

ARRL Legislative Action Program: Volunteer Qualifications

The following is a short summary of the program, and descriptions of volunteer positions for appointees operating within the ARRL Legislative Action Program.

Introduction

The ARRL Legislative Action Program (LAP) was established by the ARRL Board of Directors to provide a mechanism for ARRL members to be aware of and respond to future and pending Federal legislative matters that could affect Amateur Radio; either positively or negatively. The program provides a methodology for ARRL members to act through coordinated, legitimate political action at the Federal level. In contrast to local programs operating within each ARRL section, this is a national (Federal) effort.

Each ARRL Division Director is responsible for the operation of the program in his/her respective Division. It is his/her responsibility to appoint members to the various posts operating within the LAP structure. Within this structure, there are three key positions. The Director or the Division Legislative Action Chair (DLAC), if the Director chooses to appoint one, is the overall manager of this program within the Division. The state Legislative Action Coordinator (LAC) is responsible for coordination within a state. Legislative Action Assistants (LAA) serve as the “foot soldiers” within their community and congressional districts, and as conduits to their respective Federal elected officials.

Due to the nature of this program, we believe a rapid response will occasionally be required. The structure of the ARRL Legislative Action Program by the Board provides for both a source of information and a timeline for implementation. This information, in concert with the League’s congressional relations firm in Washington DC, is the basis for contacting Federal elected officials to provide information and ask for support at the Federal level. Attached are the descriptions for these positions.

The following pages list the three positions or levels within the ARRL Legislative Action Program and are designed to help ARRL directors fill these important positions with the best-qualified people available. The document is both an attempt to describe the job and describe the qualities of a successful candidate. Current membership in ARRL and a willingness to learn the job and to serve are the most important overall qualifications.

The *ad hoc* Legislative Action Committee

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Division Legislative Action Chair (DLAC)

This position can be appointed by the Director to administer the program or may be the Director him/herself. Typically no more than one in a Division – becomes a Division cabinet member. The following discussion presumes a DLAC is appointed.

Important considerations for the DLAC:

1. Must be a current member of ARRL.
2. Must be a registered voter who has voted in a recent election.
3. Must be readily accessible by both phone and e-mail.
4. Must be familiar with the workings of the program. (Please have them read the material previously provided by the “Legislative Action Committee” so they will understand their positions and function.)
5. Will be responsible for maintaining an up-to-date database of people working in the Program -- names, calls, addresses, and legislative district. They will periodically provide the Director with the most recent version of this information.
6. Must be willing to administer the program division wide.
7. Must have the skills necessary to work with and motivate volunteers.
8. Must be willing to recruit volunteers to fill LAC and LAA positions.

Primary Responsibilities of the DLAC:

1. A Division Legislative Action Chair (DLAC) acts on behalf of the Director as the focal point for the Legislative Action Program in his ARRL division. Any person appointed to fill this role by the Division Director is responsible for the successful operation of the program in the Division.
2. The DLAC is a member of the Division cabinet.
3. The DLAC is responsible for identifying ARRL members to serve as Legislative Action Coordinators (LAC) for the states in the Division, and for recommending these members to the Division Director for appointment
4. The DLAC is responsible for insuring the Legislative Action Coordinator (LAC) for each state is knowledgeable about the Program to insure appropriate communication with Federal legislators.
5. The DLAC is responsible to insure LACs and LAAs understand their roles.
6. The DLAC keeps the Division Director informed regarding the adequacy of information received from Headquarters, that it is understood, and that appropriate action is taken by the LACs and LAAs.
7. The DLAC insures each Legislative Action task is completed within the timeline established by Program leaders.

Skills and Knowledge of value to the DLAC:

1. An understanding of the Federal political environment.
2. The ability to serve the members in an executive oversight role.

Legislative Action Coordinator (LAC)

Typically, there will be one appointed for each state in a Division; however, more than one may be appointed for a state if necessary.

Some directors may eventually wish to have more than one LAC in states or sections with a large number of congressional districts. The Director may want to start with one position and expand latter. The Director will probably not be able to achieve the ideal number as the program is initially implemented.

Import Considerations for LACs:

1. Must be a current member of ARRL.
2. Must be a registered voter and have voted in a recent election.
3. Must be readily accessible by both phone and e-mail.
4. Must be familiar with the workings of the program. (Please have them read the material previously provided by the Legislative Action Committee so they will understand their position and function.)
5. Is responsible for maintaining an up-to-date database of people working in the Program – names, calls, address and legislative districts – in their state or area of the state. They will periodically provide the Director or DLAC with the most recent version of this information.
6. Must be willing to administer the program in the geographical area assigned to them.
7. Must have the skills necessary to work with volunteers and to motivate them.
8. Must be willing, when necessary, to recruit volunteers to fill local positions (Legislative Action Assistants).

Primary Responsibilities of the LAC:

1. Identify and recommend appointments to the LAA positions in his/her state.
2. Train and manage LAAs in congressional districts in the state.
3. Receive, document and explain various legislation and communications between the DLAC, LAA and himself
4. Speak to local clubs about the Legislative Acton Program.

Skills and Knowledge of use to the LAC:

Have the ability to work with ARRL members to train them to become effective teams in the Program.

Legislative Action Assistant (LAA)

The number of LAAs in a state depends upon the number of US Senators and US Representatives for the state. LAAs work in teams of two or three members to visit local Federal legislators. Their activities are coordinated by the LAC.

LAAs are the front line troops who will make the all-important contacts in congressional districts. In the case of key legislative districts, you may wish to identify five or six members to form two LAA teams. These teams will be able to share the task of making all important visits to their local legislators to put a face to the Amateur Radio issues with which the Legislative Action Program is concerned. While only two or three should be the number making the visit, potential scheduling problems may dictate the wisdom of recruiting a larger than necessary for a group. But avoid allowing more than one team to make visits to a legislator on the same legislative issue. Visits by multiple teams may create confusion during visits and may result in the Congressman receiving a confused message about ARRL legislative goals.

Important Considerations for LAAs:

1. Must be a current member of ARRL.
2. Must be a registered voter who has voted in recent elections.
3. Must be readily accessible by both phone and e-mail.
4. Must be familiar with the workings of the program. (Please have them read the material previously provided by the Legislative Action Committee so they will understand their place and function.)
5. Must have the skills necessary to work in a two or three person team.
6. Must be reasonably articulate and presentable.
7. Must be willing, when needed, to help recruit additional registered voters who are also ARRL members living and voting in the Congressional district.
8. Must be willing to coordinate receipt of material and training needs to fulfill the mission of the Program.
9. Must be willing to speak to local clubs about the ARRL Legislative Action Program
10. Must clearly understand their mission, as LAAs during meetings with legislators or their aides, is to discuss **only** Amateur Radio legislative issues selected to be supported or opposed through the Legislative Action Program. As private citizens, LAAs may wish to support or oppose other hot-button issues of their choosing, but they must avoid appearing to do this in the name of ARRL. These personal hot-button issues should be discussed in meetings separate from meetings held on behalf of the Legislative Action Program.

Primary Responsibilities of the LAA:

1. Schedule face-to-face meetings with local legislative staff and members of the US House of Representatives or US Senate.

LAA continued next page

2. Make follow up visits and stay in contact with the Congressional office over a long period of time to keep the Legislator current about Amateur Radio issues important to ARRL.
3. Request Congressmen support or oppose certain bills or resolutions.
4. Explain the legitimacy of the ARRL position on Federal legislation.
5. Work in a coordinated team of ARRL members in the local area who desire to make the ARRL Legislative Action Program a success.

Skills and Knowledge of use to the LAA:

1. Be a personal acquaintance with or be motivated to become acquainted with local Federal legislative staff and elected officials.
2. Have the ability to work with other local ARRL members to coordinate a team to participate effectively in the Program.

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