

Opinion on Brothers Carrying Weapons at a SUVCW Event
Ed Norris, PCinC - National Counselor
Opinion No. 4, 2022-2023
April 23, 2023

Commander-in-Chief Bruce D. Frail requested an Opinion regarding Brothers carrying weapons (muskets, rifles, and pistols) at Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War events. Events will include, but not limited to, ceremonies, parades, historical demonstrations, and other activities planned by a Camp, Department, the National Organization, Sons of Veterans Reserve (SVR), or SVR Military District.

It is the opinion of the National Counselor that the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War has no requirements that would preclude a Brother carrying a weapon at a Camp, Department, the National Organization, Sons of Veterans Reserve (SVR), or SVR Military District event. Junior and Junior Associates cannot handle a weapon at events or activities. Brothers must follow Federal, State, and Local laws that address the handling and firing of any weapon.

Unless a change in policy is deemed necessary, the Commander-in-Chief does not need to issue a General Order to reflect this opinion.

Research

The following were reviewed to determine the validity of this opinion:

- Charter, Constitution, and Regulations (updated as of August 2022)
- Regulations of the Sons of Veterans Reserve (updated as of 2019)
- Ritual and Ceremonials (2019 Edition)

Regulations, Chapter II Departments, Article XIV Military Department, Sons of Veterans Reserve, Section 2 (Page 76)

“c. Junior and Junior Associates will not handle or fire any weapon or handle gun powder while participating in a SVR or SUVCW event or activity.”

Regulations of the Sons of Veterans Reserve, Article VII Uniform and Equipment (Page 13/35)

“2. SVR Infantry, cavalry and artillery weapons should be of the Civil War era and military design, and shall be appropriate for the branch of service and rank represented. Exceptions to the above shall include NCO and Officer swords that may be Sons of Veterans, Sons of Veteran reserve, Sons of Union Veterans, or Grand Army of the Republic.”

Ritual and Ceremonials (Page 49)

“[If a salute is to be fired, the Jr. Vice Commander passes to the foot of the grave, and the Commander commands firing squad:] 1. Carry! 2. Arms! 3. Forward ! 4. March!”

“[When the rear or left of the line has returned far enough to clear the grave, he then commands:] 1. Right and left close Order! 2. March and with guns at carry.”