

2026
3rd ANNUAL HONOR GUARD
COMPETITION





3rd Annual First There First Care & Gathering of Eagles Conference Honor Guard Competition



General Rules and Guidelines

1. Teams wishing to compete shall consist of Fire or EMS agency employees; either paid, civilian or volunteer. This competition is currently only comprised of one division for all teams regardless of size or agency orientation.
2. All participating team members must be minimum 18 years of age; there is no maximum age limit.
3. Each team will be comprised of a minimum of five (5) members and a maximum of twelve (12) members including the Team Leader/Commander.
4. Participating teams shall submit a roster identifying the Team Leader/Commander and the names of all members participating in any element of the competition. Any changes to the team roster must be declared prior to the team assembling for Team Inspection.
5. **All** team members will be present for Team Inspection although only the Team Leader and four others, randomly selected, team members will be inspected by the judges. Even if some members may only be participating in a portion of the competition tasks, they must all be present for inspection. This also includes the inspection of all appliances, weapons, harnesses, etc. that will be used during any portion of the competition except for parade flags which will not be inspected.
6. As a registration incentive, the first 8 teams registered may select their position within the judging order. The remainder of the judging order shall be determined by a draw conducted by the judges during the competition briefing. This briefing will typically be held the day before the completion and allow teams to gain clarification of any items in question as well as view and walk the competition area.
7. During active judging and competition, the only teams permitted to be in the competition area are those who have been officially notified to prepare and present their team for competition and those who have officially completed their competition tasks. A ready room will be provided for teams to prepare and await their turn in the competition order. Once a team has reported for judging, all members must remain on the competition course until their performance is completed. Anyone who leaves the course for any reason not cleared by the Lead Judge may not complete further in the competition.
8. Teams will move efficiently and with purpose between tasks on the competition course. They will dismiss from each task and reassemble at the next one in a timely manner. Should a team require more than 2 minutes between tasks, their score for that event will be impacted. Variances to this requirement will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and the decision of the judges is final.
9. Awards will be presented to the first, second and third place teams once all scores have been tabulated, immediately following the competition. All teams will be given a copy of their teams score sheets following the awards presentation. Once tabulated, the judges' decisions are final.
10. In the event of a tie for first, second or third place, individual event scores will be used to establish the final order of finish. The first tie breaker will be the individual team score on the Colors Posting task. The second tie breaker will be the individual team scores for the Flag Folding task. If needed, the judges can use the individual team scores for the Casket Watch task followed by the Team Inspection task.



3rd Annual First There First Care & Gathering of Eagles Conference Honor Guard Competition



- 11.** Teams using rifles for the competition must notify the Judges in advance and render them safe to the satisfaction of the Lead Judge. Absolutely no blank or live ammunition shall be brought into the competition for any reason.
- 12.** All teams are encouraged to network with each other and maintain a high level of esprit de corps. However, no solicitation of any kind without prior approval of the event organizers is permitted.
- 13.** Teams that are new to this event will be assigned a liaison to answer all questions they may have. These liaisons are members of the MABAS 20 Honor Guard and may be used for advice or to raise questions. While their knowledge is very useful, they are assigned to advise and consequently their opinion may not be used as grounds to override the decision of the judges. The judge's decisions are final.
- 14.** The basic standards used for this competition are the U.S. Flag Code and Army Manual 3-21.5 as modified for Fire Department use (Carrying axes at Port Arms, no grenade launchers, etc.).
- 15.** Audience members, guests, event staff and teams who are observing the competition are exempt from rendering honors to the National Colors during event performances. Proper care and handling of the National Colors shall be maintained at all times by the teams while they are competing.



3rd Annual First There First Care & Gathering of Eagles Conference Honor Guard Competition



Task Requirements

Task 1: Inspection

The Team Leader will assemble **all** team members in the designated inspection area. Once assembled, the Team Leader will have 5 minutes to look over the team one last time. Individuals will be judged on uniformity, neatness, cleanliness, and military bearing. When the Team Leader has assembled their team, and is ready for inspection, the Team Leader will take a position in front of the team. The Team Leader will be inspected first followed by **four** other members of the team. These four members will be randomly selected and will be judged on consistency with the Team Leader. Teams must notify the judges, prior to the beginning of the competition, of any uniform variations within their team. The only variations in uniform that will not be penalized will be those designating rank, different company patches or any variation that the team has discussed prior to the beginning of the competition. Uniform variances will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and the decision of the judges is final.

The Team Leader will accompany the judge(s) in the appropriate position during the inspection. Any equipment or uniform accessories that the team intends to use during any portion of the competition shall be inspected at this time. This includes, but is not, limited to, color guard appliances, flag harnesses and duty belts. Parade flags WILL NOT be inspected. Teams will be at the position of attention for inspection and will be properly aligned and spaced at either normal or close interval in squad formation. Appliances will be brought to the position of Present Arms and rifles will be presented at Inspection Arms when the judge approaches the individual carrying the appliance or weapon.

When the inspection is complete, the Team Leader will take position back in front of the team, address the Lead Judge and dismiss the team when directed to do so. Teams will be under evaluation from the time in which the Team Leader initially takes a post in front of the team until such time as the Lead Judge directs them to dismiss their team.

Task 2: Colors Posting (*Diagram on Page 6*)

Following Inspection, the Team Leader will properly dismiss the team and position the Color Guard in the designated starting position, with all equipment, and await the signal from the judges to begin the colors posting task. This task will be completed by a minimum of 4 personnel. Maximum number participants are determined by the team, and they are permitted to post more than two flags.

When directed, the team will march the designated course (in the shape of a "U") executing two 90-degree direction changes to the left (Left Turn, Left Wheel, etc.) and halting prior to, but not beyond, the indicated stop line. The team will then post the colors in the stands.



3rd Annual First There First Care & Gathering of Eagles Conference Honor Guard Competition



For the purpose of the competition, it is predetermined that the audience/viewing perspective is in front of the stands. In other words, the team approaches through the audience and the stop line can simulate the front row of seating for the audience. After posting the colors, the team will return to the starting point, in reverse marching order, executing two 90-degree direction changes to the right (Right Turn, Right Wheel, etc.) and halting beyond the starting point.

Proper flag etiquette will be observed throughout this task. Judging will also be based on dress of formation, military bearing, and drill precision. Teams will be evaluated from the point they fall in at the starting point until they disassemble back at the starting point following the posting. Teams shall provide their own equipment including flag stands.

Task 3: Casket Watch (*Diagram on Page 7*)

After completing the colors posting, the Team Leader will assemble the Casket Watch Team at the designated starting point. This task will be completed by a minimum of 4 and a maximum of 5 personnel.

On a signal from the judges, the team will post the first two guards (initial posting) at the casket. From the starting point, the team will then relieve the initial posting with two new guards (changing of the guard) at the casket and the first two (initial) guards will return to the starting point. The team will then return the second posting to the starting point (final retrieval) and the team will be dismissed.

This task can either be performed with or without the use of a Detail Commander (posting escort) and exact guard placement at the casket will be at the discretion of each team. The guards will approach from the back of the room, towards the casket, down a simulated center aisle. The task will be judged on drill precision, military bearing, symmetry and posting efficiency. Judging begins when the first posting steps off and the task is complete when the final retrieval is dismissed from the assembly area back at the starting point.

Task 4: Casket Carry and Flag Fold (*Diagram on Page 8*)

When the Casket Watch is completed, the Team Leader will assemble the Flag Folding Team at the designated starting point. This task will be completed by a minimum of 4 and a maximum of 9 personnel.

On a signal from the judges, the team will march into position at the casket. The team will then convey it to the flag folding area (simulated grave site). Once the casket is secured on the mockup, the team will fold an Interment Flag (5' x 9.5') in accordance with accepted standards and present



3rd Annual First There First Care & Gathering of Eagles Conference Honor Guard Competition

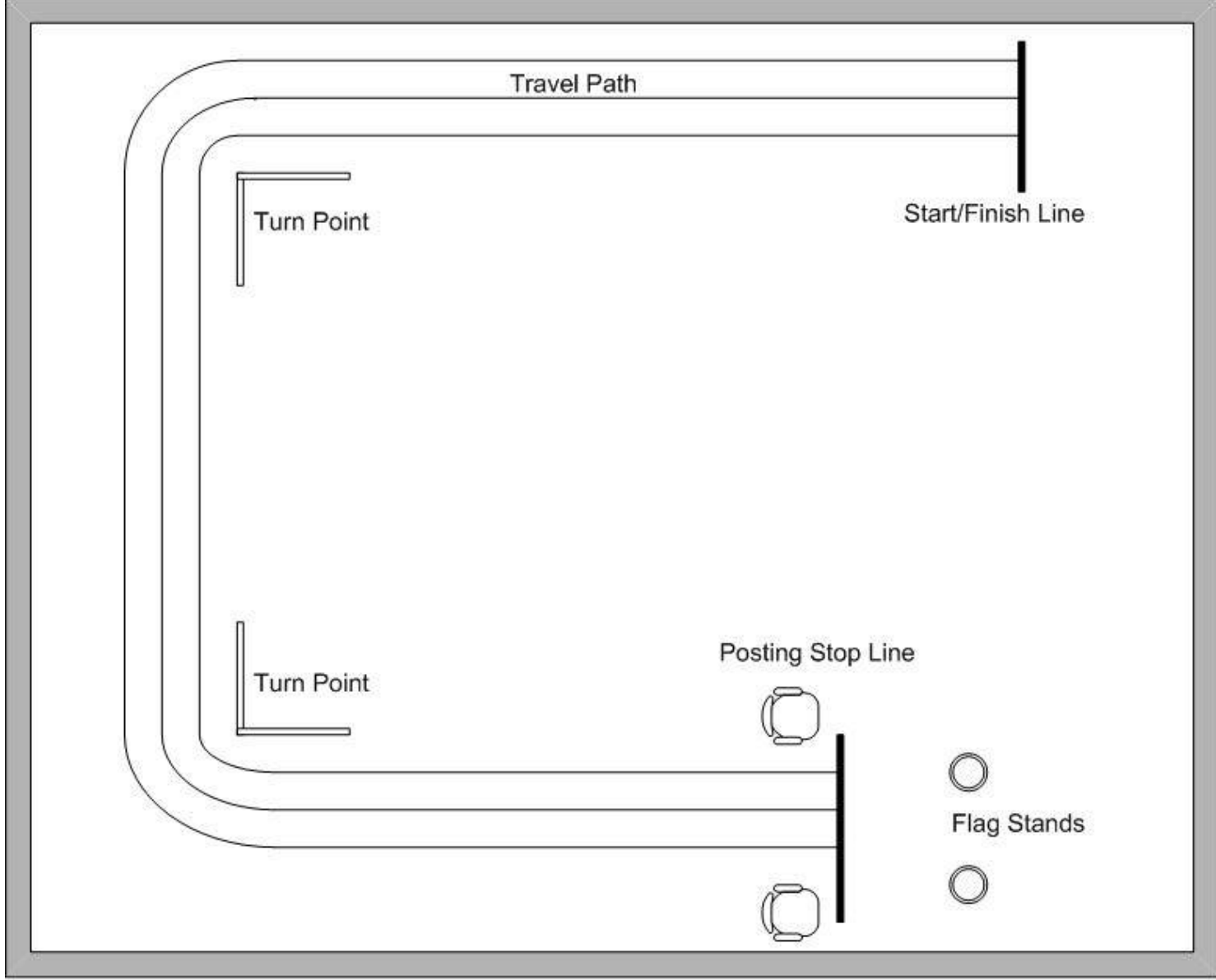


it to the receiving judge. A minimum of 2 team members must participate in the flag folding and presentation. There will be a time limit of 2 minutes and 30 seconds that will start from the time the flag comes off the casket and ends when the Presenter steps off to make the presentation of the flag to the receiving judge. Once the flag is presented, the team will depart the folding area and return to the starting point.

To begin the task, the team will carry the casket approximately 50-100' and will be required to navigate one 90-degree turn. Teams may fold the flag over the casket or elect to move away from the casket. Flag must remain level and taught during the fold and should not touch the casket again once it is removed. The folded flag will be evaluated on several elements to include tightness, smoothness and that there is no red showing. The team will be evaluated on military bearing, precision of movements and efficiency of the folding process. Teams will be evaluated from the point they step off from the starting point and will be judged until they are dismissed from the assembly area back at the starting point.



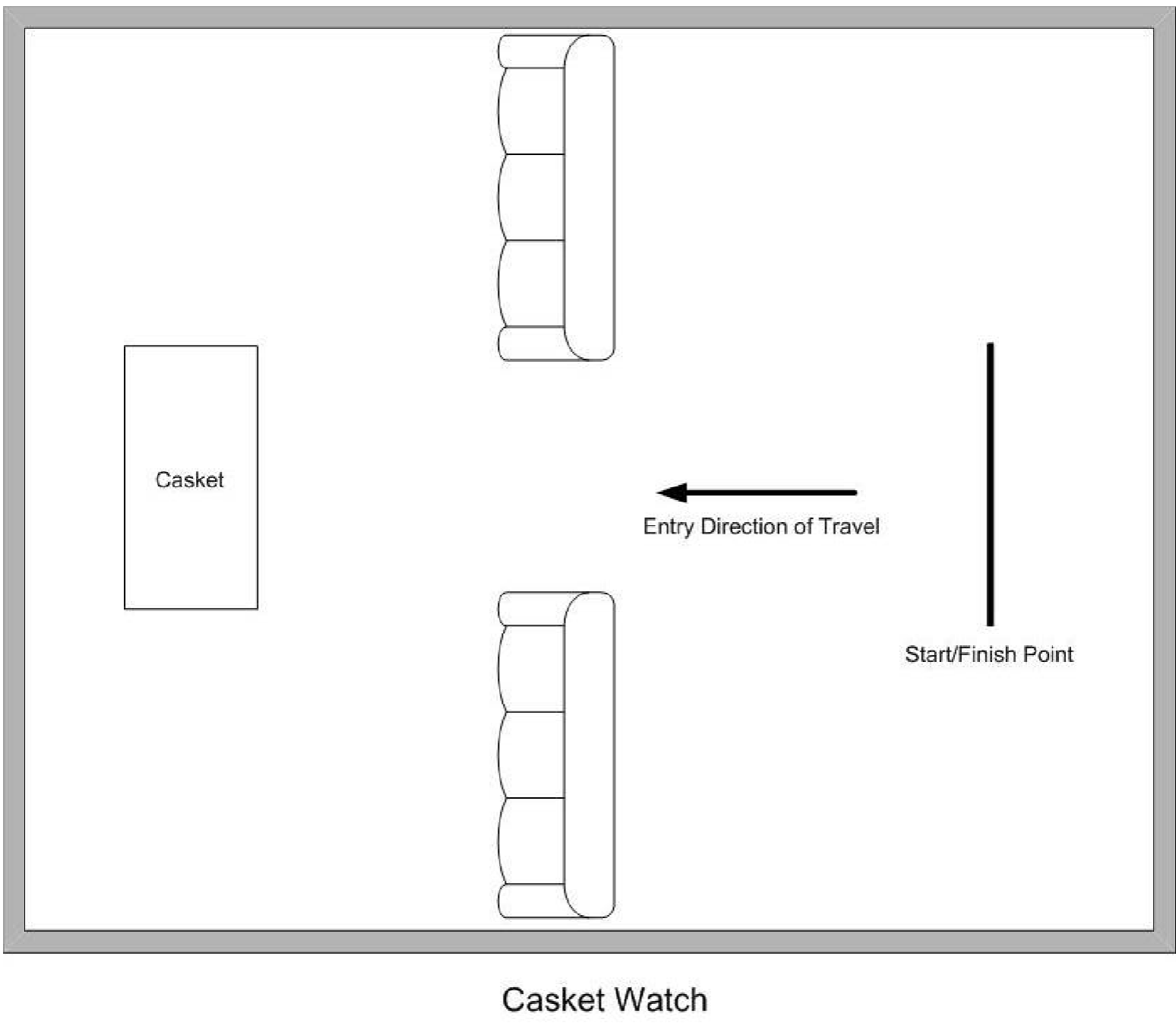
3rd Annual
First There First Care & Gathering of Eagles Conference
Honor Guard Competition



Colors Posting

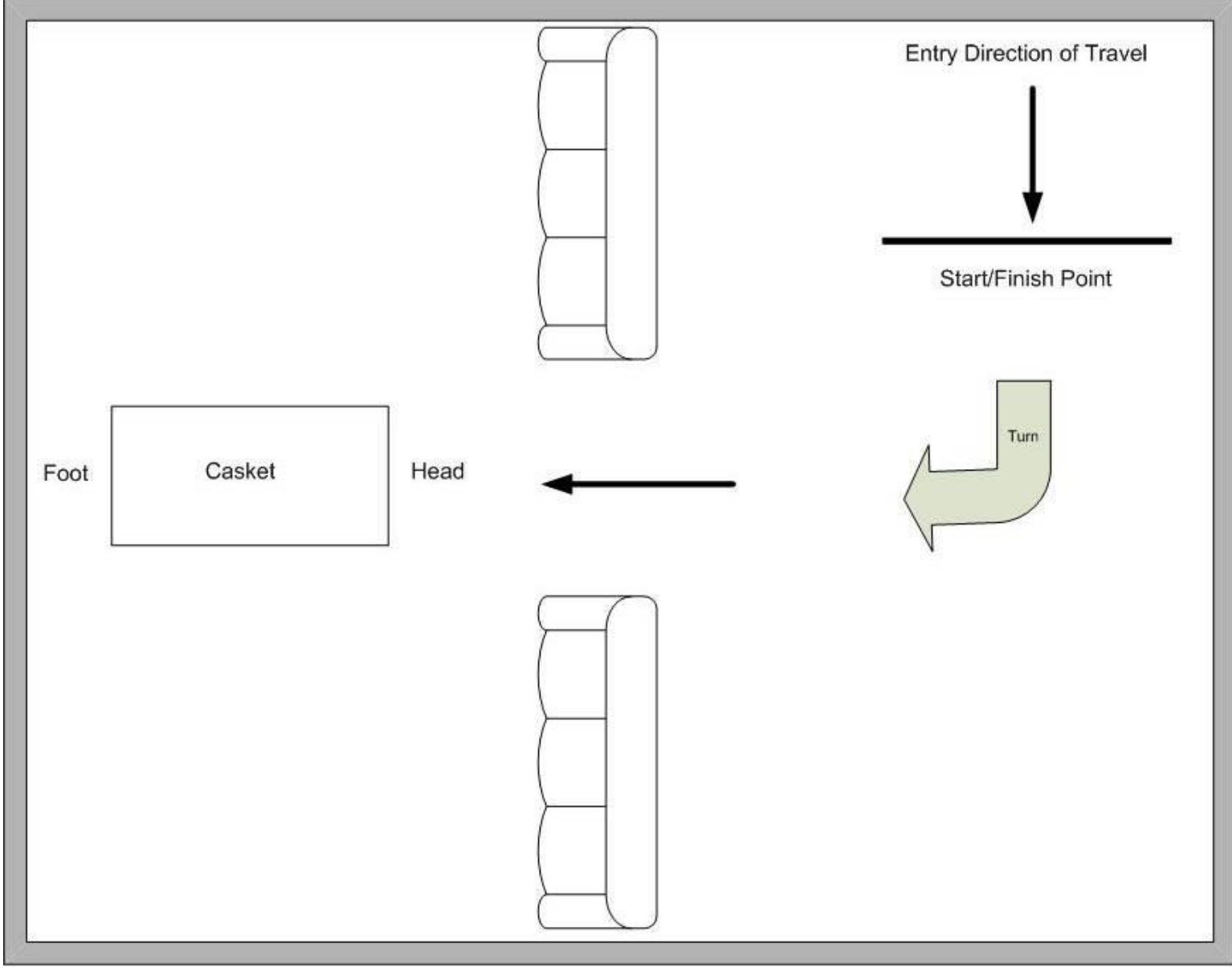


3rd Annual
First There First Care & Gathering of Eagles Conference
Honor Guard Competition





3rd Annual
First There First Care & Gathering of Eagles Conference
Honor Guard Competition



Casket Carry and Flag Folding