

## CHAPTER V CLUBS

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### **A. OBLIGATIONS OF CHARTERED CLUBS**

1. The obligations of each chartered club shall be as follows:
  - a. To hold regularly scheduled meetings or events.
  - b. Except as otherwise provided herein, to collect from each member minimum annual dues to cover international and district (single, sub-and multiple) dues and such other expenses as are necessary for club administration.
  - c. To encourage and motivate regular participation in club activities.
  - d. To conduct activities for the advancement of the civic, cultural, social or moral welfare of the community and for the promotion of international understanding.
  - e. To report monthly to International Office such information as may be called for by the board of directors of the association.
  - f. To report to the International Office the financial condition of the club upon request.
  - g. To elect officers, annually, not later than April 15, whose terms of office shall commence on July 1 following their election.
  - h. To thoroughly investigate the background of all persons proposed for membership in the community where the proposed individual resides or has a place of business or is employed.
  - i. To uphold, preserve and enhance the image of The International Association of Lions Clubs.
  - j. To abide by the policies and requirements as determined by the International Board of Directors.
  - k. To further the Lions Clubs International Purposes and Lions Code of Ethics.
  - l. To resolve all disputes arising at the club level according to the Club Dispute Resolution Procedure determined by the International Board of Directors.

## B. CLASSIFICATIONS

### 1. Good Standing

A club in good standing is one:

- a. Which is not in “status quo or financial suspension”;
- b. Which operates in accordance with the provisions of the International Constitution and By-Laws and International Board Policy;
- c. Which has:
  - (1) District (Single, Sub-and Multiple) dues and fees paid in full; and
  - (2) No unpaid balance of International dues and fees greater than U.S.\$10; and
  - (3) No unpaid Lions Club International account balance greater than U.S.\$50, outstanding ninety (90) days or more.

## C. STATUS QUO

Status quo is a temporary suspension of the charter, rights, privileges, and obligations of a Lions club. The Executive Administrator and divisions as designated by the Executive Administrator, acting on behalf of the International Board of Directors, has authority to place a Lions club in status quo or release it from status quo. The objective of status quo is to stop the activity of the club that is not fulfilling the obligations of a chartered club until the reason for placement into status quo is resolved or the club is cancelled.

Lions clubs may be placed in the following categories of status quo:

- Failure to comply with the purposes of the association, or conduct unbecoming a Lions club, such as, but not limited to, failure to solve club disputes or involvement in litigation
- Failure to fulfill any obligations of a chartered Lions club, such as, but not limited to, failure to hold club meetings or events regularly, or failure to report membership for three or more consecutive months.
- The club is non-existing or fictitious
- The club has asked to disband or participate in a club merger.
- Clubs may be placed in status quo utilizing multiple categories and may include clubs that were previously cancelled for other reasons.

- 1. Failure to comply with the purposes of the association:** When a club or its members are reported to have committed a serious action such as, but not limited to, the filing of

litigation or failure to solve club disputes the club may be placed immediately in status quo.

a. While in status quo, the club cannot:

- (1) Conduct service activities
- (2) Conduct fund-raising activities
- (3) Participate in district, multiple district, or international functions or seminars
- (4) Participate in any voting procedures outside of the club
- (5) Endorse or nominate a candidate for district, multiple district and international office
- (6) Submit the Monthly Membership Report and other report forms
- (7) Sponsor a Lions club, or organize a Leo club or a Lioness club

b. In order for a status quo club to regain the status of good standing, the club must:

- (1) Correct the reason for which the club was placed in status quo
- (2) Pay all outstanding balances in the district, multiple district and international accounts
- (3) Submit a completed Reactivation Report to report membership and leadership changes if needed
- (4) The recommendation to release a status quo club shall be made at any time of the year

c. **Cancellation:** When the infraction is severe and club cancellation is in the best interest of the association, a charter may be cancelled at the request of the Executive Administrator or his or her designee in consultation with the Legal Division.

2. **Failure to fulfill any obligations of a chartered Lions club**, which may include, but not limited to, failure to hold club meetings or events regularly, failure to report membership for three or more consecutive months; failure to pay district or multiple district dues or any other such obligation as noted in item A.1. of this chapter or as noted in the International Constitution and By-Laws.

Requests for placement into status quo for failure to fulfill the obligations of a Lions Club are made by the district governor with the approval of the first vice district governor and the zone chairperson. Sufficient documentation demonstrating that the club is not in compliance with the International Constitution and By-laws or Board Policy and the actions taken by the DG Team to encourage compliance is required to be submitted along with the request. Requests must be received 90 days or more prior to the district and/or multiple district conventions. The club will be placed in status quo once there is significant documentation that the club is not complying with the International Constitution and By-Laws.

- a. While in status quo, the club cannot:
  - (1) Conduct service activities;
  - (2) Conduct fund-raising activities;
  - (3) Participate in district, multiple district, or international functions or seminars;
  - (4) Participate in any voting procedures outside of the club;
  - (5) Endorse or nominate a candidate for district, multiple district and international office;
  - (6) Reporting membership via official methods.
  - (7) Sponsor a Lions club, or organize a Leo club or a Lioness club.
  
- b. Every effort should be made to assist status quo clubs before charter cancellation. The following procedures are to be followed to give assistance and support to status quo clubs:
  - (1) When a Lions club is placed in status quo for failure to comply with the obligations of a club, the District Governor Team or the Coordinating Lion, shall start working with the club immediately toward its release from status quo. The District Governor Team must keep the district governor informed about the progress of the status quo clubs in the zone.
  - (2) If helpful, the district governor may assign a Certified Guiding Lion to help bring the club back into good standing. The Certified Guiding Lion must have the approval of both the club and the DG Team.
  - (3) The district governor or the Coordinating Lion must review the progress and inform LCI headquarters in writing of the progress made or the recommendation of cancellation.
  
- c. In order for a status quo club to regain the status of good standing, the club must:
  - (1) Correct the reason for which the club was placed in status quo;
  - (2) Pay all outstanding balances in the district, multiple district and international accounts;
  - (3) Submit a completed Reactivation Report to report membership or leadership changes if needed;
  - (4) The recommendation to release a status quo club shall be made at any time of the year;
  - (5) Once reinstated, the club will have the ability to revise the club membership roster and officer records.
  
- d. **Cancellation:** Clubs that do not show improvement or make an adequate attempt to comply with the International Constitution and By-Laws or Board Policy within the specified time will be placed before the International Board of Directors to determine if the club should be cancelled, remain in status quo or regain good standing or active status.

### **3. Non-existing or fictitious club**

- a. If a Lions club is suspected to be non-operating and fictitious, the club is required to be thoroughly investigated, which might include:
  - (1) Review of the monthly membership report and variances or patterns in member gain or loss
  - (2) Gathering proof of club meetings or activities
  - (3) Verifying the payment of dues (district, multiple district, and international)
  - (4) Confirming the attendance at zone, region, and district functions
  - (5) Checking to see if multiple charter applications submitted at one time from one district
  - (6) Gathering reports from the district governor, first and second vice district governors, zone chairpersons, region chairpersons concerned Global Action Team GLT, GMT or GST Coordinator, and any other district or multiple district leader.
  - (7) Contacting the International Directors from the area to verify the existence of the club and to solicit their comments.
  - (8) Gathering other information that may be relevant
  - (9) At the same time, a written notification shall be sent to the club, by registered mail or some other means which can prove the dispatch of the notifications, with copies to the individuals mentioned above, to inform the club president that the status of the club is being reviewed by the association and to request a response. If no reply is received within two weeks, this process shall be repeated one more time.
- b. If no response to the second written notification is received from the club within two weeks, another written notification shall be sent to the district governor, first and second vice district governors, and district extension chairperson to inform them that the club will be placed in status quo and that the District and Club Service Committee will review the information gathered and recommend further action by the board, which may include:
  - (1) Cancellation of the club
  - (2) The district governors who approved the club may be disqualified for any and all awards issued by the association, lose status as a past district governor, and possibly required to resign from the association.
  - (3) The sponsoring club may be placed in status quo
  - (4) Other actions may be taken as deemed appropriate
- c. Due to the length of time required for investigation, notifications of a club that is believed to be fictitious should be received by the District and Club Administration Division no later than 90 days prior to the district or multiple district convention.
- d. The club will be placed in status quo upon receipt of sufficient documentation that the club does not exist.

- e. Cancellation: Clubs that are believed to be fictitious will be placed before the International Board of Directors to determine if the club should be cancelled, remain in status quo or regain good standing or active status.

**4. Disbanding or club merger.** When a Lions club notifies International Headquarters it is disbanding or merging with another club and the district governor supports the action and no other options seem viable, the club charter will be automatically cancelled.

#### **D. RESCINDING CANCELLATION**

The cancellation of a club may be rescinded within 12 months from the date of cancellation if the reasons for canceling the club are resolved. All previous dues must be paid. The district governor or the coordinating Lion must submit a Reactivation Report to rescind the charter cancellation. Requests for reactivation that are received less than 90 days prior to a district or multiple district convention may be held until the close of the convention.

#### **E. PRIORITY CLUB DESIGNATION**

Priority club designation allows members of the District Governor Team (the district governor, first vice district governor or second vice district governor) to make up to two additional club visits to the club funded by the existing district governor budget. This designation does not change the status of the club nor change the clubs rights or obligations and is designed to provide support to clubs that need additional attention.

Priority clubs automatically include all clubs that have been chartered over the previous 24 months, clubs in status quo or financial suspension and clubs that have been cancelled over the previous 12 months that could be reinstated.

The district governor may request priority designation for five additional clubs. To request priority designation for clubs that are not newly formed, recently cancelled, in status quo or financial suspension as noted above, the district governor must indicate why additional support is necessary, provide a plan outlining the needed activities and assign a Guiding Lion to the club. The plan must be approved by the club, the district governor, and the first vice district governor and then submitted to the District and Club Administration Division. These clubs must continue to pay dues and fulfill the responsibilities of a Lions Club or may risk being placed in financial suspension and cancelled. If measurable progress is not made within six months, these clubs may lose their priority designation. A club is considered to have achieved success when it has reached the goals set by the club when priority designation was granted. More than five additional clubs may be given a priority designation with the approval of the District and Club Service Committee.

## **F. PROTECTIVE STATUS**

1. A Lions club may be placed in protective status when requested by the district governor and the country or the area of the Lions club is experiencing:
  - a. War or civil insurgency;
  - b. Political unrest;
  - c. Natural disasters;
  - d. Any other special circumstances which prevent a Lions club from functioning normally.
2. A Lions club shall stay in protective status for the initial period of 90 days, plus additional days if warranted.
3. A protective status club shall be allowed to function normally, based on the definition of Lions club's functions defined in the Board Policy Manual, but exempted from:
  - a. Payment of district, multiple district, and international dues;
  - b. Reporting membership via official methods

The club is released from protective status when the club is able to fully function, pay outstanding district, multiple district and international accounts and submit a reactivation report. The recommendation to release a protective status club shall be made at any time of the year; in cases of extreme hardship, the International Board of Directors, at the request of the District and Club Service Committee, may provide partial dues relief.

## **G. Modified Protective Status**

1. A Lions club may be placed in modified protective status when determined by the Finance and Headquarters Operation Committee in conjunction with the LCI Chief of Finance and Treasurer if the country or the area of the Lions club experiencing:
  - a. Extreme hyperinflation;
  - b. War or civil insurgency;
  - c. Political unrest;
  - d. Natural disasters;
  - e. Any other special circumstances which prevent a Lions club from functioning normally.
2. A Lions club shall stay in modified status for an unspecified period of time, to be reviewed by the Chief of Finance on a regular basis for notification to the Finance and Headquarters Operation Committee that may require a change to this status.

3. A modified protective status club shall be allowed to function normally, in good standing, based on the definition of Lions club's functions defined in the Board Policy Manual, but exempted from payment of international dues at the rate stated in Article XII, Section 2. Membership Dues of the International Constitution and By-Laws. Dues shall be invoiced at an amount determined by the Lions Clubs International Chief of Finance and Treasurer as approved by the Finance and Headquarters Operation Committee in an amount greater than or equal to zero, but not to exceed the rate stated in the International Constitution and By-Laws.
4. The decision to place one or more clubs in a district in modified protective status will not affect the access of the district governor to their district budgets, which will be distributed in U.S. dollars or local currency if available or until such date where local currency is accessible for distribution.
5. Clubs in modified protective status are required to report membership information via official methods on a monthly basis. Club officer information should be updated prior to the end of each term. During the official reimbursable clubs visits, District Governors should encourage clubs to update rosters and should train clubs to use MyLCI. Future District Governor budgets could be reduced if membership information is not updated and will be evaluated semi-annually.

The club is released from modified protective status when the club is able to fully function and pay their outstanding international accounts balance which would not include dues billings after placed on Modified Protective Status.

## **H. CLUB AWARDS**

### **1. Club Excellence Award**

The club excellence award was created to recognize Clubs that reach a standard of excellence in membership growth, club management and service. Criteria is recommended by the District and Club Service Committee and approved by the International Board of Directors.

### **2. Club Rebuilding Award**

This award is given to a Lion who was instrumental in rebuilding an existing club or bringing a canceled or status quo club back to active and viable status.

- a. Is offered upon the recommendation of the governor or district governor team member, with the approval of the district governor, by submitting a completed Club Rebuilding Award Nomination Form. The award cannot be awarded to the district governor. One award may be given for each club rebuilt.



- b. The Lion nominated to receive the award must have played a key role in recruiting new members to revitalize the club, in helping the club develop new activities, and in ensuring that the club is guided and motivated as it rebuilds;
- c. For a club not yet cancelled, suspended or in status quo, the award is conferred when the Lion helps rebuild a club of less than 15 and the club achieves an active club membership of 20 within the fiscal year. The club must be in good standing for 12 months, have initiated a new service project, filed monthly membership reports for 12 consecutive months and paid the club account in full to be conferred.
- d. For a club that is already cancelled, suspended or in status quo, the award is conferred after the club is reactivated and has a minimum of 20 members. The club must be in good standing for 12 months, have initiated a new service project, filed monthly membership reports for 12 consecutive months and paid the club account in full to be conferred.

### 3. **Perfect Attendance Awards**

Annual perfect attendance awards are available for purchase and can be issued to members who have attended every regularly scheduled meeting or event of their club for twelve consecutive months, making up any lost attendance in line with the attendance make-up rules as established by the club. This period may begin with any given month. The design of this award will be at the prerogative of the international president.

## **I. MERGER OF TWO OR MORE LIONS CLUBS**

For the merger of two or more Lions clubs to occur the following procedure is to be completed:

- 1. The clubs considering a merger are to conduct a joint meeting to decide the following matters:
  - a. Which one of the clubs is to be cancelled.
  - b. Whether the name of the remaining club will be revised, and if so, determine an appropriate name. The revised name is to be approved by the district cabinet and the District and Club Administration Division of Lions Clubs International.
  - c. Whether the officers and committees of the remaining club will complete the term of office or new officers will be elected after approval of the merger. If an election will be conducted, set the location, date and time for the election and forward the results to the district governor and international office.

- d. Adopt a resolution selecting the location, date and time for the board and general meetings or events of the remaining club after the merger is completed. Adopt a resolution for a continuation of charter date of one resolution of the clubs.
2. The general membership of each club considering a merger must adopt a resolution in support of the merger.
3. The club(s) agreeing to be cancelled must also complete the following additional phases prior to the merge:
  - a. Pay all outstanding obligations.
  - b. Transfer any funds remaining in the administration and activities accounts to the appropriate accounts maintained by the remaining club.
  - c. Dispose of all club property in an appropriate manner.
  - d. File its closing Monthly Membership Report with the international office listing the members transferring to the remaining club.
  - e. Turn its charter over to the district governor.
4. The club remaining forwards the following documents and materials to the District and Club Administration Division at the international office.
  - a. A copy of the merger resolution adopted by each club.
  - b. A copy of the district cabinet resolution approving the merger.
  - c. A Monthly Membership Report listing as transfer members the members from the merged club(s).
  - d. The Merger Request Form.
5. The merged club may receive a certificate of merger upon request.
6. When the name of the merged club is revised, the merged club may request that a charter be issued in the new name of the merged club.

## **J. CLUB NAME CHANGE**

1. For a Lions club to change its name, the following information must be submitted to the District and Club Administration Division, International Headquarters:

- a. A letter of authorization from the Lions club board of directors recommending the new name.
  - b. An expression of opinion letter from the district governor regarding the name change.
  - c. A letter signed by an authorized officer of each of the other clubs that abut the Lions club requesting the name change consenting to the name change.
2. The new name of the club must comply with the requirements established in the Lions Clubs International Constitution and Board Policy.
  3. The club may request that a charter be issued in the new name.

## **K. GUIDING LION PROGRAM**

The Guiding Lion program is designed to assist newly chartered and established clubs.

1. **Appointment for Newly Chartered Clubs.** The appointment of an experienced Lion is required prior to the chartering of a new club.
  - a. The appointment is based upon the recommendations of the district governor, and the sponsoring club president and is reported on the Lions Club Charter Application.
  - b. The two-year appointment begins on the charter approval date.
  - c. The Guiding Lion cannot be a member of the newly organized club nor the current district governor. This Lion is provided with a Guiding Lion Pin during the charter ceremony to recognize his or her position.
  - d. Up to two guiding Lions may be appointed if needed.
2. **Appointment for Established Lions Clubs**
  - a. All clubs may benefit from the support of a guiding Lion.
  - b. The appointment is based upon the recommendations of the district governor in consultation with the club president and is reported to the District and Club Administration Division.
  - c. The two-year appointment begins on the date the appointment is reported.
  - d. The Guiding Lion cannot be a member of the assigned club nor the current district governor.

e. This Lion is provided with a Guiding Lion Pin to recognize his or her position.

### 3. **Guiding Lion Responsibilities**

- a. Attend most club meetings, both general and board meetings.
- b. Provide a training course for club officers and members with support provided by the district.
- c. Ensure that the club is active in service and fundraising projects and supports LCIF initiatives.
- d. Ensure ongoing membership growth.
- e. Involve club officers and members in district and multiple district activities.
- f. Ensure that the club is in good standing with Lions Clubs International.
- g. Ensure that the club routinely submits membership and activity reports and reports new club officers in a timely manner.
- h. Submit quarterly report to Lions Clubs International Headquarters and the district governor.
- i. No guiding Lion may be assigned to more than two clubs at any point in time.

4. **Certification.** Guiding Lions are encouraged to become certified by successfully passing the Certified Guiding Lion course prior to appointment. To maintain certification, Certified Guiding Lions must recertify every three years.

5. **Presidential Certified Guiding Lion Award.** Guiding Lions who complete the Certified Guiding Lion course and served successfully as a Guiding Lion for two years, as outlined in the Certified Guiding Lion Program, may apply for the award. The award will be forwarded to the new club president for appropriate presentation.

6. **Replacing a Guiding Lion.** If a replacement of a guiding Lion becomes necessary, a successor shall be appointed by the current district governor with the approval of the assigned club president.

7. **Travel and Expenses.** The General Reimbursement Policy will apply.