



**Knights of  
Columbus®**

# **Fraternal Excellence Guide**

**Practical Information for Council and District Officers**

**Effective May 1, 2025**



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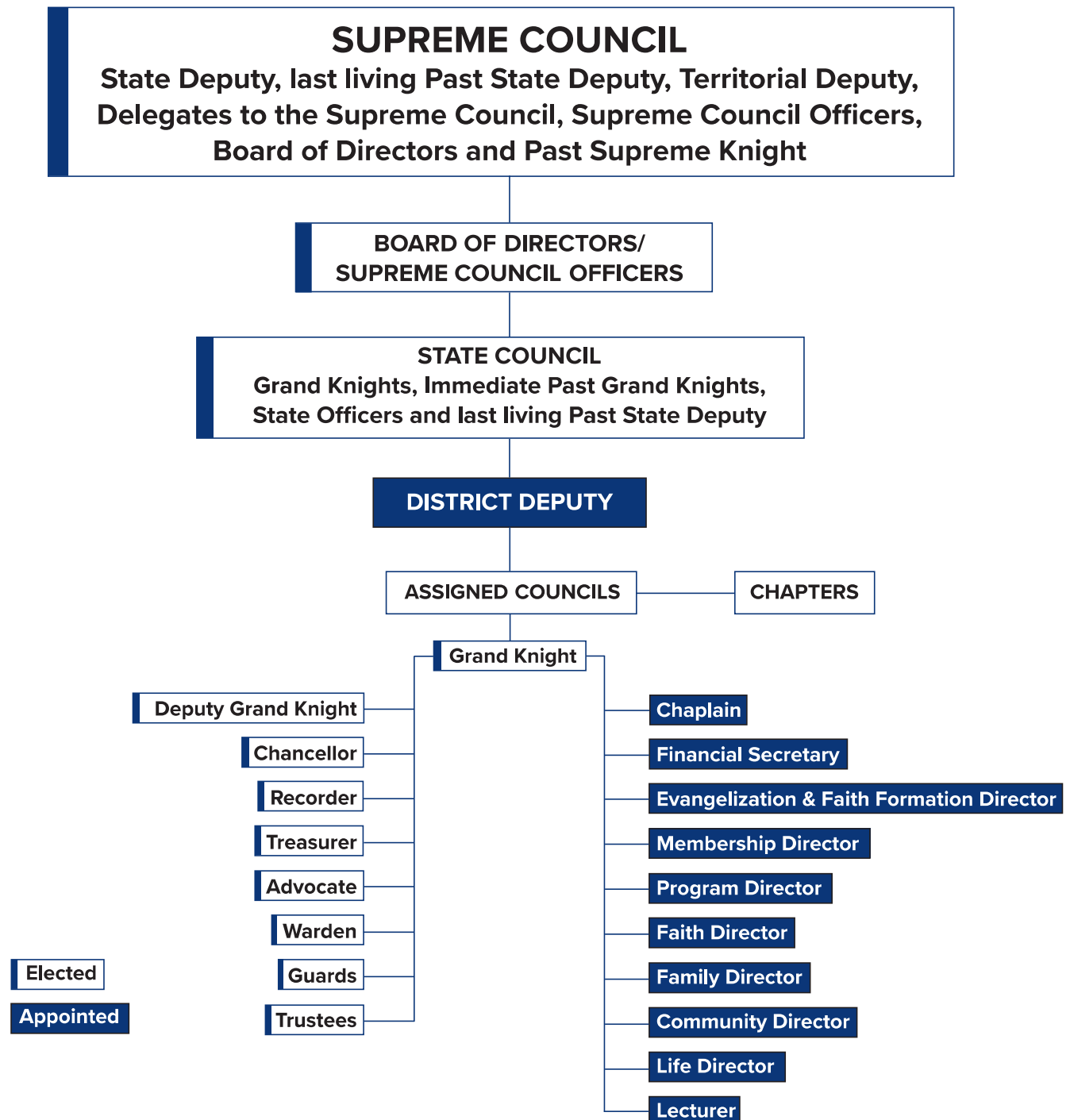
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# Knights of Columbus

## ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



# SUPREME COUNCIL OFFICE CONTACT DIRECTORY

Customer Service .....	203-752-4000	
Customer Service .....	1-800-380-9995	
KnightsGear .....	1-855-432-7562	knightsgear@kofc.org
Supplies Online .....	1-833-591-7770	customersupport@slwmco.com
Fraternal Mission.....		fraternalmission@kofc.org
Affiliate Membership .....		affiliate@kofc.org
Catholic Information Service .....		cis@kofc.org
Ceremonials .....		ceremonials@kofc.org
Chaplains Programs and Development.....		chaplains@kofc.org
Columbia Magazine .....		columbia@kofc.org
Council Accounts.....		council.accounts@kofc.org
Financial Secretary Appointments .....		financial.secretary@kofc.org
Membership Growth .....		councilgrowth@kofc.org
Membership Records.....		membership@kofc.org
Member Management/Member Billing .....		expertfs@kofc.org
Scholarships .....		scholarships@kofc.org
For general inquiries, email .....		info@kofc.org

## Forms and Reports

<u>Due Date</u>	<u>Form/Report</u>
June 30	<i>Report of Chosen Officers for the Term</i> OR the Officers Screen on Member Management
	<i>Service Program Personnel Report*</i> OR the Service Personnel Screen on Member Management
	<i>Council Evangelization and Faith Formation Director Report</i>
August 15	<i>Semiannual Council Audit</i>
September 15	<i>District Deputy Report</i>
January 31	<i>Annual Survey of Fraternal Activity*</i>
February 15	<i>Semiannual Council Audit</i>
June 30	<i>Columbian Award Application*</i>
Immediately	<i>Membership Document</i>
As Required	Entries for the <i>State Council Service Program Awards Contest</i> and Family of the Year Contest to your state council
Monthly	<i>Family of the Month</i>

\* Indicates Star Council Award Requirement

# **The Vision of Father McGivney**

# Father McGivney's Vision

On fire for the faith, Father McGivney was also approachable and trusted by the powerful and lowly alike. His ability to mourn with those in sorrow and bring joy and support to those in need of encouragement marked his priestly ministry. To him, faith was a gift to be treasured by every Catholic, and there were no human boundaries that could not be overcome by the love and care of a good and gracious God. Despite the anti-Catholic sentiments of the time, Father McGivney wanted to see Catholics keep the faith and thrive. He often stepped outside the church walls to become an advocate for parishioners in court to keep their families together; he engaged cordially with those of other Christian faiths, even a prominent New Haven minister; and he staged plays and fairs for all comers.

## Protector of Catholic Families

A man of practical thought and action, Father McGivney knew that the pursuit of holiness did not consist in an aloof attitude or separation from people and their problems. As a parish priest, his primary concern was for the welfare — both spiritual and temporal — of the largely Irish-American and immigrant Catholic population that teemed into New Haven, where he began his ministry at St. Mary's Church in 1878.

Catholics then were especially vulnerable. Immigrants often had to take the most dangerous positions in the mines, on the railroads, and in the factories. Accidents, disease and overwork led too often to the family's breadwinner suffering an early death, leaving his wife and children destitute, with no social safety nets.

## His Solution: The Knights of Columbus

Father McGivney had lived through hard times himself as the eldest of 13 children, six of whom died young. After finishing elementary school, he joined his father in the factory for three years, and this experience formed in him a deep solidarity with working men and their families. He also knew personally the effects of the death of a breadwinner. His own father died in 1873 and young Michael had to leave seminary to tend to the family before returning to his studies.

These experiences — viewed through the lens of faith — formed the man who went on to form the Knights of Columbus as an answer to the many problems his people faced. A little more than four years after being assigned as an assistant priest to St. Mary's, he gathered a handful of men in the church basement to establish a new fraternal association dedicated to helping men and their families with spiritual and temporal needs.

## Charity, Unity and Fraternity

The Order was formed as a fraternal benefit society, but Father McGivney and the men he gathered saw a "higher calling," that was expressed in the Order's three main principles of charity, unity and fraternity. Father McGivney saw them as three legs of a stool, each one dependent on the other, and each one critical to helping the Catholic men of Connecticut keep the faith while supporting also their personal, civic and social needs.

**Charity** — The greatest of all virtues is charity or love, writes St. Paul. But the modern mind has distorted these words; charity is more than giving to the needy, and love is more than romance. What these words really mean is this — to will the good of the other person for his or her own sake, even if that means suffering for me. This is the charity, the love, that Jesus had for us on the cross, and we are to approach every person with this same love and charity. This is the charity that evangelizes.

Jesus gave us a new commandment: "Love one another, as I have loved you" (Jn 13:34). This new love in Christ inspires Knights to reach out through a myriad of organized programs and efforts to help those in need and to share the Gospel. Cor reconnects Knights and men of the parish to this founding principle of the Order.



**Unity** – None of us is as good alone as all of us are together. United in the Catholic faith, Knights support one another in times of joy and grief and at every moment in between. They form a network of men and their families dedicated to building their homes as domestic churches of faith and love, and they work in union with priests to support parishes in the mission of faith formation and evangelization. In the words of one of Father McGivney’s contemporaries: “Unity of purpose, unity of action and unity of faith complete a trinity which makes the Knights of Columbus a mighty agent for good, an upholder of order, a protective force in society.”

**Fraternity** – Networks of Knights provide men with something that is too often lacking in today’s fragmented society — authentic fraternal fellowship lived out in councils, parishes, online, and in common faith and worthy projects. Working together, we know the truth of the biblical statement: “As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another” (Prov 27:17). Early in the Order’s history, Knights were told to exemplify “the Golden Rule, which is the essence of Fraternity.”

Father McGivney’s vision for his Knights has made a difference in millions of lives and brought hope and healing to countless others. More than 130 years after his death, his vision remains our mission.

In addition, the insurance program that Father McGivney began in 1882 to support families when a member died has grown from the simple seeds he sowed. Today, the Knights of Columbus is a modern Fortune 1000 company that has more than \$123 billion in financial protection in force for Knights and their families. Death benefits to survivors and regular dividends to policyholders translate each year to thousands of mortgages kept, college tuitions paid, retirements secured, and futures assured — and every dollar of assets is invested according to Catholic moral principles.

# **Council Leadership**

# Duties of Council Officers

## Chaplain

- A priest chosen annually by the grand knight, deputy grand knight and trustees
- Serves as spiritual advisor to the brother Knights and families of that council
- Provides his message to members at the beginning of the meeting
- The chaplain should attend meetings of the council whenever his schedule allows, as his guidance is a great benefit

## Grand Knight

- Uphold and advance the vision of Fr. McGivney through your personal example, leadership appointments, communication, and council meetings and events
- Presides over all meetings
- Appoints program and membership directors program, membership and evangelization and faith formation (EFF) directors.
- Appoints committees as needed
- Countersigns checks and orders for payment
- Responsible for the council's Ceremonial Team
- Maintains working relationships with the council's chaplain, district deputy, insurance agent, as well as with other local service organizations (ie. food pantries, soup kitchens)

## Deputy Grand Knight

- Assists the grand knight with operation of the council and any other duties assigned to him by the grand knight
- In the absence of the grand knight, presides at council meetings
- Recommended to serve as Program Director

## Chancellor

- Has the duty of strengthening the members' interest in council activities
- Assists the grand knight and deputy grand knight with their duties as assigned
- Recommended to serve as the Membership Director

## Financial Secretary

- Upon recommendation of the grand knight and the trustees, the financial secretary is appointed for a three-year term that is approved by the supreme knight
- The prospective financial secretary must also complete and submit the *Application for Appointment as Financial Secretary*
- Under Section 130 of the Laws of the Order, the financial secretary is automatically bonded in the amount of \$5,000. Additional bonding may be provided at a cost of \$7 per thousand by contacting the supreme secretary's office
- Collects money, in the form of dues, from members. Responsible for sending billing notices and initiating retention measures by providing a list of delinquent members to the grand knight and membership committee to prevent members from being suspended for nonpayment of dues
- Ensures that the council membership records are updated and that new members sign the constitutional roll
- Files various reports and membership/ insurance transactions with the Supreme Council Office
- Responsible for completing and submitting the IRS form 990 for the council (U.S. only)
- Keeps the seal of the council and affixes the same to membership cards, resolutions and other official documents as necessary

## Recorder

- Responsible for keeping and maintaining a true and permanent record of all actions of the council and maintains all correspondence of the council

### **Treasurer**

- Handles council funds
- Receives money from financial secretary and deposits it in the proper council accounts
- Responsible for paying all council expenses, including assessments from the Supreme Council
- Under Section 130 of the Laws of the Order, the treasurer is automatically bonded in the amount of \$5,000 when reported on the *Election of Officers form*. Additional bonding may be provided at a cost of \$7 per thousand by contacting the supreme secretary's office

### **Lecturer**

- Appointed by the grand knight
- Responsible for providing suitable educational and entertaining programs under the "Good of the Order" section of council meetings

### **Advocate**

- Acts as parliamentarian for the council
- Should have a working knowledge of Robert's Rules of Order, Charter, Constitution & Laws, council by-laws, and parliamentary procedure
- When needed, will seek legal assistance from the state advocate

### **Warden**

- Responsible for supervising and maintaining all council property
- Sets up council chambers for meetings and exemplifications
- Oversees inside and outside guards

### **Inside/Outside Guards**

- Attend the doors of the council chamber, checking for current membership cards and allowing entrance

### **Board of Trustees**

- Consists of grand knight and three other elected members
- Supervises all financial business of the council and conducts the semiannual audits
- Trustees are elected for terms of three years. At the first election of a new council, three trustees shall be elected, one to hold office for one year or until the next regular election, one for two years or until the second next regular election, and the other for three years or until the third next regular election, as determined by lot among themselves. Thereafter, at each succeeding election, one Trustee shall be chosen for a term of three years

### **Evangelization and Faith Formation Director**

- Appointed by the grand knight
- Responsible for the planning, communication, structuring and leading of *Cor*
- Coordinates and engages with existing parish ministries and/or men's groups
- Develops team of 2 to 3 men to share planning and facilitation responsibilities
- Submission of *Cor* Quarterly Report

### **Membership Director**

- Appointed by the grand knight
- Collaborates with the grand knight and council leaders on council membership goals for the year
- Oversees the activities of the council's membership
- Plans and coordinates the council's schedule of recruitment programs
- Ensures that *Membership Applications* are transmitted by the Financial Secretary to both the Membership Records Department at the Supreme Council and the general agent
- Oversees Council Church Drives and assists prospective members with navigating the Online Join Application

### **Program Director**

- Appointed by the grand knight
- Collaborates with the grand knight in setting the calendar of council programs for the year
- Manages program directors as they implement the council's programs and activities

- Keeps accurate records of council programs for reporting on the *Annual Survey of Fraternal Activity* and the *Columbian Award Application*
- Keeps council's public relations chairman informed of all programs and activities for promotion to local media

#### **Faith Director**

- Appointed by the grand knight, in consultation with the program director
- Responsible for all Faith based council programs
- Keeps accurate records of the council's Faith programs including Refund Support Vocations Program (RSVP), if applicable

#### **Family Director**

- Appointed by the grand knight, in consultation with the program director
- Responsible for all Family based council programs
- Keeps accurate records of the council's Family programs including Food for Families and Family of the Month/Year, if applicable
- Must complete all required Knights of Columbus Safe Environment training ([kofc.org/safe](http://kofc.org/safe)) and must also pass a background check

#### **Community Director**

- Appointed by the grand knight, in consultation with the program director
- Responsible for all Community based council programs
- Keeps accurate records of the council's Community programs including Coats for Kids and Global Wheelchair Mission, if applicable
- Must complete all required Knights of Columbus Safe Environment training ([kofc.org/safe](http://kofc.org/safe)) and must also pass a background check

#### **Life Director**

- Appointed by the grand knight, in consultation with the program director
- Responsible for all Life based council programs
- Keeps accurate records of the council's Life programs including Special Olympics and Ultrasound, if applicable

## **Council Activities**

## Cor

The mission of *Cor* is to help focus Catholic men on Jesus by building Christ-centered brotherhood through a simple, flexible framework of prayer, formation and fraternity. The vision is to aid in transforming the hearts of men through Christ-centered brotherhood. Rooted in prayer, formation and fraternity, men will be sharpened in faith and virtue as they cultivate authentic friendships with Christ and each other. We envision a future where *Cor* continuously helps sustain these men to lead their families, strengthen their parish communities and courageously evangelize the world as missionary disciples of Jesus Christ. The word “cor” is Latin for heart and the root of the word courage. Faithfulness, courage, and virtue begin with the heart and are the inspiration for *Cor*. *Cor* is intended to be fully integrated as a constant function of the council in service of the parish. For this reason, *Cor* requires the permission of the pastor and is open to all men of the parish. It is intended to enhance all council activity and fraternity. For more information on how to implement, lead, and structure *Cor*, visit [www.kofc.org/cor](http://www.kofc.org/cor) or reach out to the Supreme Evangelization and Faith Formation Team, at [cor@kofc.org](mailto:cor@kofc.org).

If the Council intends to offer *Cor*, the grand knight is to appoint a Council Evangelization and Faith Formation Director (EFF) and submit the Council Evangelization and Faith Formation Director Submission Form. The EFF Director is responsible for running/leading, planning, communication, and scheduling *Cor*, and building a team of men from the council and parish to assist. The Grand Knight remains the main point of contact with the pastor and parish and is encouraged to bring his appointed Council EFF Director into said communication concerning *Cor*. The involvement of the Grand Knight in *Cor* is optional and should be determined by the Grand Knight and Council EFF Director. For all *Cor* startup training and resources, visit the *Cor* home page at [www.kofc.org/cor](http://www.kofc.org/cor). Additional webinar and training resources are available for the EFF Director and team along with extended role descriptions and steps for success.

## State and Council Evangelization and Faith Formation Director

At their discretion, State Deputies are invited -- in collaboration with their State Chaplain -- to appoint a State Director of Evangelization and Faith Formation (EFF). Under the direction of the State Deputy, the State EFF Director is responsible for advancing the evangelization and faith formation initiatives of the Supreme Council, specifically adoption and implementation of *Cor*. State EFF Director oversees the development of a state EFF team to support him in his role. The State Director is charged with providing support and coaching for the council EFF directors, along with resources and communication as needed. The State Deputy is encouraged to provide his State EFF Director opportunities for statewide communication concerning evangelization and faith formation initiatives. The Supreme Council's division of Evangelization & Faith Formation shall directly support the State EFF Director. Role descriptions for this and corresponding council positions are available online at [kofc.org/cor](http://kofc.org/cor) or can be requested by emailing [cor@kofc.org](mailto:cor@kofc.org).

## “Faith in Action” – Program Model

We know that the chance to roll up our sleeves and demonstrate our faith through service is as powerful as it is rewarding. The calling is a fundamental part of the Knights history and the foundation for our program model, Faith in Action. This mission-driven platform is an excellent way to express our service program, as it speaks to our own efforts and to the interests of prospective Knights.

The Faith in Action model is a realization of the changing needs of men in the twenty-first century. It seeks to balance all of our key priorities with theirs — **Faith, Family, Community, and Life** — and present them in a way that is clear to our leaders, members and prospective Knights. The simplicity of Faith in Action allows councils to concentrate on implementing quality faith-filled family programs. Our goal is for men to lead their family in service – not leave their family for service. The focus of this streamlined program is quality, not quantity.

Woven within these four categories is the opportunity to share something that all generations and cultures within our organization seek in their membership in the Knights of Columbus. The Faith in Action model allows us to come together to share our faith, celebrate fraternity with our families and do what we do best — stand shoulder to shoulder in service to our community and to defend life at all stages and in every condition.

FAITH	COMMUNITY
<b>RSVP</b> <b>Into the Breach</b> <b>Spiritual Reflection</b> <b>Holy Hour</b> Pilgrim Icon Program Building the Domestic Church Kiosk Rosary Program Sacramental Gifts	<b>Coats for Kids</b> <b>Global Wheelchair Mission</b> <b>Habitat for Humanity</b> Disaster Preparedness Free Throw Championship Catholic Citizenship Essay Contest Soccer/Hockey Challenge Helping Hands
FAMILY	LIFE
<b>Food for Families</b> <b>Family of the Month/Year</b> <b>Family Fully Alive</b> <b>Family Prayer Night</b> Keep Christ in Christmas Family Week Consecration to the Holy Family Good Friday Family Promotion	<b>March for Life</b> <b>Special Olympics</b> <b>Ultrasound Initiative</b> <b>ASAP / Pregnancy Center Support</b> Christian Refugee Relief Silver Rose Mass for People with Special Needs Novena for Life

*Faith in Action Programs — Table 2*

**Bold** denotes Featured Programs

## Program Categories

A well-rounded council will have activities in each of the following categories: Faith, Family, Community, and Life. These programs are meant to inspire your councils to put their faith into action; councils may choose to implement several of these programs or may develop programs unique to the parish or community. By conducting programs, councils continue Blessed Michael McGivney’s commitment to serving those in need. For detailed information on all programs, please visit [kofc.org/faithinaction](http://kofc.org/faithinaction).

## Featured Programs

The Supreme Council has designated select programs in each category as Featured Programs. When your council conducts a featured program and satisfies the associated requirements, it will receive two credits for that particular program category.

## International Awards

**Service Program Awards** – Each year during a jurisdiction’s convention, state councils should recognize the best program conducted by the councils in each of the four program categories. Winning entries – with the endorsement of the State Deputy – are submitted to the Supreme Council for consideration as an International Service Program Award winner.

Using one form per program entry along with supporting documentation, a subordinate council must complete and submit the *State Council Service Program Awards Entry Form* directly to the designated state council program chair. Any entries received by the Supreme Council from a subordinate council will not be considered for the International Award.

**State Blessed Michael McGivney Awards** – At the jurisdiction’s convention, the state councils should recognize a Knights of Columbus chaplain with the State Blessed Michael McGivney Award. This winner will be considered by Supreme to be awarded the Blessed Michael McGivney Medal at the Supreme Convention.

Using one form per chaplain entry, a subordinate council must complete and submit the *State Blessed Michael McGivney Award Form*. A subordinate council can submit an entry for either a subordinate or state council



chaplain. Entries must follow proper protocol from subordinate council to state council to the Supreme Council. State and subordinate councils can submit winners from previous years.

## Family of the Year

State councils should recognize a family of the year at their state conventions.. Subordinate councils must complete the Family of the Year Entry Form and submit it to the state council.

## Jurisdiction Winners

When the jurisdiction has chosen its winners for each program category, a family of the year, as well as awarded a chaplain, they should promptly forward the submission to the Supreme Council Department of Fraternal Mission. Individual award entries must be forwarded to the Supreme Council office by April 30 to be considered. Please note: there is only one entry per category from a jurisdiction. If multiple entries are received per category, they will not be considered.

## Ordering Supplies

The Supreme Council has many materials available to help your council promote and conduct Supreme-recommended programs. Programming and print supplies can be ordered through Supplies Online, the supply-ordering portal available on Officers Online.

All Knights of Columbus-related gift and clothing needs, including K of C apparel, accessories, books, coats (Coats for Kids), religious supplies and liturgical items, can be ordered through Knights Gear.

Included below are tips to ensure that your order is processed and shipped in time for your programs:

- The ordering process works best using personal credit/debit cards.
- Fraternal Mission will no longer place orders for district deputies or council officers, except in rare circumstances.
- To see the latest listing of materials, please look items up and order them via Supplies Online.
- Please order materials at least four to six weeks in advance of your program date. Materials that are needed sooner will be shipped in an expedited manner; however, extra shipping charges will be applied to the order.

## Star Council Award

In order for your council to earn the Star Council Award, it must:

- Earn the **Father McGivney Award** for membership growth;
- Earn the **Founders' Award** for excellence in promoting our insurance and fraternal benefits;
- Earn the **Columbian Award** for well-rounded council programs by submitting the *Columbian Award Application*;
- Submit the *Service Program Personnel Report*;
- Submit the *Annual Survey of Fraternal Activity*; and
- Remain in good standing with the Supreme Council (including youth protection compliance) (In the U.S. and Canada, this includes being fully compliant with applicable Safe Environment requirements.)

The **Father McGivney Award** recognizes excellence in council membership growth. Each year, your council is assigned a membership quota from the Supreme Council. For the award, growth is measured by intake only. Withdrawals, suspensions, and deaths do not count against your quota, and transfers in or out of your council do not count for or against your quota. Your council quota can be found under the Membership tab in Officers Online, which is updated daily. Eligibility for the Father McGivney Award is automatically determined by the Supreme Council and there is no application.

The **Founders' Award** recognizes excellence in the promotion of our insurance and fraternal benefits. Councils must host / promote at least two\* Fraternal Benefit Events during the fraternal year. College and Military Councils only need to host/promote one FBE. The required sum total attendance of members, or member eligible men, at these events must equal or exceed:

- 10 for councils with 99 or fewer members
- 14 for councils with 100 or more members

\*If the GK and DGK meet individually with their agent for a personal review of fraternal benefits available to them, these two meetings will count for one of the two required FBEs, College & Military Councils excepted.

The **Columbian Award** recognizes your council's charitable service activities and fraternal programs. In order to earn the Columbian Award, your council must earn four program credits in each of the four categories of the Faith in Action program model, for a total of 16 program credits. Programs conducted by your council, whether they be Supreme Council-sponsored programs or unique activities coordinated locally, count for one program credit. Additionally, half of the Faith in Action programs are Featured Programs. Featured Programs count as two program credits towards the Columbian Award. The following is a list of Faith in Action Featured Programs:

When your council conducts one of the above featured programs and fulfills its requirements, it will receive two credits for that particular program category.

For more information about Faith in Action and Columbian Award requirements, visit [kofc.org/faithinaction](http://kofc.org/faithinaction).

## Other Awards

The **International Service Award** is presented to councils for the best programs conducted in the areas of Faith, Community, Family, and Life activities. The international winners are selected from the winning entries submitted by each jurisdiction. The first place winners are recognized at the annual Supreme Council Convention. To be considered for the award, complete and submit the *State Council Service Program Awards Entry Form*. The form, along with supporting materials (newspaper articles, photographs, etc.), should be submitted to your state council.

### State Blessed Michael McGivney Award and Blessed Michael McGivney Medal

At annual State Conventions, jurisdictions will honor a Knights of Columbus chaplain with the State Blessed Michael McGivney Award. The award should go to a "chaplain whose priestly zeal and exemplary service are in the finest traditions of our Founder".

Winner of the State Blessed Michael McGivney Award will be submitted to the Supreme Council to be considered for the Blessed Michael McGivney Medal, which will be awarded at the Supreme Convention.

Faith	Community
RSVP	Coats for Kids
Into the Breach	Global Wheelchair Mission
Spiritual Reflection	Habitat for Humanity
Holy Hour	
Family	Life
Food for Families	March for Life
Family of the Month/Year	Special Olympics
Family Fully Alive	Ultrasound Program
Family Prayer Night	Pregnancy Center Support

# **Grand Knight**

# Grand Knight

As grand knight, by virtue of your office, you and a duly elected delegate from your council, along with the grand knights and delegates from each council in your jurisdiction, compose the state council. The grand knight and delegate, or their alternates, elect state officers, elect delegates to the annual Supreme Convention and vote on resolutions presented to the annual state convention. It is extremely important for you and the delegate from your council to attend and participate in the proceedings of the convention. By taking an active role, you will ensure a stronger future for your council and jurisdiction and the overall good of the Order.

## Council Audit

*The Semiannual Council Audit Report* for the period ending June 30 is due at the Supreme Council by Aug. 15; the period ending Dec. 31 is due by Feb. 15. The council trustees and the grand knight should complete the audit and send it to: Knights of Columbus, Council Accounts, 1 Columbus Plaza, New Haven, CT 06510-3326. The reports can be found at [kofc.org](http://kofc.org) in the For Members section.

All three sections of the *Semiannual Council Audit Report* must be completed, and the audit must be signed by the grand knight and **at least two** trustees. If an entry is not applicable, the word “none” should be inserted on the line. Failure to complete any section or affix required signatures will necessitate return of the report to the grand knight.

**Schedule A — Membership** — A major objective of the semiannual council audit is to reconcile local council membership records with those maintained by the Supreme Council Department of Membership Records. If your council uses Member Management/Member Billing, the requirement to complete Schedule A is satisfied. Otherwise, the sources for information necessary to complete Schedule A are: (1) records the financial secretary maintains on ledger cards or ledger sheets, depending on the accounting system used by the council; (2) semiannual Council Rosters provided by the Supreme Council Office; and (3) monthly Council Statements sent from the Supreme Council Office. The latter are especially necessary for associate to insurance, insurance to associate, transfers out of the council and, in some instances, death transactions recorded as a result of insurance claims processing. All discrepancies between local council and Supreme Council records are to be reconciled, with any necessary membership transactions being submitted to the Department of Membership Records or local council records being corrected as necessary to ensure agreement. Only those members for whom the applicable membership transactions have been reported are to be listed on the audit. If an addition or a deduction is being acted upon but has not been submitted with sufficient time for processing, it is not to be indicated on the audit report. A review of the monthly Council Statements for the audit period — August through January statements for the January audit, and February through July statements for the July audit — should be completed to ensure that membership transactions have been received and processed by the Supreme Council Office. For the purpose of preparing the semiannual audit only, inactive insurance members are excluded; they are not to be considered as insurance members of the council. If an insurance member is suspended or takes a withdrawal, he becomes inactive and is considered a deduction. Conversely, an inactive member reactivating his membership is an addition to be recorded on the “*Re-entries*” line. Also, the “*Transfers — Assoc. to Ins.*” and “*Transfers — Ins. to Assoc.*” lines in the Additions and Deductions sections must agree. For example, an insurance addition as a result of an associate to insurance transfer is also an associate deduction. The figures for “*Total Deductions*” in the Deductions section are to be placed on the line “*Minus Total Deductions*” in the Additions section and must be subtracted from the figures for “*Total for Period*” to obtain the correct figures for “*Number Members at End of Period.*”

**Schedule B — Cash Transactions — Financial Secretary** — “**Cash on Hand Beginning of Period**” will be the figure from the previous Audit Report showing “Cash on Hand at End of Period.”

Figures for “*Cash Received — Dues, Initiations*” and “*Cash Received from other Sources*” will be the accounting period summary from Records of Cash Receipts or from the Financial Secretary’s Cash Book. “Total Cash Received” will be the total of the three previous items.

Amount for *“Paid to Treasurer”* will be the total of the figures shown on receipts from treasurer to financial secretary for moneys received during the period by the treasurer from the financial secretary.

*“Cash on Hand at End of Period”* will be amount shown *“Paid to Treasurer”* subtracted from the amount shown *“Total Cash Received.”* In most instances, *“Cash on Hand at End of Period”* will show a zero balance, as most financial secretaries pay all moneys to the treasurer before the end of the audit period.

**Schedule B — Cash Transactions — Treasurer — The *“Cash on Hand Beginning of Period”*** will be the figure shown on the previous audit from line *“Net Balance on Hand.”* The item *“Received from Fin. Sec.”* will be the accounting period total of the items in the Treasurer’s Cash Book showing moneys received from the financial secretary. This should agree with the amount shown in the financial secretary’s report on line *“Paid to Treasurer.”*

Under *“Disbursements,”* the amounts for per capita payment and general expenses will be the accounting period total of payment by the council as shown in the Disbursements section of the Treasurer’s Cash Book.

**Audit Procedures for Schedule B —** The procedure detailed below is recommended for use by auditors in determining that dues payments were receipted, entered on the appropriate Member Ledgers, turned over to the treasurer, receipted by the treasurer and deposited in the council’s bank account. Conversely, it is effective in verifying that credits were not posted to Member Ledgers unless there is a record of payment having been received. In order to make these determinations, a representative number of accounts should be *“spot checked.”* Proceed as follows:

- Verify several receipts on each Record of Cash Receipts sheet to determine if credit was given on the appropriate Member Ledger for the amount shown
- Verify several Member Ledgers to determine, in reverse order, if credit given there was received and recorded on the Record of Cash Receipts
- Verify the totals on each Record of Cash Receipts sheet to determine that moneys were turned over to the treasurer and his receipt was issued
- Verify each Treasurer’s Receipt to determine that the amounts shown were credited on bank statements as deposits

To determine if the treasurer’s check register is in balance with the balance shown on the end-of-period bank statement, the following procedure is suggested:

- Determine that an authorized voucher exists for each check issued and that the check was issued to the correct payee in the correct amount
- Review the endorsement on the checks to determine that they are properly endorsed by the payee
- Compare the cancelled checks to the Cash Disbursement register and indicate initial audit results on the check register

**Schedule C — Assets and Liabilities —** This section will provide insight as to the financial condition of the council. From the audit period it will indicate the council’s financial progress — or lack thereof — and where necessary, it will enable the trustees, state and district deputies, and the Supreme Council Office to obtain a true picture of the council’s financial status.

**Assets — *“Undeposited Funds”*** are moneys in the possession of either the financial secretary or treasurer or both. Assets labeled *“Bank — Checking Acct.”* and *“Bank — Savings Acct.”* will be the reconciliation of the treasurer’s checkbook(s) showing the net cash balance(s). Outstanding checks should be deducted from the bank statement.

*“Due From Members”* data is obtained from the financial secretary’s *Member Ledger* records. Refer to *“Schedule C — Assets and Liabilities”* for guidelines regarding these figures prior to making the entries.

One indicator of the financial condition of a council is the number of members in arrears and the amounts owed. Be certain to include these figures on the report.

**Schedule C:** Some councils may include figures in this schedule that are not applicable to the audit report. This is particularly true relative to “Due Supreme Council: Per Capita” in the Liabilities column and “Due from Members” in the Assets column.

**A common error is that** some councils include as owed the per capita levy for the period following the one for which the audit is being made. For example, if an audit is being conducted for the period ending Dec. 31, then the per capita levy for January of the following year should not be shown on the “Per Capita” line. However, should that January levy not be paid by June 30, it would be included on the next audit.

“Due from Members” — if the financial secretary follows the proper billing procedures, he will have sent the First Notices at least 15 days prior to the start of the period. Entries are not to be made for those members being billed for the following period. To avoid confusion, billing notices should be dated as the first of the month of the start of the period (January 1 or July 1), not the date the bills are being prepared. However, should any portion of the bill remain unpaid into the next audit period, that portion is to be included on the ensuing Audit Report.

The treasurer will furnish the amounts for “*Money Market accts.*” from his cash book, which should show transfers of cash to savings accounts.

**Liabilities** — Figure for the Liabilities section relative to the council’s obligations to Supreme and state, as well as miscellaneous, will be supplied by the financial secretary from his records and from unpaid bills in his possession.

Advance payment of dues by members should be included in “*Advance Payments By Members.*” It is a liability because it represents dues payment not yet chargeable to the members.

When a member is suspended, the amounts he owes will appear in the Audit Report for the period in which he was suspended. If using a manual accounting system, his Member Ledger should be removed from the council file on or before the end of the period in which he was suspended. This procedure will ensure that a billing notice is not produced during the next billing period and eliminates the carryover from one period to another of uncollectible dues or other charges on members who have been suspended. The figure for “*Total Current Liabilities*” is also entered in the Assets column in the space designated “*Less: Current Liabilities*” and is subtracted from “*Total Current Assets*” to obtain “*Net Current Assets.*”

If liabilities exceed assets, the “*Total Current Assets*” should be subtracted from “*Current Liabilities*” and the resulting figure shown in parenthesis.

**Other Assets** — Trustees are to itemize other assets on the lines provided in this section.

### **Council Budget**

Budgets are useful tools, as they allow your various program chairmen to conduct programs autonomously while working within the confines of the budget that was approved by the membership.

As grand knight, you should work with the treasurer, financial secretary and trustees of your council to compare the past year’s actual figures with the budgeted figures that were approved by the council. The information obtained will be used to develop the budget for the current fraternal year. Your council’s budget should correspond to the fraternal year, which covers the period from July 1 to June 30. Setting your council’s budget should be started immediately after your election as grand knight.

**Completed *Membership Documents* can be scanned and emailed to [membership@kofc.org](mailto:membership@kofc.org) and to the general agent of your council. This saves time and money and ensures that transactions are posted to your council's account quickly. Preferably, any updates to a member's status should be made through the Member Management application located in Officers Online.**

When beginning the budget process, review the actual revenues and expenses for each program and activity and compare those with the budgeted figures from the past year. Questions to consider when setting a budget include:

- Were the revenues skewed by one large donation?
- Were items that were donated in the past now being charged for, thus increasing expenses?
- Was participation in a particular activity up or down? Did it depend on the weather or a scheduling conflict? This could impact both revenues and expenses.
- Did the council charge too little or too much for the event?

Keep the budgeted figures realistic and attainable. The figures should reflect an approximation of the actual results from the prior year, adjusted as needed for either an extraordinary event or something that will be considered normal going forward. They should also be based on the answers to the sample questions above. However, a good rule of thumb would be to increase revenue and expenses for the cost of inflation. This is also the time to evaluate each activity to determine which ones the council will continue. The budget for a new activity will either take the revenue and expenses from a discontinued activity or new dollars will need to be allocated for the new activity.

Once the budget is prepared and finalized, it should be disseminated to the membership and adopted at a regular council meeting by a vote of the membership. It is recommended that this take place during one of the first meetings early in the fraternal year. This process ensures that future meetings are utilized to the fullest and are not taken up with voting on each project's expense. It is also a good practice to ensure that excess funds are transferred from the council's general account to a savings account, as appropriate.

After the council passes the budget, it does not mean that it is set in stone. The budget should be an adaptable document, changing as circumstances dictate.

### **Membership Procedures**

The financial secretary should use the Member Management application (the preferred method, when applicable) or process a *Membership Document* for each of the following transactions:

1. *New Member* — The Exemplification of Charity, Unity, and Fraternity establishes membership, and the recording of that exemplification is required to activate fraternal benefits. Immediately (within 24 hours) following the Exemplification of Charity, Unity, and Fraternity, the financial secretary will process the *Membership Document* by mail or email. Whether you mail or send an email of the *Membership Document* to the Supreme Council Office, always copy the general agent. This will ensure that the new member is recorded on the council roster and that the general agent receives a copy of the *Membership Document*. (Note: If the field agent is present at the ceremony, he may pick up this document for delivery to the general agent.) The council should always retain a copy of the *Membership Document* for its records. When sending the *Membership Document* via email, there is no need to send a hard copy.

2. *Juvenile to Adult* — Juvenile to Adult constitutes a specific category for an applicant for membership who holds an in-force insurance policy that was issued while he was under 18 years of age. His application is to be processed as a Juvenile to Adult transaction. The juvenile policy number should be included on the *Membership Document*, if available. If the prospect applies for membership prior to his 19th birthday, the maximum initiation fee that can be charged is \$5.

3. *Reinstatement* — This transaction can be used if membership termination has been for a period of three months or less. Reinstatements can only take place in the council from which the member was suspended or took a withdrawal. A reinstatement will not reflect a break in membership. No council vote is required.

4. *Readmission* — This transaction is appropriate if membership termination has been for a period of more than three months and up to seven years. The applicant may be readmitted into the council of his choice. Council vote on his membership is required, but action by the admission committee is normally not needed.

5. *Reactivation* — The proper transaction for reentry of an inactive insurance member is reactivation. An inactive insurance member has been suspended for nonpayment of dues but maintains an in-force Knights of Columbus insurance certificate.

6. *Reapplication* — When an applicant has been out of the Order for more than seven years, reapplication is the proper transaction to be used. He may reapply to the council of his choice, and the re-applicant need not be exemplified again if he satisfies the admission committee that he's already done so. He pays no initiation fee.

7. *Transfer* — A member in possession of a current membership card may transfer to any council of his choice by applying through a *Membership Document*. The receiving council accepts the application for transfer under the elective procedures. Please note that a transfer is initiated only by the receiving council. Members cannot be transferred out of a council.

8. *Withdrawal* — The withdrawal transaction cannot be reported by using the *Membership Document*. Rather, a personal, signed communication from the member requesting withdrawal (resignation) is required to be sent to the council and forwarded to the Supreme Council Office. A member can resign whether he is current in dues or in arrears. The only stipulation is that he must be eligible for re-entry as of the date he files his letter of withdrawal with the council or assembly. Withdrawal is not an option for a felon, non-practical Catholic, or someone who has been suspended or expelled under Section 162 of the Order's Laws. Those members who apply for and are granted a withdrawal do not maintain continuous membership. The membership record will reflect a break in service. If the applicant for withdrawal is an insurance member, he will be recorded as an inactive member and will remain in that status on the council roster as long as his insurance is in force.

The council continues to be responsible for Supreme and state council assessments on inactive members. However, a \$9 credit is applied to the council's account the month following the anniversary date of the member's insurance policy to offset such assessments.

Upon receipt of a valid withdrawal request, the Membership Records Department will process the request and a letter from the Supreme Knight will be sent out to the former member acknowledging that their withdrawal was processed and providing information on how they can once again become a Knight in the future should they wish to join a council or join online as an Online Member. The State Retention Chairman is copied on each of these letters so that the state council can follow up and attempt to retain each of these withdrawals.

9. *Suspension — NonPayment* — A member must be in arrears for at least three months before he can be suspended for nonpayment. Any member in that status, however, is to be advised that a current membership card is required for attendance and participation at all Knights of Columbus business meetings and ceremonial exemplifications. A "current" membership card is defined as one bearing a "*DUES PAID TO*" date equal to or greater than the current date. Because this category of suspension represents the largest group of losses to our Order each year, it is of vital importance that proper billing procedures be followed before active membership is terminated by suspension.

As in the case of a withdrawal, a suspended insurance member goes to an inactive status and remains on the council rolls. Because of this fact, the council is responsible for Supreme and state levied assessments and also receives the annual \$9 credit, as explained in the preceding section.

10. *Death* — As soon as possible after the death of a council member, a *Membership Document* should be submitted to the Supreme Council Office for processing with the complete date of death and survivor information included. If Member Management is used to report this transaction, there is no need to submit



additional documentation. Deceased members are remembered in daily Mass at St. Mary's Church, New Haven, CT — the birthplace of our Order.

11. *Disability — Relief from Payment* — Those brother Knights who are unable to engage in any occupation for a period of at least six months are eligible for a waiver of dues under Section 118(e) of the Order's laws. The Application for Per Capita Disability Exemption must be submitted to the Supreme Council with the signatures of the grand knight and financial secretary. If the application is approved, dues and per capita shall be waived until the financial secretary notifies the Supreme Council that the exemption should be rescinded. Council members who are exempt from dues payment under Section 118(e) are to be issued a Membership Card on a calendar year basis. In the case of a member qualified for exemption under both Sections 118(e) and 118(d) — honorary life — the honorary life designation takes precedent.

12. *Suspension — Lack of Practical Catholicity* — One of the requirements for membership in the Knights of Columbus is "...practical Catholic in union with the Holy See." In order to remain on the active rolls of your council, a current member must maintain his practical Catholicity. On occasion, however, members leave the faith, marry outside of the Church or otherwise lose that status. In such cases, they forfeit their membership "ipso facto" — by virtue of the fact. Before a suspension for this infraction can be processed, tangible evidence to support a suspension under Section 168.1 of the Laws of the Order is required. A statement must be on file in the Supreme Council office from the council chaplain or the member's parish priest to the effect that the man in question is no longer a practical or practicing Catholic. A statement signed by the member admitting to the infraction giving rise to the attempted suspension is also acceptable. One of these statements, along with a completed Membership Document, must be submitted in order for suspension processing to be initiated.

This transaction is NOT counted against Supreme Council award quotas.

13. *Suspension — Felony Conviction* — Section 168.6 of the Laws of the Order stipulates forfeiture of membership for a felony conviction. A felony is generally one where the potential penalty is greater than one year incarceration. To substantiate conviction, the financial secretary must submit: a newspaper account of the conviction, written confirmation from the prosecutor or a certified copy of the court documentation. Proof of conviction should include a description of the crime as a felony. Any ONE of the aforementioned proofs of conviction, certification that the individual convicted is known by the financial secretary to be the member to have his membership forfeited and a completed Membership Document are sufficient for suspension under Section 168.6. This transaction is NOT counted against Supreme Council award quotas.

14. *Suspension — Misconduct* — Detailed instructions on filing complaints against a member, his rights to plead and trial are found in the Laws of the Order, Chapter XIX, Sections 170-181. A completed Membership Document and all paperwork resulting from compliance with Chapter XIX of the Laws of the Order must be submitted to the Department of Membership Records before the suspension processing can be initiated.

This transaction is NOT counted against Supreme Council award quotas.

## **Membership Procedures — Transferring Online Members**

**Transferring Online Members** — Online Members "assigned" as prospects to councils will appear in the council's Prospect tab in Officers Online. This tab will only be seen by grand knights and financial secretaries. Councils will not have an "Unassigned" tab.

## **Candidate Tab — Entering Member Information Online**

The Candidate Tab, which is accessible through Officers Online, allows grand knights and financial secretaries in the United States and Canada to provide the membership information for new, reactivated and transferring members directly to the Supreme Council online. While this tool helps streamline the processing of member information, it does not fully replace the *Membership Document* and each prospective member should still complete a *Membership Document* for state and council records. Information submitted using this tool can be expected to be processed within 2-3 days.

Once the council has gone through the admissions process, and the member has taken his Exemplification of Charity, Unity, and Fraternity, they can transfer him by simply adding the date read in the “Grand Knight Approval (Date Read)” section, and the exemplification date in the “Financial Secretary (Ceremonial Date)” section, and clicking the update button. These two dates can be added separately, but once the ceremonial date is added, the transfer will be processed.

Once the update is submitted, the member will be automatically transferred into his new council. The council will not need to submit a *Membership Document*.

*Rejecting Transfers* — If, for some reason, the Online Member is not going to transfer into the assigned council, the council may “reject” the member by clicking “reject” and selecting a reason from the drop-down menu. Rejecting an Online Member for transfer will result in the member reappearing in the “Unassigned” section of the state’s “Prospect” tab. A rejection will not trigger an email to state officers.

### **Affiliate Membership- Grand Knight Responsibilities**

Members may be designated for Affiliate status if they have not responded to council engagement efforts for the most recent 18 months or longer. **Specifically, all of the following engagement methods must have been attempted and failed:**

- Regular dues notices were sent, and dues were not paid, and
- Emails were sent and ignored or bounced, and
- Postal mail was sent and ignored or returned undeliverable, and
- Phone calls were made and ignored or number not in service, and
- The member has not been seen at Mass, meetings, or events.

The Grand Knight, along with the Trustees and/or other knowledgeable leaders, reviews the list compiled by the financial secretary and removes members for whom extenuating circumstances apply. These may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Charter membership
- Military deployment
- College / University / Seminary attendance
- Approved exemptions
- Financial hardship, job loss
- Medical hardship, convalescent home, or hospice care

### **Officers Online — Grand Knight Section**

The site, accessed from the main Knights of Columbus webpage, provides you with access to your council’s membership roster and council billing statement. Your access to this website is granted once the Supreme Council Office receives your contact information on the completed *Report of Officers Chosen for Term* or on the Council Officer screen in Member Management. This report should be submitted to the Supreme Council immediately after council elections. Only upon recording of this information will the Supreme Council Office grant access to this secure section of the Knights of Columbus website.

This site lets you track your council’s progress for membership growth, which is useful information toward the earning of the Star Council Award.

After signing into *Officers Online*, as grand knight, you have the ability to order council supplies. Click on Supplies Online to view the materials available and place your order. Gift items are also available by clicking on the *Knights Gear* logo, which brings you to [knightsgear.com](http://knightsgear.com). Through this website, your council can also order customized apparel (e.g. your council’s name and number).

Another resource available through *Officers Online* is the *Officers’ Desk Reference*. It provides answers to frequently asked questions about our name and emblem, home corporations, membership issues, tax issues,

fraternal issues, council and assembly issues, and social communications. There's a very good chance that many of the questions you might have about some of the more challenging aspects of being a grand knight have been dealt with here. Entries are regularly updated and expanded as new questions arise or additional information becomes available. As grand knight, you also have access to the Member Management application and By-Laws Online. Please be sure to familiarize yourself with these applications.

### **Ceremonial Guidelines**

- The financial secretary or grand knight orders *Candidates' Kits* by logging into the Officers Online section of the Knights of Columbus website and clicking the link to Supplies Online. Each candidate kit consists of a rosary, a prayer card, a Membership Application, a Knights of Columbus lapel pin and a copy of the booklet *These Men They Call Knights*, along with information on the Shining Armor Award.
- The grand knight is in charge of the ceremonial team. The ceremonial team officers need not be current chair officers. Ceremonial team officers may wear the Supreme Council Ceremonial Baldric over a dark-colored business suit with the council medal of office.
- Reading exemplification parts is allowed, as is use of the Exemplification of Charity, Unity, and Fraternity video (which can also be viewed on demand through the Supreme Council).
- The financial secretary, along with the warden should be the custodians of the ceremonial books. The warden will have the council chamber arranged as shown in the Diagram in *Protocol, Meetings, and Ceremonials*.
- The council should consider hosting an Exemplification of Charity, Unity, and Fraternity monthly. A candidate need not travel far or wait extended periods of time to join his council. The grand knight shall notify the district deputy of exemplification dates.

### **Financial Secretary Evaluation**

Ninety days prior to the conclusion of your council's financial secretary's three-year term, you will be advised that an evaluation of the financial secretary's performance in the office must be made and returned to the Supreme Knight before consideration will be given to reappoint him for an additional three-year term. The financial secretary will receive a copy of the letter informing the grand knight of the need for an evaluation.

*The Evaluation of Financial Secretary* instructs the grand knight, and council trustees to evaluate the financial secretary by checking one of four designations on the form, rating him on eight areas of his performance. Space is also provided to indicate recommendation or non-recommendation for reappointment, and the current occupation of the financial secretary. The signatures of the district deputy and state deputy are only required if the council has decided not to recommend the financial secretary for reappointment. An evaluation requiring the State Deputy's signature must be sent to him for his signature and will be forwarded to the Supreme Knight..

If the financial secretary must resign from office before the end of his term or if he does not wish or is unable to continue beyond his three year term, he should submit a letter of resignation to the supreme knight indicating the effective date of his resignation and the reason for doing so. When the letter of resignation is acknowledged by the supreme knight, you will be sent complete instructions and forms for the appointment of a successor to the office.

Eligible candidates for appointment as financial secretary are:

1. Third Degree member of the Order.
2. at least 21 years of age.
3. not engaged in the sale of life or health insurance for another organization.
4. not a convicted felon.
5. not elected to another office within your council.

You must complete the *Nomination for Appointment* and obtain the signature of your council's trustees. The nominee must complete the *Application for Appointment as Financial Secretary* and both forms must be submitted to the Supreme Council office. The supreme knight will make the appointment, which will be mailed directly to the newly appointed financial secretary with copies to you, the state deputy, executive secretary, district deputy, and general agent. The appointment takes effect on the date it is issued and will run for a period of three years from that date.

# **Financial Secretary**

# Financial Secretary

You have been selected by your council and appointed by the supreme knight. Through your professionalism, accuracy, strong organizational skills and timeliness, your council will be financially strong and able to conduct charitable projects in your parish and community.

If you must resign from office before the end of your term or if you do not wish to continue beyond the end of your three year term, you should send a letter of resignation to the supreme knight noting the effective date of your resignation and the reason for doing so. This should be done as far in advance as possible, as sufficient time is needed to secure other applicants for the position and to process the paperwork necessary for the appointment.

## Financial Secretary Compensation

The board of directors has set the compensation to be paid to the financial secretary, and every council should have by-laws that conform exactly to this policy:

- From the council — an amount no less than 8 percent and no more than 10 percent (to be determined by the council) of the moneys collected for dues from both insurance and associate members. The financial secretary is free to waive this compensation at his discretion.
- Lump sum payments are not allowed as compensation to the financial secretary. The purpose of compensation on the percentage basis is to pay the financial secretary according to the effectiveness of his collecting from members all moneys due to the council. Such collection is the first duty of his office listed in Section 139 of the Laws of the Order. The financial secretary receives compensation from his council for dues collected only. He does not receive compensation for initiation fees or any other receipts.
- From the Supreme Council Office — the financial secretary annually receives at the end of each calendar year \$.40 for each life insurance certificate registered to the council and in force at the end of the calendar year.
- The payment from the Supreme Council is made annually in January to the financial secretary of record on Dec. 31. If more than one person served in the office during the year, it is expected that the financial secretary receiving the compensation will share it on a pro-rata basis with his predecessor.
- The approved compensation is for performance of the regular duties of the office of the financial secretary according to the Laws of the Order. The council may award additional compensation to a financial secretary for extra duties which he performs at the council's direction beyond those required by the Laws.

## Income Tax Requirements

The annual grant from the Supreme Council and any payments from your local council are subject to income tax. Accordingly, you are required to report the total amount received on your personal tax returns. In the United States, the Supreme Council will issue you a Form 1099-MISC should your grant exceed \$599.99. For Canadian councils, a T4A slip will be issued if the grant exceeds \$499.99. You must report the grant as income on your personal tax returns, even if it falls below the threshold for issuance of a Form 1099 or a T4A tax slip. You are not treated as an employee of either the local council or the Supreme Council.

## Bonding

The financial secretary, upon appointment by the supreme knight, is automatically bonded at no charge to the council in the amount of \$5,000. The same is true for the council treasurer. Councils may request additional coverage — at a cost of \$7 per thousand dollars of coverage — by writing to the supreme secretary.

Additional information on bonding:

- Bonding is on the office of the financial secretary, not the person holding the position
- Additional coverage is requested by writing to the supreme secretary

- Bonding on the covered officers is limited to \$125,000 of total coverage per council, including the provided \$5,000 of coverage on each officer
- Bonding runs from March 1 to the end of February, and any charge for additional coverage is posted on the council account annually in March or April. The charge is prorated if purchased at another time during the year
- Bonding coverage is applicable only to councils who have properly completed the two most recent council audits, which must be on file at the Supreme Council Office.

### **Annual Federal Information Return — Form 990 (U.S. Councils)**

The Knights of Columbus, including all subordinate councils, assemblies, and chapters (collectively referred to as councils), is a tax-exempt organization, recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a fraternal benefit society under Section 501(c)(8) of the Internal Revenue Code. *A group ruling recognizing the exemption was obtained by the Supreme Council for itself and for its subordinate units. The group ruling does not extend to home corporations.* This tax-exempt status requires each council in the United States to file an annual Form 990 with the IRS.

- **The IRS now requires electronic filing for all tax-exempt organizations, regardless of which form they use. In order to utilize the online filing system, all new users must complete a registration; instructions are available on the IRS website, links to which are in the Where to File section, below.**
- 990-N e-postcard – Councils reporting gross receipts of \$50,000 or less with less than \$200,000 in assets may comply with their obligation by filing the Form 990-N electronic postcard (also known as the e-Postcard).
- 990EZ – Councils reporting gross receipts of more than \$50,000 and less than \$200,000 with total assets of less than \$500,000 must file the Form 990-EZ.
- 990 – Councils with gross receipts of \$200,000 or more and total assets of \$500,00 or more must file the Form 990.

Any council reporting gross receipts of more than \$50,000 is strongly urged to consider using a qualified tax professional to prepare and file its tax return. PRACTICE TIP: at the top of the Form 990-EZ and Form 990, enter the Knights of Columbus group number (0188), tax exempt status (Section 501(c)(8)), and form of organization (Association).

- Each council must file its own tax return; there is no group or consolidated Form 990 filing. The returns must be filed by the fifteenth day of the fifth month following the end of the council’s annual accounting period. *Failure to file for three consecutive years or filing late will result in the IRS automatically revoking the council’s Employer Identification Number (EIN), which means a loss of tax exemption status.*

*The supreme advocate will send a memorandum, containing information on current IRS laws, to all U.S. councils during the month of February each year. For additional information refer to the Officers’ Desk Reference – Tax Issues section. Please email questions to tax.ein@kfoc.org.*

### **Officers Online — Financial Secretary Section**

The Officers Online website, accessed from the main Knights of Columbus webpage, provides you with access to your council’s membership roster and Council Billing Statement. Your access to this website is granted once your appointment is approved by the supreme knight. This site lets you keep track of your council’s progress for membership, which is useful information toward the earning of the Star Council Award.

In Officers Online, you will see a “Prospect” tab in which you can view Online Members who are “assigned” as prospects to your council. Once the council has gone through the admissions process, and the member has taken his exemplification, they can transfer him by simply adding the ceremonial date in the Ceremonial date section, and clicking the update button. Once the update is submitted, the member will be automatically

transferred into his new council. The council will not need to submit a *Membership Document*. If, for some reason, the Online Member is not going to transfer into the assigned council, the council may “reject” the member by clicking “reject” and selecting a reason from the drop-down menu. Rejecting an Online Member for transfer will result in the member reappearing in the “Unassigned” section of the state’s “Prospect” tab. A rejection will not trigger an email to state officers.

After signing into Officers Online, as financial secretary, you have the ability to order council supplies. Click on Supplies Online to view the materials available and place your order. Gift items are also available by clicking on the Knights Gear logo, which brings you to [knightsgear.com](http://knightsgear.com). Through this website, your council can also order customized apparel (e.g. t-shirts with your council’s name and number).

Another resource available through Officers Online is the Officers’ Desk Reference. It provides answers to frequently asked questions about our name and emblem, home corporations, membership issues, tax issues, fraternal issues, council and assembly issues and social communications. There’s a very good chance that many of the questions you might have about some of the more challenging aspects of being a financial secretary have been dealt with here. Entries are regularly updated and expanded as new questions arise or additional information becomes available.

The Order’s accounting system and member database, Member Management/Member Billing, is also located in the Officers Online section of the Order’s website. This system allows you to manage financial transactions; create, edit and archive receipts, vouchers, assessments and adjustments; maintain a list of accounts and sub-accounts, payee/payor lists and council defined sub-classes for billing (military, students, etc.); produce billing notices; and manage payments received from members.

### **Council Dues**

The Laws of the Order set forth specific provisions regarding dues payable by each member. Dues shall be levied in advance in an amount as fixed by the council. The dues for all associated and insurance members shall be the same, except that councils at their discretion may fix a different rate of dues for certain members.

### **The Member Billing Application**

The Member Billing application works in conjunction with the Member Management application.

### **Initial Setup for First-Time Users**

If your council has just started to use Member Billing, there are a few steps that are required prior to generating an assessment.

Setting up your council’s billing information:

- **Billing Information** — Member Billing allows you to assess dues to members annually or semi-annually only. The billing schedule must be selected as calendar or fraternal year. Also, once the billing frequency has been established, the billing remittance address needs to be selected — either your council’s mailing address or the financial secretary’s mailing address.
- **Class List** — This screen is where the amount of the council’s dues is entered. (The amount of annual dues for honorary members in the council is based on the sum of state and Supreme Council per capita taxes and other levies. The annual dues for honorary life members is specified in the Laws of the Order and cannot be updated in Member Billing.)
- **Subclass** — Council subclasses can be created for members for whom the council wishes to reduce the dues amount. For example, a council may wish to waive or reduce dues for students. A subclass of students can be added, along with the rate of the reduced dues. Once established, members associated with a subclass will need to be assigned to the subclass on the member’s Billing Information screen, located in the Member Information section.
- **Reason for Assessments** — This is required if your council plans to assess members for any special or miscellaneous assessments. Reason for assessments can be added on the Event/Assessments screen in the council’s Billing Information screen.

Setting up the member's billing information:

- Member Class — Displays the member as a regular, honorary, or honorary life member
- Sub Class — Members may be assigned as part of a sub class and eligible for reduced dues (military, student, etc.).
- Disability — Members that are on disability and noted as “Yes” on the member's Billing Information screen, will not be assessed dues. Nothing else is required to ensure that they are not assessed.
- Do Not Assess — This provides the ability to not assess dues for members who may have a special circumstance, such as financial hardship, where the council decides not to assess dues for a certain period. (Honorary life or disabled members are not included in the dues assessment process, so this option does not need to be selected for these members.)
- Do Not Send Bill — This provides the option of not sending a billing notice to specified members for any reason. (The member will still be assessed, but a notice will not be generated.)
- Delivery Preference — This identifies the preferred method by which the member wishes to receive his billing notice — mail, email or both.
- Language Preference — This allows a billing notice to be generated in a different language.
- Billing Address Information — This section allows the financial secretary to update a member's contact information, including his address, telephone number, fax number and email address. These changes will also be reflected in Member Management to alert the Membership Records Department at the Supreme Council Office.

Prior to generating the initial dues assessment, if there are members with an outstanding balance for previous billing periods, these records should be updated in the Member Ledger:

- Billing Status — When a dues assessment is processed from the Pending Assessment screen, the billing status for all members will be changed to “First Notice.” Former members that are listed in Member Management/Member Billing can be manually changed to “Prior” or “Deceased” status.
- Adjustments — The Adjustment section on the bottom of the Member Ledger screen can be used to generate a charge adjustment for members with an outstanding balance. Separate adjustments should be added if a member owes money for other assessments (initiation fee, miscellaneous fees, etc.). Payment of dues should NOT be recorded here, but through the “Dues Collection Tool” found under the “Receipts” section of the Council Ledger. (This is the same process as assessing new members for dues or initiation fees after they have been recorded at the Supreme Council Office and added to Member Management/Member Billing.)

## **Billing Members**

Billing procedures are greatly simplified for councils participating in the affiliate member initiative. See the section on temporary billing procedures for more detail. A dues assessment can be generated for all billable members on the “Enter Dues Assessment” screen by clicking on “Assessments” under the Council Ledger section:

- Billing Cycle — Dues can be billed for the calendar year or the fraternal year. (The default for the billing period is predetermined by the billing frequency, which is selected in the “Billing Setup” section.)
- As of Date — All bills have a date that indicates how much is owed at the time the dues were assessed. Dues can be assessed in Member Billing as early as 60 days prior to the billing period. However, the “As of Date” cannot be set more than 15 days prior to the billing period. The date used for the “As of Date” when generating a dues assessment also should be used for any special or miscellaneous assessments.
- Assess Dues — This will place the dues assessment in a “pending” status, which can be processed on the “Pending Assessments” screen. All special or miscellaneous assessments should be assessed on the “Assess Other” screen before processing the dues assessment.

A special or miscellaneous assessment can be generated for selected members using the “Assess Other” screen under “Assessments” in the Council Ledger section.

- Charge To — This specifies who will be assessed the additional charge and is selected by member type. (“All Billable” will assess all regular and honorary members; “All Members” will assess all regular, honorary and honorary life members; “Honorary” will assess only honorary members; and “Honorary Life” will assess only honorary life members).



- Voluntary or Mandatory — If an assessment is a voluntary assessment, a notation will display on the member’s bill showing that this assessment is voluntary and payment is optional. Voluntary assessments require a valid “Through Date.” A valid “Through Date” should be selected well in advance of the last day of the billing cycle (i.e. if using a calendar year billing cycle, select a date of June 1 — well in advance of Dec. 31). After this date, you have the ability to initiate a process that will generate a credit transaction for all members that did not pay the voluntary assessment. Mandatory assessments will remain on the Member Ledger until the member pays the assessment or the transaction is voided on the Member Ledger.
- Reason for Assessment — This is a required field, and if the “Reason for Assessment” does not appear in the drop down list, it can be added on the Event/Reason screen under the Billing Information section.
- Assess Other — This will place any special and miscellaneous assessments in a pending status, which can be processed on the Pending Assessments screen. All special or miscellaneous assessments should be assessed on the “Assess Other” screen before processing the dues assessment.

All pending assessments can be posted to the Member Ledger from the “Pending Assessment” screen. When the “Process Assessment” is clicked, the billing status for all members will change to “First Notice.”

### Generating Notices

Once the pending assessments are processed, the First Notice can be generated from the “Notices” section of the Print Center in Member Billing. (If the respective officers’ names or telephone numbers do not display on the Notice, the data can be added on the “Council/Assembly Officers — Current Year” screen in Member Management.)

Notices can be sent via email, or printed and mailed, based on delivery preferences on the member’s Billing Information screen. There is also an option to generate a file copy of all Notices to members.

Member Billing also provides the ability to email individual Notices to members who have been added to Member Management/Member Billing. Once the member delivery preference is set to email or both, an “Email Notice” icon will appear on the Member Ledger or member’s Billing Information screens.

Thirty days after the “As of” date, the financial secretary can update all members currently in the “First Notice” status to “Second Notice” status by using the “Update Status” screen under the Assessment section of the Council Ledger. Second Notices can then be generated and sent via email, or printed and mailed, based on the delivery preferences on the Member Billing Information screen. Second Notices can also be saved electronically.

At this point, the Financial Secretary will provide the contact information and amount due from each member in arrears to the Retention Committee for personal follow up.

Thirty days after the “As of” date of the Second Notice status, the Financial Secretary can update all delinquent members to “Knight Alert” status by using the “Update Status” screen under the Assessment section of the Council Ledger.

The Knight Alert letter sent to the member explains how his membership is in danger of being forfeited because of unpaid dues. The Knight Alert letter cannot be sent electronically because it requires the signature of the Grand Knight. Fifteen days after the “As of” date of the “Knight Alert” status, all members currently in “Knight Alert” status can be updated to “Intent to Retain” status by using the “Update Status” screen under the Assessment section of the Council Ledger. A Notice of Intent to Retain can be generated in the Billing section of the Print Center, informing the member that his delinquency has put his membership in jeopardy. Copies of the *Notice of Intent to Retain* must be mailed or emailed to the Supreme Council. Sixty days after the Notice of Intent to Retain has been filed, a *Membership Document* marked for suspension will be required to be filed at the Supreme Council to remove a member from the council’s roster.

Individuals who have been assessed for the current billing period, but have become former members, will have their balances removed on the Member Ledger screens.

## Temporary Billing Procedures

These revised billing procedures apply only to councils that participate in the Affiliate Member Initiative (AMI). They are needed because the AMI significantly changes the handling of members who are delinquent in their payment of dues. Financial Secretaries should use the Member Management and Member Billing applications, located in the secure Officers Online area of [www.kofc.org](http://www.kofc.org), to perform the tasks listed in this section.

1. The Financial Secretary forwards the membership bill “First Notice” 15 days before the billing period to each member.
2. If payment is not received in 30 days, the Financial Secretary will forward the membership bill “Second Notice”.
3. If payment is not received within 30 days from the date the “Second Notice” was sent, do not update billing status to Knight Alert.  
The Financial Secretary will instead provide the names, addresses, telephone numbers, email address, amounts due, and proposer information for each member in arrears to an Engagement Committee that should include a Chairman and two additional members.
4. The Engagement Committee Chairman shall assign committee members to contact the members in arrears. Committee members should use various methods, including internet search engines, to locate members whose contact information is out of date.  
If a member is found to be experiencing financial difficulty, the Engagement Committee Chairman should recommend to the Grand Knight and Trustees that forgiveness of dues or other suitable financial arrangements be made to assist this member.  
If a member has disengaged himself from council activities or become dissatisfied with his Knights of Columbus membership, the committee member should remind the Brother of the many valuable benefits available to all members and the particular fraternal benefits of working with local council Brothers. A supply of membership benefit reference materials should be readily available for committee members to share as needed.
5. Within 30 days of receiving the list of members in arrears, the Engagement Committee Chairman shall submit to the Grand Knight and Trustees a report including the reasons for nonpayment and their recommended actions for each listed member.
6. Within 15 days of receiving the Engagement Committee report, the Grand Knight shall meet with the Financial Secretary and Trustees to decide on a course of action for each member. These actions may include, but are not limited to:
  - Issuing a “Final Notice” to members who wish to remain in the council and gave no reason for nonpayment. The Financial Secretary can regenerate another “Second Notice” from Member Billing to serve as this “Final Notice.”
  - Waiving the dues for members in financial distress.
  - Reducing the dues or allowing alternate payment plans for members in financial distress.
  - Processing the withdrawal of members who request to leave the Order.
  - Processing members who meet the requirements for designation as Affiliate Members in the state division. Lists of these members should be submitted through a council’s district deputy and received by the Supreme Council no later than the last day of the billing cycle.
7. No further billing actions are required.

NOTE: Suspension transactions are reserved for Summary Suspension for Cause and Board actions.

## Examples of Billing Dates

### Calendar Year Billing Example

- 1st Notice sent to member on December 15th
- 2nd Notice sent to member on January 15th
- Retention Committee contacts those members in arrears after January 15th
- Knight Alert Letter sent February 15th
- Notice of Intent to Retain sent March 1st
- File a *Membership Document* with the Supreme Council on May 1st but no later than June 1st

## Fraternal Year Billing Example

- 1st Notice sent to member on June 15th
- 2nd Notice sent to member on July 15th
- Retention Committee contacts those members in arrears after July 15th
- Knight Alert Letter sent August 15th
- Notice of Intent to Retain sent September 1st
- File a *Membership Document* with the Supreme Council on November 1st but no later than December 1st

## Affiliate List Submission Process

### Affiliate Member Eligibility

Members may be designated for Affiliate status if they have not responded to council engagement efforts for the most recent 18 months or longer. **Specifically, all of the following engagement methods must have been attempted and failed:**

- Regular dues notices were sent, and dues were not paid, and
- Emails were sent and ignored or bounced, and
- Postal mail was sent and ignored or returned undeliverable, and
- Phone calls were made and ignored or number not in service, and
- The member has not been seen at Mass, meetings, or events.

### Affiliate Member Designation Process

1. The Financial Secretary creates a list of eligible members to be recommended for Affiliate designation.
2. The Grand Knight, along with the Trustees and/or other knowledgeable leaders, reviews the list and removes members for whom extenuating circumstances apply. These may include, but are not limited to the following:
  - Charter membership
  - Military deployment
  - College / University / Seminary attendance
  - Approved exemptions
  - Financial hardship, job loss
  - Medical hardship, convalescent home, or hospice care
3. The Financial Secretary or Grand Knight creates an Excel Workbook spreadsheet (.xlsx) with column headers and information exactly as shown below. Do not hide any rows. The Prefix and Suffix columns must be included, even if those cells remain blank.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	Council Number	Membership Number	Prefix	First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	Suffix
2							
3							
4							
5							

**Enter council number, membership number, first name and last name for each member to be designated as an Affiliate member. Lists not submitted in this format will be returned.**

4. The Grand Knight emails the final list to the District Deputy.
5. The District Deputy verifies proper procedures were followed and emails the spreadsheet to [affiliate@kofc.org](mailto:affiliate@kofc.org). Spreadsheets may be submitted anytime, but those received after May 1st may not be reflected on council rosters until after July 1st.

*Members who ask to withdraw from the Order may not be designated for Affiliate status. Email their resignation letter along with their name and membership number to [membership@kofc.org](mailto:membership@kofc.org) so they can be properly removed from the Order.*

## Processing Payments from Members

Under the “Receipt” section of the Council Ledger, there is a “Dues Collection Tool” to record members’ payments. The “Dues Collection Tool” is used if the member pays his outstanding balance in full.

If a member does not pay the full amount or includes a donation to the council or special fund, the payment should be recorded on the “Enter Receipt” screen to ensure that the proper accounts/subaccounts are recorded properly. If his payment includes money for a special or miscellaneous assessment, a “Reason for Assessment” must be entered in the “Event” field.

Once the “Save” button is clicked on the “Dues Collection Tool” screen or the “Enter Receipt” screen, this will place the transaction in “pending” status. Pending transactions can be processed on the “Pending Receipt” screen.

A “Report of Receipts” is available under the Treasurer Reports in the Print Center of Member Billing. There are four reports available: two for pending receipts and two for posted receipts. (Posted receipt reports will display signature lines for the financial secretary and treasurer, which serve as a record that the treasurer received these moneys. If the treasurer’s name does not display on this report, add his data on the “Council Officers — Current Year” screen in Member Management.)

## Processing Receipts From Other Sources

These moneys can be recorded in Member Billing using the “Enter Receipt” screen under the Council Ledger.

- Member or Payor — Prior to entering the receipt information, you must search for a member or a payor. (A payor is an individual or entity that is not a member of the council. A payor can be added to Member Billing on the “Add a Payee/Payor” screen under Billing Information).

Once a search has been conducted, the results will appear in the “Search Results” box to the right. Click on the desired member or payor so that it is highlighted in a blue banner. Click the “Select” button to populate the date and member/payor in the “Enter Receipt” section on the bottom of the screen. Continue to enter the remaining information.

Once the “Save” button is clicked, the transaction is placed in “Pending” status. Pending transactions can be processed on the “Pending Receipts” screen. The posted date will be the date the Process button is ‘clicked’.

## Generating Membership Cards

Membership cards can be generated for members using the “Membership Card” section of the Print Center in Member Billing. Print membership cards using the “By Member Type” feature, thereby having these cards ready for presentation when the member remits his payment for dues.

*Membership Card* stock paper can be ordered through Supplies Online. (Cards come eight to a sheet with 25 sheets to a package, for a total of 200 cards.) There are four options in Member Billing for printing membership cards:

- By Member Type — which can be classified as: All Billable, All Members, Regular, Honorary, Honorary Life, or Exempted and Disabled Members
- By all members whose dues became current between specified dates
- By Ceremonial Dates
- Use the Membership Card Template for a small group of members or for new members who have not been added to Member Billing

## **Institution of Payment**

A Supreme Council or state council obligation DOES NOT require council approval. Receipt of the monthly Council Statement from the Supreme Council office serves as the official notice that the amount owed is due and payable. The same is true of a billing statement received from the state council.

When the council approves any bill other than a Supreme Council or state council assessment, the bill must be turned over to the financial secretary. He then issues the Voucher (Order on Treasurer).

## **Vouchers (Order on Treasurer)**

After a bill has been properly approved for payment, the financial secretary initiates issuance of a check by generating a voucher in Member Billing under the “Voucher” section of the Council Ledger. He then prints a “Report of Vouchers” for the grand knight’s signature, which authorizes the treasurer to issue the check. Councils may also maintain a credit/debit card for payment of expenses.

Trustees, when conducting the semiannual audit, should compare the Report of Vouchers to the checks issued that are recorded in the bank statement and check book, and against the credit/debit card statements.

## **Electronic Banking and Payment Services**

Online banking and payment services are a normal part of business today. Councils already use a variety of electronic banking, bill payment, and dues collection options that make financial transactions easier. Councils may supplement their traditional bank accounts with any commercially accepted means of electronic receipt, transfer, or payment of money, if they ensure transparency and accountability, as required by Section 122 of the Laws of the Order. For more information see “The Process of Receiving and Expending Council Money,” which is available on the Officers Desk Reference. For purposes of ensuring accountability and transparency, this means that the Grand Knight, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, and Trustees must exercise their respective duties to review transactions carefully by producing and/or reviewing all electronic statements.

The Financial Secretary shall receive read-only log-in credentials upon confirmation of his appointment.

Councils are permitted to use electronic receipt, transfer, and payment services such as the following:

- e-Banking
- merchant accounts and internet merchant accounts
- online money transfer services (only those that are Payment Card
- Industry (PCI) compliant)
- third-party credit card processing services
- SMS payments
- direct mobile billing
- mobile web payment

## **The Process of Receiving and Expending Council Money**

Many sections of the Laws of the Knights of Columbus establish a fiduciary process for the receipt, custody, deposit, expenditure, and accounting of council funds with the goal of maintaining accountability and transparency. The fiduciary process ensures that no officer or member ever has discretion to receive, transfer, or expend money without explicit authorization. Failure to comply could result in removal of the responsible officer or member discipline, up to and including expulsion. That is why it is important that the Grand Knight, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, and Trustees familiarize themselves with their financial duties, particularly by studying the Officers’ Desk Reference entry titled “The Process of Receiving and Expending Council Money.”

## **Council Credit/Debit Cards**

A council may, by motion of a majority of its members and with the approval of the board of trustees, hold a credit and/or debit card in its own name and authorize the grand knight, financial secretary, and treasurer (“the cardholders”) to use the card to pay council related expenses, provided that the council follows the rules stated below to ensure accountability and transparency. The guidance contained in this entry applies also to assemblies and the corresponding officers (faithful navigator, faithful purser, faithful comptroller, and trustees).

## **Rules for Councils Holding Credit/Debit Cards**

### **Obtaining and Issuing Cards**

The council is responsible for obtaining any credit/debit cards for its cardholders and establishing the credit or withdrawal limits for each card. The treasurer shall issue the credit/debit cards to each cardholder.

The credit/debit card is the property of the council. Prior to receiving a card, each cardholder is required to sign the “Cardholder Agreement” (“Agreement”) found below and send the executed Agreement to the Financial Secretary. Any cardholders who violate the Agreement, these rules, or the Order’s rules for handling funds shall have their card privileges revoked and may be subject to disciplinary action.

Upon receiving a card, the cardholder shall activate the card immediately and sign the back of the card. Once the card is activated, the cardholder should notify the other cardholders in writing that he has activated his card.

### **Types of Expenses**

Council credit/debit cards shall only be used to pay for council-related expenses. Personal purchases of any type are strictly prohibited. The cardholder is responsible for all charges made on that card that is issued to him. The cardholder will be held liable for any unauthorized charges appearing on the card statement. All council expenditures must be authorized and approved for payment in accordance with the Laws of the Order. Any expenditures that exceed \$500 must be approved in accordance with the requirements set forth within Sec. 122(b) of the Laws of the Order.

### **Requirement to Obtain Alert Notifications**

If the company that issued the card offers cardholders the option to receive alert notifications, the council is required to instruct the card company to issue alert notifications to each cardholder.

### **Procedures for Using a Credit/Debit Card**

Before any purchase or payment is made, the cardholder must confirm that the expenditure has been authorized and approved by the council and a voucher (also known as an Order on Treasurer or a Warrant Voucher) has been issued by the financial secretary and countersigned by the grand knight in compliance with the Laws of the Order.

The cardholder must obtain a receipt for each payment or purchase. The receipt should include a brief description of the item that has been purchased or the service that has been performed.

The cardholder shall send the receipt to the financial secretary.

Councils must keep records of all credit/debit transactions on books approved by the Knights of Columbus.

### **Card Statements**

All credit/debit card statements must be delivered to the financial secretary. Upon receiving the statement, the financial secretary shall attach the receipts he has received from each cardholder to the statement showing the purchase or payment, and then he shall send a brief summary of the transactions to the board of trustees for its review.

Cardholders who fail to submit a receipt for any payments or purchases made on their card will be responsible for the particular payment or purchase.

### **Lost or Stolen Cards**

In the event a card is lost or stolen, the cardholder must immediately notify the card company and the council’s treasurer. Upon receiving notice of a lost or stolen card, the treasurer shall immediately notify the other cardholders and the council officers.

### **Log-in Credentials**

Online credit/debit card account access shall be given to the Grand Knight, Financial Secretary, Treasurer, and Board of Trustees. At the start of the fraternal year, the log-in password shall be changed and the Grand Knight, Financial Secretary, Treasurer, and Board of Trustees shall agree on a secure password and keep it confidential.

### **When a Cardholder Leaves Office**

Upon leaving office, a cardholder must surrender his card to the council’s Treasurer who will then instruct the card company to cancel the cardholder’s account.

### **Suspension of Council**

The financial secretary should be aware of the need to make payments to the Supreme Council within the time limits allowed under Section 156 of the Laws of the Order.

Failure to make payment within the time limit will result in suspension of the council. When a council is suspended, the board of directors requires the supreme secretary to send a Notice of Suspension to the grand knight, with copies to the district deputy and state deputy.

Section 156 provides for a grace period of 100 days for each levy from the first of the month in which the levy is made. The assessment dates and the dates on which they become in arrears are as follows:

<u>Levy Date</u>	<u>Type of Levy</u>	<u>Pay by</u>
January 1	Per Capita Catholic Adv/COL	April 10
July 1	Per Capita Catholic Adv./COL	October 10

A council is automatically suspended whenever there is an arrearage of \$50 or more in any of the above accounts.

Even though the council has a 100-day grace period to remit payments, automatic notices to the grand knight, financial secretary and district deputy will be generated between 58 and 60 days of the date of the assessment. This notice is a reminder to remit the council's payment in order to avoid automatic suspension.

A council may have its suspension lifted by making payment in the amount of the arrears. When a council is to be reinstated, a Notice of Reinstatement is sent to the aforementioned officers.

### **Record Retention**

It is recommended that the following council records be retained as follows:

- Current member *Membership Document* (new members, re-entry transactions for members who did not join through your council originally): 7 years retention
- Current member *Membership Document* (all except above and data changes): 3 years retention
- Current member *Membership Document* (data changes): verify processing of information at the Supreme Council Office, then destroy
- Former member *Membership Document* (all transactions): verify processing of information at the Supreme Council Office, then destroy
- Financial and business records (e.g. bank statements, contracts, purchase orders, invoices, etc.): 10 years retention
- Tax forms: 7 years minimum, 10 years recommended retention

In all cases, tax ID numbers — including the last four digits — must be removed.

### **Report of Officer Elections**

As financial secretary, you are responsible for completing and submitting the *Report of Officers Chosen for the Term*. Under the Laws of the Order, elections for council officers shall be held between May 1 and June 15 of each year (college councils — March 1 to June 1). Those duly elected officers are to be reported to the Supreme Council Office by June 30.

The preferred method of reporting the newly elected council officers is through the Member Management application located on the Knights of Columbus website in the Officers Online section. If reporting through Member Management prior to July 1, make sure you are on the "Next Fraternal Year" screen and simply follow the instructions included on the site for completing the form. There is no need to file a paper report with the Supreme Council Office after using this method of reporting the newly elected officers.

### **Monthly Statement**

As financial secretary, you should have an understanding of the effect of reported membership transactions on per capita, Catholic advertising and the Culture of Life levies and with the charges accrued by your council for supply orders. The council statement, available monthly in Officers Online, provides this information. It reflects changes in membership and reports information on your council's financial obligations to the Supreme Council.

- The council billing statement should be retained by you as part of your permanent files. It also should be reviewed by the grand knight and read at the next council meeting.
- The account balances — per capita, Catholic advertising, Culture of Life and supplies — should be treated as individual amounts owed by your council. Credit balances often appear in the per capita and Catholic advertising columns because of inactive insurance member credits, back-dated transactions and miscellaneous adjustments. These credits may cause an overall credit balance in the account.

Credit balances in the per capita and Catholic advertising/Culture of Life columns will automatically transfer between accounts to offset charges.

- Councils are assessed \$1.75 for per capita, \$.50 for Catholic advertising each Jan. 1 and July 1 on the total membership in the council, including inactive and honorary members. Honorary life and members on disability are excluded from the assessment.
- Councils are assessed \$1.00 for the Culture of Life fund each Jan. 1 and July 1. Honorary, honorary life, inactive members and members on disability are excluded from this assessment.

### **Member Data Change**

Changes in personal, contact (including email address), or membership information should be made electronically by using the Member Management application. Once updated in Member Management, there is no need to send information to the Supreme Council in paper format. By maintaining correct contact information — especially email addresses — allows for the uninterrupted flow of information from the Supreme and state councils to each member. Financial secretaries are highly encouraged to ensure that member contact information is updated on a yearly basis.

### **Death of a Member**

A member's death can be reported in Member Management on the member's Personal Information screen. Note that the next of kin information can only be reported if the date of death is on file in Member Management.

### **Honorary Membership**

Members who have attained the actual age of 65 years and who have been members of the Order for 25 consecutive years shall be designated as honorary members. If the 25 years of continuous service is calculated from the last date of entry, the award is automatic. If 25 years of unbroken service was achieved prior to a suspension or withdrawal transaction, the distinction must be requested by contacting the Department of Membership Records.

The honorary membership distinction includes a plastic membership card that is sent to the member. The honorary member is exempt from general fund charges, except payment of an amount equal to the sum of Supreme Council assessments and the annual levies of your state council. Because of this annual payment requirement, a paper membership card must be issued by the financial secretary on a yearly basis. The honorary member must present that paper card to gain access to Knights of Columbus functions.

### **Honorary Life Membership**

Members who have attained the actual age of 70 years and who have been members of the Order for 25 consecutive years, and those who have been members of the Order for 50 consecutive years, regardless of age, shall be designated as honorary life members. If the required years of continuous service are calculated from the last date of entry, the award is automatic. If the required years were achieved prior to a suspension or withdrawal transaction, the distinction must be requested by contacting the Department of Membership Records.

Honorary Life members are exempt from further payment of dues, per capita charges and assessments. No Supreme or state council assessments are levied against them. All priests and religious brothers who have taken their final or perpetual vows are automatically designated as honorary life members upon participating in their first ceremonial. However, this status is not awarded to permanent deacons or seminarians unless they meet the requirements based on age and years of service. The Honorary Life membership distinction includes a plastic membership card that is sent to the member.

An honorary life member cannot be suspended for nonpayment. He can, however, request a withdrawal or be suspended for cause. In such case, you must request that he relinquish his plastic honorary life card. As long as the honorary or honorary life member is in good standing, the financial secretary continues to issue an embossed paper "travel card" to the member.



# **Membership Director**

# Membership Criteria

## Qualifications for Membership

The qualifications for Knights of Columbus membership, as contained in Section 101 of the Laws of the Order, are:

- Only practical Catholics in union with the Holy See shall be eligible and entitled to continue membership in the Order.
- An applicant for membership shall not be less than 18 years of age on his last birthday.

## Practical Catholic Guidelines

Guidelines have been established to assist in determining the practical Catholicity of an applicant or member. These guidelines will assist the grand knight in performing his duties when serving on the council's admission committee. These guidelines include:

- A practical Catholic accepts the teaching authority of the Catholic Church on matters of faith and morals, aspires to live in accordance with the precepts of the Catholic Church, and is in good standing with the Catholic Church.
- A practical Catholic strives to have a greater knowledge of the teaching of Christ and his Church, and to accept, respect and defend the Church's authority (vested in the Supreme Pontiff, the hierarchy and clergy united with him) to teach, govern and sanctify the faithful.
- A practical Catholic gives material and moral support to the Church and her works on all levels, promoting the programs of the parish and diocese and coming to the aid of the missions, the needy and the under privileged; supports and advances the just causes of minority groups; endeavors to eliminate unjust discrimination, prejudice, etc.; and supports the Church in her defense of marriage and family life.

Priests and bishops, by virtue of their training and experience, understand that determining a member's practical Catholicity is a pastoral decision that requires consideration of numerous factors. It has been the longstanding practice of the Knights of Columbus that in questions relating to a member's practical Catholicity, Council officers recognize and defer to the judgment of appropriate ecclesiastical authorities, in most instances that of their Council Chaplain.

# Standing Council Committees

## Membership Committee

1. Continually keeps a fresh list of potential candidates for membership in your council.
  - Identifies and schedules recruitment drives, which should include Church drives, open houses and team recruiting initiatives
  - Works with the Program Director in inviting potential members to participate in council activities
2. Ensures that the applicant understands the Order and that the council understands what the candidate expects from his membership.
  - Requests the candidates to complete the Member Interest Survey (#1842) to identify what types of activities are of interest to the candidates
  - Informs the candidates of the date for the next Exemplification of Charity, Unity, and Fraternity
  - After the candidates have taken their exemplification, asks the new members to consider joining in the committees and activities that match their interests
3. Keeps the members of your council interested and participating in your council activities.
  - Recognizes each member's accomplishments
  - Work to re-engage members that fall behind in their annual dues
  - Coordinate the reporting of members that qualify to be designated an Affiliate Member status.

# Council By-Laws

An application called *By-Laws Online* is available on the Knights of Columbus website. It allows councils to establish by-laws electronically, receive automatic approval, submit a request for printing (if the council wishes to have the by-laws printed by the Supreme Council), and maintain a historical file of by-laws that had

previously been submitted and approved through the *By-Laws Online* application. The program is available to grand knights, financial secretaries and advocates of councils. The Supreme Council established the *By-Laws Online* program to ensure that all councils and assemblies are using a uniform set of procedures. Since it established the *By-Laws Online* program, the Supreme Council is no longer accepting or reviewing council by-laws that have not been prepared using the online template. If a council wishes to amend its existing by-laws, it must use the online template to do so. *Please note that modifications to the standard by-law templates are limited to designated fields. For more information on by-laws please see the Officers' Desk Reference entry titled "By-Laws Online."*

In order to access *By-Laws Online*, you will need a registered account on Officers Online, which is an online resource that offers a menu of helpful applications. Go to [kofc.org](http://kofc.org), click on "Sign In" on the right side of the home page, and follow the instructions on the site. If you do not have a registered account with Officers Online or need assistance obtaining a user name or password, first use the Account Assistant or Password Reset links, then please contact the Supreme Council Customer Service Department at 1-800-380-9995. Once you have obtained access to Officers Online, click on the *By-Laws Online* button.

# **District Deputy**

## District Deputy

It is extremely important that you ensure that the grand knight and the delegate from each council in your district attend and participate in the proceedings of the annual state convention. As district deputy, you are also considered an important part of the state council. As such, you are expected to attend the organizational meeting, the mid-year membership meeting and the annual state convention. By taking an active role, you will ensure a stronger future for each council in your district, your jurisdiction and the overall good of the Order.

### 944 Report

You are responsible for filling out an Annual District Deputy Report, due on September 15th, for each council in your district, including inactive councils. This form provides valuable information to your State Deputy and Supreme about council health. This form is completed online in a survey format. State Deputies will be monitoring which district deputies have completed this form.

### Ceremonial Work Within Your District

Each council in your district should strive to conduct their own Exemplifications of Charity, Unity, and Fraternity. While the Exemplification of Charity, Unity and Fraternity has seven roles that can be filled, you can point out to your councils' leadership teams that the ceremony can be appropriately conducted with as few as three team members, plus the financial secretary. This should be well within the capability of any council, regardless of its size. In addition, council's ceremonial team has the ability to conduct exemplifications more frequently, allowing them to welcome more new members than a council without a ceremonial team. The Exemplification of Charity, Unity, and Fraternity is under the direct supervision of the council's grand knight, who is responsible for appointing members to the team. Remind the grand knights in your district that the current chair officers may assume roles on the ceremonial team, but the opportunity to assume a role on the team should be open to all members of the council, even if those members fill back-up roles.

### District Deputy Expense Form

The Supreme Council Office covers certain district deputy travel expenses. Your expenses should be submitted on the *District Deputy Expense Form*.

Your travel expenses for transportation, meals, telephone, tolls and parking, in connection with official business in your assigned district, are chargeable to the Supreme Council. These expenses may be submitted as a result of traveling for installations of officers, exemplifications and council visitations. Hotel charges for one night's lodging, in connection with your attendance at your jurisdiction's organizational and mid-year membership meetings, are also chargeable to the Supreme Council.

Expenses that are not reimbursed by the Supreme Council include postage, guest meals, clerical assistance, printing, stationery, duplicating services and expenses incurred in connection with your attendance at your jurisdiction's annual state council convention.

Your *District Deputy Expense Form*, accompanied by itemized receipts, should be forwarded to the Supreme Council Office quarterly through your state deputy, whose approval is required before it will be given attention by the supreme secretary.

### Official Council Visits

As district deputy, you are the official representative of the supreme knight and your state deputy when you visit a local council. These official visits should be made a minimum of two times per year. For each council in your district, you are required to submit a District Deputy Annual Report on Council Status to the Supreme Council by September 15. This report helps you, the state deputy, and the Supreme Council determine if the council warrants additional assistance to maintain its viability.

## Council Institution

### New Council Institution Guidelines

The creation of new councils is primarily the responsibility of the district deputy, with the assistance of his state's new council Institution chairman and the insurance agent. To assist him, the following procedures have been developed.

## **Step #1 — Survey The Area**

The district deputy should determine the potential of both the initial and future membership in the specific area under consideration. Are existing councils attracting the vast majority of Catholic men in the area, or are they “hitting and missing” in their efforts to do this? Always remember Blessed Michael McGivney’s dream of a Knights of Columbus council in every parish. This is still our goal and you should strive to achieve it within your district. Each priest deserves his own council — and our job is to make sure he gets one.

## **Step #2 — Contact The Pastor**

After determining that the potential for a new council exists within the district, the district deputy’s next step is to contact the pastor of the parish where the council will exist. A letter or email of introduction is a good idea, but it is by no means sufficient. The district deputy must personally visit the pastor before beginning his efforts.

During this meeting, his first priority is to establish a good relationship with the pastor. He should explain the Order at length and specifically explain the benefits of having a Knights of Columbus council in his parish. The district deputy should be prepared to leave some literature with the priest for his perusal such as information on our Faith in Action initiatives. It may also be wise to supply the priest with the name of another pastor in the community that has a council in his parish. The support of the pastor is essential if the council is to be established. The district deputy should explain that he would like to do most of his recruiting following Masses on a specific weekend and that pulpit announcements made by the pastor would be appreciated. If the pastor wishes, these announcements can be made by the district deputy or by a member of his committee.

From this meeting, the district deputy should attempt to get a list of parish members and their contact info from the pastor. In addition, ask for a list of names that Father would consider “good leaders.”

This should only be one of many meetings that the district deputy has with the pastor; he will truly be one of the new council’s key support persons.

## **Step #3 — Contact The State Deputy**

If the pastor gives his permission for the formation of a new council, the district deputy should contact the state deputy and inform him of the current progress with the council. A *Notice of Intent form* should now be completed and forwarded to the state deputy for his signature, and it should be subsequently forwarded to councilgrowth@kofc.org. The state new council development chairman will also be advised when he receives his copy of this form.

Upon receipt of this form at the Supreme Council office, a *New Council Canvasser’s Kit*, containing a variety of recruitment materials and informational aids designed to assist in the establishment of a council, will be forwarded to the district deputy.

## **Step #4 — Contact The Insurance Representative**

If the district deputy has not already done so, he should contact his general insurance agent and inform him of the plans to establish a new council. The agent will either assign a field insurance agent to work with the district deputy or choose to do the work himself. The agency staff is comprised of professional salesmen — salesmen who sell membership as well as insurance. A wise district deputy will take advantage of this professional assistance.

## **Step #5 — Initial Recruitment Drive**

A date for the initial recruitment drive at the parish should be set. The district deputy should also have ready the date and time of the first organizational meeting. It is suggested that the district deputy provide the parish priest with a pulpit announcement which would point out that a Knights of Columbus council is being established at the parish and where/when interested candidates should meet. It is also suggested that a notice to this effect be placed in the parish bulletin and on the parish website.

## **Step #6 — Committee Meeting**

From the district deputy’s contacts with the pastor and from the results of his initial recruitment efforts, he should be prepared to select key men interested enough to form a steering committee, which will assist in the formation of a council at their parish. The district deputy and the insurance agent should meet with them to prepare plans for the organizational meeting. This may be a good time for the district deputy to select a temporary chairman

and temporary financial secretary — the former to act as membership chairman and the latter to take notes at the meeting, in addition to acting as temporary financial secretary. These men, as the process continues, will be looked upon by their peers as men of responsibility and will likely become the council's first grand knight and first financial secretary. Therefore, great care must be taken in their selection.

The district deputy and temporary financial secretary should open a bank account under the interim name of "New Council, (Town or City), Knights of Columbus." Checks should be signed only by those two individuals, although the responsibility of these funds rests with the district deputy. (Once the council number is assigned by the Supreme Council office, this should be added to the checks.)

### **Step #7 — Organizational Meeting**

Advance notice should have been given to the parishioners regarding the district deputy's initial organizational meeting. This meeting should be short and to the point. It is strongly suggested that wives attend the meeting to get them and families involved early in the council and the Knights of Columbus.

The district deputy presides over the meeting and welcomes the group — he is not there to ask the group if they want a council — he is there to organize a council.

The district deputy introduces the representative of the state council (a state officer or new council development chairman) to promote the overall program of the Order. His remarks should be tailored to the group he is addressing. The important thing is that he knows what he is talking about, that he is positive and upbeat, and that he covers all aspects of the Order that the group is interested in.

The district deputy also introduces the insurance representative to briefly explain the insurance benefits available for members. The insurance representative will no doubt mention that he will personally contact each prospect at his home to further discuss the Order's insurance features in greater detail.

Of course, the pastor and any members of the clergy in attendance should be invited to address the gathering. The pastor will later be asked to take on the role of council chaplain.

The district deputy and other members present should answer any of the group's questions before the meeting adjourns. Also, if the district deputy did not have an opportunity to select a temporary chairman or temporary financial secretary, they should now be selected.

If initiation fees and council dues have not been determined, they should be finalized at this meeting.

The most important part comes when the meeting adjourns. Tables should be set within the meeting hall so that assistance can be offered to prospective members in completing their membership documents. *Membership Documents* (#100) should not simply be handed out to those present — prospects must be assisted in completing the documents, and initiation fees and dues must be collected.

Chances are that after the first meeting, additional recruitment will still be necessary to reach the thirty initial members required to start a council. The membership committee (district deputy, temporary officers and the insurance representative) should hold recruitment meetings at regular intervals to review progress and hold additional membership drives. Additional organizational meetings should be held to a necessary minimum, but scheduled promptly so not to lose the enthusiasm of new members. Candidates will want action — not discussion.

### **Step #8 — Exemplification of Charity, Unity, and Fraternity**

The district deputy should arrange for candidates of the new council to receive their Exemplification as they are enrolled. Do not hold candidates for a large Exemplification class. Candidates may be included in classes being held by other councils within the district. The district deputy can also arrange for a nearby Exemplification team to conduct the ceremonial for a small group of candidates from time to time.

One Exemplification class should be designated as the "Institution Class." The date of this ceremonial can be used as the institution date of the new council. However, the actual selection of the date is up to the district deputy and the new council.

It is recommended that Candidate Kits be ordered six weeks prior to the ceremony through Supplies Online, which can be accessed through Officers Online. These are normally assumed by the district deputy's council until such a time that the new council can reimburse them — usually from initiation fees or when they receive

the \$200 institutional allowance from the Supreme Council. (Refer to the section on New Council Development Expenses.)

### **Step #9 — Plans For Institution**

Immediately following the institution date, the district deputy's records should indicate that a total of at least 30 men have completed membership documents, and those who are new members have been initiated through the Exemplification of Charity, Unity, and Fraternity.

The final figure includes new members, former members, and transfers, although transfers should be held to a minimum.

The district deputy now completes the *Notice of Institution* and one copy to councilgrowth@kofc.org, along with the membership documents for the charter members of the new council. The form should indicate the number of new members, the number of members who transferred into the council, and the number of former members who renewed their membership in the new council. A copy is provided for the state deputy and should be forwarded to his office. Upon receipt of this form and the required 30 membership documents at the Supreme Council office, a number will be issued, and the council will be notified immediately.

Upon receipt of the *Notice of Institution*, a Council Outfit Kit, containing all the necessary supplies and materials for the operation of a properly functioning council, will be forwarded to the new grand knight. Included are accounting supplies, administrative and ceremonial guidelines, and informational literature.

A Council Seal will be ordered by the supreme secretary's office when the Notice of Institution is received and the name selected for the new council is listed on the form.

The district deputy may arrange for the election of the council's first officers prior to the institution, following the ceremonial, or at a meeting held at an early date after the Exemplification. Formal installation of officers may be held at the district deputy's preference, but should be scheduled soon.

### **Step #10 — Application For Charter**

The *Application for Charter* should be completed and forwarded to the Supreme Council office within 90 days of when the council was issued a number. Names must be printed in alphabetical order by last name, with members of the hierarchy and clergy first.

Charter members are only new members who signed applications or members that transferred their membership into the new council on or before the date of institution. In the event that candidates, for a valid reason, have not yet taken their Exemplification, the application may be held for a reasonable length of time until they receive their Exemplification.

However, if an *Application for Charter* form is not received after 90 days, the roster will be pulled and the charter will be produced. Any changes made by the council after the charter has been processed will be charged to the council in order to produce a new charter.

If the council is to be named after an individual, the district deputy includes a short biography, along with the date of death, since the laws of the Order provide that no council can be named after a living person (Section 97).

If the district deputy does not designate a council name on the application, the charter will reflect the city in which the council was established.

Upon receipt of the application at the Supreme Council office, the charter will be engrossed and forwarded to the charter grand knight, unless otherwise requested.

### **Step #11 — Presentation Of Charter**

Upon receipt of the charter, it is up to the district deputy to make a formal presentation of the charter to the grand knight on behalf of the supreme knight and the board of directors. The charter gives evidence of the right to exist as a council and authority to confer membership in accordance with the Charter, Constitution and Laws of the Order.

The presentation of the charter ceremony should be conducted by the district deputy. Refer to the Charter Presentation Ceremony.



## Step #12 — Follow-Up

After the institution of a new council it is essential that the district deputy maintain a close personal contact with the new council officers and the program directors to see that all are properly trained and instructed in their respective duties and to assure the continued and successful operation of the new council. Leadership development and training resources can be found online at [kofc.org/training](http://kofc.org/training). New council officers and program directors should be urged to take an active role in all phases of council activity.

Service Program materials will be sent to the new grand knight following the institution process at the Supreme Council office. The grand knight should complete and return the *Service Program Personnel Report* to the Fraternal Mission Department. This and other reporting forms can be found at [kofc.org/forms](http://kofc.org/forms).

The council should begin immediately to make plans for the initiation of its first class of candidates. Growth potential is greatest when enthusiasm of the membership is at its peak. An early emphasis on recruitment is encouraged following the excitement of a new council and will more easily attract other eligible Catholic men to the new council's ranks.

## New Council Institution Expenses

The following should be noted regarding expenses in starting new councils:

1. The necessary expenses of the state deputy (in the jurisdiction) and the district deputy (in the district) for work performed in new council development will be paid by the Supreme Council and will not be chargeable to the state budget. Properly chargeable items are lodging, meals, transportation and telephone. These should be put through on regularly submitted expense accounts forms (#267) and noted as NCD.
2. At the institution of the new council, after all forms have been submitted [Membership Documents — 30 minimum, *Notice of Institution*, and the *Application for Charter*, the Supreme Council will pay jointly to the district deputy and the new council the sum of \$200 for payment of expenses incurred in the development of the new council. These would be expenses other than those normally allowed. Examples would be:
  - a. Ceremonial teams
  - b. Candidate Kits
  - c. Printing or Postage
  - d. Incidentals — advertisements, coffee and doughnuts, etc.
3. After the district deputy takes what is due to him, the balance is deposited in the new council's account.
4. If the new council is not instituted, none of these extra expenses will be allowed.
5. *Candidate Kits* should be ordered by the district deputy through his own council.

*Questions relating to the "institutional allowance" should be referred to the state deputy, the state new council development chairman, and/or the Supreme Council Department of Membership Development.*

## Reinstitution of Dissolved/Merged Councils

Councils that have been officially merged or dissolved by the Supreme Council Board of Directors should not follow the above reactivation guidelines. Rather, such councils require the Board's approval to be reinstated. To preserve the historical identity of merged and dissolved councils, a reinstatement should be requested within in the same situs as the original council.

To begin the process, a Notice of intent to Reactivate, Reconstitute, or Establish a New Council should be submitted to [councilgrowth@kofc.org](mailto:councilgrowth@kofc.org). The following documents are required to be presented to the Board of Directors:

- Notice of Institution of a Council
- Report of Officers Chosen for the Term
- Service Program Personnel Report
- Application for Appointment as Financial Secretary
- Nomination for Appointment as Financial Secretary
- Any necessary membership documents

All documents may be submitted to [councilgrowth@kofc.org](mailto:councilgrowth@kofc.org). Upon notification of the Board's approval, an Application for Council Charter should be submitted. Only names of members who have joined the council by the date of reinstatement shall appear on the application for charter. These names, along with the original charter members (if available), will appear on the new charter. Questions pertaining to the re-establishment of a dissolved council should be directed to the state deputy, the state new council development chairman, and/or the Fraternal Mission Department.

### **Council Revitalization**

As a district deputy, you have the very important responsibility of ensuring that the councils in your district remain viable. This is accomplished through your official and unofficial council visits. During those visits, your observation and leadership skills will prove to be invaluable, especially if you observe the following warning signs that a council is struggling to remain active:

- No one is willing to take office — the same members continuing year after year as officers of the council indicates a lack of leadership.
- Low attendance at meetings — council members appear to have no interest in continuing the council if there is no quorum for meetings on a continual basis.
- Very few or no service programs being conducted — councils have an obligation to assist the parish and community. Councils that have no service programs in place are likely to fail.
- The council has no recruitment program and is not welcoming to new members — in order to have a strong council, adding new members to the council is important. However, if there are no recruitment programs in place to accomplish this, the council will fail
- No support for the parish or the pastor — if the council is not interested in assisting the parish or the pastor with furthering the mission of the Church, this indicates that the council is failing
- The council is using dues payments for other expenses prior to paying its obligations to the supreme and the state councils — this situation indicates that while the council is attempting to continue to conduct programs, it is not taking in enough funds to pay for those programs. It will only be a brief time before the council is suspended for nonpayment of supreme and state council obligations

The action steps you should take if you observe one or more of these warning signs include:

- Reassure the members — this is not the time for you to chastise the remaining members in the council. Rather, let the members know that you are there to assist them in getting the council turned around
- Talk to the pastor — engage the pastor in trying to find out why the council is failing. Keep the meeting positive and listen to what he is saying about why he thinks the council is failing
- Utilize the state officers — ask for assistance from the state officers, especially the state membership and program directors. These resources are there to assist you and will provide you with many strategies to get the council functioning properly

Remember that you are there to facilitate the turnaround of a struggling council and not to issue unilateral edicts and instructions. By collaborating with the pastor and the members of the council on ways to revive the council, you will be leading by example. Keeping a positive attitude when working through this process will yield a successful outcome.

### **District Meetings**

Communication and organization are vital to the success of your district. To achieve success you are required to conduct, at a minimum, a district organizational meeting and a mid-year membership meeting. Invite grand knights, financial secretaries, treasurers, membership and program directors, and field agents from the councils within the district to participate in the meetings.

Your district organizational meeting should be held within two weeks of the jurisdiction's organizational meeting and cover the following areas:

- Membership
  - Goals and quotas for the district and each council
  - Schedule of ceremonials within the district for the proceeding six months
  - Recruitment Plans
    - Supreme Council plans
    - State Council plans

- District plans
- Council plans
- Membership Retention
- Insurance Promotion
- Membership Incentive Programs
  - Supreme Council
  - State Council
- Charitable Programs
  - Supreme Council programs
  - State Council programs

The mid-year membership meeting should be scheduled immediately following the jurisdiction's mid-year meeting and focus on motivating each council to:

- Achieve membership and insurance goals
- Continue providing charitable service programs to their parish and community

The meeting is also used to relay information from the supreme and state councils on any new membership or charitable program initiatives.

### Strategy Sessions

Quarterly (or as needed) strategy sessions are useful tools for you to meet with each council in your district on a one-on-one basis to review the council's plans for membership recruitment, insurance promotion and charitable outreach.

The sessions should be scheduled in August or September and then again in January or February. Each strategy session should include the council's grand knight and membership and program directors.

Use the first session to assess the council's plan on:

- Providing charitable outreach to the parish and community
- Earning the Star Council Award
- Membership recruitment

After this session, each participant should be committed to the plan of action for the council.

The second session should to be used to evaluate how the council is progressing on the goals established in the first strategy session. Questions to ask include:

- Is the council better now than it was previously?
- What can we do to help more people?
- How can we do this better?

### Officers Online – District Deputy Section

Your access to this website is granted at the start of your term, once the Supreme Council Office receives from your state deputy your contact information on the completed *District Deputy Appointment*. Officers Online lets you keep track your district's progress for membership growth, which is useful information toward the earning of the Star District Award, and is useful to track the health of each council in your district.

Another resource available through Officers Online is the **Officers' Desk Reference**. It provides answers to frequently asked questions about our name and emblem, home corporations, membership issues, tax issues, fraternal issues, council and assembly issues and social communications. Entries are regularly updated and expanded as new questions arise or additional information becomes available.

### District Awards

The **New Council Award** is presented to those district deputies responsible for the development of a new council.

The Star District Award is presented to those district deputies whose district excels in the areas of membership growth, insurance growth, programming, and overall excellence.

To earn the **Star District Award**, the following requirements must be completed:

- Founders Award earned by 50% of councils in the District
- Reach 70% of combined council growth quotas
- At least one council in the district earns the Star Council Award
- For each council in your district, submit a District Deputy Report – Due 09/15

The **All Star District Award** is presented to those district deputies who attain the Star District Award and have all of their active councils earn the Star Council Award. Must have a minimum of three active councils to be All Star and only available in insurance territories.

## Miscellaneous — District Deputy Section

*Medals of Office* — The supreme secretary forwards the medal of office for each new district deputy to the state deputy for presentation at the installation ceremony. The retiring district deputy is allowed to retain his medal of office as a memento of his term.

*Officers' Failure to Perform Duties* — When an officer of a council in your district fails or refuses to perform the responsibilities of his office, you may declare that office vacant in accordance with Sec. 92(b) of the Laws of the Order. You must report at once to the state deputy and supreme secretary any deposition or suspension made. If the vacancy will not be filled according to the Laws of the Order, you must appoint a member of the council to the office for the unexpired term.

*Installation of Officers* — It is your duty to install the officers of each council in your district. According to Sec. 129 of the Laws of the Order, each council officer, unless excused by a vote of his council, must present himself for installation at the first monthly council meeting following his election. The time must be specified in a notice issued by or through the district deputy or state deputy. The district deputy or state deputy also have the right to excuse a council officer from the installation. The installation ceremony is detailed in the *Protocol, Meetings, and Ceremonials*. You should prepare to conduct the installation as prescribed in the ceremonial book.

*Dissolution of Councils* — Whenever the board of directors orders a council dissolved, you must follow any directions you receive from the supreme secretary regarding the transfer of memberships and the disposition of books, papers, records, accounts and moneys of the council.

*Dissolved Councils* — A new council may not be established in a location that was the site of a dissolved council without first obtaining approval from the board of directors. The procedure calls for the state deputy to direct a letter of permission to the supreme secretary before any steps to organize are taken.

*Awards Presentations* — Each year, the Star Council, Father McGivney, Founders' and Columbian awards are forwarded to the district deputy of record (except where otherwise requested by the state deputy) for presentation. You are asked to present these awards to the council at an appropriate ceremony or occasion. You should invite the field agent to assist in all council award presentations, especially for the Founders' Award. (Note: If the council earns only the Founders' Award, it will be forwarded to the general agent of record for presentation.)

# **Membership Recruitment & Retention**

## Implementing a Membership Recruitment and Retention Strategy

Begin implementing the membership recruitment strategy immediately after your election of officers. Your council's newly elected grand knight has the very important duty of appointing both the membership and program directors.

The new membership director should work with the grand knight to appoint the retention committee chairman and the Knights that will serve on the Admission Committee. (See Appendix D for Standing Council Committees).

Once the directors and committee chairs are appointed, complete and submit the *Service Program Personnel Report* through Member Management no later than June 30. The report can also be found on the Knights of Columbus website in the For Members section. Submitting this report allows the appointed directors and chairmen to begin receiving important information published by the Supreme Council and your state council. The Member Management Application is also used to report changes to committee chairmen during the year or by submitting a new *Service Program Personnel Report* with only the changed information.

## Keys to Recruiting Success

Keep these tips in mind when recruiting a potential member:

- **Talk about your positive experiences as a member and share your enthusiasm for your council.**
  - Convey a sense of enthusiasm, excitement and pride when talking about the great things your council accomplishes and the people your council helps.
- **Make a good impression with the right attitude and body language.**
  - Maintain a positive attitude, smile often, avoid being negative, and always look the prospective member in the eye when talking with him.
- **Talk to the prospective member and his wife about the ways membership can benefit his family.**
  - Highlight how participation in your council's charitable endeavors can help a man grow in his faith. Point out that many of your council's activities and programs, including the insurance program and other benefits, are open to the member's entire immediate family.
- **Show unity when conducting a charitable service project.**
  - When members, their families and other volunteers wear Knights of Columbus-branded apparel while conducting a charitable project, it identifies your council to the community and entices prospective members to inquire about joining your council.
- **Ask men to join your council.**
  - Family, friends, co-workers and fellow parishioners represent recruitment opportunities — ask if they would like to join your council.
- **Approach recruiting in a different way.**
  - Ask a prospective member "Would you be interested in learning more about membership in our local Knights of Columbus council?"
- **What to say when the answer is "I don't have time."**
  - Be prepared with a simple answer. Tell them the amount of time they put in is completely up to them, and remind them of your council's family-oriented activities.
- **Promote your council's spirituality.**
  - Emphasize your council's involvement in the spiritual life of your parish.
- **Involve young people.**
  - Ask young men to join your council. Use targeted advertising, especially social media, to reach younger prospective members.

- **Follow-up with all prospective members in a timely manner.**
  - It is essential that follow-up communication, by personal contact, occurs within a few days at the most.

## **Planning Membership Recruitment and Retention Strategy**

Once your council's directors and chairmen are appointed, the grand knight should call an organizational meeting. Invite your financial secretary; council chaplain; program and membership directors, with their respective committee chairmen; and other council officers to the meeting. Hold the meeting immediately after the appointment of the committee chairmen and before Aug. 1. Set the groundwork for the entire fraternal year, planning your membership and insurance goals, budget, and calendar for social and service program events.

The membership portion of the organizational meeting should focus on the following:

- Reviewing the membership recruitment activities that were conducted in the past year.
  - Analyze the reasons for the success or failure of each project.
- Deciding on successful recruitment strategies to repeat in the current fraternal year and new strategies to implement.
- Setting a budget for each activity.
- Setting tentative dates for each activity, keeping in mind the parish calendar.
- Preparing the list of agreed upon activities to present to the council for approval.
- Alerting the public relations chairman of activity dates to ensure that the council's initiatives and events are communicated to the parish and community in a timely manner.

## **Keeping Members Motivated**

The membership director and each committee chairman are responsible for keeping the members motivated. It is natural to appreciate recognition for a job well-done. Here are some suggestions to keep morale high:

- Be sure that each Knight gets full credit and recognition for his work. An occasional personal written note may mean a great deal to the recipient.
- Make use of current membership campaign awards and incentives.
- Listen to the suggestions of your council members and acknowledge good advice. Tell your brother Knight that you appreciate his interest and will consider his idea.
- Be prepared to listen when a member has a question or problem. Guide him, but get him to do most of the thinking. This indicates respect for his judgment, giving him confidence and a feeling of importance.
- Accept responsibility for your mistakes. This shows your team that you know that you are human and fallible.

## **Organizing the Recruitment Committee**

The first and perhaps most important step in setting up a successful membership program is organizing your membership committees. The key is to ensure that these important positions are filled and appointees are dedicated and enthusiastic Knights. The process of organizing a recruitment committee is as follows:

- The grand knight appoints a membership director to oversee all membership programs and recruitment activities.
- Upon recommendation of the membership director, the grand knight appoints a recruitment committee of three or more Knights. He should select successful recruiters or sales-oriented members.

- The membership director and recruitment committee members form two-man recruitment teams.
- The grand knight, upon recommendation of the membership director, appoints a retention chairman and committee. It is recommended that the deputy grand knight serve on the retention committee.
- The grand knight appoints an insurance promotion chairman, preferably the council's insurance agent.
- The membership director, committee chairmen and committees set goals and plan specific recruitment, retention and insurance promotion activities for the entire year.
- Plan a full year's schedule of monthly Exemplifications.
- Identify and schedule recruitment methods that best suit your council's needs and goals (church drives, open houses, team recruiting, etc).
- Set membership goals (exceed quota, earn Star Council, break the previous recruitment record, etc.). Get the ENTIRE council involved. Those who don't recruit directly can identify and suggest prospective members.

## Proven Membership Recruitment Strategies

In a survey, members were asked why they waited so long to join the Knights of Columbus. All too often the answer was "nobody ever asked me."

With the right recruitment strategy in place, your council will ensure that every eligible Catholic man in your parish has the opportunity to join your council. A direct result of recruiting is your council's ability to increase its charitable impact in your parish and community.

While this manual contains only a few examples of recruitment activities, it is meant to inspire your council into action. By recruiting new members, your council is continuing Blessed Michael McGivney's vision and commitment of providing assistance to people in your parish and community.

## VIP Club (Very Important Proposer)

The VIP Club not only publicly honors recruiters, but also inspires everyone to do their part in the ongoing recruitment drives. Membership in the VIP Club is automatic when:

- You recruit two or more members and complete section 5 of the Membership Document with your name and membership number.
  - The Fraternal Mission department maintains VIP Club records and only provides year-to-date and life-to-date totals.
- VIP Club members are eligible to earn recognition certificates, special lapel pins and Knights of Columbus-branded merchandise.
  - Higher levels of the VIP Club are attained with the more prospective members you recruit.

Your responsibilities as proposer don't end with the signed Membership Document:

- You should accompany the prospect to their Exemplification.
- At the new member's first council meeting, introduce him to his brother Knights and make him feel welcome.
- If you notice that he stops volunteering for charitable outreach programs or attending meetings, make personal contact with him.

## Building a Prospect List

Your council's recruitment committee should have a continuously updated list of potential members. Consider these steps for building and maintaining a prospective member list:

- Ask your pastor for the parish roster.



- Add all local priests who are not Knights.
- Add all ushers, parish council members, choir members and lectors.
- Form a welcoming committee to greet and recruit new men and families of the parish.
- Recruit young people from your parish's youth ministry program, your local high schools or colleges.
- Regularly advertise in your parish bulletin, inviting potential members to contact the membership committee.

Obtain a list of former members and inactive insurance members in your area from the Supreme Council Membership Growth Department.<sup>1</sup>

## Admission Committee Guidelines

Use of an Admission Committee is essential to ensure that your council and the candidate understand one another's expectations. Follow these guidelines to ensure a properly functioning Admission Committee:

- The grand knight must appoint seven members to serve on the Admission Committee.
  - It is recommended that the chancellor serve on this Committee.
- The committee should meet on an ad hoc basis.
  - This ensures that candidates do not wait extended periods of time to be welcomed into your council.
- Ask the candidate to complete the *Member/Prospect Interest Survey*
  - Reading of the application and balloting should take place at the next council meeting.
- Advise the candidate of the date for the Exemplification.
  - If the candidate has a conflict with the date/time of the scheduled Exemplification, to welcome the candidate into your council.

## Planning Frequent Exemplifications

It is essential that prospective members are welcomed into your council in a timely manner. Scheduling monthly Exemplifications of Charity, Unity, and Fraternity ensures that recruiters know the schedule and that prospective members won't be kept waiting. Here are some suggestions to help organize your council's ceremonial:

- Your council should have its own ceremonial team.
- Publicize the ceremonial schedule at council meetings, in your council's newsletter and on your council's website.
- Ensure that you have a supply of *Candidate's Kits*, which include a rosary, a copy of *These Men They Call Knights* and a *Knights of Columbus Lapel Pin*.
- Contact the prospective member in advance to confirm his attendance and advise him of the recommended attire.
- Arrange for the prospective member's proposer or a member of the recruitment committee to escort him to the ceremonial.
- Present your new members with certificates, available through Supplies Online, which is accessible through Officers Online, at the conclusion of the ceremonial.
- Publish the names of your new members in your council's newsletter and on your council's website.

<sup>1</sup> Reactivating inactive insurance members qualifies for both membership and insurance additions toward the Father McGivney and Founders' awards quotas. Reinstatements, readmissions or reapplications qualify for membership additions for the Father McGivney Award.

## Recruiting Former Members

Former Knights are men who are familiar with the Knights of Columbus. They left the Order for various reasons but represent a pool of prospects your council should not overlook in striving for membership growth.

- Appoint a special “Welcome Back, Brother” or “Operation Re-Member” committee specifically to recruit former members. Past grand knights familiar with circumstances of earlier departures are especially suited to serve on this committee.
- Obtain a list of former members (those who took withdrawals/ suspensions) and inactive insurance members (those who took withdrawals/suspensions but maintain K of C insurance policies) from the Fraternal Mission Department. Check with your financial secretary for additional names and recent addresses.
- Review the list to determine former members known to be residing in the area who are still eligible for membership.
- Prepare a presentation for former members, highlighting changes; new programs, activities and benefits; and recent council achievements.
- Contact each former member to arrange a personal visit, or invite them to a reception for former members.
- If planning a “Welcome Back” or former-member reception, use the open house procedures. Be sure to invite your council chaplain and insurance agent to speak at the event.

Ask every former member visited or those at your reception to sign a *Membership Document* to renew their membership.

## Church Drives

A church drive is the easiest way for your council to ask qualified Catholic men to join your council. A successful church drive is dependent on careful planning and collaboration with your parish priest.

A church drive is meant to compile a list of prospective members’ contact information. **It is imperative that your council follows up with the prospective member within a few days and invites him and his family to learn more about the charitable activities your council conducts in the parish and community.**

Here are the steps for your council to follow in conducting a church drive:

- Contact your pastor and obtain his permission to conduct a church drive at all Masses on a particular weekend.
- Provide an announcement for inclusion in your parish bulletin during each of the two weeks before the drive. For a sample announcement, please see [kofc.org/drive](http://kofc.org/drive).
- Prepare a council display which highlights your council’s charitable programs and member benefits, then place it in the main entry of the church.
- Before each Mass, post teams of two or three Knights at each entry to hand out council informational flyers and *Prospect Cards*.
- Leave pens or sharpened pencils in each pew for men to complete the *Prospect Card*.
- Arrange for your pastor, grand knight or membership director to make a brief announcement prior to or after Mass, explaining the Knights of Columbus and the charitable works conducted by your council. Encourage men to complete the *Prospect Card* and hand it to Knights as they leave church.
- After each Mass, post teams of Knights at each exit to answer questions from prospective members, assist with *Membership Documents* and collect completed *Prospect Cards*.
- Deliver all completed *Membership Documents* and *Prospect Cards* to the membership director.

- Assign recruiting teams for personal follow-ups with prospective members. Team members should invite prospects and their families to participate in a charitable service program; inform prospects of the dates for the Admission Committee interview; and invite prospects to the Exemplification, which should be held within one week of the church recruitment drive. See back of book for a checklist to plan your Church Drive.

## Council Membership Drive

A Membership Drive provides an opportunity to introduce your council to a broad range of prospective members at one event. The objective of the Membership Drive is to showcase your council's charitable service programs, social and fraternal activities, and membership benefits.

Here are the steps for your council to follow to conduct a Membership Drive:

- The membership director should appoint a committee to organize and conduct the Membership Drive.
- Plan activities that children can participate in while the prospective members and their wives learn about the benefits of membership in your council.
- Publicize the date and time in local newspapers and church bulletins, and on local radio.
- Send open house invitations to prospective members.
- Make a display highlighting your council's charitable activities, awards and other council activities, then post it at the entrance to your meeting place.

The Membership Drive:

- Welcome committee greets guests. Direct children to the planned activities.
- Opening prayer by your council's chaplain.
- Grand knight or membership director should explain your council's charitable programs, and its social and fraternal activities.
- Your council's field agent should explain benefits of membership.
- A question and answer session.
- Conclude with refreshments or light buffet.

At the conclusion of the program, recruiters should ask prospective members to join and assist them in completing a *Membership Document*. Prospects should also be informed of the dates for the Admission Committee screening and upcoming Exemplification. See back of book for a checklist to plan your Membership Drive.

## Team Recruiting

Recruiting in teams of two brings twice the enthusiasm and knowledge of your council to the recruiting process. Here are the steps for your council to follow when conducting team recruiting:

- Organize two-man teams from the membership committee and additional members of your council.
- Divide your council's prospective member list among the teams.
- Schedule a visit with each prospective member and his wife.
- Invite the prospective member and his family to participate in a scheduled council charitable program.
- Ask the prospective member to join your council. Assist him in completing the Membership Document and accompany him to the Admission Committee screening and Exemplification.

## Insurance Promotion

One of the primary reasons Blessed Michael McGivney founded the Knights of Columbus was to provide financial security to families after the death of a spouse whose job was the main or only source of income. Knights of Columbus Insurance is among the most highly-rated insurance companies in North America and continues to provide protection “by brother Knights and for brother Knights.” Scheduling frequent fraternal benefits events provides members with the opportunity to learn about Knights of Columbus Insurance products and to discuss their insurance needs with a field agent. This will also set your council on the path to earning the Founders’ Award. Here are the steps for your council to follow for promoting Knights of Columbus Insurance products and hosting a fraternal benefits event:

- Send copies of all completed *Membership Documents* to your council’s general agent immediately after the Exemplification.
- Invite your council’s field agent to speak at council meetings.
- Ask your council’s field agent to write an article for your council’s newsletter.
- Have your field agent appointed as Insurance Promotion Chairman by your council’s grand knight.

To host a fraternal benefits event:

- At the request of the grand knight, your council’s field agent should schedule and conduct the fraternal benefits event. The agent is in charge of this event.
- To enhance the educational experience of the evening, the agent may invite presenters such as accountants, lawyers or bankers to offer professional insight on the value of life insurance and annuities.
- Provide the meeting space.
- Plan activities for children during the presentations.
- Provide gifts or door prizes.
- Serve light refreshments.

## Member Retention

The task of member retention begins as soon as the Exemplification is conferred upon a new member. To inspire both new and current members, that have been inactive more than one year, to be active in your council, promote the Shining Armor Award.

To earn the Shining Armor Award, Knights must:

- Be involved in at least three council service programs.
- Attend at least three business meetings.
- Meet with your council’s insurance representative.
- Recruit at least one new member.

Additional information on the Shining Armor Award can be found on the Knights of Columbus website, [kofc.org](http://kofc.org).

Your council must ensure that each Knight has the ability to earn the Shining Armor Award. Here are some steps to take to ensure your members succeed:

- Set the service program calendar early in the fraternal year and publicize it to the membership.
  - Regularly review service programs to determine if they were successful.
  - Send out a *Member/Prospect Interest Survey* annually to determine the interests of your members.

**Membership retention is every member’s responsibility. Personal follow-up is the most productive form of retention. If you notice your friend, neighbor or co-worker is not as involved in your council as he once was, a phone call, handwritten note or personal visit is recommended.**

- Utilize the suggestions of members for new service programs or to improve current service programs.
- Ask different members to take leadership roles in service programs and your council.
- Make council meetings productive.
  - Utilize members' time efficiently on meeting nights.
  - Present information in a clear and concise manner.
  - Hold officer meetings to limit lengthy discussion in council meetings.
  - Follow a meeting agenda.
  - Ask members to take leadership roles in your council.
- Host fraternal benefits events.
  - Invite the field agent to council meetings and allow him to speak.
  - Ensure that the financial secretary forwards Membership Documents to the general agent immediately after Exemplifications.
- Schedule monthly Exemplifications of Charity, Unity, and Fraternity.
- Your council's financial secretary should provide your retention committee with a list of brother Knights in danger of being suspended. Contact these members and discuss their reasons for being inactive. Urge them to become active again in an upcoming charitable or fraternal activity.

Through implementing the points above, your council will keep all members involved and active.

For more information on membership recruitment and retention, visit the Knights of Columbus website, [kofc.org/training](http://kofc.org/training).

## Round Tables

### Benefits of a Parish Round Table

A parish round table serves a parish in any number of ways. However, the ultimate aspiration of any parish round table remains the same:

To actively engage Knights of Columbus members in order to aid the parish and sustain visible Catholic action through works of charity in every parish and mission throughout the Order, and in sustainable parishes to form the round table into a fully functioning council.

There are many benefits in establishing a parish round table for the parish, its priest, and Knights. Having a Knights of Columbus parish round table creates a unique and effective support structure within the parish. Whether it's fundraising for a new roof, or actively participating in the parish's ministry, devoted Knights serve as invaluable resources for realizing the needs of the parish.

The benefits of a round table for local councils and its members are also evident. Through personal service to our respective parishes, the Order is able to truly fulfill its commitment to serving the Catholic Church, as well as our communities. And, as Knights, being active in our own parishes helps strengthen our personal faith and often helps create a better place for our families to grow theirs in spirituality and service.

### Guidelines for Establishing a Parish Round Table

- Parish round tables are ideal to provide a Knights of Columbus presence and be of service to smaller parishes and missions, and to fill needs for ethnic development. In general, parishes with more than 150 families should first explore the possibility of forming its own council.
- The grand knight and his officers make lists of council members who belong to those area parishes. All will automatically become part of that parish round table. New parishioners of the parish may be recruited, as well.

- The grand knight, with the help of his officers and insurance agents, informs all council members who belong to the designated parish, that the Order would like to set up a parish round table and then explains the benefits to them.
- The grand knight and a Knight parishioner call on the pastor to offer help.
  - Since the pastor assigns the projects, there will be no conflict with existing groups.
  - The grand knight presents the priest with a list of Knights who are parishioners.
- The grand knight appoints only one parish round table coordinator for each designated parish.
- The grand knight completes the *Report of the Parish Round Table Coordinator*, emails it to councilgrowth@kofc.org and sends copies to the State Deputy, District Deputy, State Round Table Chairman, and keeps a copy for council files.
- Formation of the parish round table and appointment of the coordinator are announced to those involved, and announcements are published in the parish and council bulletins.
- Once a round table grows and exceeds 30 members and still has potential to grow, the paperwork should be submitted to form a new council.

## Operating a Parish Round Table

- There are no elected offices in the Knights of Columbus round table. The grand knight appoints a coordinator as the designated leader of the round table and its members and acts as liaison between the round table and the council.
- Meet as necessary to aid the pastor and parish community.
- The parish round table has no dues. Members continue to meet their financial obligation to their council, and the parish round table projects are council projects. The parish round table coordinator must communicate with the grand knight and the council to ensure the project's success.
- The coordinator should visit the pastor frequently (monthly is suggested) to ask what the Knights of this parish can do to help and offer assistance.
- The pastor should only be as involved as he wants it to be. The parish round table should lighten his workload, not add to it.
- The coordinator should call on those parish round table members best qualified to carry out a specific project(s) and provide project leadership from start to finish.
- When a project requires more support than the parish round table members can provide, the coordinator solicits the whole council for support and assistance.
- The grand knight and the pastor annually review activities of the parish round table and the effectiveness of the coordinator.
- If the pastor desires a change of coordinator, or if the coordinator resigns during the fraternal year, the pastor selects a new coordinator and the grand knight makes the appointment.
- If there is a change of pastor, the grand knight and the coordinator call on the new pastor, explain the program and seek his continued support.

## Using the Name of the Parish Round Table

For simplicity, the parish name and city should be used in conjunction with the parish round table (for example: St. Mary's Knights of Columbus Parish Round Table of New Haven).

## Communication

- Each round table coordinator should regularly report on the activities of the parish round table at the business meetings of the sponsoring council.
- The parish round table projects should be announced in parish and council bulletins.
- Articles and pictures of parish round table projects should be forwarded to the state Knights of Columbus newspaper, the diocesan newspaper and to Columbia magazine.
- The state parish round table chairman should select the most outstanding "Parish Round Table of the Year" for that jurisdiction and arrange for appropriate honors to be awarded at the state convention.

## Round Table Reporting

To minimize paperwork, only two forms are used —

- **Report of the Parish Round Table Coordinator DUE: AS NEEDED**
- This form is used to report the Round Table Coordinator assigned to each parish and is signed by the grand knight's signature. Only one coordinator can be assigned to a parish. This report is emailed to councilgrowth@kofc.org for processing and also a copy will go to the State Round Table Coordinator.
- **Annual Report of the Knights of Columbus Round Table DUE: JUNE 30**
- This form is used to report the growth and activity of the established parish round table and is signed by the round table coordinator. This report is emailed to councilgrowth@kofc.org for processing and also a copy will go to the State Round Table Coordinator. Make sure your numbers have been reported to the council to be included in the council's *Annual Survey of Fraternal Activity*.

When the parish round table coordinator is changed, the grand knight notifies the Fraternal Mission Department, state and district deputies, and the outgoing coordinator with an updated *Report of the Parish Round Table Coordinator*.

## Reactivation

### Guidelines to Reactivation of a Council

A council becomes suspended if it does not pay its bills to the Supreme Council within 90 days of the billing date. Should that occur, there are two ways in which it can exit suspension and become active:

- If the council pays its arrears to the Supreme Council, it is taken off of suspension and becomes active.
- If the council is unable to pay its arrears for an extended period of time, its arrears may be forgiven in a one-time debt forgiveness under the Council Reactivation Program.

In order to have this debt forgiven, the steps included in the following section must be performed.

#### STEP 1 — MEET WITH THE PASTOR

Personally contact the pastor of the parish in which you are trying to reactivate the council, and request an appointment. Be cordial and very attentive. Highlight the positive aspects of the Order. Address his concerns; do not attempt to answer a question that you are not 100 percent sure of the answer. It is better to get back to him with a correct answer than to give him an incorrect answer immediately.

Some positive aspects for having a council in his parish are:

1. A Knights of Columbus council will help enrich the spiritual lives of the men in the parish.
2. It will provide additional manpower and support for the parish and will help people in need.
3. It will give families the opportunity to be financially protected via our top-rated Insurance Program.
4. A council will allow the men with their families to be active in their parish and community.
5. Being part of the council will help men to be better Catholics, fathers and husbands through various programs that they will participate in.

#### STEP 2 — NOTIFY THE STATE DEPUTY OF YOUR INTENT TO REACTIVATE THE COUNCIL

Fill out the form and forward it to the state deputy for his approval and signature. Make sure that everything is legible. Notify the field agent that is responsible for the suspended council. Once the form is received by Supreme Council Fraternal Mission Department, an acknowledgment letter will be sent to you with the roster of the current members and an additional *Report of Officers Chosen for the Term, Service Personnel Report, Application for Appointment as Financial Secretary* and *Nomination for Appointment as Financial Secretary*.

### STEP 3 — CONDUCT A CHURCH RECRUITMENT DRIVE

Intend to have a minimum of 13 new/transfer members. These new Knights should be the officers of the reactivated council. While the prospects are completing their Membership Document, inform them of the date and time of the informational meeting.

Please note: A council must register a gain of at least one new member to qualify for the reactivation program.

### STEP 4 — CONDUCT THE INFORMATIONAL MEETING

Hold an informational meeting with all your prospects; explain to them the workings of a council. At this time, have a ceremonial team ready to administer the Exemplification of Charity, Unity, and Fraternity.

### STEP 5 — HOLD AN ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Complete *Report of Officers Chosen for the Term*.

### STEP 6 — NOMINATE A FINANCIAL SECRETARY

Complete the *Nomination for Appointment as Financial Secretary* and assist in completing the *Application for Appointment as Financial Secretary*.

### STEP 7 — HELP THE NEW OFFICERS AND ESPECIALLY THE GRAND KNIGHT IN THE SELECTION OF THE FOLLOWING DIRECTORS:

POSITIONS	NEEDED
Chaplain	Preferably
Program Director	Required
Membership Director	Required
Recruitment Committee-1	Required
Recruitment Committee-2	Preferably
Recruitment Committee-3	Preferably
Retention Chairman	Required (Deputy Grand Knight)
Insurance Promotion	Preferably (Insurance Agent)

- Complete the *Service Personnel Report*.

### STEP 8 — MAIL ALL FORMS

- **Email all the forms including *Membership Documents* to [councilreactivation@kofc.org](mailto:councilreactivation@kofc.org).** Notify the state deputy of your progress. Once the Supreme Council receives all the documentation, it will take two to three weeks for the reactivation process to be completed. **For the council to be reactivated the total number of members cannot be less than 30.**

During the reactivation process the new officers should review the roster and perform the following:



1. Contact the remaining members on the roster and setup a time to visit with them outlining the vision and goals of the officers for the reactivated council. Encourage them to become active members in the council. The following are some examples of situations that you may encounter with the roster:
  - a. If a member is deceased, complete a *Membership Document* including the date of death.
  - b. A member may be adamant about not being a part of the Knights of Columbus. In this case, express your regrets and tell the member that he will be taken off the roster. If the member is already an inactive insurance member nothing needs to be done.
  - c. A member may be enthusiastic about being an active member of the council. Notify him of the meeting day, location and time and ask him to complete a *Member/Prospect Interest Survey*. If the member has an inactive status, then a *Membership Document* needs to be completed.
  - d. **Please make sure that the number of members in the council does not fall below 30.**

## STEP 9 – STATE DEPUTY LETTER

At this time, request the state deputy to write a letter to the supreme secretary. The letter should address the following:

1. A statement of reactivation.
2. If there are debts, the state deputy needs to ask for forgiveness of the debt. Please explain how the State Council handled the indebtedness of the council.
3. If a new name for the council is requested, the state deputy must approve this in his letter.
4. If a new location for the council is desired, the state deputy must approve this in his letter.

## Reactivation Expenses & Correspondence

Councils following the proper steps outlined above **may** qualify for \$200 to help the council and/or a council outfit kit.

Please have all the correspondence sent to [councilreactivation@kofc.org](mailto:councilreactivation@kofc.org) or the address below as they are completed. All *Membership Documents* that add a new member or suspend a member should also be sent to the same address.

Knights of Columbus  
Council Reactivations  
1 Columbus Plaza  
New Haven, CT 06510-3326  
[councilreactivation@kofc.org](mailto:councilreactivation@kofc.org)

## Procedures for Merging Two or More Councils

Under the Order's guidelines, the merging councils must complete the following steps independently in order to merge:

1. Draft a resolution calling for the Merger.
2. Read the resolution at one (1) meeting.
3. Publish the resolution to ***each*** of the council's members.
4. Vote on, and approve, the resolution at the following meeting.
5. Once the councils approve the merger the District Deputy will then write a request for the merger and sends it to the State Deputy for his approval. A copy of the resolution from the merging councils with the vote result should be attached.

6. If the State Deputy approves the merger, he will forward the request with all the attachment it to the Territorial/Regional Growth Director.
7. Once the Territorial/Regional Growth Director approves the merger, he in turn forwards the request and all the attachments to the supreme secretary for his action.
8. The supreme secretary will present the request to the Board of Directors for their approval or rejection at their next meeting.

A Few Notes:

1. A new name could be adopted for the new council.
2. We recommend keeping the lower council number.
3. All members, liabilities, debts etc. become the responsibility of the new council.

The past grand knights of each council shall retain all rights and privileges that pertain to past grand knights, and the grand knight of the council ceasing to exist by reason of the merger shall be entitled to the title, right and privileges of past grand knights without regard to the length of time served in such office. (SEC 249.2 Charter, Constitution and Laws)

# **Council Revitalization Program**

# Council Revitalization Program

The Council Revitalization Program (CRP) helps struggling councils emerge strongly from past difficulties.

The CRP focuses on resuming operations in a way that inspires members and parishioners to become reinvolved with church and community activities. The CRP has three key elements: parish support, interactions between state and local councils, and fraternal engagement.

- a. An essential part of CRP is for each council to support its parish. Councils should be active, visible contributors to the spiritual and material needs of parish families.
- b. Interactions between state and local councils are critical for success. A state council representative, usually the district deputy, will meet with council leaders to assist in developing and implementing a unique recovery plan for the council.
- c. The fraternal engagement of council members is the foundation for recovery. This must be done through a thoughtful plan of volunteer services, charitable activities, and meetings that form and strengthen fraternal bonds.

Recovery plans will be unique for each council. The CRP provides a basic framework. It can be modified as needed.

## Technology

All councils should embrace and adopt virtual capabilities because they facilitate the engagement of council members, especially those who cannot attend meetings or events. The virtual environment allows them to be engaged from a distance.

Remote participation should be offered whenever possible so that these members are given the opportunity to participate. Technology also enables more effective communications. Younger generations communicate largely by digital means. This is the way of the future and the time to adopt it is now.

## Key Steps

The revitalization program involves three basic steps:

- a. Council leaders will meet with the district deputy or state council representative to assess the council's status and develop an appropriate recovery plan. An agenda for this meeting is contained in Figure A. A council assessment should be done using the checklist in Figure B.
- b. Council leaders will meet with the pastor to discuss how the council can help the parish. The agenda in Figure C should be used to prepare for this meeting.
- c. Council leaders will engage their members to conduct the planned works of charity and service. This will rekindle a spirit of fraternity. Use Figure D for how to engage members.

## State & Jurisdiction Procedures

Every state should have a revitalization program for struggling councils. The CRP provides a good foundation. It imposes little additional work beyond what district deputies should already be doing with their councils. No extra reporting requirements are imposed on the state councils. States may modify or amend the CRP to address the unique needs of their jurisdiction.

The suggested procedure for state councils is:

- 1. Modify or amend the CRP as needed**
- 2. Assign representatives to assist struggling councils**  
Ideally, this will be the DD, but Jurisdictions may assign other fraternal leaders to this role.
- 3. Arrange training for the Representatives**  
The state council representatives should attend the Supreme training on CRP resources. State deputies may request group training sessions for their respective jurisdictions.
- 4. Contact councils**  
The state council representatives should also arrange to meet council leaders in person or virtually.

## 5. Coach the councils

The state council representatives will meet with council leaders and complete the Council Assessment (Figure B). They should help the council leaders through Figures D & E to develop a plan to bring the council back to a healthy state. They should regularly monitor the councils progress, and coach them to success. The state council representatives shall demonstrate the available resources and sign up council leaders for supreme and state distribution lists and online content.

### Local Council Procedures

#### 1. Meet with State Council Representative (*Meeting Agenda – Figure A*)

The Council Assessment (Figure B) should be completed to provide a starting point for a recovery plan. Then, using Figure B as a guide, the council leaders and state council representatives should prepare a plan for recovery. Available resources should be reviewed during this meeting.

#### 2. Meet with Pastor (*Figure C*)

Council leaders should meet with their pastor to offer assistance and identify how the council can help the parish. Prior to the meeting, review the agenda in Figure C. At a minimum, every council should complete this step.

#### 3. Engage council members in recovery activities and fraternal events

Council leaders must reach out to all members and encourage them to participate in the recovery plan.

### Resources

- [Subscribe to the Fraternal Leader Advisory](#)
- [Fraternal Programs Report Form](#)
- [Officer's Online and Member Management](#)
- [Guidelines for Council Meetings](#)
- [Knights of Columbus Public Relations and Publicity Guide](#)
- [Fraternal How To Videos](#)
- [Virtual Operations Resources](#)
- [Tips for Council Budgeting](#) and [Sample Budget](#)
- Figure A – Council Leader and District Deputy Meeting Agenda
- Figure B – Council Assessment
- Figure C – Pastor Meeting Agenda
- Figure D – Suggested Methods to Engage Members
- Figure E – Sample Program Ideas

## Figure A: Council Leader and District Deputy Meeting Agenda

1. Opening Prayer.
2. Assess Council Status (Figure B). Clarify strengths and weaknesses.
3. Get council leaders passwords for Officers Online.
  - a. Once an officer is recorded at the Supreme Council office, his account for Officers Online will be created and an email to register their account will be forwarded to them. If needed, there is an 'Account Assistant' & 'Password Reset' link under the 'Sign In' button on the Sign In screen. If additional assistance is needed, please contact Customer Service at 800-380-9995
4. Get Safe Environment Program Invites to council leaders.
  - a. Members must be appointed by the council into safe environment roles through the *Report of Officers Chosen* and the *Service Program Personnel Report* via Officers Online; only members with valid personal email addresses are eligible for appointment
  - b. Praesidium will send email invitations to appointed members with valid email addresses to complete the Order's safe environment requirements
  - c. Questions should be directed to Office of Youth Protection's Member Helpline (203.800.4940)
  - d. Visit [www.kofc.org/safe](http://www.kofc.org/safe) for more information
5. Show available resources and train on use as needed:
  - a. Fraternal Leader Advisory ([Video](#) – [Past Issues](#) – [Sign Up](#))
    - i. Sign up leaders for email distribution and FLAs
  - b. Virtual capabilities ([Resource page](#) – [Planning Guide](#) – [Technical Guide](#))
  - c. Meetings ([Council Meeting Video](#) – [Officers' Planning Meeting Video](#))
  - d. Officers Online (Use "SIGN IN" button on [KofC.org](http://KofC.org))
  - e. Email tool in Member Management ([Video](#))
  - f. Webinars ([Training & Webinars](#))
  - g. Online ceremony ([Ceremonials](#))
6. Develop a revitalization plan that leverages assessed strengths, and improves identified weaknesses, and support parish needs:
  - a. Identify people for core leadership positions: Grand Knight, Financial Secretary, Treasurer, Program Director, Technology Director
  - b. Schedule at least six events for the next six months (Figure E)
    - i. Reflect holidays, holy days, feast days, Founder's Day, McGivney feast day, etc.
  - c. Schedule council and officers' planning meetings
  - d. Create a member outreach plan – [Email Tool Video](#))
  - e. Implement the use of virtual tools for meetings and events (see 4b above)
  - f. Develop a budget ([Tips for Council Budgeting](#) and [Sample Budget](#))
  - g. Share best practices and success stories from other local councils
  - h. Set measurable and achievable goals, ie.:
    - i. \_\_\_\_ events per month
    - ii. \_\_\_\_ attendees per event
    - iii. \_\_\_\_ prospective members per event
    - iv. \_\_\_\_ members attending council meetings
    - v. \_\_\_\_ members contacted successfully
    - vi. \_\_\_\_ Date to complete a full slate of officers and directors
7. Develop agenda for officer planning meeting.
8. Develop agenda for council meeting.
9. Closing Prayer.

## Figure B: Council Assessment

Assess the council by answering the questions below. This will serve as the basis for a council recovery plan. Strengths should be leveraged, and weaknesses should be addressed in the plan.

**Answer yes or no for each question:**

**YES    NO**

- Are the core leadership positions filled (Grand Knight, Financial Secretary, Treasurer, Program Director, Technology Director)?
- Are officers and directors identified for next fraternal year?
- Are all leaders on supreme and state email distribution?
- Are leaders reading Fraternal Leaders Advisories?
- Are events scheduled for the next six months?
- Are funds available for required and planned expenses?
- Are leaders meeting the Pastor every month?
- Do leaders offer to help the Pastor with parish initiatives?
- Are leaders talking regularly with the insurance agent?
- Are all leaders attending the officers' planning meetings?
- Are members attending council meetings?
- Are virtual tools used for meetings and events?
- Are leaders familiar with the Faith in Action Guidebook?
- Are members receiving General Agent communications regularly?
- Is the Grand Knight using the Member Management email tool?
- What communication tools are currently used by the Council and parish?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Are leaders using the Supreme website and familiar with the resources it contains?
- Are leaders familiar with online Supreme Training materials?
- Are leaders attending monthly webinars hosted by Supreme?
- Are leaders familiar with the online degree ceremony?
- Is the Financial Secretary using online tools for member management and member billing?
- Have the Program director and one other Council leader completed the Safe Environment Program requirements for training and background checks?

## Figure C: Pastor Meeting Agenda

Prior to this meeting, review “Working with Your Pastor” (Video/PDF)

1. Ask your pastor to begin with a prayer.
2. Introduction by Grand Knight or Council Leader.
  - Thank Father for meeting with you, and for his spiritual leadership of the parish.
  - Emphasize your council’s support for your pastor and the parish.  
The Council wants to be an active, visible contributor to the parish.
3. Offer to assist in parish efforts to encourage parishioners participation in Mass and the sacraments. Remain open and receptive to any requests that your pastor may have for the parish. Discuss the unique needs of your parish and community.
4. Ask Father to support recruiting efforts through announcements from the pulpit.
5. Grand Knight’s Summary.
  - Review the Councils desired schedule of programs and events. Obtain Pastor's permission and concurrence.
  - Commit to follow up on his requests for support in a specific timeline.
  - Schedule a follow up meeting with your pastor.
  - Invite the pastor to council meetings if he does not already attend. Make time in your meeting agenda to address parish support efforts.
  - Thank the pastor for his time.
6. Close in prayer, asking Father to bless the works of the council.

## Figure D: Suggested Methods to Engage Members

- Create a “phone tree” to make personal contact with every man in your council
- Talk with members to foster socialization and commitment
- Ensure members have necessary support and resources
- Communicate council recovery plans to all members
- Promote council plans through the parish web site and bulletin
- Encourage attendance at meetings and events
- Hold council meetings and events with hybrid options using virtual tools
- Solicit volunteer workers for scheduled events
- Encourage members to wear Knights of Columbus branded apparel



## Figure E: Sample Program Ideas

### Faith Programs

#### RSVP

- Support a seminarian through the Refund Support Vocations Program.

#### Into the Breach

- Into the Breach is a call to battle for Catholic men which urges them to embrace wholeheartedly masculine virtues in a world in crisis

#### Adoration

- Consider beginning the recovery efforts with a 24-hour adoration led by Knights for the whole parish

#### Rosary

- Invite members and parishioners to pray the rosary after some parish Masses. This program can be done monthly or quarterly

#### Eucharistic Processions

- Walk with the Blessed Sacrament through your community, bringing Jesus to everyone along the route.

### Family Programs

#### Family of the Month

- Recognize a council / parish family that models Christian family values

#### Food for Families

- Council and parish families raise funds and supplies to support their local food pantries

#### Family Prayer Night

- Council / parish families gather for prayer, food, and fellowship

### Community Programs

#### Helping Hands

- Support those in need in a manner that best serves local circumstances

#### Free Throw/Soccer/Hockey Championship

- Competitions for boys and girls

#### Blood Drive

- Hold blood drives for the community

### Life Programs

#### ASAP (Aid and Support After Pregnancy)

- Support a local pro-life pregnancy center

#### March for Life

- Witness in your community to establish a culture of life
- Arrange for council members and parishioners to attend National & State Marches for Life.

#### Mass for People with Special Needs

- Celebrating a Mass for People with Special Needs can be the first of many steps toward integrating them into regular weekly or even daily Mass

The [Remote Programming Supplement](#) has additional suggests and is a guide for expanded participation.

# **General Section**

# Fraternal Training

Fraternal Training is divided into categories:

- Council Officer Training
- Council Administration and Operations Training
- District and State Training
- Assembly Officer Training (Coming Soon)
- *Cor* Training

**Council Officer Training** has a focus on the roles and responsibilities of each elected Officer and appointed Directors. These sessions provide all council officers with a clear outline of their duties and helps prepare them for leadership. In addition, there is in depth training for all council officers responsible for the management of council funds.

**Council Administration and Operations Training** provides insights and deeper working knowledge into various aspects of council life. These sessions reference the most current policies, guidelines, tools, and best practices. Examples of the topics covered are recruiting new members, engagement of council members, council program planning, completing forms, working with budgets, conducting meetings, and much more.

**District and State Training** contains sessions for District Deputies and State Officers to aid them in the management and operation of their district or jurisdiction. In addition to in depth training for new or reappointed District Deputies, you will find sessions on establishing new councils, aiding in the rebuilding or reactivation of struggling councils, disaster relief procedures, and more.

**Assembly Officer Training** has a focus on the roles and responsibilities of the elected Officer of the assembly. These sessions provide all assembly officers with a clear outline of their duties and helps prepare them for leadership. In addition, there is in depth training for all officers responsible for the management of assembly funds.

**Cor Training** is focused on helping councils learn about council and parish implementation of Cor, including planning events, operational best practices, and much more.

All training courses are updated on at least an annual basis to provide members with the most current information and resources to be successful Knights of Columbus leaders.

The following QR codes will take you to the various sections of the training webpage:

## Fraternal Training Webinars

These monthly live webinars discuss relevant topics for effective council operation, membership recruitment, and charitable outreach programs that engage council members. Use the QR code to register for, and view, on-demand and upcoming sessions.



## Online Training Schedule

Fraternal trainers provide live training sessions tailored to meet the needs of both new and seasoned officers, as well as any member who is interested in becoming an officer in the future. Use the QR code to register for upcoming live sessions.



## Current On-Demand Training Schedule

Missed a live training session conducted by a fraternal trainer? Our sessions are recorded and available to view on-demand, providing our members the opportunity to view these information sessions at their convenience. Use the QR code to register.



## Fraternal Training Request Form

Fraternal trainers also provide training at the state, district, and council level, both virtually and in-person. If you are looking for a specialized training opportunity, a request can be made using this QR code.



## Fraternal Leader Advisory

The **Fraternal Leader Advisory** highlights current K of C initiatives. It is sent on the 1st & 3rd Thursday of each month to all state officers and directors, district deputies, council officers and directors, and assembly officers.

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# Fraternal Leader Advisory

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## College Councils

Knights of Columbus college councils play an essential role in the mission of our Order. At a time when young men are leaving the Church in droves, we seek to keep men Catholic during their college years. Membership in a college council affords Catholic students the opportunity to nourish their faith among like-minded men while being formed as leaders in the Knights of Columbus. College Councils are a terrific way for your jurisdiction to bring on large numbers of faithful and engaged young members. Additionally, these councils are an important training ground for our Order's future state and local leaders. Finally, once a man is a Knight, they are a Knight for life. This is experience that college men can take and use for the rest of their lives.

The College Councils Department oversees over 330 college councils worldwide (including 130 in the US & Canada), promotes special programs and initiatives, and organizes the annual College Councils Conference. State deputies should use the experience and knowledge of the College Councils Department when interacting with college Knights. To obtain a listing of college councils, please visit [kofc.org/college](http://kofc.org/college) or contact the College Councils Department at [college@kofc.org](mailto:college@kofc.org).

## General Information

There are several benefits and best practices in place for college councils that councils should be aware of:

- The Supreme Council recognizes a college council as a council formed at a college or university that meets the needs of the students and their campus community. The majority of members should be university students (at least 50%), although faculty and community members may join. Officer roles should be filled by students. Alumni or community members may serve as trustees.

- The financial secretary of a college council should be a faculty member or a permanent member of the community; at no point should the financial secretary be a student. Having a more permanent member of the campus community to serve as financial secretary provides continuity and oversight for the council as well as a liaison to the university administration.
- The College Councils Department has created a special line of promotional and programming materials for college councils. These materials include brochures and posters as well as programming materials like the College Movie Program and Consecration to St. Joseph. Free programming and recruitment materials are available to college councils via the Supplies Online portal. Contact the College Councils Department for additional information.
- Currently, Supreme does not assess per capita for College Councils. However, this is reviewed on an annual basis. State Councils are encouraged to consider adopting the same practice for their college councils.
- While there will be no Supreme Council assessments for college councils in 2025, it is recommended that college councils continue collecting council dues (anywhere from \$10 - \$30 is typical) as usual to support council operations and activities.
- Councils at seminaries (“seminarian councils”) are classified as college councils and fall under the management of the College Councils Department. In addition to the college program benefits, seminarian councils are currently exempt from all Supreme Council assessments. We encourage all State Councils to adopt the same policy.

## College Councils Conference

- Every fall the Supreme Council hosts the College Councils Conference in New Haven, CT. The annual conference brings together college Knights for a weekend of faith, fraternity, and leadership development. Attendees participate in a dynamic program of inspiring speakers, networking opportunities, and sessions on membership and programming best practices, Mass at St. Mary’s, and more. The 2025 College Councils Conference will take place the weekend of September 26th - 28th in New Haven, CT.
- More information on the College Councils Conference, as well as conference registration, can be found at [kofc.org/collegeconference](http://kofc.org/collegeconference)
- Every college council is expected to send TWO (2) student representatives. The Grand Knight and an underclassman are ideal as attendees. The Chaplain of the council and State College Coordinator are also invited. The number of council members permitted to attend may be subject to change on a case-by-case basis, depending on the performance of the council, how many spaces the conference has left, etc. To help facilitate attendance, Supreme will book and pay for travel for the conference. As a reminder, everyone who attends the conference will share a hotel room with the exception of chaplains.
- Annually at the College Conference the Supreme Council recognizes the achievements of college councils over the previous fraternal year. The prestigious “Outstanding College Council Award” is given to the council that best exemplifies the mission of college program. Additional awards are given for the most outstanding programs in each of the primary service categories and for the highest gains in membership and insurance. Every college council is encouraged to apply for these awards. The application is available on the college website ([kofc.org/college](http://kofc.org/college)) and is due on June 30th.

## College Councils Advisory Board

The College Councils Advisory Board is selected to represent the needs and interests of college Knights to the staff of the Supreme Council of the Knights of Columbus, to advise staff on new strategic initiatives, and to assist in the planning and organization of the annual College Councils Conference. In order to represent the diversity of the college program, the Supreme Council selects Advisory Board members from both public and private (Catholic and non-Catholic) schools. Additionally, regional representation is considered so that Advisory Board members can serve as a liaison between the Supreme Council and the schools in their geographic area.

Members of the College Councils Advisory Board are exemplary Knights of Columbus with demonstrated leadership, both in their college council and their campus community. They are ambassadors of the Knights of Columbus College Councils Program, and their conduct should model the high ideals and traditions of the Order. In other words, they are Catholic gentlemen.

Members of the College Councils Advisory Board serve for a one-year term and are expected to:

- Offer recommendations and proposals for strategic initiatives of the College Councils Program;
- Attend a weekend planning meeting in Connecticut in February or March;
- Plan and present training workshops during the annual College Councils Conference;
- Serve as a regional liaison for College Councils;
- Serve as an ambassador for the Knights of Columbus Supreme Council; and
- Participate in monthly video conferences.

Candidates should be undergraduate students with fraternal leadership experience (such as Grand Knight) in a Knights of Columbus college council. Candidates may also be seminarians. Additional experience demonstrating leadership potential includes employment, professional internships, and extracurricular activities. Candidates should also display the ability to manage multiple projects; proficiency with Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint; strong writing capability; and the ability to interact with others at all levels of an organization. Prior public speaking experience is desirable. Details on how to apply can be found at [KofC.org/College](http://KofC.org/College).

## **Military Councils**

The Knights of Columbus and the military have a collaborative history going back over 100 years. From the first “CASEY’s” and Knight’s Hut’s of World War 1 to Supreme Convention Color Guards and Warriors to Lourdes, military councils have been the key to success of keeping military men in the faith and being the strong right arm of our military chaplain’s. Membership in a military council affords Catholic service members the opportunity to nourish their faith among like-minded men who often are only in one location for three to four years. Members of Military Councils bring a breadth and depth of knowledge and experience, especially regarding planning and organizing. Military councils are key for jurisdictions when it comes to outreach and collaboration with local military communities. Finally, with the transient nature of military Knights, these councils bring fresh ideas that may help further the success of respective jurisdictions.

## **General Information**

Military Councils fall in two unique categories, Continental United States (CONUS) based, and Outside Continental United States (OCONUS).

CONUS based councils are considered the United States and Guam. These councils fall under the jurisdiction of their respective states.

OCONUS military councils are organized into districts under the purview of the Director of Warriors to Lourdes & Military Council Health.

There are several benefits and best practices in place for military councils that council and district leaders should be aware of:

- The Supreme Council recognizes a military council as a council formed on a military base meeting the needs of service members, their families, and the base Catholic community. Most members should be active duty, veterans, or military retirees.
- The financial secretary should be someone with longevity at the base. Having a more permanent member of the military community serve as financial secretary provides continuity and oversight for the council as well as a liaison to the Director of Warriors to Lourdes & Military Council Health and Director of Military Liaisons at the Supreme Office.
- While there will be no Supreme Council assessments for military councils in 2024, it is recommended that military councils continue collecting council dues (usually \$20 - \$30) as usual to support council operations and activities.
- Should concerns or questions arise regarding the Knights of Columbus operating on a military base due to policy or other concerns, contact the Director of Military Liaisons at the Supreme Office for clarification and deconfliction.
- All OCONUS military Councils are exempt from the requirement to host two Fraternal Benefit Events for the Founders Award and will not be penalized when considered for the Star Council Award if all other requirements are met.

# Fourth Degree

## Structure

The controlling authority of the Fourth Degree is the Order's Board of Directors. The board:

- Appoints the Supreme Master and the Vice Supreme Masters
- Creates new provinces, districts and assemblies
- Makes, amends and changes all laws, rules and regulations of the Fourth Degree

The Supreme Master holds administrative authority in the Fourth Degree and supervises all of its officers and assemblies. He appoints Vice Supreme Masters and District Masters and makes detailed reports and recommendations to the board of directors.

The Supreme Assembly consists of the Supreme Knight, Supreme Secretary, Supreme Master, and Vice Supreme Masters of the Fourth Degree. The Supreme Assembly meets annually to consider all matters relating to the welfare of the Fourth Degree and recommends to the board of directors amendments to the *Laws and Rules Governing the Fourth Degree*.

## Provinces

A Fourth Degree province exists under the authority of a Vice Supreme Master and consists of a number of Fourth Degree districts. The Provincial Assembly consists of the Vice Supreme Master and all District Masters in the province. It meets whenever the Supreme Master and the Board of Directors deems it advisable.

## Districts

The Fourth Degree district comprises a number of local assemblies in a given area and falls under the authority of the District Master. The district assembly is composed of the Faithful Navigator of each assembly and one delegate for each 100 members or major fraction thereof. It meets every two years in the even numbered years in March or April to consider Fourth Degree matters. It also selects three members to be recommended to the supreme master for his consideration in appointing a district master.

## Local Assemblies

Local assemblies serve one or more local councils and are structured like local councils, although different names are used for officers. The administrative authority of the local assembly falls to the Faithful Navigator.

## Color Corps

The local assembly's color corps is led by the Color Corps Commander who is appointed by the Faithful Navigator. The color corps provides the honor guard for assembly functions as well as for local council functions, and may provide color guards for the ceremonies with the colors (flags). Refer to the *Fourth Degree Color Corp Drill Manual* for details on the color corps and uniform.

Color corps rank and office is indicated through two methods. First, by a colored flash worn on the beret behind the metallic Fourth Degree crest. Second by the wear of a colored service baldric. The color designation for flash & service baldric are as follows:

Color Corps Commander (purple), Faith Navigator (white), District Marshal (green), District Master (gold), Vice Supreme Master (light blue), and Supreme Master (navy).

Color corps members not holding office do not wear a flash behind the crest and uses the Fourth Degree membership service baldric.

(Note: Only Past Supreme Masters, Vice Supreme Masters, District Masters and Faithful Navigators are entitled to wear the color of their position after they leave office.)

## Relationship to the Membership Degree

The Fourth Degree exists as a separate entity focusing on patriotism, but it is part of — not apart from — the membership Degree. All assembly members must be members in good standing of the Membership Degree. ***(Suspension or withdrawal from the Membership Degree automatically terminates membership in the Patriotic Degree.)***

The Fourth Degree contributes to the stability of the Membership Degree because the suspension rate is less than one percent. Additionally, the Fourth Degree is the visible arm of the Knights of Columbus. The regalia and the presence of the color corps in churches and at other functions often lead potential members to consider joining the Order.

## Fourth Degree Programs

Assemblies should not participate in or sponsor programs in competition or conflict with councils. Fourth degree programs include:

- The “Serving Those Who Served” Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) program
- Military Chaplains Scholarship Program
- Wakes and honor guards for Knights and veterans
- Flag Day June 14-Knights of Columbus “One Nation Under God” program
- Memorial Day cemetery services
- Assembly civic programs
- Culture of life efforts
- Parades and civic ceremonies
- Voter registration and “Get Out the Vote” campaigns
- Immigration, naturalization and citizenship programs
- Essay and poster contests on historical or patriotic subjects
- Flag display programs and distribution of patriotic information

## Protocol

Proper protocol should be followed by all fraternal leaders. Protocol, by definition, is basic common courtesy. Protocol, Ceremonials, and Meetings contains specific information governing many types of situations where protocol is involved. Keep in mind, however, that where there is no specific rule governing a situation, you will not go wrong by employing common courtesy. Please consult *Protocol, Meetings, and Ceremonials* for proper procedures.

## Insurance Matters

### Current Status

As of December 31, 2022, the insurance in force for the Knights of Columbus topped \$121 billion. During 2022, more than \$7.3 billion of new insurance was issued. These achievements are a result of the dedication of the Order’s professional field force of 74 General Agents, 86 Assistant General Agents and 819 Field Agents.

It is important to remember that these feats have been accomplished with only one out of every three members purchasing insurance from the Order. Our field force is to be commended – as you are, for the cooperation they are afforded – for the continued growth of the Order’s insurance program. Yet our potential is great. The goal is to make the Order’s greatest fraternal benefit, our top-rated insurance program, available to every Knights of Columbus member and his family.

### Structure

The structure of our field force is simple and effective. The general agent is charged with recruiting, training and supervising the field agents in his agency. In some cases, he is assisted by one or several assistant general agents. Each agency can serve as many as 30,000 Knights of Columbus families, although agency size will vary depending on the territory and the general agent.



The regional agency executive consultant, who also serves as a general agent in charge of his own agency, is our regional executive, overseeing approximately 20 agencies. He serves as the region's insurance leader, and acts as a liaison between the home office and the field force. He is assisted in his efforts by a field director.

With over two million members, our field force should continue to grow. This is the best way to ensure that the benefits of our insurance program are made available to every member and his family.

## **Products and Purpose**

Remember that the Knights of Columbus insurance program was Blessed Michael McGivney's principal motivation for founding our Order. He frequently witnessed the devastation wrought on Catholic families — including his own — when the breadwinner died unexpectedly. He saw the Knights as a solution to that problem.

In the years since he began the rudimentary insurance program, much has changed, but the mission of offering financial protection to brother Knights and their families has not. Today, that mission is carried out through a product portfolio that offers a wide variety of products designed to meet members' needs. Permanent life insurance, term life, long-term care insurance, disability income insurance and retirement annuities are available in amounts large and small so that members in almost every age and income category can protect themselves and their families. The Order also offers many riders, features, and benefits on our plans to make them uniquely suited to our members and their families.

The Knights of Columbus also has Family Fraternal Benefits, an Orphan Fraternal Benefits program and a Member/Spouse Fraternal Benefit. The Family Fraternal Benefits program provides benefits to members with children that are physically challenged or intellectually disabled. The Orphan Fraternal Benefits program can provide a monthly stipend to orphans of qualified members until the orphan reaches their 23rd birthday if they are a full-time student. The Member/Spouse Fraternal Benefit provides a death benefit should a member (in good standing and his council must also be in good standing) or his spouse die as a result of an accident.

How are premium rates for life insurance established? The Order uses modern mortality tables to determine how many of a given group will die at certain ages. Modest assumed rates of interest are calculated as all funds collected by the Order are immediately invested. Reasonable expenses are also taken into consideration. These three factors — mortality, interest and expenses — if favorable, produce dividends (not guaranteed), which on an equitable and proportionate basis are returned to the policyholders.

## **Sales and Service**

Life insurance is a product which is purchased with discretionary dollars — those dollars left over after the so-called necessities of life (food, clothing and shelter) are met. Without question, this type of product is difficult to sell. Yet this is the task facing a Knights of Columbus field agent. His earnings are based on commission (no sale, no pay). The work is time-consuming (most prospects are available only during evening hours). Additionally, much service work is associated with the administration of the product over long periods of time. A life insurance contract can be one of extremely long duration. A home mortgage might run as long as 30 years, but a life insurance contract can run much longer. The insurance needs and goals of the member will change over time and the field agent makes sure the member's insurance plan meets those needs.

To be successful in this rewarding job, our agents need the cooperation and support of the Supreme Council, the State Deputy, his officers and our entire membership. It's also important to realize that the financial resources afforded by our insurance program support many of our charitable and fraternal activities.

The most important job of the field agents is to sell adequate life insurance to our members. This is "job one." But the sale does not end the client-agent relationship. Our field agents also service the insurance, which often requires changes as time passes. Changes of beneficiaries, changes of address, loan and surrender requests, changes in plans, etc. are all routinely handled by the field agent. In addition, he is strongly encouraged to aid and assist local council officers with their membership goals and other activities, and he will make every effort to help. This help should be in the capacity of a committeeman, with committee chairman positions held by fraternal leaders. State officers, district deputies and local council officers are encouraged to seek the assistance of our field force, just as they will often seek help from the State Deputy.

It is true now more than ever that our field force is comprised of well-trained, professional salesmen. With this in mind, the State Deputy should be aware of any member of the Order who would be interested in a full-time position in insurance sales, and refer that individual to the general agent. It is a career of hard work, without question. But it is also one filled with many rewards, both financially and spiritually.

## **Fraternal Benefit Events**

General agents and Insurance agents regularly hold Fraternal Benefit events, both in-person and virtual. These are educational presentations that focus on some of the most pressing financial issues that our members face today.

In these seminars, agents cover a wide range of topics from retirement strategies to estate preservation to charitable gifting and more. These exclusive events are designed to help our members become more aware of the tremendous financial benefits offered by the Knights of Columbus.

It is an opportunity for current and prospective Knights to learn more about the Knights of Columbus and the fraternal and financial benefits available.

## **Investments**

In order to accomplish the charitable mission of the Knights of Columbus, councils routinely raise money, which can then be donated to worthy causes. This mission also calls our members to become personally involved in fundraising and charitable activities.

Although some councils maintain a large bank account or investment portfolio, we recommend that councils conduct their financial affairs and charitable giving so that accumulated general funds do not exceed \$10,000. Larger and more active councils may maintain a larger balance in order to cover the expenses for their activities. Also, some councils may exceed the recommended \$10,000 cap because of special circumstances, such as the receipt of a restricted legacy gift or proceeds from the sale of home corporation property.

The recommended \$10,000 cap on a council's general fund is intended to avoid common problems associated with the accumulation and investment of money. For example:

- Investing and managing funds frequently causes discord and dissension among members who may disagree about investment decisions.
- Conflicts of interest frequently arise when members (or friends/relatives of members) in the investment business seek to manage the funds.
- The accumulation of large sums of money may lead members to handle those funds unwisely, despite their good intentions.
- Having access to a large amount of funds may be a temptation to self-dealing on the part of some members.
- Having large sums of money can sometime cause councils to become less active

Councils are authorized to receive funds into their general account in the course of ordinary fraternal and charitable activities. To the extent that these funds are not immediately disbursed for necessary expenses and charitable donations, they may be held in other bank and investment accounts. However, councils should never invest or hold funds in brokerage accounts, stocks, annuities, non-Catholic mutual funds (other than government money market mutual funds), bonds, or other investments, such as gold, silver or platinum. Except under the special circumstances described above, the Supreme Council does not advise, encourage, recommend, or permit councils to invest or hold funds in any type of account other than the following:

- Ordinary short-term certificates of deposit
- Simple savings accounts
- Simple checking accounts
- Simple money market accounts
- Government money market mutual funds
- Mutual Funds including Knights of Columbus Mutual Funds

For example, councils may choose to place funds in excess of \$10,000 in a short-term certificate of deposit while waiting to disburse the excess funds for an intended purpose. It is also acceptable for a council to hold excess funds

in a certificate of deposit as a reserve to cover a known expense or liability that is coming due in the future. The funds should be held under the name and Tax Identification Number of the council, and only the officers identified in the bylaws may have access to the account. The financial officers and trustees are responsible for keeping the members informed of where the funds are deposited. A program or committee chairman may never mix Knights of Columbus funds with personal funds.

In the event that a council receives proceeds from the sale of home corporation property, the council is encouraged to honor the legacy of the brother Knights who acquired and maintained the property over the long term. This can be done by investing in a diversified portfolio of Catholic values investments (e.g., Knights of Columbus Mutual Funds) to pursue ongoing charitable support in the name of the council.

Councils may not create charitable trusts or set up tax-exempt charitable corporations. However, councils that wish to set aside funds for charitable contributions are strongly encouraged to consider setting up a donor-advised fund. Knights of Columbus Charitable Fund (KCCF) has been established as a charitable corporation that offers a donor-advised fund in order to facilitate Catholic-compliant philanthropy for dioceses, councils, individuals, and other institutions. A Knights of Columbus council may set up a donor-advised fund with the KCCF through a simple application process. Individuals may contribute directly to a council's KCCF account and are eligible to claim a charitable deduction on their tax returns.

A donor-advised fund provides a valuable service to councils that have a significant amount of money in a bank account, or hold other liquid assets (e.g., a council that has received money from the proceeds of the sale of a home corporation facility, or a large bequest from a generous donor). Also, a council may wish to establish a dedicated account to receive donations for a specific Faith in Action program (e.g., American Wheelchair Mission, Ultrasound Initiative, etc.).

For assistance in creating a KCCF account or for more information please contact Dennis Gerber, President, Knights of Columbus Charitable Fund, at 475-227-6701 or visit [Knightscharitable.org](http://Knightscharitable.org).

Alternatively, if a council has accumulated assets to be invested in support of a particular program (e.g., scholarships) or another appropriate long-term need, the decision as to how to invest should be guided by Catholic moral principles. As an organization of Catholic men, it is imperative that Knights of Columbus councils comply with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) guidelines in their investment activities. There is no return on investment great enough to justify risking the good name and integrity of the Order by investing in ways that might violate Catholic teaching.

To the extent that a council wishes to invest accumulated funds, the council should retain a qualified and registered investment advisor who is knowledgeable about making investment decisions on behalf of charitable organizations and in accordance with Catholic moral principles. Knights of Columbus Asset Advisors ([www.kofcassetadvisors.org](http://www.kofcassetadvisors.org)) meets these qualifications.

Knights of Columbus Asset Advisors offers a suite of Catholic investment options, consistent with Catholic moral principles, that provides investors with access to the same institutional investment management expertise that guides the Supreme Council's multi-billion dollar portfolio for its own insurance and charitable programs. For assistance in designing an asset allocation program that meets the specific needs of a council, designated council representatives are invited to consult with Knights of Columbus Asset Advisors. Please contact Thom Duffy\*, Vice President, Head of Investment Advisory Services and Sales Support, at (203) 752-4417 or [thomas.duffy@kofc.org](mailto:thomas.duffy@kofc.org).

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\* Thom Duffy is registered with Vigilant Distributors, LLC which is not affiliated with Knights of Columbus Asset Advisors LLC or its affiliates. This communication is provided for informational purposes only. Investing involves the risk of loss and investors should be prepared to bear potential losses. No portion of this commentary is to be construed as a solicitation to buy or sell a security or the provision of personalized investment, tax or legal advice. Knights of Columbus Asset Advisors is an SEC registered investment adviser that maintains a principal place of business in the State of Connecticut. For additional information about Knights of Columbus Asset Advisor's business operations, please consult the Firm's Form ADV disclosure documents, the most recent versions of which are available on the SEC's Investment Adviser Public Disclosure website at [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov) / [www.adviserinfo.sec.gov](http://www.adviserinfo.sec.gov). Knights of Columbus Asset Advisors, LLC, is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Knights of Columbus, the world's largest Catholic Lay Organization.

Invested funds should be held under the name and Tax Identification Number (also known as an Employer Identification Number or EIN) of the council, and only the officers identified in the bylaws may have signature authority over the account. The financial officers and trustees are responsible for keeping the members informed about how the funds are invested.

Regardless of how a council decides to invest or donate its funds, all disbursements and distributions must be made in accordance with the procedures set forth in Section 122(b) of the Laws of the Knights of Columbus.

## DONOR-ADVISED FUND

Knights of Columbus Charitable Fund (KCCF) is a 501(c)3 public charity which sponsors a donor-advised fund program and other charitable planning vehicles for dioceses, councils, individuals, and other institutions. A donor-advised fund (DAF) is a charitable vehicle which allows donors to make irrevocable charitable contributions, potentially receive an immediate tax deduction, and recommend grants to other 501(c)3 public charities over time. A KCCF Council Account is a donor-advised fund for the local Knights of Columbus Council or State Council. With an annual administrative fee of 0.20%, the Council Account is easy to open and there are no minimum initial contribution or minimum balances on the fund.

The Council Account is the non-profit, tax-deductible arm of the Knights of Columbus council without all the added administration of administering a 501(c)3 public charity. KCCF also provides a giving link for each council account, this allows individuals to contribute to the Council Account online through credit card and e-check. Once a donor submits his donation to the council account, KCCF handles the processing of the donation, the acknowledgement for the donor, and the account for the gift. At that point the council simply can review who has donated, how much they have donated, and make grant recommendations to the charities they are looking to support.

A Council Account also provides a valuable service to councils that have a significant amount of money in a bank account, or hold other liquid assets (e.g., a council that has received money from the proceeds of the sale of a home corporation facility, or a large bequest from a generous donor). Also, a council may wish to establish a dedicated account to



**CHARITY**



**THE CHURCH  
& FAITH MINISTRIES**



**COMMUNITY SERVICE**

receive donations for a specific Faith in Action program (e.g., American Wheelchair Mission, Ultrasound Program, etc.).

To create a council account please visit [knightscharitable.org](http://knightscharitable.org) or if you are looking for more information please contact KCCF at [charitablefund@kofc.org](mailto:charitablefund@kofc.org).

Alternatively, if a council has accumulated assets to be invested in support of a particular program (e.g., scholarships) or another appropriate long term need, the decision as to how to invest should be guided by Catholic moral principles. As an organization of Catholic men, it is imperative that Knights of Columbus councils comply with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) guidelines in their investment activities. There is no return on investment great enough to justify risking the good name and integrity of the Order by investing in ways that might violate Catholic teaching.

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## **Knights of Columbus Office of Youth Protection (OYP)**

The Knights of Columbus takes very seriously its commitment to protect children and other vulnerable persons. When Brother Knights protect children and other vulnerable persons they serve, they live out their VOCATION of FATHERHOOD. In the words of Supreme Knight Patrick Kelly: "Protecting our children is the sacred duty of every Knight." This is why the Knights of Columbus has a policy of ZERO TOLERANCE with respect to abuse. This crime directly contradicts the identity and mission of the Knights of Columbus and has no place in the Order.

A critical part of our commitment to protect children and other vulnerable persons is to work together with local dioceses to ensure that we all meet our respective duties to protect. Our members are "Parishioners First, Knights Second." That is why the first requirement of our safe environment program is for our members to follow diocesan safe environment requirements applicable to members' volunteer activities in their parish. Our policy on diocesan requirements is straightforward - if members of the Knights of Columbus volunteer in their parish, whether in activities sponsored by the Knights of Columbus or in Church or parish ministry, they are not only volunteering with the Knights of Columbus, but they are also serving as parish volunteers. Our members must complete diocesan safe environment requirements applicable to parish volunteers in their respective parishes and dioceses. For more information visit [kofc.org/safe](http://kofc.org/safe). Please direct all inquiries to [oyp@kofc.org](mailto:oyp@kofc.org).

### **Compliance with Diocesan Safe Environment Requirements**

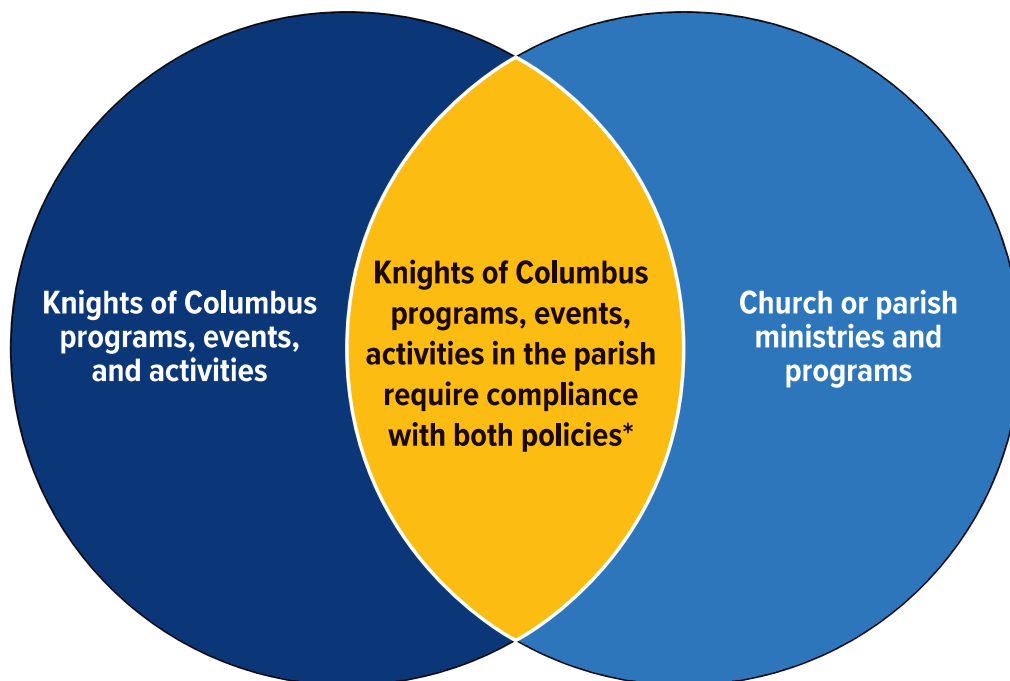
When complying with diocesan safe environment policies, grand knights and financial secretaries of parish-based councils should:

1. Make a list of all members who serve as volunteers in their parish\* for one or more Knights of Columbus programs, events, and activities. ("Eligible Member Volunteer List").
2. Ask each member on the list whether he has completed the diocesan safe environment training and background screening.
3. If the member volunteer has already completed the diocesan requirements, then the date of completion of the diocesan requirements should be recorded next to the member volunteer's name on the council's Eligible Member Volunteer List.
4. If the member volunteer has not completed the diocesan requirements, he must do so as soon as possible to maintain his eligibility to continue to volunteer for the Knights of Columbus in his parish.\*
5. The council should provide its Eligible Member Volunteer List to the parish priest, the parish safe environment liaison, and to the diocesan safe environment coordinator upon request.
6. The council should update its the Eligible Member Volunteer List with new member volunteers who become eligible to volunteer in their parish.\*
7. The council should confirm the names on its Eligible Member Volunteer List regularly throughout the fraternal year.

# Safe Environment Policies Overlap

Knights of Columbus Policy

Diocesan Policy



Office of  
Youth Protection

Membership alone does not constitute volunteer activity. Membership does not require volunteer activity in a parish.\* Members are not exempt from diocesan safe environment requirements applicable to parish volunteers by virtue of their being members. Council business meetings are limited to members over 18 years old, and are not a parish or church ministry.

## Reporting Allegations of Sexual Misconduct – ZERO TOLERANCE

When we receive allegations of sexual misconduct against one of our members, his membership is suspended, and he is removed from our organization. Nearly all allegations of sexual misconduct we receive are totally unrelated to membership in the Knights of Columbus and arise out of other circumstances in the member's life, such as employment situations, family situations, or within some youth serving program or church ministry. These allegations can vary, from a report of a boundary violation to an arrest, charge, or conviction of a sex or child related crime, or being listed on a sex offender registry.

A state or local council officer or a district deputy should notify the Office of Youth Protection at [oyp@kofc.org](mailto:oyp@kofc.org) as soon as possible when he becomes aware that a member has ever been:

- CHARGED WITH OR FOUND GUILTY BY A COURT OF ANY OFFENSE INVOLVING CHILDREN;
- CHARGED WITH OR FOUND GUILTY BY A COURT OF ANY SEX-RELATED OFFENSE; OR
- SUED IN COURT FOR ANY WRONGFUL CONDUCT AGAINST CHILDREN OR FOR A SEX-RELATED OFFENSE.

To the extent there is a need for suspension or other action, it will be handled by the Board of Directors, through the Office of Youth Protection and the Office of the Supreme Secretary.

In the rare circumstance of an allegation of sexual misconduct against a member directly arising out of his membership in the Knights of Columbus and in connection with a program or activity sponsored by the Knights of Columbus, the Knights of Columbus follows a clear protocol:

- REPORT TO LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT,
- NOTIFY THE DIOCESE,

- NOTIFY THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS VIA THE YOUTH PROTECTION HELPLINE **(844)-563-2723**.

**Office of Youth Protection:** [oyp@kofc.org](mailto:oyp@kofc.org)

203-752-4558 • 855-845-3502 (fax)

[www.kofc.org/safe](http://www.kofc.org/safe)

## Knights of Columbus Safe Environment Program (SEP)

Our Safe Environment Program (SEP) assures members and their families that we maintain a safe environment for all those whom we serve, protects members from awkward situations, misunderstandings, and appearances of impropriety, builds trust with dioceses and parishes, and protects the good name of the Knights of Columbus.

Our program is operated in conjunction with our strategic partner in youth protection and safe environments – PRAESIDIUM, Inc. Praesidium specializes in providing safe environment training and background checks to help prevent sexual abuse in organizations that serve youth and other vulnerable persons. For more information, go to [www.praesidiuminc.com](http://www.praesidiuminc.com)

Under Faith in Action, certain state and council officers/directors are required to complete the Order’s safe environment training and may also be required to provide authorization for a background check.

**If members in certain roles are not compliant within 30 days of notification, they are subject to removal from those roles.**

Email addresses are required when completing the Service Program Personnel Report for the program, community, and family director roles. Praesidium, the Order’s safe environment partner, will email grand knights, program, family, and community directors assigned usernames and passwords to complete the training. They will also email family and community directors a personalized link to provide background check authorization. The Knights of Columbus covers all costs associated with these requirements. Although the grand knight may also hold one of the following roles, there must be three (3) different members assigned to the program, family, and community director roles.

ROLES	TRAINING	BACKGROUND CHECK	OFFICERS ONLINE – REPORTS
<b>State Council</b>			
State Deputy	✓		✓
State Advocate	✓		✓
State Program Director	✓		✓
State Youth Director	✓	✓	✓
State Family Director	✓	✓	✓
State Community Director	✓	✓	✓
State Squire Chairman	✓	✓	✓
<b>Subordinate Council</b>			
Grand Knight	✓		✓
Faithful Navigator	✓		✓
Program Director	✓		
Family Director	✓	✓	
Community Director	✓	✓	
Chief Counselor	✓	✓	
Adult Counselor	✓	✓	

*Safe Environment Program Training and Background Check Requirements — Table 1*

Email notifications are time-sensitive and require the recipient to complete training and background check authorization within 30 days of receipt. For a council to be compliant with the safe environment program, all SEP

roles must be filled and compliant. If the council sponsors a Columbian Squire Circle, the Circle must also be fully compliant. The following criteria must be met for a council to be compliant with the requirements of the Knights of Columbus Safe Environment Program:

- 1) Email addresses are mandatory to appoint members into ALL roles that have safe environment requirements. Emails must be unique to the member, NOT generic like gkcouncil123@XYZ.com to ensure that members retain credit for completing their training and background checks.
- 2) There must be a Grand Knight assigned via The *Report of Officers Chosen* through Member Management.
- 3) The council must have submitted the *Service Program Personnel Report* or named program personnel via online Member Management. Watch this video to learn how to submit online:  
[https://players.brightcove.net/802593642001/y6FLila0f\\_default/index.html?videoId=6191938577001](https://players.brightcove.net/802593642001/y6FLila0f_default/index.html?videoId=6191938577001)
- 4) On the 365 Report, there must be three different members assigned to:
  - a. Program Director
  - b. Community Director
  - c. Family Director

\*Grand Knights may only hold one of the additional director roles listed above.

- 5) All roles above must complete the safe environment training. The Community Director and the Family Director must also provide consent for a background screening (criminal and motor vehicle records).
- 6) If the council sponsors a Squires Circle, that Circle must be compliant for the council to be compliant. The following criteria need to be met for the Circle to be compliant:
  - a. The Circle Officers and Chairmen Form must be submitted appointing counselors every year
  - b. One (1) Chief Counselor must be appointed
  - c. A minimum of one (1) Adult Counselor must be appointed
  - d. The Circle must have a minimum of ten (10) Squires
  - e. For every additional ten (10) squires, there must be one (1) additional Adult Counselor
    - i. Example 1: 10-20 Squires must have 1 Chief Counselor + 1 Adult Counselor
    - ii. Example 2: 21-30 Squires must have 1 Chief Counselor + 2 Adult Counselors
    - iii. Example 3: 31-40 Squires must have 1 Chief Counselor + 3 Adult Counselors et cetera
  - f. Chief Counselor and Adult Counselor(s) must complete training and provide consent to a background screening.

All members who have access to Officers Online may view the safe environment status of their council or jurisdiction each week on the Reports tab.

**Knights of Columbus Office of Youth Protection Member Helpline:**

[youthleader@kofc.org](mailto:youthleader@kofc.org)  
203-800-4940 • 855-845-3502 (fax)  
[www.kofc.org/safe](http://www.kofc.org/safe)







Thank you for taking on the responsibility of being a leader in the Knights of Columbus. Through your example of faith, charity and sound judgment, you provide the model to follow. Your leadership can set a tone that is open and engaging, which will ensure growth in charitable outreach and membership.

This resource book will provide you with practical information and instructions for success in conducting and growing charitable activities and increasing membership. Additional information is also available through the Officers' Desk Reference and on the Knights of Columbus Website [kofc.org](http://kofc.org).

**This Resource Book is effective on May 1st, 2025. It supersedes all previously published material relating to the topics herein. It remains in effect until formally revised.**

