

# The Satellite Club Concept

Source-Rotary International website & District 5170 website

## What is a Satellite Club?

Satellite clubs provide another option for creating Rotary clubs. A satellite club functions as a short-term, transitional step on the way to becoming a full, independent Rotary club. This allows interested persons to become Rotarians without meeting the requirement of having at least 20 persons to organize a separate Rotary club. Rotarians who are absent from regular Rotary club meetings can make these up by attending satellite club meetings.

Satellite clubs are branch clubs of a sponsor club. The satellite club members are Rotarians and considered members of the sponsor club. Only eight members and the support of a sponsor club are needed to start a satellite club. They often offer a different club environment or meeting time and location from their sponsor club. Like a Rotary club, satellite clubs hold regular meetings, have bylaws and a board, and get involved in community service projects. The sponsor club provides advice and support. In some cases, satellite clubs may grow and apply to become a separate Rotary club. Satellite club members are Rotarians. Officially, they are members of the sponsor club.

Satellite clubs are not substandard Rotary clubs. Their members are members of their sponsor club, and therefore, Rotarians. They have club leaders and committees, conduct service projects, and meet regularly, just like traditional Rotary clubs.

## Application Process:

- The sponsoring club president sends an application to Club and District Support. (See attachment)
- New satellite clubs must have at least 8 members at the time they form in order to satisfy the requirements of Article 13, Section 6(b) of the Standard Rotary Club Constitution. There is no maximum number of members.
- Satellite Club name: The word "Satellite" must be in the club's name. (Ex: The Rotary Satellite Club of Los Altos)

## Board & Governance:

Satellite clubs set up their own board and have their own officers. However, instead of a president, a satellite club has a chair.

The board of the sponsor club has the final authority when there are disagreements.

It is not required but highly recommended that the leadership of the satellite club have a position on the sponsor club's board.

The satellite club determines its own bylaws in collaboration with its sponsor club.

The satellite club determines its meeting place and time in consultation with its sponsor club.

The satellite club should have a separate meeting, although it may meet jointly with the sponsor club from time to time.

Can satellite clubs sponsor Interact or Rotaract clubs?

**No.** But if the satellite's sponsor club sponsors an Interact or Rotaract club, it may appoint a satellite club member to serve as the Rotarian contact and mentor for the Interact or Rotaract club.

All clubs, including satellite clubs, are strongly encouraged to set goals to achieve success. However, Rotary Club Central can't accommodate satellite club goals at this time.

Does someone who has only served as the chair of a satellite club meet the qualifications for district governor-nominee?

**No.** Only Rotary club presidents can be nominated for district governor. However, the district can ask the Rotary International president to waive this requirement.

### **MEMBERSHIP AND DUES**

Are satellite club members Rotarians?

**Yes.** They are members of the sponsor club.

Does the sponsor club need to approve new satellite club members?

The sponsor and satellite clubs should work out a process for adding new satellite club members at the time the satellite is being formed. The sponsor club should also add that process to its bylaws. If a conflict arises with satellite club membership, the sponsor club has the final say. As members of the sponsor club, satellite club members are ultimately subject to the authority of the sponsor club's board.

Do satellite club members pay Rotary dues?

**Yes.** Satellite club members are Rotarians and pay the same Rotary dues as the sponsor club's members.

Do satellite clubs receive a dues invoice?

**No.** The satellite club members are included on the sponsor club's dues invoice.

Can a satellite club have a separate dues structure?

**Yes.** The satellite club determines its dues structure in collaboration with its sponsor club.

### **CHANGES IN CLUB STATUS AND SPONSORSHIP**

How long can a satellite club exist?

Satellite clubs are intended as a temporary step on the way to becoming a full, independent Rotary club. However, there is no time limit on the life of a satellite club.

How does a satellite club apply to become a new, independent Rotary club?

The satellite club works with the sponsor club and district governor to complete Rotary's new club application.

Can a satellite club transfer to a different sponsor club?

**No.** The sponsor and satellite clubs are permanently linked. The satellite club would need to be terminated and the members would have to start a new satellite club with a different sponsor club.

How does a sponsor club terminate a satellite club?

The sponsor club president or secretary terminates each satellite club member as provided for in Article 15 of the Standard Rotary Club Constitution. Next, the sponsor president or secretary removes the terminated members from the sponsor club roster, either in My Rotary or by emailing Data Services (data@rotary.org). Finally, the sponsor club president notifies Club and District Support. The CDS representative will confirm that the satellite club no longer has any members, request termination, and notify the sponsor club president when the process is complete.

How does a sponsor club resign?

The sponsor or satellite club should contact Club and District Support. The CDS representative will confirm the resignation in writing with the sponsor club president and satellite club chair. No change will be made unless they are in agreement.

If the sponsor club is terminated, can the satellite club continue on its own?

**No.** The satellite club is terminated with the sponsor club.

If an existing weak club becomes a satellite club, can it revert to autonomous club status?

Satellite clubs are a new way to start a Rotary club. When a satellite club is ready, it may apply to become a full Rotary club.

***This summary was sourced from the Rotary International and District 5170 websites.***

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