



Satellite Club or New Club – The Right Fit

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I. Introduction and History

Following the Council on Legislation in 2013 a Rotary club is now able to establish its own Satellite Club. There is no limit on the number or type of Satellite Clubs that may be formed by the Sponsor or Host Club.

Satellite Clubs are an extension of the Sponsor Club and offer an alternative meeting time and place to the Sponsor Club. A member of a Satellite Club is a member of the Sponsor Club and subject to the same rules as any other member. Financial dues will be the same for both clubs but the Satellite Club may negotiate with the Sponsor Club to charge a different cost for weekly meetings. The Satellite Club may use a different formula to determine their member's fees (weekly and annual) provided the Sponsor Club agrees and it provides a positive cash flow.

There are no minimum numbers required to form a Satellite Club other than the expectation that the club have sufficient numbers to conduct its meeting and programs independently.

Prior to the change in 2013, there was a Satellite club pilot project. The satellite club pilot project is different than the new Satellite club policy. The pilot was intended to test a variety of meeting times for a single club. The pilot continued through 2014.

1) Governance of a Satellite Club

Satellite Club Oversight. The sponsor/parent club provides general oversight and support of a satellite club as is deemed appropriate by the board.

For the day-to-day governance of a satellite club, it has its own annually elected board drawn from its members and comprising the officers of the satellite club and four to six other members as the bylaws provide. The highest officer of the satellite club shall be the chairman and other officers shall be the immediate past chairman, the chairman-elect, the secretary and the treasurer.

The satellite board is responsible for the day-to-day organization and management of the satellite club and its activities in accordance with Rotary rules, requirements, policies, aims and objectives under the guidance of the sponsor club. It shall have no authority within, or over, this club.

II. Satellite Club Strategy

Viewed tactically, starting a new Satellite Club can be viewed as a first step towards starting a new Rotary Club.

Viewed strategically, Satellite Clubs can be used to address a wide variety of needs from penetrating underserved market niches to addressing issues related to outdated Rotary club culture. In some places, full blown clubs make sense; in other places satellite clubs are the perfect answer.

Consider the following 4 box matrix that depicts the clubs and communities that exist within a district. On the X- axis or the bottom left/right axis, clubs may be experiencing long-term decreases or increases in membership. On the Y-axis, or the top down axis communities may be experiencing long term growth or declines in population.



1. **Green.** is a community where the population has been increasing over the past 5-10 years. The number of Rotarians have been growing over the same period time. In this situation, there may well be many new areas that have developed that are not being served. A satellite club might be too modest in light of the potential. We are probably better off with new clubs. If a satellite club is being considered it should be viewed as a stepping stone to a full club in the near future.
2. **Purple.** This is a community where the population has been decreasing but the number of Rotarians has been increasing. Current club culture must be very strong to achieve this. Rotary may be better off developing satellite clubs and seeding them with one or two members from the sponsor clubs to help extend the culture and energy into the new satellites which can also then grow and expand.
3. **Orange.** This is a community where the population is growing but the number of Rotarians has been decreasing. Generally, this is a tough situation. Something might be wrong with the culture in some existing clubs. Strategically, Rotary might be better off with a new and vibrant culture. If satellite clubs are used, they should be just a stepping stone to a full-blown club so that the real potential is not lost. If current club members are involved with the creation of new satellite clubs, they should view this as an opportunity

- to build a new culture - not bring the values and outlook of the current clubs to the new satellite.
4. **Blue.** This is a community where populations are decreasing and members are decreasing. Satellite clubs could be used to target under-served segments of the population. Ethnic segments, are one possibility.
 5. Not included on the grid are clubs that have had under 10 members for a long time. These clubs are not likely to be the best sponsors for a new satellite club. There is a risk that their no-growth culture might spread to the satellite destroying any potential for a new vibrant club.

III. Description and Process

1. Purpose:

A Satellite Club may be formed to:

1. Take the first step in chartering a new club
2. Accommodate rural and remote areas or communities with small populations
3. Accommodate large metropolitan areas in allowing one club to provide several meeting times and locations
4. Provide an opportunity for a small, weak or struggling club to become connected to a larger, active club for ongoing mentoring, support and assistance
5. Accommodate different demographic groups such as young people where the established Rotary club doesn't suit them or isn't attractive to them

2. Role of the Sponsor Club

1. The Sponsor Club decide why, when and how they will establish a Satellite Club. This determines the approach, marketing, and selection of members for the satellite club. The methods used to form a Satellite Clubs in a neighboring rural town can be significantly different than a city club targeted at former Rotoractors or 30-somethings.
2. The Sponsor Club should appoint a committee to be responsible for the research and establishment of the Satellite Club. The District may likewise appoint a Governors Rep to assist as necessary.
3. The Sponsor club committee should research the locality, meeting day and time, membership demographic, community need, etc.
4. A Rotary Club President may sponsor a Satellite Club. The Club Board can help in this process by investigating the merits of a Satellite Club.
5. The Club President should lead a discussion at a club forum to discuss the merits and support for forming a Satellite Club.
6. Apply to Rotary International (through District Governor) for approval of the Satellite Club.
7. There are two types of applications required to establish a Satellite Club:
 - a. The first application is completed by the Sponsor Club and is made to the District Governor seeking approval to start a Satellite Club (prior to releasing publicity about the new club).

- b. The second application is completed by each prospective members of the Satellite club.
8. This document should be signed by Sponsor Club AND Satellite Club with list of names of prospective members.
9. The Sponsor Club must apply to the District Governor (with supporting information) to form a Satellite Club and approval must be given in writing before any information is made public.
10. Following approval by the District Governor, the Club committee should advertise for interested people through the Sponsor Club, other local clubs, local community leaders, community groups, newspapers, etc.
11. The Sponsor Club Board has the right of review and comment before the applicants can be advised that they have been accepted. Satellite Club members are part of the Sponsor Club until the Satellite Club decides to charter. The Sponsor Club will commit to update its Constitution, By-Laws and Rules as soon as practicable to recognize Satellite Clubs and accommodate its management
12. The Sponsor Club will prepare a Memorandum of Understanding to be signed by the leaders of both clubs
13. The Sponsor Club must ensure that all members comply with all the obligations and rules of Rotary membership regardless of which club they attend. The clubs must have a close relationship with regular communication to ensure a happy and harmonious existence.
14. There is no Charter issued for the Satellite Club however the Sponsor Club should devise a special induction ceremony to recognize the unique relationship between the Sponsor and Satellite Clubs and their members

3. Starting a Satellite Club

1. The District Governor will be the final arbiter in the establishment of a Satellite Club.
2. To apply to start a Satellite Club the Sponsor Club shall:
 - Have at least 10 active members
 - Show good financial and administrative standing with Rotary International and the District
 - Be active with a well-rounded program of Rotary service
 - Show a commitment to District training
3. The Sponsor Club should set a date for an information/interest meeting. Ensure the timing and conduct of this meeting is suitable to the prospective members (not the organizing committee).
4. Follow the standard protocol for conducting an interest meeting. The only variation is that prospective members are invited to join a new Satellite Club rather than an established club.
5. There are a number of advantages in joining a Satellite Club versus an established club or chartering a new club. Ensure the prospective members understand the difference. For Example:
 - No time-consuming wait for Charter, get straight down to business
 - Administration, membership, club financials, SAR's, etc. are the responsibility of the Sponsor Club
 - The satellite club starts with a blank sheet and can build its own priorities and traditions over time.

- There are some basic requirements that all clubs follow (Satellite, E-Club and traditional clubs) but the format, timing, procedures, etc. are set by the new club (in concert with the Sponsor Club)
6. Organize a follow-up meeting for all those who signed up or are interested. Further discuss how Satellite Clubs work and lead a general discussion on the future of this club.
 7. Ask for prospective members for suggestions about where and when the Satellite Club should meet.
 8. Have an open discussion on possible club names and explain the requirements of RI re naming format.
 9. Explain the leadership requirements and look for possible leaders. This is about the new Satellite Club and its members. Their opinions and comments are paramount as this will be their club and should be run as much as possible how they want.
 10. Continue this process weekly.
 11. Move control of meeting to the leaders as soon as they are elected by their peers.
 12. Where appropriate introduce procedures and structure to the meetings, committees, etc.
 13. Once members have been approved for induction, set an Induction Night. This must be a BIG AFFAIR! You are starting a new club within your club and this should be reflected in the effort on the night. Invite partners, District Governor, Assistant Governor and other important members of your community. Consider inviting all the sponsor club members and partners too. Make it a BIG induction ceremony and Fundraiser. The new club will need funds for its service projects. Induct members in a similar manner to a charter club. Develop a unique ceremony and present a special contract or agreement (signed by DG, President and Chair). Present framed certificate to all members.
 14. Organize weekly Craft Talks or "Who Am I" so that members get to know each other quickly.
 15. Arrange a "New Member Information Meeting" to explain some of the programs of Rotary. Organize a visit to District Headquarters and invite the District Governor to attend. Invite all members to attend the District Conference so that the new members will see something of Rotary beyond the Club.

4. Working Relationship between Sponsor and Satellite Clubs

1. A Satellite Club operates under the Constitution, By-Laws and Rules of the Sponsor Club unless both clubs agree to special by-laws and rules which may be enacted for the Satellite Club.
2. The Satellite Club does not have any direct official business or contact with Rotary International, All official Rotary business is facilitated through the Sponsor Club
3. A Satellite Club and its officers do not have access to Rotary Club Central; only the Sponsor Club executive can add, change or delete information. Individual members will be able to access "My Rotary - member access" normally
4. The two clubs should enjoy a close working relationship with regular joint Board meetings. This will be essential for the long-term future and well-being of both clubs.
5. The Board of the Sponsor Club has the final authority where there are disagreements.
6. The champion and committee should continue to attend the new Satellite Club as mentors for at least twelve months. The executive and Board members of the Sponsor Club should assist their counterparts in the Satellite Club. The relationship

- between the two clubs is critical to the success of the new club. This relationship is longstanding and must be based on mutual respect and trust.
7. Board members of the Sponsor Club should assist and mentor their counterparts in the Satellite Club where appropriate.
 8. This is a balancing act; The Sponsor club has decided to establish a Satellite Club. The Satellite Club must be allowed to find its own place and set its own rhythm, traditions and procedures. Allow the new club to set their own standards.
 9. The Sponsor Club and its Satellite Club/s must meet together at least once per quarter.
 10. The relationship between the two clubs is permanent and the workload for the Sponsor Club will be increased. The District Governor must be satisfied that the Sponsor Club can fulfil these extra duties permanently or until the Satellite Club charters.

5. *Satellite Club Officers*

A Satellite Club will elect a Chairman and Board to lead the club and run its weekly meetings, however the administrative, membership and financial returns of the Satellite Club are the responsibility of the Sponsor Club.

The Board should comprise a Chairman, Immediate Past Chairman, Chairman Elect, Secretary, Treasurer as well as other Directors as required. The Board will be elected annually by the Satellite Club members and be responsible for the day to day organization and management of the club.

6. *Satellite Club Operations*

1. The Satellite Club is strongly encouraged to set its own goals at all levels of service. Rotary
2. Dues charged by the Satellite Club must be set in conjunction with the Sponsor Club.
3. The Satellite Club shall submit an annual report to the Sponsor Club reporting on its membership, activities and programs.
4. The Satellite Club submits a financial statement for inclusion in the Sponsor Club's reports for its Annual General Meeting. The Satellite Club will provide any other report as may be reasonably required from time to time by the Sponsor Club
5. It is highly recommended that the Chairman of the Satellite Club be a member of the Sponsor Club's Board.
6. The Satellite Club should meet on a different day, at a different time, or at a different location from the Sponsor Club.
7. Each prospective member is required to complete a member application (see Exhibits).
8. There are no minimum or maximum numbers required; however the Satellite Club should be capable of operating independently
9. A Satellite Club meets weekly. Satellite club Bylaws describe what constitutes a "meeting". For example, participating in a service projects, meeting on-line, attending a district event, etc.
10. The privileges and obligations of Rotary membership apply equally regardless of which club they attend. The Sponsor and Satellite Clubs are permanently linked as the members of both clubs belong to the Sponsor Club. That tie can only be broken if the Satellite Club charters as an independent club

IV. Frequently Asked Questions

1. What's the purpose of the new Satellite club policy?

The new Satellite club policy provides a new way to create Rotary clubs. A Satellite club functions as a short-term, transitional step on the path to becoming a full, independent Rotary club.

2. How does a club apply to have a Satellite club?

An application is sent to Club and District Support via the sponsor club president.

3. Is there a minimum or maximum number of members of a Satellite club?

There is no minimum number needed to start a Satellite club. There is also no maximum number of members.

4. How are Satellite clubs named?

Satellite clubs are named: Rotary Satellite Club of [Sponsor Club Name] [Additional Qualifier], State/Province, Country. (Example: Rotary Satellite Club of Oceanside Sunset, San Diego, USA.)

5. Can a Satellite club transfer to a different sponsor club?

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

6. Can a Satellite club be an E-club?

Yes. You would name your club: Rotary Satellite E-Club of [Sponsor Club Name] [Additional Qualifier Wording to distinguish your Club], State/Province, and Country. (Example: Rotary Satellite E-Club of Oceanside Sunset, San Diego, USA.)

7. If the sponsor club is terminated, does the Satellite club need to close as well?

Yes, satellite clubs are terminated with the sponsor club.

8. Can Satellite clubs create a separate board with a different set of officers than the sponsor club?

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

9. If there are two boards, how are any disagreements handled?

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

10. Does the leadership of the Satellite club have a position on the Board of the main club?

This is not required, but is highly recommended.

11. Are Satellite club members Rotarians?

Yes, they are Rotarians and members of the sponsor club.

12. Do Satellite club members pay RI dues?

Yes, they are Rotarians and so pay the same Rotary dues as other Rotarians.

13. Can a Satellite club have a separate dues structure and bylaws?

Yes. The Satellite club determines its dues structure and bylaws in collaboration with its sponsor club.

14. Who decides on the Satellite club's meeting place and time?

The Satellite club.

15. Will the Satellite need to set goals as well? Will they be able to use Rotary Club Central for this purpose?

All clubs, including Satellite clubs, are strongly encouraged to set goals to achieve success. Rotary Club Central cannot accommodate Satellite club goals at this time.

16. Does someone who has only served as the chair (president) of a Satellite club meet the qualifications for a DGN?

No, but the district can ask Rotary's President to waive this requirement.

17. If an existing weak club becomes a Satellite club, what are the criteria to revert back 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 Rotary for regular club status.

18. How does a Satellite club apply to become a new, independent club?

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

19. 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 these clubs.

20. Could Rotaract clubs be converted into Satellite clubs as a transition to becoming a full Rotary club?

No. But former members of a Rotaract club may form or join a Satellite club.

21. Who can I contact for more information?

You can contact:

- Rotary Coordinator
- Assistant Rotary Coordinator
- Club and District Support representative:
<http://www.rotary.org/en/AboutUs/ContactUs/CDSandFinancialReps/Pages/ridefault.aspx>.

V. Exhibits

EN-(1013)



SATELLITE CLUB APPLICATION

All information requested on this form is required. Incomplete forms result in processing delays. Submit the signed and completed form to your [Club and District Support representative](#).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The satellite club is currently a Rotary club: ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please provide the club number: _____

CLUB NAME

The name of this satellite club will be (check one):

☐ Rotary Satellite Club of

☐ Rotary Satellite E-Club of

(complete name includes full sponsor club name, additional qualifier, country/geographical area)

Sponsor Club Name: _____
(complete name includes community, state/province/profecture, and country/geographical area)

LOCALITY

The locality* of this satellite club is _____ and the surrounding area.

*A locality is a geographic description of the area the club serves. The locality of a satellite club is the same as the sponsor club or the surrounding area.

OFFICERS

Chair: _____

Secretary: _____

Chair-elect: _____

WEEKLY MEETING

Day of week: _____ Time: _____

Name of meeting place: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

State/Province: _____ Postal Code: _____ Country: _____

For Rotary e-clubs only:

Website URL for online meetings: _____

Time (Include official website posting time for Rotary e-clubs): _____



SATELLITE CLUB MEMBER INFORMATION FORM

Complete one information form for each satellite club member.

Please type or print clearly

Title (Mr., Ms., Mrs., Dr., Rev., etc.): _____ Suffix (Jr., Sr., III, etc.): _____

Family name: _____

First name: _____ Middle name: _____

Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

Preferred language: _____

Former/current Rotarian: ☐ No ☐ Yes

If yes, RI membership ID number: _____

Name of former/current club: _____

Former/current firm: _____

Position: _____

For phone and fax numbers, include country/city/area codes.

Home Phone: _____ Business Phone: _____

Home Fax: _____ Business Fax: _____

Mobile: _____ Email: _____

Mailing address* (check one):

☐ Residence ☐ Business ☐ Other

Address: _____ City: _____

State/Province: _____ Postal Code: _____ Country: _____

*If post office box, please provide an alternate address for courier delivery.

Alternate address (complete only if mailing address is a PO Box):

☐ Residence ☐ Business ☐ Other

Address: _____ City: _____

State/Province: _____ Postal Code: _____ Country: _____

Magazine: ☐ *The Rotarian* ☐ Rotary regional magazine

Satellite Club Member Information Form