

Establishing a Rotary Satellite Club

District 7070 Guidelines

Introduction

Following the Council on Legislation in 2016 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.

What is a satellite club? Satellite clubs provide a new 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 will simply be 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 maximum numbers required to form a Satellite Club other than the expectation that the club have sufficient numbers to conduct its meeting and programs independently, it is strongly suggested to follow the RI prerequisite of the minimum of eight members at the time of forming a club. The Satellite Club will elect a Chair 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.**

Establishing a Satellite Club

Satellite Clubs may be formed to:

- Assist in chartering a new club
- Accommodate rural and remote areas or communities with small populations
- Accommodate large metropolitan areas in allowing one club to provide several meeting times and locations
- Provide an opportunity for a small, weak or struggling club to become connected to a larger active club for ongoing mentoring, support and assistance
- Accommodate different demographic groups such as young people where the established Rotary Club does not suit the or is not attractive to them

Establishing a satellite club is similar to chartering a new Rotary Club with the following differences:

- **Prior to initiating the procedure** of starting an actual Satellite Club, **all clubs in an Area should be informed of the intention** of the Sponsor Club to start a satellite club as this new club could have definite ramifications on existing clubs. All clubs should be in agreement of this new club.
- **There are no maximum numbers required** however the Satellite Clubs must have at least eight members at the time they form in order to satisfy the requirements of Article 10, Section 6(b) of the Standard Rotary Club Constitution.
- **The privileges and obligations of Rotary membership apply equally** regardless of which club they attend

- 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
- **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.
- The Satellite Club does not have any direct official business or contact with the Rotary International, Rotary District 7070 or the District Governor. **All official Rotary business is facilitated through the Sponsor Club.**
- The 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.**
- **The Satellite Club shall operate 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.
- The dues charged by the Satellite Club must be set with the advice and approval of the Sponsor Club.
- The Satellite Club shall establish its own Board and club officers. The Board should comprise a Chair, Immediate Past Chair, Chair 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
- **The Satellite Club shall submit an annual report to the Sponsor Club** reporting on its membership, activities and programs. Subject to the arrangements between both clubs, **the Satellite Club shall submit a financial statement and reviewed accounts 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.
- **The two clubs should enjoy a close working relationship with the regular joint Board meetings.** This will be essential for the long-term future and well-being of both clubs (particularly the Satellite Club) as the Board of the Sponsor Club has the final authority where there are disagreements. It is highly recommended that the Chair of the Satellite Club should be a member of the Sponsor Board.

The procedure to start a Satellite Club should be:

- **Prior to starting the process of starting the Satellite Club, the Sponsoring Club must inform all clubs in the Area** of the intention of starting this club as it can have definite ramifications on all neighbouring clubs. If clubs are widespread and won’t be affected by this new club, the announcement will serve as educational information.
- It is the responsibility of the Sponsor Club Board to investigate the merits of a Satellite Club. The President should lead a discussion at the club forum to discuss the merits and support for forming a Satellite Club. **The Club must hold a plebiscite with members under the normal club rules.**
- **The Sponsor Club will decide why, who and how they will establish a Satellite Club.** This will determine the approach, marketing and targeting of the members for the club. The method used to form a small Satellite Club in neighbouring rural town will be significantly different to a city club targeting ex-Rotaractors or 30-somethings. **So it is important to create a marketing plan based on your target audience.**
- Appoint a champion and committee to be responsible for the research and establishment of the Satellite Club.
- Committee should research the possible locality, meeting day and time, membership demographic, community need, etc.
- **The Satellite Club must meet at a different time** from the Sponsor Club.
- **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.**
- Following approval by the District Governor the committee should advertise for interested people through the Sponsor Club, other local clubs, local community leaders, community groups, newspapers etc. List all prospective members with contact details, classification, etc.
- 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).

- **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. A number of standard forms, letters, etc. are available for this purpose
Please contact the District Membership Director for more information.
- 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: No time-consuming wait for Charter, get straight down to business.
 - ❖ Administration, membership, club financials, RI reports, etc. are the responsibility of the Sponsor Club.
 - ❖ The 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-Clubs and traditional clubs) but the format, timing, procedures etc. are set by the new club (in negotiation with the Sponsor Club).
- **Have the membership nomination forms available on the day and sign up all who are interested. The normal Rotary rules for nominating new members apply.** The Sponsor Club Board **must approve the nominations** and members have a right of review and comment before the applicants can be advised that they have been successful. **Remember the Satellite Club members are part of the Sponsor Club unless and until the Satellite Club decides to charter.**
- **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. Ask for suggestions on where and when the Satellite Club may meet. Open discussion of possible club names and explain the requirements of the RI re: naming format. Explain the leadership requirements and look for possible leaders. **Their opinions and comments are paramount as this will be their club** (with the Sponsor Club support) and should be run as much as possible how they want.
- **Continue this process weekly.** Hand control of a meeting over to the leaders as soon as they are elected by their peers. Where appropriate, introduce procedures and structures to the meetings, committees, etc.
- **Apply to Rotary International (through the District Governor) for approval of the Satellite Club.** The Sponsor Club AND the Satellite Club with the list of the names of the prospective members should sign this document.
- **Once members have been approved for induction, set a date for 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 District Governor, and other important members of your community.
- Induct members in a similar manner to a charter club. Develop a unique ceremony and present a special contract or agreement (signed by the DG, President and Chair). Present framed certificate to all members.
- **The champion and committee should continue to attend the new Satellite Club as mentors for at least 12 month.** 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 club. This relationship is longstanding and must be based on mutual respect and trust.
- Organize weekly sessions so that members get to know each other quickly. Have members tell their Rotary story by sharing why they wanted membership in Rotary.
- Board members of the Sponsor Club should assist and mentor their **Satellite Club where appropriate.** This is an interesting balancing act; your club has decided to establish a Satellite Club. Whether this is because of deficiencies or limitations in your club or gaps in our Rotary community that is better filled by a new Satellite Club; we must allow the new club to find its own place and set its own rhythm, traditions and procedures. So we must **walk a careful path when we are advising the new club on the traditional way your club does things versus allowing the new club to set their own standards.**
 - Arrange a “New Member Information Meeting” to explain some of the programs of Rotary and invite the District Governor and Assistant Governor to attend. Invite all members to attend the and District Assembly

and Conference so that the new members will see something of Rotary beyond the Club.

Special considerations

- There are two Applications required to establish a Satellite Club:
 - ❖ The Sponsor Club must apply to the District Governor for approval to start a Satellite Club prior to releasing publicity about the new club.
 - ❖ The Sponsor Club AND the Satellite Club must apply (through the DG) for approval to establish the Satellite Club. This application should follow invitations, public meetings; vote on Satellite Club leaders, etc. but prior to induction of new members. Individual member information forms should accompany the application for each member.
- The Sponsor Club and its Satellite Club/s must meet together at least once per quarter.
- The naming protocol is as follows: *Rotary Satellite Club of (Sponsor Club Name) (additional qualifier) Province, Country.*
- **Sponsor Club will commit to update its Constitution, By-Laws and Rules as soon as practicable to recognize Satellite Clubs and to accommodate its management.**
- The **Sponsor Club will prepare a Memorandum of Understanding** to be signed by the leaders of both clubs.
- 1. To apply to start a Satellite Club the Sponsor Club shall:
 - a) *Have 10 active members*
 - b) *Show good financial and administrative standing with Rotary International and Rotary District 7070,*
 - c) *Conduct a well-rounded program of Rotary service,*
 - d) *Show a commitment to District 7070 leadership training.*
- 2. **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 fulfill these extra duties permanently or until the Satellite Club charters.
- 3. The District Governor will be the final arbiter in the establishment of a Satellite Club. Where a Club has been denied the authority to establish a Satellite Club they may ask the reasons for the refusal. The Club may reapply after three months if it can show changes or improvements to their Club that will satisfy the District Governor of the long-term success of the Satellite Club.
- 4. **The Satellite Club is strongly encouraged to set its own goals at all levels of service.**
- In summary; 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.

The sponsor club president sends an application (type this in your browser to download the application form)
<https://www.rotary.org/myrotary/en/document/84171>

to [Club and District Support](#).