

# GET READY: CLUB SECRETARY

This *Get Ready: Club Secretary* textbook is partly extracted from RI online Learning Center course. Please visit the Rotary's Learning Center for further information needed on the Rotary website: [Rotary.org](https://www.rotary.org).

Translating Committee  
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# Get Ready: Club Secretary

## Course Description

Learn about your role as a Rotary or Rotaract club secretary, the resources that are available to help you manage club and membership information, and questions to consider as you prepare for your role.

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# Your role

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All club secretaries have similar responsibilities that help keep our clubs operating effectively:

- ☐ Attend the district training assembly and the district conference.
- ☐ Meet with the previous secretary and receive the club's records.
- ☐ Meet with the incoming club officers or board of directors to plan the year ahead. Review your club's strategic plan if it's current or talk to the board about updating it.
- ☐ Update your club's records and member list using My Rotary or your club management system. If you use a club management system, check to make sure that it can submit information to Rotary International.
- ☐ Make sure that your club has the most recent Rotary governance documents to refer to as needed.
- ☐ Make sure the club treasurer has the club invoices in time for payment.
- ☐ Serve on the club board and club administration committee.
- ☐ Work with the club membership committee to decide who will manage the membership leads process.
- ☐ Take minutes at club and board meetings and club assemblies.
- ☐ Update club and officer information for the online Official Directory and Rotary's records.
- ☐ Manage club correspondence, including responding to emails and sending official notices and invitations.
- ☐ Keep promotional items, name badges, and other materials that are used at meetings and events.
- ☐ Preserve your club's historical records.
- ☐ Write an annual report for the club at the end of the Rotary year.
- ☐ Assist the club president, treasurer, and committees as needed.
- ☐ Meet with your successor and give them the club's records.

## Club executive secretary/director

Some clubs have an executive secretary/director role to handle administrative duties, in addition to a club secretary. Club executive secretary/director is the only role that can be held by a nonmember and the only one that can be a paid position.

Club secretary is the official role recognized by Rotary International as the person who'll receive club communications and work on the club's behalf. Make sure that your club officer assignment in My Rotary is the club secretary role, not club executive secretary/director.

There's no benefit to being listed as both club secretary and club executive secretary/director, because both positions have the same online access level. If your club doesn't have a club executive secretary/director position, though, you can report another officer or director of your club as being in that role so they'll have access to the online tools.

# Your year

Use this calendar to help you plan your activities and prepare for your role. (Note that, although Rotaract clubs will receive an annual invoice starting in 2022-23, we have not included information about when Rotaract clubs will receive invoices because we aren't yet certain when that will be. We will update this lesson when it is decided.)

## *January-June*

### **Prepare for your term**

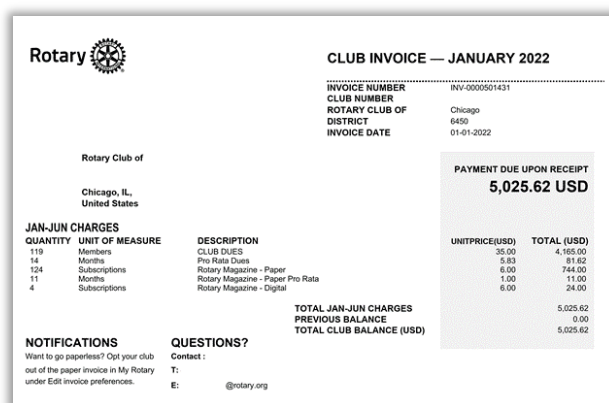
- Subscribe to Rotary newsletters that support your club's activities.
- Join the Club Secretaries discussion group on My Rotary.
- Become familiar with the Rotary Code of Policies, the Standard Rotary Club Constitution or Standard Rotaract Club Constitution, and your club's bylaws.
- Meet with the **president-elect** to:
  - Discuss club goals
  - Schedule club activities
  - Decide how you'll divide administrative tasks
  - Decide who'll manage membership leads for your club
  - Determine how you'll handle club communications
- Meet with the **current secretary** to:
  - Review club procedures
  - Review the club invoice
  - Discuss how the current leaders have managed membership leads
  - Get access to the club's records, archives, and other property
- Meet with your club's membership committee to discuss its initiatives and how you can support them.
- Review the current Manual of Procedure.
- Participate in your district training assembly.
- Attend meetings of the current and incoming board of directors, if you're invited.
- Participate in the club assembly held by the president-elect after the district training assembly to discuss club plans for the coming year.
- Prepare a schedule for sending statements of club dues and fees to all members (monthly, quarterly, or twice a year), and plan how you'll record the dues and fees you receive.



*July*

### Take office

- Update your club information and maintain accurate membership records throughout the year.
- Make sure new club officers are reported in My Rotary so they have access to online tools and resources.
- Rotary club secretaries: Make sure the club treasurer has received the club invoice so it can be paid on time, within 60 days. (A sample invoice is below.)



The image shows a sample Rotary Club Invoice for January 2022. The invoice is titled "CLUB INVOICE — JANUARY 2022" and includes the Rotary logo. It lists the club as "Rotary Club of Chicago, IL, United States". The invoice number is INV-0005501431. The invoice details include the following table:

QUANTITY	UNIT OF MEASURE	DESCRIPTION	UNIT PRICE (USD)	TOTAL (USD)
119	Members	CLUB DUES	35.00	4,165.00
14	Months	Pro Rate Dues	5.83	81.62
124	Subscriptions	Rotary Magazine - Paper	6.00	744.00
11	Months	Rotary Magazine - Paper Pro Rate	1.00	11.00
4	Subscriptions	Rotary Magazine - Digital	6.00	24.00
TOTAL JAN-JUN CHARGES				5,025.62
PREVIOUS BALANCE				0.00
TOTAL CLUB BALANCE (USD)				5,025.62

The invoice also includes a section for "NOTIFICATIONS" and "QUESTIONS?". The "NOTIFICATIONS" section states: "Want to go paperless? Opt your club out of the paper invoice in My Rotary under Edit invoice preferences." The "QUESTIONS?" section provides contact information: "Contact: T: @rotary.org".

*December-February*

### Midyear tasks

- After you report new club officers or members, use My Rotary to confirm that Rotary received your updates.
- Prepare the midyear progress report to outline the club's status and achievements so far this year.
- Review the club's schedule of activities with the president and the board of directors.
- Rotary club secretaries: Support the annual meeting to elect club officers.
- Rotary club secretaries: Confirm that your club's membership data is current in My Rotary by 1 January so you receive an accurate club invoice.
- Rotary club secretaries: Make sure the treasurer has received the club invoice so it can be paid on time.
- Rotary club secretaries: Work with the president to report the club's achievements toward the Rotary Citation in Rotary Club Central.
- Rotaract club secretaries: Follow the citation instructions for Rotaract clubs.
- Rotary club secretaries: Report next year's club officers using My Rotary or your club management system by 1 February. In Great Britain and Ireland, use the Data Management System.
- Rotary club secretaries: If you wish to propose a governor-nominee designate candidate, send the resolution that supports the decision and the governor-nominee designate form to the district nominating committee.

*April-June*

**Preparing for next year**

- Begin briefing next year's secretary.
- Prepare your annual report to the club.
- Give the club's records, archives, and other property to the incoming secretary.
- Rotary club secretaries: Confirm that your club's membership data is current in My Rotary by 1 July so that you'll receive an accurate club invoice. If you use a club management system, make sure your information is being sent to Rotary.
- Rotaract club secretaries: Update club and member data and report club officers by 30 June.



- ① The club secretary is responsible for promptly reporting membership information to Rotary International in addition to other duties listed in the club constitution and bylaws. The Rotary club secretary also needs to report next year's club officers to Rotary International by 1 February.

See the Rotary Code of Policies section 10.050. for more information.

If your club has poor attendance, it's likely a sign that it isn't engaging all its members. The Club Health Check and member satisfaction survey can help you learn what people like about the club and what you can improve.

Remember, your club can change its meeting options to better accommodate people. Clubs can choose when, how, where, and how often to meet. Work with your club leaders to change things that aren't working and make your meetings more accessible and engaging.



# Managing member information

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Your primary responsibility as secretary is keeping your club member lists current and reporting that information to Rotary. Let's quickly review some facts about membership.

Rotary recognizes two membership types: active and honorary.

## Active members

### Active club members:

- Include Rotarians and Rotaractors
- Are counted in Rotary's membership totals
- Pay Rotary International dues
- Can vote on club matters
- Can become club officers
- Can serve as district governor, if they're Rotarians



## Honorary members

### Honorary members:

- Do not pay Rotary International dues
- Do not qualify to vote or become officers

You might offer an honorary membership to someone who doesn't have time to be an active, dues-paying member. An honorary membership could also allow active members of other clubs to show allegiance to a second club (for example, in a place where they live for part of the year).

Your club can offer various types of active membership to help attract and retain members, including family, associate, junior, or corporate memberships. The club sets its own policies on club dues and service expectations for each type of active membership. Update your club's bylaws to reflect these policies and to detail each type of club membership, its eligibility rules, and the club dues such members will pay. (Remember that you need to report all of these members as active and collect RI membership dues from them.) Review the Start Guide for Alternative Membership Types for more details.

Rotaractors can also be dual members, which means that they can join a Rotary club while remaining members of their Rotaract clubs.

Your club can set its own rules for dual membership and for people who are transferring from another club, but to join, qualified members usually need only to:

- Demonstrate good character, integrity, and leadership
- Have a good reputation in their business, profession, and community
- Be willing to serve their community and others around the world

## **Managing member lists**

The best way to keep your club membership list current is to enter any changes in My Rotary or your club management system as soon as they occur, but certainly no later than 1 July or 1 January for Rotary clubs. This ensures that your club invoice will be accurate. If you use a club management system, work with your vendor to make sure Rotary International receives the information.

To report member data through My Rotary, make sure you are signed in to your account. For detailed instructions, refer to the how-to guides about adding a member and editing member information.

## **Other membership tasks**

### **Counting satellite club members**

If your club sponsors a satellite club, the members of the satellite club are officially members of your club. But membership updates for the satellite club aren't managed in My Rotary. You can send member updates for a satellite club to Data Services at [data@rotary.org](mailto:data@rotary.org).

### **Helping manage membership leads**

You can review information about prospective members who have been referred to your club on the Membership Leads page in My Rotary. You'll receive email notifications about new candidates or members who are transferring from another club.

Work with your club president and membership chair to review and update candidates' status as they progress through the process.

### **Issuing member ID cards**

You may want to issue ID cards, which members of your club can show when they attend a meeting of another club. The card is intended for personal use only. Many of the licensed vendors listed on My Rotary sell these cards, or you can use the templates in the Brand Center to make them.

### **Handling a member's move to a new club**

When someone transfers from a different club, ask their previous club to confirm their membership and that the person doesn't owe the club or district any money. RI and district dues that were paid to the previous club will be valid until the next invoice period. If you don't receive a statement from the previous club within 30 days, assume that the person doesn't owe any money.

You'll need to enter a start date for the person's membership in your club. It's best to use the day after they left their previous club so that their records will show continuous Rotary membership.

When someone in your club moves away, you can refer them to a club in their new community using the Membership Leads page in My Rotary.

# Working with the president and committees

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Meeting with the current club leaders before you take office will help you learn more about the club's goals, projects, and activities. Attend meetings of the current board, if you can, to learn administrative procedures and ensure continuity. You'll coordinate the most with the president and treasurer. Find details about how to work with them below.

## PRESIDENT

Before the year begins, meet with your club president to discuss your roles and responsibilities and how you'll work together. For example, the president might lead club meetings, but you might help plan them and make logistical arrangements, such as:

- Preparing any announcements
- Planning programs
- Scheduling guest speakers
- Distributing and collecting name badges
- Making travel arrangements, handling expenses, or sending thank-you notes for speakers
- Helping visiting members, including providing any documentation they need



Rotary club secretaries will also want to discuss which duties should be assigned to other club leaders and how you can delegate your online access to them.

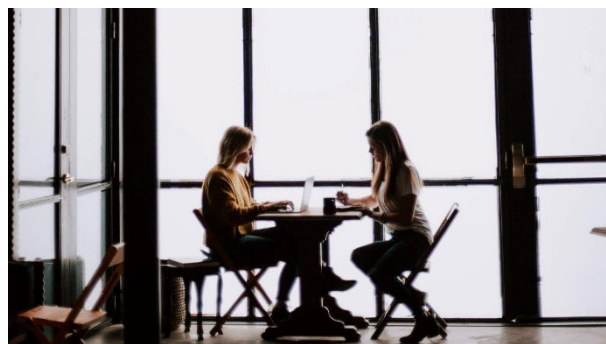
## TREASURER

The secretary and treasurer work with the president to ensure that the board reviews the club's finances and that invoices are paid on time. You share several responsibilities, including:

- Collecting and recording dues
- Reviewing the club invoice and paying it on time
- Making arrangements to collect any unpaid dues and fees
- Paying for meals
- Submitting Rotary Foundation contributions on behalf of your club
- Reporting the club email address in My Rotary to ensure that you receive the club invoice

Decide together how you'll approach each task to help your club run efficiently. You'll also work together to prepare the report that includes the income and expenses for the previous year and the first half of this Rotary year. It is presented to the club by 31 December.

You'll also prepare an annual report to present at the final club meeting of the year. Because the club president also prepares a report, collaborate with them to avoid redundancies. Your report should review what's happened during the year, including decisions by the club's board, changes to bylaws, membership gains or losses, and any continuing projects that the president doesn't discuss in their report.



## Administration committee

In Rotary clubs, the club secretary is automatically a member of the administration committee. The committee's responsibilities include:

- Planning interesting club meetings and fun social events
- Producing club communications, such as a newsletter
- Helping the club treasurer collect membership dues if necessary

You can work with the rest of the administration committee to keep members informed about club and district activities using the club's newsletter, website, and social media accounts. The committee produces the newsletter, and you can help by providing content such as committee reports, board decisions, and items from the governor's monthly communication. You can also find interesting and relevant content for the newsletter in Rotary magazine, in your regional magazine, or on My Rotary.



- ① **Visit Rotary's Brand Center to find newsletter and banner templates, images, ads, presentations, and more that all comply with Rotary's brand guidelines. Simply download them and add your club name or information.**

## Additional duties for you and the president

All members and participants deserve an environment where they feel welcome, respected, and valued. This should be a key focus for every member of the club, and it should be established and modeled by club leaders. Communicate clearly about how your club makes its roles and processes equitable and inclusive.

The club president and secretary are responsible for receiving reports about any issues related to membership diversity, harassment complaints, and club disputes. The club board is responsible for examining and handling any issues that are brought to it. Work together to determine your processes and share this information with club members.

## **Communicating with the governor and Rotary staff**

Tell the district governor and Rotary staff about special club activities. The governor can share this information with assistant governors or with other clubs. Post successful projects and events on Service Project Center. Tell Rotary about initiatives or strategies that your club has found to be effective. Share your success stories with Club and District Support. Rotary staff members may write about them in our publications or on My Rotary.

When the governor visits, share your thoughts about the health of the club, including how well club meetings are attended.

## **Club records and archives**

As club secretary, you manage all club records. Ask the previous secretary for your club's files, office supplies, and equipment.

Your club may have materials that it should retain, including:

- Your club's application for membership in Rotary and a list of charter members
- Documentation of any changes to the club's name or meeting place
- Your club constitution and bylaws with amendments
- Meeting notices and minutes
- News stories, photos, slides, or videos about the club, its projects, and its activities

When retaining and providing access to these records, be sure to follow Rotary's Personal Data Use Policy.

To find out if Rotary has an important item or piece of information about the organization or chartering of your club, write to [history@rotary.org](mailto:history@rotary.org).

Document what your club does during your term, and keep any information that you share with Rotary or the district. At the end of the year, work with the president or the administration committee to write a report for your club's archives. It should include a summary of the year's activities, photographs of officers and events, names of new members, and outstanding accomplishments.



# Voting and electors



If you're a Rotary club secretary, you're expected to attend the district conference. The conference is your chance to learn more about Rotary and district programs and to meet other leaders in your area.

The conference may also include a district legislative session, where club electors discuss and vote on important district matters.

## Electors

Work with the president to help your Rotary club select electors for the district conference. All electors need to be active club members, and only active clubs can vote at the conference.

Every Rotary club, no matter how many members it has, is entitled to at least one elector. A club gets one elector for every 25 members or majority toward the next 25. For example, Rotary clubs with up to 37 active members have one elector, while those with 38 to 62 have two, those with 63 to 87 have three, and so on. To calculate the number of electors, use your official member count according to the last club invoice you received before the district conference. Remember, honorary members don't count toward the total.

If a Rotary club has more than one elector, they all need to vote for the same candidate or proposition, or none of the votes will count. With the district governor's permission, a club can designate proxies for any absent electors.

Although Rotaractors cannot vote during a district legislative session, Rotaract members should discuss upcoming proposals with a Rotary club. Having your opinion on these matters considered is a key way to take part in the process.



## Credentials certificates

Your governor will supply credentials that electors present to show that they are qualified to vote on behalf of their clubs. For each of your club's electors:

**1**

Complete the certificate by including:

- The elector's name
- The club's membership total and the number of electors it can have
- The signatures of the club secretary and president

- 2** Give the certificate to the elector to present to the credentials committee at the beginning of the conference.
- 3** File a copy of the certificate in your club's records.

Make sure your Rotary club has paid the approved district fees for the year, because your club may not be able to vote if you owe money to the district. The governor determines the voting status of the club.

# What's next?

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You've learned a lot about how to prepare for your role. Think about these questions as you prepare for the district training assembly:

1. What are the main responsibilities of the secretary in your club?
2. How will you work with the club president?
3. How will you work with the club treasurer?
4. How will you ensure that you can report incoming club officers on time?
5. How can you support your club's committees?



6. How will your club manage its membership leads?
7. What are your club's strengths and weaknesses? What should you keep doing, and what can you improve?
8. What is one goal you'll work toward next year? How does this goal support your club's strategic plan?
9. What system will you use to address club disputes or allegations of harassment?
10. How will you ensure that your club reflects the entire community?
11. How will you track the notices you send and receive?
12. Which administrative duties can you do more efficiently?

# Resources

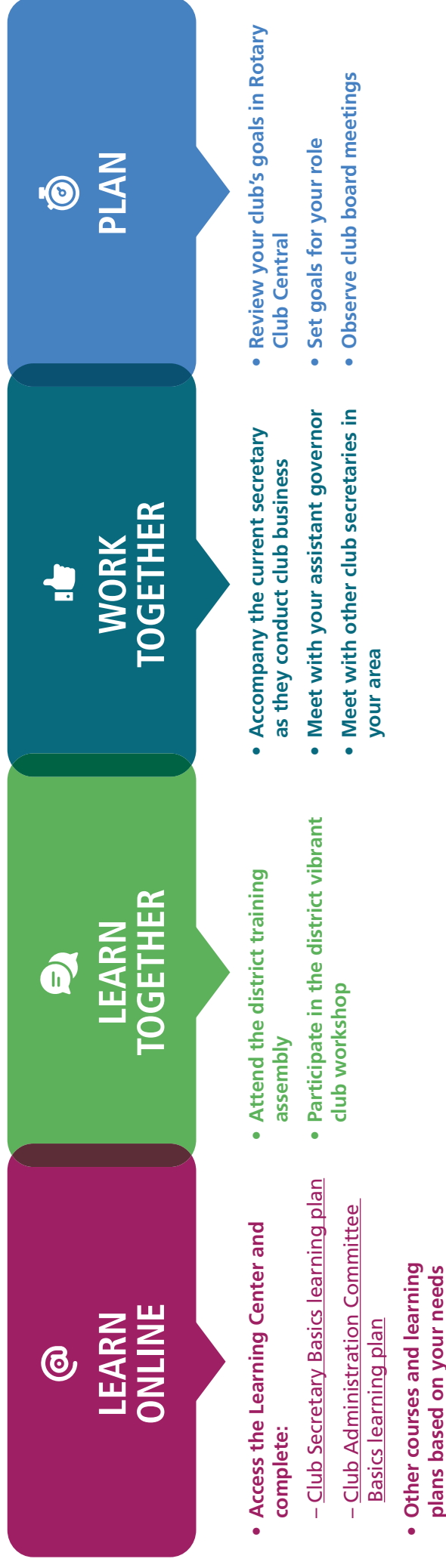
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The Learning Plan for **Club Secretary Basics** consists of various courses that you may learn from the Learning Center at Rotary.org.

- Getting Started with the Learning Center
- Managing Club Business
- Working with Your Club Leadership Team
- Minimizing Risk
- Rotary Club Central Resources
- Online Membership Leads
- Protecting Personal Data
- Preventing and Addressing Harassment
- Rotary's Action Plan and You

# PREPARING TO BE A CLUB SECRETARY

This learning path will help you develop your leadership skills and understand what to expect as a club secretary. You'll use this, your prior knowledge and experience, and other district resources to prepare yourself for a successful year.



Throughout this process, make sure to periodically reflect on what you've learned and evaluate how you're doing. Ask others for feedback so you can keep improving during your year in office.

