

GUIDE TO CLUB BRANCH FORMATION



LIONS CLUBS
INTERNATIONAL

Discover
NEW
Possibilities

We can stay where we are or forge into new territories by forming a club branch.

What Is A Branch?

A branch is a small group of individuals, who become members of an existing Lions (parent) club. The branch holds its meetings and service activities at a location that is separate from the parent club.

Forming a branch creates an opportunity for Lions clubs to expand into locations where and when circumstances do not support the formation of a charter club. *To charter a Lions club requires at least 20 members.*

Forming A Branch

Assessing Location

Branches may be formed anywhere within the parent club's district, preferably in an area not currently served by a Lions club. If the proposed branch is in an area that is being served by one or more clubs, the parent club must receive the existing clubs' written permission. Only one branch is permitted per location; however, a club may have more than one branch.

Examples of areas where a branch may form are:

- Small towns
- Rural areas
- Ethnic neighborhoods
- Business parks
- Medical complexes
- Shopping malls, markets and retail stores

Community needs should be considered in forming a branch.

Recruiting Members

When developing a list of potential branch members, consult the district governor, cabinet members, past district officers, local merchants and other contacts Lions may have in the proposed branch location. Include local community and business leaders who may be interested in branch activities. Once a list of potential members is compiled, the parent club can host an informational meeting.

Before a parent club begins to actively recruit members, the club should notify the district governor of its intention to form a branch.

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Hosting an Informational Meeting

The purpose of an informational meeting is for Lions to informally meet with potential members and discuss the possible formation of a branch. The meeting will help generate interest in becoming a Lion – as well as measure the interest level of potential members.

Informational Meeting – Discussion Suggestions:

- how a branch can help the community
- parent club projects and examples of potential branch projects
- Lions club structure and purpose (overview)
- support provided by parent club, zone, region, district, multiple district and International Headquarters
- testimonials from a few parent club members who explain what they have gained (personally and professionally) by being a Lion
- If possible, move onto the next step, branch formation, by holding an organizational meeting as outlined below or close the meeting by inviting the attendees to an organizational meeting on another day.

The Organizational Meeting

Following the informational meeting, contact the participants to thank them for their time, confirm their interest, and invite them to attend an organizational meeting. Encourage them to bring other individuals to the meeting who may be interested in joining the branch.

An organizational meeting is the first meeting of the proposed new branch. It is attended by potential branch members, parent club representatives, and may also be attended by the district governor (if available), cabinet members and any other interested individuals. The parent club president, district extension chairperson, district membership chairperson, past officer or any designated, qualified Lion may conduct the organizational meeting.

The parent club can publicize the development of a branch through local media. To receive a Club Branch Builder Kit, contact the New Clubs & Marketing Department.

Organizational Meeting – Discussion Suggestions:

- information about branch operations
- membership responsibilities
- structure and history of Lions Clubs International
- detailed explanations of each office and election of branch officers
- branch dues structure

Naming a Branch

The branch name should include the location of the branch, with the designation "branch". The branch should not include a trademarked name and must follow guidelines established by Lions Clubs International. Refer to Lions Clubs International Board Policy Manual for more information.

Protesting the Formation of a Branch

The formation of a branch may be protested by the district governor or a chartered Lions club according to the same rules and procedures for protesting the formation of a charter Lions club. For more information, contact the New Clubs and Marketing Department.

The Parent Club

Role and Responsibilities

It is the role of the parent club to assist the branch in obtaining and maintaining a high level of commitment, activity and enthusiasm. The success of the branch involves continued contact, interest, counsel and advice from the parent club. The parent club's responsibilities include:

- submitting the Notification of Club Branch (CB-1) to Lions Clubs International (*This form must be completed in order to form a branch and will establish a branch record in the parent club's file at International Headquarters.*)
- ensuring branch coordinators receive proper orientation, support and continued training
- encouraging branch members to participate in parent club and district activities
- helping to develop a membership retention and growth plan

- ensuring that elections for branch coordinator and vice coordinator are properly held each year
- supporting branch activities
- processing all membership applications and seeing that each application is properly approved and reported to International Headquarters. Report new members on the Branch Membership Update (CB-2).

To encourage communication with the branch, the parent club should contact the branch to schedule some meetings and/or service projects together.

Keys to Organizing a Branch

Enthusiastic branch members, a supportive parent club and a qualified branch liaison are keys to organizing a successful and lasting branch. In addition:

- The parent club should be prepared to assist in the formation of the branch and provide additional assistance and support as long as necessary.
- It is critical to maintain open communication between the branch and the parent club. To accomplish this, the branch coordinator should report branch activities each month to the parent club. The liaison should keep the branch apprised of all parent club activities and policies that affect the branch.

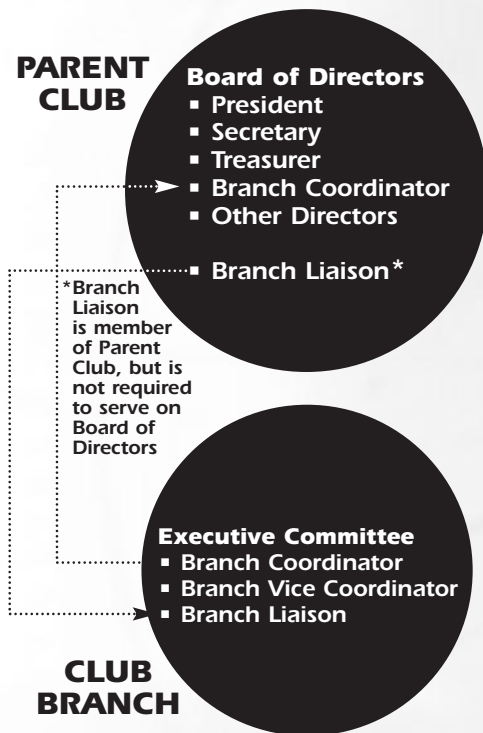
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Chart of Communication Flow and Report Distribution

International Headquarters	Parent	Branch
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ← Notify International Headquarters of the new branch by submitting the Notification of Club Branch Form (CB-1) ← Submit branch members' International dues to Headquarters Notify branch coordinator of minutes/policies that affect the branch → ← Notify International Headquarters of new members, drops, transfers and other branch member changes by submitting the Branch Membership Update Form (CB-2) ← Submit branch supply orders to be charged to parent club's account 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ← Submit activity report ← Submit financial report ← Submit club dues (payable to parent club) ← Submit recommended membership applications and notify parent club of branch member changes by submitting the Branch Membership Update (CB-2) ← Submit club supply orders when charging to parent club account (branches may order non-personalized supplies directly from International Headquarters when providing direct payment)

The Branch

Parent-Branch Relationship



Leadership and Organization

An Executive Committee, comprised of the coordinator, vice coordinator and liaison, governs the branch. The branch coordinator and vice coordinator are elected each year by the branch members who are in good standing. The term of office is July 1 through June 30. *Officers of newly formed branches may serve through the branch's second fiscal year, but this requires re-election by the members.* The parent club's board of directors appoints the branch liaison.

Responsibilities of Branch Executive Committee

Branch Coordinator

- serves as the leader of the branch, elected by branch members each year
- serves on the parent club's board of directors
- is encouraged to attend the board meetings and/or general meetings of the parent club
- provides a report of planned branch activities and the monthly financial report to the parent club
- coordinates efforts to encourage open discussion and effective communication between the branch and the parent club

Branch Vice Coordinator

- serves as the administrator of the branch, elected by branch members each year
- records income and expenses for the branch and prepares the monthly financial report that is submitted to the parent club
- responds to inquiries and requests made to the branch
- records branch minutes and maintains branch records
- maintains membership records and submits new members, drops, transfers and other changes to the parent club secretary by using the Branch Membership Update Form (CB-2)

Branch Liaison

- serves as an officer of the branch's Executive Committee, appointed by parent club's board of directors
- provides guidance to the branch (similar to a Guiding Lion) and should be an experienced Lion

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- develops a positive relationship with the members of the branch, maintains open communications and provides assistance upon request

General Membership

Branch Member

- votes on the activities of the branch
- voting member of the parent club, when in attendance at the parent club's meetings (Branch members are calculated in the parent club's quorum only when present, in person, at the parent club meetings.) Members of the branch are encouraged to attend the general meetings of the parent club.
- may serve on branch committees

Branch Operations

Meetings

A branch is encouraged to have at least two meetings a month. Each branch decides the days and the time it will meet. It is recommended that a branch meeting not last more than 1-1/2 hours and that it start and end on time. Some branches find it convenient to serve a meal as part of the meeting. **Attendance at branch meetings fulfills parent club's meeting attendance requirements.**

Membership & Dues

Any person of legal majority, good character and good reputation in his or her community may be invited to become a Lions club member.

For each new member, the branch should complete the International Association of Lions Clubs Membership Application by Invitation (ME-6) and the Branch Membership Update (CB-2) and forward both to the parent club. Upon approval by the parent club's board of directors, the parent club then submits the Branch Membership Update with the parent club's Monthly Membership Report to International Headquarters.

For additional Branch Membership Updates (CB-2) and Membership Applications by Invitation (ME-6), the branch may send or e-mail its requests to the New Clubs & Marketing Department at clubbranch@lionsclubs.org

The initiation fee for each new branch member is US\$25.00 (or its equivalent). Current members from other clubs or individuals who left a Lions club in good standing within the last six months may transfer to the branch at no charge.

Branch members pay the same amount of dues that are required of members of the parent club. Discounts are available for qualifying family units, students, graduating Leos and young adults.

Checks issued for dues and initiation fees should be made payable to the parent club.

Insurance Coverage

The branch, as part of the parent club, receives liability coverage. (The parent club secretary has a comprehensive booklet explaining this coverage).

Fundraising

The parent club should establish an account for funds raised by the branch. This money should be used for service activities in the branch community. ***The board of directors of the parent club may authorize the branch coordinator to countersign checks and vouchers authorized for payment by the parent club's board of directors.***

Ordering Club Supplies

Items personalized with the branch name must also include the parent club's name and must be ordered through the parent club. The branch may order items that do not require personalization directly from International Headquarters with a credit card or other advance payment. Only the parent club secretary may order supplies on account.

Applying for Charter

When a club branch reaches 20 members, it may consider becoming a charter club. An extension kit is available from the New Clubs & Marketing Department to assist interested branches.

Dissolving a Branch

A branch may be dissolved by a resolution that receives a two-thirds vote of the board of directors of the parent club. If the branch were dissolved, the branch members would be considered active members of the parent club and should be encouraged to participate in parent club activities. Please notify Lions Clubs International if the branch is dissolved.

For more information about developing a branch, consult the Coordinator's Guide to Branch Management (CB-5) or contact the New Clubs and Marketing Department:

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