

**Procedures for retaining members who are in arrears and proper handling of “Notice of Intent to Suspend” Form #1845.**

***Member fails to remit annual dues; FS refers to retention committee:***

After several attempts by the Financial Secretary to get a member to pay his council dues and has not succeeded, the FS informs the Grand Knight who notifies the retention committee of the member’s status. The committee consists of several council members, including the GK, trustees, chancellor, field agent and the proposer. Two members of the committee make an appointment to personally visit with the member and his spouse to discuss his situation. They cover the benefits of membership, such as the accidental death benefit for member and spouse and the honor of being remembered at daily Mass for deceased Knights and spouses at St Mary’s Church in New Haven, CT. They also share with them the activities and programs the council has to offer.

The personal visit provides an opportunity to discover the reasons for their lack of interest in continuing their membership in our Order. Most of their concerns will be satisfied by sharing and discussing the issues with them. If to no avail the member decides to discontinue his membership, then an exit interview should be conducted. Ask what it was he was interested in when he joined the Knights, what was it that he did not get from his membership and then what he liked, if anything, about being a member?

***Expect positive outcome, but follow procedures for suspension:***

Certain circumstances will happen occasionally that cannot be overcome. Not everyone will remain a member of our Order as their expectations may not have been met or they did not understand our goals and our principles. The financial secretary has a procedure that he is to follow when it becomes necessary to suspend a member. That procedure requires notification of the member, Supreme Council, State Council, District Deputy and a copy placed in the financial secretaries file. The form is a five part form. The procedure is outlined on the next page.

***Billing procedure and processing the “Notice of Intent to Suspend”:***

- First dues notice mailed 15 days prior to billing period
- After 30 days and dues not received, FS sends second billing notice
- After additional 30 days dues not received, FS provides names to the Grand Knight and the retention committee
- Knight Alert Letter mailed to delinquent members
- After the second month of member not paying his dues, FS prepares Form #1845 “Notice of Intent to Suspend”.
- Retention committee has 60 days after mailing Form #1845 to meet with the member and his spouse to persuade him to pay his dues providing they have not done so previously.
- After 60 days and before 90 days of issuing the Form #1845, FS submits a Form #100 to Membership Records, checking the suspension box indicating the collection of the member’s dues was unsuccessful.

***Reasons why members may drop their membership in our Order:***

- nobody ever called me to get involved in anything
- did not get appropriate orientation either from the proposer, admissions committee or the council
- did not take second and third degree
- never called to help with an activity
- not invited or came to any council meetings
- not felt welcome at the meeting or at an activity
- very little or no council communications or contact
- not what he was looking for
- failed to remain Catholic
- charged with felony crime
- financially stressed
- physically unable to be involved
- wanted more spiritual activity

***Procedures and suggested action when evaluating a member's status:***

***First:*** verify that the member is still a practical Catholic. If not, follow procedures outlined in FS Handbook page D7. Either the member or his former pastor can write a statement indicating that he is no longer a practical Catholic. Attach this statement to the Form #100 and remit to Supreme. This transaction will not count against council quotas.

***Second:*** the member may be having financial difficulty and his annual dues places a strain on the family budget. In these cases, the council should waive the dues until the member is able to pay or cover his dues with funds from the council's charity fund.

***Third:*** the member maybe physically unable to attend the meetings or events and feels he is no longer of value to the council or does not get any personal value from his membership. In these cases, assure the member that he is a valued member of the council and of our Order. The council should find a project or an activity that he can do and that will help him feel like he is contributing to the council. If the member is physically disabled and can not maintain employment, the financial secretary should prepare and submit to the Supreme Council, **Form #1831, Application for Relief from Payment of Council Dues and Supreme and State Council Per Capita Taxes**. This will exempt the member from dues and the council from State and Supreme per capita while maintaining the member on active status.

***Fourth:*** was not informed of council activities when he joined and has not received a council bulletin or any correspondence from the council. He feels like he is not wanted. Begin anew if possible and assign him to a committee that is active and doing projects in which he is interested. Closely mentor him and have periodic contact. Make sure he is on the council mailing list or e-mail list.

***Fifth:*** he did not feel welcome when he came to the meetings. Review the guidelines for welcoming new members with the council membership. There may be more members not attending meetings because of similar feelings. Avoid the cliques and the groupie image and make a special effort to know all the members.

**Sixth:** the council's activities are quite different from what he was told when he joined the council. Go over the activities and show him how his involvement will make all the projects better. Determine what his interest is and help him get involved with a program that satisfies his needs, even if it means starting a new program within the council. Remember everyone joins for a reason; we need to determine what it is.

**Seventh:** the member may have difficulty fitting into the council in which he is a member and may consider a transfer, maybe within his current area or in another state. Assist him with a transfer if he desires. He may know of a council in another area in which he would like to be a member or he may have moved to another location. Assist him with the transfer. Remember, the receiving council initiates the transfer however.

**Eighth:** there may be an occasion when the member is unable to be located; the last known address is no longer valid. Determine if there are others living in the area with the same last name and then contact them for more information about the member.

Check **whitepages.com; superpages.com; thepublicrecords.com; peoplelookup.com; intelius.com; zabasearch.com; or searchbug.com**

Any of these and other web sites may be helpful in locating the address and phone number of the member or a family member.

If you suspect the member may be deceased check web site; **rootsweb.com** for date of death and verification. The deceased person's social security number will be necessary to match the files maintained within this web site.

**Ninth:** has the member been charged with a felony? If so, there are conditions of the charge that must be met, such as the charges must include imprisonment of at least one year and one day before they can be removed from the current roster without counting against quota. Councils will generally carry the member until a determination of sentencing has been made and then an evaluation of the circumstances, as well as a meeting with the pastor is made to solicit his input.

**Tenth:** If all attempts fail, feel good that you did all you could do to give him the opportunity to continue his membership in the greatest organization in the world...The Knights of Columbus.

***Be responsive to the member, personally and expeditiously:***

Never allow dues to be in arrears on any member longer than two years. The retention committee should be informed of the delinquency of the member's dues in a timely manner and then immediately contact him to discuss his arrearages. A personal visit with the member is essential for a successful outcome. Phone conversations will rarely bring success or the result you expect. The financial secretary should be expected to bill and attempt to collect all dues and assessments. However, the council's retention committee becomes involved with the delinquent member when the financial secretary's effort to collect the dues has not succeeded. This should be done before the financial secretary prepares a suspension notice, if subsequently deemed necessary. A member of the retention committee stays in contact with the delinquent member until dues is collected and the member is active once again.

***District Deputy's involvement in the retention process:***

The district deputy should monitor each council's effort and progress in dues collection. He reviews all council audits within his district for accuracy and reasonableness. He should especially note the entry showing the number of members in arrears and check for reasonableness. He should be in regular contact with the Financial Secretary of all his councils regarding members who are in arrears and number of years that each is in arrears. The district deputy monitors the council's plan of action to retain members and may call members personally in an attempt to retain the member.

***Procedures for involving new members and the prevention of loss of members:***

When recruiting a new member, tell the truth and give factual information about your council's activities and its structure.  
Accompany the prospect to admission committee interview  
Accompany him to all degree exemplifications  
Proposer should be involved, if he is not then appoint a mentor  
Remind and offer to drive new members to the first few meetings  
Introduce him at meetings  
Get him assigned to a committee and involved in council activities.  
Follow-up with him by phone etc  
Encourage him to visit with the field agent  
Encourage him to join the fourth degree.  
Assist him in recruiting a friend, family member or co-worker.  
Help him achieve the Shining Armor Award  
Remind him of his importance to the council, the Order and the Church.

Let's do it right the first time and we will never need to do it again!!!

Rod J Hofschulte, PSD, RPC,

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