



LEO CLUBS
LEADING FOR LIFE

ALPHA LEO CLUB PROGRAM HANDBOOK



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INDEX

6 The Leo Club Program

- 6 History and Objective
- 6 Motto
- 7 Worldwide Membership

8 Sponsoring a Leo Club

- 8 New Energy
- 9 Types of Leo Clubs
 - 9 Community-Based
 - 9 School-Based
 - 9 Alpha Club
 - 9 Omega Club
- 10 Organizing a Leo Club
 - 10 Organization Fees
 - 11 Liability Insurance
- 12 Launching the Leo Club
 - 12 Certification
 - 12 Installation Ceremony

12 Leo Club Leadership

- 12 Being a Good Leader
- 13 Leo Club Officer Roles
- 14 Leo Club Advisor
 - 14 Roles of the Advisor
 - 14 Promotion of Leo Clubs
 - 14 Graduating Leos

15 Running a Leo Club

- 15 Club Administration
 - 15 Important Dates to Remember
 - 16 Club Bank Accounts
 - 16 LeoMMR
 - 16 Ordering Club Supplies
- 16 Club Meetings
- 17 Club Elections
- 18 Team Building
 - 18 Committees
 - 18 Social Events
- 19 Planning Service Projects
 - 19 Project Ideas
- 20 Fundraising Activities
- 20 Leo and Lions Emblem Use
- 22 Club Twinning
- 23 Awards and Recognition
 - 23 Awards for Individual Leos
 - 23 Awards for Leo Clubs
 - 23 Awards for Individual Lions and Advisors
 - 23 Awards for Lions Clubs

24 Membership

- 24 Keeping Members Involved
- 25 Club Recruitment and Promotion
- 25 Member Induction
- 26 New Member Kits

26 Leo Districts and Multiple Districts

- 26 Structure
- 26 Leo District/Multiple District Officers
 - 26 Roles and Terms
 - 27 Responsibilities
- 27 Leo Club Chairperson
 - 27 Role and Term
 - 27 Responsibilities
- 27 Associate District Leo Club Chairperson

28 Leo Club Program Advisory Panel

- 28 Composition
- 28 Qualifications
- 28 Nomination Process
 - 28 Leo Nominees
 - 28 Lion Nominees
- 29 Selection Criteria
- 29 Selection Process

30 Club Cancellations and Transfers

31 Resources

- 31 LCI Web Site
- 31 LeoMMR
- 31 Newsletters
- 31 Contacting International Headquarters

32 Publications

- 33 Leo Club Officer Installation and New Member Initiation (Leo-8)
- 37 Sample News Releases
 - 37 New Leo Club
 - 38 Community Service Project
 - 39 New Leo Club Officer
 - 40 Leo Club Anniversary

41 Forms

- 42 Leo Club Organization Report (Leo-51)
- 43 Leo Club Membership Application (Leo-50)
- 44 Leo Club Officers and Membership Report (Leo-72)
- 45 Annual Leo District/Multiple District Report (Leo-91)
- 46 Leo Successful Project/Activity Report (Leo-SPA)



THE LEO CLUB PROGRAM



“...to provide the youth of the world with an opportunity for development and contribution, individually and collectively, as responsible members of the local, national and international community.”

HISTORY AND OBJECTIVE

In 1957, the Glenside Lions Club from the U.S. state of Pennsylvania sponsored the world’s first Leo club the — Abington High School Leo Club — with 35 students. A decade later, the Lions Clubs International (LCI) Board of Directors adopted the Leo Club Program as an official program of the association.

The objective of the Leo Club Program is “...to provide the youth of the world with an opportunity for development and contribution, individually and collectively, as responsible members of the local, national and international community.”

Leo club members around the world fulfill this objective every day. Leo club activities and projects enhance the community and help young people develop and practice leadership, organization and social skills. Leo club involvement can instill in young people a lifetime commitment to helping others.

MOTTO

The Leo club motto — **Leadership, Experience, Opportunity** — says it all:

LEADERSHIP: Leo members acquire skills as project organizers and motivators of their peers.

EXPERIENCE: They discover how teamwork and cooperation can bring about change in their community and the world.

OPPORTUNITY: Leos develop positive character traits and receive recognition for their contributions.

WORLDWIDE MEMBERSHIP

Lions Clubs International (LCI) is the world's largest community service organization, with 1.3 million members. Today there are more than 45,000 Lions clubs in approximately 200 countries and geographic areas. Regardless of the language Lions speak, religion they practice or politics they support, they all share a common dedication to helping people in need.

An integral part of the Lions international network, Leos also have their own network of more than 5,700 Leo clubs in approximately 140 nations. The international scope of LCI provides Leo and Lions club members a unique global identity.

Leo clubs are open to young people with good character and an interest in serving their communities.



The international scope of LCI provides Leo and Lions club members a unique global identity.

SPONSORING A LEO CLUB



Leo clubs provide a way to mentor future community leaders and encourage future Lions.

NEW ENERGY

Leo club sponsorship inspires Lions club members through involvement with their community's youth and young adults, helping them develop into humanitarians and leaders. Connections to young people can bring new energy to a Lions club. The sponsoring Lions club will also become more visible in the community with exposure to new audiences — such as young professionals, students, parents and families — and Leo clubs provide a way to mentor future community leaders and encourage future Lions.

Leo clubs are a sponsored affiliation of Lions clubs. The sponsoring Lions club is responsible for guiding and counseling its Leo club. By working closely with Leos, Lions ensure that their sponsored Leo club operates within and benefits from the policies of LCI.

A Lion is appointed to serve as an advisor for the Leo club. This Lion should be someone who enjoys working with youth. The Leo club advisor serves as a mentor to the Leo club officers and members. The sponsoring Lions club is encouraged to appoint the Leo club advisor as a member of the Lions club's board of directors. Much of the guidance for the Leo club is carried out through the Leo club advisor.

Guidance for the Leo club is exercised in one or more of the following ways, agreed upon by the Leo and Lions club:

- The Leo club advisor or a member of the sponsoring Lions club should attend each Leo club or Leo board of directors' meeting.
- Three representatives from the Lions and Leo club should meet monthly to discuss mutual interests and plans, and to review actions of the Leo club and/or its board of directors.

- If attending meetings is difficult, Leos should submit a copy of their club or board meeting minutes to the Lions club for review.

LCI highly recommends that the sponsoring Lions club verify and follow local laws and customs dictating the provision of background checks for adults working with young people.

TYPES OF LEO CLUBS

Whether community-based or school-affiliated, Leo clubs provide members with the camaraderie and growth that come from participation in community service projects, social functions and leadership development activities.

Community-based Leo clubs offer membership to any eligible young person within the local area of the Lions club. These clubs meet at a suitable location in the community, and a member of the sponsoring Lions club serves as the Leo club advisor.

School-affiliated Leo clubs draw on members from one school. These clubs often require the appointment of a faculty-advisor — usually a teacher, counselor or school administrator — to act as a liaison between the school and the Leo club and also to assist the Leo club advisor, who is a Lion. The school must agree to fulfill Leo Club Program responsibilities and the Leo club must agree to follow the policies, insurance requirements and regulations of the school. The Leo club is subject to the same rules established by the school authorities for all student organizations and extracurricular activities. Before the Leo club is organized, the Lions club and school should agree on procedures for organizing club activities on and off school property, which adhere to school policies and LCI board policy.

Leo clubs are divided into two tracks:

Alpha and Omega.

Alpha Leo clubs are designed for youth between 12 and 18 years of age. This track focuses on the individual and social development of teens and preteens.

Omega Leo clubs are tailored for young adults between 18 and 30 years of age. This track is designed for the personal and professional development of young adults.

ORGANIZING A LEO CLUB

The success of the Leo club depends on positive involvement of Lions and the Leo club advisor. Once the Lions club agrees to sponsor a Leo club, it should:

01 Appoint a Leo club advisor and a Leo club advisory committee with at least three members, including the Leo club advisor. The Leo club advisory committee attends Leo club and Leo board of directors' meetings. Lions clubs can contact the district or multiple district Leo club chairperson for support.

02 Decide if the new Leo club will be community or school-based. Contact the school or other organizations to ensure interest and support for a club. Agree on the policies and regulations of Leo club activities with school or community officials.

03 Obtain the names of potential Leos from schools, universities, colleges, houses of worship, youth groups, and friends and relatives of Lions club members.

04 Organize a Leo club formation meeting to explain the Leo Club Program to potential members:

a. Invite young people to this meeting through promotional posters and notices sent to schools, religious youth groups, community programs and the local media. See the *Publications* section of this handbook for news release samples.

b. Answer potential members' questions concerning membership, the relationship with the sponsoring Lions club and activities undertaken by Leos.

c. Provide promotional materials to each meeting participant. Leo club materials are available in the *Leo Club Organization Kit*

and from the Youth Programs Department at International Headquarters.

d. In this meeting or a follow up meeting(s), prospective Leos can choose Leo club leaders — by electing the president, vice president, secretary and treasurer — and discuss the projects they would like to adopt.

e. Distribute the *Application for Membership*. Ask prospective members to share information about the club and bring a friend to the next meeting.

ORGANIZATION FEES

A sponsoring Lions club pays a one-time Leo club organization fee of US\$100. This fee covers:

- The cost of Lions club sponsor and Leo officer materials.
- The Leo club *Certificate of Organization*.
- Entrance fees for 20 Leo new members, which includes 20 complementary *Leo New Member Kits* containing a:
 - Leo lapel pin
 - Leo club membership card
 - Leo club membership certificate
 - Leo new member guide.

If there are more than 20 originating Leo club members, a US\$5 entrance fee is charged to the sponsoring Lions club account for each additional member. This includes a *Leo New Member Kit* for each as well. As new members join the club throughout the year, a US\$5 entrance fee should be remitted to LCI for each new member.

Fees are processed through the Youth Programs Department at International Headquarters. Postage fees and taxes are the responsibility of the sponsoring Lions club.