

**South Carolina
State Council**

Knights of Columbus



**Membership
Guidelines**

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Purpose

These guidelines are issued from the State Deputy and State Council to provide the councils in South Carolina the procedures, expectations, and philosophy for executing successful Membership programs.



We are the “Great Lighthouse of Charity” in South Carolina. The light that shines from the top is the “Light of Christ”. This light shines strong in South Carolina through our charitable works and programs. The foundation of this great lighthouse is built on recruiting.

Philosophy

Membership and Retention are the cornerstones in the foundation of every council.

It is our works that define us as Knights of Columbus. *Membership is focused on the programs conducted by our councils and the sustainment of our councils through recruiting new members.* As Knights of Columbus, we have a rich tradition of charitable works and putting our catholic faith into practice. This tradition started in 1882 with the Venerable Father Michael J. McGivney and that very first group of inspired men. This great legacy has been built by each generation of Knights. As a result, this legacy belongs to every council and every brother knight. It is our responsibility to build onto this rich inheritance through our work as Knights so that we can pass it on to those who follow us.

In order to conduct successful works in our Faith in Action service areas of Faith, Family, Community, and Life, our councils need catholic gentlemen in their ranks ready to help make a difference. Men ready to put their catholic faith into practice. It is through the recruiting part of membership, that such men are inspired to join our councils. Effective council programs raise our visibility in our parishes and communities. Effective recruiting programs provide these men the opportunity to join us.

Although this guideline is focused on Membership, **let us remember the Knights of Columbus is a fraternal order of catholic brothers. *Retention is about fraternity.*** It starts the moment a candidate signs the Form 100. **As a fraternal order, “We are our brother’s keeper”.** This means that each council must keep in contact with each of their members, especially those ill or in distress. It is the council’s responsibility to develop programs that keep its members connected.

It is through the council's Retention programs that members form the bonds of brotherhood, stay informed and stay involved. ***Members connected are members committed.*** Committed members make our councils' programs a reality.

Membership

Membership has two parts: Programs – the works that define who we are as knights. Recruiting – inspiring eligible catholic gentlemen to join us.

Responsibilities

State Membership Director (SMD):

- 1) Provide membership coordination and support for the councils.
- 2) Share successful council programs with all councils.
- 3) Help councils expand/improve their current programs.
- 4) Share successful recruiting programs and ideas with all councils.
- 5) Publish and distribute the state membership newsletter *Palmetto Push* to the councils monthly through the District Deputies.
- 6) Serve as a resource for the Grand Knights.
- 7) Execute membership tasks as directed by the State Deputy.
- 8) Update the State Officers with the *Palmetto Report*.

District Deputy:

- 1) Promote recruiting and programs within your district.
- 2) Ensure each council has scheduled Membership Drives and Admission Degrees.
- 3) Encourage Grand Knights to send the SMD information about successful programs their councils have conducted.
- 4) Pro-actively encourage your Grand Knights to watch Supreme Webinars and take their on-line training to help build the foundation of knowledge for successful council management.

Grand Knight:

- 1) Appoint a council Membership Director.
- 2) Plan and organize his council's programs in the areas of Faith, Family, Community and Life.
- 3) Execute the council's recruiting plan.
- 4) Share successful council programs and recruiting programs with the State Membership Director.
- 5) Watch Supreme Webinars and Grand Knight training. Complete the follow-up certificate test. Present a copy of the certificates to your District Deputy.

Council Membership Director:

- 1) Actively seek new program opportunities for the council.
- 2) Plan and coordinate the council's recruiting activities.
- 3) Coordinate the council's Admission Degree with the candidates.
- 4) Coordinate the candidates and the Admissions Committee.
- 5) Execute membership tasks as directed by the Grand Knight

Supreme Webinars

To help our council and district leadership build a common foundation of knowledge and understanding for council management, Supreme offers free on-line live Webinars. These are based on a wide range of topics. You can also upload any one you missed and complete it based on your schedule. These webinars are available through the Supreme website or via e-mail registration. Registration e-mails will be sent to Grand Knights and District Deputies after Supreme receives your council's Form 185 (Report of Chosen Officers).

Programs

Each council's programs are conducted under the guidelines from the Supreme Council and the State Council. These programs fall into the service areas of Faith, Family, Community, and Life. Completed programs are recorded on the Supreme form SP7 for the Columbian Award and the South Carolina ICC Program guide. **Use these forms to plan what the minimum type and numbers of programs a council should conduct each year.** Successful planning means successful programs. Every activity large or small that a council is involved with is a program. A program can be classified under several of the service areas. For example, a rosary prayer service can be a church program, council program, family program or culture of life program.

Each council is encouraged to share their successful programs and recruiting activities with the SMD each month. By sharing our success, councils work together to support each other.

Councils can learn about programs they have never tried before and get ideas on how to improve programs they are already involved with. The *Palmetto Push* is published monthly by the SMD and features successful programs from the Grand Knights.

Membership Action Plans – what a council needs for success

- 1) Council has appointed a Membership Director.
- 2) Each council has *scheduled* Admission Degrees per the State Ceremonial guidelines.
- 3) Each council should have 2 recruiting drives (1 in the Fall and 1 in the Spring) *scheduled*.
- 4) Does the council use the newest Supreme membership brochures and informational pamphlets?
- 5) Each council should have viable plans for their recruiting drives including details of who/what /when and where.
- 6) Each council has a goal of Star Council and a minimum of State ICC Honor Council.

- 7) Each council should have a viable admissions committee or some other screening process for new candidates.

Star Council Award

Earning a Star Council Award is the highest honor a council can achieve in the fraternal year. It is a standard of excellence that every knight throughout the order understands. It means a council has met and exceeded high standards in 3 areas; *Safeguarding our Families* through our insurance programs, *Spreading the Kingdom of God* through our charitable works and *Sustaining these Works* through recruiting new members. It is the ultimate recognition of the work and effort by your council's members.

Recruiting

Recruiting new members is the life force of a council. It gives the council new ideas, new energy, new expertise, new connections and more help in conducting their programs.

We recruit for the health and welfare of our councils. We also recruit to sustain our councils' programs. Without successful recruiting in the council, the Laws of Attrition (people move away, people fade away and people pass away) will degrade our council's ability to sustain its operations.

Eligible catholic gentlemen are *inspired* to join the Knights of Columbus. It is sometimes hard to know the exact source of the inspiration. The common source is often the example of our members in service to their faith and community.

While some prospects will contact us about joining, the most common way men join is by being asked. Our members should always look for men who may be interested in joining the council. New member growth means we are giving the gift of membership to other catholic gentlemen. This gift will help them grow in our faith and become better Catholics for it.

Online Membership

The Supreme Council's Online Membership allows catholic gentlemen to join the order through the Supreme website after they affirm they are practical catholic men and over 18 years old. They fill out demographic information and pay dues to Supreme. This is a streamlined method to allow men to join who are hesitant to join because of travel or other commitments.

The Online member will have access to a special Online Membership portal from which they will direct communications from Supreme based on Lead with Faith, Protect your Family, Serve Others and Defend your Values. These communications will acclimate the online members to the rich history of our order and will help them grow in faith. This will eventually set the stage for the online member to join an active council.

Online members are members of the Knights of Columbus and will receive an online membership card from Supreme. They can attend a local council's meetings. They cannot vote in a council meeting and cannot observe degree work until they join a council by going through the Admissions Degree.

Online members are assigned to the state online roster under council 98039. Either the State Membership Director or the State Online membership Director will notify a local council that a new online member from their area has joined. The council will then reach out to the online member welcoming him to the order and inviting him to attend a council meeting and activities. Find out his desire to join but *do not* overwhelm the online member e-mails and phone calls trying to recruit him. Remember, everyone has their sense of timing. Once an online member wishes to join a local council, he can go through the Admissions Degree and will transfer via Form 100 from Council 98039 to the local council. The council receives credit for a new member.

Recruiting Rules

The following list of recruiting rules is in no particular order but each is tried and true.



South Carolina Top Recruiting Rules



Golden Rule: *Everything a council does is a recruiting opportunity!*

Rule 1) **Be visible in your parish and community**

Nametags at Mass, bulletin board at church, church bulletin, recognition for church programs

Rule 2) **Schedule and plan your Membership Drives**

Check with Pastor, plan out who, what, where, when and **get a member to speak in front of the parish at mass**

Rule 3) **Schedule your Admission Degrees!**

Point of focus for degree team and recruiters

Rule 4) **Every prospect has his own sense of timing**

Between family, business and other charitable obligations, some men wait until timing is better

Rule 5) **Unity of Message**

The Knights of Columbus is catholic men's fraternal, family, charity organization.

Rule 6) **Look professional**

Membership table with table top display, current membership flyers, members are dressed neat

Rule 7) **Find your closers**

Find those members who like talking to people, can talk about the council and enjoy recruiting

Rule 8) **Don't forget the wife! 8A) Don't forget about Father!**

The younger the family, the more you need to talk to the wife....wife's support critical. Ask your pastor who he'd recommend to become a knight.

Rule 9) **Be Positive**

No one wants to join a negative

Rule 10) **Ask!**

We need to take the initiative...asking at the right time is the key to yes

Rule 10A) Ask a prospect to a council activity - especially a social with his wife and family. Just because he is not a member yet, doesn't mean he can't participate.

Rule 10B) Let your recruiters recruit! Do not expect someone who recruits multiple members, mentor them through degrees and development as a knight. Let them focus on recruiting.

Why recruit new members?

We recruit for the long term health and welfare of our councils and the sustainment of our charitable works. If we are not actively recruiting new members, then the Laws of Attrition will take their toll.

The Laws of Attrition are:

- 1) Men move away
- 2) Men fade away
- 3) Men Pass away

No one in your council is immune from the Laws of Attrition. Sooner or later, we all succumb to one of them. If your council is not successfully recruiting new members, who will replace the brothers who run your programs or provide the “hands on deck” that bring these programs to life? Who will be in your council’s pipeline gaining experience, knowledge and understanding of how your council runs? Without successful recruiting efforts, who will be your council’s future leadership? Your council needs brothers who have earned the trust and respect of your council by their experience in the council’s programs. Without recruiting, your council will have neither trusted, experienced leadership for the future or the “hands on deck” to sustain your council’s current programs. *This is why we recruit.* Awards like the Star Council Award are the result of successful recruiting programs. Awards are not the reason or goal but the result!

Asking

Everything a council does is a recruiting opportunity. Whether it is helping at the church or conducting an Operation Hope program in the community, you never know when you will run into an eligible catholic gentleman or his wife. Our Supreme Knight has charged us to make membership in the Knights of Columbus available to every catholic gentleman.

After a prospect has been asked to join, he will say yes, no or let me think about it.

If yes:

- 1) Give him a Form 100 and ask him to fill it out then.
- 2) Explain the form to him and confirm he is a practical catholic.
- 3) Make sure the candidate understands the next step in the council process (i.e. contact from the admission committee) and when the next Admissions is scheduled.
- 4) Give the Form 100 to the GK or MD to process.

The key is to start building your relationship with the candidate. It is recommended that the proposer follow-up with the candidate to make sure he has been contacted by the council and attends the candidate's Admissions Degree.

If maybe:

- 1) Ask he has any questions about the KoC.
- 2) Give him a Form 100 and other membership information.
- 3) Suggest he check out the Supreme, State and Council websites.
- 4) Get his name and contact information so someone can follow-up with the prospect.
- 5) Invite him to a council function. A social program is great as he can attend with his wife.

If no:

- 1) Ask if he has any questions or concerns about joining.
- 2) Do not press too hard. Everyone has their own sense of timing.
- 3) Let him know that when he is ready, we will need his help.
- 4) Invite him to a council function. A social program is great as he can attend with his wife.
- 5) Follow-up with him as appropriate.

It is strongly recommended that candidates go through the Admissions Degree *within 30 days* of turning in the Form 100. Based on the council's schedule, that may not always be possible. In that case, look for another Admissions Degree in the district and coordinate as needed. At the very least, invite the candidate to a council function (other than a meeting) that is scheduled before the next degree. DO NOT let candidates hang around waiting for an Admissions Degree without getting them involved.

Recruiting Drives

Recruiting drives provide a great opportunity to raise a council's visibility in the parish by telling parishioners who we are and what we do as Knights of Columbus. They give us a structured opportunity to have conversations with prospective members in the parish.

- 1) *Schedule the recruiting drives well in advance.* Coordinate them with your Pastor and church secretary.
- 2) *A member of the council should speak to the parish at each mass that weekend.* Although an endorsement from your Pastor is always appreciated, it is not the same as when one of your members talks about the Knights of Columbus. Speak from the heart and try not to read a script.
- 3) *Prepare a professional looking recruiting table.* This table should be covered, featuring current Supreme membership brochures, Form 100s and a council specific recruiting board.
- 4) *Identify your council's "closers"* and schedule them as needed. All members staffing the recruiting table should be friendly, positive and enthusiastic.
Their appearance should be similar and they should wear their name badges. Everyone involved should know when the next Admissions Degree is scheduled.
- 5) *Keep a list of prospects with contact information* so it is easier to follow-up.

- 6) It is highly recommended that the recruiting drive is complimented with some kind of social program so that the prospect's family can be included. This can be doughnuts and coffee after mass, a council social or even the council picnic.

Now you have a new member, now what?

The 2 most important things with a brand new member sitting in his 1st meeting:

- 1) ***Make him feel welcome and among friends.*** He should receive a council new member welcome packet that contains a council roster, a contact list of officers (including names of spouses), the council budget and annual schedule. Other items can include a contact list for council program directors and committees. Introduce him during the meeting and ask him to say a few words about himself. Make sure he is not left alone but engaged by other members.
- 2) ***Get him involved at his 1st meeting.*** Do not let a new member leave the meeting without asking him to participate in an upcoming program or activity.

Mentoring

Although “mentoring” is really part of Retention, mentoring new members is very helpful in getting new members involved and engaged with our works. It can be something simple like developing a “Buddy System”.

A more experienced member helps the new member to understand our activities, answer questions, encourage him and especially help the new member move through our ceremonials. Do not expect “the guy that recruited the new member” to be his mentor. If the recruiter and new member are already close friends, this will naturally occur. If not, develop a list of members who are interested in helping a new member.

Let your Recruiters Recruit!

Supreme Recruiting Incentives

The Supreme Council offers various recruiting incentives that benefit your council. For example, for the past several years councils that earn Star Council get a \$4.50 credit per billable member. The credit can be used at the Knights Gear store. These Supreme incentives are set by the Board of Directors at their annual meeting in October. The incentives are announced by e-mails.

State Recruiting Incentives

The purpose of the state recruiting incentives is to publically recognize our best “fishers of men” and the collective success of our top council recruiting programs during the fraternal year.

Top Recruiters

The top 5 individual recruiters based on total new members recruited (recognized by Supreme membership records 14 days prior to the state convention) in South Carolina for the fraternal year will earn the following:

- First - \$100 credit at the Knights Store plus commemorative plaque
- Second - \$75 credit at the Knights Store plus commemorative plaque
- Third - \$50 credit at the Knights Store plus commemorative plaque
- Fourth - \$40 Gift Card plus commemorative plaque
- Fifth - \$25 Gift Card plus commemorative plaque

Top Councils

The council with the largest new member gain by total number of new members will receive a \$250 gift card.

The council with the highest percent of new members compared to their goal will receive a \$250 gift card.

Newly formed councils are not eligible for the Top Council incentives in the fraternal year they are formed. The Top Recruiters and Top Councils will be recognized at the State Convention.

Membership along with Retention are the cornerstones of every council. Active programs in both areas are vital to the health of the council, the vitality of the State Council and the charitable work of the order.

Vivat Jesus!