



# Protocol Change Chronology 2025-Present

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# Toastmasters International Protocol Change Chronology

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## 2025

<b>Protocol</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>
Protocol 2.3: Club Programs and Events	February 27
Protocol 9.0: District Campaigns and Elections	March 15
Protocol 7.0: District Structure	August 23
Protocol 9.0: District Campaigns and Elections	August 23
Protocol 3.0: Ethics and Conduct	August 23
Protocol 7.0: District Structure	December 11

## Club Programs and Events

### 1. Club Coach Program

- A. The objective of this program is to coach struggling clubs back to a healthy membership, and to instruct club members in strategies to encourage continued member enthusiasm and interest in continuing with the Toastmasters Education Program.
  - I. Eligible clubs and prospective coaches may approach the District Director to request the appointment of a club coach to a given club. The District Director may also determine a club is eligible without external prompting.
  - II. Once it has been determined that a club requires coaching, the District Director arranges a meeting between the eligible club, a qualified club coach, and either the District Director, Program Quality Director, or Club Growth Director. The purpose of this meeting is to fill out and sign the Club Coach Agreement.
  - III. Once all parties have agreed to the specific terms of the Club Coach Agreement, the document is sent to World Headquarters for final approval and filing. Once this confirmation has been received, club coaching may begin.
- B. Clubs seeking a club coach must meet the following criteria in order to be considered eligible for the program:
  - I. Must have between three (3) and 12 active members in good standing.
  - II. Must not be currently suspended.
  - III. **At least one (1) club officer must have completed the Club Coach Training Module.**
- C. Toastmasters members seeking to become club coaches must meet the following criteria prior to their appointment in order to be considered qualified:
  - I. Must be an active member in good standing with Toastmasters International, having maintained an active membership in any club other than the club to be coached for a minimum of one (1) year.
    - a. Club coaches may not become members of, or hold any position in, any club they are appointed to coach for the duration of their appointment.
    - b. Club coaches may be former members of an eligible club, so long as they have not been a member of that club for a minimum of six (6) months prior to their appointment.

- II. Must have completed Level 2 in any Pathways path, or achieved an Advanced Communicator Bronze (ACB) or Advanced Leadership Bronze (ALB) designation in the traditional education program.
  - III. Must have served as a club officer for one (1) program year (or two (2) six (6)-month terms).
  - IV. Must have completed **the** Club Coach Training **Module**.
  - V. Must not be coaching any other club.
- D. On completion of their assigned term of service,
- I. A club coach will be considered eligible for Distinguished Toastmaster (DTM) credit if all of the following conditions have been met:
    - a. The club coach served for a minimum of six months in their assigned role.
    - b. The club coach submitted reports on club status to ~~World Headquarters~~, club officers, and relevant District personnel at the appropriate times. Initial reports are to be submitted within 30 days of a club coach's assignment; ongoing reports every 60 days thereafter; and final reports following the conclusion of the assigned term.
    - c. The Club President of the coached club ~~and District Director~~ **hasve** confirmed in writing that the Club Coach has successfully discharged their duties. Club coach evaluations may be collected to aid in this determination.
    - d. The coached club has achieved Distinguished or higher recognition in the Distinguished Club Program by June 30 of the relevant program year.
  - II. The club coach, in addition to being eligible for Distinguished Toastmaster (DTM) credit, shall also be eligible for District officer credit if they are able to bring the coached club up to full charter strength (20 members) within their assigned term.
- E. Eligible undistricted clubs may seek the assistance of World Headquarters for appointment of a qualified club coach or coaches. All other requirements as applicable to eligible clubs and club coaches shall apply to club coaches coaching undistricted clubs.
- F. Any club coach who is unsuccessful after two (2) program years with their assigned club may be reappointed at the request of the Club Growth Director or District Director to continue to coach their assigned club.
- I. Such requests for reappointment must be received by World Headquarters prior to September 30 after the club's second unsuccessful program year.
  - II. Reappointment assignments are for up to an additional two (2) program years.

- III. A club coach may only be reappointed to the same club once per coaching assignment.

## 2. **Speakathons**

- A. Speakathons are special meetings conducted by clubs seeking to provide their members with meetings dedicated to project speeches and evaluations in accordance with the Toastmasters Education Program.
  - I. One or more clubs may cooperate to conduct a Speakathon. These clubs may be from any District.
  - II. Speakathons may only be conducted at the club level, and may be conducted either onsite, online, or in a hybrid format.
  - III. Speakathons cannot be organized by Areas, Divisions, and Districts.
  - IV. Area, Division, and District resources (including websites and social media) may be used to promote Speakathons.
- B. Members of clubs other than the host club or clubs (if jointly organized) may be invited to attend and participate in Speakathons. Attendance may also be made open to the general public, at the club's discretion.
  - I. Members of the host club or clubs may take on any meeting role, including presenting speeches and evaluations (both verbal and written).
  - II. Members from clubs other than the host club or clubs may not present speeches, but may take on other meeting roles.
  - III. Non-members are not recommended to take on any roles.
  - IV. International Director and Second Vice President candidates are not permitted to participate in Speakathons conducted jointly with clubs outside their declared home region.

## District Campaigns and Elections

### 1. Schedule

Date	Action
No later than November 1	District Director appoints District Leadership Committee (DLC) Chair.
No later than December 1	DLC members are recommended by the DLC Chair and approved by the District Director.
No Later than January 15	Call for candidate declarations.
Determined by the DLC Chair and announced to the members of the clubs in the District	Deadline for candidates to declare intent to run.
March 15 – June 1	Annual Meeting of the District Council occurs (actual date set by each District).
Six (6) weeks prior to the election date	DLC notifies District Director of nominated candidates.
Four (4) weeks prior to the election date	DLC report and biographical forms are emailed to all members of the District Council and posted on the District website.  Eligible floor candidates shall declare their intent to run in writing to the District Director after the DLC report has been published and at least seven (7) days prior to the Annual Meeting of the District Council.
July 15	Deadline to submit Officer Agreement and Release Statements and District Leader rosters to World Headquarters.

### 2. District Leadership Committee

A. The District Leadership Committee (DLC) is defined and governed by Article XI, Section (b), of the District Administrative Bylaws.

B. Members of the DLC acknowledge and agree to the following guidelines:

- I. Abide by the timeline provided in Article XI of the District Administrative Bylaws.
- II. Identify and seek qualified candidates for each position.
- III. Commit to meet on a regular basis to conduct candidate assessments and to complete the selection process.

DLC meetings and deliberations are confidential and must not be attended by or shared with those who are not DLC members. A DLC candidate interview is attended only by the DLC members and the candidate.

- IV. Confirm that each candidate meets the candidate qualifications defined in Article VII, Section (d), of the District Administrative Bylaws.

- V. Ensure that there is a minimum of one (1) candidate each for the offices of District Director and Program Quality Director; two (2) or more candidates for the office of Club Growth Director; and a minimum of one (1) candidate for all other elective District offices.
- C. DLC composition:
- I. The District Director appoints a chair, who is a past District leader, preferably a Past District Director. The DLC Chair shall not hold any other District role (with the exception of the Immediate Past District Director) while serving as DLC Chair.
  - II. Committee members are appointed by DLC Chair, subject to the approval of the District Director.
  - III. Each committee member and the DLC Chair must be an active and paid member.
  - IV. Each Division in the District must be equally represented on the committee.
  - V. A member from a different District in the same region may be appointed to the DLC by the District Director, as a voting member or non-voting member, to provide outside perspective and to enhance the DLC process during deliberations. This member will not represent a Division.
  - VI. The District Director, Program Quality Director, and Club Growth Director shall not serve as members of the DLC.
  - VII. International Officer and Director candidates, Board Members, ~~and~~ Region Advisors, **and Region Advisor applicants** shall not serve on the DLC.
  - VIII. All committee members must complete a Committee Member Agreement and submit it to the DLC Chair before the committee begins its work.
- D. DLC members serve one (1) year on the DLC and may be reappointed after a one-year absence from the committee.
- E. Communication may be by conference call, email, or other means when geographic distance and other factors impede onsite participation.
- F. DLC members shall not participate in any campaign or endorse any candidate for District office.
- G. No DLC member may be nominated or run from the floor for any District office for the program year following the election at which the committee's report is presented.
- H. DLC members with a potential conflict of interest, such as a business or personal relationship with a candidate that could create a reasonable doubt as to the ability of the committee member to be impartial, must declare it at the Committee's first meeting or as soon as the potential conflict is identified. The Committee reviews the potential conflict of interest and determines, by a majority

vote, if it constitutes an actual conflict of interest. If a conflict of interest is determined to exist the committee member must abstain from the interviews, discussion, and voting regarding that candidate in the context of the Committee.

In the event the DLC chair has a potential conflict of interest, as specified above, the chair must declare it to the District Director as soon as the potential conflict of interest is identified. The District Director reviews the potential conflict of interest and determines if it constitutes an actual conflict of interest. If a conflict of interest is determined to exist, the chair is asked to resign.

### **3. Candidate Assessment and Selection**

- A. Before candidate assessment begins, the DLC verifies that each candidate meets the qualifications listed in Article VII of the District Administrative Bylaws.
- B. The DLC interviews and evaluates all known candidates for each elected position. The DLC reviews, in detail, the duties of the position as defined in Article VIII of the District Administrative Bylaws with each candidate. Candidates are evaluated using the Candidate Evaluation and District Officer Competencies documents. The chair provides these documents to the DLC members.
- C. All candidates are interviewed by at least two (2) committee members jointly or individually. Candidates for the same position are interviewed by the same interviewers except for the Division Director position.
  - I. Candidates for the same Division Director position (e.g., Division A, Division B, etc.) are interviewed by the same interviewers.
  - II. Division Director candidates who have completed the DLC interview process for any Division(s) are eligible as a floor candidate and may run for any Division Director position.
  - III. If a DLC member resigns or is replaced after interviews have begun, candidates who have completed their interviews do not need to be interviewed again by the newly appointed DLC member in order to meet the requirement as defined under Section 3.C. of this Protocol.
- D. Online participation options for interviews must be made available if needed.
- E. The DLC members, including the chair:
  - I. Have equal opportunity to express their perspectives during candidate-selection deliberations.
  - II. Exercise independent judgment during the selection process.
  - III. Consider the experience, abilities, and qualifications of each candidate.
  - IV. Keep in mind the best interests of Toastmasters International, its Member Clubs, individual members, and the District.
  - V. Discuss each candidate for each elective District office.

- F. The DLC Chair is a non-voting member of the committee and does not attempt to influence the other members of the committee.
- G. Committee members cast their votes in written form, and the committee nominates a minimum of one (1) candidate each for the offices of District Director and Program Quality Director; two (2) or more candidates for the office of Club Growth Director; and a minimum of one (1) candidate for all other elective District offices.
- H. Votes are tallied by the DLC Chair and at least two (2) other committee members. The Chair announces the results to the committee.
- I. To be nominated, a candidate must receive a majority vote of the DLC.
- J. DLC deliberations and votes are confidential and may be shared only with the District Director, World Headquarters, and the Toastmasters International Board of Directors.

#### **4. Nomination Results**

- A. The reporting of committee results is governed by Article XI, Section (b), of the District Administrative Bylaws.
- B. The DLC Chair or the District Director notifies nominated candidates and reconfirms their willingness to be nominated and their commitment to fulfill the duties of office.
- C. The District Director distributes the committee report and the Candidate Biographical Form for each candidate to the District Council.
- D. The DLC Chair or District Director notifies candidates who were not nominated and advises them of their eligibility to seek office as floor candidates.
- E. The DLC report is incomplete if the DLC is unable to nominate the required number of candidates for any individual office(s). The nomination report is invalid if any other DLC requirement, process, or deadline is not complied with.
- F. If the DLC report is incomplete, qualified candidates may run from the floor for any position for which the DLC did not nominate the required number of candidates. Qualified candidates must notify the District Director seven (7) days prior of their intent to run from the floor. Any nominations made by the DLC are valid.
- G. If the DLC report is invalid, qualified candidates may run from the floor for all positions. Any nominations made by the DLC are invalid. The report may be presented to District Council members as an advisory report at the discretion of the District Executive Committee.
- H. Any protest related to the DLC report must be submitted to the District Director no later than two (2) weeks prior to the elections.
- I. It is recommended that the DLC Chair or designated committee member provide feedback to all candidates for leadership development.

## **5. Announcement of Candidacy**

- A. Members, including current members of the District Executive Committee, may self-nominate for District office, be sought out by the DLC, or be nominated by an individual member.
- B. Floor candidates have the same opportunities and responsibilities as nominated candidates unless otherwise noted.
- C. To be nominated, elected or appointed, or run from the floor for any District officer position, candidates must:
  - I. Sign the Toastmasters International Officer Agreement and Release Statement.
  - II. Submit a completed Candidate Biography Form and photograph.
- D. All signed forms from elected or appointed leaders must be submitted to World Headquarters as soon as practicable after the elections but no later than July 15.

## **6. Campaign Communications**

- A. A campaign communication is any message, in any form, such as phone calls, postal mail, email, and social media, unsolicited by the recipient that promotes or publicizes a candidate.
- B. Photographs, audio, video, and electronic representations in all campaign materials and displays, and on the candidate's website and social media profiles, related to this campaign may be of the candidate only; no other persons are permitted.
- C. All candidates are responsible for obtaining written permission for any quotes and testimonials used in candidate campaign materials and displays, on websites, and on social media profiles. Proof of written permission may be requested for review by the District Director.
- D. Unsolicited subscriptions to information by or about a candidate, such as a newsletter, blog, or social media page, are not permitted.
- E. Communications by the District in connection with a candidate's presentation at a District conference, and internal communication among campaign team members, are not considered campaign communications.
- F. The District Director provides contact information to declared candidates only after receiving their Officer Agreement and Release Statement.
  - I. Only District Council members' contact information is provided. The contact information must include all available names, mailing addresses, email addresses, and phone numbers of the District Council members.
  - II. The contact information may only be used for campaign purposes.
- G. District candidates may only send two (2) campaign communications. These communications may only be sent to members of the District Council:

- I. The first communication may be sent between January 1 and two (2) weeks prior to the Annual Meeting of the District Council.
  - II. The second communication may be sent two (2) weeks prior to and no later than the date of the Annual Meeting of the District Council.
- H. Candidates may have a website and use social media to promote their candidacy. No District or club social media sites or websites may be used to promote any individual candidate. District and club websites may list the nominated candidates.
- I. Candidates are prohibited from participating in Toastmasters-related discussion groups on websites, including social media sites, for campaign purposes.
- J. District candidates may use the Toastmasters trademarks, including the logo and the names "Toastmasters" and "Toastmasters International," on printed and electronic campaign materials, websites and social media sites. Use of the trademarks on any other items requires the written permission of the Chief Executive Officer.
- K. Candidates shall not produce or distribute any wearable campaign items (such as buttons, pins, hats, sashes, apparel, etc.).
- L. At District conferences and District non-election meetings (such as Area and Division speech contests), nominated candidates and floor candidates may only distribute and display campaign materials in the Candidate Corner (if there is a Candidate Corner). Candidates or their representatives are responsible for the delivery, set-up, and removal of materials.
- M. In the event of an online or hybrid election, a District may host an online Candidate Corner event at the District conference. The online Candidate Corner provides a breakout room for each candidate to allow members to visit the room to ask questions.
- N. At District non-election meetings (such as Area and Division speech contests), candidates may be introduced as long as all candidates present are introduced.
- O. Candidates shall not host hospitality suites at any District event or contribute to a District hospitality suite. A hospitality suite is defined as a room where refreshments are provided and attendance is open to any member.
- P. Candidates may speak and give educational presentations at District conferences, at a time other than during the Annual Meeting of the District Council, at the discretion of the District Director.
- I. All candidates must receive equal opportunity.
  - II. The time, place, and length of presentation are identified by the District Director.
  - III. Candidates shall not serve as speech contest officials or test speakers above the club level.

- Q. Candidates shall not present campaign speeches at any District non-election meeting, or campaign at any club meetings.
- R. Advertisements in District publications, such as in newsletters, in conference programs, or on websites, by or on behalf of candidates for District office are not permitted.
- S. The names of floor candidates are not published with the DLC report or in any other District publication.
- T. Candidates or their representative(s) shall not send campaign communications once the Annual Meeting of the District Council begins.

## **7. Candidate Endorsements**

- A. District Executive Committee members shall not take any action to endorse or officially support any candidate; however, District Executive Committee members who are running for District office may campaign on their own behalf.
- B. International Officer and Director candidates, members of the Toastmasters International Board of Directors, and Region Advisors shall not take any action to endorse or support any candidate for District office.
- C. All candidates must obtain written permission for any endorsements (i.e., quotes and testimonials) used in candidate campaign materials and displays, and on websites. Proof of written permission may be requested for review by the District Director.

## **8. Campaign Violations**

- A. All actions by individual members must comply with Policy 3.0: Ethics and Conduct and Protocol 3.0: Ethics and Conduct.
- B. Candidates are responsible for ensuring campaign supporters are familiar with campaign Policies. Candidates acknowledge that violation of Policies and Protocols may result in consequences.
  - I. A level-one violation is a minor infraction that is usually correctable (for example: posting a photo of someone other than the candidate on the candidate's website).
    - a. The violation is reported to the District Director, who investigates the matter. If the District Director cannot resolve the matter, it is turned over to the District Executive Committee.
    - b. The candidate is educated and informed about the violation. When the matter is resolved, there are no further ramifications.
  - II. A level-two violation is one involving the election process or a continuing violation (for example: candidate makes a promise of future District Executive Committee action in exchange for votes, or in violation of Policy 3.0, Section 6.D.).
    - a. The violation is reported to the District Director no later than 72 hours before the election. The District Director investigates the matter or assigns the investigation to the District Executive Committee.

- b. The District Director may, at their discretion, investigate violations that occur later than 72 hours prior to the election.
      - c. The District Executive Committee may enact these penalties:
        - 1. An announcement of the violation is made prior to the election. This announcement occurs at an appropriate time and place or on the District's website as determined by the District Executive Committee.
        - 2. A letter of censure may be issued to the candidate by the District Executive Committee.
- III. A level-three violation is one of campaign ethics (for example: candidate actively engaging in or promoting the violation of Toastmasters Bylaws, Policy, or Protocol).
  - a. The violation is reported to the District Director no later than 72 hours before the election. The District Director investigates the matter or assigns the investigation to the District Executive Committee.
  - b. The District Director may, at their discretion, investigate violations that occur later than 72 hours prior to the election.
  - c. The District Executive Committee may enact these penalties:
    - 1. Any or all penalties for level-two violations.
    - 2. Request that a candidate withdraw from candidacy.
    - 3. Engage in further discipline following the processes outlined in Protocol 3.0.
- C. Discipline, related to campaign violations, that is administered by the District Executive Committee may be appealed to the District Council. The District Council's decision is final. Such decisions shall not be appealed to the Toastmasters International Board of Directors or World Headquarters. However, the Board of Directors may, on its own initiative, review the District's decision and reach a different conclusion in the best interests of Toastmasters International, its Member Clubs, or individual members.
- D. After the nominations are published, any proven candidate Policy violations must be shared with the District Leadership Committee Chair. Such violations may be disclosed at the Annual Meeting of the District Council by the DLC chair or District Director. If any violations are disclosed at the meeting, all violations of equal level must be disclosed at the meeting.

## **9. Candidate Showcase**

- A. At the District conference, it is recommended that a Candidate Showcase occur before the Annual Meeting of the District Council.

- B. Prior to the District conference, the District Director appoints members to serve as chair and co-chair of the Candidate Showcase. Other members are assigned as needed.
- C. Each candidate is given equal time to be interviewed by the chair based on questions related to the achievement of the District mission.
- D. When held, a Candidate Showcase must be exclusively onsite or exclusively online to give each candidate an equal platform. An online Candidate Showcase may be prerecorded and posted no sooner than one (1) week before the Annual Meeting of the District Council.
- E. The presentation schedule, with the names of all nominated candidates and known floor candidates for District office, is prepared by the District Administration Manager. The showcase begins with all candidates for the office of District Director, in alphabetical order by surname, and then proceeds to subsequent offices in order.
- F. There is no census or poll taken of the delegates at a Candidate Showcase.

## **10. Credentials**

- A. District voting is governed by the District Administrative Bylaws, Article X, Section (d).
- B. The District Director sends a credential form to each Club President and Vice President Education 30 days before the Annual Meeting of the District Council- in the District newsletter or in a separate mailing.
- C. Prior to the Annual Meeting of the District Council, the District Director appoints a Credentials Chair to supervise the credentials, voting, and ballot counting processes. The Credentials Chair may select members to form a Credentials Committee.
- D. The Credentials Chair is, when practicable, a Past District Director.
- E. The Credentials Chair obtains a list of paid clubs and a list of current District Council members (Club Presidents, Vice Presidents Education, and District officers eligible to vote). The Credentials Chair ensures that ballots are only issued to current District Council members.
- F. Ballots indicate the office being contested or are sequentially numbered. The names of nominated candidates may be printed on the ballots. The names of floor candidates shall not be printed on the ballots. Ballot templates are available on the Toastmasters International website.
- G. The Credentials Committee ensures that no campaign materials are in the credentials area.

## **11. Elections**

- A. The District Director or a person designated by the District Director explains the election rules and procedures to the delegates.
- B. The DLC Chair shall present the committee's report. In the chair's absence, the District Director designates another member of the DLC, when practicable, to

present the report. The chair or designee announces the names of the committee members and reads the name of each nominated candidate, in alphabetical order, for each of the offices of District Director, Program Quality Director, Club Growth Director, and Division Directors. The Area Directors, District Public Relations Manager, District Administration Manager, and District Finance Manager are also announced if elected.

- C. If any proven level-two or -three Policy violation(s) by a candidate have occurred, according to Section 8 of this Protocol, the District Executive Committee may disclose that violation and its consequences prior to the election.
- D. For each office, the District Director inquires whether there are additional nominations from the floor.
  - I. Floor candidates for District Director, Program Quality Director, Club Growth Director, and Division Director who have completed the evaluation process conducted by the DLC are eligible to run from the floor at the Annual Meeting of the District Council, according to Article VII, Section (e), of the District Administrative Bylaws. All eligible floor candidates must declare their intent to run to the District Director at least seven (7) days prior to the elections.
  - II. If the DLC report is invalid, candidates for District Director, Program Quality Director, Club Growth Director, and Division Director may be nominated as floor candidates without going through the DLC evaluation process.
  - III. Floor candidates must be nominated by a member of the District Council. Floor candidates may self-nominate when they are a member of the District Council.
  - IV. Floor candidates or, in their absence, their representatives state their eligibility qualifications.
  - V. Floor candidates for District Director, Program Quality Director, Club Growth Director, and Division Director must declare their intent to run to the District Director and sign the Officer Agreement and Release Statement at least seven (7) days prior to the elections. Only the Officer Agreement and Release Statements of those elected are sent to World Headquarters.
  - VI. The District Director may declare any proven level-two or -three Policy violations by floor candidates to the District Council.
  - VII. When nominations are complete, the District Director declares the nominations for that office closed.
- E. A candidate nominated by the District Leadership Committee who is not elected to the nominated office may be nominated from the floor for a maximum of one (1) additional office at the Annual Meeting of the District Council. A candidate who is not nominated by the District Leadership Committee may stand as a floor candidate for a maximum of two (2) District officer roles at the Annual Meeting of the District Council.

- I. Candidates must have completed the DLC interview process for each office.
  - II. Candidates must have declared their intent to run at least seven (7) days prior to the elections, for each office.
  - III. Upon approval of a new Division or new Divisions, at the Annual Meeting of the District Council, candidates who have gone through the DLC interview process, for any Division, are eligible to run from the floor for the new Division or Divisions. In this circumstance the requirement to declare intent prior to the Annual Meeting of the District Council is waived.
- F. At the discretion of the District Director, candidate speeches should all be delivered onsite or should all be delivered online to give each candidate an equal platform.
  - G. After nominations are closed, candidate speeches are given. Each candidate speaks on their own behalf. If a candidate is not present, an authorized representative may speak for the candidate. Candidate speeches shall not contain negative information about other candidates. If there is only one (1) candidate nominated, no speech is given.
  - H. A candidate's representative shall not be a member of the District Executive Committee, a member of the DLC, the Credentials Chair, or any other meeting official.
  - I. The balloting for each office takes place immediately following candidate speeches. The number of votes that a member may cast is governed by Article X, Section (e), of the District Administrative Bylaws.
  - J. After nominations for an office are closed, if there is only one (1) candidate for the office, the District Director may entertain a motion to dispense with the secret ballot for the uncontested office and instruct the District Administration Manager to cast a single ballot for the candidate.
  - K. Candidates are responsible for appointing one (1) observer to monitor the integrity of the voting and ballot counting process.
  - L. Each election is completed and the winner announced before moving to the subsequent election.
  - M. Any candidate who receives a majority of the votes cast is declared elected. In the event no candidate receives a majority of the votes cast for a contested office, voting continues with the use of special ballots. Prior to the second ballot, the nominee having the lowest vote on the first ballot and any nominee receiving less than 10% of the votes cast shall be dropped, and on such succeeding ballots the same procedure shall be followed until a nominee has received a majority of all votes cast. In case of a tie between two (2) remaining nominees, the election shall be decided by lot.
  - N. Upon adjournment of the Annual Meeting of the District Council, all election results are final. Results of the election must be displayed on the District

website and may also be announced in other public forums as soon as possible following adjournment of the meeting.

- O. All ballots are retained for 24 hours following the close of the meeting for review only by the District Director or District Credentials Chair, as necessary, and immediately thereafter destroyed by the District Director or District Credentials Chair.

## District Structure

### 1. Club Assignments

- A. Area and Division organization is defined and described in Article XII, Sections 1, 3(b), and 3(e), of the Bylaws of Toastmasters International, and in Article VI of the District Administrative Bylaws.
- B. When a new Member Club is organized, it is assigned to the District within which boundaries it meets. Exceptions are only considered with the concurrence of the District Councils involved and with the approval of the Board of Directors.
  - I. The assignment of a new club to an Area is made by the District Director, subject to approval by the District Executive Committee.
  - II. Changes to the alignment of a new club must be reported to World Headquarters by the District Director within 30 days of the club's charter date. Any changes received after 30 days will not be reflected until the following July 1.
- C. When a club moves its meeting location into the geographic boundaries of another District, its District affiliation does not change until the next July 1. This change must be reported to World Headquarters and both District Directors within 30 days of that date.
- D. The best interests of the clubs and District are taken into consideration when assigning clubs to Areas.
  - I. Areas consist of four (4) to six (6) clubs as of July 1, of which a minimum of four (4) must be in good standing.
    - a. Areas within Provisional Districts consist of three (3) to six (6) clubs as of July 1, of which a minimum of three (3) must be in good standing.
  - II. Under no circumstances may an Area have more than six (6) clubs on July 1.
  - III. **An Area shall not be comprised solely of Advanced clubs**~~shall not be segregated into Areas.~~
  - IV. Areas may be **segregated grouped** by language, subject to the approval of the District Council.
  - V. Districts assign clubs to Areas based upon:
    - a. Geographic proximity to other clubs
    - b. The ability of an Area Director to effectively provide service, without requiring the clubs to change how meetings are conducted to accommodate an Area Director visit

- c. Club size and strength (e.g., paid, active, disbanding)
  - d. Prospective clubs and expected growth
  - e. The likelihood of eligibility for Distinguished programs (e.g., club base of the Area or Division)
- E. A Division must have a minimum of four (4) Areas.
- I. Districts may have no more than nine (9) Divisions unless they are operating under a reformation plan that has been approved by the Board of Directors.
  - II. Provisional Districts must have a minimum of two (2) Divisions.
  - III. Divisions within Provisional Districts must have a minimum of three (3) Areas.

## 2. **Provisional Districts**

- A. The Board may create Provisional Districts in any geographic area that is undistricted.
- B. The criteria for the creation of a Provisional District is 25 or more clubs in good standing.
- C. Applications for Provisional District status are submitted to the Chief Executive Officer.
- D. Once granted Provisional District status by the Board, a Provisional District is entitled to administrative support from World Headquarters; a District number, which is the next sequential District number available; official participation in the Distinguished District Program; a District reserve account; applicable membership dues income; assignment to a region; visits from International Officers, Directors, and/or Region Advisors; and travel reimbursement to official District leader training and to the International Convention.
- E. Individual members of clubs in Provisional Districts may participate in the Video Speech Contest.
- F. A Past Provisional District Director is eligible to be nominated for election to the Board.
- G. Within three (3) years after granting Provisional District status, the Board reviews the progress of the Provisional District. Performance in the Distinguished District Program is considered in the decision to grant ~~full~~ District status.
- H. After reviewing District progress, the Board either allows the Provisional District to continue to function as a District or takes such action as it considers in the best interest of Toastmasters International.
- I. When a Provisional District reaches ~~75-60~~ or more clubs in good standing, it may apply to the Board for ~~full~~ District status. **For three (3) years after granting District status, the Board reviews the progress of the District**

**annually. Performance in the Distinguished District Program is considered in the decision to maintain District status.**

- J. Before becoming eligible for ~~full~~-District status, each newly created Provisional District is required to be in operation for a minimum of nine (9) months ending on June 30, during which time it must adopt the District Administrative Bylaws; elect officers, establish an organizational structure, and subdivide itself into Areas and Divisions; and operate District programs in alignment with Toastmasters International's governing documents.
- K. Any authorization to operate as a Provisional District continues until ~~full~~-District status is granted or until it is otherwise terminated by the Board.

**3. Reformed or Realigned Districts**

- A. The Board reviews the status of Districts with more than 240 clubs every three (3) years, or sooner if necessary, to determine if reformation is in the best interests of Toastmasters International and the clubs.
- B. The Board may also consider realigning a District with another District or Districts if ~~if the District or Districts have~~ ~~has~~ fewer than ~~100-60~~ clubs.
- C. Any District with 200 or more clubs that wants to be considered for reformation must have demonstrated a new club growth in the preceding two (2) program years. With approval by a majority of the District Executive Committee, a letter of inquiry can be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer for review by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee provides its recommendation to the Board.
- D. If the Board approves the request or directs a reformation, the District Director appoints a Reformation Committee to conduct a detailed needs analysis that includes the following:
  - I. Map of proposed boundaries demonstrating that the reformed Districts will ideally have no fewer than 120 clubs each
  - II. Number of clubs; club strength; growth trends; growth potential; population; education; languages spoken; and geographic influences, such as rivers, mountains, proximity of clubs to one another, and international borders, for both Districts
  - III. Reasons why the reformation is in the best interests of the members, the clubs, the Districts, and Toastmasters International
  - IV. Implementation strategy
  - V. Marketing plan projecting growth and identifying key market opportunities for both Districts
  - VI. Succession plan identifying qualified future leaders in both Districts
  - VII. Financial projections demonstrating the anticipated income and expense for both Districts

- VIII. The needs analysis is submitted to the Chief Executive Officer for review with the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee provides its recommendation to the Board.
- E. Two (2) years prior to reformation, the District elects two (2) Club Growth Directors, one (1) Program Quality Director and a District Director. One (1) year prior to reformation, the District elects two (2) Club Growth Directors, two (2) Program Quality Directors and one (1) District Director. In cases when two (2) or more Districts jointly reform or when one (1) District reforms into more than two (2) Districts, the Board will provide additional direction as needed.
  - F. The District with the oldest surviving club within its boundaries will retain the original District number. The other District will receive the next sequential number available. The number will be communicated to the District leaders no later than July 1 of the year prior to reformation.
  - G. District records through the reformation are retained by the original District. Copies of records essential to their proper administration are furnished to the newly formed District. Separate records are kept after the reformation.
  - H. Once the reformation takes place, World Headquarters distributes funds in the original reserve account to the reserve accounts of the reformed Districts, according to the ratio of the number of membership payments made by clubs in each reformed District in the program year immediately preceding the reformation.
  - I. Funds in local District bank accounts must be divided according to the ratio of the number of membership payments made by clubs in each reformed District in the program year immediately preceding the reformation. World Headquarters shall oversee the allocation of funds at the time the bank accounts are established for the new District.
  - J. At any stage of the reformation process, Districts may be asked to submit a progress report to the Chief Executive Officer.
  - K. Additional reformation requirements may be determined necessary by the Board due to special circumstances.

#### **4. District Realignment**

- A. The realignment of a District occurs on the initiative of the Board.
- B. The Board reviews the status of Districts with fewer than ~~100-60~~ clubs every three (3) years, or sooner if necessary, to decide if a realignment is in the best interest of the organization.
- C. When determining whether a realignment is appropriate, factors such as the number of clubs in the District, market potential within the District, past performance, leadership, and geography are considered.
- D. If it is determined that realignment is in the best interests of Toastmasters International and the clubs, the District is advised that it is being considered for consolidation.

- E. If the District wishes to remain a District and not be realigned, it is given the opportunity to develop and present a growth plan to the Board. The growth plan identifies potential markets within the District and provides a specific strategy and ~~reasonable~~ timeline **of up to three (3) years** for building to ~~100-60~~ clubs and more. **The growth plan is used as a baseline and is updated throughout the three (3) year period to determine if the District is on track to reach 100 clubs or more.**
- F. If a growth plan is accepted, the Board reviews the progress of the District each year **against the baseline and updated plans** and takes what action is in the best interests of Toastmasters International and the clubs.
- G. If a District is to be realigned, the clubs in that District are notified of the date of the realignment. The Board takes whatever action necessary to ensure that the clubs involved have the opportunity to participate in elections or speech contests conducted by the District absorbing the clubs.

## District Campaigns and Elections

### 1. Schedule

Date	Action
No later than November 1	District Director appoints District Leadership Committee (DLC) Chair.
No later than December 1	DLC members are recommended by the DLC Chair and approved by the District Director.
No Later than January 15	Call for candidate declarations.
Determined by the DLC Chair and announced to the members of the clubs in the District	Deadline for candidates to declare intent to run.
March 15 – June 1	Annual Meeting of the District Council occurs (actual date set by each District).
Six (6) weeks prior to the election date	DLC notifies District Director of nominated candidates.
Four (4) weeks prior to the election date	DLC report and biographical forms are emailed to all members of the District Council and posted on the District website.  Eligible floor candidates shall declare their intent to run in writing to the District Director after the DLC report has been published and at least seven (7) days prior to the Annual Meeting of the District Council.
July 15	Deadline to submit Officer Agreement and Release Statements and District Leader rosters to World Headquarters.

### 2. District Leadership Committee

A. The District Leadership Committee (DLC) is defined and governed by Article XI, Section (b), of the District Administrative Bylaws.

B. Members of the DLC acknowledge and agree to the following guidelines:

- I. Abide by the timeline provided in Article XI of the District Administrative Bylaws.
- II. Identify and seek qualified candidates for each position.
- III. Commit to meet on a regular basis to conduct candidate assessments and to complete the selection process.

DLC meetings and deliberations are confidential and must not be attended by or shared with those who are not DLC members. A DLC candidate interview is attended only by the DLC members and the candidate.

- IV. Confirm that each candidate meets the candidate qualifications defined in Article VII, Section (d), of the District Administrative Bylaws.

- V. Ensure that there is a minimum of one (1) candidate each for the offices of District Director and Program Quality Director; two (2) or more candidates for the office of Club Growth Director; and a minimum of one (1) candidate for all other elective District offices.
- C. DLC composition:
- I. The District Director appoints a chair, who is a past District leader, preferably a Past District Director. The DLC Chair shall not hold any other District role (with the exception of the Immediate Past District Director) while serving as DLC Chair.
  - II. Committee members are appointed by DLC Chair, subject to the approval of the District Director.
  - III. Each committee member and the DLC Chair must be an active and paid member.
  - IV. Each Division in the District must be equally represented on the committee.
  - V. A member from a different District in the same region may be appointed to the DLC by the District Director, as a voting member or non-voting member, to provide outside perspective and to enhance the DLC process during deliberations. This member will not represent a Division.
  - VI. The District Director, Program Quality Director, and Club Growth Director shall not serve as members of the DLC.
  - VII. International Officer and Director candidates, Board Members, and Region Advisors shall not serve on the DLC.
  - VIII. All committee members must complete a Committee Member Agreement and submit it to the DLC Chair before the committee begins its work.
- D. DLC members serve one (1) year on the DLC and may be reappointed after a one-year absence from the committee.
- E. Communication may be by conference call, email, or other means when geographic distance and other factors impede onsite participation.
- F. DLC members shall not participate in any campaign or endorse any candidate for District office.
- G. No DLC member may be nominated or run from the floor for any District office for the program year following the election at which the committee's report is presented.
- H. DLC members with a potential conflict of interest, such as a business or personal relationship with a candidate that could create a reasonable doubt as to the ability of the committee member to be impartial, must declare it at the Committee's first meeting or as soon as the potential conflict is identified. The Committee reviews the potential conflict of interest and determines, by a majority vote, if it constitutes an actual conflict of interest. If a conflict of interest is

determined to exist the committee member must abstain from the interviews, discussion, and voting regarding that candidate in the context of the Committee.

In the event the DLC chair has a potential conflict of interest, as specified above, the chair must declare it to the District Director as soon as the potential conflict of interest is identified. The District Director reviews the potential conflict of interest and determines if it constitutes an actual conflict of interest. If a conflict of interest is determined to exist, the chair is asked to resign.

### **3. Candidate Assessment and Selection**

- A. Before candidate assessment begins, the DLC verifies that each candidate meets the qualifications listed in Article VII of the District Administrative Bylaws.
- B. The DLC interviews and evaluates all known candidates for each elected position. The DLC reviews, in detail, the duties of the position as defined in Article VIII of the District Administrative Bylaws with each candidate. Candidates are evaluated using the Candidate Evaluation and District Officer Competencies documents. The chair provides these documents to the DLC members.
- C. All candidates are interviewed by at least two (2) committee members jointly or individually. Candidates for the same position are interviewed by the same interviewers except for the Division Director position.
  - I. Candidates for the same Division Director position (e.g., Division A, Division B, etc.) are interviewed by the same interviewers.
  - II. Division Director candidates who have completed the DLC interview process for any Division(s) are eligible as a floor candidate and may run for any Division Director position.
  - III. If a DLC member resigns or is replaced after interviews have begun, candidates who have completed their interviews do not need to be interviewed again by the newly appointed DLC member in order to meet the requirement as defined under Section 3.C. of this Protocol.
- D. Online participation options for interviews must be made available if needed.
- E. The DLC members, including the chair:
  - I. Have equal opportunity to express their perspectives during candidate-selection deliberations.
  - II. Exercise independent judgment during the selection process.
  - III. Consider the experience, abilities, and qualifications of each candidate.
  - IV. Keep in mind the best interests of Toastmasters International, its Member Clubs, individual members, and the District.
  - V. Discuss each candidate for each elective District office.

- F. The DLC Chair is a non-voting member of the committee and does not attempt to influence the other members of the committee.
- G. Committee members cast their votes in written form, and the committee nominates a minimum of one (1) candidate each for the offices of District Director and Program Quality Director; two (2) or more candidates for the office of Club Growth Director; and a minimum of one (1) candidate for all other elective District offices.
- H. Votes are tallied by the DLC Chair and at least two (2) other committee members. The Chair announces the results to the committee.
- I. To be nominated, a candidate must receive a majority vote of the DLC.
- J. DLC deliberations and votes are confidential and may be shared only with the District Director, World Headquarters, and the Toastmasters International Board of Directors.

#### **4. Nomination Results**

- A. The reporting of committee results is governed by Article XI, Section (b), of the District Administrative Bylaws.
- B. The DLC Chair or the District Director notifies nominated candidates and reconfirms their willingness to be nominated and their commitment to fulfill the duties of office.
- C. The District Director distributes the committee report and the Candidate Biographical Form for each candidate to the District Council.
- D. The DLC Chair or District Director notifies candidates who were not nominated and advises them of their eligibility to seek office as floor candidates.
- E. The DLC report is incomplete if the DLC is unable to nominate the required number of candidates for any individual office(s). The nomination report is invalid if any other DLC requirement, process, or deadline is not complied with.
- F. If the DLC report is incomplete, qualified candidates may run from the floor for any position for which the DLC did not nominate the required number of candidates. Qualified candidates must notify the District Director seven (7) days prior of their intent to run from the floor. Any nominations made by the DLC are valid.
- G. If the DLC report is invalid, qualified candidates may run from the floor for all positions. Any nominations made by the DLC are invalid. The report may be presented to District Council members as an advisory report at the discretion of the District Executive Committee.
- H. Any protest related to the DLC report must be submitted to the District Director no later than two (2) weeks prior to the elections.
- I. It is recommended that the DLC Chair or designated committee member provide feedback to all candidates for leadership development.

## **5. Announcement of Candidacy**

- A. Members, including current members of the District Executive Committee, may self-nominate for District office, be sought out by the DLC, or be nominated by an individual member.
- B. Floor candidates have the same opportunities and responsibilities as nominated candidates unless otherwise noted.
- C. To be nominated, elected or appointed, or run from the floor for any District officer position, candidates must:
  - I. Sign the Toastmasters International Officer Agreement and Release Statement.
  - II. Submit a completed Candidate Biography Form and photograph.
- D. All signed forms from elected or appointed leaders must be submitted to World Headquarters as soon as practicable after the elections but no later than July 15.

## **6. Campaign Communications**

- A. A campaign communication is any message, in any form, such as phone calls, postal mail, email, and social media, unsolicited by the recipient that promotes or publicizes a candidate.
- B. Photographs, audio, video, and electronic representations in all campaign materials and displays, and on the candidate's website and social media profiles, related to this campaign may be of the candidate only; no other persons are permitted.
- C. All candidates are responsible for obtaining written permission for any quotes and testimonials used in candidate campaign materials and displays, on websites, and on social media profiles. Proof of written permission may be requested for review by the District Director.
- D. Unsolicited subscriptions to information by or about a candidate, such as a newsletter, blog, or social media page, are not permitted.
- E. Communications by the District in connection with a candidate's presentation at a District conference, and internal communication among campaign team members, are not considered campaign communications.
- F. The District Director provides contact information to declared candidates only after receiving their Officer Agreement and Release Statement.
  - I. Only District Council members' contact information is provided. The contact information must include all available names, mailing addresses, email addresses, and phone numbers of the District Council members.
  - II. The contact information may only be used for campaign purposes.
- G. District candidates may only send two (2) campaign communications. These communications may only be sent to members of the District Council:

- I. The first communication may be sent between January 1 and two (2) weeks prior to the Annual Meeting of the District Council.
  - II. The second communication may be sent two (2) weeks prior to and no later than the date of the Annual Meeting of the District Council.
- H. Candidates may have a website and use social media to promote their candidacy. No District or club social media sites or websites may be used to promote any individual candidate. District and club websites may list the nominated candidates.
- I. Candidates are prohibited from participating in Toastmasters-related discussion groups on websites, including social media sites, for campaign purposes.
- J. District candidates may use the Toastmasters trademarks, including the logo and the names "Toastmasters" and "Toastmasters International," on printed and electronic campaign materials, websites and social media sites. Use of the trademarks on any other items requires the written permission of the Chief Executive Officer.
- K. Candidates shall not produce or distribute any wearable campaign items (such as buttons, pins, hats, sashes, apparel, etc.).
- L. At District conferences and District non-election meetings (such as Area and Division speech contests), nominated candidates and floor candidates may only distribute and display campaign materials in the Candidate Corner (if there is a Candidate Corner). Candidates or their representatives are responsible for the delivery, set-up, and removal of materials.
- M. In the event of an online or hybrid election, a District may host an online Candidate Corner event at the District conference. The online Candidate Corner provides a breakout room for each candidate to allow members to visit the room to ask questions.
- N. At District non-election meetings (such as Area and Division speech contests), candidates may be introduced as long as all candidates present are introduced.
- O. Candidates shall not host hospitality suites at any District event or contribute to a District hospitality suite. A hospitality suite is defined as a room where refreshments are provided and attendance is open to any member.
- P. Candidates may speak and give educational presentations at District conferences, at a time other than during the Annual Meeting of the District Council, at the discretion of the District Director.
- I. All candidates must receive equal opportunity.
  - II. The time, place, and length of presentation are identified by the District Director.
  - III. Candidates shall not serve as speech contest officials or test speakers above the club level.

- Q. Candidates shall not present campaign speeches at any District non-election meeting, or campaign at any club meetings.
- R. Advertisements in District publications, such as in newsletters, in conference programs, or on websites, by or on behalf of candidates for District office are not permitted.
- S. The names of floor candidates are not published with the DLC report or in any other District publication.
- T. Candidates or their representative(s) shall not send campaign communications once the Annual Meeting of the District Council begins.

## **7. Candidate Endorsements**

- A. District Executive Committee members shall not take any action to endorse or officially support any candidate; however, District Executive Committee members who are running for District office may campaign on their own behalf.
- B. International Officer and Director candidates, members of the Toastmasters International Board of Directors, and Region Advisors shall not take any action to endorse or support any candidate for District office.
- C. All candidates must obtain written permission for any endorsements (i.e., quotes and testimonials) used in candidate campaign materials and displays, and on websites. Proof of written permission may be requested for review by the District Director.

## **8. Campaign Violations**

- A. All actions by individual members must comply with Policy 3.0: Ethics and Conduct and Protocol 3.0: Ethics and Conduct.
- B. Candidates are responsible for ensuring campaign supporters are familiar with campaign Policies. Candidates acknowledge that violation of Policies and Protocols may result in consequences.
  - I. A level-one violation is a minor infraction that is usually correctable (for example: posting a photo of someone other than the candidate on the candidate's website).
    - a. The violation is reported to the District Director, who investigates the matter. If the District Director cannot resolve the matter, it is turned over to the District Executive Committee.
    - b. The candidate is educated and informed about the violation. When the matter is resolved, there are no further ramifications.
  - II. A level-two violation is one involving the election process or a continuing violation (for example: candidate makes a promise of future District Executive Committee action in exchange for votes, or in violation of Policy 3.0, Section 6.D.).
    - a. The violation is reported to the District Director no later than 72 hours before the election. The District Director investigates the matter or assigns the investigation to the District Executive Committee.

- b. The District Director may, at their discretion, investigate violations that occur later than 72 hours prior to the election.
        - c. The District Executive Committee may enact these penalties:
          - 1. An announcement of the violation is made prior to the election. This announcement occurs at an appropriate time and place or on the District's website as determined by the District Executive Committee.
          - 2. A letter of censure may be issued to the candidate by the District Executive Committee.
- III. A level-three violation is one of campaign ethics (for example: candidate actively engaging in or promoting the violation of Toastmasters Bylaws, Policy, or Protocol).
- a. The violation is reported to the District Director no later than 72 hours before the election. The District Director investigates the matter or assigns the investigation to the District Executive Committee.
  - b. The District Director may, at their discretion, investigate violations that occur later than 72 hours prior to the election.
  - c. The District Executive Committee may enact these penalties:
    - 1. Any or all penalties for level-two violations.
    - 2. Request that a candidate withdraw from candidacy.
    - 3. Engage in further discipline following the processes outlined in Protocol 3.0.
- C. Discipline, related to campaign violations, that is administered by the District Executive Committee may be appealed to the District Council. The District Council's decision is final. Such decisions shall not be appealed to the Toastmasters International Board of Directors or World Headquarters. However, the Board of Directors may, on its own initiative, review the District's decision and reach a different conclusion in the best interests of Toastmasters International, its Member Clubs, or individual members.
- D. After the nominations are published, any proven candidate Policy violations must be shared with the District Leadership Committee Chair. Such violations may be disclosed at the Annual Meeting of the District Council by the DLC chair or District Director. If any violations are disclosed at the meeting, all violations of equal level must be disclosed at the meeting.

## **9. Candidate Showcase**

- A. At the District conference, it is recommended that a Candidate Showcase occur before the Annual Meeting of the District Council.

- B. Prior to the District conference, the District Director appoints members to serve as chair and co-chair of the Candidate Showcase. Other members are assigned as needed.
- C. Each candidate is given equal time to be interviewed by the chair based on questions related to the achievement of the District mission.
- D. When held, a Candidate Showcase must be exclusively onsite or exclusively online to give each candidate an equal platform. An online Candidate Showcase may be prerecorded and posted no sooner than one (1) week before the Annual Meeting of the District Council.
- E. The presentation schedule, with the names of all nominated candidates and known floor candidates for District office, is prepared by the District Administration Manager. The showcase begins with all candidates for the office of District Director, in alphabetical order by surname, and then proceeds to subsequent offices in order.
- F. There is no census or poll taken of the delegates at a Candidate Showcase.

## **10. Credentials**

- A. District voting is governed by the District Administrative Bylaws, Article X, Section (d).
- B. The District Director sends a credential form to each Club President and Vice President Education 30 days before the Annual Meeting of the District Council- in the District newsletter or in a separate mailing.
- C. Prior to the Annual Meeting of the District Council, the District Director appoints a Credentials Chair to supervise the credentials, voting, and ballot counting processes. The Credentials Chair may select members to form a Credentials Committee.
- D. The Credentials Chair is, when practicable, a Past District Director.
- E. The Credentials Chair obtains a list of paid clubs and a list of current District Council members (Club Presidents, Vice Presidents Education, and District officers eligible to vote). The Credentials Chair ensures that ballots are only issued to current District Council members.
- F. Ballots indicate the office being contested or are sequentially numbered. The names of nominated candidates may be printed on the ballots. The names of floor candidates shall not be printed on the ballots. Ballot templates are available on the Toastmasters International website.
- G. The Credentials Committee ensures that no campaign materials are in the credentials area.

## **11. Elections**

- A. The District Director or a person designated by the District Director explains the election rules and procedures to the delegates.
- B. The DLC Chair shall present the committee's report. In the chair's absence, the District Director designates another member of the DLC, when practicable, to

present the report. The chair or designee announces the names of the committee members and reads the name of each nominated candidate, in alphabetical order, for each of the offices of District Director, Program Quality Director, Club Growth Director, and Division Directors. The Area Directors, District Public Relations Manager, District Administration Manager, and District Finance Manager are also announced if elected.

- C. If any proven level-two or -three Policy violation(s) by a candidate have occurred, according to Section 8 of this Protocol, the District Executive Committee may disclose that violation and its consequences prior to the election.
- D. For each office, the District Director inquires whether there are additional nominations from the floor.
  - I. Floor candidates for District Director, Program Quality Director, Club Growth Director, and Division Director who have completed the evaluation process conducted by the DLC are eligible to run from the floor at the Annual Meeting of the District Council, according to Article VII, Section (e), of the District Administrative Bylaws. All eligible floor candidates must declare their intent to run to the District Director at least seven (7) days prior to the elections.
  - II. If the DLC report is invalid, candidates for District Director, Program Quality Director, Club Growth Director, and Division Director may be nominated as floor candidates without going through the DLC evaluation process.
  - III. Floor candidates must be nominated by a member of the District Council. Floor candidates may self-nominate when they are a member of the District Council.
  - IV. Floor candidates or, in their absence, their representatives state their eligibility qualifications.
  - V. Floor candidates for District Director, Program Quality Director, Club Growth Director, and Division Director must declare their intent to run to the District Director and sign the Officer Agreement and Release Statement at least seven (7) days prior to the elections. Only the Officer Agreement and Release Statements of those elected are sent to World Headquarters.
  - VI. The District Director may declare any proven level-two or -three Policy violations by floor candidates to the District Council.
  - VII. When nominations are complete, the District Director declares the nominations for that office closed.
- E. A candidate nominated by the District Leadership Committee who is not elected to the nominated office may be nominated from the floor for a maximum of one (1) additional office at the Annual Meeting of the District Council. A candidate who is not nominated by the District Leadership Committee may stand as a floor candidate for a maximum of two (2) District officer roles at the Annual Meeting of the District Council.

- I. Candidates must have completed the DLC interview process for each office.
  - II. Candidates must have declared their intent to run at least seven (7) days prior to the elections, for each office.
  - III. Upon approval of a new Division or new Divisions, at the Annual Meeting of the District Council, candidates who have gone through the DLC interview process, for any Division, are eligible to run from the floor for the new Division or Divisions. In this circumstance the requirement to declare intent prior to the Annual Meeting of the District Council is waived.
- F. At the discretion of the District Director, candidate speeches should all be delivered onsite or should all be delivered online to give each candidate an equal platform.
  - G. After nominations are closed, candidate speeches are given. Each candidate speaks on their own behalf. If a candidate is not present, an authorized representative may speak for the candidate. Candidate speeches shall not contain negative information about other candidates. If there is only one (1) candidate nominated, no speech is given.
  - H. A candidate's representative shall not be a member of the District Executive Committee, a member of the DLC, the Credentials Chair, or any other meeting official.
  - I. The balloting for each office takes place immediately following candidate speeches. The number of votes that a member may cast is governed by Article X, Section (e-d), of the District Administrative Bylaws.
  - J. After nominations for an office are closed, if there is only one (1) candidate for the office, the District Director may entertain a motion to dispense with the secret ballot for the uncontested office and instruct the District Administration Manager to cast a single ballot for the candidate.
  - K. Candidates are responsible for appointing one (1) observer to monitor the integrity of the voting and ballot counting process.
  - L. Each election is completed and the winner announced before moving to the subsequent election.
  - M. Any candidate who receives a majority of the votes cast is declared elected. In the event no candidate receives a majority of the votes cast for a contested office, voting continues with the use of special ballots. Prior to the second ballot, the nominee having the lowest vote on the first ballot and any nominee receiving less than 10% of the votes cast shall be dropped, and on such succeeding ballots the same procedure shall be followed until a nominee has received a majority of all votes cast. In case of a tie between two (2) remaining nominees, the election shall be decided by lot.
  - N. Upon adjournment of the Annual Meeting of the District Council, all election results are final. Results of the election must be displayed on the District

website and may also be announced in other public forums as soon as possible following adjournment of the meeting.

- O. All ballots are retained for 24 hours following the close of the meeting for review only by the District Director or District Credentials Chair, as necessary, and immediately thereafter destroyed by the District Director or District Credentials Chair.

## Ethics and Conduct

### 1. Violation Reporting

- A. If an ethics or conduct violation arises, it is to be handled initially at the closest practical level to the incident.
- B. If the resolution of a violation is not satisfactory, the matter may be safely reported to the next level. Club-level matters not resolved at the club level are reported to World Headquarters.
- C. If the matter is not reported, the next level is not to be held responsible for the situation.
- D. The person receiving the report shall conduct a confidential investigation and shall initiate appropriate action to resolve the matter.
- E. Regardless of the level at which an incident occurs, if any person involved in the matter believes it was not resolved in accordance with the governing documents of Toastmasters International, or if the process is not feasible, such person may promptly report the situation to the Chief Executive Officer or to the International President if the Chief Executive Officer is charged with a violation.
- F. Any claim, threat of lawsuit, or lawsuit involving an ethics violation occurring outside the club level must be reported promptly to the Chief Executive Officer.
- G. In jurisdictions where laws are stricter than the Toastmasters International governing documents, members and clubs are required to observe the stricter standards.
- H. Suspected violations of criminal law, such as embezzlement, theft, assault, or trespass should be reported to the appropriate law enforcement authorities in the jurisdiction. Any such violation occurring outside the club level must be reported to World Headquarters.
- I. The *Policy Violations Quick Reference Guide* applies to all violations at the club, District, and international level. Modifications to the guide shall only be made through the administrative protocol review process. Exceptions are not permitted.

### 2. Club Procedure to Discipline a Member

- A. Disciplinary actions conducted by a club relating to an individual member are addressed in Article II, Section 6, of the Club Constitution. Each club is responsible for handling its own disciplinary matters following Toastmasters Policy and Protocol. District leaders have no club-level authority and shall not be involved in club-level disciplinary matters. World Headquarters, at the request of club officers, provides counsel and direction in matters of process.
- B. The process set forth below in C through J applies if a club considers disciplining an individual member. This includes, but is not limited to, situations in which the International President requests that the club initiate proceedings against a particular member.

- C. An individual member who wishes to express concern about any ethics and conduct or other violations involving a member of the club or the Club Executive Committee may submit a complaint containing reasonably credible information to the Club President, who becomes the investigative officer. If the Club President is the ~~charged~~-member **at issue**, has a conflict of interest, or is exhibiting undue bias, the next highest-ranking club officer replaces the Club President throughout the remainder of the proceedings. A conflict of interest occurs when the Club President has a business or personal relationship with the ~~charged~~-member **at issue** that impacts the Club President's ability to remain impartial and make a decision in the best interests of the club. In such cases, the Club President must not participate in the investigation.
- D. If the investigative officer believes the member complaint to be reasonably credible, a confidential investigation must be completed within a reasonable time (within 21 days). The investigative officer discusses the findings from the investigation with the complaining member and the ~~charged~~-member **at issue** (separately or together) in an effort to reach a mutually agreeable resolution. If a resolution is reached, the matter is closed.
- E. If a resolution is not reached, the investigative officer refers the matter to the Club Executive Committee. The Club Executive Committee determines, by a majority vote, whether:
  - I. Sufficient evidence of alleged violations exists
  - II. A disciplinary hearing takes place.
  - III. The disciplinary hearing is conducted by the Club Executive Committee or the club members.
- F. The following disciplinary actions are available to the club:
  - I. Request a public apology
  - II. Letter of censure
  - III. Suspension of up to 90 days
  - IV. Decline to renew membership
  - V. Terminate membership in the club
  - VI. Refer the matter to World Headquarters for further investigation
- G. A Notice of Hearing is required to conduct a disciplinary hearing. The Notice of Hearing shall include the following:
  - I. Location, date and time of the hearing
  - II. A list of the charges
  - III. The specific Policy or Protocol referring to the charges
  - IV. The potential disciplinary actions available to the club, as listed above
- H. This is the disciplinary hearing procedure when conducted by the Club Executive Committee.
  - I. The Club Executive Committee creates the Notice of Hearing and provides the Notice of Hearing in writing to the ~~charged~~-member **at issue**.

- II. After receiving the Notice of Hearing, the ~~charged~~-member **at issue** has 15 days to respond to the charges, either orally or in writing.
- III. The Club Executive Committee distributes copies of the Notice of Hearing and any response from the ~~charged~~-member **at issue** to all members of the Club Executive Committee no fewer than seven (7) days prior to the disciplinary hearing.
- IV. After the 15-day response time, the Club Executive Committee holds the disciplinary hearing.
  - a. The chair of the disciplinary hearing shall be the Immediate Past Club President unless unable to do so, in which case the highest-ranking club officer who is present will serve as chair. The investigative officer may not chair the hearing.
  - b. The Club Executive Committee must have a quorum present (majority).
  - c. At the disciplinary hearing, the investigative officer will present the list of charges to the Club Executive Committee.
  - d. If the ~~charged~~-member **at issue** requests, the ~~charged~~-member **at issue** is given an opportunity to appear before the committee to address the charges for a period of time as determined by the committee, provided that such time is equal to or greater than the amount of time taken to present the charges.
  - e. Club Executive Committee members may ask clarifying questions of the investigative officer and ~~charged~~-member **at issue**.
  - f. The ~~charged~~-member **at issue** is excused for discussion and voting.
  - g. The Club Executive Committee, by majority vote, determines if the charges are substantiated.
  - h. If the charges are substantiated, the Club Executive Committee, by majority vote, determines the appropriate disciplinary action(s) to be taken.
  - i. In order to terminate membership, two-thirds of the Club Executive Committee who are present and voting must vote in favor of termination.
- V. The ~~charged~~-member **at issue** and club members are notified in writing of the action taken within one (1) week of the Disciplinary Hearing.
- VI. The ~~charged~~-member **at issue** may appeal the Club Executive Committee's decision to the club in writing and within 15 days of the date of notice. Below is the procedure to hold an appeal hearing:
  - a. The Club Executive Committee sends notice of a special business meeting to all club members to conduct the appeal hearing, along

with a copy of the original Notice of Hearing, no fewer than seven (7) days prior to the appeal hearing.

- b. The chair of the appeal hearing shall be the Immediate Past President unless unable to do so, in which case the highest-ranking club officer who is present will serve as chair. The investigative officer may not chair the hearing.
  - c. The club must have a quorum present (majority).
  - d. At the appeal hearing, the investigative officer will present the list of charges to the club members.
  - e. If the ~~charged~~-member **at issue** requests, the ~~charged~~-member **at issue** will be given the opportunity to appear before the club members to address the charges for a period of time as determined by the committee, provided that such time is equal to or greater than the amount of time taken to present the charges.
  - f. Members of the club may ask clarifying questions of the investigative officer and the ~~charged~~-member **at issue**.
  - g. The ~~charged~~-member **at issue** is excused for discussion and voting.
  - h. A majority of members present and voting is required to overturn the Club Executive Committee's decision.
  - i. If a member's appeal of a terminated club membership is successful, the Club President must notify World Headquarters in writing within seven (7) days.
- I. Below is the disciplinary hearing procedure when conducted by the club members.
- I. The Club Executive Committee creates the Notice of Hearing and provides the Notice of Hearing in writing to the ~~charged~~-member **at issue**.
  - II. After receiving the Notice of Hearing, the ~~charged~~-member **at issue** has 15 days to respond to the charges, either orally or in writing.
  - III. The Club Executive Committee distributes copies of the Notice of Hearing, and any response from the ~~charged~~-member **at issue**, to all members of the club no fewer than seven (7) days prior to the disciplinary hearing.
  - IV. After the 15-day response time, the club members hold a disciplinary hearing.
    - a. The chair of the disciplinary hearing shall be the Immediate Past Club President unless unable to do so, in which case the highest-ranking club officer who is present will serve as chair. The investigative officer may not chair the hearing.

- b. The club must have a quorum present (majority).
  - c. At the disciplinary hearing, the investigative officer will present the list of charges to the club members.
  - d. If the ~~charged~~-member **at issue** requests, the ~~charged~~-member **at issue** is given an opportunity to appear before the club to address the charges for a period of time as determined by the Club Executive Committee, provided that such time is equal to or greater than the amount of time taken to present the charges.
  - e. Members of the club may ask clarifying questions of the investigative officer and the ~~charged~~-member **at issue**.
  - f. The ~~charged~~-member **at issue** is excused for discussion and voting.
  - g. The club members, by majority vote, determine if the charges are substantiated.
  - h. If the charges are substantiated, the club members, by majority vote, determine the appropriate disciplinary action(s) to be taken.
  - i. In order to terminate membership in the club, two-thirds of the club members who are present and voting must vote in favor of termination.
- V. The ~~charged~~-member **at issue** and club members are notified of the action taken.
- VI. There is no appeal of a decision made by the club members.
- J. When an individual is removed from membership in a club, the Club President must notify World Headquarters in writing within seven (7) days. If the Club President is the member removed, the next highest-ranking officer is responsible for notifying World Headquarters.

### **3. District Procedure to Discipline a Member**

- A. Resignation or removal of a District officer is addressed in Article VII, Section (h), of the District Administrative Bylaws.
- B. Every effort should be made to resolve conflicts early, locally, and informally between the involved parties with the goal of reaching a mutually agreeable resolution. If a resolution is reached, the matter is closed.

However, if the conflict cannot be resolved, an individual member in good standing may submit a complaint about any ethics and conduct violation involving a member of the District Executive Committee, other appointed District leader, or an individual Toastmasters member participating in District activities. It is advisable that all parties be made aware that a formal complaint is forthcoming when conflict is not resolved through best efforts at the local level.

To submit a complaint, the [District Level Policy Violation form](#) must be completed and submitted within 60 days of the incident, to the District Director

of the District in which the incident occurred. The District Director is hereby known as the investigating officer.

- C. The District Director is the investigating officer for the complaint.

If the District Director is the ~~charged~~-member **at issue**, has a conflict of interest, or is exhibiting undue bias, the next highest-ranking District officer replaces the District Director as the investigating officer or appoints another individual as the investigating officer throughout the remainder of the proceedings.

In these circumstances and in consultation with World Headquarters, the next highest-ranking District officer may act as the investigating officer or appoint any Past District Director, including any Past Region Advisor or past member of the Board of Directors who is a member of a club within the region, to act as the investigating officer.

- D. The District Level Policy Violation form must be submitted to the investigating officer.

The District Level Policy Violation form should include the following:

- I. All parties involved
- II. Description of what occurred
- III. A list of the violation(s) and the specific Policy or Protocol referring to the violation(s)
- IV. Documentation supporting the violation(s)
- V. The desired resolution(s)

The District Level Policy Violation form and supporting documentation will be shared as submitted with the ~~charged~~-member(s) **at issue**. To proceed with the investigation, the identities of the ~~charged~~-member **at issue** and complainant will be disclosed to each other.

If the incident took place in a District outside the ~~charged~~-member **at issue**'s home District, the investigating officer is required to inform the ~~charged~~-member **at issue**'s District Director about the complaint.

- E. The investigating officer begins the complaint process by completing a confidential investigation within 15 days. The investigating officer discusses the findings from the investigation with the complaining member (complainant) and the ~~charged~~-member(s) **at issue** (separately or together) in an effort to reach a mutually agreeable resolution. If a resolution is reached, the matter is closed.
- F. If a resolution is not reached within the 15-day investigation period, the investigating officer appoints a District Disciplinary Committee (DDC). The DDC continues the investigation, or at any time during the 15-day investigation, the investigating officer may, at their discretion, refer the complaint to the DDC for review. Once the complainant is referred to the DDC, the investigating officer's assignment is complete. An update is also shared with World Headquarters who will provide counsel and direction in matters of process.
- G. Before the DDC begins its work, all committee members and chairs must complete the Committee Acknowledgment of Responsibilities Form and submit it to the DDC Chair and investigating officer.

- H. The DDC shall include a chair, co-chair, and three (3) District Executive Committee (DEC) members.

If the DDC chair or co-chair is involved in the complaint, another Past District Director replaces them on committee, and they are excused. The chair and co-chair must be a Past District Director within the District; if there are insufficient Past District Directors, the chair and co-chair may be a Past Region Advisor or past member of the Board of Directors who is a member of a club within the region.

If no one is selected from within the Region, in consultation with World Headquarters, any Past Region Advisor or past member of the Board of Directors may be assigned to act as the chair and/or co-chair.

DDC members with a potential conflict of interest, such as a business or personal relationship with the involved parties that could create reasonable doubt as to the ability of the committee member to be impartial, must declare it at the committee's first meeting or as soon as the potential conflict is identified. The committee reviews the potential conflict of interest and determines, by a majority vote, if it constitutes an actual conflict of interest. If a conflict of interest is determined to exist, the committee member must be replaced.

- I. The DDC is provided copies of the original complaint, the ~~charged~~-member **at issue**'s response, and the results of the investigating officer's confidential investigation and carries out further investigations at its discretion.
- J. If, after review, the DDC determines that sufficient evidence of alleged violations exists, charges are developed, and the ~~charged~~-member **at issue** is notified that a hearing will take place. The hearing may be onsite, online, or in a hybrid format. The DDC is responsible for determining, through consultation with all involved parties, the appropriate format in which the hearing will be conducted. All discussions and materials are subject to confidentiality.
- K. A Notice of Hearing is required to conduct a disciplinary hearing. The Notice of Hearing is sent by the DDC Chair to the ~~charged~~-member **at issue** and complainant(s) at least 15 days in advance of the hearing and shall include the following:
  - I. Date, time, and location, including onsite address and/or online information
  - II. A list of the charges with supporting documentation
  - III. The specific Policy or Protocol referring to the charges
- L. After receiving the Notice of Hearing, the ~~charged~~-member **at issue** has 15 days to respond to the charges prior to the hearing, in writing, to the DDC Chair.
- M. After the 15-day response time, the DDC holds the disciplinary hearing.

- N. The complainant and the ~~charged~~-member **at issue** have the opportunity to participate in the hearing.
- O. The complainant and the ~~charged~~-member **at issue** provide any written, physical, or other evidence (other than oral testimony); and a list of witnesses to the DDC no later than 96 hours prior to the hearing. The list of witnesses is not shared with the complainant or the ~~charged~~-member **at issue** prior to the hearing.
- P. The hearing is a closed hearing. The only people permitted in attendance are the DDC, the complainant, the ~~charged~~-member **at issue**, and witnesses. Witnesses may be suggested by the complainant, the ~~charged~~-member **at issue** and the committee. If witnesses are in attendance, they speak only to the charges and evidence presented.
- Q. The DDC determines the time limit for discussions, as well as the amount of and the manner in which evidence is received, whether in person or in writing.
- R. During the hearing, the co-chairs:
  - I. Confirm that a quorum is present.
  - II. Indicate the hearing is not a court of law, and that the disciplinary process is being followed as outlined in Toastmasters' governing documents.
  - III. Advise participants that recording of the hearing is prohibited.
  - IV. State that all discussion is limited to the charges and evidence presented.
  - V. Present findings from the investigation. The findings may contain sensitive and confidential information. The committee may keep the source of information confidential.
  - VI. Allow the ~~charged~~-member **at issue** a reasonable amount of time and allow the complainant equal time to provide any additional comments. The chair may extend the time in the interest of fairness.
  - VII. Provide any witnesses who are speaking a predetermined amount of time to speak. The chair may extend the time in the interest of fairness. Witnesses may speak to all charges during one session and then be excused from the hearing.
  - VIII. Excuse all parties present except the DDC to discuss the charges, evidence, and response of the ~~charged~~-member **at issue**.
    - a. The DDC discusses and determines, by majority vote, whether the charges were substantiated.
    - b. If the charges are substantiated, the DDC discusses potential disciplinary action(s) and determines, by majority vote of the DDC members present, the recommended disciplinary action.

IX. Disciplinary actions may include one (1) or more of the following:

- a. Suspension from participation in District activities – not to exceed 18 months
- b. Suspension or removal from District office
- c. Suspension from eligibility to be elected or appointed to District office – not to exceed 18 months
- d. Private written censure of the member by the District Executive Committee
  - i. The DDC Chair drafts the private written censure.
  - ii. The draft is presented to the District Executive Committee for consideration.
  - iii. After the draft is finalized and approved, the private written censure is to be shared with the members of the District Executive Committee, the DDC, World Headquarters, the ~~charged~~ member **at issue**, and the complainant. Distribution of the written censure to additional parties is prohibited.
- e. Request that the Board of Directors review the matter and consider if further action is required.

X. The DDC makes a motion setting out the proposed disciplinary action. This motion must be presented to the District Executive Committee as soon as possible.

The District Executive Committee receives the motion from the DDC and may ask clarifying questions, and proceed to vote on the proposed disciplinary action. Voting takes place following the voting procedures outlined in Protocol 7.1: District Events.

XI. All disciplinary action must be approved by the DEC via a majority vote of those present and voting, with the exception of removal from office which requires a two-thirds vote of the entire DEC.

XII. If the District Executive Committee approves disciplinary action, the investigating officer provides the appeal criteria to the ~~charged~~ member **at issue**, who then has 15 days to appeal to the Board of Directors. Disciplinary action cannot be enforced until the 15-day appeal period has expired. If an appeal is submitted for the Board's consideration, the disciplinary actions cannot be enforced until the Board has completed the review of the appeal. If the appeal fails, the enforcement date of the disciplinary action is based on when the Board determines the outcome of the appeal.

S. The ~~charged~~ member **at issue** and World Headquarters are notified in writing within 24 hours of the conclusion of the District Executive Committee (DEC) meeting of the outcome by the chair of the DEC meeting or the District Administration Manager.

If the ~~charged~~-member **at issue** is from a different District, the respective District Director is notified. This is done in consultation with World Headquarters.

- T. The disciplinary process and the outcome are confidential, unless the circumstances of the case indicate that disclosure may be required, such as:
- I. Potential of harm to members or guests
  - II. When the best interest of Toastmasters International may require discreet communications to others

Prior to any disclosure, the District Director (or next highest-ranking District officer) must consult with World Headquarters to determine if further disclosure is necessary. World Headquarters will provide direction as to the audience and scope of the disclosure.

- U. The Board of Directors may, on its own initiative, review the District Executive Committee's decision and reach a different conclusion in the best interests of Toastmasters International, its Member Clubs and individual members.

#### **4. Procedure to Discipline Accredited Speakers and World Champions of Public Speaking**

- A. An individual member who wishes to express concern about any ethics and conduct or other violation involving an Accredited Speaker or World Champion of Public Speaking, may submit a complaint, in writing and containing reasonably credible information to World Headquarters. If the complaint is deemed to be reasonably credible, a disciplinary review following the steps in this Protocol may be conducted.
- B. Violations include, but are not limited to: harassment; discrimination; intimidation or the creation of a hostile environment; illegal, dishonest, or unethical behavior described in the Policy 3.0: Ethics and Conduct; and failure to uphold Toastmasters International's Bylaws, Policies, or Protocols.
- C. Disciplinary actions may include, but are not limited to:
- A warning or reprimand
  - A requirement to acknowledge the infraction or violation
  - A requirement to correct the infraction
  - A commitment to non-recurrence
  - An apology to affected parties
  - Provision of financial restitution to persons affected or to the organization for costs of the disciplinary process
  - Suspension of title for a specific time or permanently
  - Removal from good standing with Toastmasters International for a specific time or permanently
- D. Disciplinary review and action are based on the severity of the potential violation:
- I. A level-one violation is a minor infraction (for example: inappropriate or disrespectful behavior with individual Toastmasters members or staff. Inappropriate or disrespectful behavior at Toastmasters events.)

- a. The International President reviews the information, conducts an investigation and consults with the Executive Committee and others as needed, and engages in disciplinary communication (orally and/or in writing) to the Accredited Speaker or World Champion of Public Speaking.
  - b. If correctable, the individual acknowledges the infraction and corrects it.
  - c. If not correctable, the individual acknowledges the infraction and commits in writing to non-recurrence.
  - d. The International President informs the Board of Directors.
- II. A level-two violation is a severe violation (for example: excessive, inappropriate, or disrespectful behavior at a Toastmasters event, or relating to World Headquarters; consistently missing or being unprepared for Toastmasters-related speaking engagements; promoting the violation of Toastmasters Bylaws, Policies, or Protocol; deliberately misusing the Accredited Speaker or World Champion of Public Speaking title, embarrassing the organization, tarnishing the reputation of the program).
- a. The International President reviews the information, conducts an investigation and consults with the Board of Directors and others as needed.
  - b. The Board of Directors determines the appropriate disciplinary measure, up to and including a hearing to consider revocation of the Accredited Speaker or World Champion of Public Speaking.
  - c. The Board may assign the matter to the Disciplinary Committee. The Disciplinary Committee and the Board of Directors must follow all required disciplinary processes.
  - d. If the Board decides to proceed with the Disciplinary Committee's recommendation, appropriate procedures are followed.
  - e. There is no appeal of the Board's decision.

## **5. Procedure to Discipline Region Advisors**

- A. All Region Advisors' actions and communications are to be ethical and consistent with Toastmasters International's Bylaws, Policies, Protocols, mission, vision, and core values.
- B. Region Advisors do not knowingly support, aid, facilitate, invite, or condone anyone or anything that interferes with or is detrimental to the programs, proceedings, or affairs of Toastmasters International.
- C. Violations include, but are not limited to, a breach of confidentiality; harassment; discrimination; illegal, dishonest, or unethical behavior; failure to uphold Toastmasters International's Bylaws, Policies, or Protocols; and undermining a decision of the Board.

- D. Disciplinary measures include, but are not limited to, a warning; a reprimand; correction of the infraction; commitment to non-recurrence; acknowledgement of the infraction or violation; apology to affected parties; private or public censure from the International President; removal from the role of Region Advisor; and removal from good standing.
- E. Disciplinary action for a violation is based on the severity of the offense:
  - I. A level-one violation is a minor infraction (for example: inappropriate or disrespectful behavior at a meeting, or relating to the World Headquarters staff; consistently missing or being unprepared)
    - a. The International President investigates a level-one violation and consults with the Chief Executive Officer.
    - b. The International President engages in disciplinary communication (oral and/or written) to the Region Advisor.
    - c. If correctable, the Region Advisor acknowledges the infraction and corrects it.
    - d. If not correctable, the Region Advisor acknowledges the infraction and commits to non-recurrence.
    - e. The International President advises the Executive Committee of the situation.
    - f. The Region Advisor may make a single appeal to the Executive Committee only (not to the Board) within 10 days of the disciplinary communication.
  - II. A level-two violation is a medium violation (for example: an inadvertent breach of confidentiality; commits, promotes, or ignores a violation of Toastmasters Bylaws, Policy, or Protocol)
    - a. The International President investigates a level-two violation and consults with the Chief Executive Officer.
    - b. The International President and Chief Executive Officer consult with the Executive Committee.
    - c. The International President determines, in consultation with the Executive Committee, appropriate disciplinary measures; the Executive Committee reports that matter to the Board.
    - d. The Executive Committee may assign the matter to the Disciplinary Committee. The Disciplinary Committee and the Board of Directors must follow all required disciplinary processes.
    - e. The International President engages in a disciplinary communication (oral and written) to the Region Advisor.
    - f. The Region Advisor commits to non-recurrence.



- D. Disciplinary measures include, but are not limited to, a warning; a reprimand; correction of the infraction; commitment to non-recurrence; acknowledgement of the infraction or violation; apology to affected parties; private or public censure from the International President; and removal from good standing.
- E. Disciplinary action for a violation is based on the severity of the offense:
  - I. A level-one violation is a minor infraction (for example: inappropriate or disrespectful behavior at a meeting or events, or relating to the World Headquarters staff).
    - a. The International President investigates a level-one violation and consults with the Chief Executive Officer.
    - b. The International President engages in disciplinary communication (oral and/or written) to the member.
    - c. If the infraction is correctable, the member acknowledges it and corrects it.
    - d. If the infraction is not correctable, the member acknowledges it and commits to non-recurrence.
    - e. The International President advises the Executive Committee of the situation.
    - f. The member may make a single appeal to the Executive Committee only (not to the Board) within 10 days of the disciplinary communication.
  - II. A level-two violation is a medium violation (for example: an inadvertent breach of confidentiality; or committing, promoting, or ignoring a violation of Toastmasters Bylaws, Policy, or Protocol).
    - a. The International President investigates a level-two violation and consults with the Chief Executive Officer.
    - b. The International President and Chief Executive Officer consult with the Executive Committee.
    - c. The International President determines, in consultation with the Executive Committee, appropriate disciplinary measures; the Executive Committee reports that matter to the Board.
    - d. The Executive Committee may assign the matter to the Disciplinary Committee. The Disciplinary Committee and the Board of Directors must follow all required disciplinary processes.
    - e. The International President engages in disciplinary communication (oral and written) to the member.
    - f. The member commits to non-recurrence.



- B. If there are misrepresentations in the submission of a club's renewals, charter fees, or membership applications, that club shall be suspended from all performance results for the remainder of the program year.
  - I. The District Director, Program Quality Director, and Club Growth Director shall be immediately notified of the action and provided the reasons for suspension.
  - II. If all three (3) officers, or a majority of the officers and the Immediate Past District Director, or a majority of the District Executive Committee, certify in writing that, in their judgment, there was no misrepresentation, then the club can be reinstated to the performance results.
  - III. Clubs suspended from a District's year-end performance results must be reinstated before July 15 in order to receive credit for recognition as a Distinguished Club, Distinguished Area, Distinguished Division, and Distinguished District.
- C. Districts may create, administer, and promote District-specific recognition programs if and only if they act to supplement, and do not compete with or replace, official Toastmasters International recognition programs.

## District Structure

### 1. Club Assignments

- A. Area and Division organization is defined and described in Article XII, Sections 1, 3(b), and 3(e), of the Bylaws of Toastmasters International, and in Article VI of the District Administrative Bylaws.
- B. When a new Member Club is organized, it is assigned to the District within which boundaries it meets. Exceptions are only considered with the concurrence of the District Councils involved and with the approval of the Board of Directors.
  - I. The assignment of a new club to an Area is made by the District Director, subject to approval by the District Executive Committee.
  - II. Changes to the alignment of a new club must be reported to World Headquarters by the District Director within 30 days of the club's charter date. Any changes received after 30 days will not be reflected until the following July 1.
- C. When a club moves its meeting location into the geographic boundaries of another District, its District affiliation does not change until the next July 1. This change must be reported to World Headquarters and both District Directors within 30 days of that date.
- D. The best interests of the clubs and District are taken into consideration when assigning clubs to Areas.
  - I. Areas consist of four (4) to six (6) clubs as of July 1, of which a minimum of four (4) must be in good standing.
    - a. Areas within Provisional Districts consist of three (3) to six (6) clubs as of July 1, of which a minimum of three (3) must be in good standing.
  - II. Under no circumstances may an Area have more than six (6) clubs on July 1.
  - III. An Area shall not be comprised solely of advanced clubs.
  - IV. Areas may be grouped by language, subject to the approval of the District Council.
  - V. Districts assign clubs to Areas based upon:
    - a. Geographic proximity to other clubs
    - b. The ability of an Area Director to effectively provide service, without requiring the clubs to change how meetings are conducted to accommodate an Area Director visit
    - c. Club size and strength (e.g., paid, active, disbanding)

- d. Prospective clubs and expected growth
  - e. The likelihood of eligibility for Distinguished programs (e.g., club base of the Area or Division)
- E. A Division must have a minimum of four (4) Areas.
- I. Districts may have no more than nine (9) Divisions unless they are operating under a reformation plan that has been approved by the Board of Directors.
  - II. Provisional Districts must have a minimum of two (2) Divisions.
  - III. Divisions within Provisional Districts must have a minimum of three (3) Areas.

## 2. **Provisional Districts**

- A. The Board may create Provisional Districts in any geographic area that is undistricted.
- B. The criteria for the creation of a Provisional District is 25 or more clubs in good standing.
- C. Applications for Provisional District status are submitted to the Chief Executive Officer.
- D. Once granted Provisional District status by the Board, a Provisional District is entitled to administrative support from World Headquarters; a District number, which is the next sequential District number available; official participation in the Distinguished District Program; a District reserve account; applicable membership dues income; assignment to a region; visits from International Officers, Directors, and/or Region Advisors; and travel reimbursement to official District leader training and to the International Convention.
- ~~E. Individual members of clubs in Provisional Districts may participate in the Video Speech Contest.~~
- ~~F.E.~~ A Past Provisional District Director is eligible to be nominated for election to the Board.
- ~~G.F.~~ Within three (3) years after granting Provisional District status, the Board reviews the progress of the Provisional District. Performance in the Distinguished District Program is considered in the decision to grant District status.
- ~~H.G.~~ After reviewing District progress, the Board either allows the Provisional District to continue to function as a District or takes such action as it considers in the best interest of Toastmasters International.
- ~~I.H.~~ When a Provisional District reaches 75 or more clubs in good standing, it may apply to the Board for District status. For three (3) years after granting District status, the Board reviews the progress of the District annually. Performance in

the Distinguished District Program is considered in the decision to maintain District status.

- ~~J.I.~~ Before becoming eligible for District status, each newly created Provisional District is required to be in operation for a minimum of nine (9) months ending on June 30, during which time it must adopt the District Administrative Bylaws; elect officers, establish an organizational structure, and subdivide itself into Areas and Divisions; and operate District programs in alignment with Toastmasters International's governing documents.
- ~~K.J.~~ Any authorization to operate as a Provisional District continues until District status is granted or until it is otherwise terminated by the Board.

### **3. Reformed or Realigned Districts**

- A. The Board reviews the status of Districts with more than 240 clubs every three (3) years, or sooner if necessary, to determine if reformation is in the best interests of Toastmasters International and the clubs.
- B. The Board may also consider realigning a District with another District or Districts if the District of Districts have fewer than 100 clubs.
- C. Any District with 200 or more clubs that wants to be considered for reformation must have demonstrated a new club growth in the preceding two (2) program years. With approval by a majority of the District Executive Committee, a letter of inquiry can be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer for review by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee provides its recommendation to the Board.
- D. If the Board approves the request or directs a reformation, the District Director appoints a Reformation Committee to conduct a detailed needs analysis that includes the following:
  - I. Map of proposed boundaries demonstrating that the reformed Districts will ideally have no fewer than 120 clubs each
  - II. Number of clubs; club strength; growth trends; growth potential; population; education; languages spoken; and geographic influences, such as rivers, mountains, proximity of clubs to one another, and international borders, for both Districts
  - III. Reasons why the reformation is in the best interests of the members, the clubs, the Districts, and Toastmasters International
  - IV. Implementation strategy
  - V. Marketing plan projecting growth and identifying key market opportunities for both Districts
  - VI. Succession plan identifying qualified future leaders in both Districts
  - VII. Financial projections demonstrating the anticipated income and expense for both Districts

- VIII. The needs analysis is submitted to the Chief Executive Officer for review with the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee provides its recommendation to the Board.
- E. Two (2) years prior to reformation, the District elects two (2) Club Growth Directors, one (1) Program Quality Director and a District Director. One (1) year prior to reformation, the District elects two (2) Club Growth Directors, two (2) Program Quality Directors and one (1) District Director. In cases when two (2) or more Districts jointly reform or when one (1) District reforms into more than two (2) Districts, the Board will provide additional direction as needed.
  - F. The District with the oldest surviving club within its boundaries will retain the original District number. The other District will receive the next sequential number available. The number will be communicated to the District leaders no later than July 1 of the year prior to reformation.
  - G. District records through the reformation are retained by the original District. Copies of records essential to their proper administration are furnished to the newly formed District. Separate records are kept after the reformation.
  - H. Once the reformation takes place, World Headquarters distributes funds in the original reserve account to the reserve accounts of the reformed Districts, according to the ratio of the number of membership payments made by clubs in each reformed District in the program year immediately preceding the reformation.
  - I. Funds in local District bank accounts must be divided according to the ratio of the number of membership payments made by clubs in each reformed District in the program year immediately preceding the reformation. World Headquarters shall oversee the allocation of funds at the time the bank accounts are established for the new District.
  - J. At any stage of the reformation process, Districts may be asked to submit a progress report to the Chief Executive Officer.
  - K. Additional reformation requirements may be determined necessary by the Board due to special circumstances.

#### **4. District Realignment**

- A. The realignment of a District occurs on the initiative of the Board.
- B. The Board reviews the status of Districts with fewer than 100 clubs every three (3) years, or sooner if necessary, to decide if a realignment is in the best interest of the organization.
- C. When determining whether a realignment is appropriate, factors such as the number of clubs in the District, market potential within the District, past performance, leadership, and geography are considered.
- D. If it is determined that realignment is in the best interests of Toastmasters International and the clubs, the District is advised that it is being considered for consolidation.

- E. If the District wishes to remain a District and not be realigned, it is given the opportunity to develop and present a growth plan to the Board. The growth plan identifies potential markets within the District and provides a specific strategy and timeline of up to three (3) years for building to 100 clubs and more. The growth plan is used as a baseline and is updated throughout the three (3) year period to determine if the District is on track to reach 100 clubs or more.
- F. If a growth plan is accepted, the Board reviews the progress of the District each year against the baseline and updated plans and takes what action is in the best interests of Toastmasters International and the clubs.
- G. If a District is to be realigned, the clubs in that District are notified of the date of the realignment. The Board takes whatever action necessary to ensure that the clubs involved have the opportunity to participate in elections or speech contests conducted by the District absorbing the clubs.