

Regional Fraternity of Eastern Canada

LOCAL FRATERNITY COUNCIL DUTIES

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1.0 ELECTIONS

1.1 The local fraternity Minister has the duty to convoke, **every three years**, the elective Chapter of the Fraternity (cf. GC art.51.1 [a]).

1.2 The local fraternity Minister shall advise the Regional Minister regarding the need for an Elective Chapter **at least 4 months** before the proposed date for the Elective Chapter.

1.3 If a request for a Fraternal Visit and/or Chapter of Elections has not been received by four (4) months prior to the due date, **the Regional Minister shall initiate** the communication with the local Minister regarding the Visit and/or Chapter of Elections

1.4 The Elective Chapter shall be presided by the Regional Minister or his/her delegate, who confirms the election (cf. GC art.75.2).

1.5 The Minister and Council shall prepare for the Elective Chapter as per the written instructions provided by the Fraternal Visitor (Presider).

1.6 The Elective Chapter shall proceed according to the appropriate articles of the General Constitutions (cf. GC art.76-84) and the Statutes of the National Fraternity of Canada.

1.7 Council vacancies shall be resolved according to the appropriate articles of the General Constitutions (cf. GC art.81-84).

2.0 PASTORAL AND FRATERNAL VISITS

2.1 The local fraternity Minister, with the consent of the Council, shall request pastoral and fraternal visits at least every three years (cf. GC art.93, 94).

2.2 The local fraternity Minister shall advise the Regional Minister regarding the need for a fraternal visit **at least 4 months** before the proposed date. Fraternal visits may be held in conjunction with the Elective Chapter.

2.3 The local fraternity Minister shall advise the Regional Spiritual Assistant regarding the need for a Pastoral Visit **at least 3 months** before the proposed date. Although pastoral visits may be held in conjunction with the fraternal visit, the Regional Fraternity of Eastern Canada recommends that they be held on separate occasions (cf. GC art.92.5).

3.0 COUNCIL DUTIES

3.1 It is the duty of the Council of the local fraternity:

- a) to meet regularly in order to promote the initiatives necessary for fostering fraternal life, for improving the human, Christian and Franciscan formation of its members and for sustaining their witness and commitment in the world;
- b) to make concrete and courageous choices, appropriate for the situation of the fraternity, from among the numerous activities possible in the field of the apostolate;
- c) to decide on the acceptance and admission to Profession of new brothers and sisters, and record same in the Council minutes;
- d) to establish a fraternal dialogue with members in particular difficulties and to adopt consequent measures;
- e) to receive the request for withdrawal and to decide on the suspension of a member from the fraternity;
- f) to decide on the establishment of sections or groups in conformity with the General Constitutions and the National Statutes;
- g) to decide on the destination of available funds and, in general, to deliberate on matters concerning the financial conduct and economic affairs of the fraternity;
- h) to assign duties to the Councillors and to the other Professed members:

- i) to request from the competent Superiors of the First Order and the TOR suitable and prepared religious as Assistants;
- j) to perform such other duties as are required by the General Constitutions or which are necessary to carry out its proper purposes (cf. GC art.49-52).
- k) to maintain an updated Fraternity Register which includes at least admissions, professions, transfers, deaths and every other important annotation relative to the individual members (cf. GC art.52.2 footnote 40).
- l) to maintain a register of minutes for regular meetings, a register of minutes for council meetings and a Financial register.

4.0 FORMATION

4.1 Insertion into the Secular Franciscan Order is attained through a time of Initiation, a time of Formation and the Profession of the RULE (cf. RULE art. XXIII, GC art.37-45).

4.2 Letters of Application: the potential member shall present to the local fraternity Minister a letter of application prior to entering the Period of Inquiry, and Letters of Intent prior to entering the Period of Candidacy and Profession (cf. GC art. 39).

4.3 Letters of Reference: the potential member is asked to supply a minimum of one letter of Reference; one from a Roman Catholic Priest or Religious and/or from someone who has some knowledge of Franciscan Spirituality.

4.4 Interviews: the local fraternity Minister shall be responsible for arranging interviews with the potential member prior to each stage in the Formation process (i.e. Period of Inquiry, Period of Candidacy, Profession). The Spiritual Assistant and Formation Director, etc. shall be involved in the interviews at appropriate stages (see page 77 of this Directory).

4.5 Observers: Fraternities may require interested persons to attend a minimum number of regular meetings before they begin orientation/inquiry.

4.6 Orientation: Fraternities may include a period of orientation prior to the Period of Inquiry. This is that period of time between the initial attendance at a fraternity meeting and the written Letter of Application to enter into the Period of Inquiry. It is during this time that the Observer is experiencing the Professed members' authentic witnessing of living the Secular Franciscan vocation and discerning whether he/she is called to this way of life.

4.7 Period of Inquiry: this period of formal study is at least 3-6 months in length. The length may only be modified for an important reason, and by a majority vote of the Council. Materials approved by The Regional Fraternity of Eastern Canada are recommended (cf. National Statutes art. 8.1; Ritual pg 15-16---Rule and Tau lapel pin or wooden Tau).

4.8 Period of Candidacy: this period of formal study and prayer is at least 12 months in length. It begins with the Rite of Admission page 11, and ends with the Rite of Profession page 18. . Materials approved by the Regional Fraternity of Eastern Canada are recommended (cf. GC art. 40; Ritual pg 25 - New Testament, metal Tau or oval Tau pendant, candle, and possibly, *Secular Franciscan Companion*).

4.9 Application forms shall be kept in the minutes of the Council. After Profession, the Letters of Intent shall be returned to the member, and the Formation Director shall destroy Letters of Reference.

5.0 REGULAR MEETINGS

5.1 The Minister shall chair regular Meetings of the Council. He/she is also responsible for preparing the agenda, which is subject to approval of the Council.

5.2 Regular Meetings of the Fraternity shall have an appropriate balance of Prayer, Ongoing Formation, Social Activity and Business.

6.0 CANONICAL ESTABLISHMENT

6.1 Some of our fraternities may not be Canonically Established as required by the RULE (art. XXII) and the General Constitutions (art. 46). In addition, some fraternities that were Canonically Established in the past may be unable to find the appropriate documentation. The Regional Fraternity of Eastern Canada is prepared to proceed with canonically establishing these fraternities on a “**request basis**”, using a procedure that has been approved by the Council of the National Fraternity of Canada ([Canonical Establishment of a Fraternity](#)). We believe that this is a good opportunity for all viable fraternities to become Canonically Established, particularly since Regionalization has taken place and the Eastern Canada Region has replaced the various provinces as the “higher level fraternity”. If your fraternity wishes to proceed with the canonical establishment procedure, please mail a written request to the Regional Minister.

6.2 The local fraternity Minister, in concert with the Council, shall request that the Regional Spiritual Assistant canonically establish the fraternity. The canonical establishment shall follow the norms of the National Fraternity and Regional Statutes (cf. RULE, art. XXII, GC art. 46-48).

7.0 NEW FRATERNITIES

7.1 For the valid establishment of a local fraternity, at least five professed members are required (cf. GC art.46.2).

7.2 Emerging Fraternities:

Any individuals wanting to form a Franciscan Fraternity are asked to follow the National Policy "ESTABLISHMENT OF A FRATERNITY".

8.0 THE REGIONAL FRATERNITY OF EASTERN CANADA

8.1 Elective Chapters shall be held every three years. The Regional Fraternity of Eastern Canada shall give a minimum of six month notice of said Chapter. The Regional Fraternity of Eastern Canada shall advise each local Minister the number of delegates and observers to which the fraternity is entitled. Each fraternity shall be invited to submit Resolutions and Nominations to the Council for the consideration of the delegation.

8.2 Eastern Canada Regional Conferences and/or Workshops shall be held in the years between the Elective Chapters. The Regional Fraternity of Eastern Canada shall advise each local Minister the number of participants to which the fraternity is entitled.

8.3 Area Assemblies – Under normal circumstances an annual Area meeting will be convened by the Regional Area Vice-Minister for the purposes of fostering spiritual growth and unity among brothers and sisters i.e. retreats, spiritual workshops, days of reflection, etc. The Assembly may also be for or include Area planning. Area Assemblies are not required in the year of a Regional Elective Chapter.