



# **The Shrine Club President's Administrative Guide**

## **A Leadership Guide for Shrine Club Presidents**

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## **Introduction**

Congratulations on your election as a Shrine Club President. With your election, you have become an important part of the leadership team in the Shrine of North America. You have assumed a position where you have the opportunity to not only contribute to the future success of your Club and your Temple, but also to the Shrine of North America and Shriners Hospitals for Children. This opportunity carries with it the responsibility to be the first-line contact with your Club's Nobility and your community. There are thousands of Shrine clubs within the 191 Shrine Temples. Some serve a specific geographic area within a Temple's jurisdiction, while others serve a special interest. Regardless of their make-up, each serves as the first-line contact between its members and the sponsoring Temple, and ultimately, the Shrine of North America.

It is the purpose of this Administrative Guide to assist you in meeting your leadership responsibility as a Shrine Club President.

## **Shrine Club Establishment and Control**

Article 37 of the Bylaws of the Imperial Council Ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine for North America (the Imperial Bylaws) provides for the establishment and control of Shrine Clubs. It is important that you, as a Shrine Club president, know that your Club is specifically authorized under the provisions of Article 37 of the Imperial Bylaws (and/or the provisions contained in the bylaws of the sponsoring Temple) and that the Potentate of the sponsoring Temple exercises control over the activities and operations of your Shrine Club.

It is also important to note that the Potentate of the sponsoring Temple is charged with the enforcement of Shrine Law within the jurisdiction of his Temple. He is therefore responsible for the enforcement of, and compliance with, the Imperial Bylaws and/or the Temple bylaws for the activities and the operation of Shrine Clubs within his jurisdiction.

The above information is provided for the purpose of putting to rest the often-heard complaint that a Potentate is interfering with the activities or operations of a Shrine Club. This is not the case. It is the duty of a Potentate to supervise the activities or operations of the Shrine Clubs within his Temple's jurisdiction and to ensure the Clubs' compliance with Shrine Law and the bylaws of his Temple.

## **The Shrine Club President's Leadership Role**

In this section we will discuss specific Shrine Club activities and functions, but first it is important you understand that your most important responsibility is LEADERSHIP. (We will specifically talk about developing your leadership skills in a future section of this Administrative Guide.) It has been said, "All leadership is local." As a Shrine Club president, you are a part of, and ultimately responsible for, the leadership of your Temple and of the Shrine of North America. For your members and within your community, you are the LEADER OF THE SHRINE. How you fulfill your leadership responsibilities will determine how your members and your community-at-large view your Shrine Club, your Temple and the Shrine of North America.

**Being The First-Line Temple Leadership Contact With Individual Nobles.** While we hope all Nobles regularly attend Temple stated meetings, ceremonials and social functions, we know too many of your members will not attend these regularly. Most will look to you to keep

them informed about your Temple's activities and programs. In these cases, you, as a Shrine Club president, are the first-line leadership of your Temple, as well as of the Shrine of North America. In this capacity, you have an important responsibility: to create an atmosphere that allows for and promotes the development of positive interpersonal relationships among the members of your Club and their families, and thus promotes the purpose of the Shrine of North America and the cause of Shriners Hospitals for Children.

To accomplish this, you need to make your Shrine Club a "fun and friendly" organization. Remembering that the Shrine was founded as the "playground of Masonry," the activities and functions of your Shrine Club should be things your members and their families enjoy doing. Yes, the Shrine has a serious side, but if you are going to fulfill the promises of "fun and fellowship," you must provide opportunities that promote fun and fellowship. Like most things worth doing, the planning of your Shrine Club activities will require effort on your part, and while spontaneous events are often very successful, the reliance on spontaneity alone will not fulfill your responsibility in this area. Family picnics, barbeques, holiday parties, fishing contests, golf outings, softball games, bike rides, Club dances or a combination of these are just a few events you might consider including in your activities schedule. The important thing is that your Club activities be things your members and their families like to do, that they will participate in, and that will lead them to invite others to join.

Promoting the purpose of the Shrine of North America and the cause of Shriners Hospitals for Children is a responsibility belonging to all Nobility. As a Shrine Club president, you must constantly remind your members that the purpose of the Shrine is to promote "fun and fellowship among its members" while contributing to the cause of Shriners Hospitals for Children in pediatric treatment for orthopedic problems, burns, spinal cord injuries, and cleft lip and palate. Sometimes in our zeal for the work of Shriners Hospitals, we allow our cause to overshadow our purpose and forget that it is through "fun and fellowship" that we attract and retain the members necessary to support the work of Shriners Hospitals. The fulfillment of this responsibility requires a delicate balance on your part and is something you will need to work at during your term as a Shrine Club president.

**Being The First-Line Contact With The General Public.** Just as you are the first-line contact with many of the Nobility in your community, you are the Shrine's first-line contact with the general public. To those unfamiliar with the structure of the Shrine, your title of "Shrine Club President" means you are the local leader of the Shrine. In this capacity, there are two important areas you must address: developing local media contacts and participating in community events and activities.

Telling the Shrine story and overcoming the misinformation about the Shrine and the Masonic fraternity in general is an important function for a Shrine Club president. To successfully accomplish this, it is necessary to develop good relationships with the media (newspaper, radio and television outlets) in your community. Achieving these relationships may not come easily. Many media representatives may have been misinformed about the secrecy and/or religious issues concerning the Masonic fraternity, including the Shrine. It will take more than sending them news releases or "Imperial Public Service Announcements" to overcome this misunderstanding. You will need to take the time to visit personally with the editors, the writers, the station managers and the reporters in order to build relationships with them and create opportunities to share up-to-date information about Shriners. For some of you, it will take dogged persistence to get that first meeting with those in your local media, but persist you must,

for the story is too important to go untold. There are numerous materials available from Shriners International Headquarters public relations department to assist you in working with your local media contacts.

Your Shrine Club is part of your community, and in many ways you are dependent upon the goodwill of the general public for the support of many of your Club's activities and events. If you expect the community to support you, you must support them. There are many ways you can gain this public support. Participating in community parades and special celebrations, and joining with other organizations in the promotion or sponsorship of community activities and events are excellent opportunities to build goodwill and help your Shrine Club being seen as a respectable organization. Many organizations in your community are seeking interesting and informative speakers to address their meetings. Offering to provide a speaker to discuss Shriners Hospitals is an excellent opportunity to make others in your community aware of the philanthropy and to inform them of the activities of your Shrine Club. While there are limitations on Shrine Club participation in charitable fundraising other than for Shriners Hospitals for Children, there are many other ways you can offer to assist worthwhile community organizations. The sponsorship of youth sports teams or community youth parties and dances can help build the support of participants in these activities, as well as that of their parents. There are untold ways you can develop the image of your Shrine Club in your community, and it necessary you make this a priority of your Shrine Leadership experience.

**Developing Relationships With Other Masonic Organizations.** The Shrine and your Shrine Club are parts of the greater Masonic fraternity, and it is important that you establish good working relationships with other Masonic organizations in your community. The Blue Lodge is the foundation for all Masonic organizations and must be supported by your Shrine Club. Regular attendance at Blue Lodge meetings by a representative of your Shrine Club is imperative to demonstrating this support. Remember the Blue Lodge(s) in your community is your primary source for new members in your Temple, and thus in your Shrine Club. Going only to Blue Lodge(s) in search of new Shriners will not build the relationship necessary for your Temple or Shrine Club to grow and survive into the future.

While membership in the Scottish or York Rites is no longer a prerequisite for membership in the Shrine, the maintenance of a good relationship with these bodies is in everyone's best interest. We are all members of the greater Masonic fraternity, and by encouraging the non-Rite members of your Shrine Club to consider joining the local Scottish or York Rite Bodies will benefit the overall fraternity.

The Masonic- and Shrine-related Ladies organizations, such as Order of the Eastern Star, Ladies Oriental Shrine of North America, Daughters of the Nile and Shrine Guilds of America are valuable assets in many ways. These Ladies are able to talk with other women about their husbands and sons, even to the men themselves, about joining the Blue Lodge and the Shrine. These Ladies organizations also make valuable contributions to the work of Shriners Hospitals for Children and deserve our support and gratitude.

The Masonic-sponsored youth organizations of DeMolay, Rainbow Girls and Jobs' Daughters are deserving of the support of your Shrine Club because they represent the future of the greater Masonic fraternity.

There are many ways your Shrine Club can create fraternal working relationships with other organizations of the greater Masonic fraternity. One suggestion is for the Shrine Club to sponsor a "Masonic Unity Night," where you host the area Blue Lodge leaders, the presiding

officers of the local Rite Bodies, the leaders of the Masonic-related Ladies organizations and the leaders of the Masonic sponsored youth organizations. You might even invite your state's Grand Master and Temple Potentate. Such an event will provide all involved the opportunity to share common issues and establish better relationships on which to build future fraternal cooperation and joint success.

**Sponsoring Patients For Shriners Hospitals For Children.** Sponsoring patients for Shriners Hospitals for Children is an important activity for any Shrine Club. It is through such sponsorships that we fulfill our philanthropic motto: "No man stands so tall as when he stoops to help a child." There is no better way to improve the image of your Shrine Club than by working with other organizations that might be aware of a child who could benefit by treatment at Shriners Hospitals for Children. We suggest establishing a working relationship with your local fire department or other emergency medical service providers. These dedicated individuals are often the first to know of a burned child who may require the life-saving treatment provided by a Shriners Hospital. Working with these agencies on burn prevention programs will not only build your community standing, it will also serve Shriners Hospitals' long-term goal of preventing severe pediatric burn injuries. Working with organizations like the school nurse program, local child care agencies, local hospitals and physician groups will assist you in identifying other children who could benefit from treatment at a Shriners Hospital.

As a Shrine Club president, your community, public and fraternal relations responsibilities are many and varied. Your dedication to meeting these responsibilities will contribute to the perceived standing of your Shrine Club and the Shrine of North America in your community.

**Assuring Compliance with Shrine Law, the Bylaws of the Sponsoring Temple and Your Shrine Club Bylaws.** At your installation, you assented to an oath of office in which you pledged to uphold and abide by the requirements of Shrine Law, the bylaws of your sponsoring Temple and the bylaws of your Shrine Club. To fulfill these obligations, you must have a basic understanding of what Shrine Law is and have read the bylaws of your sponsoring Temple and the bylaws of your Shrine Club. Here we define Shrine Law and provide you with general guidance concerning the bylaws of your sponsoring Temple and your Shrine Club. We will also call your attention to some specific provisions of Shrine Law important in the discharge of your duties.

Section 101.3(l) of the Imperial Bylaws defines Shrine Law as follows: "Shrine law means the articles of incorporation of the Imperial Council, these bylaws and any general or special orders at the time in effect, but it does not include the law of the land." It is necessary you understand that the activities of your Shrine Club are governed by Shrine Law and any specific questions concerning the application of Shrine Law as it relates to any current or planned activity of your Shrine Club should be directed to your Temple Potentate and/or Recorder. (For those who would like further information concerning Shrine Law, a copy of the Imperial Bylaws and any general or special orders are available from your Temple Recorder.)

Shrine Law requires that the bylaws of each Temple be in conformity with the Imperial Bylaws. Temple bylaws must be approved by the Imperial Council, and a reading of your sponsoring Temple bylaws will provide a general and basic understanding of how Shrine Law governs the activities of your Shrine Club. If you have not already read the bylaws of your

sponsoring Temple (a copy is available from your Temple Recorder), it is strongly recommended that you do so as soon as possible.

Just as the bylaws of your sponsoring Temple must be in compliance with the Imperial Bylaws and approved by the Imperial Council, your Shrine Club bylaws must be in compliance with the bylaws of your sponsoring Temple and must be approved by its Potentate. Generally speaking, the bylaws of your Shrine Club are the basic governing document for the conduct of activities of your Shrine Club, and you, as a Shrine Club president, must understand the provisions of these bylaws.

Shrine Law and most Temple bylaws include very specific provisions concerning the basic operation of Shrine clubs.

**Shrine Club Audits:** Each Shrine Club is required to have its accounts audited at the end of each year by an auditor or a committee selected by the Potentate. A copy of the audit report, including a balance sheet and income and expense statements, must be filed with the Potentate before the first day of February following the end of the year audited.

**Shrine Club Insurance:** All Shrine clubs are required to be covered by appropriate general liability insurance and comprehensive motor vehicle liability insurance. Such insurance coverage must include as an additional named insured the Imperial Council A.A.O.N.M.S, an Iowa corporation, and Shriners Hospitals for Children, a Colorado corporation, and all affiliated organizations. Most Temple bylaws require that copies of such insurance be provided to the Potentate or Recorder each year.

**Shrine Club Fundraising Activities:** Fundraising by a Shrine Club for fraternal purposes must be approved in writing by the Potentate of the sponsoring Temple. All promotion of such fundraising activities must include a statement that the proceeds are for the benefit of the sponsoring Shrine Club and any contribution or payments made are not deductible as charitable contributions.

**Fundraising for Shriners Hospitals:** Fundraising activities by a Shrine Club on behalf of Shriners Hospitals for Children may only be conducted with the permission of the Potentate of the sponsoring Temple. The potentate, prior to granting such permission, must obtain written approval for each event from the Imperial Potentate and the Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

**Other Charitable Fundraising:** Shrine Clubs and groups of Shriners are specifically prohibited from engaging in any fundraising activity for the benefit of any charitable purpose other than Shriners Hospitals for Children. The “co-sponsorship” of a charitable fundraising activity where a local charity and Shriners Hospitals share in the proceeds may be authorized. If such a co-sponsorship opportunity exists in your community, you should communicate with your Potentate and/or Recorder for specific information and guidance.

**Shrine Club participation in non-Shrine parades:** Shrine Clubs or groups of Shriners may participate in non-Shrine parades only with the approval of their Potentate. If the parade is held in a jurisdiction of another Temple, permission must also be granted by the Potentate of the Temple in whose jurisdiction the parade will be held.

**Club Travel Activities:** Travel, tour or cruise activities conducted by a Shrine Club are considered to be sponsored by the Club’s sponsoring Temple and must conform to the requirements outlined in General Order No.1. Such travel programs include a trip to a baseball or football game and even a Shrine-Club-sponsored visit to a Shriners Hospital. Contact your Potentate or Recorder for specific information on any planned travel activities.

This is simply a summary of the more-common activities of a Shrine Club that must comply with the requirements of Shrine Law. Shrine clubs that have obtained permission to form

a “Shrine Club Holding Company” for the purpose of holding title to real property are subject to additional specific provisions of the Imperial Bylaws and General Order No.1. It is strongly recommended that each Shrine Club president communicate with the Recorder of the sponsoring Temple for the purpose of reviewing all provisions of Shrine Law governing Shrine Club operations.

**Conducting Shrine Club Meetings.** As a Shrine Club president, one of your duties is to preside at your Shrine Club’s meetings, and it is important to follow basic procedures and rules. Most Shrine Club bylaws will provide that unless otherwise stated, the parliamentary procedure for meetings will be governed by *Robert’s Rules of Order*. For those have never been exposed to this basic parliamentary authority, we warn that attempting to read and understand *Robert’s Rules of Order* is a challenging undertaking. Because it is important to conduct the meetings of your Shrine Club in compliance with basic parliamentary procedure, we suggest visiting your local public library and studying one of any number of more easily read and understood parliamentary procedure books based on *Robert’s Rules of Order*.

Another important item in conducting your Shrine Club meetings is applying the concept of fair play with each and every Noble. It is important to understand that not everyone is familiar with the requirements of *Robert’s Rules of Order*, and certain leeway must be allowed so all feel fairly treated and equally respected. Fair play applies most importantly to those who may disagree with your personal point-of-view on a given issue or activity.

A final item concerning Shrine Club meetings is that it is your responsibility to ensure they are interesting, informative and relevant to members. In this regard, the scheduling of speakers and programs on subjects of interest to your members will go a long way. Some ideas you might consider for such meetings include: investing for retirement; selecting long-term-care insurance; a presentation by a high school or college sports coach or player(s); a presentation by a local tourist attraction or theme park; a presentation by a local public official or a burn prevention or fire safety program presented by your local fire department. The important thing is that you attempt to give your members a reason to attend your meetings and participate in your activities.

**Identifying Individual Members for Future Shrine Club Leadership Positions.** One of your most basic leadership responsibilities is identifying members who demonstrate the ability and the interest needed to become a future leader of your Shrine Club. Every leader has the obligation to prepare others to assume his leadership responsibilities by encouraging those who demonstrate the ability and commitment to pursue a leadership position. In identifying such individuals, you must not rely only on recommendations from those with whom the individual may be related to, or those whom he may associate with at your Club activities. It is important to personally observe the ability and commitment needed by a Shrine Club leader in those you recommend for this responsibility. Remember that the greatest legacy a leader can leave is identifying and preparing those who lead in the future.

**Identifying Individual Members for Possible Future Temple Leadership Positions.**

You have an obligation to identify members who may have the ability and interest in becoming a part of the Temple’s future leadership. After identifying a Noble who you believe may possess the necessary leadership skills and commitment to the purpose and cause of the Shrine, you are encouraged to recommend this Noble to the current Temple leadership. You are

cautioned that in making such a recommendation, the future of your entire Temple and of the Shrine of North America may be influenced by your actions. You should make such a recommendation with care and only after the most careful consideration.

## **Developing Your Leadership Skills**

For everyone in a leadership position, the development and personal growth in leadership ability is an ongoing and never-ending challenge and responsibility. While it is not within the scope of the Administrative Guide to provide you with a Leadership Training Program, we most emphatically encourage you to continue improving your leadership skills. There are numerous resources available to assist you, including your local library or the Internet. In this section, we will provide a basic definition of leadership, emphasize the importance of distinguishing between leadership and management, provide basic information on identifying and meeting the needs of your members, and give you some suggestions on building your leadership team.

**Defining Leadership.** Webster defines a “leader” as “A person that leads, directs or commands a group activity.” “Leadership” is defined as “The ability to lead.” In his futurist treatise on leadership entitled “*Leadershift*,” Joel Barker defines a “21<sup>st</sup> Century Leader” as “Someone you would chose to follow to a place you wouldn’t go by yourself.” In “*The 21 Irrefutable Laws Of Leadership*,” John C. Maxwell states: “True leadership cannot be awarded, appointed or assigned...It must be earned.” The reading of other leadership text may provide slightly different definitions or descriptions, but there are certain things that they will have in common: 1) Leadership involves the directing of the activities of others; 2) A leader is one who must decide where it is that a group needs to go and then determine how to get them there; and 3) Leadership is not something that can be appointed, it must be earned; thus leadership is not a privilege, it is a responsibility. What does this mean to you as a Shrine Club president? It means: 1) You are going to be responsible for directing the activities of your membership; 2) As the leader of your Shrine Club, you must determine the needs of your Club and how you are going to address these needs; and 3) Regardless of what the Shrine Club bylaws may say, you will only be the leader that you need to be if you earn it by understanding that leadership is not a privilege but a responsibility that you must now live up to.

**Distinguishing Between Leadership and Management.** It is necessary to emphasize that “leadership” and “management” are not the same. Leadership focuses on people, while management focuses on systems and processes. Just like the Shrine is in the “People Business,” it is important to understand that you, as a Shrine Club president, are seeking to lead people, not manage them.

**Identifying and Meeting the Needs of Your Members.** To be a truly effective leader, you must do what is necessary to identify the needs of your members, and once you have identified these needs, determine how you are going to meet them. To identify the needs of your members, you need to determine what your members are looking for. Generally speaking, Shrine Clubs can best be described as “social organizations,” and most of your activities need to be centered on providing an environment that encourages and promotes a positive and friendly experience for your members.

In seeking to identify the needs of your members, answer the following questions: 1) Are your Shrine Club meetings well attended? 2) Are the activities of your Club well attended and do the majority of your members express general satisfaction with events you are holding? 3) Do new members of your sponsoring Temple who reside in the area of your Shrine Club or who are interested in the special interest of your Shrine Club, become members of your Club, and are they made to feel welcome at your meetings and activities? 4) Do the members of your Shrine Club actively participate in fraternal fundraising activities for the benefit of Shriners Hospitals for Children? 5) Do the members of your Shrine Club actively participate in parades sponsored by your Temple and those designated for Temple, Club and Unit participation? 6) Is your Shrine Club regularly represented at Blue Lodge meetings in your area? 7) Do members of your Shrine Club actively seek out men of good character to become members of your area Blue Lodges, your sponsoring Temple and your Shrine Club? 8) Do members of your Shrine Club actively participate in community activities, celebrations and parades, as members of the Shrine Club? 9) Do the members of your Shrine Club invite non-members to participate in social and Club fundraising activities? 10) Are members of your Shrine Club regularly informed of your sponsoring Temple's activities, and is attendance at Temple meetings and participation in Temple events and activities encouraged? 11) Are new and different members of your Shrine Club stepping forward and accepting leadership positions in the Club? 12) Do members of your Shrine Club actively seek out children who could benefit from treatment at Shriners Hospitals for Children? 13) Does your Shrine Club schedule periodic visits at the Shriners Hospitals for Children with which your sponsoring Temple is affiliated?

The preceding are a few questions you should ask yourself to determine if your Shrine Club is meeting the needs of your members. Those questions that cannot be answered in the affirmative identify a need for your Shrine Club, and you must decide how you are going to meet these needs. To accomplish this you must have a plan, and in developing this plan you need to involve the leadership team of your Shrine Club. This suggestion leads us to the concluding section of this Administrative Guide.

**Building Your Leadership Team.** Shrine leadership, at any level, is not an "I, me, my" activity. Successful Shrine leadership requires building a "leadership team," where each member contributes to the accomplishment of the organization's established goals and objectives. In building a leadership team, it is important that the leader (in the case of your Shrine Club, you) exercise care to ensure that those selected for this team are the right people for the right job. We cannot overemphasize this last statement. Selecting an individual for a leadership position because he happens to be a long-time friend or relative is the wrong reason to select that person. It is necessary to select the best person for the position to be filled. It is often difficult to make this type of decision, but it is a responsibility of leadership that cannot be avoided or overlooked. A second important item in the development of a leadership team is the assignment of the authority necessary to accomplish a delegated responsibility. Failing to give necessary authority to those selected to perform a task is a sure formula for failure.

## **Conclusion**

Again, congratulations on your selection to a Shrine leadership position as a Shrine Club President. We wish you well in meeting the challenges and opportunities that await you. Your success will depend on your commitment to meeting your leadership responsibilities, and we hope that what we have provided here will assist you.