

# MD 11 RETENTION MODEL

THIS GUIDE SERVES AS A RETENTION TOOL FOR YOUR CLUB. PROBLEM AREAS AND POSSIBLE WAYS OF HANDLING THEM ARE DISCUSSED IN THIS GUIDE.

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## SPONSOR/MENTOR

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The sponsor/mentor is crucial to the growth of a new Lion. Mentoring provides a mutually beneficial relationship where both the mentor and their protégé can learn, grow and reach their full potential together.

The sponsor/mentor has several responsibilities. Do your members know what the responsibilities are? Are they ready to sponsor and mentor a new member?

They must be knowledgeable of Lionism and be able to answer questions that the new member may have in regards to the club, district, multiple district and international levels. If they do not know an answer, they cannot be afraid to find out and get back to the new member in a timely fashion.

They need to make sure that the new member is aware of an investment in time as well as financial costs to being a member. The time cost includes club meetings and functions as well as the possibility of district meetings and functions. The financial investment includes club dues, dinners, tail twister, district meetings and conventions along with other fees assessed by your club.

It is up to the sponsor/mentor to make the new member feel welcome. Introduce them to fellow club members as well as fellow Lions at the club and district meetings and functions. This will assist in the transition of membership and give them the opportunity to learn from other members as well.

Encourage the new Lion to grow in Lionism. Attending district meetings and functions is a great way for them to learn first handed how the district works. Attending joint club meetings and charities that your club supports will also assist in their development in Lionism.

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## INDUCTION

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This is a special time for the new member as well as the club. New members should be installed into the club by the District Governor or a current member of the District Cabinet. This will show the new Lion that they are important to more than just the club.

Invite their family to attend and share this special occasion with them and the club. This lets the family know that they are also important to the club and gives them a chance to learn more about the Lions organization.

Take pictures of the event for the member, club scrap book, local newspaper and district newsletter. This shows them, fellow Lions and the community that you are proud to have them as a member.

After the induction, have the club membership get up and welcome them into the club. This will only take a few minutes and will reinforce how you feel about having them in your Lions family.

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## ORIENTATION

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You club should hold an annual orientation program to educate and revitalize your membership. Open the orientation session to the families of members as well so they can see the larger picture of the Lions organization.

The orientation can be held in one 2 hr session, two 1 ½ hour sessions or 3 1 ½ hour sessions. This will depend on your club. The topics covered in the orientation should be as follows:

- **CLUB:** Topics included under the club should consist of club history, the board of directors, club offices and their duties, club projects and fundraisers, tail twister fines and the purpose of the club accounts (activities & administrative). Explain the standing committees of the club and their duties within the club, a club roster and club calendar.
- **DISTRICT/MULTIPLE DISTRICT:** Introduce the members to the organization of the district and multiple district, region and zone structure, the district cabinet and officers. This is also a good time to speak of the conventions, conferences and forums held by both the district and multiple district.
- **INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION:** The members are informed of the structure and purpose of Lions International and Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) as well as the goals and accomplishments of Lions worldwide. Have copies of the Lions Code of Ethics and Lions International Objects.

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## INVOLVEMENT

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Encourage all members to participate in club meetings. Their ideas and talents can bring a whole new vitality to your club that can open the doors to new fundraising projects and service projects.

Involving members on club committees and projects will give them a sense of importance and a sense of being needed.

*Be careful not to overwhelm the members by putting them on too many committees or expecting them to participate in everything. The last thing you want to do is to burn them out. Every member has a different level of involvement they are willing to commit to so find a happy medium for all.*

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## LEADERSHIP

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Encourage your members to grow in Lionism. By attending district meetings they will learn more about the leadership roles in the district.

Have your members attend District Leadership Forums, seminars and Club Officer Training sessions. The Lions of Michigan offer a Leadership Institute each fall. These are good places to learn important leadership values that not only will benefit the member but the club as a whole.

The information obtained at any of the above is priceless and will benefit you in your personal or professional life as well as in Lionism.

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## COMMUNICATION

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A healthy club starts with good communication. Communication isn't just hearing what a member has to say, it's also listening to what they are saying. Their ideas, suggestions and concerns are important to them so take them seriously and give them their fair chance.

Allow your members to express their feelings and opinions at meetings. This should be done in a civil manner to ensure order to the meeting and to prevent hostile feelings. Remember, not everyone's opinion will be the same as yours. Respect theirs as you want yours to be respected.

Keep your members informed on what is going on within the club, district, multiple district and international organizations. This can be done by a newsletter or a club web site.

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## TEAMWORK... AS A TEAM, MORE CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED

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Be realistic when setting goals. If the goal is not practical, members will not work to achieve them. All members should work as a team to achieve these set goals.

Not everyone gets their way. Express your thoughts and concerns civilly during discussion. When the vote is called, members as a whole should support the vote of the club.

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## MEETINGS

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Club meetings should be fun as well as productive. Establish a time for meetings to begin and start them on time. Punctuality is important. Keep your meetings short and to the point. Lengthy meetings are boring and members will not want to attend them.

Have an agenda for your meetings and follow it. This will keep the meeting running smooth and in an organized manner. If time allows, items can always be added to the agenda at the meetings.

Hold joint club meetings. This is a good opportunity for your members to get to know other Lions in your area and to learn how other clubs operate. These meetings should be fun and lively.

Have programs at your meetings. This is a good way to learn about Lions programs, community programs or just have fun.

Utilize your tail twister. They can have some interesting ways to fine members and make it fun without humiliating the members. Give your tail twister a few minutes at the end of the meeting to do his fining. This will eliminate interruptions of the meeting.

*Use a mystery greeter. See how many members actually approach the mystery greeter to say "Hi".  
You will be surprised at the number of members that do not interact with each other.*

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## ATTENDANCE

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Encourage regular attendance at your board and membership meetings. When a member misses a meeting, call to say they were missed and that you hope that everything is alright. Never ask a member “Where were you?” because it’s none of your business.

If a member has a transportation problem, offer to pick them up for the meeting. This will show them that you value them as a member.

If continued absenteeism is an issue with a member, try to find out if there is an underlying issue why they are not attending meetings. It may be something simple or it may be the start of a serious internal problem that needs to be addressed by the club before it gets out of control.

Lions International has post cards that let members know they were missed at meetings, along with post cards reminding members of upcoming meetings. These cards are relatively inexpensive.

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## RECOGNITION

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Regardless of what members say, they do want that pat on the back for a job well done. They have given you their time and efforts and are deserving of a special “Thank You” for all they have done.

*Thank your members for their time and efforts put into the club at club meetings. Do this in a timely manner after the event they are being recognized for.*

Certificates can be purchased through Lions International or can be printed up on you home pc. Certificates are personal and have a special meaning to the members receiving them. Plaques are also available for those that went above and beyond.

Certificates and other awards can be presented to non Lion members for the work they do for the club also. This is a good way of showing your appreciation for the help of family and community members for all they have done for your club.

Present these certificates and plaques at an awards night at the end of the Lions year. Make this a special occasion and invite family members to attend as well.

Also use the newspapers to show the community that the club and members are active within the community. This is a good way of bragging about your club and members.

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## DUES AND ASSESSMENTS

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- What you charge a member to be a volunteer can make the difference of keeping or losing a member.
- Know how much your club is being charged per member for the district, multiple district and international dues.

- Budget your administrative account prior to the new year. This way you can have an accurate and reasonable amount for your club dues.
- The cost of dinners may be an issue to some members. If you have a dinner, make it as reasonable as you can. Not all members can afford the cost of a meal on top of dues.
- If you assess members for a special purpose, try to do it so that the additional cost is not a hardship on the member.

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### MEMBERSHIP EVALUATION FORMS

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The retention committee has copies of a member evaluation form that can be given to the clubs membership committee. This evaluation form rates your club on a scale of 1 to 4 with 1 being very healthy and 4 to needing a doctor. Topics covered in the evaluation form are as follows:

- **MEETINGS:** This area covers 9 aspects of club meetings from the effectiveness of meetings to the location of the meetings.
- **SERVICE:** This section evaluates the level of service your club performs within the community.
- **LEADERSHIP:** The effectiveness and the level of leadership is rated in this section of the evaluation form.
- **MISC.:** There are a few Y and N questions along with a few asking for a written response.

This survey is anonymous, unless you want to put your name on it. These should be completed and given to the club membership committee or district retention committee for evaluation. This evaluation should be done in a timely fashion with written results being submitted to the club.

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### CLUB RETREATS

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The purpose of a retreat is to address concerns and overcome obstacles that cannot be successfully discussed or solved at regular meetings. Overall a retreat should become a positive experience for all participants. All identified problem areas and the overall health of a club can be deliberated in a neutral setting without interference of regular business matters. Regardless of all specified items on the agenda, several objectives are always present and should be addressed. The following section highlights the general goals of a retreat:

- To improve the group's atmosphere, operation, projects, membership, leadership growth, attendance, self image, pride and increase involvement of members.
- To allow all members who attend the retreat to make input.
- To improve and establish open and honest communication between Lions.
- To develop better personal relationships with all participants.

- To build unity and improve ethics and principals of Lionism.
- To reach agreement on district, zone or club matters.

To have a successful retreat there must be proper organization and planning. You can download the complete guide to holding a retreat from the Lions International website ([lionsclubs.org](http://lionsclubs.org)) and it can be found under publications.

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#### **EXIT INTERVIEWS**

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When a member quits or is dropped from membership, they should be given an exit interview form. This will give the reasons they are leaving or being dropped from the club. This gives them the chance to express their reasons if any for the reason they have been dropped or quit.

Ideally, the exit interview should be given by the membership chair or committee. However, in some instances it would be better to have the members sponsor or another member that they are close to give the exit interview.