

Sergeant at Arms Training Handout

For use at the 2023-2024 Division H-hosted Officer Training Sessions

The three R's are:

Role

Responsibilities

Resources

R1 is Role (see Club Leadership Handbook (CLH) page 36, the two paragraphs under Sergeant at Arms).

Role paragraphs distilled:

- Store and keep track of (inventory) the club's property and supplies
- Arrive early enough to have the room set up before guests arrive so officers can be ready to greet guests as they arrive
- Stay after the meeting to break the room down and return club property to storage
- Serve as interface between club and the meeting space management
- You have special duty at club contests and other events

R2 is Responsibilities (see them under the two headings on CLH page 37). Your goals:

- A great first impression for guests by means of a well-organized meeting room
- Efficient tracking of club supplies so they can be ordered when quantity dwindles
- A good relationship between the club and the entity which manages the meeting space

R3 is Resources.

- Officer training (as many as you can get to) to learn and to exchange ideas.
- CLH manual page 40 links to resources on Toastmasters International Web site.
- Who/what else? Your predecessor as club Sergeant at Arms. Sergeants at Arms at other clubs (pay 'em a visit!).

Homework assignment

1. Attend as many officer training sessions as you can.
2. Read pages 36 through 39 in the Club Leadership Handbook.
3. Check out the resources on page 40.
4. Put into place if not already extant an effective club property storage system.
5. Consider maintaining an inventory sheet of all club property and supplies.
6. Prepare a room layout diagram and setup notes to help you get your job done more quickly and allow someone else to do the same great job in your absence.

Scenario: The previous Club Treasurer did not keep adequate records.

Possible solutions: At the beginning of the term of office, take possession of all available records and review the Audit Committee's report. Begin monitoring the club finances as efficiently and completely as possible, creating a simple record-keeping system and documenting procedures for future Club Treasurers.

Club Treasurer Resources

Distinguished Club Program

www.toastmasters.org/1111

Submitting membership dues payments

www.toastmasters.org/clubcentral

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Sergeant at Arms

The Sergeant at Arms will keep track of the club's physical property, such as the banner, lectern, timing device, and other meeting materials. They arrive early to prepare the meeting place for members and stay late to stow all of the club's equipment. The Sergeant at Arms is also in charge of the onsite and online meeting places, obtaining a new space when necessary, and maintaining contact with the people who allow the club to use the space for meetings.

The Sergeant at Arms also has a role to play during business meetings, speech contests, and other special club events. For example, if a club is voting on admitting a new member to the club, the Sergeant at Arms assists either by escorting the potential new member outside of the onsite meeting space or directing them to a breakout room for an online meeting. For an onsite speech contest, the Sergeant at Arms stands at the door while contestants compete to ensure that the speakers are not interrupted by latecomers. For an online speech contest, the Sergeant at Arms moderates the online platform, ensuring all attendees are muted.

Club Constitution for clubs of Toastmasters International

Article VII: Duties of Officers, Section 7

Basic Club Supplies

- ▶ Ribbons
- ▶ Ballots and brief evaluation forms
- ▶ Timing device
- ▶ Banner
- ▶ Lectern

Sergeant at Arms Responsibilities

Tend to Club Property

Keep the club's banner, gavel, lectern, award ribbons, supplies, and other digital and physical equipment safe and secure.

- ▶ Arrive early to set up the meeting space or platform.
- ▶ Stay late to dismantle and clear the meeting space and ensure all attendees have left.
- ▶ Store all club property.
- ▶ Leave the meeting room the way it was found or better.
- ▶ Track the status of supplies ordered by the Club Secretary.

Coordinate Club Meetings

Act as a liaison between the club and the management of the meeting space.

If meeting in a physical location, notify the management at least three weeks in advance if there are changes in the club's meeting schedule.

Accommodating Individuals with Disabilities

As venues are selected and prepared for events, be sure to provide appropriate accommodations for people with disabilities. Most members with disabilities will be happy to help anyone understand their needs and will be grateful for the accommodation. As in all things, communication is key: Reach out to guests prior to the event to determine any special needs that may be present and incorporate those needs into the choice of venue. Remember, it is the responsibility of the Sergeant at Arms to put on the best event possible for all guests, and to ensure that everyone leaves having had a positive experience.

Some key areas to note: Hotels should be barrier-free in all areas accessed by the public. Any person with a disability has the right to reasonable accommodations to allow them to participate fully at conferences or other types of events. As events are planned it is the Sergeant at Arms' responsibility to ensure the selected venue complies with applicable laws related to accommodations for people with disabilities. See **Policy and Protocol, Protocol 2.0: Club and Membership Eligibility**, Section 2: Members with Disabilities.

Additionally, if meeting onsite, steps should be taken to ensure that the meeting space is free of potential safety hazards before, during, and after meetings. Check the meeting space in advance for spills, sharp edges, electrical wiring, and other hazards. Keep an up-to-date first-aid kit, or know where the facility keeps one. Review any safety or evacuation protocols for the meeting location to ensure that the club will be prepared in the event of an emergency. The club may consider designating a particular member of the club—most frequently, the Sergeant at Arms—as the safety officer responsible for overseeing these items.

Proper care and attention to the meeting space and online platform demonstrates not only pride in the club, but also consideration for both members and guests—an invaluable element toward creating a good impression of the club and the organization it represents.

Common Meeting Changes

- ▶ Moving to another venue
- ▶ Meeting a different day of the week
- ▶ Planning a special event

If the club is a corporate club, reserve the meeting room by whatever method the company prefers, such as the company intranet, calendar, or sign-up sheet.

Summary of Responsibilities

Before Club Meetings

- ▶ Confirm meeting room reservations a few days before the meeting for onsite meetings.
- ▶ Confirm the meeting invitation link is accurate and functional a few days before the meeting for online meetings.
- ▶ Ensure that plenty of blank ballots are available for voting onsite. If meeting online, confirm the method for online voting.
- ▶ Work with the Club Treasurer to keep stock of materials at an appropriate quantity such as writing utensils, paper, cleaning materials, etc.
- ▶ Confirm that necessary furniture such as seating and the lectern will be available.

Upon Arrival at Club Meetings

- ▶ Arrange the meeting space and equipment at least 30 minutes before so the meeting starts on time.
- ▶ If meeting onsite:
 - Arrange tables and chairs.
 - Set out the lectern, gavel, club banner, the national flag (optional), timing device, ballots, trophies, and ribbons.
 - Place a table near the door to display promotional brochures, name tags, the **Guest Book** and club newsletters for members to see.
 - Check the room temperature and adjust it if the room is too hot or too cold.
 - Ask all guests to sign the **Guest Book** and give each a name tag to wear during the meeting.
- ▶ If meeting online:
 - Make sure audio is working.
 - Set up breakout rooms if needed.
 - Provide virtual backgrounds like Timer Backgrounds to any members who will need them.
 - Post digital materials like the meeting agenda for sharing if needed.

In the online environment, the Sergeant at Arms can act as the moderator for the meetings. This will allow them to set the expectations at the beginning of the meetings to ensure they are conducted with the professional atmosphere of a Toastmasters club meeting.

During Club Meetings

- ▶ If meeting onsite, sit near the door to welcome late arrivals and help them be seated.
- ▶ Prevent interruptions and perform any necessary errands.

- ▶ If meeting online, act as moderator of the meeting. Set expectations for attendees.
- ▶ Coordinate food service, if any.
- ▶ Collect ballots and tally votes for awards when necessary.

After Club Meetings

- ▶ Return the room to its original configuration.
- ▶ Ensure that all attendees have left the meeting space.
- ▶ Pack up all materials and store them in a secure place.
- ▶ Pick up and dispose of any stray items or trash.

Common Scenarios Sergeants at Arms Face

Scenario: It is difficult to find the time to arrive early and set up the meeting space, especially at lunchtime meetings.

Possible solutions: Ask for volunteers to assist when schedules get busy; tap into the enthusiasm of new members to help with the role.
Develop a minimalist, basic configuration for the club's meeting space and use it on those days when there is little extra time.

Scenario: The club roster has become too large for the current meeting place and a new site is needed.

Possible solutions: First, find out if there are larger meeting spaces available in the same building. If not, look for a new meeting place that is as close as possible to the existing one. There are many possible solutions: clubs, churches, hospitals, restaurants, coffee shops, veterans centers, senior centers, or city government offices.

Consider meeting in a hybrid format. Visit another club that already meets in a hybrid format to see an example. Ask fellow club members if they have experience meeting online or in hybrid formats.

Work with the Club President and Vice President Public Relations to tell everyone about the new location or options as soon as possible.

Scenario: The club's usual meeting room is temporarily unavailable.

Possible solutions: Work quickly to find a temporary solution and communicate it to members. There are many options: banquet facilities in local restaurants, pushing together some tables at a local coffee shop, or meeting online.

Canceling the meeting should be a last resort.

Sergeant at Arms Resources

Meeting online	www.toastmasters.org/resources/online-meetings
Hybrid meetings	www.toastmasters.org/resources/hybrid-meetings
<i>Distinguished Club Program</i>	www.toastmasters.org/1111
Ordering club supplies	www.toastmasters.org/meetingsupplies
Ballots and Brief Evaluations	www.toastmasters.org/163

The Distinguished Club Program

Together, club officers set attainable goals for club success and develop a plan to achieve them. Focusing efforts on achieving in the ***Distinguished Club Program*** (DCP) is one of the best ways to ensure the club reaches its goals for education, membership, training, and administration.

A club that performs well in the DCP provides a higher-quality club experience for all of its members. Each aspect of the DCP is designed to enhance the enjoyment and reinforce the supportive atmosphere for each member, every time the club meets.

The Distinguished Club Program serves as the starting point for the District Recognition Program, which encompasses the Distinguished Area, Division, and District programs. The goals of these programs are based on Distinguished Clubs.

DCP Requirements

The DCP is an annual program, running from July 1 through June 30. The program consists of 10 goals the club should strive to achieve during this time. Toastmasters International tracks the progress of clubs toward these goals throughout the year and updated reports are posted daily on the Toastmasters International website at www.toastmasters.org/distinguishedperformancereports.

In July, Toastmasters International calculates the number of goals the club met and recognizes those who earned Distinguished Club, Select Distinguished Club, and President's Distinguished Club recognition, based on the number of goals achieved and the number of members it has.

To be eligible for recognition, clubs must be in good standing in accordance with **Policy and Protocol, Policy 2.0: Club and Membership Eligibility**, Section 4: Good Standing of Clubs. Clubs must also have either 20 members or a net growth of at least five new, dual, or reinstating members as of June 30. Transfer members do not count toward this total until their membership renewal has been paid in the new club. At that time, the transfer member would then be considered as a renewing member and will not count as a new member.

Only members in good standing are eligible to earn education awards. See **Policy 2.0: Club and Membership Eligibility**, Section 5: Good Standing of Individual Members.

Submitting Information to World Headquarters

Documents must be received by World Headquarters no later than 11:59 p.m., Mountain Time, on the deadline date, even if the deadline falls on a weekend or holiday. Because no changes may be made after documents are received, club officers should be careful to submit accurate information.



Evaluation

BEGINNER INTERMEDIATE ADVANCED

What level of knowledge of the topic did you have prior to this session?

Indicate to what degree you agree with the following statements about this session.

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Overall, I was satisfied with the session.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I will use the content to strengthen my club.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The learning objectives were met.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Yes No

Will you implement at least one idea from this session in the next 30 days?

Write your comments about the session.

Indicate to what degree you agree that the facilitator demonstrated the following:

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Solid knowledge of the subject matter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Excellent presentation skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Division H-hosted Club Officer Training

Session: Summer | Winter

Position: Pres. | VPE | VPM | VPPR | Sec. | Treas. | SAA Leader: _____