



COUNCIL ON LEGISLATION: HOW TO PROPOSE ENACTMENTS

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Council on Legislation

The Council on Legislation is Rotary's governing body that amends its constitutional documents. Every three years the Council on Legislation meets to debate and vote on proposed enactments. Each district sends one representative to the Council on Legislation, and any club and district may propose enactments. If your club or district is considering proposing an enactment for the Council, please read to learn how.

Deadline to Submit an Enactment

Proposed enactments from clubs and districts for the 2019 Council on Legislation must be received by Rotary on or before **31 December 2017**. There are no exceptions to this deadline. Enactments received after the deadline are not duly proposed and will not be considered.

Types of Legislation

There are two types of legislation:

- **Proposed enactments** seek to change Rotary's constitutional documents (the [RI Constitution](#), [RI Bylaws](#), and the [Standard Rotary Club Constitution](#)).
- **Position statements** seek to state a position of Rotary International and are only proposed by the Board of Directors.

Proposing Enactments

Clubs, districts, the RI Board, the general council or conference of RIBI, or the Council on Legislation may propose enactments to the Council on Legislation. However, an

enactment submitted by a club must also be endorsed by the clubs in its district at its district conference, a district legislation meeting, or through a ballot-by-mail, before it can be submitted to Rotary.

Drafting an Enactment

Enactments amend the constitutional documents:

- [RI Constitution](#),
- [RI Bylaws](#), and
- [Standard Rotary Club Constitution](#)

To begin, consider the change you are proposing and find the related sections of the constitutional documents that need to be amended in order to bring about the change. For example, if you are proposing a change to the Object of Rotary, you will want to mark changes in the RI Constitution and the Standard Rotary Club Constitution. You can locate other related sections by:

1. Searching for keywords relating to the proposed change
2. Searching for references to the amended section in the constitutional documents

Making sure that all related sections are properly amended is important, because an enactment can be found defective by the Constitution and Bylaws Committee if they are not. A defective enactment will not be transmitted to the Council on Legislation.

To mark your changes in the constitutional documents, please use the Word versions found at these links above or find them on the [governance documents](#) page of rotary.org. The versions are set up to automatically mark your proposed changes. You will want to save a copy of your amended version of the constitutional documents, before submitting it to Rotary.

Endorsing an Enactment

For a club to propose an enactment, the club's board of directors must first submit the proposed enactment to the club members for adoption, before sending it to the district. A district conference or a district council in RIBI may also propose an enactment directly to the district. Any enactments proposed by clubs or districts are then voted on, or endorsed, by the district at a district conference, a district legislation meeting, or through a ballot-by-mail.

If a district does not have enough time to vote on a proposed enactment in person, the governor may conduct a ballot-by-mail. Such ballot should follow as closely as possible the balloting procedures set forth in RI Bylaw section 14.040. for electing a governor-nominee through ballot-by-mail.

Once endorsed, the proposer may submit the enactment to Rotary through the online [form](#) by **31 December 2017**. The district governor must also confirm the district's endorsement by **31 December 2017**.

District Governor Confirmation

The governor can confirm endorsement one of two ways:

1. Submit the proposal him- or herself and confirm the district's endorsement in the online [form](#)
2. If the proposal is submitted by someone other than the governor, the governor will receive an email letting him or her know that the enactment has been submitted. The governor should then reply to Council Services at council_services@rotary.org, along with his or her confirmation that the information submitted is correct and that the district has endorsed the proposed enactment.

If a proposed enactment does not receive the governor's confirmation by 31 December 2017, the item will be considered not duly proposed and will not be considered by the 2019 Council on Legislation.

Purpose and Effect Statement

The proposer must provide a statement of purpose and effect, 300 words or less, in order for the proposed enactment to be considered duly proposed. If a statement is not provided, it will not be considered duly proposed and will not be considered by the Council on Legislation. This statement should identify the issue or problem that the proposed enactment seeks to address and explain how the proposal addresses or resolves the problem or issue.

Duly Proposed Enactments

Proposed enactments must include the following by 31 December 2017 in order to be considered duly proposed:

1. Name of the proposing club or district
2. Confirmation from the district governor that the enactment was proposed or endorsed by the district
3. The proposer's statement of purpose and effect, 300 words or less
4. Word document with the proposed changes marked

In addition, all proposed enactments should be submitted within 45 days of being endorsed by the district.

Limit on the Number of Enactments

The RI Bylaws encourage a district, and its clubs, to submit no more than five proposed enactments. Districts should submit a separate [form](#) for each proposed enactment.

After the Proposed Enactment is Received by Rotary

The general secretary reviews the proposal to ensure that it is duly proposed. A proposed enactment that is not duly proposed will not be considered by the Council on Legislation.

The general secretary then prepares the proposed enactment for review by the Constitution and Bylaws Committee. The Committee reviews each duly proposed

enactment to determine if it is correctly drafted or if it is defective. The Committee, working with the general secretary, also develops a Financial Impact Statement for each proposal.

When proposals are identical or substantially similar, the Committee will combine the enactments and all proposers will be listed.

Where proposals are similar, the Committee will recommend a compromise proposal to proposers. The work of the Council is greatly facilitated when proposers agree to compromise proposals, as it allows the Council to examine a single proposal in depth.

Defective Enactments

Proposed enactments will be deemed defective if

1. it is subject to two or more inconsistent meanings;
2. it fails to amend all affected parts of the constitutional documents;
3. its adoption would violate governing law;
4. it would amend the Standard Rotary Club Constitution in a way that would conflict with the RI Bylaws or the RI Constitution or it would amend the RI Bylaws in a way that would conflict with the RI Constitution; or
5. it would be impossible to administer or enforce.

If a proposed enactment is deemed defective by the Constitution and Bylaws Committee, it is the proposer's or the Council representative's responsibility to submit an amended proposal before the amendment deadline. Enactments that continue to be defective after the amendment deadline will not be considered by the Council on Legislation.

Tips for Proposed Enactments

- **Review past enactments.** Legislation books for the past two Councils are posted on rotary.org. Take a look to see if 1) your idea has been proposed before and 2) how an enactment is written.
- **Ask for help.** Past representatives, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee, and Council Services staff are all very knowledgeable about the constitutional documents. If you need help drafting an enactment, please let us know.
- **Submit enactments early.** The earlier you submit an enactment, the earlier the Constitution and Bylaws Committee can review it. If defects are found, you will have more opportunities to correct them and have your enactment considered by the Council on Legislation.

Additional Information

If you have questions about Rotary's legislative process, please email Council Services at council_services@rotary.org. Additional information can also be found in the following resources:

- Article 10 of the RI Constitution
- Article 7 of the RI Bylaws
- Article 59 of the RI Code of Policies
- Council on Legislation page of rotary.org