



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 or 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 2025 Council on Legislation must be received by Rotary on or before **31 December 2023**. 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. Enactments submitted by a club or district must also be endorsed, or approved, by the clubs in the

district at a district conference, a district legislation meeting, or through a club ballot, before it can be submitted to Rotary.

Drafting an Enactment

Enactments amend the constitutional documents:

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

Here are a few things to think about when drafting an enactment.

Impact. To begin, consider impactful changes. Constitutional documents are an organization's foundation and define its structure. When proposing changes, try to address the structure and organization of Rotary. Changes should be more permanent, not ones that would change as policies are updated. Enactments should not address process, policy, or procedures. These types of changes should be suggested through resolutions, so that the RI Board and TRF Trustees can decide whether or not to update Rotary's or The Rotary Foundation's Codes of Policies. The Codes are more flexible and are changed more frequently.

Related Changes. Once you decide on your change, find the related sections of the constitutional documents that need to be amended 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 related sections by:

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

Be thoughtful about your changes and make sure that all related sections are properly amended. An enactment can be found [defective](#) by the Constitution and Bylaws Committee if it does not amend all affected parts of the constitutional documents. A defective enactment will not be transmitted to the Council on Legislation.

Mark your Changes. To mark your changes in the constitutional documents, please use the Word versions found at the links above or find them on the [governance documents](#) page of My Rotary. 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.

Once the enactment is reviewed by the Constitution and Bylaws Committee, you will receive an updated version in your status letter. Please double check to make sure your change is accurately reflected. While minor edits are normal, the committee will note if they have amended the item further.

Write Clearly. As you make your changes, be sure that their meaning and intent are clear. Often simple changes are best. If you have an idea but need help making the changes reach out to Council Services early. Staff are often able to help you clearly state

your change, but their ability to help decreases as the submission deadline gets closer. If changes can be interpreted in multiple ways, the enactment could be found defective. Also, remember if you want to prohibit an action, do not simply delete the text in the constitutional documents. You must specify that the action is prohibited.

Tips for Proposed Enactments

- **Review past enactments.** The legislation book for the 2022 Council on Legislation is posted on the [Councils](#) page of My Rotary. Take a look to see 1) if 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.

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 may also propose an enactment directly to the district. Any enactments proposed by clubs or districts are then voted on, or endorsed, by the clubs in the district at a district conference, a district legislation meeting, or through a club ballot.

If a district does not have enough time to vote on a proposed enactment in person, the governor may conduct a club ballot. Such ballot should follow as closely as possible the balloting procedures set forth in RI Bylaw section 12.050. for electing a governor-nominee through club ballot.

Once endorsed, the proposer may submit the enactment to Rotary through the online [form](#) by **31 December 2023**. The district governor must also confirm the district's endorsement by **31 December 2023**.

District Governor Confirmation

The governor can confirm endorsement in one of two ways:

1. Submit the proposal themselves 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 them know that the enactment has been submitted. The governor should then reply by email to Council Services at council_services@rotary.org, with their 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 2023, the item will be considered not duly proposed and will not be considered by the 2025 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, the enactment will be considered not 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 2023 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 endorsed by the district
3. The proposer's statement of purpose and effect, 300 words or less
4. A 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 state that a district, and its clubs, should submit no more than five proposed enactments. Districts must submit a separate [form](#) for each proposed enactment.

After the Proposed Enactment is Received by Rotary

The general secretary reviews the submission to ensure that the enactment is duly proposed. An 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. This process includes translating enactments into English, editing for readability, and formatting the enactment. The committee reviews each duly proposed enactment to determine if it is correctly drafted or if it is defective. The general secretary also develops a financial impact statement in relation to Rotary International for each proposal.

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

If proposals are similar, the committee may recommend a compromise proposal to proposers. The work of the Council is greatly facilitated when proposers agree to compromise proposals, as this allows the Council to examine a proposal in depth.

Defective Enactments

Proposed enactments will be deemed defective if they:

1. are subject to two or more inconsistent meanings;
2. fail to amend all affected parts of the constitutional documents;
3. would violate governing law;
4. would amend the Standard Rotary Club Constitution to conflict with the RI Bylaws or the RI Constitution;
5. would amend the RI Bylaws to conflict with the RI Constitution; or
6. 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.

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:

- How to Propose Enactments and Resolutions in the Learning Center
- Council on Legislation article of the RI Constitution
- Council on Legislation article of the RI Bylaws
- Council on Legislation and Council on Resolutions article of the RI Code of Policies
- Councils page of My Rotary