

Rocket City Sisters, INC.



Policies and Procedures
Manual

***“Going where NO Sister has gone
before!”***

A Comprehensive guide for members

- **The Rocket City Sisters, INC.**

Street Address
Huntsville, Alabama zip code
Rocketcitysisters.org
The Rocket City Sisters, INC.

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The Rocket City Sisters, INC.

The Rocket City Sisters Formed as a 501(C)3 public charitable organization, we are dedicated to the support, education, and development of the LGBTQIA community.

The Rocket City Sisters were introduced to Huntsville Alabama in 2019 at The Deja Vieux Bar. We held our first 4 meetings at the Las Vias Restaurant in Hartselle, Alabama.

Who are the sisters?

The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence came into existence Easter weekend in 1979. Four men dressed in full traditional nuns habits went out into the San Francisco community and began what has become the Sisters'. "The Sisters are an order of 21st Century nuns dedicated to the promulgation of omniversal joy and the expiation of stigmatic guilt. Our ministry is one of the public manifestation and habitual perpetuation." Since then, many have heeded the calling and there are now thousands of Sisters, manifesting in countries all around the world. The Rocket City Sisters is dedicated to continuing the work started by SPI those many years ago. The name of RCS reflects our desire to help our community through charitable acts, community outreach, and education; doing so, in a fashion that reflects "Omniversal Joy".

Philosophy and Statement

We are an Order of 21st century nuns dedicated to the promulgation of Omniversal joy and the expiation of stigmatic guilt. Our ministry is one of public manifestation and habitual perpetration.

- 1. Freedom of Expression:** The very nature of our philosophy and membership means that we believe in few restrictions on our expressions and creativity. There will be events where the General Membership (GM) of The Rocket City Sisters (RCS) will require all Fully Professed Members (FPM) to wear the “Traditional or Modern Formal Habit” of a FPM. To allow for our individual expressions to come out, many times this dress code will allow for the FPM to accessorize with jewelry, buttons and other items. At any other function, the FPM is encouraged to manifest, as they feel compelled to do. Remembering that the white face and House Coronet (Skyhawk) are our main way of identifying us as Sisters of RCS. Guards are encouraged to wear black at any event to identify them to the public. They may wear white and black makeup with one (1) additional color if they choose, or they may wear a mask if they present a Dr’s excuse for not wearing “white face” (the same applies to Sisters).
- 2. Diversity:** “Representing the Community” is not limited to the gay community. It is a 50 mile radius from Huntsville. This means we are open to men, women, lesbian straight, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, young, old, married, single or divorced from any part of the surrounding area. Because we do come from such diverse backgrounds, mutual respect is essential to allow the members of RCS to do the work of our calling.
- 3. Social Activism:** The very nature of our organization is one of social change. As representatives of RCS we become agents for social and political change. When working to raise monies for charitable organizations, the whole House usually participates. That said, no member will be required to participate in any event that goes against their social or political positioning.
- 4. Social Service:** The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, Inc. (SPI) printed the world’s first Safe Sex pamphlet and organized the first AIDS benefit. RCS continues the work started by SPI with our mission of community outreach and education. All of our Sisters are expected to participate in Safe Sex Kit (Condom Ministry) handouts. RCS also performs outreach to our community, whether in bars, at events, or in hospice homes. This is the service we have dedicated ourselves to. ***We are 21st century nuns!***
- 5. Spiritual Development:** RCS has no affiliation to any organized religion. We are a group of individuals, who have come together for a common purpose. Because we are individuals, we bring with us our unique beliefs. RCS does not intend to infringe

on anyone's personal beliefs, nor try to force our personal beliefs on others. We are spiritual by nature; we each have a calling to do this work for our community. Our work and our spirituality go hand and hand.

6. **Commitment:** Being a Sister/Guard is a privilege that is earned. It requires lots of work and sacrifice. Our rules may seem strict and rigid, but they are there for a reason. The rules are meant to be a guide, and are not set in stone. There may be cases where the rules will be bent to allow for the current situation. Though a FPM is a member for life, there is a responsibility to RCS. A certain amount of effort is required by RCS. RCS can only succeed in its mission if everyone does their part.

Membership

The Rocket City Sisters is a democratic Order. We have officers and other leadership roles. There are several levels of membership and a process of progression through those levels.

1. Aspirant:

Aspirancy begins when you declare your intent to join at one of our general membership meetings. It begins when you tell someone in the RCS that you are thinking about joining and last until you come before the group and say out loud, “I wish to join the Rocket City Sisters to become a Full Member and share in the good works of this House.” The Membership then votes on your elevation; if you get a majority votes you are elevated to Postulant.

2. Postulants:

Postulants are just beginning their journey to becoming a FPM (Sister/Guard). They are under the keep of the Mistress of Novices (MON) for approximately three (3) months. During this time, they will spend time working with MON learning what RCS does. They will receive training on attire, behavior and safety. They will also be developing relationships and bonds with the FPMs. By the end of this stage of their journey they need to have chosen either a Mentor, Mentor.

A Postulant Sister wears a full length black robe, with black shoes. The required head dress is a white women’s visor turned up on the head and covered by a plain white satin veil. They are allowed to wear white face with “eyes”, but do not have “lips” or cheeks. This is symbolic that they are there to watch & learn. The lack of lips signifies that they cannot speak FOR RCS publically.

A Postulant Guard wears black attire (pants, shirt and shoes) and a plain white baseball cap without a veil. They may wear white face with “eyes”, but do not have “lips” just like a Postulant Sister, or they may wear a plain white mask. Care should be taken to make sure the “lips” are painted with white.

All Postulants are required to attend all General Membership (GM) meetings and training sessions as set forth by the MON, or contact MON in advance to explain why they cannot attend. They must attend three (3) events of RCS wearing the uniform of a Postulant. They are not allowed to appear in public wearing the uniform of a

Postulant without being accompanied by a FPM. They may not speak on behalf of RCS to the Press, or Public because this is their learning phase. They need to develop relationships with the other FPMs.

Although they are considered Jr. Members they will have Voting Rights. They cannot be an Officer, or Chair a committee at this time. They are encouraged to participate in the GM meetings. Postulants should keep in mind the reason for not having lips. They should concentrate on watching and listening even when not in face. Remember, this is a short learning phase and it will end soon enough.

Postulants are required to keep track of their activities and meetings attended. This list is given to the MON upon completion of the minimum requirements for Elevation. If MON feels the Postulant has successfully completed the requirements for this stage she/he will present the Postulant to the GM meeting for Elevation.

The Postulant, with the assistance and/or approval of MON will have chosen a MENTOR to sponsor and help guide them. The MENTOR must be a FPM in good standing. The Postulant must choose which path they will follow in their Novitiate; Guard or Sister. They must pass a test on knowledge of the House and worldwide Sistory. The GM must approve the Postulant's advancement to Novitiate by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the membership.

3. Novices:

There are two (2) types of Novice Members, Novice Sister & Novice Guard. The Novice will take what they have learned as a Postulant and build on it towards their journey to becoming a FPM. The Novitiate lasts a minimum of six (6) months and an average of one (1) year.

The Novice is required to attend all GM meetings, or contact MON to explain why they cannot attend. They must attend and participate at the GM meetings. Voting Rights are limited at this stage and will not apply to By-law and Policy changes. They are not allowed to vote for officers either. The Novice must attend and participate in a minimum of six (6) RCS events.

Novice Uniform Requirements:

- a) Novice Sister: Must work with their MENTOR and/or MON to create their “Skyhawk” coronet which must have a white veil. They are encouraged to start expressing themselves thru their attire, but must wear the white bib/collar at all events. Some events will require “Formal Attire”, for a Novitiate, this will be a plain black full length dress/robe with white bib/collar and black shoes. Novice Sisters wear complete white face with lips, cheeks, eyes and any embellishments to their individual style.
- b) Novice Guard: Are required to wear black pants, or black standard kilt. Black shoes & socks and the white baseball cap. (Special Dispensation may be given to alter the Guards appearance as needed). Novice Guards wear white face with black and one (1) additional color; or they may wear an approved mask if they present a Dr’s excuse for not wearing “white face” (the same applies to Sisters).

A Novice cannot appear in public without being accompanied by a FPM. Novices are allowed to speak to the public about RCS, but may not speak on behalf of RCS to the Press. They cannot run for office or to chair a committee; however, they may be appointed to do so by the President and approved by the GM as needed.

The Novice will have a FPM known as their MENTOR to help guide them in their journey to becoming a FPM. Mentors will share knowledge of make-up jewelry, behavior, etc. with their little Sister. Mentors will provide training on what the role of a Guard is in RCS. Guards are primarily just the guardians of RCS. All Novitiates are still under the guidance and direction of MON. They are expected to be well versed with all the training materials of RCS, including By-laws and Policies & Procedures, as well as Sistory of The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence.

Both Novice Sisters and Novice Guards are required to plan, organize and execute a Novice Project. It is recommended that they not decide on a project until they are a minimum of two (2) months into their Novitiate. When the Novitiate is ready, they are to present the GM with a written proposal of their project for approval by the GM. Once they have received approval from the GM they must then present the proposal to BOD for budget approval, etc. During a Novice’s project they are the “point nun”, or person in charge for that event and are expected to act as such.

After a successful Novice Project has been completed and upon meeting the rest of the requirements for advancement, the Novice must provide the MON with a

complete listing of all meetings and events attended to date. The Novice must pass the Novitiate Test, with the approval of both the MON and their MENTOR, the MON will recommend to the BOD that they grant the Novice an interview for elevation. If the interview goes well, the BOD will vote to recommend that a vote of all FPMs to elevate the Novice to FPM be taken. A vote of 100% by both BOD and GM is required.

4. Fully Professed; Sister or Guard

- a) Sister: Elevating to Fully Professed Sister brings on BIG changes. The FPM is free to express her unique expression and artistic style. Wearing the white face and any House coronet of a FPS (permission is required from another House to wear their coronet), she may express herself through her clothes and accessories. The RCS coronet for a FPS is a “Skyhawk” with any color veil and embellishments she may choose. For safety reasons, she must always have another member (any level) of RCS with her at all times in public-we do not manifest alone.

A FPS will utilize all she has learned during her journey. She is now able to represent RCS to the press and the public. She can now take on a leadership role. She can hold office, chair a committee, and become a mentor to others beginning their journey. The FPS participates in the direction that RCS takes. She has a right to conduct business and vote at all GM meetings in which she is in good standing.

- b) Guard: The primary way a FPG participates with RCS is by escorting and ensuring the safety of the Sisters, as well as assisting with events. FPGs wear white and black make-up with one (1) other color if they choose or their approved mask if they present a Dr’s excuse for not wearing “white face” (the same applies to Sisters). They typically dress in all black. They are required to wear a black hat at all events; a Derby Hat is the official and formal hat.

A FPG has the right to vote at GM meetings in which they are in good standing. They may mentor a Novice Guard on their journey.

5. Member Emeritus:

Though it is true that once you become a FPM you are a FPM for life, there may come a time when you feel the need to move onto something new. FPMs who do not want to lose their ties with RCS, may “retire” from active status with the honorary title for Member Emeritus, rather than resign completely. To be eligible for this status the FPM must have been in good standing for two (2) consecutive years.

The FPM needs to petition the GM, or the BOD can initiate the process with a vote. The vote must pass with simple majority.

RCS values the contribution these FPMs have made, and encourage the Member to maintain contact with RCS. Their input and experience is an asset to RCS. ME's are not expected to attend any meetings or events. They do not pay dues. They are not agents of RCS and may not represent RCS to the public or the press, unless requested to do so by the RCS members.

They may attend meetings, events & be in face. They do not have any voting rights. To regain Full Membership rights and status they must petition the GM and receive a simple majority vote.

Emeritus Status:

- To be considered for Emeritus Status a member must have served as a Fully Professed Member for a minimum of 2 years and must be in good standing. Exceptions may be made due to extenuating circumstances (ie. Member gets moved by their company of employment to a state/country that has no Sister House)
- Returning to Fully Professed Status from Emeritus status: Emeritus Members who have served LESS than 3 years as a Fully Professed Member prior to going Emeritus will be expected to do the following: They must return (as are expected of the members who transfer into the house from another Sister House) to the Novice level for a minimum of 3 months; They must present a Novice Project; They must take the Fully Professed written Test; They must take the Fully Professed Oral Exam; They must write a paper explaining what it means to be Sister and They must sign the Agreement of Fully Professed Membership.
- Emeritus Members who adhere to the Standards and have served as a Fully Professed Member for 3 years or more prior to going Emeritus will be allowed to return to Fully Professed Status without starting at the Novice Level.
- Emeritus Members who return to Fully Professed Status Must receive a 90% affirmation Vote from the General Membership (Fully Professed votes only count) and a 90% affirmation Vote from the Board of Directors.
- Fully Professed Members who return from Emeritus Status will not be allowed to serve as an officer for one year after returning from Emeritus Status.

6. Transferring Fully Professed Membership:

A Fully Professed Sister or Guard from another SPI House may become a FPM in the RCS upon expressing interest and receiving an approval vote from the GM. This Sister/Guard

will begin their journey for membership in the RCS as a Probationary FPM with all the responsibilities and requirements set forth in Section 3 Membership, to include participation in GM meetings, events and fundraisers. As with a Novice, a Project would be required along with a Final Test of knowledge and an interview. The Transferring member will remain on Probationary status for a maximum of two (2) years. The BOD will call for a vote for FPM as set forth in Section 3 Membership at the end of the two year period.

Participating Non-Members

There are four (5) types of participating non-members, Aspirant, Saints, Angels, and Mr & Miss.

1. Aspirant: See Section 1 Membership.
2. Saints: RCS bestows the title of Saint to someone whose life and accomplishments are exemplary and in keeping with RCS's philosophy and statements of purpose. Any FPM may nominate a person for Sainthood by presenting a resume & biography to the Mistress of Saints at any GM meeting. At the following GM meeting, the membership will vote to approve the nomination. A simple majority vote is required to approve Sainthood. Junior members are encouraged to make suggestions for nominations to their mentors & Mother of Novices.
3. Angels: RCS bestows the title of Angel to individuals who have performed duties for RCS and our mission in an ongoing basis. Any FPM may nominate a person for Angel designation by presenting a resume & biography to the Mistress of Saints at any GM meeting. At the following GM meeting, the Membership will vote to approve Angel designation. Junior members are encouraged to make suggestions for nominations to their mentors & Mother & Novices. Past Fully Professed Members who have died while in service to the RCS, may be nominated to be elevated to the status of Angel.
4. Mr and Miss: Each year there will be a contest held to choose a Mr. and Miss for the RCS. There must be at least 3 contestants for Mr and 3 contestants for Miss. They will be chosen based on their presentation, talent and Q&A sections of the contest. They will serve for a one year length. They will assist the Pointnun in preparation for the contest the following year. They are expected to attend as many Pride Fests as they possibly can (minimum of 4) and represent the RCS by performing numbers. They must attend as many Drag Shows as they possibly can and represent the RCS by performing numbers. They will perform at a minimum of 6 "monthly Sister Events" including the Ball during their reign. They MUST conduct themselves to the same standards (as stated in this document) for members.

Approval of New Membership and Progression

Before a Novice submits a resume to the Mistress of Novices, they should have already developed some relationships within RCS. (Aspirants and Postulants are also required to submit a resume for elevation) With the assistance of the Mistress of Novices (MON), the candidates will seek feedback on their status & progression within RCS. It is the responsibility of the candidate to keep a resume (listing) of their attendance and activities. They are also responsible for approaching MON when they feel they are ready to progress. They must attend 75% of the quarterly Novice Tea's and a minimum of 80% monthly meetings (these may be lessened or increased by the MON and GM). See Novice above for further requirements.

Voting Rights

All Fully Professed Members are considered Voting Members for the rest of their lives except in the following cases; voting rights have been temporarily suspended by the voting membership; they have retired, been excommunicated, resigned, or on Emeritus Status. If the individual is on saMentoratical or has missed 3 consecutive GM meetings they will not have voting rights. In order to return to good status, a member must take the corrective action required by the GM.

Membership Status

The Rocket City Sisters has certain requirements to maintain an "Active Membership" status. To maintain Active Status with RCS, FPMs must attend 9 events in a 12 month period. Members who cannot or do not wish to participate to this extent shall be viewed as inactive as per Article II, Section 10 of the Bylaws. Below are some reasons for membership being determined "Inactive."

1. SaMentoratical: A FPM may request a vacation/holiday from RCS's duties, activities and participation by delivering a letter to the Prioress stating this desire. The Member shall remain on saMentoratical until they submit another letter to the Prioress stating their desire to return, and they attend the suMentorequent GM meeting. The length of the saMentoratical can be as long as the Member desires, up to one (1) calendar year. The GM must approve the return from saMentoratical by a 2/3 vote for members not yet fully professed. Any member whose SaMentoratical lasts longer than one (1) year will be deemed INACTIVE. During a saMentoratical, a Member may attend functions or meetings as they choose but may not speak on behalf of RCS, nor will they be allowed to manifest. They also forfeit any voting

rights as well as their right to Chair a committee. Members on saMentoratical shall be listed as active.

SaMentoratical Status:

- To be considered for SaMentoratical Status a member must have served as a Fully Professed Member for a minimum of 1 year continuously and must be in good standing. Exceptions may be made due to extenuating circumstances (ie. Member gets moved by, their company of employment, to a city that has no Sister House)
 - Returning to Fully Professed Status from SaMentoratical status:
SaMentoratical Members who have served LESS than 2 continuous years as a Fully Professed Member prior to going on saMentoratical will be expected to do the following: They will be considered (as are the members who transfer into the house from another Sister House) to be at the Fully Professed level minus the voting rights of a FP member for a minimum of 6 months; They must re-take the Fully Professed written Test; They must write a paper explaining what it means to be Sister and They must sign the Agreement of Fully Professed Membership.
 - SaMentoratical Members who adhere to the Standards and have served as a Fully Professed Member for 3 years or more prior to going on SaMentoratical will be allowed to return to Fully Professed Status with full rights and privileges except for voting rights. They will not have voting rights for 3 months.
 - SaMentoratical Members who wish to return to Fully Professed Status must receive a 90% affirmation Vote from the General Membership (Fully Professed votes only count) and a 90% affirmation Vote from the Board of Directors.
 - Fully Professed Members who return from SaMentoratical Status will not be allowed to serve as an officer for one year after returning from SaMentoratical Status.
2. Suspension: RCS Membership, by a 2/3 vote, may temporarily suspend any Member's right or privileges as set forth in this manual or in the bylaws for behavior that is deemed inappropriate (such inappropriate behavior must be proven not "hear say"). A Board Member and an Officer (who are not one and the same) must be informed of the motion to suspend, to whom it pertains and the reasons for the motion at least five (5) days in advance of the GM meeting in which the motion will be presented. At the time of the notification, the Secretary shall mail notice to the

last known address of the Member advising them of the motion for suspension and the place and time of the meeting where the motion will be made. The proposed motion to suspend rights and/ or censure must include the reason for the action, the rights that are to be suspended and the duration of the suspension. A suspended Member's rights are automatically restored to the same status as before the suspension at the end of the stated time, unless another vote to extend the suspension is passed in the same manner as stated above before the end of the original suspension period. Once suspended, a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote is required to reinstate any rights or privileges prior to the time stated in the motion to suspend. A suspended member has the right to file a grievance to contest or appeal the suspension. Additional actions may be taken or may take the place of the above mentioned actions as stated in the: Violation Penalties and Retorts Section of the PnP.

3. Any FPM may be removed from the Corporation (Excommunication) by a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote at two consecutive GM Meetings no less than forty-eight (48) hours apart. A Board Member and an Officer (who are not one and the same) must be informed of the motion to remove, to whom it pertains, and the reason for the motion at least five (5) days in advance of the GM meeting in which the motion will be presented. At the time of the notification, the Secretary shall mail notice to the last known address of the Member advising them of the motion for removal and the place and time of the meeting where the motion will be made. The proposed motion to remove must include the reason for the action. The Secretary must send a second notice five (5) days prior to any action being taken by the GM. This instrument is used as an absolute last resort all other efforts, as outlined in the Bylaws and Policy and Procedure, over an extended period of time have been exhausted. An Excommunicated Member has the right to file a grievance to contest or appeal the removal. After a member has been excommunicated, they no longer eligible to apply for membership in any House of the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence worldwide. See Violation Penalties and Retorts Section of the PnP for what constitutes Excommunication. As a point of note: Any member who is not Fully Professed does not have to be given the same courtesies as stated here. They are not considered Full members and therefore can be dismissed with a single vote at any point in their journey to becoming a FPM.

The Corporate Identity

The Rocket City Sisters, Inc. is organized as a volunteer based non-profit and does not approve of the use of “The Rocket City Sisters”, its image, name, logo, or creative properties for personal financial gain. The term “Rocket City Sisters”, may not be used for personal gain in anyway. The term may be used when conducting business for RCS with the public. Additionally, the RCS look, i.e. official wimple, coronet and veil, as well as any formal habits, shall be considered part of RCS’ identity and the use of these items shall be restricted to the Members of RCS only. Permission to wear the official coronet & veil may be given to another House, or individuals by Special Dispensation by the current AMentress of RCS.

Appearance and Conduct

Events and bar outreach are generally planned ahead of time. General Business meetings are where we discuss all upcoming events. At that time, the Membership will determine what type of “appearance” the Sisters will make. Though there are not many, there will be some events where “Formal Habit” will be required. At these events, all Sisters will be expected to wear the official formal habit of RCS, incorporating the white face and RCS’ House Coronet. The official formal habit is a black robe, the white collar, bib/scapula, wimple and coronet. To allow for our individual expressions to come out, many times this dress code will allow for the FPM to accessorize with jewelry, buttons and other items. At any other function, the FPM is encouraged to manifest as they feel compelled to do, remembering that the white face and coronet are the main way of identifying us as Sisters of RCS. Guards are encouraged to wear black at any event to identify them to the public. They are also encouraged to dress in the theme specific attire when appropriate. Fully Professed Guards may wear white & black make-up with additional colors or they may wear an approved mask.

1. Point Nun: A Point Nun is assigned for each manifesting. It is their responsibility to make sure everyone knows where & when we are meeting. It is also their responsibility to keep taMentor on where members are and how the event is progressing.
2. Hygiene: It is YOUR responsibility to be there ON TIME. You should allow yourself time to do all of your “S” chores... Remember, cleanliness is next to Godliness! Allow yourself plenty of time to put on face and don your fabulous outfit. You should arrive at the arranged meeting place ON TIME, fresh, clean and looking fantastic.

3. **Drunkenness:** A Member interacts with the community in many ways. Each requires a certain code of conduct. When representing yourself as a member, your actions are a reflection of RCS. When performing outreach, members are allowed to enjoy the adult beverage of their choosing, just not to excess. It is recommended that a maximum of 3 adult beverages is the limit while in White Face or representing RCS. Look out for each other – we are Sisters! If you notice someone is getting to the point of excess, a quiet word to that Member is in order. If you are a Member who is having that “quiet” word said to, you have the responsibility to listen.
4. **ONLINE-** Sisters and Guards are encouraged to have an online presence as a Sister/Guard. It is encouraged to have your “secular self” separate from your SPI identity. Sisters and Guards do not use online services (weMentorites, texting, chat rooms or social media) to discuss house business. Members should not indulge in conversations that are derogatory toward our house or other organizations, individuals, or members of any sister house. Online is not for gossip or bashing. If a sister or guard is found engaging in these activities, they are subject to disciplinary actions as determined in the Violation Penalties and Retorts Section of the PnP.
5. **ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR-** will not be tolerated among Sisters or guards. Abusive behavior includes but limited too; Sexual Harassment, Physical fighting/violence, tongue lashing, destroying others property etc. Abusive behavior is subject to suspension or other disciplinary actions as stated in the Violation Penalties and Retorts Section of the PnP.
6. **ORDER BUSINESS-** Whatever is talked about in the RCS meetings, stays in our house. Refrain from talking about RCS business to anyone outside of the house. Further, an FPM should not discuss business of the House with non-FPM’s, unless they are present when business is discussed and they have questions.
7. **APPEARANCE AND UNIFORMS-** Read Section three, Membership concerning dress codes and formal dress codes.
8. **THE “Rule of Two”-** The rule of 2 means no one sister or guard should travel by themselves. Postulants and Novices should always have a FP Sister or FP Guard with them. This rule includes going to any functions/events or any public places representing RCS.

Conduct/Conflict Resolution/“Whistle Blower”

The Rocket City Sisters is required by law to include a “Whistle Blower” policy in this document. Below is our written policy for the procedure to report violations of this Policy and Procedure.

1. **General:** The Rocket City Sisters’ Code of Ethics and Conduct requires directors, officers, and members to observe high standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. As representatives of RCS, we must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling our responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations.
2. **Reporting Responsibility:** It is the responsibility of all directors, officers and members to comply with these Policies and to report violations or suspected violations in accordance with this Policy.
3. **No Retaliation:** No director, officer, or member who in good faith reports a violation of the Policy shall suffer harassment, retaliation, or adverse consequence. A member who retaliates against someone who has reported a violation in good faith is subject to discipline up to, and including, excommunication from RCS. This Policy is intended to encourage and enable members and others to raise serious concerns within RCS prior to seeking resolution outside RCS.
4. **Reporting Violations:** The Policy addresses RCS’s open door policy and suggests that members share their questions, concerns, or complaints with someone who can address them properly. In most cases an officer or board member is in the best position to address an area of concern. You are encouraged to speak with someone whom you are comfortable in approaching. Officers and board members are required to report suspected violation of the Policy to the board of directors, who has specific and exclusive responsibility to investigate all reported violations. For suspected fraud, or when you are not satisfied or uncomfortable with following RCS’s open door policy, individuals should contact RCS’s Mistress of Protocol directly.
5. **Compliance Agent:** The Mistress of Protocol (if none is elected, the Secretary serves as MP) is the Compliance Agent of RCS. She is responsible for investigating and resolving all reported complaints and allegations concerning violations of the Policy and, at her discretion, shall advise the board of directors. The Mistress of Protocol has direct access to the board of directors and is required to report to the board at least annually on compliance activity. The Mistress of Protocol is the Chair of the Protocol committee.

6. Accounting and Auditing Matters: The board of directors shall address all reported concerns or complaints regarding corporate accounting practices, internal controls, or auditing. The Mistress of Protocol shall immediately notify the board of directors of any such complaint and work with the board until the matter is resolved.
7. Acting in Good Faith: Anyone filing a complaint concerning a violation or suspected violation of the Policy must be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates a violation of the Policy. Any allegations that prove not to be substantiated and which prove to have been made maliciously or knowingly to be false will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense.
8. Confidentiality: Violations or suspected violations may be submitted on a confidential basis by the complainant to the Mistress of Protocol who will take the issue to the board of directors. Reports of violation or suspected violation will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation.
9. Handling of Reported Violations: The Mistress of Protocol will notify the sender and acknowledge receipt of the reported violation or suspected violation within five business days. All reports will be promptly investigated and appropriate corrective action will be taken if warranted by the investigation.

Events

The Rocket City Sisters participate in many events. In order for an event to be considered an “official event”, the GM must approve the event’s official status by a simple majority vote at any GM meeting. The level of participation depends on the event, the organizer, and the beneficiary. It is generally agreed that it takes a minimum of 2 months to properly organize and execute an event. A very important lesson to remember is its okay to say “we’re sorry we can’t take on that project at this time”. RCS making an appearance and nothing else, or it can be as involved as RCS coming up with the concept, planning the event, and executing it.

1. Simple appearance: This is when we are asked just to “be seen” at an event. Many times we are asked just to be a presence at an event. This also covers Bar/Condom Outreach. These are where our work is simple, and it’s a great way for the Sisters to just go out and play with their community.
2. House Assisted Event: There are events that are organized by another group, and RCS is asked to help out. Our help can consist of working the gate/door, judging a contest, or running a raffle during an event. These events are planned by the event organizers. RCS just shows up, looking fabulous, and does the task asked to do.

3. **House Planned Event:** This is an event conceived by a member of RCS, approved by the general membership, budgeted by the Board, planned by the membership with the leadership of a Point Nun, and put on by RCS. These events must be given the proper amount of time to plan in advance so that they run as smoothly, and are as successful as possible. A minimum of 2 months to plan and 2 months advertising is required, unless this event has been done before by the same point nun and then only 1 month planning and 2 months advertising is required. This event is usually a fund raiser for another organization, or one of RCSs programs. **Novice Project** falls under this category.
4. **Just for Fun:** Sometimes the Sisters want to go out, “just because”. It’s very important for the Sisters to go out with no agenda. We work hard for our community, and sometimes it helps recharge our batteries to go out and “play”. It is also good to be seen by our community. They don’t always have to see us asking for money, or working for a cause. They see this already. Many times when we are out having fun, this is when we are approached by someone looking for a confidant (someone who needs someone to talk with). This is when a lot of one on one interaction happens, when those special “Sister Moments” happen.

Finances and Handling Money

Because we are usually raising money for other organizations, or for one of our programs, proper money handling is crucial. Appearance of proper money handling goes a long way in establishing our credibility with the community.

1. **Collecting Money at an Event:** When collecting money at an event, the Treasurer is the person to whom the money is given. If the Treasurer is not present the Point Nun/Guard will be given the money. The Point Nun is responsible for making sure that the money is kept in a safe, secure location during the event. At the end of the event, the Point Nun and one other FPM will count the money raised for the event. The amount will be recorded and both the Point Nun and the FPM will sign for it. The total sheet, money and any receipts will then be turned over to the Treasurer to be deposited into the RCS bank account. The FPM carrying the cash box should NEVER walk from the venue to their vehicle alone. They should ALWAYS be escorted to their vehicle by someone.
2. **Depositing Money:** All deposits are the sole responsibility of the Treasurer. After the money from an event has been handed over to them, they will either deposit the money in the night deposit box or make the deposit on the next business day (or as soon as possible).

3. Collecting Money for Another Organization: When having a fundraiser for another organization, it is RCS' policy to collect the money, deposit it into the RCS bank account and issue a check to the organization for which we are collecting. This process allows us to have an accounting of what we have done during the year and where the money is going. If the event is being run by another organization and the Sisters are just helping out, then the event organizer collects all monies raised.
4. Fundraising for Personal Use: NEVER! It is never acceptable for a Sister to do any fundraising for "Personal Use". It is NEVER acceptable for a Member to use money raised for any reason. NO EXCEPTIONS!
5. Expenditures: Any expenses should be approved at a BOD meeting and presented for approval at the following GM meeting prior to the money being spent. After the expense has been approved, the Treasurer will either issue a check for the expense, or the member will make the purchase(s) requested and then turn in an expense report (including all receipts). **If you make a purchase without prior approval, you do so with the understanding that you may not be reimbursed for the expense.**
6. Event Budgets: At the beginning of the planning phase of every event the Point Nun will be given an allowance budgeted for the event. If she/he wishes to spend their own money, they will be reimbursed up to the approved amount. In ALL cases, the Point Nun MUST turn in expense reports.
7. Checks: All checks written on RCS bank account are to be signed by the Treasurer. In the event the Treasurer is not able to sign, another Officer (who is on the account) may sign, preferably the President.

Elected Officers

Officers serve a one year term. Elections for Officers are held at the Annual Business Meeting. There are no term limits for Officers. Only Fully Professed Sisters in good standing may hold the office of President or Vice President. Other officers may be non-FPM's IF the House does not have enough FPM's to fill the offices. In that case, exceptions can be made with a quorum vote.

1. Mother/Father Superior/AMentoress/AMentorott (President): The President notifies Members of the GM meetings and serves as the Chair in both the GM & BOD meetings. They compile agendas for both meetings. It is her responsibility to insure the other Officers are fulfilling their duties. Mother Superior is the Chief Executive Officer of RCS and the official spokesperson when no other is specified. She is also responsible for all official communication with other Orders worldwide. She is the person that all communication to and from RCS flows. Other duties may be

determined by the Bylaws, at the discretion of the BOD or GM, or in accordance with non-profit law as necessary.

Appointment of Officers by the President

- The President has the authority to Appoint the following offices only if that office is vacated during a term in office (BUT must have approval of the BOD and GM):
 - Vice President
 - Secretary
 - Treasurer
 - UNPC Delegate
 - Captain of the Guards
 - Board Member
 - The President may create Committees as needed within the house.
 - The President may appoint Committee Members to a Committee with the approval of the Board of Directors.
 - The Vice President will serve as a member of all committees and may Chair as many Committees as he/she is elected to chair.
2. Mistress/Master of Novices/MOM (Vice-President): The MON interviews Aspirants, Postulants and Novices regarding their progression. She/He answers new members' questions regarding RCS rules, history, etc. She/He makes reports to both the BOD and GM regarding the status new members; distributes official sanctioned attire for RCS (if the House owns such attire); and distributes all training instruments to new members. She/He will hold a recommended minimum of two (2) Novice Teas per year, or as needed to explain the instruments of RCS and to help new members express their ideas and problems in a non-judgmental environment. She/He is ultimately the individual in charge of all Aspirants, Postulants and Novices. If the Prioress is unable to perform her duties, MON fills in as the Acting Prioress. Other duties may be determined by the Bylaws, BOD or GM, or in accordance with non-profit law as necessary.
3. Mistress of Communications (Secretary): The Mistress of Communications takes compiles and distributes to the Members the Minutes from both the BOD & GM meetings. She is responsible for seeing that an accurate attendance record is kept for all meetings and determines if Quorum has been met to hold the meeting. She, or a designated Officer, collects the mail from the official RCS mailbox and distributes it accordingly. She is responsible for communicating with the Missionary, Emeritus and SaMentoratical Members. The Secretary is responsible for filing and maintaining all official records in the office. She is also responsible for maintaining and distributing the official mailing list, emails, phone numbers and birthdays of RCS.

She is the official Secretary of RCS. Other duties may be determined by the Bylaws, at the discretion of the BOD or GM, or in accordance with non-profit law as necessary.

4. Treasurer: The Treasurer is an elected by Members of RCS. They are responsible for making all deposits, maintaining and balancing the checkbooks and writing checks as needed. They will present monthly financial reports at the BOD and GM meetings. The Treasurer is responsible for helping file forms with Federal, State and Local Governments e.g. taxes, etc. They may solicit foundations for grants. The Treasurer is the Chief Financial Officer of RCS. Other duties may be determined by the Bylaws, at the discretion of the BOD or GM, or in accordance with non-profit law as necessary.
5. Mistress of Saints (optional officer): Is the person responsible for overseeing the beatification of new Saints and the entitlement of Angels. This includes gathering Saints' and Angels' biographies, information, preparing the Saint and Angel certificates, and coordinating ceremonies. The Mistress of Saints shall be tasked with maintaining and updating the list of all RCS's Saints and Angels and shall serve as the Chair of the Saints/Angels Committee. The GM shall elect the Mistress of Saints annually at the Annual meeting. The Mistress of Saints can be removed from Office by a simple majority vote at any General Business meeting. In the event of removal or resignation, the President shall appoint a pro tem Mistress of Saints who shall serve until the GM elects a new Mistress of Saints at the next Annual meeting.
6. United Nuns Privy Council (UNPC) Delegates: The UNPC Delegates (1 Delegate and 1 Alternate) represent RCS on the UNPC. The UNPC is responsible for the development, recognition and elevation of SPI Missions across North America. The UNPC and its members respond to inquiries, grant official recognition to new missions and provide guidance through the process by which a Mission achieves the Exequatur and is recognized as a Full Professed House in the SPI Communion. The UNPC Delegates attends meetings, represents RCS, and reports on the work of the UNPC at RCS's General Business Meetings. They serve 2 year terms and have no term limits. The GM shall elect the UNPC Delegates each 2 years at the Annual meeting. A UNPC Delegate can be removed from Office by a simple majority vote at any General Business meeting. In the event of removal or resignation, the President shall appoint a pro tem UNPC Delegate who shall serve until the GM elects a new UNPC Delegate at the next Annual meeting.

Non-Elected Positions

7. Mentors/Brothers: During a new Member's Postulants, MENTOR will act as mentors, guides, and confidants for the new Members. They attend events with them, provide them with tips on attire, makeup, behavior, etc., and help them to understand relationships within RCS. MENTOR's are accountable for the new Member's activities and actions and are expected to report to the GM on the progression of their candidate.
8. Missionary of the Rocket City Sisters: A Missionary is any FP Sister/Guard that is unable to participate with RCS due to physical proximity but wishes to continue serving RCS. They may be recommended for Missionary status by any FPM at any GM meeting and their status is approved by a simple majority of voting Members present. They receive a copy of the Missionary document to substantiate their position in RCS. Missionaries are expected to keep in contact with RCS in writing, regarding their activities. Missionaries have their status reviewed by the Board of Directors and Mistress of Novices semi-annually.
9. Committees: To oversee a specific project or issue, the President may establish a committee by appointing a Chair. The Chair is then expected to recruit members of the committee. The committee may be composed of Members of RCS as well as non-Members whose skills and knowledge are beneficial to the committee. All Chair appointments are subject to approval by the GM. Upon formation of the committee, meetings shall be held at the discretion of the committee Chair and shall focus on the specific project or issue for which the committee was formed. Any non-Member may attend a committee meeting upon prior approval of the committee Chair. Committee meetings follow parliamentary procedure and the committee shall report back to the GM.

Meetings

As much as we all dread meetings, they are the way we discuss, plan, and co-ordinate the work we do in RCS. The meeting where most of the work is done is the General Business Meeting. There is also Board/Officer meetings, FP meeting, Committee meetings, Workshops, Novice Teas, Retreats, and the Annual Meeting.

1. **Annual Meeting:** The Annual Meeting is held in February of each year. This is the meeting when elections are held. All Officers and At Large Board positions, as well as all other Mistress positions are elected annually at this Meeting. Newly elected officers, board members, and mistresses are seated in their respective offices the following month in March.
2. **General Business Meetings:** General Business Meetings are open to all Members of RCS. Non-Members may be invited to the General Business Meeting with the prior approval of the Prioress or the Mistress of Novices. An agenda is followed and Roberts Rules of Order shall be used as an informal guideline. Only Members in good standing may bring an item to the floor, propose a motion or second a motion, as necessary. A vote is taken to make any decision official. Proxies are not accepted on any vote.
3. **Board/Officer Meetings:** The Board is comprised of the Officers of RCS and 2-4 other members from the community. Two of the community representatives are the current King and Queen elected to serve the year by the RCS. The meetings are designed to discuss business that would otherwise take up too much time in the GM meetings. All decisions by the board of Directors will count as a recommendation to the RCS and will count as 1/3 of the vote required to make a decision in the GM meeting of RCS. These meetings are called so that the Corporate Officers and Board Members can come to decisions about matters that pertain to the ongoing business of RCS. Board meetings are NOT open to all Members or Non-Members, only Officers and Board Members may bring a topic to the floor, propose a motion, second a motion as necessary, and/or vote. Each board member will be given a copy of the Policies and Procedures (P&P) for RCS. They should familiarize themselves with its content. During the year the board may wish to make changes to the P&P. These changes should be submitted to the voting membership and carry a 2/3 majority vote at the annual meeting. A copy of the changes must be distributed to the general membership by the next GM.
4. **Novice Teas:** Novice Teas are designed so that the new Members may discuss in confidence their anxieties, concerns, and shared situations with other new Members and the Mistress of Novices without fear of criticism by FPMs. These meetings help

facilitate solutions for special situations that arise from time to time between new Members and other Members of RCS or the public. These informal sessions are set up to be fun and social, as well as instructional and insightful. Novice Teas may only be attended by new Members and the Mistress of Novices. Other Members of RCS may attend at the specific invitation of the Mistress of Novices. Novice Teas are usually closed to all non-Members.

5. **Retreats:** Retreats are meetings of the Membership that extend for a full day or more. They are usually held in a secluded location where the group can concentrate on getting to know each other and RCS better. Although “official” business is conducted at these meetings, they can be both formal and/or parties. They may be open to Member classifications as voted on by the GM prior to the Retreat. Retreats are not usually open to non-Members. During this month, the only “official” business conducted is a retreat to review the previous year, and plan ahead for the New Year. Though on saMentoratical, FP Sisters are free to manifest should the mood hit them.
6. **Quorum:** A General Business Meeting may make official decisions if that meeting is attended by a simple majority of the voting Membership. They may discuss issues but not make binding decisions. The question as to the presence of a quorum at the time of voting on a particular motion must be raised at the time the vote is taken, if it is raised at all, and cannot be raised later. Unless the minutes show that a quorum was not present at the time of voting on a motion, the law presumes that since the minutes show that a quorum was present when the meeting began, a quorum continued to be present until recess or adjournment.

PnP Changes

The Policies and Procedures Committee shall review all proposed Policy and Procedures Manual changes before the General Membership votes on the changes so that the committee may make recommendations. Proposed recommendations on changes to the Policy and Procedures Manual require a two-thirds majority vote. If a conflict arises regarding this document then the current RCS PnP's supersede the proposed PnP's. The Policy and Procedure will be reviewed annually. Any changes will be voted on at the Annual Meeting. Bylaws may not be changed in any way since they are not a living document and changes could cause the RCS to go into review by the government putting the RCS 501©3 in jeopardy.

Dispensations

The rules of The Rocket City Sisters are meant to be a guide for conduct and running RCS in a professional manner. Occasionally, RCS's rules don't fit a specific situation. In some cases, the GM may vote to give one or more Members dispensation from a rule. Additionally, Mother Superior and the Mistress of Novices may grant dispensation for one or more new Members if a decision is required in between General Business Meetings, as long as such dispensation falls within the authority of Mother Superior or the Mistress of Novices (i.e. dispensation to modify attire for an event). Dispensation shall not be used to modify a voting requirement of RCS. For example, a vote that normally requires a three-fourths majority shall always require a three-fourths majority. In other words, dispensation cannot be used to overrule the number of votes required on an issue. If Mother Superior wished to get "a feel" from the entire group, she may give Special Dispensation to everyone to vote on a non-policy issue.

Travel Dispensation

- All Fully Professed Members are allowed to travel to other houses or cities and represent the Rocket City Sisters provided that there is another Sister/Guard present. The other Sister/Guard does NOT have to be from the Rocket City Sister house (in other words, never manifest alone).
- Should a Fully Professed Member wish to represent the Rocket City Sisters at an event where there are no other Sisters/Guards, a request to do so must be sent to the President of the House for Special Dispensation and approved by the President. (ie. Hosting the Grammys as a Sister/Guard from the Rocket City Sisters).
- NO Aspirant, Postulants, or Novices will be allowed to manifest without a Fully Professed Member of the Rocket City Sisters, OR, without being assigned to a Fully Professed Sister/Guard from another Fully Professed House, approved and assigned by the President AND given Special Dispensation in writing.

Violation Penalties and Retorts:

This section may be used to determine consequences of actions named in the Appearance and Conduct section of the PnP's. As in life, all violations which bring dishonor to the Rocket City Sisters or its members as individuals, shall have consequences. We realize that all violations have a degree of forethought. If an individual unconsciously commits an infraction, the type of infraction and the individuals past performance as a member of the Rocket City Sisters will be taken into account. With all infractions, the members in good standing, must exercise a degree of compassion, remembering that we are all volunteers and that we all have an inherent love for what we do.

1. Members who misrepresent RCS to anyone not a member of the House shall be subject to discipline.
 - They must come before the Board of Directors to account for their actions.
 - They must serve a minimum of one probationary meeting without voting privileges.
 - They must attend one function NOT in "Face" and help without recognition as an FPM.
 - They must pay a \$10 fine.
 - After these criteria have been met, the member will be voted back in to good graces with a simple vote of confidence.

If it is determined that the misrepresentation by the member has been willful and malicious to the House, the Board of Directors may recommend to the General Members that further action be taken up to and between 3 to 6 months of probation with the following criteria:

- They must report to the Board of Directors each month to have their intentions reviewed.
 - They will serve the determined amount of probation without voting privileges.
 - They must attend all house sanctioned events NOT in "Face" and help without recognition as an FPM.
 - They must pay a fine of \$10 for every month on probation.
 - At their last probationary meeting, they must present, to the Board of Directors and to the General Membership Meeting, a 2 page report on the reason their violation was wrong and steps that will correct this type of infraction for others members.
 - They must receive a 2/3 vote of confidence by the Board of Directors and by the General Membership (all of whom must be in Good Standing to vote).
2. Members who commit severe infractions named below will be brought before the Board of Directors first and the General Members second for Excommunication (as per the PnP Membership Status, point #3). Infractions that may constitute Excommunication are as follows:
 - Theft of property or money from RCS.
 - Repeated violations of the PnP without a willingness to comply.

- Purposely misrepresenting RCS to the public while violating the PnP's repeatedly.
- Purposely starting conflicts within RCS that lead to loss of members.
- Presenting false information to RCS to deliberately mislead the group for personal gain.

Conclusion:

As is the case with any conflict, if a member is provoked, he or she may lash out in anger (saying things they do not mean, or doing things not in their character). It is NEVER acceptable to "retaliate" in this case! Talk it through. If NO resolution can be reached, and another "lash out" occurs, then begin the conflict resolution process. EXCOMMUNICATION is reserved for extreme and un-resolvable circumstances. NO ONE shall have actions taken against them for having an opinion or for asking the group to confirm their worth. This is part of life and we must be adult enough to understand that life is not always perfect. BE FORGIVING...to a point.

Remember: We are an order of 21st century Nuns and Guards dedicated to the EXPIATION of stigmatic GUILT and promulgation of omniversal joy!