



NEW COUNCIL GUIDE

BUILDING  
A LASTING  
FOUNDATION

THE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE LIFE BETTER  
IN YOUR PARISH AND COMMUNITY



**E**very new Knights of Columbus council represents opportunity. The opportunity to make life better in your parish and community. The opportunity for members and their families to grow in their Catholic faith while putting that faith into action. The opportunity to offer the many benefits of membership in the Knights of Columbus to every eligible Catholic man in your parish and community.

To help you take advantage of these opportunities, we're pleased to provide this New Council Guide. The information and suggestions you'll find will help you to get off on the right foot, as you build a council that will be a force for good in your parish and community for generations to come.

*Vivat Jesus.*

## **Organizational Structure — Fraternal**

**SUPREME COUNCIL** — comprised of the state deputy and last living past state deputy of each jurisdiction, delegates to the Supreme Council, Supreme Council Officers, Board of Directors and living Past Supreme Knights. This body convenes annually in August to set policy for the Order.

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS/SUPREME COUNCIL OFFICERS** — invested with executive authority to implement the policies set by the Supreme Council.

**STATE COUNCIL** — comprised of grand knights and immediate past grand knights of each council within a jurisdiction, state officers and the last living past state deputy. This body meets annually to set policy for the Knights of Columbus within that jurisdiction and to approve resolutions to be submitted to the Supreme Council.

**DISTRICT DEPUTY** — appointed by the state deputy to oversee the operations of a number of councils in a defined geographic area.

**SUBORDINATE COUNCILS**

## **Organizational Structure — Insurance**

**GENERAL AGENT** — responsible for recruiting, training and managing a team of field agents in a defined geographic area.

**FIELD AGENT** — responsible for presenting the Order's program of insurance benefits to the members and their families of those councils assigned to him.

# Getting Started

**A**s a newly elected or appointed leader of a subordinate council, you will inevitably have questions. Your district deputy should — in most cases — be the first person you contact. He will have the answers — or be able to get them — for most of your questions. In those cases where contacting your district deputy is impractical, contact your state deputy, who will either assist you directly or refer your question to the brother Knight who can.

For questions regarding the Order's top-rated insurance program, your first call should be to your council's assigned field agent. In those cases where contacting your field agent is impractical, contact the general agent in your area. Consult your jurisdiction's website for contact information on the leaders in your area, then take a moment to record the information below and share it with the rest of your council officers. A Supreme Council headquarters contact directory is located in the *Knights of Columbus Leadership Resources* (#5093) guide.

District Deputy Name: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Number: \_\_\_\_\_

State Deputy Name: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Field Agent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Supreme Council Fraternal Mission Department:  
203-752-4270 or [fraternalmission@kofc.org](mailto:fraternalmission@kofc.org).

# Immediate Actions

Use the following check list to ensure that your council starts out on the right foot. These actions should become ongoing operations of your council:

- Ensure that all required council forms are completed and submitted in a timely manner. We encourage the submission of electronic forms using



the Member Management Application located in the Officers Online section of the Knights of Columbus website or by visiting [kofc.org/forms](http://kofc.org/forms). Additionally, the *Council Report Forms Booklet* (#1436) contains paper copies and due dates of all forms. Every council is required to submit the following forms:

- *Report of Officers Chosen for the Term* (#185) — due July 1
- *Service Program Personnel Report* (#365) — due August 1
- *Annual Survey of Fraternal Activity* (#1728) — due January 31
- *Semiannual Council Audit* (#1295) — due February 15 and August 15

- Review the procedures to conduct the semiannual council audit contained in the *Knights of Columbus Leadership Resources* (#5093) guide. Submission of the audit is required under the laws of the Order and to maintain the bonding on the offices of the financial secretary and treasurer.

- To keep your council in good standing with the supreme council, make sure that all assessments for Per Capita, Catholic Advertising and Culture of Life Fund are paid promptly:

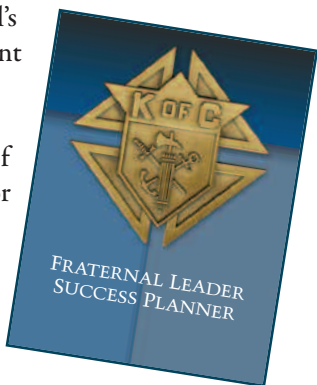
- Assessments levied on January 1 are due by April 10
- Assessments levied on July 1 are due by October 10

- Also be certain that any assessments levied by your state council are paid promptly
- ☐ In order for your council to be able to meet its financial obligations, it's important that members keep their dues current.
- The financial secretary is responsible for billing members and collecting dues payments. He should do so in the manner prescribed in the *Knights of Columbus Leadership Resources* (#5093) guide.
  - Ensure that your financial secretary communicates to members and prospects the importance of dues and how the money is spent (i.e. charitable programs, donations, etc.).
  - The financial secretary should receive all money for the council, recording its receipt in the Member Billing Application located in the secure access Officers Online section of the Knights of Columbus website and turn the funds over to your council's treasurer for deposit.
- ☐ Council meetings should follow a prepared agenda and every attempt should be made to limit its length to one hour.
- Familiarize yourself with *The Method of Conducting Council Meetings* (#10318)
- ☐ Meet with your pastor. This is a top priority and provides your council with the expectations that your pastor has for your council.
- Ask him what the immediate needs of his parish are and offer your council's assistance.
- ☐ Meet with your district deputy. Establish good lines of communication with your district deputy as he serves as a resource for your council and can assist when called upon.
- Keep your district deputy informed of the dates and times of all council charitable activities and invite him to all council functions and activities.

- ❑ Meet with your field agent or general agent.
  - Offer to assist him in promoting the Order's fraternal benefits to all members and solicit his support of your council's membership recruitment strategies.

- ❑ Develop and plan a schedule of council charitable programs for the year.

- This schedule should be reviewed regularly and modified as needed. To assist with planning, use the *Fraternal Leader Success Planner* (#5033) provided in this package. For program suggestions, consult the *Surge . . . with Service* (#962) manual also provided.



- ❑ Develop a list of prospective members and a recruitment plan.

- Lists of prospective members can be generated from the parish list or from recommendations from current members. Additional information on membership recruitment can be found in the *Membership Recruitment and Retention Manual* (#10237) or by visiting [kofc.org/drive](http://kofc.org/drive).

- ❑ Appoint the membership and program directors.

- These appointments are made as soon as the new officers are elected. The directors collaborate with the grand knight to appoint the remainder of the service program personnel and membership chairmen. Information on the responsibilities of the membership and program directors is located in the *Knights of Columbus Leadership Resources* (#5093) guide, *Surge . . . with Service* (#962) manual and the *Membership Recruitment and Retention Manual* (#10237), all of which are included in this package.

- ❑ Conduct monthly Admission Degrees

- Until your council's Admission Degree team is certified by your council's district deputy, use the *First Degree Ceremonial Video Production* to



welcome new members into your council. A copy of the First Degree Ceremonial Video Production is provided in this kit and is available online in the secure access Officers Online section of the Knights of Columbus website, [kofc.org](http://kofc.org). Also consider attending a neighboring council's Admission Degree ceremonial as this builds fraternity and could lay the groundwork for additional collaboration efforts.

## Other Checklist Items

**T**hese items should be kept in mind as your council progresses through the fraternal year:

- Identify and prepare current members to take leadership roles in your council. It is a best practice to continually identify and prepare members to become fraternal leaders in your council.
  - Look to directors and chairmen that have excelled in their role to assume council officer positions.
  - Don't overlook members that may not have held positions in your council, yet possess traits that will make them qualified fraternal leaders.
  
- Attend your district's Organizational Meeting and Mid-Year Meeting.
  - Your council's district deputy will conduct the district Organizational Meeting in July/August and the Mid-Year Meeting in December/January. These meetings are critical in learning the goals and objectives set by your state council as well as any new initiatives of the Supreme Council.
  - Consult with your council's district deputy to obtain the details for these meetings.
  
- Attend your jurisdiction's annual convention.
  - This is a great way to meet other fraternal leaders and share ideas on charitable outreach, member recruitment and retention and insurance promotion.

- Consult with your council's district deputy to obtain the details for your jurisdiction's annual convention.
- ☐ Review all material provided by the Supreme Council and your state council.
  - Familiarize yourself with the resources provided on the Knights of Columbus website, [kofc.org](http://kofc.org) and encourage all officers, directors and chairmen to do likewise.
- ☐ Take advantage of any training offered by your jurisdiction for the officers of your council.
  - Consult with your district deputy to see what is available. The Supreme Council offers training in the Officers Online section of our website. Once logged into Officers Online click the Fraternal Training Portal icon and take advantage of the resources offered there.
- ☐ Familiarize yourself with the Knights of Columbus website, [kofc.org](http://kofc.org).
  - Become familiar with Officers Online, located in the secure section of the website.
    - Officers Online contains the Member Management/Member Billing Applications, Officers Desk Reference, By-Laws Online and the Fraternal Training Portal.
- ☐ Create a council newsletter or website.
  - This is a great way to keep members informed of council activities.
- ☐ Advertise your council in your parish and community.
  - Ensure that parishioners and community members know that your council is ready and willing to assist.
  - Use the parish bulletin and local media to get your message out to the public.

# Council Supplies

The Supreme Council headquarters has many materials available to help your council promote and conduct its service programs and membership recruitment and retention strategies. These supplies can be ordered through [knightsgear.com](http://knightsgear.com), the Order's website for all Knights of Columbus-related gift and clothing needs, including Knights of Columbus apparel, accessories, books, religious supplies and liturgical items.

- ❑ All council supplies must be ordered through your council's grand knight or financial secretary. To have the order charged against your council's account, the grand knight or financial secretary must first log in to Officers Online. Once logged in, officers may access the link to [knightsgear.com](http://knightsgear.com).

# Setting Goals for Your Council

It should be a priority for your council to remain visible in your parish and community by conducting various charitable service projects and council activities to keep your current members active and



engaged in their council and to attract potential new members. As your council begins its charitable outreach and council activities, the programs and activities that your council conducts need not be elaborate or difficult to plan. It's no secret that successful councils set goals for themselves that are achievable and measurable. Start off right by setting goals for your council, chief among them is the goal of earning the Star Council Award.

## What is the Star Council Award?



The Star Council Award is the highest award that your council can earn and it's achievable by all councils in the Order.

In order for your council to earn the Star Council Award, you must:

- Earn the Father McGivney Award for membership growth (the council's quota is 7% net of total membership as of 7/1, with a maximum of 35 and a minimum of 4);
- Earn the Founders' Award for insurance growth (the council's quota is 2.5% net of total membership as of 7/1, with a maximum of 18 and a minimum of 3);
- Earn the Columbian Award for well-rounded council programs by submitting the *Columbian Award Application* (#SP-7) by June 30;
- Submit the *Service Program Personnel Report* (#365) by Aug 1 or as soon as your council is instituted;
- Submit the *Annual Survey of Fraternal Activity* (#1728) by January 31; and
- Remain current with assessments from the Supreme Council Headquarters

For additional information on earning the Star Council Award, consult the *Surge . . . with Service* (#962) manual, the *Knights of Columbus Leadership Resources* (#5093) guide, visit [kofc.org/star](http://kofc.org/star) or visit the Fraternal Training Portal located in the Officers Online section of the Knights of Columbus website.

## Sample Council Action Items

**B**elow is a listing of items that your council should be aware of during the year along with suggestions for council activities and ideas for membership recruitment and insurance promotion. The provided examples of programs cover each of the *Surge . . . with Service* categories. Following the examples for council activities, membership recruitment and insurance promotion will set your council on the path toward earning the Star Council Award.

## APRIL/MAY/JUNE

- ❑ Be sure your council is represented at your jurisdiction's annual convention. Your council's grand knight and a duly elected delegate from your council are voting members of your state council. For information on your state council's convention, please consult your jurisdiction's website or ask your district deputy.
- ❑ Ensure that your council's assessment from the Supreme Council for per capita, Catholic advertising and Culture of Life Fund is paid by April 10.
- ❑ Council election of officers should take place between May 1 and June 15. As soon as officers are elected, the financial secretary should report the new officers to the Supreme Council by completing the Officers screen in the Member Management Application or by submitting the *Report of Officers Chosen for the Term* (#185) found at [kofc.org/forms](http://kofc.org/forms).
- ❑ Complete and submit the *Columbian Award Application* (#SP-7) by June 30. The application is found at [kofc.org/forms](http://kofc.org/forms) or in the *Council Report Forms Booklet* (#1436).
- ❑ New council officers should be meeting and planning the next fraternal year. Use the *Fraternal Leader Success Planner* (#5033) and plan a full year of council programs and activities.

Suggested council activities during the quarter:

- Volunteer to clean up your parish's grounds and complete landscaping and planting
- Plant trees in your community
- Hold an end of fraternal year cookout for members and their families
- Support your local hospice by raising funds or providing volunteers
- "Adopt" a needy family in your parish or community
- Sponsor a retreat for young people

Suggested membership/insurance promotion activities for the quarter:

- Be aware of your council's progress toward earning the Star Council Award.
- Ask your pastor for the parish contact list in order to send invitations to men and their families to join your council. Use the *Membership Invitation Card* (#2599) to send to prospective members.
- Coordinate with your council's field agent to conduct a Fraternal Benefits Night. Information on how to conduct a Fraternal Benefits Night is available in the *Membership Recruitment and Retention Manual* (#10237).

## JULY/AUGUST/SEPTEMBER

- Schedule an Installation of Council Officers in July with your district deputy.
- As soon as the grand knight appoints the service program personnel, report the information to the Supreme Council using the Member Management Application and complete the Service Personnel screen or submit the *Service Program Personnel Report* (#365), found at [kofc.org/forms](http://kofc.org/forms) or in the *Council Report Forms Booklet* (#1436).
- Your grand knight and council trustees are responsible for completing the *Semiannual Council Audit* (#1295) and submitting it by August 15. The audit can be found at [kofc.org/forms](http://kofc.org/forms) or in the *Council Report Forms Booklet* (#1436).
  - The most current two audits must be on file with the Supreme Council in order to maintain the bonding on the offices of the financial secretary and treasurer. Information on bonding is contained in the *Knights of Columbus Leadership Resources* (#5093) guide.

Suggested council activities during the quarter:

- Sponsor a parish retreat weekend
- Host a Mass to honor law enforcement officials, firefighters and paramedics
- Sponsor an athletic team

- Sponsor a Baby Bottle Campaign. With your pastor's permission, distribute baby bottles to parishioners and ask them to fill the bottles with loose change. The money collected can be donated to Culture of Life efforts in your area
- Recognize a family with the Family of the Month program
- Participate in the Soccer Challenge

Suggested membership/insurance promotion activities for the quarter:

- Recruit new members by using the Friends Recruiting Friends and Stages of Life techniques. These techniques and others are discussed in the Fraternal Training Portal located in the Officers Online section of the Knights of Columbus website.
- Ask your council's field agent to speak at council meetings.

## OCTOBER/NOVEMBER/DECEMBER

- Ensure that your council's assessment from the Supreme Council for per capita, Catholic advertising and Culture of Life Fund is paid by October 10.
- Participate in the Orderwide Church Drive and Orderwide First Degree Week during October.
- Check with your district deputy for the dates and times of the District Mid-Year Meeting.
- Prepare for the completion of the *Annual Survey of Fraternal Activity* (#1728) by distributing the *Survey of Fraternal Activity Individual Member Worksheet* (#1728A). The worksheet is found at [kofc.org/forms](http://kofc.org/forms).

Suggested council activities during the quarter:

- Host a Bible discussion program



- Provide tutors and raise money to battle adult illiteracy
- Sponsor Columbus Day celebrations in your community
- Visit a nursing home and distribute Christmas cards
- Offer a babysitting program for council members' families
- Participate in the Coats for Kids program

Suggested membership/insurance promotion activities for the quarter:

- Ask a prospective member and his family to participate with you in one of your council's charitable service projects. After the project, ask the prospective member to consider joining your council.
- Invite your council's field agent to write a monthly column for publication in your council's newsletter or website.

## JANUARY/FEBRUARY/MARCH

- Prepare and submit your council's *State Council Service Program Awards Entry Form (#STSP)* to your state council. Every year, at their state conventions, state councils honor the best program or activity conducted by local councils in each Service Program category. The form is located at [kofc.org/forms](http://kofc.org/forms) or in the *Council Report Forms Booklet (#1436)*. To assist in completing the form, consult the *Service Program Awards (#10173)* guide located in this packet.
- Complete and submit the *Annual Survey of Fraternal Activity (#1728)* by Jan 31. The survey can be submitted electronically on the Knights of



Columbus website, [kofc.org/forms](http://kofc.org/forms) or it can be manually completed and mailed. The manual form is located in the *Council Report Forms Booklet* (#1436).

- ❑ Participate in the Orderwide Church Drive and Orderwide First Degree Week during March.
- ❑ Your grand knight and council trustees are responsible for completing the *Semiannual Council Audit* (#1295) and submit it by February 15. The audit can be found at [kofc.org/forms](http://kofc.org/forms) or in the *Council Report Forms Booklet* (#1436).
  - The most current two audits must be on file with the Supreme Council in order to maintain the bonding on the offices of the financial secretary and treasurer. Information on bonding is contained in the *Knights of Columbus Leadership Resources* (#5093) guide.

Suggested council activities for the quarter:

- Host a clergy appreciation dinner
- Invite your police chief and/or officers to a council meeting to get their view of how your council may help the problems facing your community
- Recognize outstanding members of your council through a Knight of the Month and/or Knight of the Year award
- Organize a local March for Life
- Sponsor a family Mass or Communion breakfast
- Conduct a spelling bee

Suggested membership/insurance promotion activities for the quarter:

- Honor a prospective member and his family with the Family of the Month Award. Guidelines for choosing a family are available in the *Surge . . . with Service* (#962) manual. After the award presentation, ask the prospective member and his family to consider joining your council.
- Contact inactive insurance members in your area and encourage them to reinstate their

membership in your council. Listings of inactive insurance members are available from the Fraternal Mission Department. (A reactivation of an inactive insurance member counts as both a membership and an insurance addition towards your council's quotas.)



