



REGIONAL GUIDELINES TEMPLATE

October, 2023

The National Executive Council offers this as a template for regional executive councils (RECs) to use in drafting or revising regional guidelines. RECs are free to edit or customize to fit the specifics for the region. There are sections that are optional. Areas highlighted in yellow indicate where a choice needs to be made. Should you have questions about this template, contact your National Councilor or another member of the NEC.



NAME **REGIONAL GUIDELINES**

Chapter One

The Regional Fraternity

1. The Regional Fraternity of Name Region of the Secular Franciscan Order is a juridical person, established by the National Executive Council (NEC) of the National Fraternity, made up of an organic union of all the local fraternities in the given geographic description (state the parameters of the specific geographic area).
2. The Regional Fraternity shall have a Regional Fraternity Council made up of regional officers and representatives of the canonically established local fraternities in the region.
3. The Regional Fraternity Council shall have a Regional Executive Council (REC) made up of its officers and one or more spiritual assistants.
4. The Regional Fraternity of the Name Region of the Secular Franciscan Order may recommend the establishment of new local fraternities according to the provisions of the International and National Statutes and 2021 Approved Guide to Canonical Establishment of a Secular Franciscan Fraternity.
5. These Regional Guidelines may be amended as needed by an absolute majority vote of all members of the Regional Fraternity Council.

Chapter Two

The Regional Fraternity Council

6. The Regional Fraternity is represented most fully at the Regional Fraternity Council:
 - a) The Regional Fraternity Council is composed of the REC and the minister from each local fraternity or delegate.
 - b) The Regional Fraternity Council shall meet at least once a year to promote the life of the Regional Fraternity and local fraternities.
 - c) The Regional Fraternity Council suggests and approves policies to be implemented by the Regional Executive Council.
7. The Regional Minister may not at the same time hold another office within the REC, the NEC, the Regional Fraternity Council or any local fraternity. No person shall serve as a representative from the local fraternity on the Regional Council and as a voting member of the REC.
8. Fifty percent plus one of the memberships of the Regional Fraternity Council constitutes a quorum for doing official business at any meeting.

Chapter Three

The Regional Executive Council

9. The Regional Fraternity is animated and guided by the REC. The REC shall include the following:
 - Regional Minister (elected)
 - Regional Vice Minister (elected)
 - Regional Secretary (elected)
 - Regional Treasurer (elected)
 - Regional Councilor at Large (elected/minimum 1)
 - Regional Councilor(s) at Large (elected/optional)
 - Regional Formation Director (elected/appointed)
 - Regional Spiritual Assistant(s)-Appointed by Province(s)
10. The REC must be composed of at least six professed members, not including Regional Spiritual Assistant(s).
11. The Regional Spiritual Assistant shall be a member of the REC. Together with the Regional Fraternity Council, the Regional Spiritual Assistant provides for the spiritual welfare of the Regional Fraternity, assists in achieving the purpose of the Regional Fraternity Council and provides such other assistance and advice as may be requested from time to time.
12. The purpose of the REC is as follows:
 - a) To foster cooperation and communion among the local fraternities, to suggest helpful policies to the Regional Fraternity Council and to carry out the decisions and policies of the Regional Fraternity Council.
 - b) To foster contact with other branches of the Franciscan family within the region.
 - c) To make the charism of our Seraphic Father present in the life and mission of the Church wherein the region is located.
 - d) To promote knowledge of the Franciscan way of life and commitment to it.

- e) To approve the formation program for the instruction of Inquirers, Candidates and ongoing formation in the local fraternities.
 - f) To provide a forum for discussion of common problems and goals.
 - g) To be a voice in the public forum for Secular Franciscans.
 - h) To represent Secular Franciscans in contacts with other church or civil organizations and to promote mutual relationships with such other organizations, when appropriate.
 - i) To make fraternal and pastoral visits and chapters of elections to local Fraternities when requested and according to the provisions of the General Constitutions. The Regional Fraternity will pay the travel costs for visitations. The local fraternity is responsible for the stipend to the pastoral and fraternal visitors. (optional)
 - j) To provide in general for the life of Secular Franciscans at the level of the Regional Fraternity.
13. The REC meets in person at a minimum twice each year at a time and in a place determined by its membership. Additional meetings are encouraged and may be virtual. If a “secret ballot” is required, an in-person meeting is required.
 14. Meetings may be called at the request of the regional minister or at the written or an emailed request of two or more members of the elected councilors.
 15. Notice of REC meetings shall be given in writing or at least through email by the regional minister or at the direction of the regional minister by the regional secretary at least two months prior to the meeting.
 16. Fifty percent plus one of the REC members constitutes a quorum for doing official business at any meeting.

Chapter Four

Regional Officers

17. The Regional Minister is the chief executive officer of the Regional Fraternity. The Regional Minister shall carry out the duties of his/her office as determined by the provisions in the National Statutes and General Constitutions. In addition to the duties prescribed by the guidelines of the Secular Franciscan Order, the Minister will:

- a) Preside over the meetings of the REC and the Regional Fraternity Council.
- b) To present the agenda for the regional council meetings.
- c) Speak in all matters for the regional fraternity in any contacts with other church and civil organizations as well as with the general public. (GC 51.1)

18. The Regional Vice Minister shall carry out the duties of his/her office as determined by the provisions in the National Statutes and General Constitutions. In addition to the duties assigned by general and particular law, the Regional Vice Minister performs such duties as the Regional Fraternity Council may designate. (GC 52.1)

Vice Minister will oversee the following **appointed (or elected)** positions:

- Archivist
- Database Manager
- JPIC Animator
- FY/YA Animator

19. The Regional Secretary shall carry out the duties of his/her office as determined by the provisions in the National Statutes and General Constitutions. In addition, the Secretary will:

- a) Distribute and keep all records of the minutes of both the REC and Regional Fraternity Council.
- b) Preserve the important documents and correspondence of the Regional Fraternity.

- c) Assist the Regional Minister in sending out announcements of forthcoming meetings of the REC and Regional Fraternity Council.
- d) Perform such other duties as the REC requests (GC 52.2).
- e) Oversee newsletter editor and "webmaster."

20. The Regional Treasurer shall carry out the duties of his/her office as determined by the provisions in the National Statutes and General Constitutions. In addition, the Treasurer will:

- a) Keep accounts of all money and is the overseer of the property of the Regional Fraternity, unless otherwise determined by the REC.
- b) Deposit all funds of the Regional Fraternity in such bank accounts as the Regional Council designates and in the name of the Regional Fraternity (GC 52.4).
- c) Make financial reports for approval at each regular meeting of the REC and Regional Fraternity Council.
- d) Pay out money by check only as the business of the regional fraternity may require on the order of the REC.
- e) Arrange for an audit by a qualified accountant/auditor, preferably a professed member of the Secular Franciscan Order. The audit shall be conducted every three (3) years immediately prior to the regional executive council elections.
- f) To prepare and present an annual budget to the REC for approval.

21. Those authorized on the bank signature card are the Minister, Vice Minister and Treasurer.

22. The Regional Formation Director shall carry out the duties of his/her office as determined by the provisions in the National Statutes and General Constitutions. In addition, the Formation Director will:

- a) Facilitate the Regional Formation Team in the implementation of the nationally approved formation materials (GC 52.3; IS 13.1b)
 - b) Submit a regional formation report to the National Formation Director upon request.
 - c) Coordinates with the REC topics related to ongoing formation.
23. (Optional Line) Two Regional Councilors-at-Large, as elected and voting members of the REC shall carry out the duties of their office as determined by the provisions in the National Statutes and General Constitutions. In addition, the Councilors at Large will:
- a) Be liaison/contact persons between the REC and local fraternities.
 - b) Bring issues, questions, and/or concerns from the local fraternity ministers to the attention of the Regional Minister and the other members of the REC.
 - c) Facilitate fraternal outreach to local and emerging fraternities and within their assigned area when formation guidance is requested or needed by the Formation Director.
 - d) Periodically contact all local and emerging fraternities within their assigned area no less than two times a year to encourage and discern if there are needs or challenges to address.
 - e) Preside over and confirm the elections of local fraternities within their assigned area when requested by the Regional Minister.
 - f) Attend admissions, professions, canonical establishment ceremonies and other special events within their assigned area whenever possible.
 - g) Perform such other duties that the REC and Regional Minister may designate in support of our local fraternities.

Chapter Five

Regional Appointed Positions

The REC includes non-voting, appointed positions for the following committee chairs (These are suggested positions. Other regionally specific positions may be added):

- **Regional Archivist**
- **Regional Database Manager**
- **Regional Ecumenical/Interfaith Animator**
- **Regional Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) Animator**
- **Regional Youth and Young Adults (FY/YA) Animator**

Chapter Six

Visitations of and by the Regional Council

24. Once every three years, the Regional Minister and the REC must request the National Minister to make a Fraternal Visit to the Regional Fraternity Council. A Fraternal Visit by the National Minister may also be requested at other times for important reasons. The Regional Fraternity Council will pay the stipend and travel expenses for the fraternal visitor(s).
Once every three years the Regional Minister, with the consent of the REC, must request a pastoral visit from the National Conference of Spiritual Assistants. The Regional Fraternity will pay the stipend and travel expenses for the pastoral visitor.
25. The Regional Minister is a member of the National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order in the USA (NAFRA) and is to attend its meetings. If he/she is impeded from attending the annual meeting of NAFRA, he/she shall be represented by the Regional Vice Minister or, if necessary, by some other elected member of the REC designated by the REC.
26. The common fund of the Regional Fraternity Council shall pay the travel expenses of the REC when on official business.
27. All common funds paid by Fair Share should be used for operations of the region only as documented in the approved annual budget.
28. The Regional Fraternity contributes annually to the common fund of the National Fraternity as called for by the directives of NAFRA.

Chapter Seven

Membership

29. Candidates who withdraw or are suspended from formation and wish to return later must start the formation process at the Orientation phase.

30. When a professed member transfers from another regional fraternity, he or she may not run for a local or regional executive council position in the new region for **several months** after the transfer is complete.

These guidelines may be amended, altered or repealed and new guidelines may be adopted by a majority vote of the Regional Fraternity Council. The undersigned members of the REC do hereby certify that the Guidelines set forth were duly adopted by the Regional Fraternity Council at a meeting held on the (Date) amended on....

Minister: Name, OFS

Vice-Minister: Name, OFS

Secretary: Name, OFS

Formation Director (if elected): Name, OFS

Treasurer: Name, OFS

Councilor-at-Large: Name, OFS

Councilor-at-Large: Name, OFS