



Unlocking the Mystery of Chapter Rules

Each biennium, chapters are required to submit a copy of their chapter rules to the TSO Bylaws and Rules Committee. Chapter rules are what govern how each chapter conducts its business and should reflect the actual practices of the chapter. However, these rules cannot be in conflict with state and international governing documents. Therefore, when changes are made at the international and state levels, each chapter's rules must be in compliance with those changes.

Governing documents of the various levels of The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International are:

International:	Constitution (2018) International Standing Rules (ISR)
State:	Texas State Bylaws (2019) Texas State Rules (2019)
Chapter:	Chapter Rules (submitted to TSO each biennium)

At the 2018 International Convention in Austin, several changes were made to the Constitution and International Standing Rules. As a result, TSO adopted those changes into the Texas State Bylaws and Texas State Rules in 2019 to keep our documents in compliance with those changes to the international documents. Now individual local chapters must be sure that their Chapter Rules are also in compliance with the international and state documents as well.

If your chapter has not submitted its rules after those changes were made, now is the perfect time to do so! There are documents on the Bylaws and Rules Committee section of TSO's website to help. (The direct link is <https://www.dkgtxas.org/bylaws-and-rules-committee.html>.) The easiest way to update your rules is to use the 2020 Model Chapter Rules template and fill in your chapter's information. Of course, you will need to include any specific rules that your chapter has that might not be included in the model, such as guidelines for specific committees or specific duties for certain officers, for example. However, the Model Chapter Rules template is a great place to start.

As you review your chapter rules, please keep the following changes (made at the 2018 convention) in mind:

- Members are now inducted, not initiated

- Individuals become members when they pay their dues
- New classification of membership was added—collegiate member
- Membership year now is July 1—June 30, so dues must be paid before June 30
- Official membership records are kept by the chapter treasurer
- International reports are no longer required
- Chapter vote is NOT taken for resignations, transfers, or changing from reserve to active status. However, chapter vote IS taken to approve changing from active to reserve.
- Transfers are now handled by the receiving chapter treasurers, not by International

Other things to consider:

1. Chapter officers should be elected in a timely manner in even-numbered years so that the names can be submitted to TSO by March 15
2. Include information that will reflect your chapter's practices, such as:
 - a. Grant-in-aid or scholarship given
 - b. Courtesy policies
 - c. Chapter achievement award guidelines
 - d. Committees that work for your chapter (do not have to be exactly like the state or international committees)
 - e. Nominations committee may be elected or appointed
 - f. Include any special responsibilities that chapter officers may have

Process for Certifying Chapter Rules:

1. Review your chapter rules and make needed changes to be sure they are compliant with state and international governing documents. The 2020 Model Chapter Rules, located on the TSO Bylaws and Rules Committee page, will be helpful with this process. **Changes which are made to align your chapter rules with the state and international documents do NOT have to be voted on by your chapter members.**
2. Submit your chapter rules to your area representative on the Bylaws and Rules Committee. This committee will change when the new biennium begins on July 1, 2021. The names will be posted on the website soon after that.
3. Your area representative will be happy to assist you with the process. When all the changes have been agreed upon, be sure to send a final, clean copy to your area representative on the TSO Bylaws and Rules Committee.

Having updated chapter rules is very important to your chapter. They assure that everyone knows the guidelines that direct how your decisions are made, and they are helpful as new officers and committee members take on their responsibilities. It keeps everyone in the chapter “on the same page”.

