



ST. THOMAS MORE REGIONAL GUIDELINES



Chapter One

The Regional Fraternity

1. The Regional Fraternity of St. Thomas More Region of the Secular Franciscan Order is a juridical person, made up of an organic union of all the local Fraternities, officially established by the National Executive Council of the National Fraternity, in the given geographic area of the Southwest corner of the state of Nevada, including Las Vegas, and the State of Arizona, except the Northeast corner.
2. The Regional Fraternity shall have a Regional Council made up of Regional Officers and representatives of the canonically established local fraternities in the Region.
3. The Regional Fraternity shall have a Regional Executive Council made up of its officers and one or more spiritual assistants.
4. The Regional Fraternity of the St. Thomas More 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 the 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 of the members of the Regional Council.

Chapter Two

The Regional Fraternity Council

6. The Regional Fraternity is represented most fully at the Regional Council:
 - a) The Regional Fraternity Council is composed of the Regional Executive Council (REC) and the minister from each local fraternity or delegate.
 - b) The Regional Fraternity Council shall meet at least once a year, preferably during the month of February, 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 Fraternity Council shall function as the Chapter of Elections at the time of the elections of the REC.
8. The Regional Minister may not at the same time hold another office within the REC, 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.
9. Fifty percent plus one of the membership of the Regional Fraternity Council constitutes a quorum for doing official business at any meeting.

Chapter Three

The Regional Executive Council

10. 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 Formation Director (elected)
 - Regional Councilor at Large (elected)
 - Regional Councilor at Large (elected)
 - Regional Spiritual Assistant
11. The REC must be composed of at least five professed members.
12. 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.
13. 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 especially through the Councilors at Large positions.
 - 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 challenges 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 preside at chapters of Elections for local Fraternities when requested and according to the provisions of the General Constitutions. The Regional Fraternity will pay the travel costs for the Elections and Visitations. The Local Fraternity is responsible for the stipend to the Pastoral and Fraternal Visitors.
14. The REC meets as necessary but at least twice each year at a time and in a place determined by its membership.
 15. 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.
 16. 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.
 17. Fifty percent plus one of the REC members constitutes a quorum for doing official business at any meeting.

Chapter Four

Regional Officers

18. The **Regional Minister** is the chief executive officer of the Regional Fraternity. The 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) Present the agenda for the Regional Council meetings.
 - b) Preside at the meetings of the REC and the Regional Fraternity Council (RC).
 - 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).
19. 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 RC may designate (GC 52.1).
Vice-Minister will oversee of the following appointed positions:
- Archivist
 - Database Manager
 - JPIC Animator
 - FY/YA Animator
20. 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 RC.
 - 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 RC.
 - d) Perform such other duties as the REC requests (GC 52.2).
 - e) Oversee newsletter editor and “webservant”.

21. 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 RC 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 RC.
 - 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 after the regional elections.
 - f) Prepare and present an annual budget to the RC for approval.
22. Those authorized on the bank signature card are the Minister, Vice Minister and Treasurer.
23. 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.

- 24. 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 may designate in support of our local fraternities.

Chapter Five

Regional Appointed Positions

25. Regional Archivist

Important documents, photos and artifacts that are pertinent to the St. Thomas More Regional Fraternity need to be kept in a central place that is both environmentally safe and secure. By assessing, sorting and preserving regional records correctly, the archivist is extending the life expectancy of those documents. Material that is created and saved by local fraternities needs to be properly sent for storage in the Regional Archive, chief among reasons is being the suspension of activity in a local fraternity (deactivation). Local fraternities should keep their records in their own archive area. This is not a position that can be assigned to simply anyone. There should definitely be a love, even a fascination, for the work

The archivist, a non-voting member of the Regional Council, is to be appointed by and after the Regional Executive Council (REC) election for a term of three years, no later than 12 months after election. In most cases the term of 3 years can be renewed for an unspecified period of time. Regional funding should ensure that the archivist is compensated for supplies and mileage.

The Archivist:

- Should have some experience as a secretary, historian, or have previous archival experience
- Should have good organizational skills as well as good writing skills
- Should have access to a computer and the ability to use the necessary computer programs

Regional Archivist Duties:

1. Collect important records specific to the regional fraternity
2. Assist in finding a suitable, secure place in which to store regional fraternity material
3. Collect pertinent documents of early regional fraternity history
4. Create a directory (catalog) of archival files
5. Scan documents onto hard-drive as back-up to paper copies
6. Store hard copy files alphabetically and/or chronologically within folder in archival boxes or file cabinets
7. Give updates verbal or electronic, periodically to the Regional Executive Council
8. Share important information at District Regional Council meetings
9. Be available for consultation when needed to check documents
10. Remove unneeded materials and duplicates
11. Should actively be recruiting and training others as replacements for future work

We preserve our past as a gift for our future. (Tom McNamara, OFS)

(Approved by the Regional Council: 11/14/2020)

26. Regional Database Manager

The Sisters and Brothers of St. Thomas More Regional Fraternities are the most important elements of the Secular Franciscan Order. When accurate records of our membership are maintained, it enables our fraternities to thrive with a vibrant Franciscan spirit of love, connectedness and perfect charity.

The Regional Database Manager (RDM), a non-voting member of the Regional Council and appointed by the Regional Executive Council within 12 months after election, is responsible for updating and maintaining membership information for the fraternities of St. Thomas More Region, with the assistance of each local fraternity. Length of term: In most cases the term of 3 years can be renewed for an unspecified period of time.

A Member's Personal Information Form, located under "Resources and Forms" on the St. Thomas More Region website, is designed for such purpose. Each local fraternity council will be asked to appoint a local councilor to manage the database.

The responsibilities of the Regional Database Manager (RDM) will be as follows:

- Enter St. Thomas More Region's fraternity membership information into the national database, using the Member's Personal Information form provided to each fraternity.
- Assist the appointed councilor in each local fraternity to keep the necessary records through ongoing and frequent communication.

Please note: Each fraternity will have access to the database. Only the RDM will be responsible for entering the data.

- Report to the Regional Council as requested.
- Verify with Regional Treasurer that the end of the year reports from each fraternity agree with the information in the database.
- Update the Regional Directory and communicate changes to all Regional Council members.

The responsibilities of the Fraternity Database Councilor (FDC), who is a member of and appointed by each local fraternity council, will be as follows:

- Update as well as preserve records of important dates for the fraternity members to include: Welcoming, Admission, Profession, Transfer, and Death.
- Update records with any changes affecting fraternity members' status such as: Active, Active/ Excused, Lapsed.
- Update records with any changes affecting fraternity members' contact information to include: Phone number, home address, Email address.
- Notify the RDM of any of the above changes.
- The local Fraternity Database Councilor will maintain diligent, open and frequent communication with the Regional Database Manager.

(Approved by the Regional Council: 2/20/21)

27. Regional Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) Animator

JPIC Mission Statement

The mission of JPIC is to assist the professed secular Franciscans as they reflect on their relationship with God as manifested in the fruits of conversion in their lives.

This with special regard to the daily choices made in the areas of justice, peacemaking and respect for all created things and people; as brothers and sisters of penance, bringing life to the Gospel and the Gospel to life.

Goals of JPIC:

Assist, guide, animate and communicate with the local fraternities and to be in contact with the National JPIC Animator to:

- Promote and endorse the seven themes of Catholic Social Teachings
- Foster an atmosphere in fraternity, the privileged place, where, with openness and trust, we may share with each other, the manner in which our personal conversions are shaping our Franciscan lives.
- Reinforce the appreciation of the dignity of the human person in the choices made in our professed lives by responding in charity and patience to all we meet and to respond as Franciscans to anything which would denigrate the dignity of the human person, beginning with our own personal communications with one another.
- Assist in the living out of obedience to the common good as intended by God so that the professed Secular Franciscan builds up all that is good for all of Creation and does nothing which would damage the fabric of communal interdependence; and
- Strengthen the professed Secular Franciscans' commitment to solidarity with all of Creation enabling them to make those choices in life which would bring about a more fraternal and evangelical world

In addition, the JPIC animator, a non-voting member of the Regional Council, is to be appointed by and after the Regional Executive Council (REC) election for a term of three years, no later than 12 months after the election. In most cases the term of 3 years can be renewed for an unspecified period of time.

(Further support and guidelines can be taken from the *Handbook for Animators of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation* and the *FUN Manual*.)

(Approved by Regional Council: 2/20/2021)

28. Regional Franciscan Youth and Young Adults (FY/YA) Animator

“Inspired by the life of St. Francis of Assisi and guided by our OFS Rule (Art. 24) and General Constitutions (Art. 96 & 97), our mission is to bring the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to the youth and young adults of the United States of America. We are called to share this Franciscan way of life through prayer, formation, and social justice action with all youth whom we encounter.

“We envision journeying with youth and young adults as they discern their purpose in life and develop a relationship with Jesus Christ. After experiencing Franciscan fraternal life, these young people may desire to form a FY/YA community, and the OFS at all levels commits to support them.” (Mission Statement of the National FY/YA Commission)

<https://secularfranciscansusa.org/wp-content/uploads/FY/YA-Mission-Statement.pdf>

The Regional Franciscan Youth and Young Adult (FY/YA) Animator has the following responsibilities:

- Be the point of contact in the region for the National FY/YA Commission Chair.
- Be the conduit for information to flow between the National FY/YA Commission, to the region, and to the local fraternities.
- Be the conduit for information to flow between the local fraternities, to the region, and to the National FY/YA Commission Chair.
- Form a bond and communicate with the FY/YA group(s) in the region.
- Attend the Regional Council Meetings.
- Send reports and attend the Regional Executive Council meetings when asked.
- Become familiar with the USCCB documents "Renewing the Vision: A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry" for those working with teenagers and "Sons and Daughters of the Light: A Pastoral Plan for Ministry with Young Adults" if working with young adults.

The Regional FY/YA Animator shall possess the following:

- An understanding of youth and young adults and their place within the Secular Franciscan Order and within the Church.
- An understanding of the USA FY/YA Mission Statement and National Statutes, CIOFS' Franciscan Way (You/Fra): A Way of Vocation, CIOFS' Formation Program for Franciscan Youth and the CIOFS' Guidelines for Fraternal Animation.
- Proof of current training (Virtus, Safe Environment, etc.) background check, or Code of Conduct required by their home diocese. **This training is required when working with youth and young adults in both Tucson and Phoenix dioceses.**

“The SFO, by virtue of its very vocation, ought to be ready to share its experience of evangelical life with the youth who feel attracted to Saint Francis of Assisi and to seek the means of adequately presenting it to them.”

(OFS General Constitutions, Art. 96.1)

Chapter Six

Relations with the National Executive Council

29. Once every three years, the Regional Minister and the Regional Executive Council must invite the National Minister to make a Fraternal Visit to the Regional Fraternity. A Fraternal Visit by the National Minister may also be requested at other times for important reasons. The Regional fraternity will pay the stipend and travel expenses for the Fraternal visitor.
30. Once every three years the Regional Minister with the consent of the Regional Executive Council 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.
31. 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.
32. The common fund of the Regional Fraternity shall pay the travel expenses of the Regional Executive Council when on official business.
33. All common funds paid by Fair Share should be used for operations of the region only as documented in the approved annual budget.
34. The Regional Fraternity contributes annually to the common fund of the National Fraternity as called for by the directives of NAFRA.

Chapter Seven

Membership

35. Candidates, who withdraw or are suspended from formation and wish to return at a later time, must start the formation process at the Orientation phase.
36. The Region offers an Affiliate Program to Catholics or non-Catholics alike who through a time of preparation, make a temporary commitment, renewable every two years to participating in Fraternity life.
37. Should a person in affiliate status seek to become a professed member of the Secular Franciscan Order, then the requirements of the formal formation process supersede all parts of the affiliate orientation plan. Affiliation orientation does not shorten or alter the norms of the formation process of the Secular Franciscan Order.
38. Note that at the beginning of affiliate orientation the local fraternity minister and assigned sponsor must clearly advise that the affiliate, once approved, has no juridical bond, voice (right to hold office), or official status within the Secular Franciscan Order.
39. When someone transfers from another fraternity, he or she may not run for a Council position in the new local fraternity or for a Regional Council position for 18 months after the transfer. After 18 months, the fraternity members have the opportunity to get to know the new person.

These guidelines may be amended, altered or repealed and new guidelines may be adopted by a majority vote of the Regional Council.

The undersigned members of the Regional Executive Council do hereby certify that the Guidelines set forth were duly adopted by the Regional Council at a meeting held on the 23th Day of October 2021 and amended on the 4th Day of March 2023.

Minister: Julianne Hartzell, OFS

Vice-Minister: Cathy Roszhart, OFS

Secretary: Amy Sperry, OFS

Formation Director: Tom McNamara, OFS

Treasurer: Steve Roszhart, OFS

Councilor-at-Large: Carmen Duron, OFS

Councilor-at-Large: Benjamin Saenz, OFS

Region Spiritual Assistant: Susan Simeone, OFS

Julianne Hartzell, OFS
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Cathy Roszhart, OFS
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Amy Sperry, OFS
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Tom McNamara, OFS
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Steve Roszhart, OFS
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Susan Simeone, OFS