



# **Local Council Guidelines**

# UCT LOCAL COUNCIL GUIDELINES

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## **INTRODUCTION**

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UCT's Local Council Guidelines are designed to help guide the officers and members of a UCT local council for maximum success. Please note that the guidelines have been updated. If your council still participates in traditional meetings, please refer to the UCT Constitution & Bylaws available under About Us on our website at [www.uct.org](http://www.uct.org) for more detailed information. A copy of the UCT Ritual is also available on our password protected Members' Area.

If you have questions about any of the information in the guidelines, please feel free to contact us. A contact list is provided in the back of the guidelines for you.

## **LOCAL COUNCIL OFFICERS**

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### **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Local council officer elections are held each year, usually in March, so that the one-year terms of office can begin with the new membership year starting April 1.

### **LOCAL PRESIDENT**

The local president presides at all meetings and is a member of the executive committee, if applicable. He/She works with other council officers and members to ensure the success and growth of the council.

### **LOCAL PRESIDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

- **Sees that the council functions according to the UCT Constitution & Bylaws** as well as the bylaws of the regional and local councils. The UCT constitution is available under About Us at [www.uct.org](http://www.uct.org).
- **Presides at all council meetings.** Works with the secretary-treasurer to prepare an agenda in advance of each meeting. Reviews and gains an understanding of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised.
- **If applicable, appoints all council committees,** except the executive committee.
- **Immediately following elections, holds an organizational meeting of all council officers** to review their responsibilities and make preliminary plans for the coming year.
- **If applicable, attends all meetings of the executive committee.**
- **Establishes goals for membership growth and retention.** Works with other council officers and members to ensure that goals are reached.

### **ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS**

- **If applicable, sees that the executive committee meets each month.**
- **Checks with the secretary-treasurer before each meeting** to make sure all necessary reports, material and information are prepared.
- **If applicable, requires each council committee to prepare a report.**
- **Works with other officers, members and committees to prepare a council budget for the year.**
- **Obtains a monthly financial statement from the secretary-treasurer,** including the names of lapsed members and the amount each owes.
- **Keeps members informed** through mail, email, social media or monthly council newsletters.

### **LOCAL VICE PRESIDENT**

The local vice president presides at meetings if the local president is unable to attend. He/She also assumes a seat on the council's executive committee, if applicable.

### **LOCAL VICE PRESIDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

- **Presides at meetings if the local president is unable to attend.**
- **If applicable, attends all executive committee meetings.**
- **Works with other council officers and members to ensure that membership growth and retention goals are reached.**

### **LOCAL IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT**

The local past president draws on his/her experience and knowledge of recent council activity to provide advice and guidance to the local president, other officers and council members.

### **LOCAL IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

- **Presides in the absence of both the president and vice president.**
- **Performs other responsibilities as required by the UCT Constitution & Bylaws** and as requested by the local president.

## **LOCAL SECRETARY-TREASURER**

The secretary-treasurer acts as the chief administrative officer of the council. He/She works under the direction of the local president and, if applicable, the executive committee. He/She is the liaison between the local council and the regional council and between the local council and the UCT home office.

### **LOCAL SECRETARY-TREASURER RESPONSIBILITIES**

- **Records the minutes and activities of the council in a permanent record book.** Shares the minutes of the last meeting at each meeting and enter corrections. Verifies the minutes and has them signed by the local president.
- **Files and preserves all papers and documents relating to the business of the organization and local council.**
- **Oversees all council banking activity.** When using checks, makes sure they are properly countersigned by the local president or, if applicable, a member of the executive committee.
- **Processes all new member applications immediately.**
- **Submits reports to the home office as required. See Page 13 for details.**
- **At the end of his/her term, gives all funds, books, vouchers and property belonging to the council to the new secretary-treasurer.**
- **Performs other responsibilities as required by the UCT Constitution & Bylaws** and as requested by the local president.

### **ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS**

- **Works with the regional council secretary to pay the local council's quarterly per capita tax.** The local secretary-treasurer should receive either by mail or email a quarterly notice from the regional secretary regarding the local council's per capita tax balance due. This amount is 50 cents per member, per quarter, and is based on the total number of local council members.
- **Works with other officers and members to keep suspensions low by notifying members who are late paying their dues.** A personal email or phone call to each member can easily cut down suspensions.
- **Works closely with the council's local president and, if applicable, executive committee.**

- **Works with other council officers and, if applicable, the executive committee to prepare the annual budget prior to the April meeting.**
- **Becomes familiar with UCT's Secretary Inquiry System (SIS), which can be accessed under Login on the home page of our website at [www.uct.org](http://www.uct.org).** SIS provides secretary-treasurers with local, regional and international membership information as well as access to year-end activity and financial reports. To get started, obtain an SIS user ID and password by contacting the UCT helpdesk at [helpdesk@uct.org](mailto:helpdesk@uct.org).
- **Contacts the Fraternal Department** for help with SIS or with any questions about administrative procedures.

### **LOCAL DIRECTOR (OPTIONAL)**

The local director works with other council officers and members to ensure that membership growth and retention goals are reached. He/She also works with other council members to plan and carry out local council events and volunteer activities. Any local council can have up to three directors.

### **LOCAL CHAPLAIN (OPTIONAL)**

The chaplain is appointed by the local president. See the UCT Constitution & Bylaws or UCT Ritual for more details.

## **LOCAL COUNCIL COMMITTEES**

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With the exception of the examining finance committee, local council committees are optional. We highly recommend a membership committee if you want your council to grow and a marketing committee to help with that membership growth.

### **EXAMINING FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Every local council needs to have an examining finance committee. The committee functions briefly each year to audit the books and vouchers of the secretary-treasurer as of March 31, the end of the UCT local council fiscal year. Instructions and forms for conducting the audit are sent to local secretary-treasurers from the UCT home office each February.

The committee is composed of three members other than the secretary-treasurer, who are appointed by the local president to serve a three-year term (staggered so one term expires every year). It is the local president's responsibility to appoint one member for a three-year term in February to serve with the two carry-over members.

### **EXAMINING FINANCE COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES**

- **Audit the books and vouchers of the secretary-treasurer.**
- **Report the results of the audit to the council.**
- **Report to the UCT home office and regional council secretary.**

### **REPORT TO UCT HOME OFFICE AND REGIONAL COUNCIL SECRETARY**

Copies of the committee's report should be forwarded immediately to the UCT home office and to the regional council secretary.

UCT furnishes a fidelity bond on each local secretary-treasurer. The requirements of the commercial bonding company demand that all examining finance committee reports be completed and filed at the home office no later than April 30 each year.

According to the regulations in the Standing Orders of UCT, the Board of Governors may order an audit of the books and records of a local council, by an accountant selected by the Board of Governors, at the expense of the local council, if a council fails to file an examining finance committee report with the home office and regional council secretary after having been notified twice by first class mail and once by certified mail, over a period of three months.

### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (OPTIONAL)**

The executive committee consists of at least the president, vice president and secretary-treasurer, who are elected annually to serve a term of one year each; and a minimum of two other members, with one-half of these members elected annually to serve for a term of two years each. The committee oversee the council's finances and acts as the council's policy-making body.

### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES**

- **Selects an executive committee chairperson. Meets monthly to perform the responsibilities required of the executive committee.**
- **Prepares an annual budget for the council.** Prior to the council's regular April meeting, prepares a budget and submits it for council approval. Budgets from April 1 of the current year through March 31 of the following year and includes all expected income and expenses.
- **Designates the president or another member of the executive committee (other than the secretary-treasurer) to countersign all checks or vouchers issued by the secretary-treasurer.**
- **Examines quarterly, and whenever seems advisable, the books and property of the secretary-treasurer.**

- **Makes sure the council functions according to the UCT Constitution & Bylaws.**
- **Submits a report of the executive committee at each council meeting.**
- **Performs other responsibilities as required by the UCT Constitution & Bylaws and as requested by the regional president, regional executive committee or the Board of Governors.**

### **MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE (OPTIONAL)**

UCT is structured so that individuals generally become members by invitation. A membership committee can help council growth by motivating members to share the benefits of UCT with friends, relatives, co-workers and others.

### **MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES**

- **Sets goals for increasing council membership and develops a plan to accomplish these goals.**
- **Motivates members to invite their friends, family and co-workers to become members.**
- **Recognizes members who bring in new members.**
- **Works with the secretary-treasurer to keep suspensions to a minimum.**
- **Keeps members informed by making periodic reports to the council.**

### **GOALS FOR MEMBERSHIP GROWTH**

To help the council achieve its goals for membership growth, the membership committee should urge members to establish personal goals for bringing in new members at the beginning of each membership year. The committee can then frequently remind members of the goals they have set and help them to attain them.

The minimum goal of each active member should be to bring in at least one new member each year. The achievement of individual goals by active council members will result in steady growth for the council.

### **MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AWARDS**

On the international level, UCT Membership Development Awards is our way of recognizing and rewarding local members for helping UCT grow by bringing in new members. We do this in partnership with Boost Rewards, a web-based, integrated program for rewarding and tracking member performance and retention.



Backed by integrated partnerships with the Internet's largest retailer, Amazon.com and with Visa, Boost offers online, point based programs that allow flexibility in selecting awards. U.S. members are able to select from thousands of products on Amazon while Canadian members receive Visa gift cards for bringing in new members.

### **MEMBER RETENTION**

Membership retention is one of the biggest challenges for any UCT local council. While some councils sign many new members each year, their net membership increase can be very small due to suspensions.

The membership committee can help the secretary-treasurer keep suspensions low by involving new members in council activities, inviting them to take part in council meetings and encouraging them to get involved in local council activities and volunteer projects.

### **ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR MEMBER RETENTION**

- Have council members commit time each month to contact, either by phone or email, unpaid and lapsed members.
- Keep track regarding the contact made with unpaid or lapsed members and report to the council any progress made.
- Be knowledgeable about UCT member benefits and discounts as well as the various products that are available, especially the product that the unpaid or lapsed member holds.
- Report member address, phone number and email address changes to the home office on a regular basis.

### **MARKETING/COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE (OPTIONAL)**

Whether you've just formed a new council or you're in the process of reenergizing your existing council, keeping your members engaged and your community informed is vital. A marketing committee can be one or two people who know a little (or a lot) about marketing and communications and are willing to invest some time in the following:

- UCT brand awareness
- Media relations
- Social media
- Local council newsletters
- Email marketing
- Graphic design

The home office staff is also on hand to help with all of the above and much more! With a single email or phone call we can put you on the right path to promoting your council - all you have to do is reach out to us.

## **PROGRAMS & EVENTS**

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### **UCT CHARITIES**

UCT Charities was established in 1997 to support individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, primarily by providing scholarships through the UCT Scholarship Program. We've expanded this support to include other programs and projects that benefit individuals with special needs.

The fund is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization and is supported entirely through donations. Donations may be tax-deductible and are cumulative. There are several ways to donate to UCT Charities, including:

**Life Insurance** – Purchase a life insurance policy that names the fund as beneficiary upon your death. This option holds the funds in an irrevocable trust and, depending upon tax status, can allow you to deduct the cost of the policy's premiums.

**Memorial Gift** – Consider making a contribution to the fund in memory of a deceased loved one or member.

**Honor Gift** – Make a donation in honor of a special person or an event such as a birthday or anniversary.

### **UCT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS**

UCT invests in the future of our communities by investing in students. We do this by sponsoring three scholarship programs to help students meet the financial challenges of a college education.

**The UCT Heaston Scholarship** helps students achieve their dreams of a college education. The program consists of three scholarships granted to three students annually, each covering four years of undergraduate education. The scholarships are:

- **The Jack & Betty Heaston Memorial Scholarship – \$6,000 per year for four years**
- **The Betty Y. Heaston Memorial Scholarship – \$3,000 per year for four years**
- **The Jack Heaston Memorial Scholarship – \$3,000 per year for four years**

**The UCT Scholarship Program**, funded by UCT Charities, provides scholarships to students and teachers seeking college degrees or certification to work with people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Applicants must meet specific guidelines.

**The Ann Marshall Scholarship Program** grants scholarships to members and the children and grandchildren of living members. This program is funded entirely through donations from members and councils.

**Contact Anita Neal at [aneal@uct.org](mailto:aneal@uct.org) or at 800.848.0123 x1100 with questions or for more information.**

### **ANNUAL CONVENTIONS**

Delegates to UCT's international and regional council conventions give every local and regional council a voice in UCT business. This system ensures that all actions of the organization are made in the best interest of its members.

Each local council is entitled to one representative to the regional council convention and as many more as the regional council may determine, provided representation is appropriated among the local councils in proportion to their membership. Each local council should elect delegates to its regional council convention according to the eligibility requirements as stated in the UCT Constitution. Most councils elect their delegates during March, at the same time council officers are elected.

Because local councils are governed by their regional council and at the international level, each council should see that its full quota of delegates attends the regional council convention and votes on all matters in the interest of the council. The chairperson of the delegation should be required to give a full report at the next regular meeting of the council, informing members of important legislation adopted at the regional convention.

Delegates to the international UCT convention are elected at each regional council convention. Similarly, each regional council should make sure its full quota of delegates attends the international convention to represent the regional council and its member councils.

### **AWARDS PRESENTATIONS**

UCT honors members who have reached important milestones by awarding pins to those who have been affiliated with the organization for 25 and 50 years. Plaques can also be purchased from the home office for members who have achieved 50, 60, 65 and 75 years of membership.

Because of the importance of these awards to the members receiving them, many local council members who have given so many years to UCT. Most do this during or right after a regular local council meeting while some designate a special day or evening for it.

## **UCT MEMORIAL DAY**

The Sunday nearest to the anniversary of the death of UCT's first Supreme Secretary, Charles Benton Flagg, who died on April 9, 1901, is designated as UCT Memorial Day each year. Many councils commemorate the day by engaging in community service.

## **MEMBER BENEFITS**

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Being a UCT member means having access to a variety of benefits & discounts, including:

- Disaster relief benefit
- Discounts on hotel stays, car rentals, and travel
- Savings on office supplies, energy programs, auto financing & more
- Identity theft protection discount
- Prescription card saving program
- Health screening discounts

**We offer specific benefits for U.S. and Canadian members. For more details, visit [www.uct.org](http://www.uct.org) under Get Involved or contact our Customer Service Department at [customerservice@uct.org](mailto:customerservice@uct.org) or at 800.848.0123 x1300.**

## **UCT FRATERNAL FUND**

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The UCT Fraternal Fund has been providing financial assistance to members in need since 1892. If you know of members who could use some help, you might want to make them aware of the benefits available through the UCT Fraternal Fund.

### **WIDOWS' AND ORPHANS' BENEFIT**

This benefit provides financial assistance to the widows or widowers and/or children of UCT members who can't meet necessary expenses after the member's death.

An individual must be without means of financial support and have been dependent upon the deceased member at the time of death in order to qualify. The deceased must have been a member in good standing at the time of death. Benefits are given in strict confidence, and it should be noted that members can collect Widows' and Orphans' benefits.

A maximum amount of assistance is available through this benefit to recipients each year. In addition, an allowance for each child under 18 years of age may be granted. All grants may be renewed annually. Recipients receive a renewal application one month prior to the anniversary date of the original application and each application is reviewed to determine continued eligibility.

**Contact Jane Visocan at [jvisocan@uct.org](mailto:jvisocan@uct.org) or at 800.848.0123 x1112 with questions or for assistance.**

### **FRATERNAL BENEVOLENT BENEFIT**

This benefit may provide financial assistance to members who become permanently physically or mentally incapacitated. Members must be totally disabled and must provide proof that their income isn't sufficient to provide the basic necessities for their family members in order to qualify. Individuals must be and remain UCT members in good standing in order to receive assistance.

Recipients cannot exceed a set maximum amount of assistance during any one year. In addition to the amount paid to the member, an allowance for a dependent spouse and/or for each dependent child under age 18 may be granted. Two members of the immediate family may collect full Fraternal Benevolent benefits. Benefits are renewed annually and applicants receive a renewal application one month prior to the anniversary date of the original application and each application is reviewed to determine continued eligibility.

**Contact Jane Visocan at [jvisocan@uct.org](mailto:jvisocan@uct.org) or at 800.848.0123 x1112 for more details about the benefit or to apply for assistance.**

### **DISASTER RELIEF BENEFIT**

This benefit provides a one-time per occurrence, per member, benefit from the UCT home office to help members who experience a disaster like a fire, flood, hurricane or tornado. It is designed to help cover the cost of food, clothing, shelter or other necessities in times of personal emergencies. A key criterion for eligibility is the member being forced from the home. The home office must be able to verify that any member requesting assistance is a UCT member in good standing at the time of the disaster.

**Contact Anita Neal at [aneal@uct.org](mailto:aneal@uct.org) or at 800.848.0123 x1100 to request disaster assistance. Please note that to be eligible for assistance members must request it from the home office within 72 hours of the disaster. Additional help might be available from the member's local council, and the local council secretary can verify this.**

## **PRODUCTS & SERVICES**

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Like many better known insurance companies UCT offers you affordable products to protect you and your families. Unlike most for-profit insurance companies, however, our non-profit status means that instead of paying dividends to shareholders, our insurance operations help support members' local community service efforts across the U.S. and Canada.

**More information about the products we provide can be found at [www.uct.org](http://www.uct.org) under Get Covered or by contacting Sales Director Bob Miller at [bmiller@uct.org](mailto:bmiller@uct.org) or at 800.848.0123 x1192.**

*Products available only in the U.S.*

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

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### **LOCAL COUNCIL REPORTS**

Local councils are required to complete several reports to be submitted to the UCT home office each year. The reports are mailed, emailed and available online through SIS. The information requested in the reports is necessary to ensure that UCT and its councils are financially compliant and retain tax-exempt status. The reports include:

**Local Council Activity Report – Due March 1**

**New Officers & Delegates to Regional Council Conventions – Due April 15**

**Local Council Financial Reports – Due July 1**

**The reports are self-explanatory, but feel free to contact Linda Fisher at [lfisher@uct.org](mailto:lfisher@uct.org) or at 800.848.0123 x1130 with any questions.**

### **LIABILITY INSURANCE FOR SPECIAL EVENTS**

When hosting a fundraiser or special event, local councils must have liability insurance, as such events are not covered under UCT's insurance. This is not difficult to obtain – and we can help you.

**Contact Accounting Manager Sonja Miller at [smiller@uct.org](mailto:smiller@uct.org) or at 800.848.0123 x1133 for assistance.**

## **CONTACT US**

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