



CHAPTER

CHAPTER LEADER MANUAL

OCTOBER 2024



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Chapter 1: Chapter Overview

Code Council Overview

The International Code Council is a member-focused association with more than 60,000 members. It is dedicated to developing model codes and standards used in the design, build and compliance process to construct safe, sustainable, affordable and resilient structures.

VISION: Creating safe, affordable, and sustainable buildings and communities.

MISSION: To provide the information, tools, and resources that members rely on, building safety professionals turn to, and the public trusts.

CORE VALUES: The International Code Council is the largest international association of building safety professionals. The Code Council is the trusted source of model codes and standards that establish the baseline for building safety globally and create a level playing field for builders and manufacturers. Code Council building safety solutions draw directly from the expertise we develop in authoring the international codes and standards and apply that to product evaluation, accreditation, certification, codification, training, and technology.

At the Code Council, we understand that cultivating a diverse and inclusive culture is essential to realizing our vision of a world where people unite and take action to create lasting change, to make our buildings safe and our communities more resilient. We value diversity and celebrate the contributions of people of all backgrounds, across age, ethnicity, national origin, race, physical ability, learning style, religion, faith, socioeconomic status, culture, marital or relationship status, language, sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity as well as differences in ideas, thoughts, values, and beliefs.

Recognizing that individuals from a range of human differences have historically experienced barriers to membership, participation, and leadership, we commit to advancing inclusion in all activities of the Code Council.

FAMILY OF SOLUTIONS:

The Code Council Family of Solutions combines the resources and expertise of several organizations to provide a complete range of support for our members, customers and stakeholders across the building safety industry. [LOGOS: International Code Council; ICC Evaluation Service (ES); S. K. Ghosh Associates; International Accreditation Service (IAS); General Code; NTA; Alliance for National & Community Resilience (ANCR); Community Development Solutions; American Legal Publishing]

Code Council Services

The International Code Council offers unmatched technical, educational and informational products and services in support of the International Codes, with hundreds of highly qualified staff members at offices throughout the United States.

- **MEMBER SERVICES:** Though chapter membership is not necessarily contingent on Code Council membership, the two are designed to be mutually beneficial. Code Council members include architects, engineers, builders, contractors, government officials, manufacturers and others interested in the code enforcement industry. For a detailed list of member benefits and to access a Code Council membership application, click [here](#).
- **CREDENTIALING:** The Code Council's Credentialing Program is the oldest, largest and most prestigious professional certification program in the U.S. for construction code administration and enforcement. It provides a nationally recognized credential that attests to comprehensive knowledge of construction codes and standards used by professional code enforcement personnel. For more information, click [here](#).

- **TRAINING:** The Training Department allows you to identify relevant code training events, track CEUs, maintain credentials, and even learn about the steps needed for earning specific certifications. You can also access training and education in a variety of formats that suit your learning style and schedule. Click [here](#) to visit the Training Department.
- **PREFERRED PROVIDER PROGRAM:** The Preferred Provider Program focuses on training opportunities offered by various categories of Code Council-approved education providers which collectively form the Code Council Preferred Provider Network (PPN). The Program recognizes and promotes Code Council -approved educational offerings by a variety of providers as they relate to codes, standards and guidelines, as well as building construction materials, products and methods. Click here to learn about your chapter becoming a Preferred Provider.

Code Council Chapter Types

The Code Council is supported by more than 400 chapters spread throughout the country and around the world. Chapters are designated as Regional, State, Local, Professional, Student or Global depending on the geographical area they serve and the nature of their membership. Every chapter is different; many chapters focus on a particular discipline such as Building, Fire, Mechanical or Plumbing. Learn more about chapters, chapter responsibilities or how to become a chapter by reading [Council Policy CP#10-04](#).

Following are the types of Chapters

- **Regional chapters** shall represent all chapters established within the geographical boundaries of one of the 12 designated regions and serve as the coordinating body.
- **State chapters** shall represent jurisdictions that enforce or administer codes within the geographical area of the state/province. State chapters require 50 Code Council members, of which at least 25 must be Code Council Governmental (jurisdictional) members.
- **Local chapters** shall represent jurisdictions that enforce or administer codes in a geographic area smaller than that of a state. Local chapters require 20 Code Council members, of which at least 10 must be Code Council Governmental (jurisdictional) members.
- **Professional chapters** shall represent individuals from any geographic area whose profession or business will benefit from participation in Code Council activities. Professional chapters require 20 Code Council members, of which at least 10 must be Building Safety Professional members.
- **Student chapters** shall represent students whose course of study will benefit from participation in Code Council activities. A Student chapter shall have a Regional, State, Local or Professional chapter as a sponsor.
- **Global chapters** shall represent chapters outside the United States. Global chapters require 20 Code Council members.

Chapter Responsibility

All chapters must submit an Annual Report each calendar year per [Council Policy CP#10-04](#) in order to remain in good standing and to qualify for chapter benefits. The report includes:

- A current list of chapter officers including address, phone number, and email address.
- The dates of annual or general membership meetings.
- Any changes in the chapter's constitution or bylaws since the last annual report.
- Any significant changes in the geographical area served by the chapter.
- Current number of chapter members.
- The number of Code Council members within the chapter membership.
- The year the organization was established.

Annual Reports can be submitted beginning in early January and at any time of each calendar year. The chapter qualifies for its annual benefits upon submission of an Annual Report. However, it is important to note that chapter benefits expire at the end of each calendar year. To submit an Annual Report, follow [these steps](#).

Chapter Benefits

Chapters in good standing receive many benefits. In addition, a chapter can qualify for rewards points that can be redeemed for select Code Council products and services.

- For a guide to viewing your chapter benefits and rewards, click [here](#).
- For a summary of how to redeem your chapter benefits and rewards, click [here](#).

The Chapter Annual Report is comprised of two parts; one part is mandatory, and one part is optional.

Part 1 of the Annual Report is mandatory. Upon completion, you receive your chapter annual benefits:

- Complimentary registration for the Chapter President (or designated officer) to the Code Council Annual Conference OR complimentary travel and registration to the Chapter Leadership Academy.
- Chapter Education Benefit, which consists of an education credit to be used for one complimentary day of training through an Code Council Preferred Provider (valued up to \$1,200) or one day of training from the Code Council.

Part 2 of the Annual Report is optional. If completed, you qualify for chapter rewards points and can submit for consideration as Chapter of the Year, which is part of the Code Council's Annual Awards Program:

- Chapter of the Year Nomination – Must be submitted by March 15th for consideration.
- Chapter Rewards Program – Earn points that can be redeemed toward the purchase of select Code Council products and services.

Other benefits include the following:

- Chapter Discounts: All chapters receive 20 percent off member prices on designated Code Council products for bulk orders shipped and billed to the chapter. Chapters can also receive discounts when contracting a Code Council seminar or purchasing Code Council chapter membership in bulk.
- Use of the Code Council Chapter logo: See details in Chapter 8 of this manual for more information.

For a full description of chapter benefits, [click here](#).

Chapter 2: Chapter Formation

Chapter Application Requirements

To request recognition as a Code Council chapter, you must submit a [Chapter Application](#). The online application process requires the following information:

- Chapter name and primary contact information
- Desired Chapter Status
- Elected Officers
- Names, addresses and Code Council member numbers (as applicable) of all chapter members
 - This information is required to determine if the chapter has the minimum number of Code Council members
- Constitution/Bylaws
- Resolution
- Area Covered and Primary Discipline
- Statement of Purpose
- Chapter Meeting Details

Chapter applications are reviewed according to criteria established in [Council Policy CP#10-04](#). Chapters that meet the minimum requirements are granted chapter status at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

If you have questions about the chapter application process, please reach out to Ron Piester, Vice President of Membership and Strategic Engagement, at rpiester@iccsafe.org.

Chapter Bylaws

Chapter Bylaws describe the relationship between the members and the working groups within the chapter, among other governance considerations. Before drafting its Bylaws, a chapter should first review [Code Council's Bylaws](#), because a chapter's bylaws and purpose cannot be in conflict with the [Code Council Bylaws](#) and purpose. Next, review the sample Chapter Bylaws for additional ideas. This will enable a chapter to include important issues while still tailoring the document to its own goals and objectives. It is recommended that each chapter have a licensed attorney review its bylaws for state requirements. See Chapter 8 of this manual for more information.

A Chapter's Bylaws should address the following:

- Chapter name
- Chapter purpose
- Membership
 - Who is eligible for membership
 - How to become a member
 - Types of membership
- Officers
- Description of governing body
- Terms of office
- Elections and Meetings

- Election procedures
- Filing of vacancies
- Removal from office
- Amendments

Chapter Policies

Chapter policies are typically established and maintained under the purview of chapter officers and boards. They differ from the bylaws in that they do not require membership approval by vote, and they are concerned with implementation, rather than organization. Policies may cover such issues as specific responsibilities, job descriptions, authority for expenditures, formation and dissolution of committees, etc.

Chapter 3: Order and Leadership

Chapter Order

Chapters require structure and purpose to function effectively. A few tips on maintaining chapter order:

- Identify main functions of the chapter – to give the members purpose.
- Structure the chapter to carry out its functions – clearly define the roles and responsibilities of the **chapter** officers, key chapter events and involvement throughout the year.
- Create complete job descriptions for each office and job task – will written minutes be taken or will you record the meeting? Who will be responsible for the minutes or the audio/visual recording?

One method used by chapter leaders to evaluate the success of their organization is a chapter Profile Log, which documents:

- Criteria for decision making by responsible parties.
- The purpose and process of conducting meetings.
- A yearly source of organized, quick reference materials about the chapter's activities and services and the outcomes.
- A historical chart that cites events and lessons learned.
- A summary document that highlights "need to know" information that makes the decision-making process simpler.

Chapter Officer Duties

Chapter Officers must conduct the chapter in accordance with the [Code Council bylaws](#) and the chapter's bylaws. There is often a natural progression in the chapter leader positions. Usually, the secretary/treasurer eventually becomes the vice president, then the president of the organization. It is extremely important that the chapter leader becomes familiar with all the chapter officer's duties, functions and unique stresses of the different officer positions.

President - The chapter president is the general manager of all parts of the chapter in reaching the chapter's goals. It is the president's duty to appoint appropriate people to committees. The chapter president oversees each project to guide all parts of the chapter in the same direction and must be able to manage many different tasks effectively and efficiently.

The president should not simultaneously hold the office of treasurer. Appropriate checks and balances require that the decision-maker is not also handling the money for an organization.

The president facilitates, but the board decides what objectives the chapter must accomplish (e.g., educational, fundraising). The president must anticipate problems with accomplishing those goals and be prepared to circumvent potential problems. Duties include:

- Making decisions
 - Establish objectives
 - Define tasks
 - Set deadlines
 - Follow up/Evaluation
- Setting priorities considering established objectives and priorities
- Delegating workload

Vice President – The vice president should assume the duties of the president in the absence of the president or in case of an emergency. The vice president should also assist the president in the conduct of the office of president. The vice president should have similar qualifications to that of the president.

Secretary/Treasurer – The secretary keeps accurate minutes and records in a meeting and maintains correspondence. The treasurer receives and controls funds and supervises financial affairs in general. In some chapters, the office of secretary/treasurer is held by the same individual, while other chapters separate the two offices.

Chapter Leadership

Effective leadership encompasses several elements:

- **Planning** is essential to the future of a chapter. As an officer, you should establish and work towards chapter goals and objectives. Leadership also develops policies and procedures for future officers and members. Chapter leaders should identify the resources necessary for task accomplishment (i.e., people, time, money, material) and determine their availability to establish deadlines.
- **Organizing** includes all activities that make goals and plans a reality. Leaders must bring together all the chapter's resources in the most efficient and effective way to achieve the goals and objectives set forth by the chapter. Establishing a clear list of tasks and responsibilities and a good communications system is also key to a successful chapter.
- **Motivating chapter** members can be difficult. Leaders must consider different member's perceptions and bring them together under a common purpose. It's important to meet the needs of both individual chapter members and the chapter as a whole. Coaching, training, empowerment and recognition all motivate members to remain active in a chapter.
- **Delegation** is crucial to a chapter leader. A leader must know what is expected of his or her resources, when it is expected and how to best employ resources to obtain the desired results. This means assigning work in a planned and thoughtful manner.

Chapter Membership

The foundation of a Code Council chapter is its membership. As a leader of a chapter, it is important to determine spectrum of code enforcement disciplines and construction industry interests that exist within the chapter. The goals and activities of a chapter should meet the needs and interests of all represented groups.

Membership needs are met in several ways:

- Finding value in chapter programs
- Opportunities to participate in chapter activities
- Receiving high-quality information from leaders in a timely manner
- Opportunities to network with their peers
- Benefits of membership outweigh the costs
- Finding a sense of belonging to the organization
- Receiving excellent support from the Code Council

You can assess membership needs in several ways:

- Conduct a Chapter Survey, so members can provide suggestions and feedback. Several online resources can be used to create and send free online surveys.
- Conduct a member forum to assess members' reactions to programs and chapter operations.

- Invite chapter members to attend board meetings. Including them in Board meetings allows members the opportunity to offer observations about the chapter's goals, activities and performance.
- Investigate the programming and services offered by other chapters to identify needs that could be provided by the chapter.
- Create meeting or training evaluation forms for chapter events and activities.

Membership Recruitment

When trying to recruit new chapter members, a chapter should consider a few individual questions:

- Who or what got you involved with your chapter?
- What keeps you involved with your chapter?
- What is your chapter doing right?
- What would happen if the chapter didn't exist?

These questions help to determine the value the chapter offers to current and future members. Current members should use their strengths to recruit new members with education, events and communications. Showing those new to the profession the value and importance of chapter involvement can help in recruiting new members.

A chapter can offer orientation to the career and chapter, networking opportunities and mentoring opportunities. New chapter members contribute a fresh perspective, creative ideas and improvements upon chapter best practices.

Chapter Finances

Every chapter approaches maintenance of finances differently. Some chapters operate using traditional methods, while others track finances electronically. As mentioned above, the office of the Treasurer is responsible for collecting dues, tracking chapter expenses and record keeping. All chapter funds should be used to benefit its members and the mission of the chapter.

TAX STATUS/INCORPORATION: Learn more about incorporation and tax status in Chapter 8 of this manual.

UPDATES: The Treasurer provides a financial report at each chapter meeting, so members are aware of the chapter's financial activities and status.

RECORD KEEPING:

The following list of the files are typically necessary in maintaining the chapter's finances.

- Past Treasurer's Reports
- Audit Reports
- Documentation of bank activity
- Checkbooks and ledgers
- Tax Documents and Records
- Public Service
- Financial Statements

Succession Planning

Succession planning is needed at every level to ensure that the organization's flow of operation is uninterrupted. It guarantees that incoming leaders are informed of the work of predecessors. This planning keeps the chapter focused on completion of stated goals and objectives.

The best time to begin thinking about your successor is when you take on the job of chapter leader. From the beginning, you should establish and maintain orderly files that can be easily transferred and understood by someone unfamiliar with the position. As you work with your chapter officers and membership, assess their strengths as potential successors. You may be asked for recommendations for your successor. You should hold a formal transition meeting with your successor once they are chosen.

PLAN AS A CHAPTER:

- Does your chapter have a vision/mission?
- Are clear job descriptions in place for each major chapter position?
- Is there a system for frequent reward and recognition?
- Does your chapter have short- and long-term goals, and a method to review and adapt them?

PLAN AT THE SMALL GROUP LEVEL:

- Does your chapter have a transition meeting or process between old and new officers?
- Does the chapter have an effective recording method allowing successors to review previous actions and events?
- Are leaders dividing job responsibilities among members to encourage member involvement?
- Does the chapter have short- and long-term goals and a method to review and adapt them?
- Is there a method for changing chapter processes when needed?
- Are there a variety of ways for members to get involved? Does chapter leadership promote participation whenever possible?
- Does your chapter encourage membership in the international organization?
- Is there support for chapter leaders to attend Code Council's Annual Conference?
- Are leaders delegating responsibilities and recognizing volunteers?
- Does your chapter have a New Member Orientation to get new members engaged?

Chapter 4: Meetings and Events

Chapter Meetings

Planning an effective meeting requires preparation and evaluation of the needs of the chapter. Each chapter establishes the best meeting frequency, dates and times based on the needs of the membership. A few tips for planning a successful meeting:

- **Consider the outcome** – how will you measure the success of this meeting? What would you like to accomplish? Be sure you can state this clearly, preferably in one sentence.
- **Set the agenda and time frame** – What needs to be covered? How long does each agenda item need to take? List the items in proper order so that the least important item has the least amount of time and is toward the end of the meeting when people may be distracted or tired.
- **Determine what kind of record you will keep** – will written minutes be taken or will you record the meeting? Who will be responsible for the minutes or the audio/visual recording?
- **End the meeting effectively** - Repeat any decisions that were made, conclusions that were reached, problems that were solved and assignments that were given. Make sure the minutes are distributed within 48 hours.

When you may not need to meet:

- When a decision by a responsible party will do.
- When the reason for meeting is unclear.
- When key people (officers, speakers, etc.) are unavailable.
- When critical data are unavailable.

What should be included on an agenda?

The meeting agenda should include the meeting date, time and location and state what type of meeting will be held. The agenda should state specific meeting objectives and tell participants what information or materials to review to prepare for the meeting. Meeting topics should be listed with a time limit in a logical order and include the presenter's name. Keep the length of the agenda reasonable. Higher priority items should be placed earlier in the agenda. The agenda should be distributed at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting.

Chapter Education

Chapter education can be combined with regular chapter meetings or held separately. Chapter education is determined by what members want and what the chapter can afford. Chapter members want training that is affordable, applicable to their job and conveniently located. Surveys are a good tool in determining what the chapter member wants in this area.

- **Use your Continuing Education Benefit:** Though chapter membership is not necessarily contingent on Code Council membership, the two are designed to be mutually beneficial. Code Council members include architects, engineers, builders, contractors, government officials, manufacturers and others interested in the code enforcement industry. For a detailed list of member benefits and to access an Code Council membership application, [click here](#).
- **Become a Code Council Preferred Provider:** The [Preferred Provider Program](#) focuses on training opportunities offered by various categories of Code Council -approved education Providers, as identified in Section 1.6, which collectively form the Code Council Preferred Provide Network (PPN). The Program recognizes and promotes Code Council -approved educational offerings by a variety of Providers as they relate to codes, standards and guidelines, as well as building construction materials, products and methods. [Click here](#) to learn about becoming a PPP as a chapter.

- **Plan your own education event:** Open your education events to the public to invite those who may not be in your chapter to participate. If using your chapter benefit, some chapters provide the training to chapter members for a small fee for lunch and charge other attendees a registration fee.

Chapter Meeting Requests

If a chapter would like Code Council representation at one of their meetings or events, an officer can submit a chapter Meeting Request. Chapters are encouraged to submit requests at least 60 days in advance of the event. The Code Council aims to confirm attendance 4-6 weeks prior to the chapter event when possible.

Chapter Officers can find the online Chapter Meeting Request form in the chapters area of [myICC](#) under "Manage Chapter." Remember to include the role you want the guest to play and any additional information on the schedule of events or lodging.

Chapter Outreach Events

Outreach events are a great way to get involved in the community and spread the word about your chapter. Here are a few steps to get started:

- Recruit a team from your chapter who will commit to participating in the event.
- Gather your team to decide whom you want to reach and what you want to do for your event. Consider the following possible target audiences:
 - Civic/Community groups (Chambers of Commerce, Kiwanis, Jaycees, Rotary, Toastmasters, etc.)
 - Students/Future Code Officials
 - Government officials
 - Homebuilders' associations
 - Homeowners' associations
 - Real estate agents
- Select relevant materials to share at your event that fits your audience or communities:
 - Code Council Brochures
 - Tip sheets on disaster mitigation, fire safety, pool safety and sustainable buildings
 - Videos
- Identify an organizational contact and reach out to them 60-90 days prior to the event if you want to host an event at their location. If you are tabling at a local hardware store or want to participate in a career fair, determine the right person to contact about your event. Send them a brochure and provide the following details:
 - Title of Event
 - Day/Date/Time
 - Purpose – Public education and awareness about building safety.
 - Who – tell them who is hosting the event and who will participate.
 - What – Tell them what you will hand out.
 - Ask – Your local home improvement retailer to donate an item to raffle during your event.
 - Contact Information – Give them your name, email address and phone number.

- Send an announcement to your chapter and other associated groups at least 30 days prior to the event to recruit volunteers and bolster attendance. Send or arrange for an announcement one week prior as well.
- Post your event details chapter website and other local websites as soon as you confirm your plans. Post about the event on your social media pages in the weeks and days leading up to the event.
- Prepare an announcement about your event and give it to your organizational contact. Ask them to advertise the event.
- Be sure to take pictures at the event and email them to photos@iccsafe.org.
- Send a thank you note to those who helped plan the event.

Chapter 5: Best Practices

Recruitment and Mentorship

Chapters require structure and purpose to function successfully. A few tips on maintaining chapter order:

- **Ask chapter officers to identify potential future leaders once a year** – to encourage mentoring between chapter members and plan for the future of the chapter.
- **Encourage chapter members to bring coworkers or friends in the building industry to events and meetings** – clearly define the roles and responsibilities of the chapter officers, key chapter events and involvement throughout the year.
- **Utilize social media, both as officers and as chapter members** – choose a platform (Facebook, X, LinkedIn, etc.) to communicate with members, and stick to it! See chapter 6 of this manual for more information.
- **Set up an internship or mentorship program** – to build connections and commitment within your chapter. Connect seasoned professionals with those who are new to the building safety industry. You can also sign up to become a mentor through the Code Council [Member Community](#).
- **Provide education and training to those outside of your chapter** – by allowing the public to attend any education or trainings you put on throughout the year.

Chapter Engagement Opportunities

Officers of chapters have the duty to conduct the chapter in accordance with the Code Council bylaws and that chapter's bylaws. There is often a natural progression in the chapter leader positions.

Building Safety Month - Building Safety Month (BSM) is a public awareness campaign celebrated by jurisdictions worldwide during the month of May. Chapters can learn more about the campaign and ways to get involved by clicking [here](#).

Code Development Process – Our members shape the codes that ensure health, safety and welfare of the people who live in, work in and visit the communities they serve. Encourage your chapter to get involved in the Code Development Process. Check out more information on Code Development [here](#).

Membership Councils – Membership Councils offer Code Council members a place to come together and be a more powerful force shaping your organization, your industry, your career, and your future. There are seven discipline-specific Membership Councils that serve to take your membership and profession to the next level. Share your expertise, voice, and vision with your peers – learn more [here](#).

Give Back

There are several ways for your chapter to give back to chapter members, the community and the industry:

- **Establish a scholarship fund** for chapter members to attend Code Council events or to support education within your community.
- **Plan community activities** to spread the word on building safety. Table at your local hardware store or attend a nearby career fair.
- **Visit a local school to teach the next generation about the importance of building codes.** Encourage a local school to implement the Code Council's Technical Training Program (TTP). To learn more about starting the program, visit the [TTP webpage](#).
- **Set up a chapter awards or recognition program** to acknowledge members of your chapter that invest in the members of the chapter and/or get involved in the community.

- **Spread the word about Safety 2.0.** Safety 2.0 is the Code Council's signature initiative to welcome a new generation of members and leaders to the building safety profession. Safety 2.0 includes robust portfolio of resources to help young and new people to our industry understand the many career opportunities in building safety. For more information about Safety 2.0, click [here](#).

Chapter Connections

One of the best ways to strengthen your chapter is by building relationships throughout the industry. Personal connections are just one of so many great resources leaders can use to run a chapter.

Talk with other Code Council chapter Leaders: If there are other chapters within proximity to your group, reach out to their leadership. Ask other chapters about how they operate, what events they hold and how they recruit new members. Attend the chapter Presidents Meeting at the Code Council's [Annual Conference](#) or our [Chapter Leadership Academy](#) to easily connect with other chapter leaders.

Connect with local chapters from other organizations: Several of the Code Council's Strategic Partners also have chapters throughout the country. Research local chapters of other organizations and learn more about their mission and activities.

Code Adoptions/Legislation

Code Council chapters play an important role in the code adoption and code legislation process. Chapters can collaborate with the Code Council Government Relations Department to support the adoption and use of the highest quality codes, standards, products and services of the Code Council and its Family of Companies. Here are a few ways to get involved:

Get in touch with your Code Council Government Relations Team

Representative: Visit the [Chapters & Board/Staff Liaison Map](#) to determine your Board and Staff Liaison for your state.

Learn about your state: Visit our [Code Adoption Map](#) to learn which codes are used in your state and learn about key contacts and state adoption agencies.

Use our Code Adoption Resources: The [Code Adoption Resources](#) include briefing papers on technical issues, samples of ordinances, endorsements and support materials from national organizations.

Learn about Federal Grant opportunities: The Code Council has a wealth of information to assist you in understanding how Federal Grants can support your communities, what types of grants are available and how to apply for Federal Grants. To learn more, click [here](#).

Chapter 6: Social Media

Overview

Social media is an excellent tool for chapters looking to increase membership numbers, communicate with current members, and raise public awareness about the work of code officials and the importance of building safety. However, it can be time consuming to run a social media account, and the rules and lingo sometimes seem like a foreign language.

Whether you are new to social media or have been running an account for a while, the tips below will help you optimize your messaging and take your online communications to the next level.

The materials provided include best practices for the following:

- How to get started (if you're new to social media)
- When to post
- What to post
- Where to post
- How to increase your following and engagement

If you have questions or need additional help, reach out to communications@iccsafe.org.

Tip #1 – Make a Plan

Whether your chapter has had a Facebook page for 5 years or if you're starting one for the first time, it's important to have a plan for what content you will share, how you will collect that content, and who will share it.

- **Identify your content producers.** Who from your chapter will collect and post content on your accounts? This doesn't need to be just one person. Having multiple content collectors can help overcome potential pitfalls like overtasking, unexpected sicknesses and job changes. However, you should identify one person to manage the team.
- **Determine how much time you have to commit to social media.** Be realistic when putting your plan together and encourage others to pitch in with ideas and content. Even though only a few people will be on the social media team, everyone can send ideas.
- **Pick your sites.** "Social media" entails a number of different potential sites including Facebook, X, LinkedIn, YouTube and Instagram. Do a little research to see which site(s) are used most frequently with the audiences you want to reach. For example, ask your members at a chapter meeting which sites they use most often.
- **Watch and learn.** Review what other chapters and organizations are doing on their accounts. This is a great way to figure out what you don't like and to find new ideas.
- **Jump in!** Now, it's time to really get started! Don't be scared to jump right in. With social media, it's all about learning from your past posts and constantly improving.

Tip #2 – Post Regularly

Consistency on social media is extremely important. Building your audience, and then keeping them there, is essential to your success. Choose a posting schedule and stick with it.

- Best practices are to post to **Facebook** 3-5 times a week, which leads to more clicks per post. We know this can be difficult for people with busy schedules. Therefore, our suggestion is to post to Facebook at least twice a week.
- According to Track Social, you need to tweet enough to get noticed. The best practices for **Twitter** are to post 3-5 times a day for the most engagement. Our suggestion: on the weekdays, post one tweet daily.

- Best practices are to post to **LinkedIn** once daily. Our suggestion: post to LinkedIn at least three times a week.
- **Pro Tip:** To optimize your time spent, create a social media plan and calendar. Use a dashboard such as Hootsuite or Sprout Social to schedule posts for all your accounts and to allow multiple account managers to work together.

Tip #3 – Share Photos and Videos

Research from the Social Media Examiner advocates for the use of visuals within social media posts. Visuals including photos, videos, gifs and other interactive content reinforce the message and optimize the engagement and click rate of your posts.

We suggest using the following images:

- Take and post photos of the **attendees** at your chapter’s regular meetings and special events.
- Take short videos of your **members** talking about the importance of building safety.
- If you have a **speaker**, take photos and post a video of the speaker’s presentation.
- Share a photo or video of your **Chapter President** speaking during an event.
- **Share your chapter logo.** Example post: We are proud to be a Code Council chapter serving our community and promoting building safety. [Attach your chapter’s logo and include a link to your chapter website.]
- **Pro tip:** You can take decent photos and videos with most cell phones today. Many cell phones come with basic photo and video editing software that allows you to make minor changes right on your phone.

Tip #4 – Increase your following

Once you’re comfortable with the basics, your focus should be on increasing your number of followers. The more people who subscribe or “follow” your account, the more chances you have to get your messages in front of new people.

- Let people know where to follow your chapter online by including your social media accounts on all your **print materials** as well as on your chapter website.
- Add links to your social media accounts in **your email signature**.
- Encourage your friends, **family and colleagues** to follow your accounts.
- Share your chapter’s posts on your **personal accounts** to give them greater reach.
- Ask other Code Council chapters and **other organizations** to follow your account and share your content on their pages. Do the same for them!
- **Measure your engagement.** See what types of posts your audience responds well to by looking at the post metrics, which are available for free on most sites. Focus on posting those types of messages more often in the future. For example, does your audience like news articles from your local paper? Alternatively, they may respond best to messages from your chapter president. You will only know for sure if you pay attention to the metrics.

Tip #5 – Proofread, proofread, PROOFREAD!

Don’t forget to proofread all your posts before you press “send.” Reread your posts an extra time to ensure it is comprehensible to your followers. To be careful, run everything through spell check before posting. Failure to proof your social media content can reduce your credibility with your followers. Maintain your professionalism and credibility in all your online interactions by proofing your posts.

Chapter 7: Chapter Website Benefit

Website Benefit Overview

The Code Council knows how important websites are for our chapters. It is the first place people go to learn about you! That is why the Code Council provides a valuable benefit to help you to create your own customized website that coordinates with your status as a Code Council chapter.

We've contracted with KWSM, a premier digital marketing agency, to work with you to personalize your template. KWSM will also provide regular maintenance to the website and minor changes as needed.

The website template we've developed in conjunction with KWSM is modern, clean and easy to use. It will help you expand your online outreach to new members and communities within your region.

If you are interested in this benefit, here are a few things you should know:

- You'll need to continue paying for your website domain. Those costs won't change, but you won't need to pay for your own web hosting.
- The International Code Council pays for the template creation and maintenance as well as the master hosting account. We also pay half the monthly maintenance costs for each chapter website. Additional work you need done above and beyond the main template is the responsibility of the chapter.
- After your website is created, you will be responsible for updating it with new events, jobs and blog posts.

To learn more about the chapter website benefit, [click here](#).

Chapter 8: Governance and Compliance Considerations

Disclaimer

The contents of this Section, including all opinions and other postings, are offered for informational purposes only and should not be construed as legal or tax advice. Review of this material does not create an attorney-client relationship. You should consult directly with an attorney or accountant for individual advice regarding your particular situation.

Overview

Chapters play an integral part in supporting and promoting the mission and goals of the Code Council. These chapters, however, are completely separate entities from the Code Council and are free to incorporate and govern themselves in a number of ways. The only requirements imposed by the Code Council are those listed in [Council Policy CP#10-04](#), which are described in Chapter 2 of this manual.

Beyond these requirements, chapters enjoy significant autonomy. The following informational tips can serve as a starting point for your chapter's major governance and compliance considerations, including the initial incorporation process, the development of your chapter's Bylaws and policies, the fiduciary responsibilities of chapter leaders, and maintaining compliance with state and federal requirements.

Tip #1 – Options and Steps for Non-profit Incorporation

Choosing Your Entity: Most chapters are incorporated as non-profit organizations. There are 29 types of 501(c) non-profit entities (all with different requirements), but the following three are the most common types for chapter incorporation:

- 501(c)(3) – public charity organizations
- 501(c)(4) – social welfare organizations
- 501(c)(6) – membership organizations and business leagues

The following resources can assist you in determining which type of 501(c) non-profit entity is the right choice for your chapter:

- Publication 557: Tax-Exempt Status for Your Organization (IRS.gov): <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p557.pdf>
- How to Start a Nonprofit (National Council of Nonprofits): <https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/running-nonprofit/how-start-nonprofit>
- Tax Information for Charities & Other Non-Profits (IRS.gov): <https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits>

Steps to Incorporate: Nonprofit tax-exempt organizations require organization and incorporation at the state level, followed by filing for tax-exempt status at the federal level.

State Incorporation: Some of the requirements to become a Code Council chapter, such as the finalized name of the chapter, the Chapter Bylaws, and the list of Officers, may also be requirements to become a non-profit in your state. However, as a general rule, the required filings to form a nonprofit organization and achieve state tax-exemption **vary by state**. This [resource](#), prepared by Hurwit & Associates, can assist you in understanding your state's specific incorporation and registration requirements.

Federal Filings: Once the chapter is formed and filed with the state, your chapter will have the opportunity to file for tax exemption at the federal level. However, there are a number of steps your chapter must undertake **beforehand**. This IRS resource can guide you through these preliminary requirements. Depending on the type

of 501(c) organization your chapter selects, you may then make the required Federal filings to achieve Federal tax exemption. The following resources can assist you in preparing these filings:

- Applying for Tax Exempt Status (IRS.gov): <https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/applying-for-tax-exempt-status>
- Publication 557: Tax-Exempt Status for Your Organization (IRS.gov): <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p557.pdf>
- How to Start a Nonprofit – Step 4: Filing for Federal Tax-Exempt Status (National Council of Nonprofits): <https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/running-nonprofit/how-start-nonprofit/how-start-nonprofit-step-4-filing-federal-tax-exempt-status>

It is recommended that your chapter seek independent tax or legal advice in preparing and filing the necessary incorporation and tax-exempt paperwork.

Tip #2 – Corporate Governance Policies for chapters

What is Nonprofit Corporate Governance and how does it apply to a Code Council chapter? It's the Board's leadership role to oversee, control, and influence the current and future shape and course of the chapter.

Bylaws: Your Chapter's Bylaws are legally binding rules that govern your chapter and outline how the chapter's Board of Directors will function. For your chapter to run effectively, your Chapter's Bylaws should comply with state law, and your chapter's Board of Directors should adhere to those Bylaws. The following resource, provided by BoardSource, provides an overview of nonprofit bylaws and the provisions and topics that should be addressed within them: <https://boardsource.org/resources/bylaws/>

Corporate Governance Practices: Once the chapter is formed, it is required to keep record of certain matters, including but not limited to Board meeting minutes, appropriate financial/accounting data, and an updated roster of chapter board members and officers. For further information on required and recommended corporate governance practices, please see the following resources:

- *Recommended Governance Practices* (BoardSource): <https://boardsource.org/recommended-board-practices/>
- *Good Governance Policies for Nonprofits* (National Council of Nonprofits): <https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/running-nonprofit/governance-leadership/good-governance-policies-nonprofits>

Again, it is recommended that your chapter seek independent tax or legal advice in developing your Chapter's Bylaws and corporate governance policies.

Tip #3 – Fiduciary Duties of Chapter Leaders

The Board of Directors serves as the governing body of your chapter and provides oversight and influence for the direction and goals of the chapter. Though the responsibilities of board members vary from state-to-state, every non-profit board member will generally have three fundamental fiduciary duties:

- Duty of Care
- Duty of Loyalty
- Duty of Obedience

For further information on these and other fiduciary responsibilities of Board members, please see the [Board Roles and Responsibilities](#) from the National Council of Nonprofits.

Tip #4 – Staying in Compliance

Once your chapter is incorporated, your officers are elected, and business is under way, it is important to always be cognizant of annual compliance. Chapter leaders should always keep in mind the following tips:

- **Stay in compliance by making the proper annual state and federal filings!** Each state and the IRS can fine you for your failure to make the proper filings and can ultimately revoke your corporate standing and/or tax-exempt status if neglected for too long.

- **State filing requirements** vary substantially depending on the state that your chapter incorporates in. This resource, prepared by Hurwit & Associates, can assist you in understanding your state's specific annual filing and disclosure requirements.
- **Federal filing requirements** vary depending on the type of 501(c) organization your chapter incorporates as. The following IRS resources provide detailed information on required federal filings and any other compliance requirements:
 - ◇ *Compliance Guide for Tax-Exempt Organizations (other than 501(c)(3))* (IRS.gov): <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p4221nc.pdf>
 - ◇ *Compliance Guide for 501(c)(3) Public Charities* (IRS.gov): <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p4221pc.pdf>
 - ◇ *Stay Exempt (IRS.gov) for 501(c)(3) Nonprofits*: <https://www.stayexempt.irs.gov/>.
 - ◇ *How to Stay Exempt* (IRS.gov): <https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/how-to-stay-exempt-1>
- **Abide by your Bylaws and governing documents!** As a chapter Leader, it is your fiduciary responsibility to follow the procedures imposed by your Chapter Bylaws, Articles of Incorporation, and any other governing documents or policies. Review your Chapter Bylaws regularly and ensure your meetings, elections, and other procedures comply with them.
- **Communicate!** It's too often that chapter leaders who are familiar with the compliance process do not relay the information to the incoming leadership as they rotate off. It is important to keep chapter leaders consistently informed as the organization evolves so that these vital but easily overlooked formalities do not get lost in the cracks.
- **Entrust Legal and/or Tax Counsel!** Although state and federal incorporation and tax filings are complicated, it is your legal responsibility as a chapter leader to ensure that these matters are properly addressed. Remember that there are professionals who specialize in these requirements that can assist you in maintaining compliance.

Tip #5 – Member and Chapter Logos

The Code Council makes available two types of logos for member and chapter use. Please note that in an effort to protect its intellectual property rights, the Code Council does not allow the use of its **corporate logo** by members, chapters, or any other non-Code Council entity without express permission.

Member Logo: Code Council members can access the member logo through their [myICC](#) account using the following instructions:

- Click [here](#) to access the sign-in page.
- Once you sign in, click the link entitled “Member Resources” in the left-hand menu, then open the “ICC Members Logo” tab.
- Review the Code Council Member Logo License agreement and scroll to the bottom of the page. If agreeable, click the link entitled “Click here to proceed” to accept the licensing agreement and agree to comply with its terms and conditions. You will then be directed to the Member Logo Request Form.
- Enter your information and click Submit.
- You will then have the option to select any of the four member logo options.

Chapter Logo: Code Council chapters can access one of the two chapter logos by contacting Deputy General Counsel Will Coffman at wcoffman@iccsafe.org.

Questions about Governance and Compliance Considerations?

Please direct them to: Will Coffman, Esq., Code Council Deputy General Counsel, wcoffman@iccsafe.org

Chapter 9: Code Council Member Voting Privileges

Full Voting Privileges

In accordance with Article III of the [Code Council Bylaws](#), only Governmental Members (via their validated Governmental Member Voting Representatives) and Honorary Members may vote on any issue at the Code Council's Annual Business Meeting. Further, validated Governmental Member Voting Representatives and Honorary Members may vote in the Code Council's Public Comment Hearings, Online Governmental Consensus Vote and points of order as dictated by [Council Policy CP#28-05](#).

Eligible Final Action Voters: Eligible Final Action voters include Code Council Governmental Member Voting Representatives and Honorary Members in good standing who have been confirmed by the Code Council in accordance with the Electronic Voter Validation System. Such confirmations are required to be revalidated each code development cycle. Eligible Final Action voters in attendance at the Public Comment Hearing and those participating in the Online Governmental Consensus Vote shall have one vote per eligible voter on all Codes. Individuals who represent more than one Governmental Member shall be limited to a single vote.

Limited Voting Privileges

All other Code Council members, including Corporate members and members in any of the Individual member categories, are afforded the ability to vote on Points of Order at all hearings. These Limited Voting Privileges derive from [Council Policy CP#28-05](#).

Points of Order: Any person participating in the public hearing may challenge a procedural ruling of the Moderator. A majority vote of Code Council members in attendance shall determine the decision.

Members with Multiple Employees

In the case of Governmental or Corporate members, it is important to note that the Code Council member is the entity as a whole and not a particular individual or employee. Because these "entity members" house multiple employees, their voting and membership Privileges are slightly more complex.

Governmental Members

As stated in Section 5.4.7 of [Council Policy CP#28-05](#) (referenced above), the general rule is that each Code Council member is entitled to one vote. However, there is an exception that each Governmental Member Voting Representative may vote on behalf of its Governmental member. This exception entitles Governmental members to multiple votes; it is the only membership category that is entitled to such. The remaining non-Governmental Member Voting Representative employees of a Governmental member, however, are not entitled to any voting privileges and are not considered individual Code Council members for the purpose of code development unless they pay for an individual membership themselves.

Corporate Members

Corporate members, like Individual members, are entitled to one vote. The Corporate Member Primary Contact designates an employee who votes on the corporation's behalf. The remainder of the corporation's employees are not entitled to any voting privileges and are not considered individual Code Council members for the purpose of code development unless they pay for an individual membership themselves.

Code Council Member Voting and Membership Privileges Guide

Definitions

Full Voting Privileges: The ability to vote in the Code Council's Annual Business Meeting, Public Comment Hearings, Online Governmental Consensus Vote and Points of Order at all hearings.

Limited Voting Privileges: The ability to vote on Points of Order at all hearings.

Summary of Voting Privileges of Specific Membership Categories

Governmental member:

- Full Voting Privileges.
- Multiple Votes. All validated Governmental Member Voting Representatives may vote on behalf of the Governmental member.

Honorary member:

- Full Voting Privileges.
- Entitled to one vote.

Corporate member:

- Limited Voting Privileges.
- Entitled to one vote. The voter is an employee of the Corporate member designated by the primary contact to vote on the Member's behalf.

Individual Code Council members (Building Safety Professional members, Participating members, Student members)

- Limited Voting Privileges.
- Entitled to one vote.

Selected Employees of a Governmental or Corporate member:

- No Voting Privileges but can testify and participate in discussion at the Committee Action and/or Public Comment Hearings.

Members of the General Public:

- No Voting Privileges but can testify and participate in discussion at the Committee Action and/or Public Comment Hearings.