



# Kiwanis®

## Proposed Bylaw Amendments and Proposed Resolutions

### What's the difference between a bylaw amendment and a resolution?

- A bylaw amendment proposes a change to the Kiwanis International bylaws regarding administrative issues of Kiwanis International and its clubs.\*
- A resolution proposes action relating to service matters, social concerns, or special initiatives. Resolutions may *not* be used to change the Kiwanis International bylaws.

A sample amendment and resolution are shown at the end of this document.

[Consult the Kiwanis International Bylaws](#)

[Consult one set of recently proposed amendments and resolutions](#)

### Who may submit proposed amendments or resolutions?

Proposed bylaw amendments or resolutions may be submitted by:

- A club by majority vote of its membership. Proposals cannot be accepted from a club board or an individual Kiwanian.
- A district by a majority vote of its board of trustees or its house of delegates.
- The Kiwanis International board.

### When are proposals due?

Submissions of proposed bylaw amendments or resolutions must be *received* (not postmarked) by Kiwanis International **no later than October 31** prior to the Kiwanis International Convention at which they will be considered. Postmark has no bearing on submission date.

Proposals may be sent by postal mail, fax or email. Send proposals to: Attention Executive Director, Kiwanis International, 3636 Woodview Trace, Indianapolis, IN 46268, or fax to 317.879.0204, or email to [governance@kiwanis.org](mailto:governance@kiwanis.org). *Note: If you send your proposal through postal mail, please use certified mail or some other traceable method.*

→ **“Don’t wait until the last minute to submit a bylaw amendment or resolution,”** cautions Barry Glazer, Kiwanis International’s parliamentarian and past president of the American Institute of Parliamentarians. “Begin working on it early to allow advance time to consult with the staff, parliamentarian, and any reviewing committees. They can provide advice as to whether the amendment is in the proper form, if the language is appropriate, if it addresses all relevant provisions, and potential problems with implementation. Last minute submissions usually do not permit opportunities for improving the final wording of your proposal.”

## How do I write a proposed amendment?

Drafting amendment proposals takes careful preparation.

- Include a clear statement of the basic **purpose or intention** of your proposal (what you hope it will accomplish), along with your **rationale** (key reasons) for proposing it. See the separate section below on *Statement of the Proposer’s Rationale* for further information.
- Indicate **which section(s) of the bylaws you propose to amend** and write **the exact wording of your proposal**. If your club or district needs help identifying the correct provision or finalizing the exact wording, Kiwanis International Staff can assist you; contact the Governance Specialist at [governance@kiwanis.org](mailto:governance@kiwanis.org). Allow 2-4 weeks *prior to the submission deadline* for such consultation.
- Consider **a reasonable effective date for implementation** of your proposal, keeping in mind whether additional processes must first be developed and put into place. State the effective date as part of your proposal.
- Consider any **financial ramifications or possible unintended consequences** of your proposal and, if necessary, revise the wording to account for these.
- Your club or district must **submit a letter in writing** (postal mail, fax, or email) informing Kiwanis International that it has adopted the proposal. Follow the sample format shown near the end of this document.
- The club or district should also **designate a member who is authorized to work with Kiwanis International on behalf of the club or district to make revisions** that may be recommended. This is a good practice because sometimes there is not enough time between recommendations from Kiwanis International and the next step in the process for a club or district to formally meet again and vote on recommended changes. Instead, the club or district may designate that a particular club member is authorized to approve changes on its behalf that are in keeping with the intention of its original proposal.

- **Submit your proposal as soon as possible but no later than October 31**, for consideration at the next Kiwanis International convention.

## **Statement of the proposer's rationale**

If your club or district is submitting an amendment proposal, it must include a few key points stating why the amendment is important; why delegates should adopt it; how it will improve Kiwanis growth, service, or the member experience; etc. Text should start with "The club [or district] advocates this amendment for the following reasons," with the reasons then stated in sentence format as bullet points. See the sample format below. Your rationale should be approximately 100 words or less *altogether*, and may be subject to editing by Kiwanis International for clarity, accuracy, and succinctness. ("The club advocates" line does not count toward the 100 word limit.)

### **Sample rationale:**

The club [or district] advocates this amendment for the following reasons:

- This change will....
- Members should have this option because....
- It also will help Kiwanis by....

*(Note: Your rationale does not need to start with these exact words or phrasing. They are just listed as helpful hints in your thought process.)*

This brief rationale will be included in the amendments booklet that eventually is shared with clubs. The booklet will also contain the rationale of the Kiwanis International board in supporting or opposing your proposal.

Your club or district may also submit a cover page explaining its rationale in greater detail; however, a 100-word version is needed with submission.

*Tip: Microsoft Word has a feature that will calculate the word count for you, but the instructions vary depending on which version of Word you have.*

## **How do I write a proposed resolution?**

Resolutions are simpler to construct than amendments. Simply state each of the key reasons for making the proposal as "Whereas" statements, then state what you want to ultimately accomplish in the "Therefore, be it resolved" clause. See the sample resolution at the end of this document.

## **What happens to proposals after they are submitted?**

After you've submitted your proposed bylaw amendment or resolution to Kiwanis International by the October 31 deadline, here's what happens:

- Staff acknowledges receipt of your proposal in writing (by postal mail, email, or fax).
- Staff verifies whether your submission is a proposed amendment or resolution and initially reviews the document for general format, content, and accuracy. Staff may give initial advice and suggestions to the proposer.
- The proposal is forwarded to the International Committee on Resolutions and Bylaws for more thorough review.

<p><b>If your proposal is a bylaw amendment:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The committee or the Kiwanis International board may contact your club or district for clarification or to offer guidance on how to form an amendment that more fully captures your intent. However, neither the committee nor the board has authority to change an amendment proposal unless the club or district agrees to the change.</li> </ul>	<p><b>If your proposal is a resolution:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The committee has the authority to accept, reject, edit, or combine any resolution proposals.</li> <li>• The committee and the Kiwanis International board determine which resolutions will be proposed and the final language of each.</li> </ul>
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- When the Kiwanis International board meets in mid-January, it determines whether to support, not support, or take no position on each proposal. Staff will inform your club or district of the board's position.

*Please note that assistance or advice from the Resolutions and Bylaws Committee or from Staff has no bearing on whether or not the board will ultimately support your proposal. The committee and Staff help ensure the wording and format of your proposal meets your stated intention, but cannot predict board support of that intention.*

- All bylaw amendment proposals from clubs or districts, as well as all resolution proposals approved by the Kiwanis International board, are included in the annual amendments and resolutions booklet and placed on the agenda for the House of Delegates at the next Kiwanis International convention.
- The annual amendments and resolutions booklet is made available to clubs on the Kiwanis website not later than 90 days prior to the convention at which the proposals will be considered. Clubs are notified via email.
- At the next Kiwanis International convention, your proposed bylaw amendment or resolution arrives on the floor of the House of Delegates.

- During the House of Delegates at the International convention:
  - Someone must move the adoption of your *bylaw amendment*. Moving adoption of your amendment may be done by a member of your club or district or by any other delegate. If no motion to adopt is received from the House of Delegates, the amendment will not be considered.
  - The Kiwanis International board moves adoption of each *resolution*.
- Delegates vote on each proposal moved for adoption. A simple majority vote is needed to adopt resolutions. Some bylaws amendments require a majority to pass, while others require a two-thirds vote, depending on which provisions are being amended.

## Questions?

If you have any questions, contact the Governance Specialist at the International Office:  
[governance@kiwanis.org](mailto:governance@kiwanis.org).

\* *Be aware that the Standard Form for Club Bylaws and the Standard Form for District Bylaws are under authority of the Kiwanis International board, not the House of Delegates at International Conventions. If your club or district wishes to propose a revision to either the Standard Form for Club Bylaws or the Standard Form for District Bylaws, it should do so by submitting a formal request to the Kiwanis International board, via either the Executive Director or Governance Specialist. Such request will then be considered by the International board as soon as possible and you will be advised of the outcome.*

## SAMPLE FORMAT FOR A PROPOSED AMENDMENT

*Note: If a proposal is being submitted by a district, revise the following fields as appropriate.*

The Kiwanis Club of \_\_\_\_\_ proposes to amend the Kiwanis International Bylaws, Article(s) \_\_\_\_, Section(s) \_\_\_\_, as shown below (or as attached).

Purpose/Intention: \_\_\_\_\_

Effective date: \_\_\_\_\_

Amend Article \_\_\_\_, Section \_\_.

**Current wording (example only):**

**ARTICLE VI. CLUB OPERATIONS**

**Section 9.** A club shall submit to Kiwanis International such reports as required by the Board of Trustees.

**Proposed new wording (example only):**

**ARTICLE VI. CLUB OPERATIONS**

**Section 9.** Each club shall report its membership figures to Kiwanis International on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.

*Note: Staff will add the correct cross-outs and underlining of specific words.*

The club advocates this amendment for the following reasons:

- (State as many relevant points as can be accommodated in approximately 100 words.)
- (Use complete sentences, in bullet format.)
- (See sample rationale in the instructions.)

We certify this proposed amendment was approved by a majority vote of our club at a meeting which included a quorum on \_\_\_\_\_ (date).

*Optional: We also certify that \_\_\_\_\_ (member's name) is authorized to make changes to this proposal, on behalf of the club as may be recommended by Kiwanis International, provided such changes are in keeping with the club's original intention.*

Kiwanis Club of \_\_\_\_\_

Club President: \_\_\_\_\_ Club Secretary: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

(If submitted by email, signatures are not required)

## SAMPLE FORMAT FOR A PROPOSED RESOLUTION

*Note: If a proposal is being submitted by a district, revise the following fields as appropriate.*

The Kiwanis Club of \_\_\_\_\_  
proposes the following resolution.

*The following example is from an actual past resolution, intended for example only:*

**WHEREAS** Kiwanis is a global organization of volunteers dedicated to changing the world, one child and one community at a time; and

**WHEREAS** many of Kiwanis' fellow service organizations have similar missions focused on making the world a better place for children; and

**WHEREAS** the Presidents of Kiwanis International, Rotary International, Lions International, and Optimist International met to discuss similarities and differences; and

**WHEREAS** it was agreed that we are all working to make our world a better place in which to live; and

**WHEREAS** it was agreed that working together on an international issue would allow our organizations to have more of an impact;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** Kiwanis International supports exploring collaboration with Rotary International, Lions International, and Optimist International on ways to serve the needs of children.

We certify this proposed resolution was approved by a majority vote of our club at a meeting which included a quorum on \_\_\_\_\_ (date).

*Optional: We also certify that \_\_\_\_\_ (member's name) is authorized to make changes to this proposal, on behalf of the club, as may be recommended by Kiwanis International, provided such changes are in keeping with the club's original intention.*

Kiwanis Club of \_\_\_\_\_

Club President: \_\_\_\_\_ Club Secretary: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

(If submitted by email, signatures are not required)