

## **Incorporation of a new Kiwanis club**

During the club organization process, the club opener should explain the importance of club incorporation. Many clubs do not realize that, even as a nonprofit organization, they are considered to be a business in the eyes of the state and that all members, as ‘business owners’ can be sued for their personal assets if the club is not incorporated. Once the club is incorporated, anyone filing suit against the club can only pursue the assets of the club, not members’ personal assets. This is why Kiwanis International strongly encourages all clubs to incorporate with the appropriate state or national authority within no more than one year from its charter date—the sooner, the better. (This applies to all clubs in the United States and Canada and may apply to clubs in other areas of the world, if incorporation is the normal process for businesses there.)

The basic process for club incorporation is this:

1. Club members adopt a resolution indicating their intention to incorporate and authorizing club officers to handle the process.
2. The club drafts proposed Articles of Incorporation in compliance with the state or national government and a few special requirements by Kiwanis International.
3. The club sends both documents to Kiwanis International for approval.
4. Kiwanis International sends the club a consent form to incorporate.
5. The club submits its Articles of Incorporation to the government for approval.

*Note: These cannot be filed with the government prior to approval from Kiwanis International.*

6. The government approves the club’s incorporation and sends certification to the club.

The club sends a copy of its governmental certification to Kiwanis International and retains a copy for itself.

Complete details, including the necessary templates for some steps, can be obtained from the Member Services Department at Kiwanis International or found online at [www.kiwanis.org/clubopener](http://www.kiwanis.org/clubopener).