

# **Moose: New Member Orientation Program**

May, 2022



A guide to conducting an effective  
onboarding program for new members of the  
Moose Fraternity

## Introduction:

Moose lodges have long acknowledged that a well-run orientation program improves the chances that a new member will begin to understand what the Fraternity is all about. It also is an important first step in the retention of new members.

Many of us forget that new members really know very little about how the Fraternity, or for that matter, how an individual lodge, operates. New member surveys indicate that communications and an explanation of how things work go a long way in making a new member feel welcome and comfortable.

They want to believe that they joined an organization with a higher purpose, as well as one that celebrates life through activities and friendships at the local level.

Each Moose unit is unique in its own way. Use the materials provided in this kit to supplement the information you will be providing at the local level. Make sure you discuss those areas that are most important for the new member, stay on-point and make your presentation as interactive as possible.

The first step in being a successful lodge is simply doing *something* to introduce a new member into the Fraternity. The second step is creating a memorable program that creates a positive impression for the lodge and the entire organization.

***Let's get started with your new orientation program!***

***“You never get a second chance to make a first impression.”***

How many times have you heard that? A new member’s perception of an organization is often formed based on what he/she experiences the first time visiting the lodge. Make sure that experience is positive and professional. Create an organized program in which you portray your lodge in the best possible light.

***“Two things remain irretrievable: time and a first impression.”***

– Cynthia Ozick



First impressions are more heavily influenced by nonverbal cues than verbal cues. In fact, studies have found that nonverbal cues have over four times the impact on the impression you make than anything you say.

**Here are six nonverbal ways to make a positive first impression:**

1. **Adjust your attitude.** People pick up your attitude instantly. Before you turn to greet someone, or enter the

lodge, or step to the podium to make a presentation, think about the situation and make a conscious choice about the attitude you want to embody.

2. **Straighten your posture.** Standing tall, pulling your shoulders back, and holding your head straight are all signals of confidence and competence.

3. **Smile.** A smile is an invitation, a sign of welcome. It says, “I’m friendly and approachable.”

4. **Make eye contact.** Looking at someone’s eyes transmits energy and indicates interest and openness. (To improve your eye contact, make a practice of noticing the eye color of everyone you meet.)

5. **Shake hands.** This is the quickest way to establish rapport. It’s also the most effective. Research shows it takes an average of three hours of continuous interaction to develop the same level of rapport that you can get with a single handshake.

6. **Lean in slightly.** Leaning forward shows you’re engaged and interested. But be respectful of the other person’s space.

Every encounter, from dinners to meetings to orientation sessions to community service activities, presents an opportunity to meet people, network, and expand your fraternal contacts by making a positive first impression. Research implies you’ve got just seven seconds to make an impression – but if you handle it well, seven seconds are all you need!

## Frequently asked questions:

### 1. **Who should organize and run the orientation session?**

- a. The Membership Chairman in the lodge is officially tasked with organizing and running the orientation session, *however*, any officer or member can do the work as long as he is organized, articulate and personable. Remember that this session is often a new member's first impression of the lodge, so put your best presenter front and center.

### 2. **How long should the orientation session last?**

- a. The simple answer is 'as long as it takes', but you should always keep the session less than an hour.

### ***Some interesting facts you should know:*** **How long can you hold your audience's attention?**

According to research, if the topic is of interest and you are a good presenter, the audience can focus on the presentation for 7-to-10 minutes at most. If they're not interested in the topic or the presenter is particularly boring, then they'll lose interest much faster.

A typical presentation is longer than 7-to-10 minutes. Presentations are often an hour long. This means you have to find ways to make changes at least every 7 minutes in order to get people to pay attention.

1. **Have a mini-break.** If your session is longer than 40 minutes, you should have some kind of break. You can use a one minute stretch break halfway through.
2. **Do something interactive.** Build in small exercises that can be done no matter how many people you're presenting to. Have them introduce themselves to the person sitting next to them.
3. **Ask the audience a question.** If you take a minute to ask the audience a question, that will serve as a break. If it's a large group, you can ask questions that require only a show of hands.
4. **Move to a different position.** Rather than pacing around the front of the room or on the stage, stay in one area for a few minutes and then walk to a different place and speak from there. You can do this more often than every 7 minutes, as long as you are not continuously moving around.
5. **Move on to a different topic.** Stop and say, "Now, I want to talk about something that is very different."
6. **Tell a story.** Stories grab attention instantly. Make sure the stories are short and relevant to the topic.
7. **Use multiple speakers.** Adding a second speaker often resets the clock for the audience.

### **3. What type of information is most important to new members at this time?**

- a. We often try to tell everyone everything about the Moose at one time. As we have already discussed, people can't absorb that much information all at once.

Make sure you cover the basics –

- when is the lodge open;
- what type of activities do you do;
- when is food served;
- what types of meetings are held and when do they occur;
- how can they become involved;
- how do they access more information about the lodge;
- who can they talk to in order to find out more information about The Moose;
- give them the addresses to the Moose International website and social media sites

### **4. How do we get people to attend orientation?**

- a. Don't assume written notices will entice people to come. A phone call or personal visit is much more effective at getting new members to show up.
- b. If you can't get people to come down to the lodge for an orientation, did you select the right individuals to join? Quality over quantity often makes a huge difference in how a lodge performs.
- c. Try tying your orientation into another lodge event, such as a family dinner or game night.
- d. Provide incentives for attending – Moose bucks or a free dinner often motivate people to attend.

- e. Have the sponsors reach out and extend a personal invitation. Make sure the sponsor attends the orientation as well.

**5. What is the new member's takeaway from the orientation session?**

- a. Write it down! At the very least provide a sheet of paper with the key pieces of information contained on it that the new member can take home and refer to later.
- b. Be creative – put your hours and contact information on a refrigerator magnet or a coffee mug so the information is always at hand.



**6. Do the Women of the Moose already have an orientation program?**

- a. Yes, and the materials contained in this packet, especially the videos, can be used to supplement that presentation. Therefore, though both lodges and chapters can use these materials, the following text is written for the lodge's perspective.

**7. Any other tips for creating the right atmosphere?**

- a. Make sure you arrange seating so that everyone can easily see the presentation – and have extra seats for guests, dignitaries and sponsors. Test any A/V equipment ahead of time and practice what you are going to say!



## **Sample Moose Orientation Agenda**

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Mission of the Moose
3. Brief History of the Lodge
4. Officer Roles
5. Committees of the Lodge
6. Women of the Moose
7. Moose Legion and Higher Degrees
8. Districts, Associations and International
- 9. Moose International Video Presentation**
10. Meeting Room vs. Social Quarters
11. Lodge Meetings
12. Lodge, Social Quarters and Fraternal Policies
13. Schedules and Events
14. Communication vehicles (newsletter, website, social media)
15. How to become involved
16. Where to go to find out more about the Lodge
17. Questions

### **\*\*Please note\*\***

All Lodges operate differently and you should tailor your presentation to what works best for your new members. For example, although all committee descriptions are provided, you do not have to mention every one during your presentation, especially if the committees are inactive. Be brief, but thorough.

## Welcome and Introductions:

- Welcome all new Members
  - This starts the moment the new member arrives at the Lodge. There have been too many stories about members who show up for an orientation and then are ignored completely or no one in the Lodge knows that the orientation program is happening. Be organized and have someone at the door to greet new members.
  - Make sure you acknowledge any sponsors who have shown up in support of their candidates.
  - Thank them for joining your Lodge!  
**You can never say thank you enough.**

- Introduce:

- Yourself
- Any Officers present
- Special Guests (i.e. Territory Manager, etc.)
- Committee Chairmen
- Degree recipients who are present
- Employees
- Mentors (if utilizing this program)



## **Mission of the Moose:**

*An International organization of men and women, dedicated to caring for young and old, bringing communities closer together and celebrating life.*

What does that really mean?

1. We care for children in need from throughout the world at Mooseheart Child City and School, just west of Chicago.
2. We provide for our senior members at Moosehaven, a 63-acre retirement community in Orange Park, Florida along the St. Johns River.
3. We generate \$40 - \$60 million worth of community service activities annually.
4. We have fun doing so and develop life-long bonds with brothers and co-workers through the Fraternity.

Mention that they will be viewing a video later in the presentation that will help explain our fraternal missions in more detail.



## **Brief History of the Lodge**

This is your chance to highlight the positive things your lodge has done.

Do not forget to mention:

- How long the lodge has been in existence
- The number of members in the lodge
- Any association with a chapter or Moose Legion
- Recent awards the lodge may have won (Premier Lodge Award?)
- Community service projects unique to the lodge
- Special events or projects that the lodge is known for in the community
- The number of Fellows, Pilgrims and Collegians and why they are important

## **Officer Roles**

Briefly describe what each officer of the lodge does.

### **President**

- The primary objective of the President is to promote the fraternal operation of the Lodge. The President is the top elected official of the corporation (Lodge).

### **Vice President**

- The Vice President is the next in line for the corporation and stands in when the President is unavailable.

### **Chaplain**

- Presides in the absence of the President and Vice President. Visits the sick, disabled and distressed.

## **Past Lodge President**

- The immediate former President of the Lodge who serves as a voting member on the Board based on his previous position.

## **Administrator**

- The secretary of the corporation and of the Board of Officers. The Administrator generally oversees the day-to-day business activity of the Lodge and may be a paid employee of the Lodge.

## **Treasurer**

- The Treasurer of the Lodge is the treasurer of the corporation and ensures that the financial processes for the Lodge are in compliance.

Other individuals who hold positions within the lodge:

- Trustees
- Sergeant-At-Arms
- Inner Guard
- Outer Guard

## **Lodge Committees**

Briefly describe what the main committees of the lodge do.

## **Membership**

Focuses efforts on four distinct areas:

- Recruitment of New and Former Members
- Reception (including orientation and enrollment)
- Recognition of Members' Sponsors
- Retention of Existing Members

## **Activities**

Focuses efforts on two distinct areas:

- Activities which are primarily for the purpose of serving as social or recreational enjoyment for members and their families;
- Activities with the primary objective of raising funds for the Lodge treasury or another specified purpose.

## **Financial Review**

Focuses efforts on three distinct areas:

- The three members' task is to fully review each of the financial reports.
- Ensure that the officers are performing their financial duties; i.e. such as trustees initialing bills, etc.
- Periodically verify that appropriate tax filings are occurring and the Lodge is protected from loss through insurance coverage.

## **Heart of the Community**

- Provides an avenue for the Lodge to show that they are an asset to their own local communities.
- Enhances the image of the Lodge and the Fraternity.
- Organizes participation in Moose International's fraternity-wide programs such as Youth Awareness, Tommy Moose and Safe Surfin'.

## **Moose Charities**

- Coordinates and promotes the fundraising efforts of Moose Charities to help offset the operating expenses of Mooseheart and Moosehaven, as well as the Endowment Fund, Capital Projects, Scholarship Fund, and other programs as introduced.

## **Other Committees:**

- Moose Legion
- Communications
- Application Review
- Government Relations

## **Women of the Moose**

The Women of the Moose, founded in 1913, is a unit of Moose International with more than 340,000 women in approximately 1,000 chapters in the United States and Canada.

- Women must first be a member of a Lodge before applying for membership in the WOTM.
- Funds raised by the WOTM assist in maintaining and caring for the needs of our children at Mooseheart and senior members at Moosehaven.
- The WOTM, known as sisters, have the opportunity to earn honors and degrees by holding an officer or chairman's position and meeting the requirements set forth by the WOTM headquarters.
- Sisters have a vote regarding Lodge operations; may hold a Lodge officer position; their contributions and volunteer efforts help keep the Lodge running smoothly; and their activities are essential to the growth of the organization.

## Degrees of The Moose

The **Moose Legion** is known as the Degree of Service.

- The purpose of this degree is to band together the loyal and devoted Moose members who desire to make further contributions to the humanitarian objectives of our Order while providing fun and entertaining activities for members and their families.
- The official colors of the Moose Legion are red, white and purple with purple being predominant. You will also see Moose Legionnaires sporting maroon blazers and informal vests.

The **Fellowship Degree of Honor** is an honorary degree of The Moose conferred only upon Moose Legionnaires who are recommended by the Fellows of their Lodge and approved by the Pilgrim Council.

- The official regalia of a Fellow is a French-blue blazer featuring the Fellowship logo, coordinated necktie, white shirt and black trousers.

The **Pilgrim Degree of Merit** is the highest honor that can be bestowed upon a member of The Moose. This Degree is conferred only in the House of God at Mooseheart and comes as a reward for extraordinary service to the Order.

- The official regalia of a Pilgrim is a gold blazer featuring the Pilgrim logo, coordinated necktie, white shirt and black trousers.

The **Council of Higher Degrees** is made up of members with the main responsibility and goal to aid the retention of active dues paying members.



## **Beyond the Lodge**

Each Lodge within the Fraternity belongs to a Moose District comprised of several Lodges, which in turn is part of a state or provincial association, and finally, a member of Moose International.

Moose International issues a Charter to each Lodge giving permission to operate as a unit of the Loyal Order of Moose. As such, every member is bound together in fraternal service to each other and the organization, and must abide by The General Laws of the Order.

Those interested in learning more about the General Laws can visit [www.mooseintl.org](http://www.mooseintl.org) for the latest version.

## **Moose International and Our Fraternal Obligations**

A video has been produced to introduce you to our international endeavors including helping children in need at Mooseheart; our senior members at Moosehaven; and our communities through our Heart of the Community efforts.

Here is a short video that provides just a little more information. *(Play video here)*



## **Information about YOUR Lodge**

We often assume that new members (and our current members) know more than we think. Unfortunately, our new member surveys indicate that they are unsure about even the basics, such as how to enter the lodge; rules and regulations within the lodge home; and their rights and responsibilities as members.

### **Lodge Meeting Room vs. Social Quarters**

The **Meeting Room** is used for the private meetings of the Lodge to discuss Moose business and for other activities, as appropriate, including dinners, dances, etc.

- This area may be utilized by members of the Lodge for private social functions.

The General Laws of the Order authorize a Lodge to operate a “**Social Quarters**” for use by members and qualified guests.

- The Lodge Executive Committee controls and supervises all aspects of the Social Quarters.
- A high standard of conduct is required within the Social Quarters and privileges may be suspended or revoked for violation of decorum (discuss expectations).

### **Lodge Meetings**

Discuss the following points as they apply to YOUR lodge.

- Purpose
- Days and Times
- Who may (should) attend
- Proper conduct and dress

## **Lodge Policies**

Discuss the following points as they apply to YOUR lodge.

- Entering the Lodge
- Guests
- Purchases
- Decorum
- Games of chance (if applicable)
- Commitment to grow the Fraternity
- Endowment collections
- 9:00 o'clock Ceremony

## **Schedules and Events**

Discuss the following points as they apply to YOUR lodge.

- Hours of Operation
- Key events throughout the year
- Dinners, weekly programs, raffles, etc.

## **Communication Vehicles**

Discuss the following points as they apply to YOUR lodge.

- Signs in the Lodge
- Newsletter
- Website and Social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
- Email
- Tele-messaging or group texts

## **How to Become Involved**

Discuss the following points as they apply to YOUR lodge.

- Volunteer work
- Running for and holding a Lodge Office
- Community service
- Committee work
- PR and communications

## **Where to go to find out more about the Lodge and The Moose**

- Lodge Officers
- Lodge Administrator
- Your communication vehicles
- Provide a Moose Member Benefits brochure and ask them to visit the website to learn more
- [www.mooseintl.org](http://www.mooseintl.org)

## **Questions?**

- Make sure you take time to answer any questions new members may have.

## **Takeaways**

Thank each new member for joining (!) and each new member should walk out the door with information in-hand. Our biggest mistake is believing that he/she will retain everything we just told them.

- Information sheet with essential details about your Lodge
- DVD or flash drive with information on it
- Refrigerator magnet or coffee cup with your hours, website address and hotline printed on it.

## **The three main thoughts to remember when onboarding a new member:**

- This is often the first impression a new member will have of your lodge/chapter – make it a positive one.
- Keep it Simple – Remember, this is just a guide and you need to tailor your presentation to your audience.
- Your job is not done! Make sure you continue to communicate with your members over the life of their memberships.

