



# Convention Delegates Handbook



## SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL OF THE AMERICAS, INC. ®

Welcome to the 48<sup>th</sup> Biennial Convention! All clubs in good standing, which includes payment of the convention fee, are entitled to one full convention registration for one delegate to participate in the business of the federation at convention. The convention delegate position is a significant one. This handbook provides valuable information on your role as a delegate. Please review it carefully and bring it with you to convention.

This handbook, along with all other important documents pertaining to the convention and the business to be conducted there, can be found online: <https://www.soroptimist.org/events/call-to-convention.html>

### Delegate Responsibilities

- Have a working knowledge of the SIA Bylaws and Procedures, the federation strategic plan, and experience as a member of club committees or the club's board of directors.
- Prepare for engagement prior to convention. Review the tentative agenda and Call to Convention listing the business to be transacted, proposed amendments to SIA's bylaws and other general information.
- Request time at your club's business meeting to discuss topics on the agenda. In this way, a majority opinion expressed by the club will serve as your guide when you are asked to cast a vote.
- Be familiar with convention standing rules (pages 3-4 of this manual) and parliamentary procedure.
- Vote with your club's viewpoint in mind.

### Before You Go

Ensure that your club is in good standing, as only delegates from clubs in good standing may vote at convention. In order to be in good standing a club must:

- Remain current in all financial obligations to the region and federation.
- Have submitted any required final reports from Soroptimist Club Grants for Women and Girls.
- Paid the club convention fee of \$800.00, which was due on March 15, 2024.

Prior to the opening of the convention registration, club presidents were emailed a code for their club's delegate to use when registering. You must officially register as a club delegate; registration is available online through the [SIA convention webpage](#). Prior to the opening of the convention registration, club presidents were emailed a code for their club's delegate to use when registering. The club's convention fee covers the cost of your full registration, coffee breaks, two meal events--the General Business Meeting Boxed Lunch and the Volunteer Recognition Closing Gala, as well as entry to the Denim and Diamonds Dance Party. Tickets for the Past Governors Breakfast must be purchased for an additional fee for those individuals who served as a region governor.

## At Convention

- SIA will utilize a web-based polling platform to cast delegate votes. Delegates must provide a personal device (mobile phone, tablet, laptop) enabled to access the dedicated website through a web link or QR code to cast their votes. Please bring the device to the Delegate's Briefing and the Business Session.
- Register promptly at the registration counters in the Evergreen Ballroom Foyer, Lobby Level at Hyatt Regency Bellevue. Registration opens on Wednesday, July 24 from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Thursday, July 25 at 7 a.m., prior to the beginning of the Business Session. If you have already pre-registered, go to the "Pre-Registration" counter with the header that shows the first letter of your last name. If you are not pre-registered, go to the "On-Site" registration counter.
- Before you leave the registration area, check your name badge, meal tickets, and attach the delegate ribbon to your badge holder. Be sure to wear your name badge to all sessions.
- You will be issued a voting card in your registration materials that you will need to bring to all General Sessions. Please print and sign your name on the voting card when you receive it. Voting cards are non-transferable and will be used to signify your vote during General Sessions.
- Attend the Delegate's Briefing on Wednesday, July 24 from 2 to 2:30 p.m. in the Regency Ballroom of the Hyatt Regency Bellevue. **(You will need to register before attending the Delegate's Briefing.)**
- While delegates should attend all sessions of the convention, it is mandatory they attend the Business Session on Thursday, July 25 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Hyatt Regency Bellevue, and a continuation and wrap up session (if necessary) from 1 to 2 p.m.
- Please be on time for all sessions as the convention body will be required to adhere to a schedule.
- At the Business Session, it is very important that delegates sit in the area reserved for them at the front of the room.
- A credentials report confirming the number of delegates will be presented Thursday at the morning Business Session.
- If a club delegate is unable to attend the convention or has to leave the convention (either temporarily or permanently), the club's alternate delegate may take their place by changing status at the on-site registration desk. The delegate and the alternate may not switch places again.
- At the beginning of the Business Session, delegates will be asked to adopt the convention's Standing Rules. By adopting the Standing Rules, the delegates will adopt the official convention program as the order of business for the convention, giving authority to the SIA president to make changes to the order of the program that might be necessary for the orderly conduct of business. The Standing Rules are found on pages 3-4 of this handbook.
- Proposed amendments to the SIA Bylaws that will be discussed at the convention are available [here](#). Delegates may make amendments to these proposals.
- Delegates may introduce new business, but only after approval of a motion to do so by a 3/4 vote of the delegates present and voting.
- Attend all meetings and keep notes for a report back to your club.
- A mail ballot will be sent to clubs after the convention asking clubs to vote on the proposals as they have been acted upon by the delegates. The mail ballot will contain both the original proposal and if amended by the delegates the amended proposal, as well as the consensus recommendation of the convention delegates for action by the clubs in the mail ballot. The ballot question will be on the version approved by the delegates and none of the proposals go into effect until adopted by a 2/3 vote of the clubs voting on that issue by mail ballot.

## After the Convention

After the convention, you should prepare a report for presentation at your club's next meeting. The following outline may be helpful:

- Action taken by convention voting body, including a summary of proposals that were presented and the consensus of the delegates.
- Ideas for increasing your club's support for our 2021-2031 Big Goal.
- A report on the workshops you attended.
- A synopsis of keynote addresses and speeches.
- Your personal evaluation of the convention proceedings.

Make sure your club participates in the mail ballot on the proposed amendments to the SIA Bylaws, which will be conducted from early-October to early-December 2024.

### Bring to the Business Session at Convention

#### Convention Standing Rules

##### 1. Program

The official program shall be the order of business upon adoption by the convention body, except changes necessary for the orderly conduct of business or special consideration.

##### 2. Voting Body

Soroptimist International of the Americas Bylaws, Article VII, Section 7.02 states: Each club in good standing shall be entitled to designate a delegate (and an alternate to serve in the absence or inability of the delegate to serve), who must be a member and who shall cast all votes by the club. A delegate may represent only the club in which membership is held. Each club through its delegate, each past President of the Federation, Region Governors, and each member of the Board of Directors of the Federation shall be entitled to cast one vote on each matter brought to a vote at a convention. Proxy votes shall not be allowed under any circumstance.

##### 3. Credentials Report

A credentials report shall be given at the opening of each business session and any other time, as directed by the presiding officer.

##### 4. Delegate Status

Delegates shall have special badges and represent clubs in good standing. They shall be seated in the section reserved for voting members. If an emergency requires that an alternate be certified as the delegate, she shall serve as the delegate for the remainder of the convention.

##### 5. Non-Delegates, Guests, Interpreters

Non-delegates and guests will be seated in assigned areas. Interpreters will be seated in an assigned area, but if necessary, may be seated with a delegate if prior permission is granted.

##### 6. Identification

Only those wearing official badges may be admitted to any convention meeting. Registration badges are to be worn at all times during the meetings. Both non-delegates and guests will be provided with badges to be worn during convention meetings. Badges are not needed for meal functions.

### 7. Attendance

All delegates have an obligation to be present for all meetings of the convention. Delegates are required to be seated before the business meetings are called to order. During business meetings, members should refrain from speaking unless entitled to the floor and suppress unnecessary noise in the corridors adjoining the assembly hall. Please turn off or silence all cellular phones.

### 8. Quorum

Soroptimist International of the Americas Bylaws, Article VII, Section 7.03 states: Delegates representing at least one-third of all the clubs in good standing shall constitute a quorum at any convention. The vote of a majority of those present and voting shall be the acts of the members. If delegates representing one-third of the clubs in good standing are not registered, the quorum, for the purpose of considering those matters notice of the general nature of which has been given prior to the convention, shall be a majority of the delegates who have been registered with the credentials committee as in attendance.

### 9. Proposed Amendments with Notice

Proposed bylaw amendments noticed to the membership shall become general orders at the business meeting and will be considered without any additional motion necessary.

### 10. Obtaining the Floor

To obtain the floor, the speaker must go to a microphone, address the chair, and after being recognized, state clearly her name and club or federation position.

### 11. Motions

Only voting members may make motions and vote. All substantive motions shall be submitted in writing to the chair at the time they are made.

### 12. Delegate Debate

No delegate may speak more than twice on the same question, nor longer than two minutes at a time, except by permission of the convention body. Total debate for each proposal shall be limited to 10 minutes unless extended by the convention body. An official timekeeper will call time.

### 13. Non-Delegate Debate

A non-delegate may speak once on any question for one minute only, provided there is no delegate wishing to speak. An official timekeeper will call time.

### 14. Communications

All communications to the platform shall be delivered by an official page. Cellular phones and other electronic devices shall be on silent mode or turned off during meals and business sessions.

### 15. Technical and Conforming Changes

The SIA Secretary/Treasurer and staff shall be authorized to correct article and section designations, punctuation, and cross-references and to make such other technical and conforming changes as may be necessary to reflect the intent of the delegates in connection with any amendments to governing documents adopted by the clubs after approval at the SIA business meeting.

### 16. Suspension

These rules, except where based on the Soroptimist International of the Americas Bylaws, may be suspended by a 2/3 vote of the convention body.

## Helpful Motions during the Business Session

Prepared by SIA Parliamentarian Connie Deford, Professional Registered Parliamentarian

| What do I want to do?  | What motion do I use?          | What words do I use?  | What else do I need to know?   |
|--|--------------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Change or modify a resolution or bylaw article before it is adopted</b> | Amend                          | <i>I move to amend by: inserting or adding, OR by striking out, OR by striking out and inserting...</i> | <b>Second/Amendable/Debatable</b><br>Majority vote   |
| <b>Postpone making a decision</b>  | Postpone to a certain time     | <i>I move to postpone until... (later in the same meeting or next meeting)</i>                          | <b>Second/Amendable/Debatable</b><br>Majority vote   |
| <b>Change rules of debate</b>  | Extend limits of debate        | <i>I move to extend debate for __ minutes</i>   | <b>Second/Amendable/No Debate</b><br>Two-thirds vote   |
| <b>Stop debate</b>   | Previous Question              | <i>I move the previous question.</i>  | <b>Second/Not amendable/No Debate</b><br>Two-thirds vote                                     |
| <b>Follow the agenda</b>   | Call for the orders of the day | <i>I call for the orders of the day.</i>  | <b>No second/No debate</b><br>Chair explains what action is to be taken                      |
| <b>Protest about noise, heating, ventilation, etc.</b>                     | Question of Privilege          | <i>I rise to a question of privilege:<br/>Example: May the doors be closed?</i>                         | <b>No second/No debate</b><br>Chair decides what action, if any, is to be taken              |
| <b>Ask a question about parliamentary procedure</b>                        | Parliamentary Inquiry          | <i>Parliamentary Inquiry. Would it be in order to...?</i>   | <b>No second/No debate</b><br>Chair responds to the question                                 |
| <b>Ask a question about facts</b>  | Request for Information        | <i>I have a request for information... (Ask a question about facts helpful to the delegates)</i>        | <b>No second/No debate</b><br>Chair responds or directs the question to another for response |