

Sirs Rule Changes 2019

Summary of the State Rules That Apply to Membership in SIR

Membership Requirements:

RULE 50. Membership shall be open to men retired from full-time gainful occupation or only working part-time regardless of age, race, color or religion.

(Note the definition of retired has been modified to include men working full-time who are able to attend the Branch luncheon meetings.)

RULE 52. Part-time work should not detract from eligibility for membership if employment does not adversely affect one's ability to attend Branch luncheon meetings.

Emeritus Membership eliminated:

Rule 55.1 deleted

Inactive membership eliminated:

Rule 54, and Rules 90-94 deleted.

Rule 55 modified to be more accommodating:

RULE 55. A Branch BEC may grant a member attendance relief who is unable to attend luncheon meetings due to prolonged illness, acting as a caregiver to a family member or companion, or an extended absence from the Branch locale. A member that is granted attendance relief is still considered a member and subject to Branch rules.

Rule 80 allows membership in more than one Branch.

RULE 80. Membership in more than one Branch at the same time is permissible. The member is required to pay dues to both Branches, if applicable.

Rule 100 modified to allow Branches to set attendance requirements:

RULE 100. A member shall be required to attend one-half of the regular Branch monthly luncheon meetings within the previous twelve consecutive month period unless the Branch BEC has approved a different attendance requirement(s). A member shall be notified in writing, e-mail, and/or telephone by his Branch if he is in violation of the Attendance Rule 100 and is subject to the termination of his Branch membership

Although not specifically stated this has now resulted in two classes of members. Those exempt from attendance requirements per new Rule 55 and those who are not exempt from the attendance requirements per new Rule 100.

Both exempt and not exempt members shall now appear on the Branch Roster and both will be counted for State Quarterly Assessment purposes. (Quarterly assessments are based on the November, February, May, and August Form 28 membership headcount.)

Branches that require membership dues may decide whether or not to assess dues from members who are exempt from attendance requirements, or assess reduced membership dues.

I am pleased to report that the State Rules Committee has been busy since August cleaning up and rewriting more rules. The changes which have received Board approval are listed at the end of this message. The updated SIR Manual edition dated 10/30/18 can be downloaded from:

http://sirinc.org/MemInfo/manual/ManualEdition_20181030_20181112.pdf and contains the Board authorized language for all the Rule changes. Please note the Board has approved flexibility in some rules so Branches can use discretion under certain circumstances.

Many of the Rule changes are minor, but some require an explanation.

Deletion of Inactive Member status

'Inactive Member' status has been deleted because there has been a widespread belief that an Inactive member could freely attend activities as a guest. However, Rule 91 has stated since 6/10/08 that "An inactive member may be a one-time guest at a regular monthly luncheon meeting or an in lieu function such as a special luncheon, dinner or picnic, but cannot be a guest in any other SIR activity." This Rule meant that an "inactive" member was never a guest and was therefore not an 'insured' person covered by our General Liability (GL) insurance. Some Branches, not understanding the implications of Rule 91, allowed "Inactive" members to participate regularly in activities, an obvious risk to SIRinc because our GL policy gives us no protection against claims caused by them. We should remember that insurance costs make up almost 50% of SIRinc expenses, and these expenses are paid by the Branches via the quarterly assessments which are based on the number of Members.

Removing the 'Inactive' status means that a man is now either a Member, or not, so we no longer need to define an 'Active Member', so the word Active has also been removed from the Rules where it was an unnecessary adjective.

Now that the status of "Inactive" membership has been deleted, all Members in good standing are 'insureds' and SIRinc is covered by our GL policy for authorized activities where Members outnumber guests (see Rule 40).

Invited guests, eg potential members, are covered as 'insureds' at authorized SIR activities. It is considered unethical to invite a non-member to routinely enjoy a

SIR activity as a "guest", especially if the man does not intend to join SIR. The Board, at its next meeting, will consider a motion to limit the number of times a guest can attend SIR activities without committing to join a Branch.

Emeritus Member Status (deleted) and Emeritus HLM Status (retained)

Under old Rule 55 (for example in the SIR Manual dated 6/12/18) a Branch BEC could award Emeritus status to a member who could not consistently attend luncheon meetings. This status exempted them from individual member attendance requirements, but with changes to Rules 100 and 55 described next, this status is no longer necessary.

However, the award of Emeritus status to an Honorary Life Member (HLM) is retained under Rule 24(g) which states (in part) "In situations where a Branch has determined that a past HLM recipient can no longer attend or participate in branch functions, the Branch Executive Committee with two-thirds approval may request that the Area Governor approve assigning that member HLM Emeritus status so that he would no longer count toward the Branch's HLM limit."

Attendance at Luncheons

Rule 100 has been rewritten to say "A member shall be required to attend one-half of the regular Branch monthly luncheon meetings within the previous twelve consecutive month period unless the Branch BEC has approved a different attendance requirement(s).

A member shall be notified in writing, e-mail, and/or telephone by his Branch if he is in violation of the Attendance Rule 100 and is subject to the termination of his Branch membership. See Rule 107. (Revised 6/7/18) (Revised 4/10/18) (Revised 10/30/18)

Attendance Relief

Before the Board agreed that the 'Inactive Member' status should be deleted, we required a compassionate way to allow for members who were unable to attend luncheon meetings due to sickness, caring for a family member or companion, or for extended absences. This is now provided under Rule 55 which allows a Branch to grant attendance relief to a member at their discretion; "A Branch BEC may grant a member attendance relief who is unable to attend luncheon meetings due to prolonged illness, acting as a caregiver to a family member or companion, or an extended absence from the Branch locale. A member that is granted attendance relief is still considered a member and subject to Branch rules. (New 11/04/2014) (Revised 4/10/18) (New 11/04/2014) (Revised 4/10/18) (Revised 10/30/18)"

Membership Obligation

The changes described above do not remove a basic Membership obligation, that expecting Members to support their Branch financially. Many Branches have decided the fairest way to maintain a balanced budget is to collect annual dues so all Members support their Branch. Other Branches collect money in different ways, and this choice is a matter for each Branch to decide. The State Board recommends a dues-based system because the running costs of a Branch are then spread evenly across all members instead of just collecting from those who attend luncheons.

Branch Director Term Limits

Many Branches replace their Directors on a rotating basis after 3 years, others do not. The Board supports the idea that new blood is essential to maintain vigor and enthusiasm in a Branch so Rule 240 has been rewritten to say "The Branch Director is an integral part of the Branch Executive Committee. He has equal voting rights with other members of the committee and shares equal responsibility for the conduct of all Branch operations and activities. A Branch Director shall serve one-year terms and be restricted to three consecutive terms, excluding any partial year immediately preceding the first such year. If a Branch Director vacates the position for one or more calendar years, eligibility is reestablished. Upon request by the Big Sir, the Regional Director or the State President may make an exception to this rule. (Revised 9/12/18) (Revised 10/30/18)"

The Board recommends that this change should be phased in over a 3 year period so the value of experience and continuity is not abruptly discarded.

The Listing of Rule changes in the SIR Manual dated 11/12/18

Article 10 - Financial - State

Revise Rule 38a to change expense amount requiring a receipt

Article 6 - State Treasurer

Revise Rule 868c to revise authorization of certain expenditures

Part 4 - SIR Websites cleanup.

Revise Rules 953, & 955 - 959 to allow various website cleanup.

Article 8 - Monthly Meeting Attendance

Revise Rule 100 to allow Branches to set Luncheon attendance requirement

Article 2 - Membership

Revise Rule 55 and 55.1 to eliminate Emeritus status and provide attendance relief.

Article 7 - Inactive Members

Revise Rules 90, 90.1, 91 - 94 to eliminate "Inactive Member" status

Article 1 - Definitions

Revise Rule 2i to remove reference to "Inactive Member".

Article 2 - Membership

Revise Rules 51, 54, 58 to remove reference to "Inactive Member".

Article 5 - SIR Awards & Certificates

Revise Rule 24g to clarify & simplify HLM Emeritus status

Article 5 - Dual Membership

Revise Rule 80 to allow dual Branch membership.

Article 8 - Branch Director

Revise Rule 240 to allow exception to the Branch Director term limit

"State Standing Committees" From Corporate Bylaws Article 8, Sections 224 & 225 to Standing Rules Division 1, Article 11, Rules 39 & 39.1.

RULE 315. The breach of any Standing Rule, Bylaws or Branch Regulation, or refusal to conform thereto, may be cause for the revocation or suspension of a Branch Charter by the State Board