

# Junior Optimist International Board Member

## Introduction

So, you have decided to run for a position on the Junior Optimist International Board of Directors. That's great! In order for you to have a better understanding of what the expectations of the office are, we have compiled this information for you. Please read the information carefully and make sure that you understand it.

Serving as a Board Member is a lot of fun, but also requires time and dedication in order to be effective. We have created a minimum set of responsibilities that need to be fulfilled by each Director. In cases where an International Director would not be able to complete tasks, steps can be taken to remove or replace the Director from office. If you have questions, please contact the Junior Optimist Department at (800) 500-8130.

## Your Role

If you are elected as a Director, you will be taking a very active leadership position. You will serve your year as a representative of the organization to District Officers and to adult Optimists. You are a model for other Members and adults who are thinking about starting Clubs.

As a Director, you will also serve as a Board Member charged with making decisions that will affect the entire organization now and in the future. You will need to think "globally," putting the good of the organization ahead of what might be best for your Club or District.

Probably the most important part of being a Director is being a great "communicator!" We have all said that better communication is something that needs to be strived for and you will have the opportunity to make that happen! You will be assigned a group of Districts to communicate with all year long. It will be your job to keep these Districts in the loop about things that are happening. You also need to be the person who can help and encourage the Districts to continue to add new Members and build new Clubs. You will also be a key promoter of the Junior Optimist International Convention.

## Attire

When you are representing the organization, you will need to wear business attire, unless you are told otherwise. This means coat and tie, pantsuit, suit, dress or skirt. You are representing future Optimists and want to send the best message possible!

## Travel

The first meeting will be held in mid-October in conjunction with Optimist International Committee meetings in St. Louis, MO. We will begin on Thursday evening and will continue through Saturday evening. Staff will be making your travel arrangements and will work with you on schedules.

You will be sent a binder of information prior to each meeting regarding topics that will be discussed at the meeting along with minutes from past meetings. Please spend some time reviewing these items so that you will be ready to take part in the discussion at the meetings.

The other meeting takes place during the Convention. Again, Staff will make your travel arrangements.

For the October and July meetings you will receive a per diem to offset expenses. Optimist International will pay for your plane ticket and hotel room. Any other expenses will need to be paid for with your per diem. During these meetings, you will be sharing a room with other Board Members.

## Communications

As a Director, you will be communicating on several different levels. Be prepared to make lots of phone calls and send out lots of e-mail messages. Since you will be in charge of roughly 10 Districts, you will need to make sure that you are in contact with each Governor or representative. If you send an e-mail message to your Districts, please also copy the International office. We want to know what information you are sending out in case we can help in any way.

Make contact and stay in contact frequently with your Districts. At the very least, you should be talking to your Districts monthly. It would be a good idea to get the e-mail addresses of the Club Presidents in each of your Districts and send

them a message from time to time. During the year, you will be given specific items to discuss with your Districts and report back on. We will be expecting a monthly report on each of your Districts from you.

We use e-mail a great deal when contacting you and other Board Members throughout the year. Check your e-mail daily! Expect lots of e-mail and also be prepared to respond to it when and if the time arises. If the International office sends an e-mail and asks for a response – do so as promptly as possible. There will also be e-mail from your fellow Board Members, Staff, Committee Members, people in your region, and other people associated with Optimist International. All of this e-mail should be read and you should take the proper course of action concerning the message’s content. If you are uncertain of what to do, forward the message to Staff and they will help you.

If your computer goes down or you cannot get into your e-mail account, please notify Staff immediately at (800) 500-8130, and we will let everyone else know. Also, be prepared to give us an alternative way to give information to you until you are able to receive e-mail again. It will be your responsibility to find out what takes place during the time that you are unable to access your e-mail.

Occasionally, the Board and Committee conduct business by conference call. Be prepared to participate in these calls. You will be notified of the date and time of the call and given instructions on how to access the call. If you are unable to participate in the call, contact the Staff and let them know. It will be your responsibility to contact someone to find out what happened on the call and any assignments that might have been given.

During the course of the year, there will be several discussions regarding things that affect the organization. Since we only meet two times a year, many of these discussions take place via e-mail or conference call. It is important that you play a leading and active role in these discussions.

**Miscellaneous**

Be prepared to present a report at each of the meetings. During the October meeting your report will be on your goals for the upcoming year. At the Convention Meeting, your report will be on how the year has gone.

During the course of the year, there will be several discussions regarding things that affect the organization. Since we only meet two times a year, many of these discussions take place via e-mail or conference call. It is important that you play an active role in these discussions.

Be prepared to spend at least 10 hours a week on Junior Optimist International-related work.

Being a Junior Optimist International Board Member is a lot of work, but if you are elected, it will be like no other year that you will experience!

**I have read and understand these rules and agree to abide by them.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)