



Retention Considerations

As the Retention Committee contacts these members who have not paid their dues, you may run into several of these situations. Here are some best practices for you to consider:

1. The member may not be a practical Catholic.

- Whether someone is a practical Catholic or not is not a decision that should be made by the Council.
- If the member says he is NOT a practical Catholic or implies he is not a practical Catholic, the council should do the following:
 - i. Talk to his Pastor and (if he agrees) have him write a statement of non-Catholicity.
 - ii. Forward this to Supreme (MembershipRecords@kofc.org)
- This drop will NOT count against your councils quota.

2. The member may not be physically able to work or earn income.

- Whether someone is a “able to work” or not is not a decision that should be made by the Council.
- If the member says (or implies) he is not able to work, the council should do the following:
 - i. Encourage the member to get his Doctor to sign form #1831. [application for relief from payment of council dues and supreme and ... \(kofc.org\)](#)
 - ii. Forward this to Supreme (MembershipRecords@kofc.org)
- This will provide exemption from dues and per capita charges from State and Supreme and is renewable each year.
- If a member (or someone in his immediate family) is in the hospital, the council should add them to the council prayer list. Reach out to the family to see if they need anything and offer to help. Visit the member, send cards, flowers, gift baskets, or whatever.
- If a member is too old/ill (maybe no longer drives at night), if appropriate, offer to have someone pick him up and drive him to/from the council activities. Invite them to participate via conference call. It’s also a good time to bring up form #1831. If the member is too old/ill to attend a meeting or a council event, he’s probably a great candidate for the disabled member form #1831.
- Keep track of members who have moved into senior care facilities and nursing homes. Many of these men were very active in the Knights of Columbus earlier in their lives. They see the Knights as an organization where they help others. It is a difficult transition for these men to make the shift and see the Knights as an organization where others help them. Many men may request withdrawal from the Knights because they can no longer “give”. Do what you can to ensure these men feel valued. Process form #1831 whenever it is feasible. Waive their dues as they are not working. Have someone visit them several times a year.

3. The member may not be financially able to pay dues.

- This is a judgement call made by the Council (primarily the Grand Knight). Remember, we are a fraternal organization and it is our responsibility to care for our brother Knights and their families. It is just plain wrong to force members to pay dues or suspend them when they are in a financial crisis.
- Here are some typical examples for the Council to consider:
 - i. Maybe the member (or his wife) lost their job.
 - ii. Maybe the member had a significant unexpected bill that he is struggling to pay (examples include a house fire, a large financial law suit, divorce, etc...)
 - iii. Maybe the member is not working in order to go to school or stay home to care for children.
- Some examples are easy decisions. Others are more difficult. It’s best to error on the side of compassion. If the Grand Knight approves waiving dues, proceed as follows:
 - i. Tell the member the council is waiving their dues for this year.



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- ii. Keep notes and records as this situation may re-occur next year if the situation has not changed significantly.
- iii. The council will still need to pay both State and Supreme per capita but your council is helping a brother Knight in need and practicing our first principle of Charity.

4. The member may not feel welcome in the Council.

- It is very common that the council recruits a new member but does little (or nothing) to make him feel welcome in the council. He has no friends. No one calls him to invite him to council events. He may have been left off of the council's email distribution list.
- A big part of being a Knight is Fraternity. It is very understandable that these members will want to quit because they don't feel welcome or valued. Make everyone feel welcome at meetings and events. Avoid the cliques and break them up if they exist. Have a calling committee for different activities.
- In these situations, the council should do the following:
 - i. It's best if the council can turn this situation around. Hopefully, the Grand Knight can apologize to the member, and maybe start the whole membership process over again. Assign him a mentor. Invite him to activities, add him to the email distribution list and keep a close eye on him until he truly is active, engaged, feeling welcome and valued.
 - ii. Sometimes, the situation is already too late to fix. This occurs when Retention Committees are not proactive and active throughout the entire year (not just when dues are late). If the member is not interested in starting over and wants to quit...
 1. First try to waive his dues (for a year). Ask him to think about it and maybe he'll be more interested in reengaging next year.
 2. If that fails, get him to send you "in writing" his desire to withdraw from the council and then follow the withdrawal process.

5. The member may not attend council meetings. There are many reasons why members don't attend meetings. The Retention Committee needs to have a list of members that never (or almost never) attend meetings, understand their reasons as to "why" they don't attend meetings and react accordingly.

- **Meetings are often boring, last too long, members argue, and offer little/no value.** Grand Knights need to assess their meetings. Get feedback from various members including those that don't attend meetings and make any appropriate changes to ensure council meetings are productive and fun.
- **Some members are less interested in Fraternity and primarily focused on Charitable contributions.** This is perfectly OK for members to feel this way and councils need to find a way to make these people comfortable not attending meetings. Ensure meeting minutes are sent out every month. Call, text and/or e-mail non-attendees to invite them to participate in upcoming activities. Maybe assign a mentor (someone who attends meetings) to stay in contact with this member and ensure he gets invited to charitable activities that are of interest to him.

6. The member may be an Insurance member.

- Engage your Field Agent to help you talk to this member and get him re-engaged. Because this member is an insurance member, he will be losing out on dividends that he might be ordinarily making while retaining his membership.
- Plus, as the Field Agent is typically not a member of your council, the member may be more open to explaining his real reasons for not paying his dues and being more active.



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- 7. The member contact information may be old and outdated.** Here are several free online tools to locate lost members. These tools have been more effective than only relying on the phone company's directory assistance. The percentage of contacts that I succeed in making has been greatly increased by accessing the following resources that are available to most everyone through the Internet.
1. <https://PeopleLooker.com> I am an app only free user, but my greatest number of successes in talking with members in arrears have come from this app. I have an android phone and was able to install the app from Google Play Store. It should also be available for iPhone users.
 2. <https://thatsthem.com> This site was suggested for my use by the office of a Knights of Columbus Insurance General Agent. I find this to be a major source of phone directory and email information
 3. <https://www.whitepages.com> This is the largest and most trusted internet source for people, businesses and phone numbers.
 4. <http://www.yellowpages.com/whitepages> YP.com provides an extensive online white pages directory where you can find the person you're looking for.
 5. <http://www.referenceusa.com/Static/LibraryLocator> To access the ReferenceUSA database, you need to be a member of a local library. It's a free service and there are many libraries in your area to choose from. Just enter your zip code at <http://www.referenceusa.com/Static/LibraryLocator>. Once you have logged onto the site, you can access the Residential Databases and choose "U.S. Consumers / Lifestyles". Use this database of over 271 million U.S. Consumers to locate lost members of your council. These records are continuously updated and processed against the USPS National Change of Address (NCOA) and Delivery Sequence File (DSF).
- 8. The member may have moved and no longer lives in the proximity of your council.** This situation should have been seen way before someone is delinquent with their dues. When a person moves away from a council, the Retention Committee should immediately begin working on transferring the member. Many councils feel it is the members responsibility to transfer to a new council if he wants to. While many Knights will transfer on their own, people have lots of things to do when they are moving and transferring councils is not at (or near) the top of their priority list. As a brother Knight, it is the councils responsibility to ensure all members membership needs are met. Step up and help out.
- The Supreme website has a tool to help you locate councils near your members' new address. [Find a Council Near You | Knights of Columbus \(kofc.org\)](#) Use this tool to locate a council, contact the council and ask them to welcome your member to their community, invite him to council activities and invite him to join/transfer to this new council.
- 9. The member may have died.**
- If you suspect the member may be deceased, the council should do the following:
 - i. Go to the website www.rootsweb.com and enter his social security # (if known) or his full name and search for a match.
 - ii. If it finds a match, the site will also provide some details regarding the death.
 - iii. If he has passed away, the Financial Secretary can update the membership records and mark this member as deceased.
 - This drop will NOT count against your councils' quota.
- 10. The member may have been convicted of a felony punishable with prison time.**
- If a member has been charged with a felony crime, it may cause for dismissal from the ranks. Check with the council Chaplin or parish Priest.
 - Section 168.6 of the Laws of the Order stipulates forfeiture of membership for a felony conviction. A felony is generally one where the potential penalty is greater than one-year incarceration. To substantiate conviction, the financial secretary must submit:



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- i. A newspaper account of the conviction or written confirmation from the prosecutor or a certified copy of the court documentation. Proof of conviction should include a description of the crime as a felony.

- ii. A completed Membership Document (form #100)

- This drop will NOT count against your councils' quota.

11. The member may have close to 25 years of service or may be over 65 years old.

- If a member has 25 years or more of continuous service and is 65 he is eligible for honorary membership. At 70, he is eligible for honorary life. Always check the service and age data before suspending a member.
- If less than this, you must consider alternatives. If he's been a member for 20+ years and is close to honorary status, consider waiving his dues until he reaches honorary status.

12. Also, consider trends in your decision making.

- If a member has been fairly consistent in paying his dues but misses one year, maybe forgive him and waive his dues for this year.
- If a member consistently is late (or does not pay at all), then it makes better sense to suspend this member.