



THE ADVOCATE...

DECEMBER 2018

FEATURE ARTICLES: PREASIDIUM TRAINING & SAFE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM...
 UPDATE
 INDEX (ARTICLES OF INTEREST IN PAST NEWSLETTERS)

Welcome to **THE ADVOCATE**....dedicated to all Council Advocates but to be shared with the Council Executive, and all District Deputies. You may share this with all the members in your Council but it relates strictly to your responsibilities in the Council. I will endeavour to keep every missive short but they are designed to inform and educate you, Worthy Advocates. Remember...it is your responsibility to ensure that your Council knows and follows our Charter, Constitution, Laws and Rules, and also your Council's By-Laws.

Please refer to the *INDEX* section ... it lists articles published in previous issues of this newsletter.

PREASIDIUM TRAINING & SAFE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM ... UPDATE

After reading this article you are encouraged to pursue more detailed information which may be found in Supreme's release in the Safe Environment Program Information Guide (Rev. 2018) available online at www.kofc.org .

This is the latest update on the Praesidium training and the Safe Environment Policy. Every subordinate Council in our jurisdiction (and every other jurisdiction) must follow the rules as set out by Supreme to be compliant in the Safe Environment Program.

1. Positions and roles

Every Council must elect and fill these 4 positions / roles:

- Must elect a Grand Knight
- Appoint a member to be a Family Director
- Appoint a member to be the Community Director
- Appoint a member to be the Program Director

2. Praesidium Training:

The Councils' Grand Knight as listed on Form 185 (Report of Officers Chosen for Term), and the Community Director, Family Director, and Program Director as listed on Form 365 (Service Program Personnel Report) are sent an email from Supreme inviting them to take the Praesidium course.

This email provides information and the member's login credentials to take the Praesidium training. The member has 45-days* to complete the 3 training modules which takes about 1½ to 2 hours to complete. You are monitored as you progress and complete each module.

Once all the modules are completed the member may then print off a certificate as proof of completion and is considered certified. Supreme is automatically notified of training completion.

As of July 1st, 2018, this certification is valid for 3 years from the date of certification. Prior to this date certification is/was valid for only 2 years. There is no certification grandfathering.

Note: * the 45-days period is comprised of a "30-day standard period" and a "15-day grace" period allowing the member a little more time to complete the training.

3. Security / Background Checks

Members appointed to certain roles must complete the Background Check Authorization Consent Form for Canada and send it to Supreme. These roles are:

- Family Director, and
- Community Director

Once the training is successfully completed Supreme will initiate a security/background check on the member. All the member's information is sent to the R.C.M.P. in Canada who conduct the background check. The R.C.M.P. only report back to Supreme if the member has passed or failed... no other information is provided to Supreme.

It should be noted...

The Grand Knight AND Program Director are NOT required to undergo a background check if that is the only role they occupy.

However, **should either the Grand Knight or the Program Director also assume the role of the Community Director and/or Family Director then they will be subject to a background check and must complete the Background Check Authorization Consent Form and submit it to Supreme.**

4. Compliance and Liability

All these regulations for compliance come down to two very important items – insurance and liability.

Councils that meet all the requirements as outlined in items 1, 2, and 3 above are considered to be fully compliant. They will be covered (insured) by Supreme should anything happen during a youth event.

So, for example, if your Council is fully compliant, hosts a youth event, and something happens to a child during the event then the Council is fully covered and supported by Supreme should the situation with the child result in litigation initiated by the parent or guardian.

5. Non-Compliance and Liability

Councils that do not meet all the requirements as outlined in items 1, 2, and 3 above are considered to be non-compliant by Supreme.

In this case should something happen to a child during a Council hosted youth event it may result in litigation. This causes a potential liability ripple effect. Not only can the host Council be sued but everyone in our jurisdiction is liable and may be listed as defendants. This includes the State Council, the State Board, and everyone, yes everyone, in our jurisdiction.

Councils who are not fully compliant are advised NOT to host any youth events until they become fully compliant.

6. Diocesan Concerns

The Diocese has raised concerns about Praesidium training and Councils being fully compliant to host youth events. They are concerned the parish may be named and included in any litigation brought against the Council due to the Council's reluctance to become fully compliant.

To protect itself the parish may undertake certain measures. One is to forbid a Council from conducting and holding their business meetings on church property. Another is they may prohibit the Council from hosting any youth events on church property.

7. Star Council Award

Councils that are non-compliant are not eligible for the Star Council award as being fully compliant is one of the requirements.

A recent Columbian magazine lists only 1 Council in our jurisdiction (Alberta – Northwest Territories) as a recipient of the State Council Award !

8. Council Members Training

Supreme is encouraging every member in the Knights of Columbus to take and complete this training on their own. This includes any member who does not hold a designated position where it is mandatory to take the Praesidium training,

Supreme's desire and objective is to educate all members on the Safe Environment Program and be diligent and observant when they attend or volunteer at youth events. Their goal is to have more eyes watching over the children.

To access this training:

Go to www.kofc.org

Next select at the top right **Safe Environment Program**

On the next screen scroll down to a box titled: **FOR ALL OTHER MEMBERS**

Read and follow the instructions in the box.

Scroll to the bottom of the box

Click on **PRAESIDIUM'S ARMATUS Safe Environment Program Training START ►**

Questions posed by Councils

All responses are directly from the Office of Youth Protection, Supreme.

- a) If a Council does not host youth activities do they (all 4) still have to take the training?
YES, all training is required.
- b) Can one member be appointed to both the Family Director and the Community Director?
Yes, although it is not recommended.
- c) Can the Grand Knight also be the Family Director or the Community Director?
Yes, although highly discouraged.

The point of appointing a different member to each role is so there is more than one person that can be available at events watching over the children.

Comments

A few Grand Knights have mentioned to me that they were not informed until after the 15-day grace period expired that their Family and Community Directors did not complete the Praesidium training and as a result they had been removed from their roles as Directors. This was their first and only notification received.

When one Grand Knight made an inquiry his Family Director responded "...he had received the email but thought it was just another email from Supreme and ignored it".

First off, all Grand Knights must inform every member appointed to either the Family, Community, or Program Director role they must take and complete all Praesidium training and that the Family and Community Directors will undergo a background check.

Secondly, members in these roles should open all emails from Supreme as this is the medium used to provide all the information on Praesidium training and other information on their roles.

Recommended Reading

It is highly recommended that everyone read the updated Safe Environment Program Information Guide (Rev. 2018). It provides complete information on this program and is available online.

Go to www.kofc.org

Next select at the top right [Safe Environment Program](#)

On the next screen on the right side select [Knights of Columbus Safe Environment Guide](#)

Your feedback is invaluable. If anyone has any questions or comments on anything drop me a line. Also, if there is a topic you wish covered in future newsletters just send a note to SA2017@kofc.ab.ca

Thank you ...and God Bless.

Vivat Jesus
Sir Knight John Onyskiw
State Advocate

INDEX

August 2017	Advocate Responsibilities Praesidium Council By-Laws
September 2017	Meeting Minutes Records Retention Policy
October 2017	Officers Desktop Reference Knights of Columbus Logo

November 2017	Conviction of Felony or other Crime Forum: Praesidium Course Council's By-Laws
December 2017	Reinstatement after Conviction of Felony or Other Crime Applicants for Membership in the Order who have Criminal Records Petition for Reinstatement
January 2018	Resolutions – Part 1 Forum: Basketball Free-throw Council Signing Authority Praesidium Course – Multiple Youth Directors Including Multiple recipients in an E-Mail
February 2018	Resolutions – Part 2
March 2018	Roberts Rules of Order (overview) Motions
April 2018	Elections Movie Nite Forum: State Council State Board
May 2018	Council Elections
July 2018	Council Advocates Praesidium – Safe Environment Program Council By-Laws
August 2018	Praesidium...Safe Environment Compliance Council Advocates - Access to Officer's Desktop Reference Website Forum: Council Executive Responsibility
September 2018	Praesidium...Safe Environment Policy Update IT Security Policy Forum: Council Chaplains
October 2018	Protection of Membership and Financial Information Forum: Praesidium / Armatus Reports