



Department of
Local Government, Sport
and Cultural Industries

1

Starting a new club



Frequently asked questions

Do we need to be incorporated?

No, but it is highly recommended.

Incorporation provides protection to individual members in certain situations and gives your organisation the right to sign contracts, lease premises, operate bank accounts, receive grant monies from government and so on. In today's sporting climate, it is considered very good practice.

Do we have to have written rules?

If the club is unincorporated, no. But it is more businesslike and it ensures that the club has a set of objectives.

If you want to become incorporated, yes.

Booklet 12 of this series Establishing your club rules and becoming incorporated provides a step-by-step guide to establishing a set of rules.

New legislation passed in 2016 governs incorporation. Contact the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (Consumer Protection Division) to obtain a comprehensive information package to guide you in becoming incorporated, including model rules that can be used free of charge.

Two simple rules:

- Simplicity is the key to an easily read, understood and workable set of rules
- Take time to understand the role of 'by laws' (rules that can be changed by the committee) as their use is very important in the day-to-day running of the club.

Running the club

You need to put a committee into place to run the club. Remember that small committees tend to be more effective so that all members can play a part in decision-making.

Clubs usually have:

- A president – someone who leads the club and who acts as a chairperson at club meetings
- A secretary – someone to deal with the administration work of the club
- A treasurer – who handles the finances (money) of the club. Small clubs or groups often combine the duties of the secretary and treasurer
- Plus two to four other club members that share the workload in various ways (e.g. fundraising, membership, social)
- It is also useful to have a deputy to chair meetings when the president is absent.

Work out the main areas of responsibility, e.g. fundraising, social etc – then determine the size of the committee required. Recruit a qualified member for special projects as they arise, and try to avoid having people on a committee just to make up numbers.

Do we need an accountant for treasurer?

No. Small club accounts are not complicated, but an effective system right at the start is important.

Ask someone who knows how to set up a simple bookkeeping system to write down the steps for reference. There are many different and easy to use software packages for clubs to use for effective financial management. Be sure to use one.

How do we register our members?

Clubs can use very simple hand kept records of who belongs to the club, their contact details and details regarding their financial status. It is wise to use a computer to keep records as it's more efficient and effective.

It is recommended that initial registrations be done face to face (e.g. registration day) and after that, if at all possible, managed online to include the payment of fees by bank transfer. This is the most simple and effective method.

How do we get sponsors?

Sponsors can cover all or some of the activities of the club, in a general or event-specific way. Firstly, ask your club if sponsors are necessary.

If yes, be sure to prepare a proposal for any potential sponsor that clearly states what the club will do and at what cost for a sponsor. Then make sure you deliver all that has been promised in any sponsorship deal. Non-delivery will destroy a sponsorship arrangement and future relationships.

It is worth remembering that if you secure sponsor's funds or goods that it is going to cost you time and effort to make the support worthwhile.

It is usually better to get your club running efficiently and find sponsors only for specific projects when required.

Can we get financial assistance to set up the club or group?

There are a variety of grants available to community sport and recreation clubs. Your local government and/or Healthway may have grant schemes that you can access.

Do we have to have a post office box for mail?

No, but it is recommended. If the club is incorporated it is required to have an official address and must inform the Commissioner for Consumer Protection of this address. The club must notify the commissioner of a change of address within 28 days of it occurring.

Do we need contact with our local government?

Yes, it is highly advisable!

- Your local government is possibly the clubs most important partner
- Establish a communication link and develop a relationship
- Many local governments may be able to help you with information and resources
- It is also a good idea to provide your local government with a copy of your club plan.

Is personal advice available?

Sport and Recreation (WA) has regional officers with expertise in the delivery of sport and recreation including various aspects of running clubs/groups, junior sport, seniors, Aboriginal sport, coaching, officiating and volunteers that can help. Do not hesitate in contacting your local Sport and Recreation (WA) office.

Your local government may also have services within their operations such as club development officers and recreation officers that can assist.

Do we tell our State Sports Association of our activities?

- Affiliation with your State Sports Association is highly recommended. They provide essential guidance on and for a range of critical issues
- Along with local government your State Sports Association is an essential partner for the club
- In some cases it's obligatory, but it's always desirable.

Step-by-step to starting your club

1. Establish a small group to carry out the tasks involved in establishing a club
2. Make sure there is going to be an ongoing need for the club or group (i.e. what are the aims of the club?). You may want to talk this through with your local government and/or your State Sports Association.
3. Make sure you have a base for your activities. This does not have to be a clubroom.
4. Draft a set of rules. Be sure to consult the model rules published by the state government agency responsible for incorporation.
5. Decide whether to become incorporated
6. Design an effective registration system
7. Draw up a budget
8. Make copies of the club's rules and budget
9. Call your prospective members together to:
 - a. examine the draft rules and budget
 - b. get agreement on your objectives.
10. Ask members to consider standing for office
11. You may have to have a second get-together to:
 - a. agree on the draft rules and costs
 - b. enrol members (after payment of a nominal fee)
 - c. elect office bearers.

Ten hints

1. Draw up a club or group register of members' and volunteers' names, addresses, ages, occupations and other relevant information
2. Develop a plan for the future. Keep records, both electronic and hard copy from the outset. They provide a valuable source of historical data.
3. Plan and be realistic about your budgets for the year
4. Keep your members informed by use of social media and/or a club or group newsletter. Organise a permanent address (post office box). Identify your club's or group's potential members and involve them in your activities.
5. Hold regular, interesting meetings in which decisions are made! Good meetings keep clubs or groups alive (see booklet 7 of this series, Making meetings effective – A short guide)
6. Delegate - Spread the workload. Members will be more committed if their talents are used and it will reduce stress on the elected representatives

7. If appropriate, develop club colours, a uniform or organisation insignia
8. Involve families and have a social aspect to your club or group
9. Remember – take time to plan in detail with your members
10. Think about:
 - a. introducing junior, men's, women's, mixed and veteran teams
 - b. developing a coaching committee
 - c. using your state association's coaching and officiating courses
 - d. making sure members know the rules
 - e. giving everyone a turn at umpiring.

Good luck!

Other resources

This resource is part of a series which provides assistance to Western Australian sport and recreation clubs and organisations to become better managed, more sustainable and to provide good quality services to members and participants.

Other resources in the series include:

1. Starting a new club
2. Planning for your club – the future is in your hands
3. Taking the lead! A guide for club presidents
4. The club secretary – the key to efficiency
5. Show me the money – a guide for the club treasurer
6. Effective club meetings – a guide for the chairperson
7. Making meetings effective – a short guide
8. Delegation – help for the overworked committee member
9. Problem solving – a guide for clubs
10. Promoting your club
11. Seeking and servicing a sponsor
12. Establishing your club rules
13. Risky business – a club guide to risk management
14. Clubs' guide to volunteer management
15. Member protection for clubs
16. How to be an inclusive club
17. Passport into schools – linking sports with schools
18. Youth sport – junior sport policy
19. Long-term involvement – junior sport policy
20. Physical growth and maturation – junior sport policy

21. Sport pathways – junior sport policy
22. Forming links – junior sport policy
23. People making it happen – junior sport policy
24. Quality coaching – junior sport policy
25. Making sport safe – junior sport policy
26. The law and sport – junior sport policy
27. Top 20 tips for officials
28. Top 20 tips for successful coaching

You will find the full series of the booklets on Sport and Recreation (WA)'s website:

www.dsr.wa.gov.au/clubs