



Politics and Rotary

Where does it appear in Rotary Policy? Here are some useful references:

Standard Rotary Club Constitution

Article 14 Community, National, and International Affairs

Section 1 — *Proper Subjects*. Any public question involving the welfare of the community, the nation, and the world is a proper subject of fair and informed discussion at a club meeting. However, this club shall not express an opinion on any pending controversial public measure.

Section 2 — *No Endorsements*. This club shall not endorse or recommend any candidate for public office and shall not discuss at any club meeting the merits or demerits of any such candidate.

Section 3 — *Non-Political*.

(a) *Resolutions and Opinions*. This club shall neither adopt nor circulate resolutions or opinions and shall not take action dealing with world affairs or international policies of a political nature.

(b) *Appeals*. This club shall not direct appeals to clubs, peoples, or governments, or circulate letters, speeches, or proposed plans for the solution of specific international problems of a political nature.

Rotary Code of Policies:

2.090. Clubs and Politics

RI and its member clubs must refrain from issuing partisan political statements. Rotarians likewise are prohibited from adopting statements with a view to exerting any corporate pressure on governments or political authorities. (*October 2013 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 31*)

26.020. Rotary and Politics

Because its world-wide membership includes persons of many facets of political opinion, no corporate action or corporate expression of opinion shall be taken or given by Rotary on political subjects. (*April 2016 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 157*)

34.040.1. Use of Name or Emblem for Political Means

Clubs shall not use the Rotary name or emblem or other of the Rotary Marks for the purpose of furthering political campaigns. Any use of Rotary fellowship to gain political advantage is foreign to the spirit of Rotary. (*January 2020 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 85*)

What can you do to prepare for questions or concerns about Rotary and Politics? Here are some of our recommendations or best practices:

- Appoint a Public Image Chair
 - Consider designating a Public Image Chair for your club. This individual might possess a background in public relations, branding or reputation management, or public image consulting, offering valuable insights to guide the club's decisions regarding branding and image. Their role extends to collaboration with the club and district, addressing any arising issues. Explore the [Club Public Image Basics](#) course on the Learning Center for in-depth information on enhancing your club's public image.
- Create a Plan(s)
 - Consider proactively addressing issues that will come up in your club. Who would be involved? What steps would you take to resolve the issue?
 - Create a public image plan establishing clear guidelines for social media and other public communications on behalf of the club.
 - Take this as an opportunity to review your club bylaws and update where needed. You can see all of our Rotary Governance Documents at this [link](#).
- Political candidates as speakers in club meetings
 - When inviting a political candidate or someone speaking about an issue being considered your community, it is important that the club not take any corporate action to express an opinion on the presentation, nor should it endorse or recommend any candidate for public office.
 - If the decision is made to host a political candidate, consider diversifying perspectives by inviting speakers from different parties to participate in the meeting or at a subsequent date.
 - Anticipate the speaker's talking points by reviewing them beforehand, but also prepare for any unplanned remarks.
 - Thoughtfully plan the visual aspects of the event, including the strategic placement of your club banner and other club/Rotary logos.
 - Consider how you might ensure that it is known that the opinions of the speaker do not reflect that of the club.
- For any situations not explicitly covered in your plan, reach out to your district leaders, your respective CDS Officer, or CDS@Rotary.org for support.