

Lions Clubs and Incorporating

It is strongly recommended that all Lions Clubs incorporate. Doing so helps protect individual club member in lawsuits against the club. Liability would be limited to the capital or assets of the club. Checking to ensure your club's incorporation status is intact is the single most important item a board can do to protect its members.

Incorporating as a non-profit corporation is handled by the Ohio Secretary of State. There is a \$99.00 fee to file the Initial Articles of Incorporation. Renewal cost \$25.00 every five years. Once incorporated, the Secretary of State issues a **Statement of Continued Existence** every five years to the Statutory Agent (any Lion so named in the Initial Articles of Incorporation). This update of records is required by the Secretary of State to maintain the incorporation status of the organization. There is a \$25.00 fee to file this form once every five years. Failure to file such a statement will result in the cancellation of the articles of incorporation. You may contact the Secretary of State to make sure your club's corporation status is still active. There is a search engine on their website under the "Businesses" and "Search Filings" tabs. There is also a special form called the **Statutory Agent Update** to change the appointment of the statutory agent or to change the mailing address of the current agent. There is a \$25.00 fee to file this form.

After the club votes to incorporate for the first time, there are 4 simple steps to take:

1. **Obtain the required form** from the Secretary of States' website: www.sos.state.oh.us. Look under the "Businesses" and "Forms & Fees" tabs. It is Form 532B or the "Initial Articles of Incorporation. Nonprofit, Domestic Corporation."
2. **Fill the form out.** Skip the Effective Date. The corporation will begin when the form is filed. In the purpose of the corporation box, write "see attached" and attach:

The **(fill in name of your club)** Lions Club is chartered by and under the supervision of The International Association of Lions Clubs of Oak Brook, Illinois, and is governed by the Constitution and Bylaws of said Association. The specific purposes for which this corporation is organized are:

- A. To create and foster a spirit of understanding among the people of the world.
 - B. To promote the principles of good government and good citizenship.
 - C. To take an active interest in the civic, cultural, social, and moral welfare of the community.
 - D. To unite the members in the bonds of friendship, good fellowship and mutual understanding.
 - E. To provide a forum for the open discussion of all matters of public interest; provided, however, that partisan politics and sectarian religion shall not be debated by club members.
 - F. To encourage service-minded people to serve their community without personal financial reward, and to encourage efficiency and promote high ethical standards in commerce, industry, professions, public works, and private endeavors.
 - G. Generally, to carry out at **(fill in name of your community)**, the principles and teachings of the International Association of Lions Clubs, a service club organization with whom the **(fill in name of your club)** Lions Club is affiliated.
3. **Send a copy** to the Legal Department of Lions Club International by fax 1-(630) 571-8890 or email (legal @lionsclubs.org) and wait for approval.
 4. **Submit the form.** After receiving your approval from Lions Clubs International, mail your form and \$99 check to the Secretary of State address on the form.