

GUIDELINES FOR CEC DIVISIONS TO OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZE SUBDIVISIONS

Recognition of subdivisions is conferred by the CEC international division – not CEC Headquarters. If your division has not developed forms or procedures for official recognition of subdivisions, feel free to adapt CEC's to suit your division's needs or use them as a guideline to develop your own.

Subdivision Organizational Information

Upon request, subdivision organizers receive subdivision organizational information via e-mail from CEC that includes:

- *Steps for organizing a new subdivision**
- *Sample subdivision bylaws**
- *Subdivision bylaws checklist**

The information/forms are generic. The e-mail advises organizers to contact their division for information on its requirements and forms for applying for official recognition as a subdivision, and the division president and subdivision or membership chair are copied on this message.

Getting Started

After the subdivision organizers have contacted the division, it is helpful for the division to provide support and guidance to help them get started. Some ideas:

- Encourage the organizers to contact the state/provincial unit to elicit their support. They can also ask that space be set aside for the group to meet at the next state/provincial conference and for this meeting to be listed in the conference program.
- “Advertise” the potential subdivision in your newsletter and on your Web site. Encourage members in that state/province to get involved with this new group.
- Provide a list of division members in the state/province so the organizers can invite them to the meeting.
- Is there a division officer or committee chair in that state/province? If yes, they should attend the organizational meeting to answer questions and provide guidance. It's a great way to align the subdivision with your division from the start.
- Subdivisions starting out always appreciate seed money, even if it's only a few dollars to help cover postage and photocopies.
- Contact the organizers a few days after their initial meeting to see how it went and offer technical assistance and encouragement.

***Generic sample available from CEC.*

Documentation Required

Most divisions require the following documentation in order to officially recognize a subdivision:

- *Subdivision application**
- *Officer ID form**
- *Subdivision bylaws**
- *Subdivision bylaws checklist**

Division Recognition Procedure

1. Review bylaws. The *subdivision bylaws checklist** includes commonly required elements. If there are missing elements or other problems or discrepancies, return the bylaws to the subdivision with a note explaining the corrections that need to be made in order for it to be approved.
 - Once approved, retain the original bylaws in the state/provincial unit's files, and provide a copy to the subdivision for its files.
2. Verify that at least 3 officers are current members of CEC and the division. If they're not on your membership list, contact CEC's Customer Service Center at 888.232.7733 or service@exceptionalchildren.org with a request to check their membership. If the subdivision does not have at least 3 member officers, notify the subdivision president that the subdivision cannot be approved until it meets this qualification.
 - Officers can join or renew online at www.exceptionalchildren.org, or print the application from the Membership section of the CEC website at and submit it via mail or fax, or call CEC's Customer Service Center at 888.232.7733 to join by phone.
3. Verify that there are at least 15 CEC/division members in the state/province.
4. Complete the division section of the *subdivision application*.*

That's it! A letter of official recognition should be sent to the subdivision. The letter should also include the procedures for obtaining a charter.

Note: Subdivision membership lists are available through the division membership chair (or another division officer that is decided upon) pulling a list (of their members in that state or province) and sending to the contact.

Reactivating Subdivisions

For subdivisions that have been inactive for less than 3 years: Many divisions require a list of the new officers, a copy of the previously-approved bylaws, and a minimum of 15 members to reactivate the subdivision.

For subdivisions that have been inactive for more than 3 years: Because the bylaws may no longer be in compliance, many divisions require an updated or new bylaws along with a list of officers and 15 members in order to reactivate the subdivision.

Charters

The CEC division – not CEC Headquarters – also issues charters. The CEC recommends that the divisions grant charters to recognized subdivisions after two consecutive years of operation. During that time, the subdivision should meet the following requirements:

- Maintain the minimum membership requirements for subdivision as stipulated in the policies of the division.
- Maintain an approved bylaws on file with the division.
- Submit satisfactory officers lists and *annual reports** to the division.

A sample *charter certificate** is available from CEC.