



A global volunteer organization that improves the lives of women and girls through programs leading to social and economic empowerment.

SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL OF THE AMERICAS, INC.®

# Soroptimist Protocol

## Proper Soroptimist Custom and Protocol

- Begin and close meetings on time; be on time for meetings.
- Attend regularly.
- Address the presiding officer as president, governor or, if the vice president is presiding, by her title followed by her name, e.g. “Vice President Mary.”
- Address another Soroptimist by her first name.
- Do business with Soroptimists on a business basis, expecting no favors or special treatment.
- Pay your own way, unless you’re invited as a guest or as a speaker.
- Invite Soroptimists and others (as deemed appropriate by the president) to business meetings. Welcome visiting Soroptimists.
- Disagree politely and keep informality within the bounds of fellowship and parliamentary procedure.

## Use correct terminology:

- We are Soroptimists — **not** Sorops.
- We are members — **not** sisters or girls.
- We are clubs — **not** chapters.
- We are a federation — **not** national or federal.
- We have a pledge — **not** a creed or motto.
- We attend a club or district **meeting**, region **conference**, federation or international **convention**.
- We elect region officers — **not** regional officers.
- We believe in Soroptimist — **not** “Soroptimism.”

## Use correct names:

- Soroptimist International of (name of your club)
- Soroptimist International of the Americas
- Soroptimist International of Europe
- Soroptimist International of Great Britain and Ireland
- Soroptimist International of the South West Pacific
- Soroptimist International

Protocol promotes orderly procedures. Personal friendships, likes and dislikes cannot matter in official life. Always remember that you honor the office a person holds... not the person.

Note: Should an occasion arise when you do not know the correct protocol, you will find that a gracious, cooperative attitude is most acceptable.

### Introductions

- Officers of other federations are recognized as honored guests and should be seated in positions of honor according to rank when attending club meetings, region conferences and functions, or a new club chartering.
- Past federation presidents attending a convention, region conference, or other function should be recognized by the presiding officer at some time during the affair.
- The custom of standing to recognize various officers should be observed only at the opening of a formal convention or conference.
- If there are a number of dignitaries present who are to be introduced, but are not expected to speak, begin with the highest-ranking guest.
- If guests are expected to say a few words, then begin with the lowest ranking guest.
- While the guest speaker may be introduced when other guests are introduced, a formal introduction should be made just prior to the address.

### Visiting Soroptimists

Because of the recurring questions about responsibilities of clubs or individual Soroptimists toward visiting Soroptimists, Soroptimist International has approved the following statement:

“Soroptimists who travel are welcome at any club meeting throughout the world. Information concerning meetings of clubs in the areas to be visited should be obtained from the headquarters of their own federation and not through the federation president. Personal hospitality may be accepted when it is offered by a member of a Friendship Link, or through a scholarship, or because of personal friendship, but should not be sought. Soroptimists who desire professional engagements should book them through a regular booking agent. Hotel accommodations should always be reserved through travel agents.”

### Protocol for Seating and Recognition of Officers

#### Club

- A club president is recognized as chief officer and host for the club. When not presiding, she should be seated in a place of honor at any club meeting or function. When presiding, she is seated in the center; the guest speaker is seated to her right; and the program chair is seated to the right of the speaker (or honored guest). Other special guests and club officers should be seated to the left of the president. The region governor should be seated to the right of the president.
- International officers, federation officers, federation Board members, and region officers are seated in positions of honor according to rank.
- An international officer, federation officer, federation Board member, or region officer or Board member is recognized as such at any formal function of her own club. Otherwise, she is recognized as any other member of her club.

### Region

- A region governor is recognized as the chief officer and host in her own region. She shall preside at region conferences, and when not presiding, she should be seated in a place of honor at a region conference or function, a Soroptimist club chartering or function, installations and other Soroptimist affairs. Should an international or federation officer or Board member be present, the region governor retains the place of honor.
- International and federation officers are recognized as honored guests in order of rank when visiting region conferences, functions or charterings.
- International and federation officers and visiting Board members may attend region Board meetings only upon invitation from the host governor, and may speak only upon invitation from the governor or Board.
- Guests attending region conferences need not be seated on the platform — except during the opening ceremonies — unless they participate in the program or are specifically invited to that position by the host governor.

### Federation/International

- The president of Soroptimist International of the Americas is recognized at all times as the highest ranking officer of the federation. When not presiding, she is seated in the place of honor at any federation meeting or function.
- The president of Soroptimist International is recognized as the top ranking guest at any formal meeting or function within the federation.

### Wearing of the Membership Pin

By custom, the pin is worn on the left side, close to the heart.