

Club President's Handbook

Congrats on being elected as your club's president! That's a big win and thank you for stepping up to the plate! So, what now? Well, in the past, PROBUS Canada might have overwhelmed you with printed materials, but these days everything's online with the most up to date information. This document is here to help you find all the info you need to run a smooth and fun presidency.

We get that you probably have a ton of questions, so where can you turn for answers?

1. **National Website:** Start by checking out the national website at <https://probuscanada.ca>, especially the [Club Reference Guide](#). It's usually the quickest way to find what you're looking for, and it'll save your fellow Probians from answering the same questions over and over. The website is constantly updated so check it out for the most current information.
2. **Help Desk:** If you can't find an answer, shoot an email to help@probuscanada.ca. This is our help desk where a team of directors and staff members will help you out.
3. **District Director:** If you're still stuck, reach out to the District Director representing your club at PROBUS Canada. You can find them by going to the PROBUS Canada website, clicking on "Our Team" in the menu, and selecting "Directors & Staff." Each director's profile will tell you which areas they cover.
4. **Probus General Manager:** There are some instances e.g. pins, where the General Manager will be the first point of contact but a general rule is go to your Director for help.

We're all volunteers here, so feel free to reach out—we love keeping things casual and friendly!

1. Your Probus club and PROBUS Canada

First things first: every Probus club in Canada runs independently, with only the [Standard Constitution for Probus Clubs](#) laying out the basic rules. How your club operates is up to you and your members, as long as it doesn't conflict with the Constitution.

There's no need to reinvent the wheel! PROBUS Canada is here to support you, not tell you how to run things. For example, they offer [suggested bylaws](#) that you can adopt or tweak to fit your club's needs. You can find all the info you need in the [Club Reference Guide](#), which we'll refer to throughout this document but won't copy verbatim.

Want to dive deeper into resources from PROBUS Canada? Check out their presentation [online](#) or [download](#) for later.

1.1. Annual Club Membership Fees

To keep things running smoothly, PROBUS Canada charges a small annual fee (\$4 per club member for 2026), which is due by December 15 each year. About a third of the funds go toward liability insurance, another third covers staff honorariums, and the rest helps cover costs like travel expenses when Directors visit clubs.

To get the payment details directly to your club's Treasurer, make sure their email address is listed in the national Club Directory. The General Manager notifies the clubs by email when fees are due. No more paper forms, and if possible, please pay via Interac e-transfer.

1.2. Annual General Meeting

PROBUS Canada hosts an online AGM every April, and all clubs are invited to attend. District Directors vote by proxy for their clubs, but you're welcome to represent your club yourself. If you want to do that, notify the PROBUS Canada Secretary that you wish to withdraw your proxy from your District Director. Just make sure your club's email address is up-to-date in the national Club Directory so you don't miss any important info.

2. Leading your Management Committee

The duties of the club president are listed in the [suggested role descriptions](#), but it's the Management Committee that makes the decisions, as laid out in the Constitution.

Many clubs use a simplified version of [Robert's Rules](#) to manage meetings, but you can do what works best for your club as long as it's defined in your bylaws. Make sure you keep records of committee decisions and keep things transparent so the members trust how the club is being run.

It is a good practice to have the roles of your management team clearly defined. Check out the [roles description](#) in the Club Reference Guide. If you have gaps or are instituting a new position, check with the other clubs in your district as a job description may already exist.

It is very rare, but significant conflicts can occur within a club. This is where your bylaws can be a big help and remember your Director is a resource to tap into. We have also added a [suggested code of conduct](#) for clubs to consider and adopt as appropriate.

2.1 Surveys

Need to get a sense of your club's sentiment on any topic? PROBUS Canada can help with the design and operation of an online survey, just follow [these guidelines](#).

2.2 District Interclub Activities

Clubs are encouraged to explore how they may cooperate with each other, sharing ideas, events, etc. Your District Director will appreciate your help with in-person or online meetings.

3. Reviewing Bylaws

It's a good idea to make sure that any new Management Committee members are familiar with the [Standard Constitution for Probus Clubs](#) and your club's bylaws. Every three years, it's a good idea to review your club's bylaws and operating procedures. Usually, a sub-committee is formed to compare your club's current bylaws with the suggested ones from PROBUS Canada to make sure they reflect how your members want the club to run. If changes need to be made, follow the process laid out in your bylaws (Section X in the [Suggested Bylaws](#)).

Just a heads-up: the [Standard Constitution for Probus Clubs](#) can't be changed by your club, but there is a process for requesting amendments as described in its Section XI.

4. National Club Directory

PROBUS Canada keeps a national Club Directory to help people find local clubs and to encourage collaboration between clubs. Make sure someone on your Management Committee is in charge of keeping your club's info updated. A good time to review the directory is right after your club's AGM. No more paper forms—just head to <https://www.probuscanada.ca/find-a-club> armed with [these instructions](#) on requesting updates.

We do suggest that you do not have a personal email address as the club's point of contact on a public facing web page. There are several advantages to this approach including keeping your personal information private!

5. Liability Insurance

All club members are covered by [Commercial General Liability Insurance](#), and Management Committee members have [Management Liability Insurance](#).

There's a lot of info on this in the [Club Reference Guide](#), so be sure to check that out first if you have questions. This tends to be a hot topic, so it's best to get familiar with the details before reaching out to the help desk or your District Director.

Insurance

1. Liability and Management
 1. [Info for Members](#)
 2. [FAQ](#)
 3. Liability Insurance (CGL)
 1. [Why do we need it?](#)
 2. [CGL Policy](#)
 3. [CGL Certificate](#)
 4. Management Insurance (D&O)
 1. [Why do we need it?](#)
 2. [Management Policy](#)
 3. [Management Certificate](#)
5. Claims and Forms
 1. [Claims Process](#)
 2. [Claims Reporting](#)
 3. [Incident Report](#)
 4. [Liability Waiver](#)
2. Optional Plans
 1. [Health and Travel](#)
 2. [Home and Auto](#)

6. Cyberloss

Starting in 2024, our insurance added a Cyberloss exclusion. Most Probus clubs don't have much cyber risk, except for one thing: the membership directory. Make sure your club protects [personal information](#) (PII) and limits access to sensitive data. You should also add warnings about the potential risks when sharing the directory online or in print, and only keep essential data (like names and contact info). Get rid of things like birthdates or vaccination statuses unless they're absolutely necessary.

7. Marketing

7.1. Website

Many clubs run their own websites to connect with potential new members and share info about upcoming events. Websites are also great for organizing club operations, like posting a calendar. Please take note of [this important information about websites](#).

Over 35 clubs use a platform called [WildApricot](#), which helps with everything from membership management to payments. Other clubs use platforms like WordPress or website builders like Wix or Weebly. Be sure to first define what your club wants to accomplish with such an app before spending resources on implementation!

If your club doesn't have an IT expert on hand, don't worry! PROBUS Canada can help you get started with a [simple website](#) that works like an online flyer.

Just a plug that you can put links to the PROBUS Canada videos, podcasts, etc into your club website to help spread the message "we are here!"

7.2. Newsletter

Publishing your club's newsletters can be great to attract new members. If you do publish them, make sure to redact all personal information (names, personal email addresses, phone numbers) , and verify that your members are OK with being in photos.

Also check with your District Director if and how clubs in your area are sharing newsletters as a great resource for their own events and activities.

7.3. Copyright

Heads up: some clubs have faced legal issues because they used copyrighted material like cartoons in newsletters or on websites. To avoid this, make sure your content is either:

- Original work from club members
- In the Public Domain (be careful as it might be in a public site but still copyrighted and you might not know it)
- Under Creative Commons license (with proper credit)
- Purchased from sites like iStock
- A photo in our Probud Photo Library. Note we welcome additional photos submitted to our Photo Library as outlined in the Club Reference Guide.

7.4. Tools

PROBUS Canada has a ton of marketing tools to help clubs find new members.

Head over to the [Table of Contents](#) in the Club Reference Guide to check it out.

7.5. Marketing Assistance

Directors have a small marketing budget for assisting clubs within their district with advertising and promotion expenses. If you have something planned and could use some financial help, reach out to your Director.

1. [Podcast](#)
2. [Videos](#)
3. [Photos](#)
4. [Trifolds, rack cards, ...](#)
5. [Official Logo](#)
6. [Style Guide](#)
7. [Your Club's Website](#)
8. [Simple Websites](#)
9. [Promotional Article](#)
10. [Outreach & Networking](#)
11. [Probud Month Media Release](#)

7.5. Marketing Ideas

Not all clubs are looking for new members but many are. A common question is about ways for promoting a club that go beyond bring-a-friend. Here are a few ideas for you to consider knowing that your local circumstances will inform your approach.

- Do you have a local community TV channel? A personal interview or airing of our Probus video - preferably the 46 sec version
- Local radio community service announcement
- Any local print media? A community service advert or possibly a cheap print advert?
- A Probus info sheet in the Town welcome package (it is in the Marketing section on the PROBUS Canada Website)
- Information sheet in the school board, major employer, healthcare & municipal employees retirement package
- Probus posters scattered around town - grocery community bulletin board, etc
- Seniors events - a table/booth e.g. 55+ fair

Use your imagination and see what might work in your area.

8. Merchandise

As an accredited club in good standing, you can use the Probus name and [logo](#) for non-commercial purposes, like making name tags or custom mugs for your members. There's no exclusive vendor contract, so you're free to choose Ontario's [Strath Craft](#) or source your own.

Pins can be purchased from PROBUS Canada, which buys them in bulk. Just follow [these instructions](#).

9. Recognition

Every club has members who are its backbone and without whom the club might not function as well as it does.

1. [Certificates and Awards](#)
2. [Citation Award Nomination Form](#)
3. [Citation Award Recipients](#)
4. [John R. Morris Award Recipients](#)
5. [Certificate Templates for Clubs](#)

Make sure to publicly appreciate their volunteering using one of the local or national awards! This may also encourage others to step up.

BTW, your District Director would love to be invited to your club, e.g. to present anniversary certificates or personal awards.