

Lions Multiple District 5M Convention Host Planning Guide



Thank you for considering the opportunity to host a MD5M Lions Multiple Convention. Your diligent work, planning and coordination, with excellent leadership and teamwork, will provide a rewarding experience for your club and the Lions of MD5M.

This document was approved by the Council of Governors and is provided as a guide to planning. Unless referring to a specific deadline, it is meant to be a *guide*, not a *rulebook*. Our goal is to adequately provide a quality environment for those attending the convention as they participate in business meetings and educational seminars.

Revised 10/2025

Multiple District Convention Goals

- Increase attendance and get more “rank and file” Lions to attend
- Provide learning and skill-building opportunities
- Strengthen knowledge among Lions
- Build inspiration and passion for Lions work and causes

Documents that reference the Convention that should also be consulted through the planning process:

- Constitution and Bylaws
- Policy Manual
- Lions Protocol Procedures

To assist you in preparing your bid and managing convention arrangements, the following information is provided in this packet:

- Convention Bid Information
- Convention Requirements
- Meal Services
- Host Committee Responsibilities
- Suggested Host Committee Leadership & Committees
- Convention Credentials

In preparing your bid, it must be clearly understood that:

- The bidder must have the advance approval of its District.
- The provisions of the MD5M Constitution, Bylaws and Policy Manual concerning the Multiple District Convention will apply.
- Upon final award of the bid review and approval of contracts that support the bid requirements. These contracts must be completed no later than March 31st, in the calendar year prior to the convention dates.
- No contracts of any kind shall be signed by representatives of the MD5M Host Committee without prior review by the MD5M Legal Consultant.

(See Policy Manual - Chapter 1 - “Table of Organization, Section A - “Committees”, Subsection 4a - “Conventions”)

The Council of Governors and I look forward to working with you in conducting an excellent convention. You are encouraged to contact me at any time if you need assistance.

Cindy Walters
Executive Secretary, Multiple District 5M
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Convention Bid Information

A club, group of clubs, or District may bid for the privilege of hosting a MD5M Multiple Convention. The bidding group should select its Chairperson and receive approval from its club and or District. The club or District representative or selected Chairperson should secure the bid form and information packet from the MD5M Office. Cities, hotels and convention centers wishing to bid for a MD5M Multiple Convention must work through the Convention Committee.

To determine available dates to bid on the Multiple Convention contact the MD5M Executive Secretary.

Bids are due to the Council Chairperson, with a copy to the MD5M Executive Secretary, in writing at least thirty days prior to the MD5M Multiple Convention at which the delegates will vote on the convention site.

The selection of the MD5M Multiple Convention site shall be made by the MD5M Delegates at the business meeting at the MD5M Multiple Convention three (3) years prior to the date of the awarded MD5M Multiple Convention.

The Host Convention Committee Chair(s) shall work with the Headquarters Hotel to set aside a specific block of rooms within the general block for the District Governors and MD5M officers. Minimum Thursday Night Hotel Rooms

- 12 - District Governors
- 12 - District Governor Elects
- International Guest, Council Chair, MD5M Executive Secretary and PIDs
- Review room pickup pattern from past Conventions to have the proper inventory of rooms for each night

Working with the Host Convention Committee Chair(s) and by the October COG or following the July COG meeting prior to the stated convention, the Executive Secretary will assign rooms based on specifications requested by the District Governors and other MD5M officers. The aforementioned specific block of rooms will also include a suite(s) for our visiting International Guest, as well as a suite/room designated as the "Hospitality Room".

Convention Requirements

General Business Session (Friday afternoon and/Saturday morning or afternoon)

- Theater seating
- Skirted, elevated, head table with seating for 4 MD5M (Executive Secretary, Council Chairperson, Parliamentarian & International Guest)
- Lectern at the elevated head table with microphone
- Floor microphones in central aisle - or wireless mic brought around the audience (if speaking from the floor will be required)
- If Friday afternoon, seating for approximately 150 – 200 individuals
- If Saturday morning or afternoon, seating for approximately 300 individuals

Foundation Meetings (Saturday morning)

- Foundation meetings are at the option of the individual Foundations that require approval of major actions by the convention members in their bylaws. Traditionally, these foundations include:
 - Childhood Cancer Foundation
 - Diabetes Foundation
 - Hearing Foundation
 - Vision Foundation
- It is the responsibility of the individual Foundations to request arrangements for a space from the convention host committee, though the Host Committee may want to reach out to Foundations to determine their inclusion in this section.
- Each Foundation is usually given up to 20 minutes to conduct their business.

Flag Ceremony/Service of Remembrance (Friday evening)

- Seating for 300 - 400 individuals
- Space on stage to manage flags/flag poles
- Lectern (1 or 2) on elevated platform
- 2-3 skirted 8' tables for the service (for candles, photos, flowers, etc.)
- Microphone at lectern(s)
- Equipment for music needs - Piano or keyboard, A/V to play pre-recorded music
- The host committee is responsible for conducting the service, including:
 - obtaining a speaker and pianist/keyboard player/singer.

Credentials Certification

- Space is needed for:
 - Friday 10 AM - 6 PM
 - Saturday from 7 AM - 6 PM (unless voting is concluded earlier)
 - Sunday from 7 AM - 11 AM (if needed for voting on Sunday)
- 2 eight-foot skirted tables with 6 chairs (or per Executive Secretary)
- Credential officials are appointed by District Governors (one per District)

Registration/Conference Services Desk

- Conducted by the host committee
- Designated room or foyer space with 3 eight-foot skirted tables with seating for two per table
 - Thursday 4 PM - 7 PM
 - Friday 10 AM - 9 PM
 - Saturday 7AM - 9 PM
 - Sunday 8 - 10:30 AM

Host Committee Headquarters/MD5M Office

- Have designated space near the registration desk or other location convenient to running the Convention.
- Central board table - seating for 8 - 10
- Side worktables - for Executive Secretary and Convention Registrar, near electrical outlets
- Space to stage and store Convention materials
- Have this space available starting early on Thursday. Keys to the room to be in the possession of the MD5M Executive Secretary & Host Committee from Thursday afternoon through Sunday afternoon.
- Should be close to the general registration area

Voting (Sunday morning)

This may not be a requirement for every convention. It should only be needed for conventions where the delegates will be voting for an International Officer.

- 2 rooms needed from 6:30 AM -11:00 AM (Could also be one very large room with two separate spaces for distributing ballots and for voting)
- 6 eight-foot skirted tables individually placed in one of the rooms
- 2 eight-foot tables placed in the other room

Conventions Committee Meetings (Friday afternoon)

(See Bylaws Article IV - "Multiple District Committees, Section 3 - "Multiple District Convention Committees")

- If available 2 rooms suggested from 1 PM - 3 PM (or as designated by the Host Committee and Council Chair) for use by the convention committees:
 - Rules
 - Sergeants-at-Arms
 - Elections
 - Nominations
 - Resolutions
 - Constitution & Bylaws
- If rooms are not available, committees should be able to find a place in the convention hall to hold their brief meetings.
- Board table and seating for 10 - 15 in each room

Seminar Rooms (Saturday morning or afternoon)

- One room with theater seating for approximately 300 individuals, and 4 - 6 rooms, with theater seating for about 50 individuals each room for seminars. The seminar rooms will depend on how the convention committee want to set up them.
- There is traditionally a high need for rooms on Friday; smaller need on Saturday
- Skirted head table in each room with seating for 2 - 3
- Microphone (if the room is large enough to require amplification)
- Signage outside the room to indicate seminar(s) presented within
- Data projectors and screens in each room, as needed

Display/Vendor Area

- Minimum of 15 separate 6-8' skirted tables
- Several of the tables need to be at or near electrical service (ask vendors on registration if they require electricity)
- Should be located out of the main traffic flow pattern for the seminars and meals
- Audio-visual equipment for individual tables to be supplied by or paid for by the requesting party (club, committee, project, etc.)
- If a for profit vendor requests a table, the Host Committee will set the pricing for the use of the table and space, at the discretion of the Host Committee
- Determine if hotel charges for use of tables (some do; some don't)

Council of Governors Meeting (Friday 7 AM - 12 Noon)

- Skirted head table with seating for 3
- Skirted participant tables, open square, seating for 24.
- Lectern at or very near head table with microphone.
- Display screen for projection
- Conference Wi-Fi availability to facilitate the zoom needs for the COG
- Additional seating theater style for 40-50 in the back or sides of the room.
- The Executive Secretary works with the venue/caterer to arrange the necessary continental breakfast, coffee and water service as part of the Multiple District budget (direct the charges to the Executive Secretary).
- Seating as directed by Executive Secretary (there is a diagram to show this).

DGE Meet-and-Greet Space (Friday Afternoon)

- District GLT leader coordinates the agenda for this event and ensures that those who should be invited get invited
 - DGEs + partners
 - 1VDGEs + partners
 - 2VDGEs + partners
- Determine Audio/Visual needs based on space and presenter requirements
- The Executive Secretary works with the venue/caterer to arrange the necessary snacks (cookies, dry snacks) and beverage service (lemonade, tea, water, etc.) as part of the Multiple District budget.

Hall of Fame Recognition (Saturday during Lunch)

- Connect with DGs to determine their HOF recipients and ensure that DGs

distribute registration information recipients and their families

- Maintain a list of HOF recipients to determine reserved seating at luncheon
- Work with PIDs to ensure the script for award presentation as part of lunch session is completed and the facility is set to accommodate how they wish to do the presentation.

Meal Services

PDG Banquet/Reception (Friday Evening)

- Provide room/area for the Past District Governors Association to hold their annual PDG Banquet. PDG Association & President will arrange all details, including meal choice and billing the attendees, once room is made available.
- Costs for this event are covered by the PDG Association.

Friday evening Mixer

- A social gathering that will follow the Flag Ceremony/ Service of Remembrance
- Planned by the Host Committee

Optional Head Table Setup - Head tables, when used at all, tend to be used for Saturday Banquet only - as the most formal event during the Convention.

- Not having head tables at breakfasts and lunches tend to make those events move quicker and make the banquet head table more special.
- The traditional two-tier head table can require a lot of space and a large amount of staging that may be beyond the venue's inventory (and would require expensive rental from outside vendors).
- The trend nationally tends to be moving away from head tables, particularly outside of formal banquets. This is a nod to changing tastes, especially among younger and newer Lions.
- Banquet head table is typically already set to include both seated DGs and DGEs, spouses, visiting international guest, CC & Exec Sec (2 tiers - up to 30 on top tier, up to 26 on bottom tier)
- Individuals sitting at both levels of the head tables will process in after everyone has been admitted to the room and are seated. The procession is organized by someone from the host committee.

Saturday Morning Breakfast

This meal may or may not be part of the meal package for the Multiple Convention at the discretion of the Host Committee preparing the bid

- Lectern with microphone in the middle of the upper head table.
- Rounds of 8 or 10 for approximately 250-300 individuals.
- 2 - 3 round tables reserved for dignitaries and guests.
- Meal should be served approximately five to fifteen minutes after scheduled seating time.

Saturday Luncheon

- Include reserved tables for MD5M Hall of Fame recipients and invited guests. (Need to get HOF + guest count ahead of time).
- Rounds of 8 or 10 for approximately 275-350 individuals.
- Meal service will need to be coordinated with caterer and CC to give time for opening ceremony such as Pledges.
- Meal should be served approximately five to fifteen minutes after scheduled seating time, unless served buffet style as attendees enter seating area.

Reception (Saturday afternoon prior to Saturday Evening Banquet)

- Start approximately an hour prior to the banquet time
- Provide a cash bar (or several, based on attendance) that run through the end of the banquet time
- Boutonnieres are provided to the individuals sitting at the banquet head tables.
- Photos are usually taken of the DGs, DGEs and their partners when the boutonnieres are distributed and before lineup happens for march-in procession. (This whole process takes more time and space than one would expect.)

Saturday Night Banquet

- Lectern with microphone in the middle of the upper head table
- Rounds of eight or ten for approximately 200-250 individuals
- 4 - 6 round tables reserved for dignitaries and guests
- Meal should be served approximately five to fifteen minutes after scheduled seating time. Coordination with caterer and CC to give time for opening pledges, anthems, prayer, etc.

Sunday Brunch

- Lectern with microphone in the middle of the upper head table.
- Rounds of 8 or 10 for approximately 200 individuals.
- 2 - 3 round tables reserved for dignitaries and guests.
- Meal should be served approximately five to fifteen minutes after scheduled seating time.

FOR ALL MEALS

- Have Sergeants-at-Arms at doors, buffets or other key places to monitor credentials (has everyone paid for the respective meal)
- It is suggested that plated meals be served whenever possible. Several Conventions have seen food run out in buffet settings and cost are often higher for buffet options. To prevent the potential for empty buffet lines and negative conference experiences plated meals are suggested.

Host Committee Responsibilities

(See Bylaws - Article III - “Duties of the Multiple Council of Governors”)
(See Bylaws - Article VI - “Multiple District Convention, Section 10)

Reports to the Council of Governors

- The Host Committee Chairperson and key member of the Host Committee (as appropriate) shall report in person to the Council of Governors on the plans and arrangements that have been or need to be made for the MD5M Multiple Convention.

IN THE PRECEDING FISCAL YEAR TO THE CONVENTION:

- JULY COG MEETING - Reports with status on any meetings and/or decisions made by Host Committee following awarding of the convention site bid.
- MARCH COG MEETING - Immediately preceding the Lions fiscal year, the Host Committee will present the proposed hospitality package for approval, as well as room rates, if not included in the original bid.

IN THE FISCAL YEAR OF THE CONVENTION:

- JULY COG MEETING - Preliminary budget for approval and other reports as necessary
- OCTOBER COG MEETING - Final budget for approval and any other reports as necessary
- MARCH COG MEETING - Final programs and schedule for approval
- FRIDAY COG MEETING OF THE CONVENTION - Preliminary attendee numbers and any other reports as necessary

FOLLOWING THE CONVENTION:

- JULY COG MEETING - Final summary report and audit of the books

Printing of the convention program booklet.

Select a Convention theme, logo and other identity elements.

Making initial contact and non-binding space booking arrangements with hotels and convention space.

Composing convention registration forms, online registration systems and if needed, hotel registration forms.

Composing a suggested convention schedule, the pertinent convention information to be emailed to the MD5M Executive Secretary, Council Chairperson and the Council of Governors at least three weeks prior to the October Council meeting during the same fiscal year of the convention.

Sending of registration forms and convention information to all District Secretaries/District Administrator (per that district's privacy policy) after the October Council meeting and before January 1.

- Provide representatives at each District Mid-Winter Convention to market the convention, programs and location.
- Submitting registration forms and news releases regarding the MD5M convention to the District Governors or District Newsletter Editors for entry into their District Newsletters.

Conducting fundraising activities and selling advertisements in the program booklet to offset the costs of convention expenses if the Host Committee so desires.

- Set a timeline for ad sales - set deadline 2 - 3 months before sending the convention book to print to allow time to collect funds and get all the artwork submitted.
- It is traditional to include a full-page ad for the next convention and the one after that (if that team is ready to place an ad). These ads are provided at no cost.
- A portion of the dues paid by the Lions of Multiple District 5M is allocated to the MD5M convention. These funds are released to the convention through the Executive Secretary.

The Host Committee should appoint a treasurer to collect, disburse and account for all funds attributed to the Multiple District 5M Convention except those held by the MD5M Executive Secretary.

- The Executive Secretary holds a portion of the dues to use toward the LCIF award given to the visiting international guest.

The Host Committee Treasurer shall not pay any invoices unless accompanied by a payment approval voucher signed by the Host Committee Chairperson.

Meal prices, menus and room rates should be established by the Host Committee and submitted to the Council of Governors for approval no later than the March Council meeting in the year preceding the year of which it takes place.

An expected registration of 300 - 350 would be a planning number.

- Not all attendees register for the entire convention. Not all registrants attend meal functions, seminars or business sessions.
- Hotel rooms and convention space should be reserved on a non-binding basis as soon as possible before the bid is presented to the Council of Governors. No binding contracts are authorized until after the convention bid is awarded and the MD5M Legal Consultant has reviewed.
- Estimated hotel rooms needed: (may need to adjust based on proximity to Twin Cities Metro area and how many of those Lions will commute to Convention)
 - Thursday night 50 rooms
 - Friday night 150 rooms
 - Saturday night 150 rooms

All possible suites of all sizes should be held for all three nights until release to the Host Committee by the MD5M Executive Secretary.

The Host Committee shall not allow any campaign literature, gifts or other campaign paraphernalia to be placed anywhere in the room for the Service of Remembrance, on any dinner table in the banquet hall or in the reception area for the Saturday Night Banquet.

Know that there are two groups that have large influence on the Convention - the Host Committee (the group from the District that puts on the Convention) and the COG Convention Committee (the group from the COG that oversees certain Convention deliverables like budget and schedule). It is important to know how these groups interact and what input is needed and expected from the COG committee.

Provide excellent signage - directional signage to get participants around the venue and signage for the various meetings and functions.

Plan for miscellaneous elements to plug into the Convention - elements that could be easily overlooked:

- Providing a space for trainings such as Guiding Lions training to be able to be booked to occur during the convention.
- Collection of eyeglasses from the Hearing Foundation - which usually brings their trailer for a set time to collect the large volume of glasses that participants bring.
- Securing a (volunteer) photographer to document the Convention and take formal photos of the DGs and DGEs for District publications.
- Work with COG hospitality host on parameters for Thursday evening and Friday lunch hospitality functions (what sort of suite/sleeping room do they need, etc.?)
- Set a firm plan for the Silent Auction
 - Convention committee should designate which foundation is the beneficiary
 - Establish communication and partnerships between Host Committee and the respective Foundation
 - Coordinate with the Foundation on promotion throughout the District on auction theme (if any), process for making/delivering contributions, etc.
 - Ensure that Foundation has plan and process in place to solicit bids and collect funds

Suggested Host Committee Leadership & Committees

(See Policy Manual Chapter 9 - "Conventions")

When making appointments to leadership and committee roles, think about criteria for potential members. What attributes, skills and abilities do the roles need and how to candidates match those?

The Host Committee may want to consider having an "Executive Board" to manage the many quick and small decisions that need to be made outside of committee meetings. This Board could consist of the Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, Hotel Logistics Chair and Council Chair.

When recruiting Host Committee members, be ready to talk about:

- Time requirements
- Work projects needed
- Expectations of members (attendance, participation, fundraising, etc.)

Host Committee Chair and Vice-Chair

- Ensure that all elements of the Convention are planned and communicated.
- Bid preparation.
- Council of Governors reporting.
- Sub-Committee appointments.
- Coordination of committee meetings and agenda-setting.
- Responsible for signing contracts with hotels, convention venue, etc.
- Coordinating schedules as required and needed with CC.

Council Chair

- Support the Host Committee work
- Communicate key messages between the Host Committee and the COG
- Note - there is a misconception that it is "the Council Chair's Convention". The CC is not the "decider" - they help make sure things get done and can have significant influence on activities and outcomes.
- Council Chair and Executive Secretary should be invited to all convention committee planning meetings during the year of the convention.

Treasurer

- Develop budget with input from the Chair, Council Chair and committee. All expenditures which include but not limited to: convention facilities, badges, pins, prizes, decorations, meals, programs, insurance, and incidental expenses necessary to conduct the convention shall be contained in the budget approved by the Council of Governors.
- Track all fundraising and ad sales as part of the budget.
- Regularly update and report on the budget as revenue and expenses change.
- Responsible for paying all expenses needed for the convention.

Secretary

- Recording minutes of all convention meetings.
- Send minutes and all other communications in a timely manner.
- Other duties as requested by chair or committee.

Registration Chair

- Prepare hotel and convention registration forms and online registration system.
- Compilation of registrations.
- Manage rosters during the registration period and prepare lists for Convention.
- Work with Treasurer on registration funds received.
- Notification of Chairperson of any need to reallocate space. May need to work with venue caterer on numbers for meals.
- Attendance and record keeping (for the final report to the Council).

Promotions & Marketing Chair

- Prepare articles for MD5M Newsletter and District Newsletters.
- Send convention information to all and District Secretaries/District Administrators.
- Convention marketing can be coordinated with MD5M Marketing Chair and MD5M Technology Coordinator.
- Maintain Social Media presence and provides updated info for MD5M website.
- In desired, develops the “Swag Bags” (convention pin, treats and materials, etc.) given at registration with help from rest of committee. It is perfectly acceptable to eliminate the swag bags to save cost on the convention, and they are by no means a required element.

Program Chair

- Prepares the Convention booklet or work with graphic designer/print shop on this.
- Develops Convention program schedules
- Work with Chair, Vice Chair and CC to establish the programs.
- Identify person or team to work with presenters to coordinate information distributed at Convention - slideshows, handouts, video presentations, etc. Coordinate with Hotel Logistics Chair on AV and technology needs.

Service of Remembrance Chair

- Gathers names from each district on those Lions/ Leos who have passed since the previous convention. For most districts it is those who have been included in the district midwinter Service of Remembrance.
- Works with the Equipment and Audio/Visual Chair to transfer all district information/photos into a singular PowerPoint for projection at the service.
- Coordinates with the sitting DGs to have someone read the deceased names. Works with Program Chair to compile a Service of Remembrance program.

Hotel Logistics Chair

- Works with Hotel events staff on schedule, meeting room setup, sleeping room block, food & beverage needs, setup of foundation tables and all other arrangements at the event venue.
- Works with all Program Chair and Equipment/AV Chair as needed and connect with venue AV provider to meet convention needs.
- Prepares directional signate and meeting space signage

Equipment and Audio/Visual Chair

- Coordinate all projected visual displays during the convention (meeting slides, videos, etc.)
- Work with Program Chair and Service of Remembrance Chair to ensure that display needs for these groups are properly prepared and presented
- Ensure that someone manages on-site event needs (loading presentations, advancing slides, etc.)
- Work with venue technology staff on needed equipment, set-up.

Excursion & Service Activities Chair

- Plans and facilitates Service projects and off-site excursions (if applicable).
- Coordinates the First Timer contest – arranges type of contest to use, prizes to be awarded, presents the winner during Sunday morning brunch.
 - Usual prize(s) are meal packets at next year's Convention. Free rooms are not suggested since this is hard for future Host Committees to honor.
 - Make sure to communicate winners to next year's Host Committee.

Convention Credentials (Appendix 1)

Credential Certification (See Policy Manual Chapter 9 - "Conventions")

- Clubs should be using the Lions Portal to report their delegates to the Executive Secretary.
- Mailing - The Executive Secretary shall, during the month of March, send pre-numbered delegate and alternate forms prepared in triplicate to the Secretary of each Lions Club in good standing with a copy of the correspondence sent to the District Governors. The number shall correspond with the number of delegates and alternates to which the club is entitled.
- Club Secretary - Each Club Secretary shall enter the appropriate information on the form, have it signed by the named delegate or alternate and countersigned by the Club President or Club Secretary.
- Distribution - The originals, a list of delegates and alternates, and all unused sets of delegate and alternate forms shall be mailed to the MD5M office, postmarked no later than 15 days prior to the convening date of the Annual Convention of MD5M. The second copy is to be given to the Lion named on the certificate, and the last copy shall be retained by the club.
- Certification of Credentials - Each delegate or alternate may be certified by presenting the second copy of the Credential Certificate to the Certification Office along with an approved form of identification and signing the Credential Certificate at that time. The Credential Certificate, and the signature must agree with that on the original certificate.
- Late Submissions - Club delegates and alternates whose names do not appear on the club list described above may be certified as delegates as follows:
 - Go to the Certification Office to determine that there is an opening for either a delegate or an alternate
 - If there is an opening, bring either the Club President or Secretary with you to the Certification Office to document your status as a delegate or alternate.
- Close of Certification - The Certification Office will certify Credentials up to and until the closing of the polls on the final day of the Convention.
- Voting - The certified Voting Certificate must be presented when voting on any issue or to receive a ballot as required by the Rules of the Convention.