

The Society for Creative Anachronism
East Kingdom

**Office of the Seneschal
Handbook**

rev. May 2021

Statement from the East Kingdom Seneschal

The policies in this handbook govern the Office of the Seneschal of all branch groups in the East Kingdom of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. (SCA). Branch Seneschals are responsible for knowing and following these policies.

Part I. Branch Seneschals

A. Requirements for Branch Seneschals.

1. You must be 18 years of age or older in order to hold the office of branch Seneschal.
2. You must be a member of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc., either as a sustaining member in your own name, or as a family/associate member residing at the same address and have direct access to *Pikestaff*. Furthermore, you must maintain this membership without a lapse for the duration of your tenure in this office. In the event of a membership lapse, a new Seneschal shall be chosen by the group and the lapsing Seneschal removed from the *Regnum Orientalis*.
3. You must have a valid mailing address and telephone number for the roster. these will not be published in *Pikestaff*. If you wish, you could set up a PO BOX and/or acquire a Voice over IP (VoIP) phone number for your security.
4. You must have access to email and use the account provided by the Webminister's Office for all official communications. As the contact point for your branch, your name and officially provided email account will be printed each month in the *Regnum Orientalis* in *Pikestaff*.
5. You must reside within the boundaries of the branch, as defined by the zip codes registered with the Kingdom Seneschal's Office. Your mailing address will be considered proof of residence in most cases. Anyone who knowingly provides a false residence in order to hold office will be subject to administrative sanctions. The residence requirement is not negotiable except with prior written permission of the Kingdom Seneschal.
6. You must accept the position of branch Seneschal and agree to fulfill the duties of the office. You will need to send an email to your Regional and Kingdom Seneschal including the following: your SCA and legal name, your full mailing address and telephone number, and the name of the branch of which you will be Seneschal. Along with this email you will need to send proof of your membership (i.e. a copy of your membership card or a copy of a communication from the Registry) and proof of address. Failure to provide any of the above information can result in a delay in your appointment. You should also ensure that the outgoing Seneschal provides an email to the Regional Seneschal advising that they have resigned. Once all information has been received, the Regional Seneschal will notify the Kingdom Seneschal and Kingdom Chronicler of the change in branch Seneschal.

B. Appointment of Branch Seneschals.

1. There are no individual warrants; the Seneschal's Office works on the roster system. The roster, in this case, is the *Regnum Orientalis* which appears each month in *Pikestaff*. You will be warranted in an acting capacity upon receipt of your letter and information; it becomes official when published in *Pikestaff*.
2. The selection of a branch Seneschal is governed by local customs which have been established and made known to the members. It will be assumed that the candidate is the choice of the branch members, unless proven otherwise, either before or after the fact. Branch Seneschal candidates should not be substantially opposed by the populace of the group.
3. The Kingdom Seneschal reserves the right to refuse a branch Seneschal candidate for any reason. Should a request to be rostered as a branch Seneschal be denied, the Kingdom Seneschal shall advise the candidate, in writing, of the reasons why they were refused.

4. In the event that a branch finds itself without a rostered Seneschal, the *Regnum Orientalis* shall bear the term VACANT for that branch. Any established branch which is without a rostered Seneschal for a period of two consecutive months may be brought to the attention of the Crown and the Board of Directors for possible dissolution. An incipient branch that finds itself without a Seneschal for two or more months is subject to dissolution by the Kingdom Seneschal per the Society Seneschal's Handbook; this does not require approval of the Society Seneschal.

C. Terms of Office and Renewal of Branch Seneschals.

1. Branch Seneschals will be warranted upon receipt of the required information (see section IV.A.6. above). Seneschal term limits are set by local custom, but in no case shall exceed 4 consecutive years. A member may serve more than 1 term, but the terms may not be consecutive without express written permission of the Kingdom Seneschal. The Kingdom Seneschal reserves the right to remove any branch Seneschal. Should a branch Seneschal be removed, the Kingdom Seneschal will inform that officer, in writing, of the reasons for removal.
2. The complete *Regnum Orientalis* will be presented to the Crown once per reign for ratification. The Crown has the right to strike the name of any branch Seneschal for any reason. If the Crown chooses to strike the name of a branch Seneschal from the *Regnum Orientalis*, the branch shall be informed in writing by the Kingdom or Crown Principality Seneschal (if applicable). The branch shall have 45 days to select a replacement.

D. Resignation of Branch Seneschals

1. A Seneschal may resign at any time, without prejudice.
2. Written resignation should be sent to the branch's officers and Territorial Coronet (if applicable) with as much advance notice as possible to give the branch enough time to select your replacement.
3. Written resignation must be sent to the Regional/Crown Principality Seneschal and Kingdom Seneschal in order to make the necessary changes in the roster. The resignation may be accompanied by a letter from the duly chosen successor requesting appointment.
4. You should assist the new Seneschal to ensure a smooth transition of office, including transferring access of the official online account information in accordance with the Webministry's policies and procedures.

E. Removal of Branch Seneschals

1. Seneschals may be removed for the following reasons: infractions of membership policy; repeated failure to meet reporting requirements; non-residence in the branch; lack of support from the members of the branch; failure to use officially provided online account; failure to follow instructions from the Regional and/or Kingdom Seneschal; violations of civil law; violations of the Governing Documents of the SCA, Kingdom Law, or these policies; or endangerment of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc.
2. Written warnings will be given for such infractions as membership or reporting problems. Multiple written warnings may lead to removal from office.
3. Removal takes effect upon written notification from the Kingdom Seneschal or the removal of the branch Seneschal's name from the *Regnum Orientalis* in *Pikestaff*, whichever comes first. This supersedes the *Regnum Orientalis* currently in print.

4. The process to appeal this decision can be found in Kingdom Law.

F. Restrictions

1. No branch Seneschal may be a Territorial Baron/ess.
2. No branch Seneschal may be a Greater Kingdom Officer. This does not include deputy or regional positions.
3. No Seneschal may assume the Crown. The office must be turned over to a deputy, as provided for in Kingdom Law.
4. No Seneschal may hold more than one position in the Seneschalate at the same time without written permission of the Kingdom Seneschal, but may hold other branch offices, in keeping with the policies of that office. This should be avoided as much as possible to avoid burnout.
5. Seneschals may not be the autocrat for their own branch's events or for Kingdom sponsored events that are held in their branch's territory.

G. Responsibilities of Branch Seneschals

1. You must read and uphold the Governing Documents of the SCA, Kingdom Law, the Society Seneschal's Handbook, and this East Kingdom Seneschals' Handbook. Be familiar with key policies, including policies, including the SCA's Code of Conduct, the Bullying and Harassment Policy, policies regarding Minors, and the Social Media Policy. Any question concerning the interpretation of Law can be clarified by the Kingdom Seneschal's Office. (Kingdom Law is available on the Kingdom Seneschal's website at seneschal.eastkingdom.org. The Governing Documents of the SCA are available at www.sca.org. The Society Seneschal's Handbook is available at socsen.sca.org)
2. You must read *Pikestaff* regularly. Your officially provided online account is a member of the Branch Seneschals' Google Team Drive, and you should check there regularly for updates and announcements.
3. Because you have a seat on the Curia Regis, you represent the interests of the members of your branch in the decision-making process of the Kingdom. You should make an effort to attend Curia whenever possible. If you cannot attend, make your opinions known through an email to the Kingdom Seneschal or in-person representative.
3. You must inform the Kingdom Seneschal and Chronicler of any changes in your name, address or telephone number. A courtesy copy should also be sent to your Regional Deputy.
4. You must have a deputy. Ideally, this should be your replacement-in-training, but you must at least have someone designated to take over if needed.
5. You must file quarterly reports with your Regional Deputy by 1 April, 1 July, 1 October, and 1 January, covering all local activity for the previous three-month period. The quarterly report is an overview of your branch's activity for the preceding 3 months and must summarize all major activities (events, meetings, practices, demos), officer changes, future planned activities, and any major problems.

A courtesy copy may be sent to the Kingdom Seneschal, but it is not required.

Incipient branches must file a copy of their quarterly report with their sponsoring group's Seneschal and with the Deputy for New Groups.

The Kingdom Seneschal reserves the right to implement standard forms for branch Seneschal reporting.

Consistently failing to file your branch's quarterly report on time may lead to removal.

6. You must ensure that your branch has the necessary warranted officers as required by Kingdom Law. Any offices not required are optional and may be created as local needs demand. You must make sure that all branch officers, including yourself, continue to meet all membership and residency requirements, and have been properly warranted through the appropriate Kingdom office.
7. You must ensure branch officers are using their Kingdom-provided E-mail addresses for all official business. To review email usage, see the Webministry Tool found here:
<https://members.eastkingdom.org/tools/>

For additional help with this tool, please contact the Webministry via email help@eastkingdom.org

8. You are responsible for your branch having a known procedure by which it will consistently choose branch officers and their replacements. No branch officers are officially warranted until they have been found acceptable by the corresponding Kingdom Officer.
8. You are required to monitor branch membership levels to ensure that they meet the minimum required for your branch level as defined in the Governing Documents of the SCA. Aim to maintain a cushion of a few extra members to allow for fluctuation in renewal rates.
9. You must maintain an up-to-date list of your branch's zip/postal codes, and file all requests for changes with the Kingdom Seneschal's Office. To get a list of your branch zip codes, contact the Kingdom Postal Legatus. legatus@eastkingdom.org
10. You must keep records of the branch's official correspondence. The files should also contain such items as the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc.'s tax information and letter of introduction, list of zip codes, roster of branch officers, site information, etc. These files must be turned over to your successor within thirty days of resignation or removal from office.
11. You must answer communications promptly. Be sure to check your official email regularly.
12. You should hold and chair regular meetings of branch members to conduct such business as is necessary, at least once per quarter. Should your branch be large enough, regular meetings of the officers are also advised.
13. You are in charge of scheduling and maintaining the calendar of your branch's activities. You must be aware of all activities taking place within your branch, since you are ultimately responsible for them. You should see to it that your branch has a procedure for planning and sponsoring its events and activities, and that the necessary event information is sent to *Pikestaff* on time, as well as published on the online event calendar. You should also make sure that the appropriate branch officers are present at events and practices (i.e., the knight marshal must be present at fight practice), and that all event reports are filed in a timely fashion. You should also make sure that quarterly reports and event reports for the Exchequer are filed in a timely manner.
14. You should maintain good communications with the Seneschals of neighboring branches, both in order to avoid scheduling conflicts and to ensure smooth working relations.

15. Pay special attention to new members, transplants to the East from other Kingdoms, and visitors.
16. Except in the case of an emergency, do not involve civil authorities in the branch's business without first being in contact with the Kingdom Seneschal. (In the case of financial matters, also contact the Kingdom Exchequer before proceeding further). If an emergency situation requires the presence of fire, medical, or police personnel, do not hesitate to call them first; then contact the Kingdom Seneschal as soon as possible, and file a full report when it's over. Do not attempt to take care of incidents such as assaults or harassment yourself; call the police.
17. You must notify the Kingdom Media Liaison of impending media coverage of any of your branch's activities when possible. You are required to file copies of any pieces with the Kingdom Seneschal and Kingdom Media Liaison. media@eastkingdom.org
18. You are the legal representative of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. in your area only. Your equivalent 21st century title is "Local Chapter President." If there are arrangements that need to be made with civil authorities for the ongoing and regular use of a meeting or practice site, you should be the one making such arrangements. If the branch receives a written letter of permission to use a particular site on a regular basis for meetings/practices, you must maintain the original of that letter and make sure that the appropriate officers have copies of the permission letter (For example, if a town gives written permission for the SCA to use township facilities for fighter practice, you should keep the original letter; then make sure that the Knight Marshal running the practice has a copy to present to authorities if needed).
19. You are required to be a member of your branch's financial committee, to review branch financial reports and banking documents, and to be the second signatory on your branch SCA bank accounts.
20. You must make sure that all group policies are known to all branch members, preferably in a written form. While these policies have no official standing within the hierarchy of rules governing the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc., they have a great deal of weight concerning the daily operation of branches. Should your policies be in written form, they must be on file with the By-Laws Deputy. Every time your policies are revised, submit a complete set with the revisions to the Kingdom Seneschal and the By-Laws Deputy.
21. As the SCA's legal representative, you have the ultimate authority for all events in your branch. If you become concerned with the event staff or steward, or the event itself, contact the Kingdom Seneschal as soon as possible for guidance. Should circumstances require sanction to be pulled from an event, as described in the Governing Documents of the SCA, the branch Seneschal must notify the Kingdom and Regional Seneschal as soon as possible, and a written report as to the circumstances must be filed with the Kingdom Seneschal and Regional Seneschal within 5 days of the event.
22. Avoid taking sides in disputes. Also avoid confusing the identities of any household with the branch itself. Branch activities must be made available to all, regardless of their other affiliations.
23. Set reasonable expectations for when you will be available to respond to emails, generally within 24 hours of receipt. Consider having "office hours" after which you are not available unless it is an emergency.

Part III – Branches

Formation of new branches and changes of branch status must follow Section III.D of the Governing Documents of the SCA. Any person(s) wishing to form a new branch should contact the Kingdom Seneschal for the current procedure. No group shall be a recognized branch of the East Kingdom unless it appears in the *Regnum Orientalis* section of the Kingdom Newsletter *Pikestaff*.

Part IV – Events

For the purposes of these policies only, the term “event” is defined as an activity sponsored by a branch of the East Kingdom intended for the attendance and enjoyment of the populace and may require fees to attend. All practices where the participants contribute funds to cover the rental of a practice site are not considered events. Martial practices, guild meetings, and the like are defined by their respective Kingdom Greater Offices.

A. Branch’s Responsibility

- i. A branch must establish and make known to their populace the procedure for sponsoring and scheduling events.
- ii. Branches may only sponsor events within their own territory as defined by the post code lists on file with the Kingdom’s Postal Legatus.
- iii. An event may be held within another branch’s territory with prior written consent from the other branch.
- iv. Neighboring branches may establish agreements, lasting no more than two years at a time, concerning sites near the borders. Such agreements must be filed with the Regional and Kingdom Seneschal.
- v. The sponsoring branch is responsible for all activities, duties, and responsibilities associated with the event.
- vi. Branches should make every effort to avoid scheduling events which would conflict with those of neighboring branches.
- vii. Any branch wishing to host an event within 100 miles of a published Crown Tournament, Coronation, or East Kingdom Twelfth Night, must first obtain permission from the current Crown.
- viii. If a branch is incipient, its sponsor is ultimately responsible for any events hosted by the incipient branch.

B. Event Steward’s Responsibility

- i. The Event Steward is acting as an agent of the hosting branch and must be a paid member of the SCA from the start of planning through the end of the event.
- ii. The Event Steward is considered a branch officer of the sponsoring branch for the duration of the planning and execution of the event, including final event reporting.
- iii. A branch’s policies may determine whether an event steward from outside is permitted to organize an event within the branch’s borders.
- iv. If your event requires insurance, the ordering forms and directions are available on the Local Branch Seneschal’s Google Team Drive.

C. Seneschals' Responsibility

- i. No branch may host an event without a rostered Seneschal.
- ii. The sponsoring Seneschal is responsible for confirming the Event Steward is a paid member for the duration of the planning, execution, and final reporting of the event.
- iii. The sponsoring branch Seneschal serves as the emergency Event Steward for all events hosted by their branch and may not be listed as the Event Steward.
- iv. As the legal representative for the branch, the hosting branch's Seneschal should attend all events sponsored by their branch. If the Seneschal is unable to attend an event being held by their branch, an appointed deputy must attend.
- v. The sponsoring branch Seneschal shall follow all waiver requirements set forth in Kingdom Law.
- vi. The sponsoring branch Seneschal shall review and sign all contracts related to an event. They may give written consent to the Event Steward to sign the contract after it has been reviewed.

D. Kingdom's Responsibility

- i. Events sponsored by the East Kingdom must have a deputy Event Steward.
- ii. The Kingdom Seneschal, or their appointed deputy, must attend events sponsored by the East Kingdom.

E. Announcements

- i. All events must be submitted to the East Kingdom Website and the Kingdom Newsletter.
- ii. The event announcement shall conform to the requirements of the Chronicler's Office.
- iii. The Kingdom Chronicler shall not print an announcement from a branch whose Seneschal's office is listed as VACANT in the Kingdom Newsletter without explicit direction from the Kingdom Seneschal.

F. Minors

- i. For a minor to attend an event accompanied by an adult who is not their legal guardian, the responsible adult must be in possession of an SCA waiver and a medical treatment waiver signed by the guardian. The waivers can be found on the SCA website here:

<http://www.sca.org/resources/document-library/>

Part V. Miscellaneous

A. Seek to resolve problems at the lowest level that is effective, starting with a person-to-person basis whenever possible. Involve as few people in the process as necessary, although a mediator may often be helpful. Be aware that if you force someone in authority to solve your problem for you, you may not like their solution.

B. When resolving complaints in the SCA, use the procedures outlined in the Governing Documents of the SCA.

1. East Kingdom Investigators guide has East Kingdom specific procedures for dealing with conflicts and complaints. These procedures are inclusive of all Society Level procedures.

C. Do not meddle in the other offices; allow them to do their jobs. However, you should confirm that they are meeting all requirements set forth for them, since you will be held responsible for them. Do not hesitate to consult them for information in their areas of expertise.

D. Be aware that Personally Identifiable Information (PII) is sensitive and subject to legal restrictions. Contact the Kingdom Seneschal for guidance.

E. Delegate tasks whenever possible. There are many people in this Kingdom and more than enough work to go around.

F. If it isn't written down, it doesn't exist. If you have a serious complaint that you have tried to work out on a lower level, send it to your Regional Seneschal, and, if needed, to the Kingdom Seneschal, in writing.

G. Be tactful; a little goes a long way. Consider your written communication carefully where tone of voice can be misinterpreted.