



Middle Kingdom New Groups Policy

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In accordance with Corpora and Kingdom Law that require the Kingdom Seneschal to set forth policies and procedures regarding the establishment and advancement of groups, this Middle Kingdom Seneschal's Policy is established.

1. **New Groups Designations** Groups seeking establishment will be identified for administrative purposes by one of two designators:
 - 1.1. **Applicant Group**: An applicant group is any group of people who express interest in beginning the process of becoming a full status group in the Middle Kingdom.
 - 1.2. **Incipient Group**: An incipient group is an applicant group that has received agreement from its administering branch and whose officers have been designated as deputies of the officers of that administering branch. A group may be designated Incipient by the Kingdom Seneschal or their designated deputy.
2. **Reasons for Forming a Group** It is recognized that a broad variety of reasons may exist for the establishment of a group. Politics, interpersonal issues, or other conflict-based reasons will not be acceptable as a reason to begin the establishment process, and any group's request based on those reasons will be denied.
3. **Group Administration** In accordance with Corpora, any group seeking establishment in the Middle Kingdom is required to have an 'administering branch'. The determination of which full status branch will serve in this capacity will be made in the following manner:
 - 3.1. **Determining the Administering Branch**
 - 3.1.1. If the group seeking establishment falls within the boundaries of an established and full status group, it will be that group's responsibility to serve as the administering branch. In the case where the established group is also a part of a Barony, the Baron, Baroness and Baronial Seneschal must also be consulted.
 - 3.1.1.1. Under no circumstances shall full status group be required to give up lands already owned by them to a group seeking establishment.

3.1.1.2. If a full status group is not willing to become the administering branch for a group seeking establishment the establishment process will be terminated.

3.1.2. If the group seeking establishment seeks establishment in an area that is 'unclaimed lands', the group may approach any full status group whose territory abuts the desired territory to serve as the administering branch.

3.1.3. Claimed and unclaimed territories will be determined by consultation with the Kingdom Cartographer.

3.1.4. Any variance from these policies must be approved in writing by the Kingdom Seneschal.

3.2. Duties of Officers

3.2.1. Administrative Duties

3.2.1.1. In accordance with Corpora VII.K.2 and Middle Kingdom Law XIV-203, all officers of an incipient group will be deputies of the officers of the administering branch. Administering branch officers will be required to teach, assist, and oversee all activities of incipient group officers. Officers of incipient groups will not be warranted until such time as the group is advanced to full status.

3.2.1.2. Officers of the administering branch shall ensure that the incipient group files all reports in a complete and timely manner. Unless specifically required, all reports are submitted to the administering Seneschal, applicable Regional Seneschal, and the Kingdom Deputy for New Groups. If the incipient group is a part of a Barony, the Baron and Baroness should also receive copies of reports. Administering Seneschals will be required to include a commentary to the Kingdom Seneschal with each required report regarding the status and development of groups they are sponsoring and to send a copy the Deputy for New Groups.

3.2.1.3. Deputy Officers in the incipient branch will assume all actions and responsibilities that might be expected of a fully warranted officer, except that they will not be under warrant and will not have any authority to represent the SCA in any official capacity.

3.2.1.4. Officers of the administering group will be required, from time to time, to advise the Kingdom Seneschal or their designated deputy/deputies on the progress of the incipient group.

3.2.1.5. Officers in the administering branch will ensure that all officers in the incipient group have current and updated copies of all relevant governing documents as are required to properly administer a group.

3.2.1.6. Officers of applicant/incipient branch must be members of the SCA and hold valid waiver cards.

3.3. Right to Self Identity

3.3.1. Because it is recognized that all groups develop with their own character and nature, officers in the administering branch are encouraged and required to allow the applicant group to develop in any manner or direction the incipient group sees fit provided it does not violate modern, corporate or kingdom law or policy.

3.3.2. Incipient Groups must be aware that their desire to form a new group puts certain burdens on the administering branch and the Kingdom. It is their responsibility to work cooperatively and understandingly with the officers and people in the administering branch and Kingdom and to find a reasonable solution to differences of opinion. Although an incipient group may have great latitude in its developmental process, that should not impose any undue burden on those assisting them in their endeavors.

3.3.3. Any complaints of restraint in this area will be referred to the Special Deputy for New Groups for resolution. The New Groups Deputy's decision may be appealed to the Kingdom Seneschal.

4. Advancement/Disolution

4.1. There is not minimum time limit for a group to be recommended for advancement and advanced. However, prior to being recommended for advancement certain things beyond the requirements set forth in Corpora and Kingdom Law, the Seneschal's Offices shall determined and established in practice:

4.1.1. The incipient group shall have a name and device accepted by the College of Herald's.

4.1.2. The incipient group shall have demonstrated an ability to bring up new officers and successfully change over officers within the group. Simply 'shuffling' a static core of officers is not acceptable.

4.1.3. The incipient group shall have demonstrated an ability to do Demonstrations and Events.

- 4.1.4. The incipient group shall have demonstrated an ability to file reports on time and shall have completed at least one complete reporting cycle including the filing of a ‘Domesday’ report.
- 4.1.5. Incipient Groups, prior to applying for full status, should also have demonstrated:
- 4.1.5.1. an ability to ‘play well within the group’. This means that the group should not have extraordinary internal difficulties, and that what difficulties do arise from time to time are resolved in a constructive and civil manner.
 - 4.1.5.2. an ability to ‘play well with its neighbors’. This means cooperative action and interaction with neighboring groups and others within and without its region.
 - 4.1.5.3. a stable and, preferably, growing membership
 - 4.1.5.4. the ability to self-manage
 - 4.1.5.5. an understanding of what it means to be a ‘full status group’ within the Midrealm.
- 4.1.6. An application packet, which details the requirements for advancement to full status, is available from the New Groups Deputy.
- 4.1.7. Groups who have existed in an incipient or lesser status for more than three years will be reviewed to determine whether their desire to become a full status group is still viable.
- 4.1.8. Incipient Groups who are unable to demonstrate an ability to work cooperatively with their administering branch or their neighboring full status groups or who fail, by repeatedly failing to meet one or more of the advancement criteria, to show progress towards advancement may be disestablished by the Kingdom Seneschal.

5. **Publication of Group Contact Information**

- 5.1. Applicant and Incipient groups will have their Seneschal's contact information published on a special page of the midrealm.org web site, with a disclaimer stating that this publication is for information purposes only and does not constitute warranting of the group's officers. In addition, incipient groups may be listed in *The Pale* with an appropriate designator.

Supporting Citations from the Governing Documents of the Society and the Kingdom of the Middle:

Corpora III.C. Branches

7. **Other local branches:** Below baronial/provincial level, branch establishment proceeds according to kingdom law and custom, subject to the Society Seneschal's review and the requirements set forth below. These branches may adopt designations as provided for by the laws and customs of their kingdoms and as established in this document. Minimum requirements include:

- At least 5 subscribing members.
- At least 3 officers, including a Seneschal, an Exchequer, and one of the following: a Herald, a Marshal, or a Minister of Arts and Sciences. Local branches are encouraged to fill all the latter positions.
- A name registered with the College of Arms.
- Consensus among members in the area favoring establishment of the proposed branch.
- A special type of local branch is available for use at schools or military bases, or in other situations where membership is likely to fluctuate for reasons beyond the members' control. The "territory" of such branches is defined in terms of affiliation with the institution where they are based, not in terms of physical boundaries. Institutional branches may report directly to a kingdom, but if their institution is located within the borders of a branch of any other class, they report through that branch. They differ from other local branches in that they go dormant if membership falls below five (5), rather than being disbanded.

Corpora III.D. Establishment and Advancement

1. The Society and Kingdom Seneschals will work together as necessary to process petitions for branch establishment or advancement. Society members who wish to form a branch, advance an existing branch in status, or advance a group of branches in status must first determine whether the area they have in mind is eligible for such treatment. This process shall involve consultation with the Kingdom (and Principality, if any) Seneschal, and with the Seneschals of any nearby branches.

2. The Society permits very broad participation by people who are not members as defined in the By-Laws. However no part of the Society can be required to solicit or heed their views regarding branch status, or any other situation where the opinion of the populace is to be consulted. Law, custom, or actual practice may allow consultation with nonmembers, but it cannot be required.

3. If necessary, the members shall reach a consensus as to a proposed name (and device, where required) and register it with the College of Arms before any petition for recognition can be granted.

4. The members of the proposed branch shall prepare a petition for the proposed action, stating the proportion of their numbers favoring the move, and demonstrating that the requirements are met. The petition shall be submitted as specified by kingdom law and custom. The Kingdom Seneschal shall review the petition to determine whether the proposed branch elevation conforms to Corpora and kingdom law and custom, consulting royalty and other kingdom or principality officers as appropriate for the level of branch under consideration. If the Kingdom Seneschal decides to recommend that the petition should be granted, the action to be taken depends on the level of branch, as follows:

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8. Institutional branches and local branches other than baronies and provinces: The Kingdom Seneschal shall advise the Crown if the petition is acceptable. After the Crown acknowledges the creation of the branch, the Kingdom Seneschal shall inform the Society Seneschal of the name, location and date of elevation, and the Society Seneschal shall then notify the Board.

9. Appeals: If a petition to change branch status is denied at any stage, the petition will be returned to the originator(s) together with the accumulated recommendations, comments, and reasons for denial. Any denial may be appealed to the next level.

Further,

Corpora VII.K. Warranting / Rosters

2. Local Branch officers may be officers in their own right, or be deputies of officers of an administering branch. Until a branch is proclaimed by the Crown, its officers must be deputies of their counterparts in the administering branch.

Further,

Corpora III.C. Branch Designations lists all designations recognized by Society as legitimate branch designations. It should be noted that Corpora nowhere recognizes any group that is not a ‘full status’ group (i.e., ‘proclaimed by the Crown’).

Middle Kingdom Law goes on to reiterate or expand on Corpora in the following ways:

III-201 The Kingdom Seneschal shall be responsible for all procedures involved with authorizing new groups and changing the status of existing groups and shall keep a list of the dates on which all groups have been authorized or have had their status changed.

ARTICLE XIV - Recognition and Advancement of Subsidiary Groups

XIV-100 All groups desiring recognition or advancement within the Middle Kingdom shall petition both the Kingdom Seneschal and the Crown.

XIV-101 The Kingdom Seneschal shall keep the Crown apprised of the progress of all such petitions.

XIV-200 Groups other than Cantons (and their equivalents) are required to have a Seneschal, an Exchequer, a Pursuivant, and at least one of the following: Minister of Arts and Sciences, or Marshal. Cantons are required to have a Seneschal, an Exchequer and at least one of the following: Pursuivant, Minister of Arts and Sciences or a Marshal.

XIV-201 If any training of fighters is to be undertaken, the group must have an appropriate Marshal.

XIV-202 If monies are held by the group, an Exchequer is required. A group may not hold monies in the name of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. until it has been officially recognized by the Middle Kingdom Seneschal as an incipient or full-status group.

XIV-203 Upon obtaining full status, a group shall recommend and request warrants for their officers.

XIV-300 Prospective groups shall submit a name to the Kingdom Seneschal and the College of Arms.

XIV-400 Existing groups shall not be permitted a division or advancement which will foster a schism or fractionalization of a political nature in the resident population.

XIV-500 Prospective new baronies must reach and maintain a level of at least 30 sustaining and 10 additional associate or higher memberships.

XIV-600 Prospective new principalities must reach and maintain a level of at least 125 sustaining and 50 additional associate or higher memberships.

XIV-700 No geographic area, other than a group officially recognized by the Kingdom Seneschal, may have officers, a champion, or defined borders. Groups listed on the Middle Kingdom *Collegium Seneschallorum* are officially recognized by the Kingdom Seneschal.