

# Middle Kingdom Policy on Baronial Transitions

## January 2017

As a group begins the process of changing their status to that of barony and/or the process of selecting a new Baron/Baroness, the Transitions Deputy provides guidance and administrative support. The overall process is designed to enable all members of the group to voice their opinion during the transition. The processes for transitioning to baronial status and for selecting a Baron/Baroness are detailed below. The polling portion of the process is conducted according to the polling requirements listed in Kingdom Law (XV-100 and XV-200) and in Corpora (V.A.1).

### Steps for a group to transition to baronial status

1. After verifying with the Group Transitions Deputy that there is a sufficient number of paid members (the minimum requirement is 40 adult associate or higher memberships), the group seneschal communicates the group's wish to begin the process of becoming a barony to the Regional Seneschal, the Transitions Deputy, and the Kingdom Seneschal.
2. The group provides a petition showing the members who support this transition. The "Petition to Transition to Baronial Status" needs a purpose statement at the top of each page (i.e. *The type of group of group's name is petitioning for baronial status. We, the below members of this group, support this transition*). If two or more groups desire to combine into one barony, the petition should list the name of each group. The petition needs to have space for the following information: mundane name, mundane signature, SCA name, membership number, and type of membership. If multiple groups are combining, there needs to be a space for each signee to indicate the group to which he/she belongs. When the petition is complete, copies are mailed to the Kingdom Seneschal and the Transitions Deputy. The Kingdom Seneschal will consult with the Crown on approving the petition.
3. Once the group has received permission from the Kingdom Seneschal, the group will compile their transition packet. Dates and times of meetings dealing with the transition should be made public in a variety of formats (i.e. group's website, social media, e-mail list, newsletter). The transition packet should include the following:
  - A copy of the transition petition
  - The group's expectations of the Baron/Baroness
  - A map and a list of zip codes for the group
  - Letters of support from local and/or regional officers and letters of support from kingdom officers
  - Documentation showing the group's name and device has been approved
  - A brief history of the group and their activities, including how long members have been playing
  - A listing of the offices of the group and the officers holding them
  - A copy of the group's charter or standard operating procedures
  - Any other documentation that shows why this transition would be beneficial to the group (i.e. A&S activities members of the group are involved with; events, practices, meetings, and demos the group holds)

This packet will be provided to the Transitions Deputy, the Crown, and the Kingdom Seneschal.

4. The Transitions Deputy will verify that all required information is included in the packet and will contact the group seneschal regarding any missing part(s).
5. Once the packet has been approved by the Transitions Deputy and the Kingdom Seneschal, the polling for Baron/Baroness will take place. The Transitions Deputy will establish the timeline for the process and will notify the Crown, Kingdom Seneschal, and editor of The Pale of the pending action. *The type of group of group's name is petitioning for baronial status. There will be a polling to provide counsel to the Crown on this matter and on choosing the first Baron/Baroness if the petition is granted. This will tentatively take place in the month of \_\_\_\_.* Non-member polls will be available on the Middle Kingdom Seneschal's website.
6. The group seneschal will collect letters of intent from all candidates who wish to run for Baron/Baroness for a period not to exceed thirty days. The letters must include: SCA name and any titles (how s/he wants it listed on the poll), legal name, mailing address, phone number, e-mail address, copy of valid membership card, copy of photo id, and any other information the candidate wishes. At the end of the collection period, the group seneschal will forward the letters to the Transitions Deputy.
7. If the group seneschal is a candidate, the Transitions Deputy needs to be notified as soon as possible. The seneschal's deputy will need to cover the responsibilities of the office, including conducting meetings, for the duration of the polling process. The duration of the polling process is defined as the beginning date of the collection of the letters of intent to the day the polls must be postmarked by. After the poll submission deadline, the seneschal may resume the duties of the office. If s/he is notified by the Crown that s/he has been chosen, s/he may continue to serve as seneschal until a new group seneschal is chosen or the date of the investiture, whichever comes first.
8. After the letters of intent are received, the Transitions Deputy will prepare two polls (one for members and one for non-members) and request from Corporate the mailing addresses for the group's zip codes.
9. The poll will contain the name of the group being polled, a statement of the purpose of the poll, a list of the candidates, a ranking system for indicating preference/opinion, a space for comments, a return address for the poll, a closing date, and an area for the respondent's information. The poll will also include the question, *Do you support the transition of group's name from the status of type of group to barony?*
10. Gentles *must* have a valid membership and an address within the claimed zip codes on file with Corporate at the time the mailing labels are requested from Corporate in order to have a member poll mailed to them. For all others, a non-member poll will be made available on the Middle Kingdom Seneschal's website for the duration of the poll.
11. For a submitted member poll to be considered valid, it must contain the member's name, SCA name (if one), address, membership number, and signature. For a submitted non-

member poll to be considered valid, it must contain the respondent's name, SCA name (if one), address, group, region, membership number (if applicable), and signature.

12. At the end of the polling process, the Transitions Deputy will tally and synopsize the results by both paid members within the group and non-members. The tallied results, synopsis, polls, and letters of intent will be sent to the Kingdom Seneschal and the Crown. A bill for the costs incurred in the polling process will be sent to the group by the Transitions Deputy.
13. If the Crown agrees to elevate the group to the status of barony, They will reach a decision regarding the first Baron/Baroness. If this happens, a copy of the complete transition packet with the Crown's recommendations will be forwarded (by the Kingdom Seneschal) to the Society Seneschal for final approval/disapproval.

#### Steps in the baronial polling process

1. The Group Transitions Deputy will keep a record of when baronial investitures have occurred. Six months before the end of the Baron/Baroness' term, the deputy will contact the baronial seneschal to begin the polling process. If a Baron/Baroness desires to step down earlier than the length of time stated in the baronial charter (or per Kingdom law), the baronial seneschal will contact the deputy to begin the process.
2. The Transitions Deputy will establish the timeline for the process and will notify the Crown, Kingdom Seneschal, and editor of The Pale of the pending action. *The Barony of \_\_\_ in the Region of \_\_\_ is preparing to conduct a poll in order to provide counsel to the Crown regarding Their choice for Baron and Baroness. The poll will tentatively take place in the month of \_\_\_. Non-member polls will be available on the Middle Kingdom Seneschal's website.*
3. The baronial seneschal will collect letters of intent from all candidates who wish to run for Baron/Baroness for a period not to exceed thirty days. The letters must include: SCA name and any titles (how he wants it listed on the poll), legal name, mailing address, phone number, e-mail address, copy of valid membership card, copy of photo id, and any other information the candidate wishes. At the end of the collection period, the group seneschal will forward the letters to the Transitions Deputy.
4. If the baronial seneschal is a candidate, the Transitions Deputy needs to be notified as soon as possible. The seneschal's deputy will need to cover the responsibilities of the office, including conducting meetings, for the duration of the polling process. The duration of the polling process is defined as the beginning date of the collection of the letters of intent to the day the polls must be postmarked by. After the poll submission deadline, the seneschal may resume the duties of the office. If he is notified by the Crown that he has been chosen, he may continue to serve as seneschal until a new baronial seneschal is chosen or the date of the investiture, whichever comes first.

5. After the letters of intent are received, the Transitions Deputy will prepare two polls (one for members and one for non-members) and request from Corporate the mailing addresses for the group's zip codes.
6. The poll will contain the name of the barony being polled, a statement of the purpose of the poll, a list of the candidates, a ranking system for indicating preference/opinion, a space for comments, a return address for the poll, a closing date, and an area for the respondent's information.
7. Gentles *must* have a valid membership and an address within the claimed zip codes on file with Corporate at the time the mailing labels are requested from Corporate in order to have a member poll mailed to them. For all others, a non-member poll will be made available on the Middle Kingdom Seneschal's website for the duration of the poll.
8. For a submitted member poll to be considered valid, it must contain the member's name, SCA name (if one), address, membership number, and signature. For a submitted non-member poll to be considered valid, it must contain the respondent's name, SCA name (if one), address, group, region, membership number (if applicable), and signature.
9. At the end of the polling process, the Transitions Deputy will tally and synopsize the results by both paid members within the barony and non-members. The tallied results, synopsis, polls, and letters of intent will be sent to the Kingdom Seneschal and the Crown. A bill for the costs incurred in the polling process will be sent to the barony by the Transitions Deputy.
10. Based on the Crown's good judgment and the council received, the Crown will make Their appointment.

#### Steps for a group to transition from shire to canton

1. If a shire desires to change its status to that of a baronial canton, the group seneschal must first meet with the baron/baroness and seneschal of said barony. If all parties agree to the transition, the shire seneschal communicates the group's wish to begin the process of becoming barony to the Regional Seneschal, the Transitions Deputy, and the Kingdom Seneschal.
2. The Transitions Deputy will prepare two polls (one for shire members and one for baronial members) and request from Corporate the mailing addresses for the shire's zip codes.
3. The poll will contain the name of the group being polled, a statement of the purpose of the poll, a ranking system for indicating preference/opinion, a space for comments, a return address for the poll, a closing date, and an area for the respondent's information. The poll will also include the question, *Do you support the transition of group's name from the status of independent shire to canton of the Barony of \_\_\_?*

4. Gentles *must* have a valid membership and an address within the shire's claimed zip codes on file with Corporate at the time the mailing labels are requested from Corporate in order to have a shire member poll mailed to them.
5. A poll for baronial members will be made accessible to the populace. It can be posted on the baronial website, distributed at baronial functions (meetings, practices, events, etc.), or disseminated in any other manner the baronial seneschal sees fit.
6. For a submitted shire poll to be considered valid, it must contain the member's name, SCA name (if one), address, membership number, and signature. For a submitted baronial poll to be considered valid, it must contain the respondent's name, SCA name (if one), address, membership number (if applicable), and signature.
7. At the end of the polling process, the Transitions Deputy will tally and synopsize the results by both shire and baronial members. The tallied results, synopsis, and polls, will be sent to the Kingdom Seneschal. The tallied results and synopsis will be sent to the Crown, the shire seneschal, the baronial seneschal, and the baron/baroness. A bill for the costs incurred in the polling process will be sent to the shire by the Transitions Deputy.
8. If the Crown and Kingdom Seneschal agree to transition the group from shire to baronial canton, the group, barony, and Transitions Deputy will be notified. The Transition Deputy will then assure that the group's zip codes are associated with the barony on the Kingdom zip code database.

Rules for all types of transitions:

- Official baronial polls will be conducted by the Group Transitions Office. No one living inside a branch being polled will administer a poll, unless special dispensation is given by the Kingdom Seneschal or it is a poll for a shire to transition to a canton.
- A landed Baron/Baroness is an officer of the Crown and must be a paid member of the Society with access to the Kingdom newsletter.
- As an officer of the Crown, the Baron/Baroness is required to submit a "change of officer" form to the Regional and Kingdom Seneschals. They are also required to provide a State of the Barony report at each Coronation. Officers who do not report may be removed or suspended by the Crown.
- A seneschal who is a candidate for baron/baroness will be asked to step down for the duration of the process. (See the policy for specifics). One may not hold the office of Baron/Baroness and the office of baronial seneschal at the same time.
- No Baron/Baroness will be appointed over the substantial objection of the populace.
- A barony must contain, at a minimum, 40 adult associate or higher memberships of the Society for Creative Anachronism. It should be able to show that it has maintained and will continue to maintain this minimum membership level. (This could be accomplished with historical membership information, meeting numbers, record of practices, broad locations where members come from, etc.)

*For further rules regarding Recognition and Advancement of Subsidiary Groups, see Middle Kingdom Law Article XIV. For further rules regarding Territorial Barons and Baronesses, see Middle Kingdom Law Article XV.*