



This document must be reviewed/refreshed yearly to ensure alignment with any revisions to the referenced documents. The current version of this document can always be found at this link: <https://d53tm.org/wp-content/uploads/D53-Club-Alignment-Guide.pdf>.

### D53 CLUB ALIGNMENT STRATEGY

As an extension to the Toastmasters International governing documents, District 53 has established the following strategy to guide the annual Realignment Team as well as the alignment of new clubs during the program year.

1. The expectations and deadlines for annual club realignment, and for alignment of new clubs formed during the program year, will be in compliance with the guidance defined in Toastmasters International Governing Documents. The salient excerpts of these documents are included at the end of this document for quick reference.
2. This document will be reviewed by the DSM (District Services Manager) annually and updated if needed to keep it in alignment with the TI Governing Documents or to District 53 standards, policy, or procedures.
3. Each year's Realignment Team will use this document to guide its realignment efforts.
4. The only associated deadline defined by TI is that realignment results must be reported to TI by July 15. However, D53 has established the following additional deadlines to ensure that we are able to meet the TI deadline.
  - a. The DSM will review this guidance document for any needed updates by October 15.
  - b. The DSM will request an Active Clubs report (not available as a standard report) from TI by October 15. This report defines which clubs must be included in the realignment.
  - c. The District Director will identify the Realignment Chair by November 1.
  - d. The Realignment Chair will identify other members of the Realignment Team (typically the Division Directors, CGD (Club Growth Director), and DSM) by December 15.
  - e. Realignment team activity will begin by December 1.
  - f. The draft Realignment Plan will be completed by 2 weeks prior to the DEC meeting preceding the District's Spring District Council Business Meeting. The DSM will document this deadline for the team based on the program year calendar.
  - g. The DEC will vote on approval of the draft Realignment Plan at the DEC meeting preceding the District's Spring District Council Business Meeting.
  - h. The District Council will vote on approval of the draft Realignment Plan at the Spring District Council Meeting.
  - i. The District Director will provide the TI Club Alignment Report template to the DAM (District Administration Manager) and DSM as soon as received, typically around mid-June.
  - j. The DAM or DSM will enter the results of the approved Realignment Plan to the TI-provided Club Alignment template and send to TI by the July 15 deadline.
5. The Realignment Team will strive to minimize alignment changes in order to minimize disruption, within the restrictions of the referenced governing documents.
6. The Realignment Team will strive to maintain balance throughout our alignment regarding the number of clubs per area, number of areas per division, number of members served by each division, and club strength in each area, to the extent geographically possible.
7. The Realignment Team mission is "To create a recommendation that equitably divides District 53 into a manageable number of Divisions, and to create similarly quantified and qualified Areas within those Divisions, such that all Divisions and Areas have roughly the same number of Clubs, as is practical."

8. The draft realignment plan will be reviewed with the Senior Staff, then the Steering Committee at their normally scheduled preceding meetings prior to presentation to the DEC for approval.

## **D53 REALIGNMENT PROCESS**

1. The Realignment team will meet at a frequency and on dates/times defined by the Realignment Chair, who will consider member availability when defining the meeting schedule.
2. Realignment Team meetings will typically be online via Zoom (or equivalent) to minimize travel.
3. The DSM will provide a spreadsheet workbook to the Realignment Team with the current alignment, club strength metrics, and any new clubs in work.
4. The Realignment Team will use the workbook to make adjustments to maintain alignment with TI Governing Documents and District 53 strategy, as defined in this document.
5. The Realignment Team will use Google Maps (or equivalent) to map a visual representation of the club alignment to support decisions and for inclusion in the realignment report.
6. The Realignment Team or the DSM will integrate the completed plan into the D53 standard Realignment Plan report template for year to year consistency and compatibility with District Council communications procedures.

## **D53 REALIGNMENT TEAM**

1. The realignment process will be facilitated by the appointed Realignment Chair(s), including Team building, meeting organization and execution, communications, and process guidance.
2. The Realignment Team requires representation by each Division, typically the current Division Director, but may be delegated.
3. The Club Growth Director will be an adjunct member of the Realignment Team and will keep the Realignment Team aware of new clubs in work.
4. The CGD may also include other members of his/her staff (eg: Club Extension Chair, New Clubs Chair) to also participate on the Realignment Team.
5. The DSM will be an adjunct member of the Realignment Team for year to year continuity.

## **D53 NEW CLUB ALIGNMENT**

This section applies to alignment of new clubs any time during the program year, including during the realignment period (November-May).

1. Formal assignment of a new club to an area is recommended by the Club Growth Director and approved by the District Director.
2. The sponsoring club, Area Director, or Division Director or the Club Ext Chair or any other member of the CGD team may make a recommendation to the CGD for consideration.
3. The CGD takes the following into consideration to make his/her formal recommendation to the DD.
  - The recommendations made by the CGD staff and/or sponsor person or group
  - The rules of Toastmasters International for club assignment (summarized in this document)
  - During Realignment Team activity (December-April) the Realignment Team recommendation.

## **D53 BOUNDARIES**

District 53's boundaries are defined as "The entire State of Connecticut and Western Massachusetts. The eastern boundary being the west border of Worcester County, running from north to south, and the following counties in the State of New York: Essex, Warren, Washington, Saratoga, Rensselaer, Albany, Schoharie, Schenectady, Montgomery, Fulton, Hamilton, Greene, Columbia, Dutchess, Putnam, Orange, Sullivan and Ulster."

## REFERENCE EXCERPTS

Ref: <https://www.toastmasters.org/leadership-central/Governing-Documents>

### TI DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE BYLAWS

#### Article XI: Committees, Section a. District Executive Committee

4. The committee shall review the report of the Alignment Committee and recommend the alignment of clubs in the District into Areas and Divisions for approval at the Annual Meeting of the District Council.

#### Article XI: Committees, Section d. Alignment Committee

1. Each year, the District must review, and amend, if needed, the alignment of clubs, Areas, and Divisions within its boundaries. The District Director shall appoint an Alignment Committee chair and committee members.

2. The Alignment Committee prepares an alignment proposal and provides the proposal to the District Executive Committee for review.

3. The District Council reviews and approves the final alignment at its Annual Meeting.

4. The District alignment is submitted to World Headquarters by July 15.

### TI POLICY AND PROTOCOL

#### Protocol 7.0: District Structure, Section 1. Club Assignments

A. Area and Division organization is defined and described in Article XII, Sections 1, 3(b), and 3(e) of the Bylaws of Toastmasters International and in Article VI of the District Administrative Bylaws.

B. When a new Member club is organized, it is assigned to the District within which boundaries it meets. Exceptions are only considered with the concurrence of the District Councils involved and with the approval of the Board of Directors.

I. The assignment of a new club to an Area is made by the District Director, subject to approval by the District Executive Committee.

II. Changes to the alignment of a new club must be reported to World Headquarters by the District Director within 30 days of the club's charter date. Any changes received after 30 days will not be reflected until the following July 1.

D. The best interests of the clubs and District are taken into consideration when assigning clubs to Areas.

I. Areas consist of four (4) to six (6) clubs; however, an Area may consist of three (3) clubs on July 1 only when an effort to charter a fourth club is in process.

II. Under no circumstances may an Area have more than six (6) clubs on July 1.

III. Advanced clubs shall not be segregated into Areas.

IV. Areas may be segregated by language, subject to the approval of the District Council.

V. Districts assign clubs to Areas based upon:

a. Geographic proximity to other clubs

b. The ability of an Area Director to effectively provide service, without requiring the clubs to change how meetings are conducted to accommodate an Area Director visit

c. Club size and strength (e.g., paid, active, disbanding)

d. Prospective clubs and expected growth

e. The likelihood of eligibility for Distinguished programs (e.g., club base of the Area or Division)

E. A Division must have a minimum of three (3) Areas.

#### Protocol 7.1: District Events, Section 5. District Executive Committee Meetings

I. At District Executive Committee meetings, unless noted, the following business is conducted:

VI. At the meeting prior to the Annual Meeting of the District Council, the alignment of clubs into Areas and Divisions is recommended.

## Document Change Log

Date	Description of Changes	Changed By	Approved by*
12/01/22	Original Draft	Norm Thibodeau, RegMgr	Working document was not submitted for approval.
11/30/23	Reviewed TI rules vs current governance docs – no changes needed for this year.	Norm Thibodeau, RegMgr	Working document was not submitted for approval.
02/24/24	Reformatted and updated document identification per D53 Documentation Standard. Added D53 Strategy and Document Change Log sections.	Norm Thibodeau, DSM	Patti Walter, DD, 02/25/24
03/04/24	Added D53 REALIGNMENT PROCESS, D53 REALIGNMENT TEAM, and D53 NEW CLUB ALIGNMENT sections. Added section D53 ALIGNMENT STRATEGY, Paragraph 2, part f. Refined for clarity section D53 ALIGNMENT STRATEGY, Paragraph 2, part h. Changed file name from “D53 Club Realignment Guide.” Moved reference section to the end.	Norm Thibodeau, DSM	Patti Walter, DD, 03/09/24
03/12/24	Added DISTRICT BOUNDARIES section.	Norm Thibodeau, DSM	Patti Walter, DD, 03/22/24

\* Per D53 Documentation Standard, approval of any changes is required by the incoming District Director, with review by the District Trio.