



# **Masters And slaves Together, International, Inc.**

## **New Chapter Formation MANUAL**

A MAsT Chapter functions as the local presence of Masters And slaves Together, International, Inc. (MAST or MAsT International) and is the primary means by which MAsT provides support and services to the Master/slave community in the geographical area served by that Chapter.

Each local MAsT Chapter must subscribe to and follow the purposes of MAsT and the MAsT Policy Manual, and annually pledge cooperation with the Executive Committee of Masters And slaves Together, International, Inc.

A copy of the MAsT Policy and Procedures Manual (MAST Policy or Policy Manual) is included in the file of official MAsT documents ([www.mast.net](http://www.mast.net), tab Start a Chapter). Please read it carefully and use it as the basis for the organization and continued operation of your local MAsT Chapter.

1. **Plan the Scope of the Chapter. What will be the overarching principles of your chapter?** A strong, viable organization requires both pre-planning and ongoing planning to survive and prosper. In your pre-planning consider and develop at least the following things:
  - a. **What geographical area will your MAsT Chapter serve?** This decision is affected by the geography of your locale, highways and transportation systems, whether the majority of people have their own transportation, etc. Other MAsT Chapters in nearby areas may also affect it. You can find if there are existing MAsT Chapters at [www.mast.net](http://www.mast.net), Chapter Locator. See also the MAsT Policy Manual, Section VII.C., "Multiple Chapters."
  - b. **What M/s population will your MAsT Chapter serve?** MAsT is officially pansexual, but the MAsT Policy Manual, Section VII.A.2., provides for more limited local service. Consider, however, that for your new MAsT Chapter to be successful there must be an M/s community within your selected service population and geographical area that is large enough to provide a base for membership growth. What demographic study or thought has been given

to the size of your selected service population and to the likelihood that they will join a MAsT Chapter?

- c. What will be the purpose of your MAsT Chapter?** MAsT International states its reason for existing in the MAsT Policy Manual, Section II., “Purpose.” In the initial planning phase and during the first few meetings as a new chapter, establish your local vision, values, and mission statement which can provide a clear path for the actions of leaders and members.
- d. What name will your MAsT Chapter function under?** The basics of a MAsT Chapter name are identified in the MAsT Policy Manual, Section VII.D.1-3. Your selected name must uniquely identify your MAsT Chapter with a name that identifies a notable city or town where the meetings will be conducted in the geographical area you have selected to serve. The Executive Director, who has final jurisdiction over MAsT Chapter names, is normally represented by the Membership Director during this decision process.
- e. How will the chapter be governed?** Some MAsT Chapters have been successfully organized and led by one person, whether a Dominant or a submissive, or by an M/s couple (although it is strongly recommended that the Director and Co-Director be from different households). Others have found that an Executive Committee works well by sharing the load, providing backup when a leader is ill or away, and providing continuity as membership changes. Still others may find a “traditional” slate of officers, elected from the membership, fits well with a general democratic sensibility.
- f. What will be the Membership Criteria and the Code of Conduct?** These are two important considerations that are often overlooked. Who should potential members contact for membership or more information? What steps might be required for membership? Would there be a probationary period for prospective members? Should dues or membership fees be collected? Where will the meetings be held; e.g., a public or private location? Will your Code of Conduct clearly outline the appropriate behaviors expected regarding communication, conflicts, decisions, and consequences?

Attachment 1, *Forming New MAsT Chapter Suggestions*, at the end of this manual, provides a wide range of important factors that you can consider as you prepare to form your new Chapter.

- 2. What kind of programming will your MAsT Chapter offer?** To attract members and to keep them coming back, your MAsT Chapter must offer something of value to their lives. Typically, those living an M/s lifestyle need an opportunity to talk with each other for support and for overcoming the all too frequent sense of being alone. Additionally, programming should offer educational opportunities for relationship growth and development through targeted topics for discussion, presentation and/or guest speakers. Demonstrations can be valuable but they need to be focused on their application to the M/s lifestyle. Also consider social opportunities, such as parties, munches, bar nights or other special events that provide an opportunity to strengthen relationships among Chapter members and keep their interest and attendance high.
  
- 3. How will your MAsT Chapter cover its expenses?** MAsT is a nonprofit organization and is not in the business of making money. But at the same time, each MAsT Chapter is faced with raising enough revenue to cover its operating expenses. During this initial formation phase some of these expenses may be coming out of your own pocket, but over the long haul the Chapter itself should be providing the funds to cover ongoing expenses. When planning how revenue will be generated for your MAsT Chapter, assess the nature of the selected population in your service area: What expenses will be needed? What can they reasonably provide? Are special fundraising event opportunities feasible? Review the MAsT Policy Manual, Section VII.F.1-5, "Chapter Finances and Non-Profit Status" for ideas and for the MAsT statement on ethical and accountable behavior regarding Chapter funds.
  - a. Know your local laws regarding educational/social organizations.** The laws can affect your decisions regarding taxable or non-taxable status, type of bank accounts to use, and requirements for records and financial transactions. Note, as a matter of integrity, it is always important to keep detailed chapter records and fiscal books.

**4. Develop an Organizational Structure.** Some form of organizational structure is generally needed for a group of people to get anything done. Even making the decision on how to decide something, whether by leader directive, Committee decision or “democratic” vote, can be difficult.

- a. The MAsT Policy Manual, Section VII.E.1-8, “Chapter Leadership,” says little about the organizational structure of the local MAsT Chapter, recognizing that each founding group or leader will have different skills and abilities available to build on. There may also be significant differences between the organizational styles of a Dominant leading the formation of a MAsT Chapter and a submissive leading the same task. We have also seen a significant difference in the organization and structure of our gay Chapters from that of our pansexual Chapters.
- b. MAsT Policy Manual, Section VII.E.1-8, states that there must be a Chapter Director who is the main contact or liaison person between the MAsT Executive Committee and the local MAsT Chapter. (Note that your primary contact for this purpose is your Regional Representative. The Chapter Director is also responsible for submitting the initial MAsT Chapter Formation Petition, the MAsT Provisional Charter Application and the annual MAsT Charter Renewal Application. The local MAsT Chapter is not required to use the actual title of Chapter Director, but there must be one person identified to the Executive Committee who fills that function. A second person, who is not a member of the Chapter Director’s household, must also be identified to the Executive Committee to serve as an alternate contact should the Chapter Director be away or unavailable.
- c. **Decide what structure your new MAsT Chapter will have.** Have you honestly weighed your own organizational and management strengths and weaknesses, as well as those of your core group, in whatever organizational structure you develop?

**5. Submit a MAsT Chapter Formation Petition.** Now that you have completed the advanced planning for your new chapter, it is time for you to petition MAsT International for approval to form your chapter. This petition is located at [www.mast.net](http://www.mast.net), *Start a Chapter* tab, “New Chapter Formation Petition.” It informs the International Office of your intent to organize and develop a local MAsT Chapter, gives us necessary contact information and offers a potential

Chapter name. Please include two references for the Chapter Director and Co-Director; also, tell the Board about you in the Personal Qualities and Personal Competence blocks. Remember to always keep a copy of any forms submitted to the International Office in your Chapter's permanent records.

- a. The Membership Director will contact you to confirm the receipt of your petition to form your new chapter and explain the approval process. This will include contacting your two references, consulting with the Regional Representative team where you intend to form your chapter, and conducting a vote of the Executive Committee.
- b. The Membership Director will notify you when your chapter formation petition is processed. If your petition is approved, you will be sent an acceptance letter that will include an introduction to your Regional Representative team, guidance for "next steps," and instructions to submit your Chapter's Provisional Chapter Charter application and the appropriate processing fee (currently \$25).

**6. Submit a MAsT Provisional Charter Application.** Your chapter's Provisional Charter is tangible evidence that you are approved to form a MAsT Chapter. It indicates that you have agreed to conduct your chapter according to the following standards:

- a. To operate your MAsT Chapter as a local representative of MAsT International, with the privileges and responsibilities thereof.
- b. To operate your MAsT Chapter in accordance with the purposes of MAsT, in conformity with the MAsT Policy Manual, and in full cooperation with the MAsT International Board of Directors.

Once the petition and processing fee are received, the appropriate Regional Representative will prepare an e-version MAsT Provisional Chapter Charter (locked .pdf format) for your chapter. The charter will normally be e-mailed to you within one week. The charter should be printed and displayed at all chapter functions to ensure that your general members are aware that yes, the chapter is an authorized chapter. You will then be a proud part of the MAsT family as an official MAsT Chapter with the privilege and responsibility of using the MAsT Name and MAsT Logo, within the terms of the MAsT Brand Identification Manual.

Shortly after you receive approval to form your chapter, the MAsT Graphics Designer will send you graphics that may be used for business cards and letterheads, along with a template for your chapter Meeting sign-in sheets.

- 7. Hold Provisional Chapter Meetings.** During this six-month provisional period, you will have time to promote and conduct monthly meetings, learn the best received types of meetings for your attendees, develop a positive reputation in your area, and show a growing attendance base. You must report each Meeting as noted in paragraph c., below. Once you have received your approval to form a chapter, you should start promoting your chapter.
- a. During the first two or three Provisional meetings, focus on forming activities; e.g., meet and greets, stress a welcome and safe environment, provide M/s related topics with highly interactive formats, and start to build your local MAsT community. There are many excellent ideas to use during this important time located at the end of this document as Attachment One, *Forming New MAsT Chapter Suggestions*.
  - b. During the remaining Provisional meetings, focus on normalizing your chapter meetings, continue growing your attendance, and with suggestions from your attendees, build a meeting plan for the next six months.

**Important note:** At the top left of your dashboard is a **Chapter Meeting Report Database**. If you look under the **Topic, Presenter, Location, Type** column, you will have access to the list of topics that all MAsT Chapters have used over the years. It is a "gold mine" of potential topics for your meetings.

- c. During the six-month provisional period, your new MAsT Chapter will receive careful oversight from the Board of Directors through your Regional Representative team. Your Regional Representatives are dedicated to help you be successful and be in compliance with MAsT policies. Submitting your meeting reports is one tool that they can use to understand your relative success. Help them help you by submitting your reports in a timely manner. The Meeting Report is located at [www.mast.net](http://www.mast.net), your Chapter Dashboard *Reports* tab. Many successful Chapter Directors find it easiest to report the meeting as a standard part of putting paperwork away after each meeting.

**8. Promote Your Chapter.** Each MAsT Chapter is to have a functional, responsive email address for inquiries and a website, linked from the International website, to promote the Chapter. If you have not done so already, you should acquire both of these during the Provisional Charter period. See the MAsT Policy Manual, Section VII.H.1-3, "Chapter PR Campaigns." A mail-list service for your members, such as Yahoo, may also be a valuable tool for keeping them informed and for facilitating discussion between meetings.

- a. You should also develop a list of local area and regional media that your members and potential members read, and then regularly submit press releases about upcoming events and follow-up stories about current events. Also get your meetings and events listed in the event calendars that many publications offer. Keep your MAsT Chapter in the news. A story that seems very routine to you may speak to a potential member at just the moment he or she is ready to hear it.
- b. Promotional materials, especially pamphlets and brochures, should be coordinated with the Executive Committee through your Regional Representative to make sure they follow the MAsT brand identification program.
- c. Please make sure that copies of all news articles, pamphlets, brochures, other PR materials, pictures of events, etc. are provided to the Executive Committee, through your Regional Representative, for the MAsT archives and for the MAsT collection at the Leather Archives and Museum.

**9. Becoming a MAsT Chapter in Good Standing.** After you have completed the six-month provisional period, conducted at least six meetings, submitted six meeting reports, and your chapter has conducted itself within the standards of MAsT International, the Regional Representative will prepare and send to you via e-mail an e-version of the MAsT Chapter Charter for your chapter. The charter should be printed and displayed at your chapter events. This charter is tangible evidence that your chapter is a MAsT Chapter in good standing.

**10. File for Annual Charter Renewal.** MAsT Chapter Charters are valid for one year, from January 1, year to December 31, year. Renewing your charter annually allows your MAsT Chapter to remain in good standing and to retain the privilege of using the MAsT Name and MAsT Logo. See the MAsT Policy Manual, Section VIII.C. and D.

Applying for a MAsT Charter is an important business action for each Chapter Director to take. It represents the foundation for the relationship between the Chapter and MAsT International, Inc. Please take a minute to read the following and consider those two sentences:

I/we desire to operate this MAsT Chapter as a local representation of MAsT International, Inc, with the privileges and responsibilities thereof,

I/we agree to operate this MAsT Chapter in accordance with the purposes of MAsT, in conformity with the MAsT Policy Manual, and in full cooperation with the Board of Directors of MAsT International, Inc.

These two sentences, when agreed upon represent a contract between MAsT International, Inc. and the Chapter Director. The contract represents mutual trust between the parties; and an expectation of integrity and honesty between the parties that will support the purpose of MAsT International.

This contract is what you agree to when applying to form your chapter; and, with only a slight amendment, “to continue...” it represents your annual renewal contract to remain a MAsT Chapter.



## **Attachment One**

### **Forming New MAsT Chapter Suggestions**

The following core issues are examples of MAsT business issues that a new Chapter Director should consider when starting and nurturing a new MAsT Chapter through its formation phase.

#### **Overarching Principles**

- Whether they were going to adopt an autocratic or collaborative Leadership model?
- How to develop an environment of ownership and involvement among attendees?
- How to integrate MAsT vision, values and mission statement into the Chapter purpose?

#### **Foundational Structures**

- Management structure
- Communication & Decision Making processes and structure
- Legal structure
- Membership structure
- Membership criteria

#### **Planning, Organizing, and Conduct of Meeting**

- Venue for meeting
- Agenda setting
- Meeting structures
- Meeting rituals and ceremonies
- Meeting timetable/topics
- Code of Conduct including expulsion of members
- Archiving history

#### **Review – What Worked and How to Keep it "Fresh and Rewarding"**

- Annual meeting dedicated to building "better"
- Regional rep coordination