

Appendix I

Q. What is an Oxford House Chapter?

A. An Oxford House Chapter is an official group of individual Oxford Houses that meets monthly and provides a vehicle for individual houses to share their strength, experience and hope.

Q. How many individual Oxford Houses does it take to form a Chapter?

A. Three, usually located within a few miles of each other, although there have been Chapters made up of houses geographically separated by 100 miles or more.

Q. Does a Chapter have officers?

A. Yes. There is a Chapter Chairperson, a Vice Chairperson, a Treasurer, a Secretary and a Housing Service Committee Chairperson.

Q. How long can officers of a Chapter serve?

A. One year. Unlike officers of an individual house who are limited to terms of six months, Chapter officers may serve one-year terms.

Q. Does a Chapter have any permanent committees?

A. Every Chapter has a Housing Service Committee. That committee is the only required committee and serves the important purpose of helping new houses get started and existing houses that are having problems. The committee is generally made up of individuals who understand how Oxford House works and have the desire to help other houses gain what their house has achieved. Serving on this committee gives a house member the opportunity to share his or her experience, strength and hope. It is also rewarding to help another house to get or stay on track. The members of the Housing Service Committee should include individuals from several houses in the Chapter. It is also helpful if they hold or have held offices within their own house.

Q. Where are Chapter meetings usually held?

A. At one of the individual houses in the Chapter. Usually the Chapter meeting is held at a different Oxford House each month so that all Oxford House residents in the chapter can learn from each other about the things to do – or not do – in operating an Oxford House.

Q. How is a Chapter meeting opened?

A. The Chairperson calls the meeting to order and asks one of the persons at the meeting to read the three Oxford House Chapter Principles (page 4 of the Chapter Manual). After one of the Principles has been read in its entirety, the Chapter meeting begins.

Q. How are Chapter meeting conducted?

A. Chapter meetings are conducted just like house meetings. After the reading of the three principles and one principle in its entirety, the Chairperson asks the Secretary to read the

minutes of the last meeting and asks the Treasurer to give the financial report. Second, the Chairperson goes around the room to call the roll of the houses and asks each house representative three questions” (i) what is the financial condition of your house, (ii) does the house have any vacancies and (iii) who left the house this month and under what conditions? Third, new business is taken up and can range from the opening of a new house to organizing a Saturday night dance. Each new business item is discussed and either voted up or down or tabled for decision at a later date. Each house has one vote in a Chapter Meeting. Chapter Form-B “Oxford House Chapter Meeting Minutes” is printed in the Appendix and serves as a good guide and record for the Chapter Secretary to follow.

Q. How often do Chapters meet?

A. A Chapter meets once a month unless some emergency situation requires getting together immediately.

Q. What reports should a Chapter submit to Oxford House World Services Office?

A. A copy of the Monthly Chapter Report (printed in the Appendix as Chapter Form-C) should be sent to the Oxford House World Services Office. It helps the World Services Office to recognize successful Oxford House “graduates” and to form a strong world alumni group.

Q. When should a Chapter apply for recognition by the Oxford House World Services Office?

A. A Chapter should apply for recognition as soon as it begins to think about forming because recognition is provided quickly and the start-up kit can insure that the Chapter gets off on the right foot.

Q. When should a Chapter divide into two chapters?

A. Whenever a Chapter becomes too large to effectively operate it should divide into two chapters – usually 13 or 14 houses in a Chapter is about as big as a Chapter can handle without becoming too big to be effective.

Q. How does a Chapter divide?

A. The best way is to list all the houses according to the date the houses started with the oldest house at the top of the list. Go down the list marking “A” by the first house on the list; “B” next to the second house on the list; “A” by the third house; “B” by the fourth house and so on. All the “A” houses would become one Chapter; all the “B” houses would be the other Chapter. That way makes certain that each of the new Chapters will have both older and newer houses as members. It also avoids splitting Chapters on the basis of friendships or some other reason that could weaken the Oxford House system of operations. The money in the original chapter is divided equally with each new chapter taking half. Both Chapters should apply for Chapter Recognition and notify the Oxford House World Services Office of the division.