

Let us serve like Jesus - Let us Journey together

**Member Statuses**

**(The following are abbreviated definitions of various statuses into which a member may belong; they are followed by detailed procedures for the Fraternity Council to follow when changing a member’s status.)**

1. There are two categories of statuses: membership status and profession status. The statuses listed below are currently those in use in the National Database and may change as the Database is updated.
2. Membership status: Active, Active-Excused, Lapsed, and Deceased.
   * 1. **Active:** One who is attached to a fraternity and regularly attends and participates in the life of that fraternity (GGCC art.53.3; NS art. 18.7.a).
     2. **Active-Excused:** Active-Excused members are professed members who cannot actively participate in community life on a regular basis because of health, family, work or distance and have been excused from doing so by Council (GGCC art.53.3; NS art.18.7.a; 18.10). May be referred to as Excused. The Local Fraternity Council should maintain contact with these members at least twice a year.} *[Refer to “procedure” for details re being classified as “Active Excused” & member’s duties while so classified.]*
     3. **Lapsed:** One who no longer attends fraternity gatherings, does not financially support the fraternity, and has not been excused by the council from doing so (NS art. 18.7.b). *[Refer to “procedure” for details re being classified as “Lapsed” & member’s duties while so classified.]*
     4. **Deceased:** One who has died. Secretary and Database persons should update their records as soon as possible after receiving information on the death.
3. **Affiliates** are those who, while not belonging to the Order and not necessarily Catholic, wish to participate in the fraternity’s life and activities according to Franciscan principles and teachings (GGCC art.53.5 and 103.1).
4. Affiliates may be welcomed by the Local Fraternity, so as to make their communion living and effective.
   * 1. Individuals wishing to become affiliates should make their desire known by a written request to the Local Fraternity Council, which makes a decision regarding the request.
     2. They should be entered in the rolls of the local fraternity as well as the National Database.
     3. A recognition ceremony is permitted as long as it cannot be confused with any ceremonies proper to members of the Order.
     4. These affiliate brothers and sisters will have no juridical bond with the Secular Franciscan Order and are, therefore, persons welcomed to love and be loved “as a gift of the Lord and an image of Christ” (Rule Art. 13).
     5. They may share the experiences and activities of the fraternity, without the right to vote.
     6. In order that the identity of the fraternity not be altered, the number of affiliates may not exceed 40% of the number of active professed members of a fraternity (NS art. 18.13.c).
5. Profession status:
   * 1. **Visitor**: One who is not in initial formation nor an Affiliate but who attends gatherings for a limited period by permission of the council while discerning whether or not to start Initial Formation.
     2. **Aspirant/phase 1A of Initial Formation:** One who is in Orientation.
     3. **Aspirant/phase 1B** of Initial Formation: One who is in Inquiry; which begins with a Welcoming Ceremony.
     4. **Candidate**: One who is in the second phase of Initial Formation; which begins with a Rite of Admission. Candidates are considered members of the OFS and must be included in the membership count for Fair Share.
     5. **Professed:** One who has completed Initial Formation, has undertaken the Rite of Permanent Profession and is now a full, permanent member of the Order.
     6. **Temporary professed**: One who has completed Initial Formation and has undertaken the Rite of Temporary Profession (GGCC art.56).
6. Only Active (which includes Candidates) and Active-Excused members of the fraternity are counted when determining the “fair share” total for which the Local Fraternity is responsible (NS art. 18.7).
7. Professed Members may leave the fraternity in the following ways: Deceased, being Asked to leave, or being classified as Lapsed, Withdrawn (Temporary or Definitive), Suspended, or Dismissed. (GGCC art.55-59, NS art.18.7.b, & 20).
8. The following are very brief descriptions of the above “leaving the fraternity”. *[Refer to “procedure” for details re the following classifications.]*

* + 1. **Asked to Leave:** Council determines that a person’s life or behavior is

incompatible with the life of the fraternity.

* + 1. **Lapsed:** describes a member who has not fulfilled one or more of the

requirements of active life, has not requested to be excused from

those requirements (NS art. 18.7.b), and who, after repeated personal

invitations to return to the fraternity, consciously and deliberately

rejects or ignores the invitations.

* + 1. **Temporary Withdrawal**: **(Sometimes referred to as “Voluntary Withdrawal”)** One who has, by written request approved by Council, temporarily withdrawn from a fraternity but not from the Order (GGCC art. 56.1) Applies to Candidates and professed only.

Candidates who withdraw and wish to return must restart Formation at Phase 1A/Orientation.

* + 1. **Definitive Withdrawal**: A Professed member, who has, by written request and approved by Council, definitively, permanently withdrawn from the Order (GGCC art. 58.1). **This is not reversible**.
    2. **Suspended:** One who has been removed from the fraternity for serious cause by vote of the Council and is excluded from all fraternity gatherings and activities (GGCC art.56.2). **This does not remove him/her from the Order.** Candidates who withdraw and wish to return must restart Formation at Phase 1/Orientation.
    3. **Dismissed:** One who has been removed from the fraternity and from the Order for serious cause by vote of the Council (GGCC art. 58.2-4).
    4. **“Leave of Absence”** can only be made while in Initial Formation and not a Candidate. If the member returns to being actively involved with the fraternity from this status, s/he must restart the phase of Initial Formation in which they participated before the change.