



Member Handbook

Edition 2025-26

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1. Welcome Letter

Bottom Line: We welcome you to a community of servant leaders who believe in service above self. This handbook will help you navigate club traditions, policies, and opportunities. As you begin or continue your Rotary journey with Atlanta West End, remember that collaboration, integrity, and fellowship are the hallmarks of our mission.

Dear Member,

On behalf of the membership of the Rotary Club of Atlanta West End (AWER), welcome. This handbook explains our club history, values, membership expectations, and how to make the most of your Rotary experience.

Since our charter in 1958 our club has built a strong intergenerational network of professionals and civic leaders who unite to create lasting change in our local communities and around the world. We invite you to join this community of leaders, exchange ideas, and take action!

We are a diverse group of individuals committed to living by the Four-Way Test, practicing ethical leadership, and modeling inclusivity. You will find opportunities to grow as a leader, serve others, and build lifelong friendships. Whether you have joined recently or have been with us for years, thank you for choosing Atlanta West End Rotary. Together we can make a difference.

In service,

The Board of Directors of the Rotary Club of Atlanta West End

2. About Our Club

Bottom Line: Atlanta West End Rotary (**AWER**) is one of the oldest Rotary clubs in Georgia, established in 1958. Our mission is to connect professionals committed to service, promote fellowship, and take action to create lasting change locally and globally.

2.1 History and Mission

- **Origins and Growth** – Founded in 1958, AWER has served the historic West End community of Atlanta for more than six decades. We began with a handful of civic-minded leaders who believed in service above self and have grown into a vibrant, diverse club. Our members come from many professions and demographic backgrounds, including leaders who played pivotal roles in the civil rights movement and social change.
- **Mission** – Our mission aligns with Rotary International: to unite leaders, exchange ideas, and take action to create lasting change in our communities and ourselves. Locally we support education, youth development, and economic empowerment. Globally we contribute to Rotary initiatives in peacebuilding, disease prevention, clean water, and literacy.
- **Values** – AWER members commit to the Rotary motto “Service Above Self” and the Four-Way Test (see Section 3). Our values include integrity, inclusiveness, mutual respect, and collaboration. As professionals we practice high ethical standards and strive to be stewards of public trust.

2.2 Bylaws and Governance

- **Bylaws Summary** – Our club operates under a constitution and bylaws adopted by the membership. These documents describe member classifications, dues, meeting schedules, officer duties, and voting procedures. Changes require approval by club members in accordance with parliamentary procedure. The bylaws require that the club meet regularly and provide a well-balanced program of education, service projects and fellowship. For full text of our [constitution](#) and [bylaws](#), please consult the club website or contact the club secretary.
- **Meeting Schedule** – Regular club meetings are held weekly at a time determined by the board of directors. Special meetings may be called by the president or board. Club assemblies are scheduled at least quarterly to allow for planning and member input.
- **Decision-Making** – The club board consists of the president, immediate past president, president-elect, secretary, treasurer, and directors for each of the club’s committees. Meetings are conducted using parliamentary procedure, Robert’s Rules of Order, to ensure fairness and efficiency. Significant decisions, such as amending the bylaws or constitution, require a majority vote of the members.

3. Rotary Basics

Bottom Line: Understanding Rotary's core principles and service structure helps members align their work with the organization's mission. The Four-Way Test, Object of Rotary, Avenues of Service and Areas of Focus provide a foundation for ethical leadership and program development.

3.1 What Is Rotary?

Rotary International is a global network of 1.4 million leaders who come together to create positive, lasting change. Clubs operate autonomously but share a common mission: to provide service to others, promote integrity, and advance world understanding, goodwill, and peace through fellowship of business, professional, and community leaders.

3.2 Four-Way Test

Use this ethical guide in personal and professional decision-making:

1. Is it the truth?
2. Is it fair to all concerned?
3. Will it build goodwill and better friendships?
4. Will it be beneficial to all concerned?

Members recite the Four-Way Test at meetings and apply its questions when planning projects, conducting business, or resolving conflicts.

3.3 Object of Rotary

The Object of Rotary is to encourage and foster the ideal of service as the basis of worthy enterprise. Its four points are:

- 1) The development of acquaintance as an opportunity for service;
- 2) High ethical standards in business and professions, the recognition of the worthiness of all useful occupations, and the dignifying of each Rotarian's occupation as an opportunity to serve society;
- 3) The application of the ideal of service in each Rotarian's personal, business, and community life;
- 4) The advancement of international understanding, goodwill, and peace through a world fellowship of business and professional persons united in the ideal of service.

3.4 Avenues of Service

Rotary's philosophy of service is structured around five Avenues of Service, which provide the framework for our club's committees and projects:

- Club Service – Focuses on strengthening fellowship and ensuring the effective operation of the club. Examples include meeting organization, member care, and club communications.
- Vocational Service – Encourages members to employ their professional skills in service to others and to promote high ethical standards in their workplaces.
- Community Service – Guides the club's efforts to improve the quality of life in the West End

and greater Atlanta area. Projects may support education, youth leadership, public health, and economic empowerment, etc.

- International Service – Provides opportunities to collaborate with Rotarians around the world on humanitarian projects, cultural exchanges, and global grant programs.
- Youth Service – Recognizes the importance of empowering young people through leadership programs, Rotaract, Interact, RYLA (Rotary Youth Leadership Awards) and youth exchange.

3.5 Areas of Focus



Rotary International channels most of its humanitarian efforts through seven Areas of Focus:

- (1) Peacebuilding and conflict prevention
- (2) Disease prevention and treatment
- (3) Water, sanitation, and hygiene
- (4) Maternal and child health
- (5) Basic education and literacy
- (6) Community economic development
- (7) Environment

4. Membership Expectations

Bottom Line: Membership in AWER involves financial commitment, regular attendance, and active participation. Members are encouraged to share their professional skills, cultivate fellowship, and support the Rotary Foundation.

4.1 Dues and Financial Obligations

- **Club Dues** – Members pay annual club dues, which fund meeting costs, Rotary International and district dues assessments, and operational expenses. Dues are assessed quarterly and can be paid annually or in installments. Contact the treasurer for current rates and payment options.
- **Rotary Foundation Giving** – Members are encouraged to contribute to The Rotary Foundation's Annual Fund and PolioPlus campaigns. Giving is voluntary but strongly supported; our club aims for every member to contribute at a level meaningful to them. Donations qualify for Paul Harris Fellow recognition.
- **Event Fees** – Certain events, such as holiday/fellowship dinners or district conferences, may require additional fees. Members should budget accordingly.

4.2 Attendance

- **Meeting Attendance** – Rotary emphasizes participation. Members should strive to attend regular club meetings, service projects and social events. While perfect attendance is not required, consistent engagement strengthens fellowship and ensures projects succeed. Please notify the secretary if you will miss several consecutive meetings.
- **Leave of Absence** – Members may request a leave of absence for temporary circumstances such as extended travel, health issues or professional obligations. Requests must be approved by the board.

4.3 Participation and Engagement

- **Service** – Members are expected to contribute time and expertise to club projects and committees. Serving on at least one committee provides opportunities to develop project management skills and collaborate with fellow Rotarians. Participation may include hands-on service, fundraising, event planning, or administrative support.
- **Fellowship** – Our club culture thrives on relationships. Attend networking events, service projects, and social gatherings to build connections and support colleagues.
- **Professional Contribution** – Rotary encourages members to leverage their professional knowledge for the benefit of the club and community. Offer training, mentorship, or pro bono services where appropriate.

5. Orientation and Involvement

Bottom Line: New members are most successful when they receive a structured onboarding, mentorship, and clear pathways for involvement. The club is here to assist in orientation, a mentor if needed, and a checklist to encourage early engagement.

5.1 New Member Orientation

- Orientation Session – Soon after induction it is advisable to schedule a one-on-one orientation session with club leaders, learn about our history, bylaws, and committees, and receive resources such as this handbook and involvement checklist.
- Mentorship – It can be very advantageous for if a new member is paired with an experienced Rotarian who serves as a mentor. Mentors can introduce you to fellow members, accompany you to early meetings, explain club traditions and encourage engagement. Feel free to ask about a mentor for guidance on service projects, leadership roles, and Rotary culture.
- Lapel Pin – New members receive a lapel pin. When you decide that you want to seek a leadership position in the club, lapel pins specific to those leadership titles are available.

5.2 Involvement Checklist

Use this checklist during your first year to integrate into the club and explore Rotary resources:

- ✓ ☐ Attend at least 50% of meetings in person.
- ✓ ☐ Attend via Zoom, if not in person.
- ✓ ☐ Attend at least one board or committee meeting.
- ✓ ☐ Participate in a service project or volunteer activity.
- ✓ ☐ Create a MyRotary account at my.rotary.org.
- ✓ ☐ Join a club committee aligned with your skills.
- ✓ ☐ Attend a district conference, district assembly, or leadership development training.
- ✓ ☐ Take online courses at the Learning Center (learn.rotary.org)
- ✓ ☐ Explore club website (atlantawestendrotary.org/)
- ✓ ☐ Subscribe to Rotary magazine and follow Rotary social media.
- ✓ ☐ Invite a colleague or friend to a club meeting or service project.
- ✓ ☐ Contribute to The Rotary Foundation.
- ✓ ☐ Present a classification talk about your vocation during a meeting.

6. Tools for Success

Bottom Line: Rotary provides digital platforms and learning resources to support member development. Familiarizing yourself with these tools enables you to manage your membership, grow professionally and stay connected.

6.1 MyRotary

MyRotary (<https://my.rotary.org>) is the secure member portal for Rotary International. Create an account to:

- Update your contact information and view your Rotary record.
- Register for events, training, and the Rotary Convention.
- Access the Learning Center, which offers courses on key roles in Rotary, leadership, public speaking, and Rotary policies.
- View your giving history and manage contributions to the Rotary Foundation.

6.2 Rotary Learning Center

Located within MyRotary, the Learning Center hosts self-paced courses on club leadership, membership development, project planning, diversity, and inclusion. Completing relevant modules helps you earn leadership certificates and enhances your ability to manage projects effectively.

6.3 Club Communication Channels

- Newsletter – AWER publishes a digital bulletin summarizing upcoming meetings, service opportunities and member spotlights. Read it regularly to stay informed.
- Website – Visit our website (<https://atlantawestendrotary.org/>) for club news, officer contacts, calendar of events and meeting information.
- Social Media – Follow the club at the below. Engage by sharing posts and inviting your professional network to events.
 - **Facebook:** [facebook.com/RotaryAWE](https://www.facebook.com/RotaryAWE)
 - **Instagram:** [@rotaryatlantawestend](https://www.instagram.com/rotaryatlantawestend)

6.4 Rotary Mobile App

Rotary has a mobile app that lets you view club and district events, read Rotary Magazine, and connect with Rotarians around the world. It is available for iOS and Android devices.

7. Club Culture and Community

Bottom Line: AWER celebrates fellowship, diversity, and service. Our membership reflects Atlanta's rich history and embraces inclusivity.

7.1 Diversity and Inclusivity

Our club welcomes individuals of all ages, genders, races, religions, and professions. We believe that fellowship flourishes when differences are celebrated, and all voices are heard. Club leaders encourage open dialogue and respect. We aim to mirror the diversity of our community and support an inclusive environment.

7.2 Fellowship and Traditions

- Fellowship Events – Beyond weekly meetings, members gather for social outings, business networking, family picnics and cultural events.
- Traditions – We begin meetings with an invocation or inspirational thought and the Pledge of Allegiance. Members recite the Four-Way Test together as we bring the meeting to adjournment.
- Guest speakers provide educational or inspirational programs. Monthly club assemblies focus on planning and club health.
- Celebrations – We recognize birthdays, anniversaries, and personal achievements. Awards such as Rotarian of the Year honor those who exemplify service and leadership.

7.3 Community Engagement

The West End of Atlanta has long been a hub for ideas and activism. Our club partners with local schools, nonprofits, and civic groups to address community needs such as literacy, food insecurity, youth mentorship and economic development. Members are encouraged to propose new projects based on assessments of community needs and alignment with Rotary's Areas of Focus.

8. Leadership Pathways

Bottom Line: Rotary offers numerous leadership roles at club, district, and international levels. Serving in these positions enhances your leadership skills while advancing the mission of service above self.

8.1 Club Leadership Structure

The AWER board of directors oversees club operations and strategic planning. The Board prepares the annual budget. Board service is open to any active member who meets attendance and participation criteria. Positions include:

- **President** – Serves as chief executive officer, presides at meetings, appoints committee chairs (elections are also allowed for per the bylaws), and ensures the club follows Rotary and AWER policies. The president should be familiar with Robert's Rules and lead meetings with fairness and efficiency.
- **President-Elect** – Assists the president and prepares for his or her presidential year. Chairs the Club Administration committee as further preparation to be responsible for club operations.
- **Past President** – Provides continuity and mentoring to the board.
- **Secretary** – Maintains membership records, minutes, and correspondence. Submits reports to Rotary International and District 6900.
- **Treasurer** – Manages club finances, and financial reports (quarterly, mid-year, and annual financial condition), collects dues and pays invoices. Coordinates the annual audit should the club undertake one.
- **Directors** – Each standing committee of the club has a seat on the Board of Directors who leads project planning in their area of purview and committee coordination.

8.2 Committees

Standing committees exist to focus on areas of ongoing effort. Special committees may be formed for temporary, signature projects. Committee chairs develop annual goals and work plans, recruit volunteers and report progress to the board. Serving on committees builds leadership and project management experience.

Here are the club's standing committees and their areas of purview:

- **Club Administration:** Manages the day-to-day operations, including record keeping and finances, to ensure smooth operation, service, and fellowship.
- **Membership:** Recruits and retains new members, cultivates a diverse and passionate network of Rotarians, and ensures members are engaged and active in the club.
- **Public Image:** Promotes the club's activities and accomplishments to the community and manages the club's reputation.
- **Service Projects:** Develops and implements educational, humanitarian, and vocational projects addressing community needs locally and internationally.

- **The Rotary Foundation:** Develops and implements plans to support The Rotary Foundation through financial contributions and program participation.
- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI):** Develops and implements plans to support RI's initiatives regarding DEI through programming and projects.

8.3 District and International Opportunities

Beyond club leadership, members can participate in District 6900 roles such as assistant governor, district committee member, or training facilitator. District conferences and assemblies provide education and networking. On the international level, members may serve as district governor, serve on Rotary International committees, or join [fellowships](#) and [action groups](#).

9. Making Rotary Personal

Bottom Line: Rotary membership offers personal and professional development. Make the experience your own by pursuing passions, building networks, and exploring global opportunities.

9.1 Professional and Personal Benefits

- **Leadership Growth** – Serving on committees and boards hones project planning, stakeholder engagement, leadership, and organizational skills. You will learn to set objectives, manage budgets, timelines, and evaluate outcomes.
- **Networking** – Rotary connects you with leaders from diverse fields. Networking within the club and at district events expands your professional circle and fosters opportunities for collaboration.
- **Skill Development** – Delivering classification talks, leading meetings, and organizing projects build public speaking, facilitation, and meeting management skills. Rotary’s emphasis on ethical decision-making can strengthen your leadership brand.

9.2 Travel and International Service

- **Rotary Conventions** – Annual conventions bring together thousands of Rotarians from around the world. Attending exposes you to new ideas and allows you to participate in service projects abroad.
- **Friendship Exchanges** – Clubs host Rotarians from other countries for cultural exchange. Participating broadens perspectives and leads to enduring friendships.
- **Global Grants** – Through The Rotary Foundation, clubs can apply for global grants to fund large-scale international projects aligned with the Areas of Focus. Members may travel to project sites and participate in hands-on service.

10. Key Contacts and Resources

Bottom Line: Keep these contacts and references handy to stay connected.

10.1 Club Leadership (2025-26 Rotary Year)

President: Victoria Seals, PhD, [REDACTED]
Membership Director: Sonia Hantman, [REDACTED]
Secretary: Neil Shorthouse, [REDACTED]
Treasurer: Rose Caplan, [REDACTED]
Club Service Director: Carolina Ramos, [REDACTED]
General Club Email: inforotaryawe@gmail.com

Consult the club directory on MyRotary or contact the club secretary to obtain up-to-date contact information.

10.2 Useful Links

- AWER Website – atlantawestendrotary.org
- Rotary International – www.rotary.org
- MyRotary Portal – my.rotary.org
- Rotary Learning Center – learn.rotary.org
- Rotary Code of Policies – <https://my.rotary.org/en/document/rotary-code-policies>
- Knowledge & Resources – [Learn about Rotary programs and find resources to help you connect with members and strengthen your club.](#)