

Redistricting Plan is Progressing*

The Organization of Lions has always evolved

Organization of Lions clubs in the Pacific Northwest has changed many times as Lionism grew. A short history of our Multiple District 19:

- District 19 was born in 1922 as a single district of British Columbia, Washington and Oregon states.
- Oregon broke away to become a separate district three years later; North Idaho was added in 1936; and Alaska was added in 1943, then removed to join with Northwest Territories in 1949.
- Multiple District 19 formed in 1947-48; it had five districts, A through E. In 1950-51, Districts D and E were split to form D, E and F.
- District C was reorganized into C and G in 1963-64; and District A into A and H in 1966-67. In 1970-71, Districts A and H reorganized again, creating District I.

Why MD19 is being redistricted now

Districts need to be large enough to have robust pools of trained and qualified leaders as well as meaningful annual conferences or conventions, and adequate resources to support the operations and development of the clubs in them. Through the past five years, Multiple District 19 has lost an average of 400 members per year. Last year, during the height of Covid, it lost more than 800. More than 10,000 Lions have been lost in the past 25 years, and no full reorganization has been done in that period. It's time to better realign our regional structure again to help Lions Clubs continue to grow, provide our best service to our local communities and our neighbors within them.

This effort has not been a rush decision. LCI considers that redistricting should take at least three years, a timeline our multiple district is on track to complete. Work on strategic planning for redistricting MD19 has been ongoing since 2020, and the remaining processes will take us through this autumn 2022. If the redistricting is approved by LCI, wrap up and completion tasks will occur during the rest of the 2022-23 year, with full implementation at the LCI prescribed 3-year mark in July 2023.

Redistricting can imbue our district with more new leaders to inspire and bring fresh ideas into our activities; and combine resources to meet the needs of local clubs more effectively. The most exciting aspect of merging districts: a new mix of leaders who will revitalize leadership, membership, and programs to benefit all Lions in the new District.

Increased energy and enthusiasm will grow from this larger pool of leaders. When done well, redistricting can strengthen the district, stimulate growth in membership and leadership, and improve our ability to provide humanitarian services.

The present plan to help District G do that will be to merge Districts C and G into one new District (N). That will bring 80+ clubs and 11 or more zones into our new district that will be 2,345 members strong.

How this will impact Lions, their clubs, and their district

There will be NO financial cost to individual Lions Clubs and the Lions in them. Redistricting will not change any zone boundaries; current clubs will stay in the same zones they are in now. Once redistricting has been completed, and districts have assumed new letters or numbers, the zone numbers within them may change, but not their structure. Costs that will impact the district will include new banners for our zones, district governor, and home club; and expenses of travel and meetings. Districts will also need to examine their constitutions and bylaws to make any needed revisions; and to consolidate district funds.

How future District Governors will manage and communicate with 80+ clubs

Consolidation will make significantly larger districts. The entire current travel paradigm should be reconsidered. While district governors traditionally visit every club in their districts each year, this is not an LCI requirement; the mandate is simply to contact the clubs in his or her district every year. There is room to consider and reimagine new ways for district governors to keep in contact.

Lions Clubs International recommends that club visitations be divided into thirds, and that the district governor, 1st vice district governor, and 2nd vice district governor visit an equal share and rotate through the clubs. Zoom has become an integral part of meeting schedules during the Covid challenge; it is highly recommended that district governors consider adding Zoom meetings to their club visitation schedules to minimize long-distance individual travel. District governors travel to zone meetings of several gathered clubs presents an excellent opportunity to ensure that every club has a chance to meet with district leadership and learn the governor's goals and objectives for the district.

How districts are coordinating to make all this happen

Each district governor has appointed a Redistricting Merger Committee that meets with their counterparts in other districts to merge the elections or appointments of district officers and address issues such as finance, Constitution and Bylaws, foundation representation and other important merger topics impacting the new district, and to address

other issues that arise relating to the merger. The District G and C merger committee has been meeting regularly for many months to plan and carry out this work.

Where we are in the process right now

During March through May 2022, districts will present their redistricting plans at their spring conventions. A nonbinding advisory vote may be taken within any district and presented to the multiple district.

What is coming next

The MD19 Council of Governors voted on February 19, 2022 at its Winter Council meeting to call a special convention on June 4, 2022. Delegates will go to cast a binding vote on the redistricting plan. Election details will be posted at the MD 19 website as they become available, so be sure to frequently check the redistricting page, <https://lionsmd19.org/redistricting.php> for updated details on the proposed redistricting plan and process. If approved, the application to redistrict must then go to the Lions Clubs International Board, which will vote on final approval in the coming Fall. Implementation of the newly-shaped districts will take place at the start of the Lions year on July 1, 2023.

Our District G Governor Marilyn Patterson said, "Typically voting matters would be held at the Fall convention, but due to a time frame for this proposal, if approved the plan will need to be submitted to Lions Clubs International in October 2022. I encourage this information to be brought to your club members for understanding and consideration. I would be happy to answer questions you may have."

Want more information about redistricting?

Strategic Planning Committee members are available to meet with zones and clubs to explain and offer more information about the proposal. Contact any Strategic Planning Committee member to schedule a meeting or presentation with your group. <https://lionsmd19.org/downloads/redistricting-spc-members.pdf>

The MD19 web linked above also contains more merger redistricting information. As new information is learned, it will be posted there. Summary statistics, resources, maps, PowerPoint presentations and a link to the *LCI Guide to Consolidating Districts* are available from the page.

* Excerpt from the *District G News*, March 2022, PZC Cheryl Coast, Editor. Information in this article is derived from the PowerPoint presentation, Redistricting Multiple District 19: A Path To Success, posted on the Redistricting page in the MD 19 web, and frequently asked questions compiled by the MD 19G Strategic Planning Committee.