

## **Reciprocity**

### **What is Reciprocity:**

Reciprocity is an arrangement between clubs permitting members from one to use the goods, services and facilities of the other with a minimum number of restrictions. Use of the guest's "home club membership number" is permitted in payment for any goods and services.

The visiting club member does not need to be accompanied by a member of the host club.

The relationship assumes that the admissions process of the clubs is similar, that they admit similar members and that they hold them to the same standards of conduct. By so doing the members become "pre-qualified guests" at the other club.

The visitor must be a current member of the other club and must be in good standing at that club.

The clubs must be willing to divulge their membership roster and member numbers to the other club so that those who are signing for goods and services can be checked for authenticity.

Each club's accounting department bills the other monthly for member charges. It is the responsibility of the charging member's club to get payment from their members and to reimburse the other club for those charges.

### **What Has Prompted this Re-examination of Reciprocity:**

The Board has heard several member comments concerning certain reciprocal club members and their "comfort level" with goods, services and the facility at the host club. The commenting members object to the frequency of their use, their use of club beach equipment, their free access to the "better club" and their ability to wander in whenever they choose unaccompanied by host club members.

In addition, a letter was received objecting to the open reciprocity with the reciprocal club and the invasion of club privacy represented by that reciprocal arrangement. Concern was expressed regarding the legal definition of privacy and the violation thereof that might be represented in that reciprocal arrangement.

### **What are the Advantages of Reciprocity:**

Reciprocity allows good friends from each club to socialize easily and comfortably with their counterparts at the other club.

This openness affirms that each club is the other's neighbor and that their value systems, standards of behavior, interests and concerns are similar. The openness enhances the personal relationship between the clubs and their membership.

Reciprocity allows access to goods, services and facilities at the other club which are unavailable, or different, than those offered by the home club.

Visiting club members may pay for their own goods and services, thereby avoiding the inconvenience of having their host pay for everything.

The relationship expands the consumer base for a given club's goods and services, thereby contributing sales--- and thereby profits--- in various departments.

**What are the Concerns:**

Several concerns have been expressed regarding reciprocity:

1. The presence of "reciprocals" will crowd the parking lot, clubhouse and beach and slow down the distribution of goods and services from the various club outlets.
2. Reciprocity permits too many "strange faces" to wander around the club thereby making the club experience less comfortable and more impersonal.
3. Rejected candidates may apply to and be accepted by the reciprocal club after which they could use the host club without any restrictions whatsoever.
4. People might join the less expensive club and retain rights and privileges at the more expensive facility.
5. The standards for admission might be less at the other club thereby allowing "sub-standard" personalities to use the host club.
6. The sense of privacy--- that those privileged to use the facility have been selected for participation in the membership family--- has been violated.
7. The rights and privileges of membership are no different than those for a guest.
8. The host club might be considered a "place of business" because non-members were using the facility and paying for goods and services. A concern exists that a club might thereby lose its right to select its members from amongst those who apply for admissions.
9. "Unwanted personalities" have access to the club and nothing can be done to limit their access as long as they are a member of the reciprocating club.
10. Members of the other club might frequent the host club so often that they would appear to be members of that club.
11. Members question why they pay dues if those who don't receive the same privileges.

**Options:**

The following reciprocity options exist:

1. Eliminate reciprocity.
2. Leave the reciprocal arrangement as is.
3. Restrict the number of visits permitted by their members.
4. Restrict the times when those members may visit.
5. Restrict who they may bring with them when they visit.
6. Restrict them to visiting in the company of a host club member.
7. Require that they be signed in by a member and pay a guest fee like any other guest.
8. Require that they sign themselves in and pay a guest fee.
9. Apply a surcharge to all goods and services they purchase.
10. Table the issue and monitor the situation over the next couple of months.
11. Have a joint meeting with their Strategic Planning Committee to review the issue in greater detail.