These rules supersede all previously printed rules for TOPS® and shall be reviewed and posted in all chapters and inserted in all TOPS® Manuals for Members and Chapters. Rules are subject to change by resolution of TOPS® Board of Directors.

In accordance with the Articles of Incorporation of TOPS Club Inc., herein referred to as TOPS®, the officers of the corporation shall govern the activities of the chartered Associate Chapter of TOPS Club Inc., herein referred to as chapter.

1. TOPS® CHAPTER OBJECTIVES and PURPOSES

TOPS® chapter shall support our members as they take off and keep off pounds sensibly.

TOPS® means Take Off Pounds Sensibly℠.

KOPS® means Keep Off Pounds Sensibly℠.

2. CHAPTER ID and CHAPTER NAME

“Chapter ID” shall be as follows: two-letter postal designation, space, four-digit chapter number. TOPS® may precede the ID and city follow the ID to comprise “Chapter Name” (TOPS WI 0123 Smithville).

3. CHAPTER ORGANIZATION

The chapter shall be educational, nonpolitical, nonsectarian and is classified as an unincorporated association of TOPS Club Inc., a nonprofit organization. The chapter shall not deny membership to any individual who meets and fulfills qualifications and requirements as stated in Rule 9, unless consent to such denial is secured in advance from the Service Program Administrator and the officers of TOPS®.

4. LIMITATIONS ON CHAPTER ACTIVITY

Chapter activity shall be limited to furthering the objectives and purposes of TOPS® as stated in Rule 1. A chapter shall not agree to indemnify, defend and hold harmless the owner of its meeting place from liabilities and expenses on account of personal injury of a member attending a chapter meeting. A Chapter has no power or authority to enter into any agreement on behalf of TOPS® or which would legally bind TOPS®, nor to waive any legal rights on behalf of TOPS®.

5. CHARTER

A group may only function as a TOPS® chapter under a charter from TOPS®. The loss or revocation of such charter shall terminate all activities of the chapter.

6. OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The elected officers of the chapter shall be Leader, Co-Leader, Secretary and Treasurer. In chapters with more than ten members, no one may hold two officer positions. The elected officers shall each serve for a term of one year. The elected officers, together with the Weight Recorder and Assistant(s), shall constitute a Chapter Executive Committee.

The Chapter Executive Committee may propose such measures as it shall deem necessary and proper regarding the activities of the chapter. Such proposals shall be presented to the chapter for approval.

7. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The election of officers shall be by written secret ballot. Nominations for the officers come from the floor. Members may submit a letter of willingness to hold office and state which office, or be present at time of election. The nominee receiving the greatest number of votes for each office shall be named elected. No absentee ballots are cast. The Officers Chart (L-001) must be completed and sent to the Coordinator immediately after the election of officers and before the newly elected officers are installed. Coordinator will notify chapter if any officer is ineligible.

a. An oral notice of elections shall be given at the meeting preceding the election. For newly organized chapters, no notice is required.

b. In an existing chapter, adult membership of at least thirty days in the chapter is required to be eligible to vote or run for office. Teens and preteens may vote but are not eligible to run for elected or appointed Executive offices.

c. Annual election of chapter officers shall be held at any regular meeting after the first meeting in May and no later than the second meeting in July. Officers Chart must be received by Coordinator no later than July 31. New officers shall assume their responsibilities at the first regular meeting in August.

d. Leader may serve only two consecutive terms in office unless an exception that benefits the chapter’s success is granted by the Coordinator.

e. If the Leader vacates the office and the Co-Leader chooses not to become Leader, an election is held for the Leader. Officers Chart signed by the Leader must be mailed/emailed/faxed to Coordinator immediately.

f. A special election shall be held whenever the office of Co-Leader, Secretary or Treasurer is made permanently vacant.

8. DUTIES OF ELECTED OFFICERS

a. The Leader shall appoint a Weight Recorder (and Assistant(s), if needed) and preside at all regular or special meetings of the chapter and at all meetings of the Executive Committee.

b. The Co-Leader shall assist the Leader in the execution of duties and temporarily assume the duties of other officers who do not attend a meeting.

c. The Secretary shall record the minutes of each regular or special meeting. Minutes, whether printed and/or in electronic form, shall be available for review by chapter members but need not be read aloud.

d. The Treasurer shall have charge of all receipts and disbursements and submit all records for annual audit.

9. MEMBERSHIP, OBLIGATIONS AND LOSS OF MEMBERSHIP

The minimum age of a TOPS® member shall be seven years. Only those having proof of membership in TOPS® may attend TOPS® meetings and participate in TOPS® activities. Exception:

a. TOPS® membership is not required for adult advisors of a teen/preteen chapter.

b. Non-member caregivers of handicapped members may attend TOPS® meetings and TOPS® activities if and only to the very limited extent necessary to assist the handicapped member to attend TOPS® meetings and participate in TOPS® activities.

1) The caregiver may not participate in TOPS® activities.

2) The Chapter Executive Committee shall determine the reasonableness of the caregiver’s attendance.

c. All members attending TOPS® meetings must weigh in or are marked absent. Members who choose to not weigh in may not vote...
on any matter. Additionally, officers who choose not to weigh in may not conduct their office at meeting. Members of the chapter shall dedicate themselves to the purpose of controlling their weight and to the encouragement of other members to do likewise.

d. If membership in TOPS® has lapsed one full year, the person shall be considered a new member for all purposes if rejoining TOPS®.

e. Members who conduct themselves in such a manner as to violate the purpose and objectives of TOPS® are subject to loss of membership. The Chapter Executive Committee may recommend such action to the Coordinator. The Service Program Administrator shall review the recommendation of the Coordinator and the chapter and make a determination.

10. DUES AND FUNDRAISING

a. The fee for individual membership in TOPS® shall be determined by TOPS®, and fully described on the Membership Application (L-003).

b. The chapter may assess moderate individual dues to fund ongoing chapter expenses.

c. When the annual TOPS® membership for the chapter Leader becomes due, fee shall be paid from chapter funds.

d. The chapter shall pay current, established fees based on membership for Chapter Maintenance.

11. CHAPTER MEETINGS

Meetings of the chapter shall be held weekly and focus on supporting our members as they take off and keep off pounds sensibly. Both the business aspects of a meeting and the activities directed to the problem of overweight shall be carried out in conformance with suggestions and directives of TOPS®.

12. PROCEDURE AT MEETINGS

a. Any number of persons attending a regularly scheduled meeting shall constitute a quorum.

b. A simple majority of the votes cast by the chapter members is required for the passage of any matters.

c. Chapter meetings shall be conducted by Democratic Rules of Order in matters not covered by TOPS® Rules.

13. MISCELLANEOUS

a. TOPS® is dedicated to helping members take off pounds sensibly. Therefore, TOPS® advocates healthy eating and moderate exercise to achieve weight loss and maintain it. However, TOPS® does not render medical or other professional advice. Members should seek the services of a licensed healthcare professional for medical advice or other assistance.

b. Chapters are allowed two sensible food functions per year. Coordinator shall be notified in advance. Chapters need not hold these functions if they feel it is to their advantage not to do so.

c. No member or group of members of TOPS® shall have the power or authority to obligate TOPS® by contract, in writing or orally, without first being authorized by the TOPS® Board of Directors.

d. No member may belong to two TOPS® chapters at the same time.

e. If TOPS® chapter meets in private homes, the homeowners’ liability insurance must cover such a meeting.

f. Clothing and other items for chapter use may be printed or decorated. If TOPS® logo and/or other registered TOPS® marks are used, the registered mark symbol (®) must be included on the item.

g. Smoking, e-cigarettes and alcohol are not allowed at TOPS® chapter meetings, sponsored activities or functions.

h. Firearms, ammunition, military ordnance, knives and other cutting or dangerous instruments and related parts or accessories are not permitted at TOPS® chapter meetings, sponsored activities or functions.

i. Criminal convictions with a substantial relationship to the health and safety of TOPS® members and employees or the purposes and activities of TOPS® and its chapters are grounds for denial and revocation of membership in TOPS® and its chapters.

14. WEIGHT RECORDS

a. All weight charts (TOPS® L-027T, Transfer L-027TR, KOPS® L-027K) of the members of a chapter are confidential.

1) A member shall be granted access to the information on his/her chart at any time.

2) Those who may see a member’s weight chart are member, Leader, Co-Leader, Weight Recorder and Assistant(s), and person designated by the member.

3) Web Designate may see members’ online record only.

b. The chapter shall make reasonable modifications to weigh-in policies, practices, time(s), or procedures to enable all persons to weigh in. No member may weigh him/herself. At roll call, each member who weighed in may state loss or gain, in or out of leeway, or actual amount lost or gained since last weigh-in.

c. Weight recorded when joining as a new member or highest weight recorded at TOPS® when renewing is used to determine all awards except annual Division honors. Highest weight may not be changed when member is on medical excuse or on a doctor’s pregnancy slip.

d. After a TOPS® member’s first weigh-in of the year, if four or more consecutive weeks of unexcused absences are recorded, a member is ineligible for annual recognition and awards. Lapse of membership has the same consequences.

e. The only weekly entries allowed on a weight chart are the actual weights and dates registered on the chapter scale, excused (EX), absent (AB) or no meeting (NM).

f. All excused absences are granted at chapter level as stated in chapter bylaws.

g. If a TOPS® member must refrain from dieting, is taking prescribed medication that causes weight fluctuation, or becomes pregnant, a written statement from a licensed healthcare professional* on official letterhead or prescription blank, signed and dated, which states time covered shall be presented to Weight Recorder by the member. Omission of time covered limits medical excuse to one month. Altered medical excuses are unacceptable. Weight lost or gained while on medical excuse is neither penalized nor awarded and is not calculated and included in the annual resume report.

h. Members may attend another chapter(s) for a period of time. Weights may be recorded on a Weight Chart (L-027T) marked as “TRAVEL” by the home chapter which is brought by the visiting member from his/her home chapter. Complete details on this procedure are in the TOPS® Manual.

i. A member on a travel weight chart who wishes to compete for annual Division and Royalty Recognition or who is a KOPS® who wishes to graduate at Recognition Days at any level and needs a December weigh-in, must forward the Travel Weight Chart (L-027T) to the home chapter by December 31.

15-31. KOPS® RULES

15. All KOPS® must be current members of TOPS® and attend a chartered TOPS® chapter unless granted privileged status.

16. To become a KOPS®,
a. A member must secure, on official letterhead or electronic or paper prescription, from a licensed healthcare professional, a signed and dated statement, prescribing goal weight or desired BMI number. For BMI-based goals, the chart in *Real Life* shall be used when no BMI chart is supplied with goal slip.

b. Exception: If for religious reasons, a member cannot seek advice from a healthcare professional, the chapter will accept a statement to that effect, and goal weight shall be determined by the healthy weight range by height listed on the BMI chart in *Real Life*.

c. This statement must be filed with the chapter Weight Recorder before KOPS® may be registered. Altered goal slips are unacceptable.

17. When goal weight is reached, member may choose to become a KOPS®.

a. No adult member may have a goal weight higher than his or her highest weight recorded at TOPS®.

b. Members who have been in Division 9 at any time may be KOPS®.

c. KOPS® Registration (L-014) is used for KOPS® First Registration, KOPS® Goal Change or KOPS® Reinstatement.

18. When goal is reached for the first time, KOPS® First Registration (L-014) with a signed and dated goal slip must be sent to the Coordinator.

a. TOPS® will send a KOPS® card and KOPS® pin award to the member. A KOPS® is eligible to graduate at chapter level after the registration has been validated at TOPS®.

b. To graduate at any recognition event, a KOPS® must have reached goal by December 31 of the previous year and registered at TOPS® by January 31 of the current year.

19. A KOPS® goal must be maintained within the following leeway: three pounds above goal weight through seven pounds below goal weight. Example: A member with goal weight of 135 pounds may not exceed 138 pounds or go lower than 128 pounds.

a. If this leeway is exceeded, a two-week grace period is granted. A KOPS® must be back in leeway during this two-week grace period. Absences, excused or otherwise, do not change the grace period of two weeks. Failure to record an in-leeway weight at the chapter by the second week will result in loss of KOPS® status.

b. If a KOPS® goal slip to change goal.

21. KOPS® who are on a KOPS® Weight Chart (L-027K) from the first week of January through the last week of December shall have at least 15 weigh-ins per year in order to maintain status.

22. KOPS® having four consecutive unexcused absences, lapse of membership or an unsigned KOPS® Weight Chart (L-027K) lose status and are disqualified for awards at all levels.

23. KOPS® from several chapters may hold up to six meetings annually as KOPS® Societies. Attendance at KOPS® Society meetings does not replace or count as attendance at the TOPS® chapter meeting.

24. If, because of illness, the KOPS® licensed healthcare professional believes the member cannot maintain weight in leeway, a written statement on prescription blank or letterhead to that effect must be provided. Gains or losses during this period will not cause loss of KOPS® status under the following provisions:

a. Medical excuse, dated no more than 30 days prior to presentation, must be given to the Weight Recorder before leeway is exceeded.

b. Medical excuse goes into effect on date presented.

c. Medical excuse must state time covered. Omission of time covered limits medical excuse to one month. If not in leeway by the end of this period, KOPS® status is lost. Two-week grace period does not apply.

d. A KOPS® on medical excuse may present a new goal. Medical excuse ends when new goal is presented. KOPS® must record weight at or below new goal within two weeks.

e. All medical excuses must be attached to the KOPS® Weight Chart (L-027K).

f. At the end of twelve consecutive months of medical excuse, KOPS® must record a weigh-in within leeway of his/her goal. Two-week grace period does not apply.

25. When a KOPS® becomes pregnant, a written statement, on prescription blank or letterhead from her licensed healthcare professional stating no limit or maximum weight allowed at term must be submitted to Weight Recorder. If maximum weight is exceeded, a two-week grace period is allowed as in Rules 19-a and 19-b.

a. KOPS® goal may be changed during pregnancy.

b. After birth of baby, KOPS® shall remain on pregnancy excuse thirteen (13) weeks. If KOPS® is not within leeway at the end of this time, KOPS® status is lost.

c. If, because of medical complications, it would not be advisable for KOPS® to reach goal in thirteen (13) weeks, a signed and dated medical excuse on prescription blank or letterhead, stating length of time covered from a licensed healthcare professional may be presented. Omission of required length of time makes medical excuse limited to one month. If out of leeway at the end of this period, KOPS® status is lost. Two-week grace period does not apply.

d. When KOPS® has a miscarriage, Rules 25-a, 25-b and 25-c apply.

26. KOPS® Longevity Award (L-051) for 5-year continuously maintained anniversary of KOPS® status is validated by KOPS® Weight Chart (L-027K) sent to Coordinator and forwarded to TOPS® each year. Last weight must be in leeway and not on medical excuse.

27. A registered KOPS® may present to the Weight Recorder a licensed healthcare professional’s new goal slip to change goal.

a. Goal Change must be presented before leeway is exceeded.

b. New goal goes into effect on date presented to chapter Weight Recorder.

c. If KOPS® is not at or below new goal within two weeks, KOPS® status is lost on that date.

28. The KOPS® Goal Change (L-014) must be sent to the Coordinator with new goal slip. KOPS® will receive a new KOPS® card showing changed goal information.

29. If KOPS® status is lost, Notice of Lost Status (L-021) is sent to Coordinator immediately. KOPS® reverts to TOPS® status.

30. To reinstate as a KOPS®:

a. If goal is changed, a new goal weight must be submitted as defined in TOPS® Rule 16.
b. Goal weight or below must be achieved.
c. KOPS® Reinstatement Registration (L-014) must be completed and sent to the Coordinator.
31. To participate in graduation ceremonies or recognition and awards programs at any level, KOPS® must be registered at TOPS®.

### 32. ANNUAL DIVISION RECOGNITION

a. Selected Division Winners shall not be recognized for weight loss if, at the last meeting before any recognition day, member exceeds the recorded weight loss by more than five pounds.

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b. The last weight recorded for the year must be during the month of December and shall not be on medical excuse.

c. If Division winner is on medical excuse at time of recognition, honor is forfeited.
d. If Division Winner does not attend the recognition event, further recognition is forfeited.
e. If qualified first place Division Winner is not present at the recognition event, the second place Division Winner is not moved up but is still in effect.
f. Entire annual weight loss of transfer members is counted even if loss occurred in more than one chapter, state, province or country.
g. TOPS® members compete annually for most weight lost from first weight of the calendar year to last weight of December in nine separate divisions. These include:
   1) Members having had surgery specifically to enable weight loss.
      a) Members who join having had surgery for weight loss that is still in effect or have surgery after joining are entered into Division 9 immediately. (This may result in a member changing division during the year.) Weight losses are figured like all other divisions. As long as surgery for weight loss is effective, member is not eligible for Royalty competition.
      b) Member may bring a signed and dated statement from a licensed healthcare professional* on official letterhead or prescription blank stating that the surgery is no longer effective, and present it to the Weight Recorder.
      c) At first weigh-in of the new year, the member competes in a traditional adult division.
   2) Adult members losing by nonsurgical means based on weight at first weigh-in of the year.

### 33. ANNUAL ROYALTY COMPETITION

Eligibility for TOPS® Annual Royalty:

a. Royalty (Queen, Queen Runner-up, King, King Runner-up) at all levels are the KOPS® who lost the most weight to reach goal for the first time by December 31 of the current year and registered at TOPS® by January 31 of the following year.
b. Loss to goal honored will be last goal registered on or before December 31 of current year. New KOPS® must maintain continuous status from first registration and must maintain this goal weight or lower goal until time of recognition.
c. If a new KOPS® raises goal after December 31 or loses KOPS® status at any time, he/she is disqualified from Royalty competition at all levels.
d. Weight loss for annual Royalty is determined from original starting weight or highest weight at renewal recorded at TOPS® regardless of time taken to reach goal. Minimum weight loss from highest weight recorded at TOPS® to goal is 10 pounds.
e. New KOPS® who transfer within the year are eligible for Royalty competition in chapter in which last December weight is recorded. Loss is from highest weight recorded at TOPS® regardless of the chapter in which recorded to goal weight.
f. The last weight recorded for the year must be during the month of December and shall not be on medical excuse.
g. A pregnant KOPS® within her licensed healthcare professional’s limit at the time of recognition may be Royalty.
h. As long as surgery for weight loss is still effective, new KOPS® is not eligible for Royalty competition as defined in Rule 32-g,(1).
i. After presentation of a licensed healthcare professional’s statement of ineffectiveness of surgery for weight loss, if a member was not registered as a KOPS® previously, the member is eligible for Royalty competition based on weight at the time the slip of ineffectiveness is presented or highest weight at renewal thereafter.
j. When Royalty are disqualified at any level because of lost KOPS® status or absence at time of recognition, they are replaced by next in line.
   1) Royalty who do not attend recognition event forfeit the honor.
   2) Royalty on medical excuse at time of recognition forfeit the honor.

34. Any qualified official of TOPS® has the authority to weigh any questionable contestant before annual recognition at any level.

### 35. CHAPTER DISSOLUTION

If a chapter is considering dissolving for any reason, Leader or other member shall consult with the Coordinator immediately. Chapters with only one active member at the end of the year will be disbanded automatically.

*TOPS® defines licensed healthcare professionals as: medical doctor (MD), osteopath (DO), chiropractor (DC), psychiatrist (MD/PhD), registered nurse (RN), nurse practitioner (NP), physician’s assistant (PA), dietitian (RD and others) and certified diabetes educator (CDE).