The TOPS® Rules are your go-to resource for all things related to TOPS®, including what’s allowed at chapter and during weigh-in, how honors like KOPS®, Century Award, Royalty and Division Winner are earned or lost, do’s and don’ts for officers and members and more. Here are the newly updated TOPS® Rules in effect from Jan. 1, 2022, until further notice. The usual smaller-print version is available in the Members Area of www.tops.org if you prefer. It’s also is inserted in My Day One, which Headquarters will mail to all new members beginning in 2022. Current Rules follow (revised after printing).

These rules supersede all previously printed rules for TOPS® and are to 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 govern the activities of the chartered Associate Chapter of TOPS® Club Inc., herein referred to as chapter.

1. TOPS® CHAPTER OBJECTIVES and PURPOSES
TOPS® mission statement is to help and support our members as they Take Off and Keep Off Pounds Sensibly.
TOPS® means Take Off Pounds SensiblySM.
KOPS® means Keep Off Pounds SensiblySM.

2. CHAPTER ID AND CHAPTER NAME
“Chapter ID” is as follows: 2-letter postal designation, space, 4-digit chapter number. TOPS® may precede the ID and city follow the ID to comprise “Chapter Name” (TOPS® WI 0123 Smithville).

Virtual chapters consist of a 4-digit number preceded by VC.

3. CHAPTER ORGANIZATION
The four categories of TOPS® Chapters are:
  a. Virtual
  b. Public
  c. Private
  d. Business

The chapter is to be educational, nonpolitical, nonsectarian and is classified as an unincorporated association of TOPS® Club Inc., a nonprofit organization. The chapter may not deny membership to any individual who meets and fulfills qualifications and requirements as stated in Rule 8, unless consent to such denial is secured in advance from Service Program Administrator or President of TOPS®.

4. CHAPTER ACTIVITY
Chapters meet weekly. Weigh-ins providing the benefit and support of accountability are offered to each member and are strongly encouraged.
  a. Chapter activity is limited to furthering the
objectives and purposes of TOPS® as stated in Rule 1.

b. 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.

c. 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 will terminate all activities of the chapter.

6. SELECTION OF CHAPTER LEADER
A Chapter Leader is selected to serve a term of one year by simple affirmation, or if more than one member is interested in the position, Democratic Rules of Order apply.

a. Officers and Information (Form L-001) must be submitted to the Coordinator or Virtual Programming Administrator immediately following this process.

b. If a Chapter Leader cannot fulfill his/her term, a replacement is chosen in this same manner.

c. In chapters with more than ten members, no one may hold two officer positions.

d. Teens and preteens are not eligible to be selected as a Chapter Officer in an adult chapter.

e. Selection of Chapter Leader shall be held at any regular meeting after the first meeting in May and no later than the second meeting in July. Officers and Information (Form L-001) must be received by the Coordinator or Virtual Programming Administrator no later than July 31. New Officers assume their responsibilities at the first regular meeting in August.

7. DUTIES OF CHAPTER LEADER
The Chapter Leader may wish to appoint a Co-Leader, Secretary, Weight Recorder and Assistant Weight Recorder if needed. If handling finances, Chapter Leader also may appoint a Treasurer to assist with keeping accurate books and completing an annual audit. These appointees would join the Chapter Leader as Officers. All Officers shall be approved by simple affirmation.

a. Chapter Officers are to propose activities that support the objectives and purposes of TOPS®. Such proposals are to be presented to the Chapter for approval.

b. The Chapter Leader, at his/her discretion, may assign duties and positions to members to further enhance the chapter experience.

c. The Chapter Leader will serve as the chapter contact. In instances when he/she does not have email, the Chapter Leader may choose a member to serve as Web Designate to receive electronic communication.

8. MEMBERSHIPS
a. The minimum age of a TOPS® member is seven years.

b. Only those having proof of membership in TOPS® may attend TOPS® meetings and participate in TOPS® activities. Exception for caregivers and others is at the discretion of the Chapter by-laws, or if not applicable, the Chapter Leader. TOPS® membership is not required for adult advisors of a teen/preteen chapter.

c. If membership in TOPS® has lapsed 3 full years, the person will be considered a new member for all purposes if rejoining TOPS®.

d. All members have the choice to weigh in for accountability, validation for KOPS® status and/or eligibility for International recognition. Members have options available to document and submit weights for their purpose. For example, a weigh-in validating that the member has reached his/her KOPS® goal weight or to document required December weight for weight-loss honors. The following are approved methods:

1. Weights recorded at his/her weekly chapter meeting.

2. Weights submitted on prescription blank or letterhead from a licensed healthcare professional* signed and dated.

3. Weights obtained using a Travel Chart at a Public chapter signed and dated.

4. Weights recorded by TOPS® Field Staff signed and dated.

5. Other means approved by Service Program Administrator.

9. DUES AND FUNDRAISING
a. The fee for individual membership in TOPS® is determined by TOPS® and fully described on the TOPS® website and on Membership application (L-003).

b. The chapter may assess moderate individual dues to fund the cost of meeting place rental and/or reasonable ongoing chapter expenses.
c. No member may sell any product or service for personal monetary gain at any TOPS® function.
d. Fundraising projects may not detract from chapter meetings.

10. CHAPTER MEETINGS
Meetings of the chapter are to 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 are to be carried out in conformance with suggestions and directives from TOPS®.

11. PROCEDURE AT MEETINGS
a. Any number of persons attending a regular scheduled meeting constitutes a quorum.
b. A simple majority of the votes cast by the chapter members is required for the passage of all matters.
c. Chapter meetings are to be conducted by Democratic Rules of Order in matters not covered by TOPS® Rules.

12. MISCELLANEOUS
a. TOPS® is dedicated to supporting members as they take off and keep 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. No member may belong to two TOPS® chapters at the same time but may visit while traveling or for temporary necessity while unable to attend his/her own chapter.
c. If TOPS® chapter meets in private homes, the homeowners’ liability insurance must cover such a meeting.
d. 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.
e. Smoking, e-cigarettes and alcohol are not allowed at TOPS® chapter meetings, sponsored activities or functions.
f. Firearms, ammunition, military ordnance, knives and other cutting or dangerous instruments and related parts and accessories are not permitted at TOPS® chapter meetings, sponsored activities or functions.
g. 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.
h. If a chapter is considering dissolving for any reason, Chapter Leader or other member must consult with the Coordinator or Virtual Programming Administrator immediately. Chapters with only one active member at the end of the year will be disbanded automatically.

13. WEIGHT RECORDS
a. All weight records and charts of TOPS® members are as confidential as is feasible to process memberships and recognition forms.
   1. A member may have access to the information on his/her chart at any time.
   2. The Web Designate may see members’ online record only.
b. All weight charts are provided by TOPS®, KOPS® and winners’ charts are submitted with the Annual Report (Form L-010) to the Coordinator or Virtual Programming Administrator.
c. The chapter is to make reasonable modifications to weigh-in policies, practices, time(s), or procedures to enable all persons to weigh in if they choose.
d. A roll call may be held and be as structured or casual as the chapter may prefer. Each member who weighed in may choose to state loss or gain or actual amount lost or gained since his/her last weigh-in.
e. No member may weigh him/herself if the weight is officially recorded. Online members who self-report are not recorded on official weight chart unless weights are submitted per Rule 8 d.
f. Weight recorded when joining as a new member or highest weight recorded at TOPS® when renewing is used to determine all awards except annual TOPS® Division awards, which are based on a calendar year.
g. Highest weight may not be changed when member is pregnant or KOPS® is on a Medical Excuse.
h. Members may attend another chapter(s) for a period of time. Weights may be recorded on

Rule 12 spells out some no-nos: No medical advice given, no smoking or vaping, no alcohol, no weapons ...
a Weight Chart (L-027T) marked as “Travel” by the home chapter, which visiting member brings from his/her home chapter.

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

j. If a TOPS® member becomes pregnant, weight lost or gained while pregnant is neither penalized nor awarded. Weight during the pregnancy is not calculated or included in the Annual Report (L-010). See Rule 26 specifically for KOPS®.

KOPS® RULES
(TOPS® RULES 14 – 27)

14. All KOPS® must be current members of TOPS® and attend a chartered TOPS® chapter or Virtual meetings. All members following Rule 15 are eligible to be KOPS®, including members who have been in Division 9 at any time.

15. If a member wishes to become a KOPS®, he/she 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 will be used when no BMI chart is supplied with goal slip.

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

a. This statement must be filed with the chapter Weight Recorder, Chapter Leader or Virtual Programming Administrator before KOPS® may be registered. Altered goal slips are unacceptable.

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

c. No adult member may have a goal weight higher than his/her highest weight recorded upon joining or renewing at TOPS®.

16. When goal is reached for the first time, KOPS® Registration Form (L-014) using “New/First” is submitted with a signed and dated goal slip and copy of the weight chart to the Coordinator or Virtual Programming Administrator. TOPS® will send a KOPS® card and KOPS® pin award to the member. A KOPS® is eligible to graduate after registration is validated at TOPS®.

17. 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 to maintain status.

18. 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.

19. In addition to the goal slip, preteen/teen KOPS® registrations may be accompanied by a growth allowance (Form L-056), stating goal weight and the number of pounds per inch of growth allowed, signed by a licensed healthcare professional*. Growing preteens/teens who submit Growth Allowance do not lose KOPS® status as long as weight does not exceed that allowed for growth.

a. Preteens/teens with this form may raise their goal as they grow to a height that warrants a goal change. A KOPS® Goal Change stating new goal and height must be sent to the Coordinator or Virtual Programming Administrator.

b. Goal weight may be higher than original or highest weight due to growth.

20. A registered KOPS® may present to the Weight Recorder or Chapter Leader a licensed healthcare professional’s* new goal slip to change goal. KOPS® Registration form (L-014) using “Goal Change” must be completed and sent to the Coordinator or Virtual Programming Administrator with new goal slip and copy of the weight chart. KOPS® must be at or below the newly established goal on the date presented, which is effective immediately.

21. If KOPS® leeway is exceeded, a two-week grace period is granted.

a. 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 KOPS® second week of grace period should
When KOPS Status Is Lost

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24. To reinstate as a KOPS®:
   a. If goal is changed, a new goal weight must be submitted with the L-014 as defined in Rule 15.
   b. Goal weight or below must be achieved.
   c. KOPS® Registration Form (L-014) using "Reinstating" must be completed and sent with a copy of the weight chart to the Coordinator or Virtual Programming Administrator.

25. If, because of illness, the KOPS® member’s 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, may be given to the Weight Recorder within the two-week grace period.
   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.
   e. All medical excuses must be attached to the KOPS® Weight Chart (L-027K).
   f. At the end of 12 consecutive months of medical excuse, KOPS® must record a weigh-in within leeway of his/her goal. Two-week grace period does not apply.

26. 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 or Leader. If maximum weight is exceeded, a two-week grace period is allowed as in Rule 21 (a), (b) and (c).
   a. KOPS® goal may be changed during pregnancy.
   b. After birth of baby, KOPS® shall remain in pregnancy excuse for 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 limits medical excuse to one month.
   d. When KOPS® has a miscarriage, Rules 26 (a), (b) and (c) apply.

27. KOPS® Longevity Award is earned for 5-year continuously maintained anniversary of KOPS® status validated at TOPS® headquarters by the KOPS® weight charts submitted each year with the Chapter Report (Form L-010). Use KOPS® Longevity Award form L-051.
   a. KOPS® must document a minimum of 15 weigh-ins each of the five years.
   b. KOPS® must register an in-leeway weight on or after the date award is achieved.
   c. Member may not be on medical excuse at the time the validation is submitted, however, KOPS® may apply with an in-leeway weight when no longer on medical excuse to qualify.
28. CENTURY AWARD WINNERS
A medallion is awarded in recognition of a loss of 100 or more pounds from the highest weight recorded at TOPS® Club, Inc. Additional medallions may be earned by a member for a 200-pound loss or more and so on in 100 pound increments.

a. All weights recorded on the validation form (L-018) must show a minimum 100-pound loss.

b. There must be a validating weight on week 52 or thereafter to submit the application.

29. ANNUAL DIVISION RECOGNITION
TOPS® members compete annually for most weight lost from the first weight of the calendar year to the last weight of December in nine separate divisions, including divisions for male and female members. These divisions include:

a. Members who join having had surgery for weight loss within the previous 18 months, or who have surgery after joining, are entered into Division 9 immediately. (This may result in a member changing divisions during the year.) Weight losses are figured like all other divisions. Members may be placed in a traditional division at their first weigh-in 18 months after surgery (with that weight establishing a first weight of the year for the new non-surgical division) or may choose to postpone leaving Division 9 until their first weigh-in the following year.

b. Adult members losing by nonsurgical means based on weight at first weigh-in of the year.

c. Two divisions based on age for preteens and teens.

d. 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.

e. The last weight recorded for the year must be during the month of December and shall not be on medical excuse. Lapsed membership in the current year and unsigned weight chart disqualifies member for recognition.

f. If Division winner is on KOPS® medical excuse at time of recognition, honor is forfeited.

g. If Division winner does not attend the recognition event, further recognition is forfeited.

h. If qualified first place Division winner is not present at the recognition event, the second place Division winner is not moved up but honored as second place.

i. Entire annual weight loss of transfer members is counted even if loss occurred in more than one chapter, state, province or country.

j. Members who become KOPS® during the calendar year are eligible to compete for both Division awards and Royalty awards (if not in Division 9).

k. Member must have a minimum weight loss of ten (10) pounds.

30. 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 the 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 ten (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 the highest weight recorded at TOPS® regardless of the chapter in which it was 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. Lapsed membership in the current year and unsigned weight chart disqualifies member for recognition.

g. A pregnant KOPS® within her licensed healthcare professional’s* limits 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.

i. If a member was not registered as a KOPS® previously, the member is eligible for Royalty competition based on his/her weight eighteen (18) months after surgery (This is the new starting weight for Royalty competition.) 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.
   • Royalty who do not attend recognition event forfeit the honor
   • Royalty on medical excuse at time of recognition forfeit the honor.

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

Here are the healthcare professionals who may write your TOPS goal slip.

* 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)
  • Certified Diabetes Educator (CDE)

TAKE NOTE
Some 2021 TOPS® Rules were eliminated and are not in effect for 2022.

Based on the many unique circumstances over the past two years as well as on suggestions made by you, our members, your TOPS® Board of Directors has eliminated the following 2021 TOPS® Rules:

• TOPS® Rule 7 Election of Officers, b concerning term of office of Leader- removed
• TOPS® Rule 10 Dues and Fundraising, c concerning membership of chapter leader- removed
• TOPS® Rule 10 Dues and Fundraising, d concerning chapter maintenance- removed
• TOPS® Rule 13 Miscellaneous, b concerning food functions-removed
• TOPS® Rule 14 Weight Records d concerning four plus consecutive absences- removed
• TOPS® Rule 14 Weight Records g concerning a TOPS® medical excuse- removed
• TOPS® Rule 17 New KOPS® concerning date reaching goal-removed

The numbering of the 2022 TOPS® Rules, which take effect on January 1, 2022 until further notice, reflects these Rule changes

Please contact your Coordinator if you wish to have additional information or clarification. The contact information may be found on the back cover of your TOPS® News.