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Guidelines for Placing a Sister City Relationship into Emeritus Status

First and foremost, a U.S. city should understand that when it enters into a sister city relationship, it should be with an eye toward the long-term. Sister Cities International recognizes, however, that some sister city relationships lapse for one reason or another and that there are times when either or both cities wish to put the relationship on hold.

Sister Cities International recommends that the U.S. city do the following before it places the relationship in Emeritus Status:

1. Find out if there are people in the U.S. community who work on or who are interested in working to keep relationship active. Community support, participation, and involvement are key to sustaining a relationship.
 - a. If there are people interested, then a letter from the mayor of the U.S. city and the key leader of the community group interested should be sent to the mayor of the sister city acknowledging that perhaps there has been a lapse in activity between the two cities, but that the U.S. city is prepared to rectify the situation. Ask for concurrence from the foreign city. If concurrence is forthcoming, then proceed.
 - b. If the foreign city does not respond, or responds that they do not want to continue activity at this time, then Sister Cities International should be informed in writing by the mayor of the U.S. city of the situation. The U.S. community and the foreign community will need to decide if they will dissolve their relationship or just place it on hold, i.e. "Emeritus Status". Placing a community in "Emeritus Status" shows that the two cities are still sister cities, but they are currently inactive.
2. To place a relationship into Emeritus Status, the mayor of the U.S. city needs to write a diplomatic letter to the mayor of the foreign city thanking them for their past activity. The letter should state that they want to remain sister cities, but understand that the relationship will remain inactive until such time as both cities are able to sustain an active relationship. Sister Cities International should be informed in writing by the mayor of the U.S. city of the situation. Sister Cities International will then place the partnership into Emeritus Status and it will be reflected in its directories and all lists of sister city programs.
3. If there is NO community interest in saving the relationship, or there is NO interest from the foreign community in continuing with the relationship, then dissolving the relationship is the only solution. For further information, please see the "Guidelines for Ending a Sister City relationship."



Guidelines for Ending a Sister City Relationship

First and foremost, a U.S. city should understand that when it enters into a sister city relationship, it should be with an eye toward the long-term. If one thinks of a sister city relationship as a marriage, two parties enter into marriage with the thought and the commitment that this is to be “forever”.

Sister Cities International recognizes, however, that some sister city relationships do not work out for one reason or another and that there are times when either or both cities wish to end the relationship.

Sister Cities International recommends that the U.S. city do the following before it ends the relationship:

1. Find out if there are people in the U.S. community who work on or who are interested in working to save the relationship. Community support, participation, and involvement are keys to continuing a long-term relationship.
 - a. If there are people interested, then a letter from the mayor of the U.S. city and the key leader of the community group interested should be sent to the mayor of the sister city acknowledging that perhaps there has been a lapse in activity between the two cities, but that the U.S. city is prepared to rectify the situation. Ask for concurrence from the foreign city.
 - b. If concurrence is forthcoming, then proceed. If the foreign city does not respond, or responds negatively, then Sister Cities International should be informed in writing by the mayor of the U.S. city of the situation. Sister Cities International will then remove the partnership from its directories and all lists of sister city programs.
2. If there is NO community interest in saving the relationship, then a tactful and diplomatic letter from the mayor of the U.S. city should be sent to the mayor of the sister city. Sister Cities International should be informed of this action in writing by the mayor of the U.S. city and Sister Cities International will then remove the partnership from its directories and all lists of sister city programs.
3. If there is community support for a relationship with a particular country, but the city you are linked with is not interested, then the U.S. city needs to decide if it wishes to pursue a different city in that country. Check with Sister Cities International first to find out which cities in the country are working with another U.S. city, and for a list of all cities within that country who are currently seeking a U.S. city. If the U.S. city decides to partner with another city in the country specified, please follow the steps found in “How to Find a Sister City” to complete the relationship. Once the partnership agreement has been signed by the highest elected official for both communities, a copy must be sent to Sister Cities International to be officially recognized.



Sample Letter of Inquiry

Date _____

The Honorable _____
Mayor/County Commissioner/Governor of _____
Address _____
Address _____
Country _____

Dear _____,

It is with great pleasure that I invite the City/County/State of _____ to re-enter into a sister city/country/state affiliation with the City/County/State of _____ and make our relationship active again. This invitation is on behalf of the many citizens of our community who have come to know and love the city/county/state of _____ and vote unanimously in favor of reactivation.

As we look to the future of this alliance, we envision a growing awareness and appreciation of each other's culture and people. From small beginnings, we hope this partnership will continue for many generations, fostering educational, economic and professional exchanges. We look forward to the limitless possibilities of this relationship.

Although this partnership must begin, again, on an official basis between the governments of our two communities, we see the strength and vitality of this long-term association resting wholly in the hands of our citizen volunteers and participants. To this end, we have designated a group of men and women to enlist voluntary support in our community. We suggest that a similar body of individuals be assembled in your city/county/state. A copy of this letter will be filed with the Sister Cities International office in Washington, DC.

We truly hope that the city/county/state of _____ will seriously consider the opportunity to reactivate the partnership with our wonderful city/county/state. We eagerly await your decision.

Sincerely,

Signature Title _____
Cc: Sister Cities International



Sample Letter to Change to Emeritus Status

Date _____

The Honorable _____
Mayor/County Commissioner/Governor of _____
Address _____
Address _____
Country _____

Dear _____,

It is with sadness that I write this letter to place our sister city affiliation with the City/County/State of _____ into Emeritus Status. Our relationship has been inactive for a period of _____ months/years. On behalf of the many citizens of our community who have come to know and love the City/County/State of _____ and vote in favor of keeping our affiliation in hopes of re-activating our relationship sometime in the future.

We appreciate the awareness and education that you and your citizens have brought to the City/County/State of _____ and trust that in the future we will be able to continue to share each other's culture and people. We look forward to this partnership continuing again in the future for many more generations, in anticipation of fostering educational, economic and professional exchanges.

Although this partnership must be reactivated on an official basis between the governments of our two communities, we see the strength and vitality of this long-term association resting wholly in the hands of our citizen volunteers and participants. To this end, when we are able to reactivate our relationship will designate a group of men and women to enlist voluntary support in our community; we suggest that a similar body of individuals be assembled in your city/county/state.

We sincerely appreciate the relationship between our community and the City/County/State of _____ and look forward to the wonderful opportunities that await our communities in the future. A copy of this letter will be filed with the Sister Cities International office in Washington, DC.

Sincerely,

Signature Title _____
Cc: Sister Cities International



Sample Letter to Dissolve Relationship

Date _____

The Honorable _____
Mayor/County Commissioner/Governor of _____
Address _____
Address _____
Country _____

Dear _____,

It is with great sadness that I write this letter. Our relationship has been inactive for a period of _____ months/years with the City/County/State of _____. On behalf of the many citizens of the City/County/State of _____ who have come to know and love the City/County/State of _____, we wish to dissolve our relationship but do to the inactivity. This will allow both of us to partner with other communities should we so desire.

We appreciate the awareness and education that you and your citizens have brought to the City/County/State of _____ and sincerely thank you for all of past participation. Because of the inactivity, we, therefore, request that you agree to this change in our relationship by returning a signed copy of a reciprocal letter at your earliest convenience. A copy of this letter will be filed with the Sister Cities International office in Washington, DC.

We wish only the best for you and all of your citizens.

Sincerely,

Signature Title _____
Cc: Sister Cities International