



## How An Email Distribution List Can Benefit Your Women's Committee

A Distribution List allows you to send multiple emails using one group email rather than using individual emails. You can create a Distribution List in Microsoft Outlook by following instructions at the end of this document. Below is some useful information to assist you.

### Why Should You Use An Email Distribution List?

**To save time.** Instead of selecting the names of multiple Sisters when you want to send an email, you just select the name assigned to the distribution list.

**To stay in contact with everyone more frequently.** If you have everyone listed in one distribution list, it is easier to “click” the button to send that one email rather than searching for the names of several Sisters.

**To keep everyone informed.** It can be easy to overlook a Sister’s name. By having all email addresses in one distribution list, you can be assured that everyone will receive the same message at the same time.

**To keep names in one location.** You can add the names of new Sisters to your distribution list whenever you receive them. That way, you do not have to search through previous emails just to find a Sister who might have come to only one meeting several months ago. Her name will be in your distribution list.

**To easily communicate with specific women's committee members.** You could have several distribution lists: one for everyone you want to invite to meetings; one for officers of your committee; one for members who serve as mentors. The choice is limitless and can be based on the needs of your committee.

### When Should You Use An Email Distribution List?

Use an email distribution list whenever you want to communicate with committee members or share information with anyone else. You could also use a distribution list to determine how your Sisters are doing or to determine what your Sisters need. Consider these situations:

1. To send notices about a next SIB meeting
2. To send reminders to attend a next SIB meeting
3. To send notices about a Locals meetings
4. To send notices about special events
5. To request volunteers
6. To send information related to women’s committee business (e.g., calendars, meeting notes)
7. To find out how many Sisters are currently working
8. To find out how many Sisters are being mentored on job sites
9. To get feedback on your committee meetings or other events
10. To conduct a survey

## **How Do You Collect Email Addresses For Your Distribution List?**

The nice thing about a distribution list is that emails can be collected from Sisters over a period of time and from various sources. Consider the following approaches.

**Collect names at your women's committee meetings.** Use a sign-in sheet that includes a place for meeting attendees to include their email address.

**Collect names from other Sisters.** Your Sisters will know other Sisters who may not attend your meetings. However, they might attend if they receive notices or if they are notified of an event that interests them. So make it a practice to remind Sisters to get the emails of anyone who would like to be included on your distribution list.

**Collect names from events you sponsor or attend.** When you attend conferences, participate in community events, conduct outreach, or engage in any other type of event where Sisters attend, you might meet some Sisters in those places who are not involved with your committee. So look at these events as opportunities to collect the email address of potential committee members.

**Update email addresses at your women's committee meetings.** Always ask if anyone has changed their email address and make corrections.

**Update email addresses based on Return emails.** If you get a return email from someone whose address was previously correct, contact the sister via telephone to acquire her new email address if she has one.

## **How Do You Maintain An Email Distribution List?**

To be effective, once you start your distribution list, you must keep the information current. Sisters will need to be added or taken off for various reasons. Someone must also be willing to send out the emails for your committee. These people could be the same or different. Some options for this person (or people) might include:

1. Someone who is currently on your committee and has access to a computer.
2. Someone who currently works for your Council and has access to a computer.
3. Someone who currently works for your Local and has access to a computer.

## **How Can You Keep Email Communications Meaningful?**

Once you create your distribution list, you do not want to inundate Sisters with a message everyday, or a message that is viewed as unnecessary. So strike a balance between what you email and when you email.

**Be consistent with “when” you email.** If you decide to use your distribution list to send notifications about upcoming meetings, do this at the same time for every meeting. For example, if you send an initial meeting notification 30 days before the next meeting, send this at the same time. Do not send one initial notification 30 days, then the next notification in 20 days, then the next notification in 15 days. Be consistent.

**Be Consistent with “what” you email.** If you plan to send a copy of meeting notes to women's committee members after each meeting, do so after each meeting. Do not send the notes after one meeting, but then forget to send them after the another meeting.

**Send emails to the right Sisters.** If you plan to send a distribution email about “guidelines” to Sisters who have signed up to participate in a specific event, do not send that same email to Sisters who have not signed up. They may not need to know this information and may feel irritated that you keep sending them information that is not relevant.

### **What Kind Of Permissions Do You Need?**

Before creating your email distribution list, remember to follow appropriate protocols and be clear about your intent. For example:

1. It is important to get permission to use the email addresses of any Sisters. This can be verbal, but you must “ask” if it is OK to use their email. Also, let Sisters know that everyone on the list will be able to see the names and email addresses of all recipients.
2. It is important to contact your Regional Council, District Council, Union Local, or other Leadership-Level Authority before administering your email distribution list. You may need permission from someone at this level before you get started. So let them know the process you plan to use.

### **What Else Should You Be Aware Of?**

As with any practice, you want to be prepared for things not always going as expected. Below are some things you might anticipate:

1. If you require a “reply”, remember to include a Reply Date that gives Sisters ample time to read and consider the correspondence in your email. If you do not receive a sufficient number of replies, resend the email as a reminder.
2. You might encounter some replies that do not have anything to do with the topic of the email. For example, a Sister might use the email as an opportunity to give you an opinion on another matter or to talk about her work situation. Do not engage in such “side-bar” conversations. Instead, refer the situation to the SIB committee chair and have her contact the Sister directly with a telephone conversation.

### **INSTRUCTIONS FOR CREATING AN EMAIL DISTRIBUTION LIST:**

1. Upper left corner, click File > New > Distribution List.
2. Enter a Name for the list.
3. Click Select Members > double-click to add a name.
4. Click File > Save before you close the list.
  - The new list shows in your address book, just like a contact.
  - You have to create a new contact for anyone not already in an Address Book.
  - Get names from any of your contact lists (work, personal, etc.) using the "Address Book" drop-down at top of the Select Member window.
  - You can always click on Outlook Help > enter "Distribution List."

