

Connections Membership Guidelines and Terminology

Everyone attending a Connections meeting will be identified as a member, an applicant, or a guest.

Business Members have been accepted as such by the Connections executive (according to the process described in the application process) and maintain their membership in good standing with the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce. A representative from the Business Member is expected to attend the biweekly breakfast meetings.

A **primary representative** is someone the Business Member appointed to represent the Business and its interests at Connections.

An **alternate representative** is someone the Business Member appointed to represent the Business and its interests in the primary representative's absence. A business can have up to 2 alternative representatives.

An **applicant** is a Business who has applied to become a Connections member by submitting a completed application form to the Connections Membership Director. Interested parties are not considered applicants until they have applied. Applicants must attend two breakfast meetings (preferably in succession) before the Connections Executive will consider their application.

A **guest** is a representative from a Business who attends a Connections meeting. Guests may attend up to a maximum of two meetings before they submit their intent to become a Connections member to the Membership Director.

From time to time, at the discretion of the executive, individuals may be invited to attend specific events as a "guest of the Chair" (e.g., guest speakers, walk-ins, etc., from outside the membership).

Business Categories - The Connections Executive will review Business Categories to determine if category expansion is possible based on existing Connections members.

Connections Membership Director is a specific position(s) within the Connections Executive Committee responsible for managing the application process described below. From time to time, the duties of the Membership Director will be executed by a duly appointed designate of the Connections Executive.

Application Period is a maximum of 28 days, excluding the December Holiday period, and is initiated once an application for Connection membership is received. During this time frame, if there are any concerns regarding guests or potential applicants, they should be brought to the attention of any member of the Connections Executive.

Application Process

- 1) All applicants must be in good standing with the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce before applying to become a Connections member.
- 2) Prospective applicants can apply online through the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce website. (hyperlink)
- 3) Upon receipt of the application, the Connections Membership Director will:
 - a. Inform the Connections Executive of the applicant and which Business Category the applicant wishes to join under.
 - b. The Connections Executive will inform (via email and in person) the Connections Membership of the applicant's intent to join Connections.

- c. After the application period, the Connections Membership Director will contact the applicant with the decision on their membership to Connections.
 - i. Once approved, the Connections Membership Director will announce the new Member(s).
 - ii. If they are not approved, the applicant will be notified by the Connections Membership Director and may be given the option to be put on a waiting list.
- 4) During the Application Period, the applicant can not attend another Connections meeting.
- 5) On a continuous and ongoing basis, the Membership Director will monitor open categories within Connections and notify the membership.
- 6) With direction from the Connections Executive, the Membership Director will contact selected applicants (e.g., from the waiting list or any other appropriate source) and invite them to submit (or resubmit) an application to Connections. Once the application is confirmed, the application period is extended to the existing Connections Membership.

Updated by the Connections Executive October 2024

Approved by the Membership ---