

SENESCHAL 101

Baron Terafan Greydragon
Deputy Kingdom Seneschal for VA

Primary Duties and Responsibilities

- **Legal Representative of the group**
- **General Health & Welfare of the ENTIRE group**
- **Coordination and Support of all other group officers**
- **Reports**
- **Attending Curia Regis**
- **Relationship w/ Barons & Baronesses (if applicable)**
- **Warrants and Replacements**
- **Exchequer Duties (by default)**

Legal Representative of the Group

- The Seneschal is “the” person who has legal authority
- Able to sign contracts
- In conjunction with the exchequer, able to encumber (commit) SCA funds
- Must carefully consider deputies, including autocrats. It is only as a deputy to the seneschal are autocrats able to enter into contracts. (They are empowered for a specific purpose, for a specific length of time)

Group Health & Welfare

- The NUMBER ONE responsibility is concern for the overall wellness of the group
- All decisions need to be made from this standpoint
- Personal feelings must sometimes be put aside
- Must focus on the “Big Picture”

Coordination and Support of all other group officers

- Seneschals are NOT “in charge” of the other group officers
- Seneschals must support and coordinate the activities of the other officers
- Seneschals may become a central point of contact if a group officer is not performing adequately
- Seneschals should provide as much “big picture” help as possible

Reports

- Quarterly Reports (every 3 months) are VERY important because they are used to compile the Kingdom Domesday Report to the Society Seneschale.
- Seneschals should feel free to make sure that other group officers have completed their reports to the appropriate Kingdom officer. **Why?**
Kingdom Law 1.3.3.1 - When an office is vacant, the seneschal of the group is responsible for filing any reports required the missing officer.
- It is a good idea, and not “getting too deep in their business” to ask for copies of their reports.

Attending Curia Regis

- Curia Regis meetings are held at least ONCE PER REIGN.
- Read the Acorn carefully to make sure you know when/where they will be held.
- Stay abreast of the relevant issues, talk to your group (or at least the officers) about the issues prior to attending, and be able to explain your group's feelings and desires.

Relationship w/ Barons & Baronesses (if applicable)

- You are not in fealty to the Baron/ess (if you are, you probably should NOT be)
- You report to the Kingdom Seneschal, they report to the Crowns
- They are NOT your boss, NOR are you theirs
- All of you are working for the greater good of the group.
- You should be able to call and talk to them several times a week and feel comfortable doing so
- You should have the appearance of being the **#1 supporter** of the Baron/ess.

Warrants and Replacements

- Seneschals play a key role in warranting ALL the other officers in the group
- Requests for new seneschal warrants must include the signatures of TWO other group officers
- When considering acceptable replacements, you must think of the greater good of the group and the ability of the individual to fulfill the duties and responsibilities
- When considering replacements, does the individual have traits and characteristics that will help him/her be successful
- When considering replacements, does the individual have a good working relationship with the Baron/ess? (if applicable)

Exchequer Duties (by default)

- Only baronies are REQUIRED to have a separate exchequer, in other groups, it is the seneschal by default if there is not one
- Exchequer duties pose the biggest danger because of the association with funds belonging to the group
- Failure to file accurate and timely reports can endanger the status of the entire group because of the special nature of the SCA as a non-profit organization
- Seneschals should provide as much assistance as possible to the exchequer at report time.
- Even seneschals who have separate exchequers should check to make sure that reports are being done correctly and on time. Another set of eyes never hurts.
- I **strongly recommend** that if a group seneschal and exchequer live together, that they are **both NOT on the signature card**
- Exchequers are required to submit written reports at meetings to the seneschal, who keeps a copy.

Attributes of good Seneschals

- Well organized
- Good communication skills

- Ability to see the “Big Picture”
- Arbitration skills
- Some leadership skills
- Ability to handle a wide variety of people AND situations

Kingdom Structure

- Kingdom Seneschal
 - Regional Kingdom Deputy Seneschal
 - Baronial/Shire Seneschal
 - Canton/College Seneschal

Tips to succeed as a Seneschal

- Remember that each seneschal has a different level of responsibility (and a different level of experience)
- The single biggest problem is lack of/failure in communication, not from intentional malice
- Group seneschals report to the seneschal in the kingdom structure, normally the Regional Deputy.
- Hold group Officers meetings
 - ⇒ These are not intended to exclude any member of the populace. If they want to come, LET THEM COME.
 - ⇒ These are intended to prevent the populace from becoming bored while the officers hash out little details, plan and coordinate activities, and such
 - ⇒ Use a year long calendar. Remember the “big picture”
 - ⇒ Baronial Seneschals need to coordinate (with canton seneschals) all the canton events so they don’t conflict and you don’t have all the canton events in the same month.
- Delegate activities to the appropriate officer so meetings are kept interesting. Have dance sessions, personae tales, quick craft classes, a great recipe from the last feast, new armor standards, archery requirements, and so forth
- Run an interesting informative meeting. Keep business meetings to once a month, NOT weekly.
 - ⇒ **SHORT** officer reports
 - ⇒ Old Business
 - ⇒ New Business
 - ⇒ Upcoming events/Activities.
 - ⇒ Total Time should not be more than 1 hour unless you are planning “THE” big event.

Mailing labels (or how to run a polling)

- Mailing labels MUST be ordered from Member Services by the Kingdom Seneschal
- What you need to provide the Kingdom Seneschal is:
 - ⇒ The range of zip codes (The Kingdom Seneschal can help with this)
 - ⇒ Whether you want subscribing members and associate/family members **OR** just subscribing members
- Allow at least THREE WEEKS to get the labels
- Use the labels ONLY FOR THEIR INTENDED PURPOSE.