



Pre-Application Guidelines for Leaders

Meet with the prospective Leader Applicant to discuss and explore the following topics. As background for your discussion, use *Thinking About LLL Leadership?*, *Overview of Application Work for Leader Accreditation*, Appendices 17 and 18 to *LLLI Policies and Standing Rules Notebook*, Chapter 5 of the *Leader's Handbook* and your experience as an LLL Leader.

This resource lists the section titles in the recommended order of a pre-application dialogue.

1. The LLLI Prerequisites to Applying for Leadership

- Read with the prospective Applicant each statement of the LLLI Prerequisites to Applying for Leadership, Appendix 18 to *LLLI Policies and Standing Rules Notebook*.
- Ask her to assess her experience/attitudes in relation to each of the prerequisites.
- First focus on the Personal Breastfeeding Experience and Mothering Experience Prerequisites because her experiences about these prerequisites are no longer changeable.
- Next make sure about the Organizational Experience and Personal Traits Prerequisites. If there is any requirement she can meet from now, help her find a way of achieving it.
- Compare how you and she understand each prerequisite.
- Use the Guidelines for Leaders from Appendix 18 which explain how Leaders can interpret and implement the prerequisites.
- Check with your co-Leaders to see if they agree. If any of you have questions or uncertainties, contact a Leader Accreditation Department (LAD) representative.

2. La Leche League philosophy

- Share the ten concept statements and refer to sample guiding questions in Chapter 5, *Leader's Handbook*.
- With Appendix 17 as a resource, discuss each of the concepts separately and as they relate one to another:
 - How they are presented more fully in *The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding*.
 - How they are revealed in a Leader's experience and in the prospective Applicant's experience.
- Work through questions she may have about the philosophy of "mothering through breastfeeding" or about presenting it at meetings.
- Stress that we present LLL philosophy and respect other philosophies and choices.
- If you have questions about any of this, consult with your LAD representative.

3. The work of a Leader

Definition of an active Leader

An active LLL Leader pursues the La Leche League mission through basic Leader responsibilities as defined in the *Policies and Standing Rules Notebook* and/or other service to LLL. An active Leader's fees are current, she keeps up to date with Leader education, and she communicates regularly with the organization.

- Most Leaders begin with the five basic Leader responsibilities; explain what each entails. Do they describe the work the prospective Applicant would like to do as a Leader? Explain the definition of an active Leader. Related to these, let her know about:
 - Our published resources (books, newsletters, and magazines; pamphlets and information sheets).
 - Our support network (DA/DC, ACL, APL, CLA, etc.) and opportunities for ongoing education.
 - A Leader's accountability to LLLI and what she can expect from the organization; the importance and role of communication and consultation.
 - The LLLI policy of not mixing causes; how a Leader limits what she says and refrains from promoting other interests when representing LLL.
 - The difference between guiding a discussion and formal "teaching."
 - La Leche League's approach of mother-to-mother help:
 - Respect for the knowledge an individual brings to a situation.
 - The effect of long-term support on the continuation of breastfeeding.
 - The LLL Leader's availability (how we fit LLL work into our lives).
- Ask the prospective Applicant about her goals as a Leader; explore with her how she will fulfill the LLL mission. Be sure that her goals are compatible with those of LLL and that she is willing and able to keep her fees current, stay up to date with Leader education, and communicate with the organization.

4. The application work

- Explain the parts of the application and their purposes so the prospective Applicant will know what to expect and what is expected of her.
- Show the prospective Applicant what reading is required and the *Checklist* of topics you will discuss together.
- Share the *Breastfeeding Resource Guide* and the *Preview of Mothers' Questions/Problems and Group Dynamics/Management*.
- Explain the application procedures and how she will work with the LAD representative.
- Talk about the LLLI Criteria for Leader Accreditation, which state that the Applicant will have:
 - Met the LLLI Prerequisites to Applying for Leadership.
 - Nursed her baby for about a year.
 - Demonstrated understanding of LLLI philosophy.
 - Conveyed her knowledge of basic breastfeeding management.
 - Demonstrated leadership skills and attitudes.
 - Completed the LLL Leader accreditation work.
 - Signed the *LLL Leader Statement of Commitment*.
- Create a preliminary plan of what you can do to assist her to attain these goals.

5. Costs of an application

- Explain the current fees/costs of application and accreditation, and what they cover. Discuss possible sources of financial help.

Recommending the mother

If you are co-leading, consult with your co-Leader(s) about your intention to support an application for leadership. When you, your co-Leader(s), and the prospective Applicant are satisfied that an application is appropriate:

- Ask the other Leaders in the Group to complete recommendation forms or to add their observations in a letter to the LAD representative.
- Discuss the role each Leader will play in helping the Applicant to prepare for leadership.
- Fill out the Leader Recommendation form. The information you provide is a first guide for the LAD representative as she starts working with the Applicant.
- Give the prospective Applicant an Application form.
- Explain the payment of the application fee, if applicable.
- With acceptance of this application, be ready to meet regularly with the Applicant to discuss and practice various aspects of LLL leadership and to communicate frequently with the LAD representative.

Note: If a Leader Applicant or mother interested in applying for LLL leadership disagrees with a decision regarding her application made by a local LLL Leader or the LAD representative, LLLI offers an opportunity to appeal the decision to LLLI. Refer to LLLI Leader Accreditation Appeals Policies and Process, Appendix 38 to *LLLI Policies and Standing Rules Notebook* and consult your LAD representative.