

Conducting a Lions Club and Community Needs Assessment

Whether your club is passionate about service but unsure where to begin, or a seasoned club seeking new service opportunities, this tool will help you reflect on your club's service and discover new ways to impact your community. Once a year, your club should assess the programs and services you provide to your local community. Through a simple assessment, you will be able to understand:

- What are our club's strengths and challenges?
- What area of need motivates our club to serve?
- What are the specific community needs that motivate us, and what opportunities and resources will enhance our service?

This can be achieved by conducting a [Lions Club and Community Needs Assessment](#). Some of the benefits of conducting a [Lions Club and Community Needs Assessment](#) include:

- Community leaders become aware that the club wants to make a difference in the community.
- Provides feedback from community leaders as to what they see as important needs within the community that your club could work on.
- Provides greater relevance to the community and to club members.
- Clubs working on relevant community service projects generate excellent public relations, greater community support, and fellowship amongst club members.
- For your convenience, a sample letter and questionnaire is included.

To accurately assess the needs of your community, follow the steps below:

Step One: Introduce the Community Needs Assessment to the Board

Present the importance of conducting a needs assessment with your club's board of directors. Explain how the assessment will help the club identify and focus on programs and services that are needed in the community.

Step Two: Appoint a Committee

After receiving approval from the board, discuss the importance of conducting the community needs assessment at a club meeting. If members agree to the assessment, appoint a task force to handle the assessment.

Step Three: Develop a Questionnaire and Cover Letter

Have your task force begin their work by developing a questionnaire and cover letter. You may use the sample questionnaire and cover letter provided or customize your own to include questions that will help you assess the specific needs of your community. If you choose to use the questionnaire provided, you can use the editable PDF version of the [questionnaire](#) from the LCI website.

Step Four: Decide Who to Contact in the Community

Before beginning your assessment, your task force will need to decide who can best evaluate the needs of your community. Make a list of the people you think should take the assessment. Consider visiting your villages' official Web site for ideas of who to contact. Often, the village Web site will provide email addresses and phone numbers of important personnel.

Some ideas of people you can contact to help determine the needs of your community include:

- Principals
- Teachers
- Library personnel
- Environmental service workers
- Park district coordinator
- Police
- Fire fighters
- Hospital administrators
- Doctors & nurses
- School counselors
- Social workers
- Student leaders

Step Five: Survey Community Contacts

Contact the people on your list and give them the community assessment questionnaire you developed. Consider that the questionnaire can be answered by e-mail, over the phone, in person or by postal mail. Use the method of contact that best fits the situation of each contact.

Step Six: Analyze Survey Results

Once the questionnaires have been compiled, the task force can begin reviewing and analyzing the results. Try to answer the following questions:

- Does your community have specific needs for services your club can provide?
- Are other clubs and organizations duplicating your club's efforts, in which case you may consider finding a way to work together on a project?
- Do any of your programs need to be updated, improved or suspended?
- In summary, what does your community need and how can your club help?

Step Seven: Share the Results

Ask the task force to share the assessment at a club meeting. Get feedback from your fellow members and discuss whether your club's current services and programs are meeting the needs of your community. Open up the floor to new ideas that can help serve your community better. In addition, if you have uncovered opportunities and needs outside the service area of your club, consider informing the district governor and district membership chairperson.

Step Eight: Follow Up with the Survey Participants

Send a message thanking respondents for participating in the survey. Discuss how their input has helped the club define programs to better serve the community. Use this as a recruitment opportunity and ask if they are interested in working with Lions and invite them to attend the next club meeting.

These are just a few practical ideas for you to consider and more ideas will be published on a regular basis.

If your club has experienced successful public relations for an event, please let us know. We need to “get the message out” by sharing these successes to **ALL** clubs in the district.

If you have a question regarding these ideas, promoting your club in your community or if you would like to invite a member to visit your club, please feel free to contact any one of us. We are here to help you to reshape public opinion and improve your club’s visibility so that club activities become a success.

By working together to improve the awareness of our clubs in our communities, we can work towards ensuring effective and successfully promoted club service projects, fundraisers and events.

Together in Lions Service,

Lion James Johnston

District A4 Public Relations and Promotions Coordinator