

SIGMA KAPPA

Live with Heart

Dear sisters,

After much discussion and thoughtful consideration, national council has voted to eliminate Sigma Kappa's legacy policy (section I.B of the *National Policy Handbook*). The elimination of the legacy policy empowers our collegiate chapters to make their own membership selections and gives each PNM an equal opportunity to receive an invitation to Sigma Kappa. This change is effective Jan. 1, 2021, and is consistent with the objective, outlined in our strategic plan, to eliminate barriers to diversity, equity, inclusion, and access (DEIA) at the point of entry and throughout the membership experience. We realize that some will see this as a step forward while others will need more time to accept the change.

National council came to this decision after reviewing the archives, analyzing membership statistics, consulting with the DEIA committee, and observing the policy in action. As we re-examine our policies and practices through a lens of equity, we recognize that our legacy policy has given preferential treatment to potential new members (PNM) whose relatives had greater access to higher education or were given the privilege to join sororities like Sigma Kappa.

We recognize there is a special bond for those who are able to share their sisterhood with a family member. Sigma Kappa will continue to recognize that relationship when a legacy joins Sigma Kappa. For example, per our Initiation procedures, a legacy may still be pinned by her relative during the Initiation ceremony. Our hope is that our members teach Sigma Kappa's values of loyalty, friendship, personal growth, and service to their legacies so that when it comes time to pick a sorority home, legacies will join Sigma Kappa alongside other PNMs who share those values.

Removing this policy is only one step in examining many of our policies and practices, and specifically our recruitment practices, to ensure equitable consideration for all PNMs. Additional progress on this front, as it relates to recruitment and all aspects of the membership experience, will be shared in our regular DEIA communications to the membership. Currently, members of the DEIA committee along with creative teams are developing DEIA focused chapter programming. Just last week, we launched newly created resources for the DEIA Chairwoman.

We continue to encourage members to submit Recruitment Introduction Forms (RIF) at www.sigmakappa.org. Submitting RIFs allows our collegiate chapter members to know more about the potential new members they will meet during recruitment. If you know any women, including legacies, who would make a great member of Sigma Kappa we encourage you to fill out a RIF.

In the coming months, the Legacy Link program will be re-examined to identify ways to introduce our sisterhood to future generations. Until the program has been reimagined and re-branded, the program will be paused and gifts will not be mailed this fall.

Recruitment supervisors and vice president of membership advisors will soon receive details about a virtual training to discuss and plan for the elimination of the legacy policy. [A list of frequently asked questions can be found here.](#)

As our world continues to evolve, and consistent with our value of personal growth, it is critically important to the future of Sigma Kappa that we remain bravely open to self-reflection and change. We are confident that this policy change will serve to create a stronger, more equitable sisterhood that will thrive for generations to come.

Loyally in Sigma Kappa,

Ann O'Connell Adams, national president

Kathleen Brangan Held, national vice president for membership