

# Membership Guide

Understanding Your  
Pennsylvania  
Downtown Center  
Membership  
Options



PENNSYLVANIA  
Downtown Center  
• Since 1987 •





*To our valued members*  
and those that may wish to become members,  
this guide provides an of membership  
options open to an individual, an organization, a  
municipality or a business that would like to be  
an integral part of the PDC statewide network of  
revitalization partners.

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It is important to have a common understanding of the various classes of participation. These classes have a direct impact on which Pennsylvania Downtown Center (PDC) membership may be best for you. These levels are primarily driven by the PA Department of Community and Economic

Development (DCED) and the National Main Street Center (NMSC). The levels of participation can be a bit confusing because both organizations, DCED and the NMSC, use the term “designated” as a community classification.

# About Designation

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## **DCED Designated Programs**

Under the current DCED structure, the Main Street and Elm Street funding programs are both sub-components of the Keystone Community program. With this program a community that has the financial resources to support a full-time revitalization manager, and that submits the appropriate application documentation, may be “designated” by DCED and thereby gain priority access to program funding. If the revitalization manager spends 100% of their time working within the boundaries of the neighborhood (in the case of Elm Street) or the business district (in the case of Main Street), as defined by the program boundaries submitted with the application, the community would be a designated Keystone Elm Street, or a designated Keystone Main Street, respectively. In some cases, where the community cannot find the financial resources to have the full-time professional spend 100% of their time working within these defined boundaries, it may be necessary for other revitalization work to be carried out by that individual in other parts of the community. If that person spends at least 60% of their work week providing revitalization services inside those program boundaries, that community can still be designated by DCED as a Keystone Community. Under the current DCED program structure, all of these programs would be considered as “designated” by DCED. As a designated program these communities, in addition to having priority access to program funding, may obtain free technical support from PDC and attend DCED-sponsored managers meetings at no cost. In addition, if the organization changes managers, attendance by the new manager at the New Manager Training is free and attendance at the PDC Community Revitalization Academy is greatly subsidized by DCED. Board and committee members may also attend annual Regional Leadership Forums at no cost.

## **NMSC Designated Members**

In 2014, the NMSC added its own version of a designated membership. Previously, the NMSC had only a single standard membership. Now, the NMSC allows local organizations to choose between being a standard member and a designated member. The primary difference between the standard and the designated memberships with the NMSC is that designated members are eligible to be considered for the national Great American Main Street Award (GAMSA) and national accreditation.

Under this system it is possible to have local organizations that are both DCED designated communities and NMSC designated members. For more information on NMSC membership visit [www.mainstreet.org](http://www.mainstreet.org).



# *Membership Options*

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## **PDC Individual Membership**

PDC values the participation of individuals as members of the organization. While most of what PDC does involves interactions with other non-profit organizations or units of government, we are aware that most revitalization programs begin with the commitment of an INDIVIDUAL, or a small group of individuals, to advance the local effort. By becoming an individual member of PDC, you are not only supporting the work of the organization, you are staying informed. As an individual member you will be kept aware of the trainings, the funding opportunities, and other critical information necessary to take your local revitalization effort to the next level.

## **PDC Organizational Membership**

This is the standard PDC membership level for local revitalization organizations or municipalities. PDC Organizational Membership is best suited for DCED designated communities. Organizational Membership is also suggested for those non-DCED designated communities that do not think they will need any direct, individual PDC technical assistance during the course of the next year or that are not interested in NMSC accreditation in the course of the next year.

## **PDC Enhanced Organizational Membership**

This is an upgraded level of membership in PDC. The Enhanced Membership is best suited for communities that do not have a current DCED designation AND will need a full day of technical assistance from PDC during the course of the next membership year. Communities that join as an Enhanced Member will see a significant savings in this one day of technical assistance by getting a site visit from PDC.

## PDC Recognized-Program Premium

There are many non-DCED designated communities that may want access to any or all of the following:

- Attend the three annual Managers Meetings sponsored by DCED
- Attend the Regional Leadership Forums (RLF) for board and/or committee members
- Attend New Manager Training, designed primarily for DCED-designated communities
- Be eligible for recommendation by PDC to the NMSC for national accreditation.
- Be eligible to apply for the Special Occasion license offered by the Liquor Control Board for DCED designated or National Main Street Center accredited/recognized programs.\*

Because PDC's contract with DCED only covers services to designated communities, PDC must have a way of tracking and monitoring the performance of, and paying for the costs associated with, the non-DCED designated organizations that wish to take advantage of these benefits associated with DCED designation. PDC requires non-DCED designated communities to pay a Recognized Program Premium to have access to these activities. The Recognized Program Premium will be added to either the Organizational Membership or Enhanced Membership dues.

In addition, to be considered for definition as a "Recognized" program, the local member must meet the basic performance criteria that allow it to be reviewed for national accreditation in the course of those years. These criteria include:

- Having a manager working, full-time or part-time, for at least six months of the calendar year.
- Having the manager attend all three annual managers meetings.
- Having at least one board or committee member, NOT THE MANAGER, attend one of the Regional Leadership Forums held annually at various locations around the state.
- Report basic community reinvestment statistics.
- Beginning this year, for activity in 2021, completing a salary survey is an added requirement for eligibility for national accreditation. **A community that does not have a completed salary survey will not be accredited.** It is **recommended** for any programs that are pursuing DCED Keystone Communities Main Street & Elm Street designation and/or national affiliate status.

## PDC Group Memberships

One of the membership choices open to existing and potential PDC members is the “Group Membership” option. The Group Membership option is designed to give communities in relatively close proximity to each other the opportunity to join as a collection of organizations, communities and/or businesses. The intent behind Group Memberships is to get more organizations/municipalities/businesses that share a common geography to work together, share common problems and opportunities, and to generally interact with each other on a more regular basis. PDC’s evolving regional membership networks will provide several annual opportunities for these members to come together and share their revitalization successes, failures and future needs. Under the Group Membership option, communities must all be from the same county or all be from within a circle that does not exceed a diameter of 50 miles. To take advantage of the Group Membership, the following conditions must apply:

1. There must be at least five (5) participants in the group.
2. The participants must ALL have organizational or business memberships. *Individual memberships do not apply to group membership.*
3. The Group Membership must be paid in full for all participants in the group before the benefits are available to any one member of the group.

Organizations and communities that choose to join under the Group Membership will receive a 20% discount on either the standard or enhanced organizational and/or business membership fee. Not all participants in a group membership need select the same membership option. Some of the participants can be standard members and some may be enhanced members. Communities or organizations that wish to be Recognized Programs must add the Recognized Fee premium to their discounted group membership. Below is an example of a Group Membership (fees subject to annual revision):

Group Participant	Membership Class	“Single” Cost	Group Cost	Savings
Municipality #1	Standard	\$325	\$260	\$65
Organization #1	Standard	\$325	\$260	\$65
Organization #2	Enhanced	\$675	\$540	\$135
Municipality #2*	Standard	\$325	\$260	\$65
Organization #3*	Standard	\$325	\$260	\$65
TOTAL		\$1,975	\$1,580	\$395

\* Represents NEW PDC Members.

## Business Memberships

At PDC, we understand that the purpose of business is to make money. And, we also understand that even non-profit organizations, such as ours, ultimately need to generate net income to survive. So rather than refer to our relationships with the business community as just memberships, we prefer to use the term partnership. We know that for a business person, one of the best things that PDC can provide to you is the connection to those people and organizations that are buying the goods and services you offer for their local revitalization efforts. In order to craft the sort of partnership to best serve the needs of your business, PDC has three levels of business memberships. The details of each are as follows:

**Bronze** | Our most affordable business membership is the bronze level membership. At this level a business has access to all of the benefits associated with a standard organizational membership, but with some important additions. Bronze level business partners get greater access to the larger PDC membership through a listing on the PDC web site. Bronze members may interact directly with PDC members by attending the annual conference at a discounted rate. Bronze level members will also be notified directly of any opportunity to bid on the goods, service and projects offered by any of our non-profit or municipal members.

**Silver** | If your business wants to step it up a level, PDC's Silver level membership offers all of the benefits of a bronze level membership plus a great addition. Silver level members have the added benefit of a free day of technical assistance from PDC. This technical assistance may be used directly by the business organization or "gifted" to a local non-profit or municipal member as part of a contract which the business may have with that entity. If using the service directly, the technical assistance may allow the business to better compete for available goods and services contracts by expanding their own knowledge base related to community revitalization or to focus on and address a particular business need related to community revitalization.

**Gold** | The gold level of business membership is, well, the gold standard. In addition to the benefits of silver level membership, the gold level member gets two additional benefits: Two complimentary registrations to the PDC annual conference and a listing in every issue of PDC's quarterly newsletter.

# *A word about* National Main Street Center Accreditation

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We are often asked the question as to why an organization or a community should be interested in seeking “national accreditation” from the NMSC. National accreditation has always had the following benefits:

- Recognition at the National Main Street Conference
- Acknowledgment of the accreditation achievement to the Governor of Pennsylvania
- Recognition at the Pennsylvania State Conference
- Validation of the program with local stakeholders
- A significant addition to grant applications submitted to funding entities

But going forward, PDC will take every step to make this national accreditation have even more tangible benefits. These will include:

- More coverage of the achievement by local media
- Direct recognition of nationally accredited programs in PDC marketing activities
- Extra points for PDC and Keystone CORE Services funded initiatives
- A 20% reduction in membership dues per year for five years to organizations that are nationally accredited for five (5) consecutive years, starting in 2015 (for 2014 program activities) through 2019. First discount 2019-2020

To review the fundamental requirements for national accreditation, a community must:

- Be a current member of the Pennsylvania Downtown Center
- Be either a DCED-Designated or PDC Recognized Program
- Be a Designated Member of the NMSC
- Meet the 10 Performance Criteria of the NMSC – please read these carefully (see [www.mainstreet.org](http://www.mainstreet.org))

It is important to note in the above criteria, that you do NOT have to be a DCED designated program to be eligible for national accreditation, but if you are not DCED-designated, you must be a PDC Recognized Program. Much of the work related to evaluating a community’s performance for consideration as a nationally accredited program is conducted during a required annual program assessment for a DCED-designated community. This evaluation WILL be paid by DCED and does not cost the community anything. Non-DCED designated communities are eligible for a similar accreditation evaluation by PDC. PDC will determine if it has sufficient information to conduct the accreditation evaluation without the need for an on-site accreditation site visit.

# Membership Cycle

*PDC's membership cycle operates on the organization's fiscal year – July 1 through June 30. PDC's membership renewal window opens in the fourth quarter of the preceding membership year.*

## **New Members**

Membership for individuals, organizations or businesses is perpetual during the course of a fiscal year and is prorated for new members.

- First quarter of the membership year (July through September) pay 100%
- Second quarter of the membership year (October through December) pay 75%
- Third quarter of the membership year (January through March) pay 50%
- Fourth quarter of the membership year (January through March) will get the fourth quarter and associated PDC membership benefits for free provided that they pay the full amount of the membership fee for the next membership year. Becoming a member of PDC only for the fourth quarter to gain access to PDC member conference rates is not allowed.

## **Current Members**

Renewal payments are due in full by June 30th. PDC offers current members a 30 day grace period through the end of July.

- Membership renewals paid after August 1st are subject to a \$25.00 administrative late fee.
- After September 30th, members' access to the member sections of the PDC website and other PDC membership benefits are suspended until member pays their membership fee, a late fee of \$25 in full and a \$25 reconnection fee.
- A member is expected to pay their membership fee in full plus any fees in the year they are delinquent, regardless of when they renew their membership.

## **Lapsed Members**

If a previous member lapses for a year, their membership can be renewed at the applicable current member rate plus the \$25 administrative fee and \$25 reconnection fee. The lapsed membership status applies for one full membership year. After that year, the individual, organization or business may rejoin PDC as a NEW MEMBER without late and reconnection fees.

# *Our Values*

## at Pennsylvania Downtown Center

*Pennsylvania Downtown Center (PDC) is the only statewide nonprofit dedicated solely to the revitalization of the commonwealth's core communities.*

As of May, 2013, PDC has outlined six values that act as guiding principles to navigate the organization, as detailed below.

### *Authenticity*

We seek out, recognize and celebrate what is real, genuine and unique about each other, our members and our communities. We value diversity and encourage creative expression.

### *Stewardship*

We believe in honoring the balance among people, planet and profit. We take into consideration this triple bottom line when aligning ourselves with potential partner organizations and companies. We are advocates for social, economic and environmental justice as these impact community revitalization.

### *Progressive*

We want to evolve. We strive to constantly expand our knowledge base as leaders in the field of community revitalization. We seek to be both adaptive and creative, continuously improving. We foster the entrepreneurial spirit and are open to new ideas.

### *Collaborative*

We cooperate and are willing to work together. We recognize the importance of connectedness and we actively explore and develop partnerships. We operate with our partners in a synergistic fashion by building dynamic networks and thereby increase the potential for mutual successes.

### *Fun*

We communicate, demonstrate and reflect excitement and enthusiasm for the work we do. We create an enjoyable environment that motivates, energizes and celebrates a passion for the inspiring work of community revitalization.

### *Integrity*

We are honest, accountable and transparent as individuals and as an organization. We act respectfully and respond thoughtfully with a consistent ethic of service to our communities. We follow through on our promises as we put our values into action.



# PENNSYLVANIA Downtown Center

• Since 1987 •

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*The mission of the Pennsylvania Downtown Center (PDC) is to build and support the capacity of local non-profit organizations, municipalities and individuals to enhance the overall well-being and sustainability of Pennsylvania's "core" communities. PDC accomplishes this mission by engaging local community leaders and volunteers, and educating them, to advance the sense of place, quality of life and economic vitality of the Commonwealth's downtowns, traditional neighborhood business districts and nearby residential areas.*

**[padowntown.org](http://padowntown.org)**