

An Tir Baronial Polling Handbook

October 2024

This Polling Handbook has been developed to provide guidance through the Baronial Polling process as it exists in An Tir. Change in Baronial Coronets happens infrequently and becoming knowledgeable about the process can help to minimize the impact on the Barony.

Membership polls provide the Crown with the wishes of the SCA members residing within the Barony's postal codes. It is the responsibility of the Kingdom Seneschal's office to conduct these polls, and the position of Kingdom Polling Deputy is in place to facilitate that process. The final decision on the appointment of a Baronial Coronet belongs to the Crown.

It's important to remember that participation in a poll is not a vote. Any member of the populace (regardless of membership in the SCA) may send an email message to the Crown directly with commentary about a candidate.

I. Before the Poll

The polling process begins well before the actual poll takes place. Six months before the end of the Baronial Coronet's tenure, the Kingdom Polling Deputy will contact the Baronial Seneschal and the Baronial Coronet to discuss their options, provide them with this handbook and will help them create a proposed plan to present to the Crown for approval.

This proposed plan will outline important dates:

- Deadline for candidate submissions
- Date(s) for candidate presentation(s) – if it is a selection poll
 - These presentations may be meet-and-greets, visions for the Barony statements, SCA resumes, etc.
- Date for the polling
- Date for an investiture – if it is a selection poll

The plan will also discuss practical needs to conduct the poll

- Which Baronial Officer will coordinate the poll, usually the Baronial Seneschal. If the branch Seneschal is applying, another Greater officer will act as representative for the branch
- What method will be used to poll the membership

Once the Crown has approved the polling plan, or made any changes, the process can move forward.

II. Types of Opinion Polls

There are two types of baronial polls:

- A **selection poll** occurs when a new Baronial Coronet must be selected.
- A **confidence poll** occurs when the Baronial Coronet wishes to request an additional term of appointment. In this situation, no other candidates are sought or will be included in the poll.

A. Selection Poll

After the Crown's approval has been granted and the Baronial Coronet has announced their intentions to the branch populace, the Baronial Seneschal (or another baronial officer acceptable to the Crown and Kingdom Seneschal) will coordinate the process. This officer will be responsible to:

- Solicit letters of intent from candidates to be sent to the Polling Deputy the sitting Baronial Coronet, and the Baronial officer. Once all letters of intent and resumes are received the Polling Deputy will send the package to The Crown, who has final approval on the acceptability of candidates.
- Announce the final list of candidates to the populace after the Crown has given approval.
- Publish SCA resumes of candidates to the branch.
- Find a site(s) for both the presentation of the candidates and the poll, if required
- Review the polling announcement for the Crier, created by the Kingdom Polling Deputy. The Polling deputy has examples of crier announcements for the different polling methods.
- Ensure that the representatives of the Crown and the Kingdom Seneschal are provided with the information needed to conduct the poll including candidates' emails and titles.

Announcement of the results of the poll is the prerogative of the Crown. The Crown may elect to delegate the announcement of the poll results to another person.

The Baronial Coronet and their appointed successors will work with the Crown to facilitate the investiture of the new Baronial Coronet. The polling process is now complete.

B. Confidence Poll

After the Crown's approval has been granted and the Baronial Coronet has announced their intentions to the branch populace, the Baronial Seneschal (or another Baronial officer acceptable to the Crown and Kingdom Seneschal) will coordinate the process. This officer will be responsible to:

- Review the announcement for the Crier, created by the Kingdom Polling Deputy. The Polling deputy has examples of crier announcements for the different polling methods.
- Ensure that the representatives of the Crown and the Kingdom Seneschal are provided with the information needed to conduct the poll

Announcement of the results of the poll is the prerogative of the Crown. The Crown may elect to delegate the announcement of the poll results to another person.

If the Crown confirms the re-appointment of the Baronial Coronet, the polling process is considered complete. If the Crown does not confirm the re-appointment, the Baronial Seneschal shall contact the Kingdom Polling Deputy to prepare for a selection poll.

III. The Polling Process

Online Poll

Using this method, the location, date, and time of the poll will be announced to the populace and published in the Kingdom and Baronial newsletters. Online polling will be coordinated between the Kingdom Polling Deputy and the Kingdom Webminster.

- The Kingdom Polling Deputy will coordinate with the Kingdom Webminister to set up an online polling form. The Polling deputy will communicate with the branch representative for details.
- The branch representative will share the schedule of polling with branch members.
- The Kingdom Polling Deputy will share the polling details(link) with the Branch for registration. Registration is open for approximately 1 week prior to poll being open
- After the registration period the Kingdom Polling deputy will verify memberships of registered branch members. The Kingdom Polling deputy may reach out to inquire on updated memberships, or request assistance to verify with branch representative.
- The Kingdom Polling Deputy will advise the Kingdom Webminister once memberships are confirmed, and polling details will be emailed out to those registered for the poll. Results of the poll will be sent directly to the Crown and Kingdom Seneschal
- The Crown will make the appointment of the Baronial Coronet(s).

Any questions about this policy should be directed to the Kingdom Pollings Deputy at pollings@antir.org.