



Group Leader Guide

About This Guide

Realm, a ministry solution your church uses to serve the administrative needs of its staff and leaders, provides you with convenient tools to support the way groups connect and grow together. This guide highlights important information about the multiple things group leaders can do on Realm. It is intended to be a quick reference guide.

You'll learn how to...

- Download the Mobile App
- Edit Group Settings
- Create Content
- Manage Group Participants
- Chat With Your Group
- Email Your Group
- Mark Attendance

For comprehensive Help documentation, please visit: go.acst.com/leaders_guide

Download the Mobile App

Stay connected to your group wherever you go with Realm's mobile app named Connect - Our Church Community. It is available for iPhone and Android devices. This free app enables leaders to communicate with members in a timely manner, and it keeps members engaged throughout the week. Although people are not required to use the app to participate in your group, it sure makes it a lot easier.

Connect with your group anytime:

- Newsfeed—Keeps everyone up to date with the latest posts, photos, and events for your group.
- Files—Access your group's shared files.
- Participants—See names and basic profile details for the people in your group, based on their privacy preferences.
- Notification Settings—Manage your preferences for group notifications and emails.
- Mark Attendance—Keep track of attendance for group events.
- Chat—Have real-time conversations with your entire group, or select individuals.
- Inbox—Email or text your entire group, or select individuals.

Download "Connect - Our Church Community" today:

On your iPhone or Android device, go to: <http://onelink.to/connectapp>

Feel free to share/text that link to the people in your group.

iPhone: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/connect-our-church-community/id1052274581?mt=8>

Android: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.acstechnologies.android.realm.engagement>

Edit Group Settings

Leaders should update their group's details whenever information changes. If you are in an open invitation model church, group settings include information like name, description, meeting time and location, campus (if a multi-site), and group photo. You can add additional details about the group's settings, target demographics (e.g. gender, age, marital status), and connected social media accounts if enabled. Church staff can also edit group settings if they have the appropriate permissions.

More details available online at: go.acst.com/edit_group

Group Communication

Group communication permissions are determined by your church staff and can be reserved for leaders only if necessary. But when they're enabled, groups can connect to each other in their proper context, unlike group texts and emails.

Important: When you create content within a group with communication settings turned on, Realm sends all group members an email notification. People who are a part of the group, but do not have a profile, receive an invitation to join Realm within these emails. Please keep this in mind when you are introducing communication to your congregation!

Types of Communication

- Newsfeed— The latest posts, photos, and events for your group.
- Comments— Direct responses to a post, event, or other comments.
- Chat— Send your entire group, or select individuals, a chat that starts a conversation in the Chat tab.
- Inbox— Send your entire group, or select individuals, an email or, if texting is enabled, a text message.

More details available online at: go.acst.com/enable_group_communication

Create Content

Group communication allows group members to share posts, comments, photos, and event RSVPs with other members in their group. It's a great way to carry conversations throughout the week and keep connected to what's going on. When you create a post, photo, or event, it shows up on your group's Newsfeed, and all group members are notified depending on their notification preferences.

Types of Content

- Post - A message created by a member of your group that all other group members can read.
- Photo - A single photo, or a gallery of photos, that group members share.
- Event - An event created by a member of your group that other group members can RSVP for.

Posts

When a member of a group creates a post, it appears in a Newsfeed for that group. Other group members can respond to this post with a comment, or support it by clicking the heart icon. It's a good idea to create a few posts in your group so that people have content to interact with when you open the Newsfeed to them.

Photos

A member can share a single image or a group of images in a photo gallery. Like posts, photos also appear on the group's Newsfeed. Other members can respond with a comment and support photos by clicking the heart icon. More details available online at: go.acst.com/intro_group_communication

Files

Group participants can share files with their group by attaching a file to a post. When someone adds a file to a post, it appears in the Files tab of your group. Shared files can be downloaded by members of the group. Files may not exceed 20MB.

More details available online at: go.acst.com/share_files

Events

Church groups often get together at regularly scheduled times, but they also like to gather for parties, picnics, prayer, outings, or other special events. Fortunately, you don't have to be the only one to organize these events. Members can post events for the group, too. As a group leader, you always have oversight of your group's calendar and can make any edits as needed. Events can also be exported as an .ics file to be used with your preferred calendar program, like Microsoft Outlook.

Event types include:

- **Primary Event**—This is your group's regularly scheduled meeting time and location. You can maintain this information online with your group's details. People will likely reference these details while evaluating participation in your group.
- **Special Events**—Groups often hold other gatherings, which may occur one time or on a temporary recurring basis. Leaders and members may create events, but only leaders have the ability to edit all posted events.
- **Recess**—Sometimes groups take periods of time off, like for summer or for the Christmas season. Leaders can add a recess period to remove any previously scheduled recurring meetings from the calendar during a specific recess period. Other special events will remain on the calendar. When a recess is set, group members will automatically be emailed about this change. You will still have the ability to schedule additional, non-recurring events during the recess.

More details available online at: go.acst.com/manage_group_events

Manage Group Participants

Group leaders can be given specific permissions to maintain group rosters. Group rosters include leaders, members, and guests who have profiles.

Permissions	Leader	Member	Guest
View names on roster	✓	✓	–
View members' contact information	up to the member	up to the member	up to the member
View list of group events	✓	✓	✓
View and download resources	✓	✓	–
Read and create posts	✓	✓	–
Add Events	✓	✓	–
Post resources (files and photos)	✓	✓	–
Send a message to the group	✓	✓	–
Mark attendance	✓	–	–
Set Meeting Times and Locations	✓	–	–
Add, delete, edit group members <i>(if permitted by church to do so)</i>	✓	–	–

Leaders


Leaders can add people to a group's roster. Once an individual has been added as a group member, they can be promoted to a leadership position. A group can have more than one leader. Church staff can also assign group leadership.

Members

Members are participants in a group. Leaders can add members to the roster by using the search profiles field. Likewise, leaders can remove people from the roster at any time. You set the person's role in the group while adding her or him. You can edit a person's role any time.

Current Participants ▾



Select an action... ▾ **+ Add Person** View Map  ▾

Jane Doe ▾ Member ▾
Add profiles **Add** or Cancel


72 participants | 25 maximum

Guest

Guests are people who have attended your group with the intent to become a regular member. There are probably only a few edge cases where you would add out-of-town or one-time guests. If the church staff permits it, leaders may enter new individual profiles for guests. Use the Add profiles option to add a new profile as a guest if they are not showing up in the system. Check with a church staff member if you have questions.

Current Participants ▾



Select an action... ▾ **+ Add Person** View Map  ▾

Jane Doe ▾ Guest ▾
Add profiles **Add** or Cancel

72 participants | 25 maximum

More details available online at: go.acst.com/manage_group_roster

Chat With Your Group

If chat is enabled for a group, the group leaders can send a chat to everyone in a group, or just specific people. This chat notifies group members based on their preferred notification settings. It will also create a new conversation on the Chat tab.

Email and Text Your Group

The inbox is where you can send email and text messages to everyone in your group. Text messaging must be enabled for the group, and only those opted into receive a text will get one.

If you enable replies for your message, you can also view comments written by your group members and respond to them. When you send a message to your group, each member receives a notification for that message based on their inbox notifications settings for your group.

Notification Settings

You can view notification settings for each member on the group's Participants tab, and whether the member has a Realm login. You can also see if a group member doesn't have a login or a method of communication. This helps you know how members receive notifications for messages and posts.



- Member has a Realm login.



- Member receives email notifications from this group.



- Member uses the mobile app and receives app notifications for this group.



- Member does not receive communication from this group.

Mark Attendance

Keeping track of your group members' attendance gives your church staff insight into how people are involved in the church. To mark attendance, go to your group's Attendance tab, then click on a past event.

Options

- **Member Attendance**—You can mark member attendance by selecting the checkbox for each person who attended the meeting. The total number of marked attendance is calculated at the top of the screen.
- **Head Counts**—If you do not mark individual member attendance for the event, you can enter a number in the Total column. If you record a head count and later decide to mark individual members' attendance, the head count and individual member attendance are combined in the total. You will need to go back and adjust the number for each selected profile to keep your total number consistent.
- **Printed Sheets**—Sometimes it makes sense to use a printed marking sheet so you can take roll on paper prior to entering it online. Attendance sheets are printed for a group's entire month

of events. If attendance has already been entered for a past event, it will print premarked on the sheet. The printable attendance-marking sheet is exported as a PDF.

- Attendance Profiles—If you are the leader of multiple groups, ask your administrator to set up an attendance profile containing all your groups. Then you can use the Attendance option to mark attendance for one group at a time without needing to go to each group's Past event list.
- Reviewing an Individual's Attendance—While looking at your group's roster online, you can hover over the ellipsis icon next to the attendance percentage to see a snapshot of the person's attendance history.

More details available online at: go.acst.com/mark_attendance



If you have any questions or would like to speak with one of our experts, please give us a call at 1-800-669-2509.

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