POTOMAC DIVISION, MER, NMRA

POLICIES

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.   INTRODUCTION

1. Periodically, the Potomac Division (PD) Board of Directors (BOD) approves a motion or proposal intended to establish ongoing policy and practice. The policies herein listed are to be followed in conjunction with the Bylaws. They are intended to provide a more detailed list of measures that the Board, Volunteers, and Members are expected to adhere to and to be incompliance with MER and NMRA guidelines.

2. The paragraphs are followed by a date in parenthesis which indicates the meeting date on which the policy was established or the most recent revision, e.g., **(Revised 02/28/14)**

3. Any action of the BOD which affects the action of future BOD's should be so worded as to become a policy statement and be added to the appropriate paragraph of this document or used to create a section within the document.

4. Policy statements which have become null and void by virtue of subsequent actions by the board or have become outdated are shown in the Appendix of the Section.

5. This document contains the policies that have been adopted by the Board of Directors starting in 2019.

II.   NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

1. Duties and Responsibilities of the Elections Committee.

A. The primary duty of the Committee is to prepare a slate of candidates to fill specific upcoming openings on the Board of Directors. In doing so, the Committee, will identify candidates who will, if elected to the Board position, be a highly effective leader of the Division.
   i. The leadership characteristics of potential candidates are essential for them to be successful in carrying out their duties and responsibilities of office.
   ii. Some of these characteristics will be provided as a guide.
B. The Committee should research all available information in the Bylaws, from past elections, and that solicited from the current Board and past Board members and other Division members who may have historical election information.
C. The Committee Chair shall be appointed by the current Division Superintendent.
D. The Committee is responsible for the preparation and execution of the election.
   i. The Committee will compile a list of candidates for each position up for election.
      a. Potential candidates can come from eligible current Board members and from the general membership of the Division.
         i. Members in good standing can be selected via recruitment by the Committee as a candidate or nominated by a minimum of three (3) Division members with the nominee's concurrence.
         ii. Candidates may also self-nominate by contacting the Committee directly.
         iii. No nominations will be accepted after the nominations deadline which is thirty (30) days prior to the election date.
         iv. No nominations will be accepted from the floor at the election.
      b. Each potential candidate shall be contacted to determine if they are willing to serve on Board in the position that is open.
         i. If the candidate is willing to run for office then they shall be deemed a "candidate".
         ii. IF the candidate indicate they are not interested but would be willing to run in a future election their name will be placed on a list to be kept by the Division Clerk.
      c. The Committee will review the candidacy statements of each candidate and conduct interviews, if necessary, to determine the candidate's qualifications, as set forth by the Division bylaws and National NMRA requirements to hold the office in question.
      d. To keep the current Board of Directors informed on the status of the election process, the Committee shall provide a written interim report and a final report to the Board of Directors to document salient information gathered during the election cycle. The final report must be provided no less than fifteen (15) days prior to the Division's scheduled Annual Meeting.

INTERIM REPORT:
   1. The Interim report is due to the Board of Directors no less than four (4) weeks prior to the nomination deadline.

> 2. The report shall include the number and names of candidates for each specific position.
> 3. A list of those members solicited for office by the Committee shall also be included.
> 4. Feedback (positive or negative) regarding the election process as well as any request for assistance or guidance from the current Board of Directors should be included.

FINAL REPORT:
> 1. The Final report is due to the Board of Directors no less than fifteen (15) days prior to the Annual meeting.
> 2. This document serves as the historical document regarding the election and should include a summary of all election aspects.
> 3. The first paragraph of the report should include the approval authorization of the Committee to include the Division Superintendent's name and concurrence by the remaining Board members.
> 4. The report should list the specific offices that are up for election, the number of candidates running for each specific office and current Board members who have decided not to run for re-election.
> 5. A statement indicating the candidate names and statements were published by the Division in a Special Edition of the Potomac Flyer and the date of the edition.

e. The Committee is responsible for insuring the established deadlines and schedule for the election is adhered to.

f. **If necessary, the Committee shall prepare a ballot for each position that has more than one (1) candidate.** Such ballot shall be in such format that the person cast the vote cannot be identified. Ballots, if needed, shall be distributed to those members for which the Division lacks email contact information.

2. **Procedure for Voting.**
   The election will be conducted by the use of either an electronic voting process or an email/postal service method as determined by the Board of Directors. In either case members, without emails on file, will be sent a ballot via postal service.

   If the email/postal service option is selected the following will take place:

   A. At an appointed time during the Annual meeting, the Division Superintendent will turn the meeting over to the Chair of the Nominating Committee to conduct the election.

   B. The Chair of the Committee will then ask and permit any member in attendance time to deliver a brief set of remarks concerning a nominee or nominees. No nominations will be accepted from the floor.

   C. If there is only one candidate for each specific Board position a motion can be entertained from the floor to accept the Committee slate of specific officers and

elect them to office. A "second" from at least one Division member, present, will allow for a membership vote to accept the Committee's slate of specific officers.

D. If there is more one candidate for a specific Board position, a secret ballot vote will be required (See an example ballot at Attachment 1). Ballots will be distributed by Committee members to eligible Division members present.

E. A ballot casting closing time will be announced and the votes will be collected and counted by at least two (2) Committee members and at least one "disinterested" witness. The "disinterested" witness can be any Division member not involved in the election process, or an NMRA member from another Division who is present.

F. Based on simple plurality of the ballots cast, the Chair will announce the winner of the specific Board position in question.

G. In the event of a tie, a second vote, using secret ballots, will be conducted immediately. If the tie still remains, a deck of cards, a coin toss, or other method agreed to by the tied candidates will be done.

H. The Chair of the Committee will retain all the ballots for at least two (2) weeks after the election and after direction by the new Board destroy the ballots.

I. Voting can be accomplished by absentee ballot voting when approved by the Board. This may be by email and/or US Postal Service. All date requirements for a ballot vote must be complied with and a cut-off date for receipt of such ballots will be announced.

If the electronic voting system is selected the following will take place:

A. Members will vote using the electronic process and for those members without emails ballots will be sent, via postal service mailing to the last their address on file. Mailed ballots will be returned to the Nomination Committee Chair and be tabulated. After tabulation the votes will be added to the electronic voting system results to arrive at the final voting results.

B. At an appointed time during the Annual meeting, the Division Superintendent will turn the meeting over to the Chair of the Nominating Committee to report the results of the electronic election process.

III.   PRIVACY POLICY

1. The Potomac Division Superintendent must authorize distribution of Potomac Division personal information, either for an ongoing management purpose, or in response to a special request. The Superintendent will be guided by the following general principles. Personal information will not be distributed in the following cases:

   A.   To any individual or business for commercial purposes.
   B.   To any individual not in a leadership role within the NMRA, the MER, or an MER Division (exceptions must be specifically approved by the Division Superintendent [for information relating to that Division's membership).
   C.   For any purpose other than NMRA, MER, or MER Division business.

2. In advance, the MER BOD approves the regular distribution of membership data extracts by the Business Manager to Division officers for the purpose of maintaining their membership rosters (an ongoing management purpose). This information shall include NMRA membership data, MER membership data, and personal information including name, address, county of residence, phone number, birth date, and modeling scale(s).

3. In all approved cases of membership information distribution, a brief "Privacy Policy Statement" will be included to avoid unintentional secondary distribution to other individuals. For example, membership listings distributed to Division management shall not then be distributed in a manner not sanctioned by this Privacy Policy.

IV. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

1. Meetings

    A. Attendance of PD Board of Directors Meetings by Potomac Division Members and other Guests.

        i. The applicable bylaws for Board of Directors meetings are in Article IV.

        ii. The Superintendent shall act as Parliamentarian for all meetings of the PD Board of Directors

        iii. Physical face-to-face board meeting may be held at a board member's home, in conjunction with some Division event, or other available venue. Announcements of time and place of Board meetings will be made to the membership at least 15 days in advance of the meeting. In the event that an issue arises that requires an emergency meeting of the Board, then advance notice of the meeting may not be provided.

        iv. PD members may attend board meetings as non-participating observers. The Superintendent may invite members to comment and/or ask questions at the end of each agenda item discussion. Any items that the Board needs to discuss in an Executive Session will be held after the open portion of the meeting has finished. PD members who are participating as observers will be asked to leave if the Board needs to discuss any matters in an Executive Session.

        v. Requests to attend must be made to the Clerk at least 10 days prior to the meeting. Physical attendance shall be limited to the number of observers that the host or Chair believes can be accommodated at the meeting site and granted on a first-come-first-served basis.

        vi. Potomac Division members who attend Board meetings as observers are

expected to arrive at the meeting location at the time the meeting is scheduled to start.

vii. A Potomac Division member may propose to the Clerk a topic (or topics) to discuss with the Board at its next following meeting. Proposals should identify the member's specific interest, issue, or purpose associated with the topic. Proposals will be accepted until 12 days prior to the meeting. The topic may be put on the agenda and the member given a limited set time to discuss that particular agenda item.

2. Reports to MER.

A. The Superintendent in cooperation with the Clerk shall provide a yearly report to the MER Vice President containing the following information per the format specified in the MER Executive Handbook, Section 7, "Division Superintendent's Handbook"

B. The Superintendent, in cooperation with the Clerk and other Board members as needed shall provide a yearly statement of validation to the MER President (or Vice President) of the NMRA membership of the Division Officers.

3. Paymaster Reporting.

The Paymaster shall submit a financial report to the Superintendent on a quarterly basis.

V. MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES

1. Annual Meeting Attendance

The Annual Meeting generally takes place during the Division's yearly miniCon usually in the Spring of every year. The Annual Meeting will be held as the first event of the day unless the Superintendent schedules otherwise since the organization offering the venue usually charges the Division a fee and the Annual Meeting will be open to all members without charge. Those who wish to attend all the other events must register and pay the established fee for the event. Name tags will be issued to all paying members. Non-fee paying members will not be permitted to attend the remaining miniCon events.

2. Event Attendance

A. Except for holding a Division office or voting, any NMRA member may attend or participate in and Division Activity.

B. Guests may attend and participate in Division activities as in introduction

to the NMRA as prescribed by the Division, MER, and NMRA policy.

VI.   NEWSLETTER POLICY

1. The publication frequency of PD newsletter, *The Potomac Flyer*, shall be at the discretion of the Division BOD.

2. The publication format of the PD newsletter, *The Potomac Flyer*, shall be at the discretion of the Division BOD.

VII. Email Program Notification Policy

1. One of the forms of notification the Division will use to notify members concerning events and activities taking place shall be via email using the email program selected by the Board to use.

    A. Notifications concerning open houses will be sent a minimum of ten (10) days prior to the date the open house is scheduled.

    B. Notifications concerning clinics and similar activities will be sent a minimum of fourteen (14) days prior to the date the clinic or activity is scheduled. An additional notification will be sent seven (7) days prior to the clinic or activity.

    C. Notifications concerning clinics and similar activities will be sent a minimum of fourteen (14) days prior to the date the clinic or activity is scheduled. An additional notification will be sent seven (7) days prior to the clinic or activity.

    D. Notifications concerning Division elections will be sent no later than deadline(s) set by the Nomination Committee.

2. The Division email list will maintained by the Division Assistant Superintendent or whoever is acting as Computer Clerk for the Board as to be consistent with the email addresses provided by the most recent National NMRA extract of active members.

    A. Non NMRA Division members will not be entered into the Division email list unless they possess a NMRA membership in another division.

    B. A member will be archived in the Division's email program when one of the following takes place:

i. The member's NMRA membership has lapsed for a period of sixty (60) days or more.

ii. The member request to be unsubscribed from the Division's email list.

iii. The National NMRA membership extract shows the member's membership as being expired.

C. All NMRA Division members' email addresses will be contained in the Division email list.

D. In the event of a conflict with a Division member's email address the email address provided by the National NMRA extract will be used. Members will be encouraged to keep their email address up to date at the National level.

VIII. Electronic Meeting Policy for the Potomac Division, MER

1. All participants (Board members and invited Staff) will have read the BOD agenda and any other provided information for the meeting prior to the meeting and they will be prepared to act upon each item and topic without delay. Questions and conversations between Board members prior to the meeting to gain clarification or additional information is encouraged.

2. Reports from Board members and any ancillary functionaries will not be read to the Board and other attendees during the meeting. If a member needs to add or change information, he may do so to the extent he is not substantially changing his report. If there is a substantial change in his report caused by events occurring after the report was filed, the Board member must contact the Superintendent promptly when the event occurs and then also before the meeting so that the Superintendent can determine how the matter will be addressed.

3. Discussion will be limited by a motion at the beginning of the meeting to a time limit of five (5) minutes. On motion of two members or in the Superintendent's discretion, this provision may be waived as to any particular matter either before or after the aforementioned rotation of discussion has been concluded.

4. Discussion during/about topics shall be done in the following order as called : Sr. Assist. Superintendent, Assist. Superintendent, Clerk, Paymaster.

5. Recognition of other attendees will be done by the Superintendent through use of the "chat" function to address questions, to provide additional requested information to the Board, or for required discussion of a vote by the membership. All attendees will use their real names at these meetings or be removed from the meeting room. The Superintendent shall recognize persons by name and also clearly place a rigid limit on their time on the floor, e.g. "The Chair recognizes "Member's Name" for 2 minutes". Control of the mute function shall be strictly controlled to maintain order of the meeting.

6.	All attendees shall be muted when not speaking. Please use the mute feature on your phone or in the software on the monitor. The host shall also control this function for the meeting. Do not call in on your phone and also have the sound unmuted on your computer!

7.	When a vote is called, the Superintendent will take the vote by roster in order: Sr. Assist. Superintendent, Assist. Superintendent, Clerk, Paymaster. If a tie break vote is needed, the Superintendent will cast it at the end of the roll call.

8.	Your patience and tolerance will be expected and appreciated so we can efficiently conduct the business of the Potomac Division, MER.

# IX.	Division Records Organization and Retention Policy

The Division shall maintain an electronic backup of historical records. The backup shall be maintained on the same server as the Division's website and will be designated as **PD Records Files**. These records shall be maintained by the Clerk, the Web Master, or other designated individual as determined by the Board of Directors of the Potomac Division.
In addition, something missing here shall be electronically archived in a folder designated as "Archived Files" in the **PD Records File** folder.

The Clerk, or other designated individual, is authorized to destroy paper and electronic records associated with maintaining the Potomac Division membership database, check processing, and other remittance activities, and website files after a five year period. This destruction is permitted provided such records are recorded in digital form on at least two different and current media located in different geographic locations and accessible to the members of the Board of Directors.

Division Record File Structure
The Division's **PD Record Files** shall be maintained in the structure set forth in this policy and shall contain the following folders:
Archived **Files** – The folder's file name shall contain the date of the last major archive event. This folder will contain files records that are of greater than seven (7) years in age and also meet the criteria for being historical.

A. **Awards and Certificates to Members** – This folder is to contain files dealing with the various types of awards presented to the membership of the Division. The different types of awards shall be grouped in their folder by year in which they were awarded. The following subfolders shall be maintained under the main folder:
- Merit Award Certificates – Files for all Merit Award Certificates will be kept in this file.
- Potomac Division Service Certificates
    - Master Certificates – The master certificate files for Layout Tours and Clinics will be kept in this file.

- o <u>Layout Tours</u> – The files for each Layout Tour appreciation certificate will be kept in this file. The certificates are grouped by periods of five years.
- o <u>Clinics</u> – The files for each clinic appreciation certificate will be kept in this file.

B. **Board of Directors** – This folder is to contain files for the various Board of Director Positions and other business related functions of the Division. The following subfolders shall be maintained under this folder:

- <u>Bylaws</u> – This folder is to contain files for the various versions of the Division Bylaws and shall contain a copy of "adopted" amendments/changes.
- <u>Computer Clerk</u> – This folder is to contain files containing information used by the Computer Clerk and will have the following subfolders.
  - o <u>Computer Clerk Resources</u> – This subfolder shall contain various instructional documents on "how to do" the functions of the Computer Clerk.
  - o <u>Connecting to Division Record Files on Website</u> – This subfolder shall contain documents on how to connect to the file records of the Division.
- <u>Meetings and Meeting Site Information</u> –This folder shall contain files containing Board of Director, Division Business, Minicon, and MER Convention meetings. The following subfolders shall be a part of this folder:
  - o <u>Board of Director Meetings</u> – This folder shall have subfolders for each calendar year and contain the agenda and minutes for each meeting.
  - o <u>Annual Meetings</u> - This folder shall have subfolders for agenda, minutes, and announcements of the various annual meetings and shall be grouped by year.
    - o <u>Agenda</u> – This folder shall contain the agenda of the annual meeting.
    - o <u>Announcements</u> – This folder shall contain the annual meeting announcements.
    - o <u>Meeting Folder</u> – This folder shall contain the events associated with the annual meeting and be title with the year of the meeting.
    - o <u>Past Meeting information</u> – This folder shall contain files of documents associated with the various locations the Division has met in the past to include floor diagrams and such.
- <u>Paymaster</u> – This folder shall contain files associated with the Paymaster position and include subfolders for forms and reports.
  - o <u>Voucher Forms</u>
  - o <u>Reports</u> – This subfolder shall contain Paymaster and Financial Reports in folders for each calendar year.
- <u>Policies</u> – This folder shall contain documents related to the Division's policies.
- <u>Position Descriptions</u> – This folder shall contain documents providing information on what each position in the Division is responsible for.
  - o <u>Computer Clerk</u>
  - o <u>Open House</u>
  - o <u>Teams</u>
- <u>Tax Exemption Info</u> – This folder shall contain documents related to any exemptions from local, state, and Federal taxes.

C. **Correspondence** – This folder is to contain files dealing with the Division's intra-correspondence within the Division and inter-correspondence with other National Model Railroad entities and other external entities that have had business with the Division. The following subfolders shall be maintained under this folder:
- MER Region – This folder shall contain any correspondence with the Mid Eastern Region of the NMRA. There shall be a subfolder that shall contain any and all yearly report from the Division to the Region.
  o Potomac Division Yearly Reports
- Personnel – This folder shall contain files dealing with issues with individual members as needed.
- Potomac Division Business – Incoming
- Potomac Division Business – Outgoing
- SunTrust Bank (now Truist) – Files dealing with correspondence with our Bank.
- Vista Print **–** Files dealing with printing of announcements, etc.

D. **Division Activities** – This folder is to contain files dealing with the various Division activities. The following subfolders shall be maintained:
- Achievement Program – This file contains documents concerning the members involved in the AP program and MMRs.
- Clinics – This folder contains documents concerning all clinics held by the Division. It shall have subfolders for in person and virtual clinics.
  o In person - This subfolder contains documents concerning clinics delivered in person at a site. This subfolder shall have subfolders containing pictures, presentations delivered, and White Flag Extra Clinics.
    - Pictures
    - Presentations
    - White Flag Extra Clinics – These clinics shall be in subfolders by year presented.
  o Virtual – This subfolder contains documents concerning clinics delivered via a video platform.
- Conventions – This folder contains information concerning various conventions of the Potomac Division. It shall have subfolders for convention sites, MER Conventions, and Potomac Division MiniCons.
  o Convention Site Floor plans – This subfolder contains information concerning past convention sites shall have subfolders for EUMC and St. Matts.
  o MER Conventions – This subfolder contains information on past MER Conventions with subfolders for each year.
  o Potomac MiniCons – This subfolder contains information on past Potomac Division MiniCons with subfolders for each year.
- Division Activity Rosters – This folder shall contain documents showing membership attendance at the various Division activities and shall be kept in folders covering a five year period. The following subfolders shall be maintained under this folder:
- Layout tours

- o Past Layout Tours – This subfolder shall contain information regarding past Division layout tours and have subfolders concerning notices, pictures (subfolders for each past tour), pictures and information (subfolders for each past tour) , and sign in sheets.
  - o Schedules – This subfolder shall contain information about schedules of past Division layout tours with subfolders for each 5 years.
  - o Virtual Layout Tours - This subfolder shall contain information about schedules of past Division layout tours with subfolders for each 5 years.
- Operations Initiative – This subfolder shall contain information related to various programs dealing with the Operations Initiative. There shall be subfolders for Gateway Division Guides, Operations Saturday, OPS Initiative Quarterly Reports, OPS SIG Pictures, and Presentations.
- Outreach Programs – This subfolder shall contain information on seminars associated with the Division's outreach program area.
- Potomac Division Excursions – This subfolder shall contain information related to excursions held by the Potomac Division and shall have subfolders for each excursion.

E. **Division Assets** – This folder is to contain files dealing with physical items owned by the Division. There shall be subfolders for equipment manuals and projectors/PA.

F. **Division Insurance** – This folder is to contain files dealing with insurance certificates and insurance related correspondence for the Division. There shall be a subfolder for waivers.

G. **Potomac Flyer** – This folder is to contain files containing the contents of the Division's newsletter, *The Potomac Flyer*. The only files maintained are the "final" files containing the content of each Division newsletter that is published and serves as a backup of the copies that reside on the Division's website. The files are contained in a Flyer-archives folder in another subfolder for Flyer issues grouped by year of publication of the Flyer. There shall be subfolders for display ads and covers.

H. **Membership** – This folder is to contain files containing personal information concerning the Division's membership and other files related to contacting the Division membership. The following subfolders shall be maintained under this folder:
- Division MER extracts – This subfolder shall contain subfolders for each year of membership extracts sent to the Division by the MER.
- Free Membership promotion – This subfolder shall contain information concerning Division and MER free membership promotion programs.
- Letters – This subfolder shall contain Division for letters to be sent to membership for new members, renewal members, and lapsed members.
- Mailing Labels – This subfolder shall contain the Division's official mailing labels which are created from the most recent MER extract membership list.
- Membership Analysis – This subfolder shall contain membership analysis (excel spreadsheets) with subfolders for each year.
- Membership forms – This subfolder shall contain forms used for membership purposes.

- MER Extract information – This subfolder shall contain the NMRA Codes and descriptions used in the MER extract spreadsheets.
- Teams (car pool) – This subfolder shall contain information concerning the Division's Team program.

I. **Public Relations** – This folder is to contain files concerning the various public relations efforts and programs of the Division. The following subfolders shall be maintained under this folder:
- Model Railroad Brochures and power points – This subfolder shall contain brochures of the Division.
- Railpass – This subfolder shall contain rail pass related information.
- Tri-fold - This subfolder shall contain information related to the Division's Trifold Brochure and also pictures used of could be used for the trifold.

J. **Purchases** – This folder is to contain information regarding purchases made by the Division and a subfolder for forms used by the Division for purchases. There shall also be a file that records the property of the Division and where it is located, i.e., who has custody of what property of the Division.

K. **Surveys** – This folder is to contain files concerning all surveys conducted by the Division. They shall be organized in subfolders by the year the survey was conducted.

L. **Yahoo Groups** – This folder is to contain files concerning the Division's past Yahoo Group and current Groups.IO groups.

X. Social Media Policy (adopted 7/11/2023)

1. Social media represents a vast online community where Division and other NMRA members come together to share information, promote the model railroading hobby, and exchange information about NMRA events and member experiences. The Potomac Division recognizes the limits and risks of social media, and how it can affect the NMRA and Division's brand, public image, and core values.
2. The Division's participation on individual social media platforms will require the approval of the Board of Directors.
3. The Division's participation on social media platforms will be managed by a Division member who will be designated as the Social Media Committee Chair, who will be appointed by the Division Superintendent with the approval of the Board of Directors.
4. This committee will have such membership as necessary to assure information posted to the various social media platforms is accurate and timely.
5. The purpose of this policy is to (a) outline social media guidelines and protocols of the Division, (b) define rules that apply to Division social media use, and (c) to explain the Division's process for policy violations. This policy applies to all Division members participating on Division social media accounts.
6. The Division will use social media as a means of communicating about activities of the National NMRA, Mid-Eastern Region NMRA, and the Division. Members who participate on designated Division social media accounts are required to uphold the NMRA and Division's image, core values, and brand. Subsequently, the Division expects all members participating on Division supported social media to remain fair, professional, and polite.

7. The Division's social media guidelines are as follows-
   a. Participants will avoid speaking on and/or posting about subjects outside of model railroading, railfanning, or railroad or transit industry operational or design topics which relate to model railroading or the support of the railroad and transit industry. Commentary on industry business practices will not be permitted (e.g. union operating rules, management practices, etc.)
   b. Any incorrect or misleading content will be corrected or deleted.
   c. Posts used for political reasons or personal gain, or information determined to be offensive to members of the community will not be permitted.
8. If a Division member or social media participant is found to have violated the guidelines of the above, they will have their permission to participate suspended until such time a review by the Social Media Chair can be completed and any recommended action(s) be acted upon by the Board of Directors.

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