



# Resource: **Board Contract**

## **Statement of Individual Board Member Responsibilities**

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Those who serve on the \_\_\_\_\_ Board of Directors have considerable responsibilities extending well beyond the basic expectations of attending meetings, participating in fundraising initiatives, and personal giving. All Board members must:

### **Ensure That \_\_\_\_\_ Remains True to Its Ends and Accountable to the Larger Community**

Each Board member has primary responsibility for ensuring that \_\_\_\_\_ remains true to its mission, vision, and ends, always acting first in the interests of our members. It is \_\_\_\_\_'s Board of Directors that is responsible for maintaining the professional and ethical standards that will ensure that \_\_\_\_\_ remains a powerful force for social justice.

### **Assume Fiscal and Legal Responsibility**

Membership on the Board brings with it both fiduciary and legal responsibilities. An important part of serving as a trustee is protecting accumulated assets and ensuring that current income is managed properly. Because \_\_\_\_\_ is incorporated and granted tax-exempt status to fulfill a public need, the Board must assume full responsibility for the financial viability of \_\_\_\_\_. Moreover, our staff and community service partners depend on the sustainability of our organization. Accordingly, each Board member should insist on and carefully review financial monitoring reports prepared by the Executive Director; and actively participate in the annual audit and budget preparation processes. Board members must also give careful consideration to major expenditures by the organization. In particular, the Treasurer of the Board should be responsible for making other members aware of the agency's financial situation on an on-going basis.

As trustees, Board members are also legally responsible for the organization, and assume full responsibility in all contract and other legal matters.

### **Ensure Adequate Resources**

Each Board member, regardless of whether he or she is working on the Development Committee, must accept the idea that fundraising is an essential element of being a Board member. At a basic level, each Board member must contribute personally to \_\_\_\_\_ each year to the extent that she or he is able, and should assist in identifying and evaluating fundraising prospects including

individual, corporate, and foundation contacts, as well as participating in \_\_\_\_\_ special events.

### **Act as an Ambassador for \_\_\_\_\_**

In the most basic sense, each Board member is required to care about the organization and take both the work of \_\_\_\_\_ and his or her role as a Board member seriously. During day-to-day activities, each Board member should always be looking for opportunities to help \_\_\_\_\_ either personally or through professional contacts and networking. Each Board member should know the organization's mission, purposes, goals, policies, programs, services, strengths, needs, and ends. Board members should also keep in mind the organization's priorities; and making decisions that will affect the agency only when appropriate and consistent with established procedures.

Each Board member should support the Executive Director (and help review his or her performance), support the Board Chair or Co-Chairs and other Board members, and honestly assess his or her own (and the entire Board's) performance. Finally, Board members are encouraged to volunteer in other capacities within \_\_\_\_\_ to the extent that doing so does not interfere with a Board member's primary responsibilities.

### **Actively Participate in Board Meetings**

In order to ensure that \_\_\_\_\_ is working toward defined ends, it is essential that every Board member attend Board meetings. Absent special circumstances, Board members are considered resigned if they miss two of three consecutive meetings. If a Board member is unable to attend a Board meeting, he or she should contact the \_\_\_\_\_ Board Chair prior to the meeting.

It is fundamental to Board governance that each Board member participate fully in Board meetings. This assumes that each Board member prepares for meetings and reads all minutes and other materials that are prepared for meetings. To the maximum extent possible, reports to the Board should be prepared and circulated prior to a Board meeting, and should be presented in a way that focuses the Board on the salient issues. Each Board member should make an effort to follow and discuss trends relating to \_\_\_\_\_'s work.

The \_\_\_\_\_ Board is also responsible for determining agency priorities through its ends work and supporting the Executive Director in strategic planning efforts.

### **Fulfill Committee and/or Officer Responsibilities**

Each Board member should have specific committee and/or officer roles and responsibilities. Each Board member is expected to participate in committee meetings and fulfill committee and/or officer responsibilities that are in line with one's own areas of expertise. To the extent possible, Board members should assist other committees and participate in the various ad hoc committees and work groups that may be created by the Board. The Board is also primarily responsible for its own make-up, and members will be asked to recommend, assess, and invite new members when vacancies occur.

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## Foster Group Cohesiveness

In order to work together as an effective team, every Board member should (1) accept every other Board member with a due appreciation of his or her strengths, a tolerance of his or her quirks and weaknesses, and a respect for his or her differences; (2) remember that the Board as a whole is more important than any of its parts; (3) make every effort to resolve dissent and discord, or if it cannot be resolved, to keep it in perspective of larger issues; and (4) accept and conform to the policies and procedures previously established by \_\_\_\_\_.

Board members should also take responsibility, both individually and collectively, for the Board's development. Members should look to improve their own skills, and must commit to participating in at least two Board development activities each year, including at least one retreat to be scheduled by the Board Chair or Co-Chairs. Board members are also expected to participate in internal needs assessment activities, and a self and Board evaluation process.

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