

BOARD MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities of REACH Healthcare Foundation Board Members are best explained by shared responsibilities of the board as a whole as well as individual member responsibility.

DETERMINE THE ORGANIZATION'S MISSION AND VISION

A statement of mission and vision should articulate the Foundation's goals, means, and primary constituents served. It is the board's responsibility to create the mission statement and review it periodically for accuracy and validity. Each individual board member should fully understand and support it.

SELECT THE EXECUTIVE AND REVIEW PERFORMANCE

Boards establish the chief executive's job description and are charged with ensuring a search process to identify the most qualified individual for the position. Once in position, the board is responsible for ensuring the chief executive has the moral and professional support to fulfill the stated responsibilities for the organization and conducting a periodic evaluation of the chief executive's performance.

ENSURE EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATIONAL PLANNING

As stewards of an organization, boards must actively participate with the staff in an overall planning process and assist in implementing the plan's goals.

ENDEAVOR TO ENSURE ADEQUATE RESOURCES

One of the board's foremost responsibilities is to provide adequate resources for the Foundation to fulfill its mission. The board should work in partnership with the chief executive and investment staff and consultants, if any, to invest the Foundation's corpus wisely in keeping with Board-approved investment policies.

MANAGE RESOURCES EFFECTIVELY

The board, in order to remain accountable to the public, and to safeguard its tax-exempt status, must assist in developing the annual budget and ensuring that proper financial controls are in place.

DETERMINE, MONITOR, AND STRENGTHEN THE FOUNDATION'S FUNDING PRIORITIES AND PROGRAMS

The board's role in this area is to determine which funding priorities are the most consistent with the Foundation's mission and purpose, as well as the needs of the community, and to monitor an effective balance between the two considerations.

ENHANCE THE FOUNDATION'S PUBLIC STANDING

The Foundation's primary link to the community, including constituents, the public, and the media, is the board. Clearly articulating the Foundation's mission, accomplishments, and goals to the public, as

well as garnering support from important members of the community, are important elements of a comprehensive public relations strategy.

ENSURE LEGAL AND ETHICAL INTEGRITY AND MAINTAIN ACCOUNTABILITY

The board is ultimately responsible for ensuring adherence to legal standards and ethical norms. Solid personnel policies, grievance procedures, and a clear delegation to the chief executive of hiring and managing employees will help ensure proper decorum in this area. The board must establish pertinent policies, and adhere to provisions of the organization's bylaws, articles of incorporation and memorandum of understanding.

ORIENT NEW BOARD MEMBERS AND ASSESS BOARD PERFORMANCE

All boards have a responsibility to articulate and make known their needs in terms of member experience, skills, and many other considerations that define a "balanced" board composition. Boards also must orient new board members to their responsibilities and the organization's history, needs and challenges. By evaluating its performance in fulfilling its responsibilities, the board can recognize its achievements and reach consensus on which areas need to be improved.

INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Abide by the legal and fiscal responsibilities of the Board as specified by institutional charter, bylaws, conflict of interest and confidentiality policies, and state statutes and regulations
- Be informed about the Foundation's mission, services, policies, funding priorities and programs
- Review agenda and supporting materials prior to board and committee meetings, and maintain a record of regular attendance and participation
- Serve on committees and offer to take on special assignments
- Vote according to one's conviction, questioning the judgment of others when necessary, yet being willing to support the majority decision of the Board and work with fellow members in a spirit of cooperation
- Assist the board in carrying out its fiduciary responsibilities, such as reviewing the Foundation's financial statements and annual audit
- Take advantage of educational opportunities facilitated by the Foundation to learn more about community health care needs, philanthropy and the Foundation's funding priority areas
- Refrain from making individual and personal requests of the staff

Board Responsibilities taken from Ten Basic Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards. Washington, DC: BoardSource, 1996.

Board member responsibilities taken from Six Keys to Recruiting, Orienting, and Involving Nonprofit Board Members. Washington, DC: BoardSource, 1995.