

INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

As a board of directors has basic collective responsibilities, board members are also entrusted with individual responsibilities as a part of board membership. The obligations of board service are considerable – they extend well beyond the basic expectations of attending meetings, participating in fund-raising initiatives, and making monetary contributions. Some of these other responsibilities include:

- Know and be able to articulate the agency's mission, vision, values, goals, policies, programs, services, stories, statistics, strengths, and needs
- Ask questions, challenge ideas and ensure recommendations are in line with the organization's vision
- Suggest possible nominees to the board who are clearly women and men of achievement who can make significant contributions to the work of the board, whether as potential board members, committee members or direct service volunteers
- Serve in leadership positions and undertake special assignments willingly; prepare for and participate in board and committee meetings
- Follow and keep current regarding trends in the organization's area of interest
- Bring what you hear out in the community back into the boardroom
- Maintain confidentiality of the board's work and speak for the board or organization only when authorized to do so
- Support the work of the chief executive as appropriate
- Avoid asking for special favors of the staff
- Avoid even the appearance of a conflict of interest; declare potential conflicts upon receipt of each agenda
- Maintain independence and objectivity and do what a sense of fairness, ethics, the organization's values and personal integrity dictate
- Exercise prudence with the board in the control and transfer of funds
- Faithfully read and understand the organization's financial statements, ask questions when in doubt or to clarify any variances and otherwise help the board fulfill its fiduciary responsibility
- Give an annual gift according to personal means
- Assist in all appropriate ways to help make fund raising efforts successful
- Bring good will and a sense of humor to the board's work

Adapted from and expanded on BoardSource's *Ten Basic Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards*. www.boardsource.org