



Board of Trustees Information Sheet Spring 2019

Thank you for your interest and willingness to serve on the Board of Trustees of New Thought Center for Spiritual Living.

Serving as a board member is one of the most challenging and rewarding volunteer assignments. It is a call to service at a very high level. While election or appointment to a board is an honor, board members have important legal and fiduciary responsibilities that require a commitment of time, skill, and resources. Prospective board members show that they are serious about this commitment by understanding their responsibilities. What follows is by no means a comprehensive listing. There are several very good sources online you might want to access for additional information such as: www.boardsource.org.

Thank you again for your willingness to be involved and answer this call. You will be asked to confirm your understanding of the below information on the Application.

Board of Trustee Responsibilities

- Attend board and committee meetings and community special events.
- Be informed about the organization's mission, services, policies, and programs.
- Review agenda and supporting materials prior to board and committee meetings.
- Serve on committees and offer to take on special assignments.
- Be a committed pledger to our sustaining circle and Spirit of Home-Capital Campaigns.
- Suggest possible nominees to the Board who can make significant contributions to the work of the board and the organization.
- Follow conflict of interest and confidentiality policies.
- Assist the board in carrying out its fiduciary responsibilities, such as reviewing financial statements.

Personal Characteristics

- Ability to listen, analyze, think clearly and creatively, and work well with people individually and in a group.
- Willingness to prepare for and attend board and committee meetings, ask questions, take responsibility and follow through on a given assignment, contribute personal and financial resources in a generous way according to circumstances, open doors in the community, and evaluate oneself.
- Willingness to develop certain skills if you do not already possess them, such as recruit board members and other volunteers; read and understand financial statements; learn more about the substantive program area of the organization, project management, and standard business practices.
- Demonstrate honesty; sensitivity to and affirmation of differing views; a friendly, responsive, and patient approach; community-building skills; personal integrity; a developed sense of values; and a sense of humor.



Eight Basic Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards

- Determine the organization's mission and purpose. It is the board's responsibility to create and review a statement of mission and purpose that articulates the organization's goals, means, and primary constituents served.
- Select the Board of Trustee officers.
- Provide proper financial oversight. The board supports development of the annual budget and ensuring that proper financial controls are in place.
- Ensure legal and ethical integrity and maintain accountability. The board is ultimately responsible for ensuring adherence to legal standards and ethical norms.
- Ensure effective organizational planning. Boards must actively participate in an overall planning process and support implementing and monitoring the plan's goals.
- Recruit and orient new board members and assess board performance. All boards have a responsibility to articulate prerequisites for candidates, orient new members, and periodically and comprehensively evaluate its own performance.
- Determine, monitor, and strengthen the organization's programs and services. The board's responsibility is to determine which programs are consistent with the organization's mission and to monitor their effectiveness.
- Support the spiritual community's leadership and assess performance. The board should ensure that the leadership has the moral and professional support needed to further the goals of the organization.

What Are the Legal Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards?

Under well-established principles of nonprofit corporation law, a board member must meet certain standards of conduct and attention in carrying out his or her responsibilities to the organization. Several states have statutes adopting some variation of these duties, which would be used in court to determine whether a board member acted improperly. These standards are usually described as the **duty of care**, the **duty of loyalty** and the **duty of obedience**.

- **Duty of Care:** The duty of care describes the level of competence that is expected of a board member, and is commonly expressed as the duty of "care that an ordinarily prudent person would exercise in a like position and under similar circumstances." This means that a board member owes the duty to exercise reasonable care when making a decision as a steward of the organization.
- **Duty of Loyalty:** The duty of loyalty is a standard of faithfulness; a board member must give undivided allegiance when making decisions affecting the organization. This means that a board member can never use information obtained as a member for personal gain, but must act in the best interests of the organization.
- **Duty of Obedience:** The duty of obedience requires board members to be faithful to the organization's mission. They are not permitted to act in a way that is inconsistent with the central goals of the organization. A basis for this rule lies in the public's trust that the organization will manage donated funds to fulfill the organization's mission. Source: www.boardsource.org.