

Could We Be Searching for You?

Random Acts of Flowers (RAF) improves the emotional health and well-being of individuals in healthcare facilities by delivering recycled flowers, encouragement, and personal moments of kindness.

What it Means to Serve on a Nonprofit Board

Board members are the fiduciaries who steer the organization toward a sustainable future by adopting sound, ethical, and legal governance and financial management policies, as well as making sure the nonprofit has adequate resources to advance its mission.

The legal duties of nonprofit board members are to:

1. Take care of the nonprofit by ensuring prudent use of all assets, including facility, people, and good will; and provide oversight for all activities that advance the nonprofit's effectiveness and sustainability.
2. Make decisions in the best interest of the nonprofit corporation; not in his or her self-interest.
3. Ensure that the nonprofit obeys applicable laws and acts in accordance with ethical practices; that the nonprofit adheres to its stated corporate purposes, and that its activities advance its mission.

The operational duties of nonprofit board members include:

1. Achievement: The role of the board is to achieve the organization's greater potential as well as its mission.
2. Accountability: The board's role is to ask: "How do we know?"
3. Ownership: Board members understand that the organization's success is their responsibility.
4. Oversight: Board oversight is essential; it's also not enough.

Responsibilities of the Board *(Descriptions available in the Board Member Guidebook Governance Outline)*

Mission Fulfillment & Strategic Vision; Meeting Minutes; Financial Oversight; Budget Planning; Special Events; Staffing; Staff Performance Reviews; Staff Compensation

Setting Expectations

Members of the RAF board are expected to:

- Be informed about the organization's mission, services, policies, bylaws, and programs;
- Serve for a term of at least 1 year to start, as a founding member. After the founding members, recruitment and renewals will be up to the affiliate site to determine.
- Attend and participate in a majority of annual board meetings/gatherings;
- Make an annual, personal, financial contribution each fiscal year by joining the Perennial Society at any level;
- Participate in mission related activities (volunteer opportunities, floral deliveries, etc.) whenever possible;
- Make efforts to attend/participate in RAF branch related special events/fundraisers and encourage others to be involved as well;
- Serve on at least one committee and regularly attend committee meetings;
- Find ways to further the charitable organization in unique and innovative ways;
- Refrain from intruding on administrative issues that are the responsibility of the staff, except to monitor the results and prohibit methods that conflict with board policies;

- Maintain the confidentiality entrusted to you as a board member and do not discuss board issues with anyone other than another board member or members of the staff;
- Avoid conflicts of interest between your position as a board member and your personal life. If such a conflict does arise, declare that conflict before the board and refrain from voting on matters in which there is a conflict.

Ownership & Engagement

Random Acts of Flowers reaches its full potential when each member of the board “owns something” each fiscal year. Whether it’s chairing an event, leading a committee or simply taking a leadership role in one aspect of the mission, if board members begin to own various elements of the organization, it usually proves to elevate performance and maximize output.

Board Member Financial Commitments

One quite common board governance discussion is around the financial responsibility of board members. Is it “give or get?” RAF believes that it is both “give AND get” with every board member making a personal financial donation to the organization each fiscal year. Being able to confidently say that our board has 100% personal financial investment is crucial to the health of the organization as a whole and has a significant impact on grant applications.

Optimal Board Composition

Finding the right formula of board members is crucial to a functional, working team. The goal is to find passionate leaders with a diverse set of experiences and skills who are enthusiastic about furthering the mission delivery and organization. The board membership should reflect people who are dedicated to donating their time, talents and treasure to the organization and charitable mission RAF delivers to the community. Here are some of the key types of board members RAF recruits:

- **BUSINESS:** Strategic thinkers, goal oriented, accountable operators, organized leaders.
- **PHILANTHROPY / FUNDRAISER:** Has the “rolodex” of large donors, runs in high-end philanthropy circles, knows how to raise money and sponsorships.
- **COMMUNITY CONNECTORS:** The people who know everyone, serve in other organizations, have great connections to volunteers and social groups.
- **STRATEGIC VENDORS:** Leaders in companies that are connected to other mission-related partners and can support your events and/or operations (event rental operators, caterers, printing co., construction co., magazines, etc.).
- **OPERATIONS / HR:** Process-oriented businesspeople who have skills in personnel or running the inner workings of companies and groups.
- **FINANCIAL:** Understanding of budgets, financial management, cash-flows, etc. – this person may be your Treasurer. Consider engaging a CPA with nonprofit board experience.
- **MEDIA / PR / TECHNOLOGY:** Someone who either works at a media outlet or has relationships on a PR level with many outlets, can write stories, drum up media attention, and post items to the web/social media.
- **MEDICAL (non-administrative):** Doctors, nurses or medical professionals who identify with the mission and validate the organization to colleagues across all healthcare partners.

It’s important to have one or two members of each group listed above, and never get too many people from the same constituency group. The size of a Local Board will ultimately be determined by the Executive Director and the Chair of that board. RAF finds it most productive to have more than 10 members but less than 20. In our experience, between 13 - 15 members is the most effective size.