



National MPS Society Board Member Role and Responsibilities Position Description

Purpose of Position:

Board Members offer their service to the National MPS Society to bring about change in the lives of children, adults, and families with MPS and related diseases. Making change happen requires an even greater commitment than regular membership. As such, serving on the Board of Directors is not an honorary position but requires a commitment of wealth, wisdom and work. Board members are expected to give of their time, talent, and trusteeship. Board Members ensure that the Mission of the National MPS Society is foremost in all activities and actions of the Board of Directors.

The Board role in the governance of the Society includes moral and legal responsibilities, setting the vision, mission, goals, and strategic direction, allocating resources, evaluating the performance of the Executive and the Board, rewarding and motivating staff, making difficult decisions, dedicating themselves to assisting the Society in areas of special expertise, and strengthening the Board by recruiting members who will adhere to these principles and values.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities:

1. **Determine the organization's mission and purpose** - A statement of mission and purposes should articulate the organization'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 the mission.
2. **Select the Executive Director** – The Board must reach consensus on the Executive Director's job description and undertake a careful search process to find the most qualified individual for the position. The Board should be assured that management succession is properly planned.
3. **Support the Executive Director and review his or her performance** - The Board should ensure that the Executive Director has the moral and professional support he or she needs to further the goals and mission of the organization. The Executive Director, in partnership with the entire board, should annually approve the performance review of the Executive Director and establish compensation based on recommendations of the executive committee. Review results achieved by management as compared with the organization's mission and annual and long-range goals. Compare performance to that of similar institutions. Ensure that the organizational strength and employee base can sustain long-range goals.

4. **Ensure effective organizational planning** - As stewards of an organization, the Boards must actively participate with the staff in an overall planning process and assist in implementing the plan's goals. The Board will assess the ever-changing environment and approve the organization's strategic plan at least every two years.
5. **Ensure adequate resources** - One of the Board's foremost responsibilities is to provide adequate resources for the organization to fulfill its mission. The Board should work in partnership with the chief executive and development staff, if any, to raise funds from the community. The Board shall annually review and approve the organization's funding plans and financial goals.
6. **Manage resources effectively** - The Board, in order to remain accountable to its donors, 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. The budget of the organization shall be presented on an annual basis and approved by the Board prior to its effective date. The Board must be informed and it must inform members of the financial condition of the organization and its operations through reports. The Board has the responsibility for retaining an independent auditor. The Board evaluates the performance by the auditor on an annual basis prior to renewal of his/her contract. Be certain that the financial structure of the organization will adequately support its current needs and long-range strategy.
7. **Determine, monitor, and strengthen the organization's programs and services** - The board's role in this area is to determine which programs are the most consistent with the Society's Mission, and to monitor their effectiveness.
8. **Enhance the organization's public standing** - An organization's primary link to the community, including constituents, the public, and the media, is the board. Clearly articulating the organization'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.
9. **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 Executive Director 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 and articles of incorporation. A Board member owes his/her loyalty to the organization and may not use their position as officer or director to his/her own advantage. A Board member must support the decisions of the full Board to the membership and public.
10. **Recruit and 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. The Board must also orient new board members

to their responsibilities and the organization's culture, needs, and challenges. By annual evaluating its performance in fulfilling its responsibilities (including its composition, organization, and responsibilities), the Board can recognize its achievements and reach consensus on which areas need to be improved.

- 11. Attendance and committee responsibilities** - The Board reviews committees and officers' reports and make recommendations concerning committees' activities. The Board of Directors will meet at least three times during the calendar year. Attendance of Board members is expected at all board meetings and official functions. Requests to be excused shall be sent as soon as possible to the President. The President will assign each board member to a standing committee with the responsibility of communicating and reporting board activities on a timely basis. Attendance at standing committee meetings is expected. Determine eligibility for, and appoint members to board committees in response to recommendations of the executive committee.

Individual Board Member Responsibilities:

- Attend all Board and committee meetings and functions, such as special events
- Be informed about the organization's mission, services, policies, and programs
- Participate in Board member orientation
- Review agenda and supporting materials prior to Board and committee meetings
- ACTIVELY serve on committees and offer to take on special assignments
- Make a personally meaningful financial contribution to the Society annually, according to circumstances
- Serve as an ambassador for the Society to increase public awareness
- Suggest possible nominees to the board who can make significant contributions to the work of the board and the organization and assist in filling vacancies as needed
- Keep up-to-date on developments in the MPS and related diseases field
- Follow conflict of interest and confidentiality policies
- Refrain from making special requests of the staff
- Assist the Board in carrying out its fiduciary responsibilities, such as reviewing the organization's annual financial statements

Personal characteristics to consider

Ability to: listen, analyze, think clearly and creatively, work well with individual people and groups, provide candid and constructive criticism, advise, and ask questions

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, evaluate oneself

Willingness to: develop certain skills if you do not already possess them, such as cultivating and soliciting funds; cultivating and recruiting board members and other volunteers; read and understand financial statements; learn more about the substantive program area of the Society

Possess: honesty, sensitivity to and tolerance of differing views; a friendly, responsive, and patient approach; community-building skills; personal integrity; a developed sense of values; concern for the Society's organizational development; a sense of humor

I have read and understand the National MPS Society's Board Member Position Description and agree to follow the essential duties and responsibilities in addition to the individual board member responsibilities. I will promptly inform the board chair of the National MPS Society of any change that will result in my inability to execute my duties as a member of the board of directors.

Type/print name

Signature

Date

Board Responsibilities taken from Ten Basic Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards. Washington, DC: National Center for Nonprofit Boards, 1996 and from Six Keys to Recruiting, Orienting, and Involving Nonprofit Board Members. Washington, DC: National Center for Nonprofit Boards, 1995. Also, The Role of the Board and Board Members, Brian O'Connell, Independent Sector, 1988.