

COCAF Member of the Board of Directors Job Description and Expectations

Purpose: To advise, govern, oversee policy and direction, and assist with the leadership and general promotion of the Colorado Coalition of Adoptive Families (COCAF) in support of COCAF's mission and needs.

Mission statement: We believe that all children have the right to a permanent loving family. We are dedicated to improving services for every pre- and post-adoptive family and to increasing the knowledge and accountability of public systems. We are committed to advocacy in state and local service planning and delivery, in support of all pre and post adoptive families.

Major responsibilities for all Board members:

- Determine COCAF's mission and purpose. It is the Board's responsibility to create a statement of mission and purpose, and to review it periodically for accuracy and validity. This statement should set out COCAF's goals, means, and primary constituents served. Each Board member should fully understand and support it.
- Select COCAF's Executive Director, then appoint, evaluate, and (if necessary) dismiss that individual. The Board must also ensure that the Executive Director, who has responsibility for the administration of COCAF, receives the moral and professional support he or she needs to further COCAF's goals.
- Ensure effective organization planning. As steward of COCAF, the Board must actively participate with the staff in an overall planning process, and assist in implementing the plan's goals. The Board should help management to develop business plans, policy objectives, business strategies, and priorities.
- Ensure adequate resources. One of the Board's foremost responsibilities is to provide adequate resources for COCAF to fulfill its mission. The Board should work in partnership with the Executive Director and development staff to raise funds from the community.
- Manage resources effectively. The Board, in order to remain accountable to its donors and the public, and to safeguard its tax-exempt status, must approve the annual budget and ensuring that proper financial controls are in place.
- Determine, monitor, and strengthen COCAF's programs and services. The Board's role in this area is to determine which programs are the most consistent with COCAF's mission, and to monitor their effectiveness. By constantly reviewing COCAF's work, the Board ensures COCAF's capacity to carry out its programs.
- Enhance COCAF's public standing. The Board is COCAF's primary link to the community. Clearly articulating COCAF's mission, accomplishments, and goals to the public, as well as garnering support from 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. The Board must work with the Executive Director to establish pertinent policies and procedures (e.g., personnel policies, grievance procedures), and adhere to provisions of COCAF's bylaws and articles of incorporation.
- Suggest possible nominees to the Board who can make significant contributions to the work of the Board and COCAF. The Board must select new Board members and orient them to their responsibilities, and COCAF's history, needs, and challenges.

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- Evaluate the Board's performance. By evaluating its performance, the Board can recognize its achievements and determine which areas need to be improved. As COCAF grows and improves, the governing Board must also evolve to meet changing needs and circumstances.

Actions Expected of Board Members

- Attend all Board and committee meetings and functions, such as special events.
- Review agenda and supporting materials prior to Board and committee meetings.
- Be informed about COCAF's mission, services, policies, and programs.
- Keep up-to-date on developments in the adoption field.
- Serve on committees or task forces and offer to take on special assignments.
- Assist with the execution of all special events.
- Help communicate and promote COCAF's mission and programs to the community.
- Be alert to community concerns that can be addressed by COCAF's mission, objectives, and programs.
- Support COCAF in making its Board of Directors representative and inclusive of the entire adoptive community, including people of varied age, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, and physical abilities.
- Assure that management continuity is properly provided.
- Annually evaluate the performance of the Executive Director and determining any bonus awards or increases in salary.
- Annually review the performance of the Board of Directors and take steps (including recommendation for its composition, organization, and responsibilities) to improve its performance.
- Approve appropriate compensation and benefit policies and practices.
- Ascertain that management has established appropriate policies to define and identify conflicts of interest throughout the Coalition, and is diligently administering and enforcing those policies.
- Follow conflict of interest and confidentiality policies.
- Refrain from making special requests of the staff.
- Ensure that the status of organizational strength and manpower planning is equal to the requirements of the long-range goals.
- Assist the Board in carrying out its fiduciary responsibilities, such as reviewing COCAF's annual financial statements.
- Become familiar with COCAF's finances, budget, and financial/resource needs.
- Make recommendations based on his or her experience and vantage point in the community.
- Financially support COCAF through the annual Board individual giving campaign according to one's means.
- Identify potential funding sources and serve as an ambassador in securing organizational funding.
- Provide candid and constructive criticism, advice and comments to the President, other members of the Board of Directors, and the Executive Director.
- Approve major actions of COCAF, such as capital expenditures and major program and service changes.

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- Get to know other members; build working relationships that contribute to consensus.
- Support decisions of the Board, regardless of personal desires and/or opinions.

Length of term: Three years, which may be renewed pending approval of the Board.

Meetings and time commitment:

- The Board of Directors meets quarterly in January, April, July, October. Meetings typically last 5 hours.
- Committees of the Board meet an average of one to four times per year, dependant upon the respective work agenda.
- Board members are asked to attend no more than one or two special events or special meetings per year, as they are determined.
- Hourly monthly commitment averages between 2 to 20 hours.

Personal Characteristics to Consider

- Ability to listen, analyze, think clearly and creatively, work well with people individually and in a group.
- Willing 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 your own performance.
- Develop certain skills if you do not already possess them, such as to cultivate and solicit funds, cultivate and recruit Board members and other volunteers, read and understand financial statements, learn more about the substantive program area of COCAF.
- 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 your nonprofit's development, a sense of humor.
- Set aside any potential conflict between their personal or individual business interests to support the ongoing growth of COCAF.
- Have a passion about the mission.
- Have time available to serve COCAF.