

Developing Board Policies

The Board of Directors, as the organization governing body, is entrusted with the authority to establish policy for the governance of the organization. Board policy establishes the parameters and guidelines for board members, committees, management and staff.

The purposes of our policies are to:

- Inform everyone of board intent, goals and aspirations
- Prevent confusion among board members, staff and the public.
- Promote consistency of board action
- Eliminate the need for instant (crisis) policy making
- Reduce criticism of the board and management
- Improve public relations
- Clarify board member, executive and staff roles
- Give management a clear direction from the board

Management policies are not board policies

The Board of Directors makes an important distinction between board policies and management policies. Board policies establish the broad parameters within which board, management and staff will operate. Management policies outline the specifics of how the organization and staff will operate within board policy.

Personnel policies are an example of management policy. The staff develops the personnel policies and may have them examined by an attorney familiar with personnel policy. The staff then informs the board that personnel policies are in place, and provides board members with copies of the personnel policy handbook. The board is not directly involved with developing personnel policies other than to ensure that they are carried out.

Once the Board of Directors officially adopts a new board policy, that policy is the standard for dealing with the subject matter covered by the policy. If an issue comes before the board that is not in line with existing policy, the issue is out of order and will be considered only in terms of policy change.

Policy requires a majority vote of the board

All policy decisions will be made by majority vote of the board and only at board meetings. Before adopting any policy, all board members will receive a copy of the proposed policy in advance of the meeting at which the vote is to be taken.

Source of policies

Policies may be recommended to the Board of Directors by committees of the board, individual board members or staff. All proposed policies will be researched to ensure that they are legal, and do not contradict already established policy or bylaws. If approved by the board, policies will be written, coded, dated at time of approval and included in all copies of the board policy manual.

Considerations for all policies

All policies proposed to the board should be tested to consider if the proposed policy is:

- Really necessary for good operation of the organization
- Consistent with the mission statement, vision and values
- Within the scope of board authority
- Consistent with local, state and federal law
- Compatible with other policies of this board
- Practical
- Broad enough to cover the subject completely
- Enforceable

Accountability for carrying out policies

The Board or staff will be accountable for carrying out these policies, ensuring that all policies are effectively explained to the employees and making every reasonable effort to see that they are understood, accepted and complied with.

Distribution of IYSA policy manual

A copy of the IYSA policy manual will at all times be available for review and inspection by staff and board members. Each board member will be given a revised policy manual.

Amendment or suspension of policy

All policies will be annually reviewed by the Board of Directors or a committee of the board for accuracy and appropriateness, and recommendations will be made to the board for amendment, addition or elimination. Except as otherwise provided by law, any policy of the board may be suspended, repealed, amended, or waived by a majority vote of the board, provided that at least one full week advance notice has been given of the intention to consider revocation, repeal, waiver, or amendment.