

## Board Member Job Description

Office:	Board Member
Term:	3 years; not to exceed 2 consecutive terms
Reports to:	Board President
Time Required:	3 – 8+ hours per month
Basic Duties:	Attend board meetings Participate on at least one committee or task force Attend events as scheduled Conduct fundraising activities Recruit new board members

### Responsibilities:

1. Read The Ultimate Board Member's Book, by Kay Sprinkel Grace. Copies can be "checked out" for free at the affiliate office.
2. Have knowledge of organization and personal commitment to its mission and goals
3. Makes annual financial contribution to organization
4. Attend regularly scheduled board meetings and annual retreat
5. Provide leadership for organization
6. Review board meeting minutes and stay well informed regarding organization's fiscal and program work
7. Participate actively on at least one committee
8. Volunteer for, and willingly accept assignments and complete them thoroughly, and on time
9. Match skills and interests with tasks and activities
10. Participate annually in strategic planning and fundraising plan development
11. Play a leading role in fundraising activities
12. Serve as an ambassador of organization to the public
13. Review Affiliate Articles of Incorporation and uphold By-laws

## Duties of Board Members

The importance of the board of directors cannot be overemphasized. The success of your affiliate reflects the performance of the people involved.

### Nine Primary Duties of Board Members

#### 1. Legal Duties

As a board member, you must protect the public interest as well as the interest of your organization. The public interest always comes first. Affiliate board members are called upon to diligently perform their legal duties:

**Duty of Care:** Directors and officers must perform their responsibilities in good faith and with the same care ordinary persons would use in managing their own affairs. Directors and officers must remain active and informed. The actions of directors and officers must confirm to the appropriate standards of business conduct.

**Duty of Loyalty:** Directors and officers must act in good faith and in a manner that does not harm the organization to the benefit of the director or officer. Directors and officers must avoid any conflicts of interest or appearances of impropriety.

**Duty of Obedience:** Directors and officers must comply with the provisions of the bylaws, the articles of incorporation and the laws of the state, and must adhere to the affiliate covenant. Directors and officers must safeguard Habitat's mission and Christian witness.

**Corporate Opportunities:** As a director, you cannot take advantage of business opportunities that would be of interest to your affiliate without disclosing the information to your affiliate. For example, if you see a piece of undeveloped property that is being sold at a very low price, and you know that your affiliate is looking for land to purchase, you cannot buy the property without disclosing your knowledge about the property to your fellow directors and allowing the affiliate the opportunity to bid on the property.

**Confidentiality:** As a director you should not disclose information about the affiliate's activities, unless the board decides to make the information public, or the information is a matter of public record.

#### 2. Affiliate program development

As a board member you are responsible for the development of programs for your affiliate. Your affiliate's programs must meet the test of good stewardship within the framework of Habitat for Humanity International. The board must continually evaluate its programs to ensure that it is fulfilling Habitat's mission and purposes.

Committees are necessary to meet the objectives of your affiliate. An affiliate board creates and monitors an affiliate's committees. Operating committees for an affiliate are development, family selection, family support, site selection and building/construction. Many affiliates require additional committees such as nominating, public relations, finance and budget, volunteer and human resources, executive, long-range planning and risk management. Ad hoc committees can serve to handle a special event such as a benefit dinner, groundbreaking, house dedication or workshop for fund-raisers, and then cease to exist.

Board members will serve on committees, but committee membership should not be limited to members of the board.

The board makes decisions based on local conditions, but within the framework of policies established by Habitat for Humanity International.

### **3. Affiliate staff**

Make sure that staff, through communication with the Executive Director, whether paid or volunteer, are committed to the Habitat for Humanity vision. Staff must be willing and able to carry out the Habitat for Humanity vision within the limits of the affiliate covenant, the policies of the affiliate board, and the policies of HFHI's board. Mutual respect and clear understanding can avoid the creation of problems; respect and understanding also help to solve problems when they occur.

### **4. Financial goals and priorities**

Set goals at Strategic Planning each year, determine what resources are necessary to accomplish them, develop a budget, and set your course to raise the needed capital. Realistic goals should be set in terms of how many houses you will build.

### **5. Fund raising**

Building houses is a capital-intensive venture. Board members have crucial contacts in the community. Cultivate these contacts honestly and ask them to join with you as partners. If board members are representative of the community they serve, they have many links to human and material resources. People feel valued when they are asked to assist worthy enterprises such as Habitat for Humanity. This is particularly so when they have a clear picture of where Habitat for Humanity is headed and believe that the affiliate's priorities are right. Board members also are expected to contribute financially to the work of the affiliate to the extent that they are able.

### **6. Legal matters**

Your duty as a board member is to keep everything open and honest and to avoid all potential conflicts of interest. You also have a responsibility to ensure that your affiliate complies with all legal requirements, such as Fair Housing laws and Internal Revenue Service regulations. You also must ensure that your affiliate completes all necessary filings with state and local governments. All agreements and contracts should be in

writing, and according to acceptable practice in your state. You should ensure that your affiliate has an attorney to advise the board of its legal responsibilities. Keep everything legal and remind board members of their duty to avoid any and all potential conflicts of interest.

## **7. Public relations**

Sound public understanding and support for Habitat for Humanity are important measures of the success of your affiliate. Your public relations efforts must mesh with all of your other efforts so that you can enjoy the full realizations of your affiliate's goals. A successful public relations program is an important part of your total effort; therefore we have an entire committee devoted to PR.

Deal evenhandedly and openly with your "publics." Who are your significant "publics"?

- Public opinion: As it goes, so go you.
- The media: They tell it as they see it. You may be asked by the E.D. or Board President to interface with the media. If you are contacted by the media, please refer to the E.D. or Board President unless you were asked to handle that specific communication.
- Government agencies: You need their cooperation.
- Volunteers: Without them you are a commercial home builder.
- Habitat for Humanity homeowners and prospective homeowners.
- HFHI: When needed, their assistance can be as significant as a legion of volunteers.
- Other Habitat for Humanity partners: Evenhandedness and full disclosure are important.

Be professional and consistent in your public relations efforts. Monitor your "publics" constantly and take daily barometer readings. If you do that, sudden storms are unlikely to develop.

## **8. Board affairs**

Communicate with affiliates and HFHI. Attend regional meetings; send minutes and newsletters to the regional office; tithe to Habitat's overseas work; etc. Ensure continuity through the nomination process, follow your bylaws, evaluate board performance and take action to improve!

## **9. Educate new board members**

Give them copies of the Habitat books, such as *The Ultimate Board Member's Book*, *A Simple, Decent Place to Live*, *No More Shacks!*, *The Theology of the Hammer* and *Welcome to Habitat*.