

National Small Business Association

Board of Trustees - Expectations and Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees is responsible for setting the overall strategic direction, priorities, and policies of the association, including the selection of executive leadership. Board members can help ensure the ongoing success of the organization through their commitment and support of the mission, goals, and practices of the association and by remaining attuned to potential opportunities and threats requiring association action.

Specifically, members of the Board of Trustees are expected to:

Attend meetings of the Board. The Board generally meets quarterly at various locations throughout the country, and is required to meet at least three times per year. Trustees should attend as many of these meetings as possible. More than two consecutive unexcused absences (an excused absence can only be granted by a vote of the full Board) results in automatic dismissal from the board.

Prepare for Board meetings. Board materials will be delivered in advance of each meeting. Each Trustee should commit to reviewing these materials in advance and arrive at the meeting prepared to engage on the information provided.

Maintain active committee participation. Given the relative infrequency of Board meetings, much of the ongoing work of the association occurs at the committee level. Trustees are expected to be actively involved in committee work, which generally occurs via teleconference. Each Trustee should be active in at least one Issue Committee and one Standing Committee.

Respond to requests for information/action. Between Board meetings, the association will regularly solicit feedback on issues and policies, often in a survey format. Also, there may be requests to speak with the media, legislators, or others on important policy matters. Trustees should endeavor to respond to these requests in a timely and productive manner, ensuring that the association's priorities are advanced.

Actively promote NSBA. Within their communities, trade associations, local organizations, and other spheres of influence, Trustees should actively promote NSBA and its positions, initiatives, and programs.

Uphold the non-partisan values of NSBA. A central tenet of NSBA's mission is that our policies should be member-driven and not subject to partisan politics. Each Trustee should strive to bring this ethos to the work of the Board.

Maintain membership in the association. Each Trustee should be a member in good standing and support the association at the appropriate level.

Disclose conflicts of interest. Each Trustee is obligated to disclose any potential conflict regarding association business to the association at the earliest possible time.

Maintain confidentiality on Board of Trustees business. Confidential board business should not be shared with those outside of the Board.

Understand the financial and operational status of the association. The Board has responsibility for the long-term stability and viability of the association, and each Trustee should be prepared to assist in this role.