



## **Board of Directors Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Role of the Board**

- Acts as the fiduciary and guardian of the Suicide Prevention Coalition of Colorado assets
- Reviews and approves SPCC's annual budget
- Establishes short- and long-term strategic goals supporting the SPCC mission
- Contributes toward progress of SPCC fundraising, advocacy, educational and membership goals
- Assumes stewardship responsibility for SPCC finances

### **Expectations of Board Members**

- Attend monthly scheduled board conference calls (1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of each month 8:00-9:00am)
- Attend quarterly education sessions and promote to networks. Many education sessions are in virtual format.
- Review agenda and supporting materials prior to meetings
- Participate in at least one committee (Advocacy, Collaboration, Education, Financial)
- Become informed about the SPCC policies and programs and member organizations
- Participate in fundraising activities and special events sponsored by SPCC – including playing a significant role in the annual conference (e.g., planning committee, participation, recruitment, presenting, etc.)
- Contribute financially according to ability including being a paid SPCC member.
- Participate in board orientation activities
- Keep up-to-date on developments in suicide prevention field and act as an informed advocate of SPCC
- Participate in advocacy activities as recommended by the advocacy committee
- Participate in planning one educational session per year.
- Recruit new individual and organizational members

### **General Expectations**

- Know SPCC's mission, purpose, goals, policies, programs, services, strengths and needs.
- Serve in leadership positions and undertake special assignments willingly and enthusiastically.
- Avoid prejudiced judgments on the basis of information received from individuals, urge staff members with grievances to follow established policies and procedures through their supervisors. All significant matters coming to you should be called to the attention of the board chair and/or the executive director as appropriate.
- Follow trends in suicide prevention (especially in Colorado) that are of interest and keep informed.
- Bring good will and a sense of humor to the board's deliberations.
- Suggest to the nominating committee possible candidates for board membership who are clearly women and men of achievement and distinction and would make significant contributions to the board and organization.

### **Meetings**

- Prepare for and conscientiously participate in board meetings, committee meetings and appropriate organizational activities.
- Ask timely and substantive questions at board and committee meetings while supporting the majority decision on issues decided by the board.
- Maintain confidentiality of the board's executive sessions and any confidential information given to you. Never speak for the board or organization unless authorized to do so. All utterances from board members carry great weight with those inside and outside the organization. Private opinion on any matter is often construed as the board's official position whether it is or isn't.
- Occasionally suggest board and committee meeting agenda items to board leaders and the executive director to ensure that significant, policy-related and strategic matters are discussed.
- Follow and support the decisions of the board. Do not undermine those decisions if you disagree.

### **Avoiding Conflicts**

- Serve the organization as a whole rather than any special interest group or constituency. Even if you were invited to fill a vacancy reserved for a certain constituency or organization, your first obligation is to avoid any preconception that you represent anything other than the organization's overall best interests.

- Avoid even the appearance of a conflict of interest and disclose any possible conflicts to the board in a timely fashion.
- Maintain independence and objectivity and do what a sense of fairness, ethics and personal integrity dictate.
- Never accept (or offer) favors or gifts from (or to) anyone who does business with the organization.

### **Fiduciary Responsibilities**

- Exercise prudence with the board in the control and transfer of funds.
- Faithfully read and understand the organization's financial statements and otherwise help the board fulfill its fiduciary responsibility.

### **Fundraising**

- Give an annual gift in line with your particular interests and personal means. Always do your best to set an example for other board members.
- Remember, giving one's time and expertise, as important as they are, are not substitutes for providing financial support according to one's capacity. If board members don't support their SPCC, why should anyone else?
- Assist the development committee and staff by helping to identify potential givers and implement fundraising strategies through personal influence where you have it (corporations, individuals, foundations).

### **Ambassadorship**

- Represent SPCC responsibly and diligently in the community by telling the SPCC story and presenting its accomplishments as well as its needs and current challenges.
- Represent SPCC to your professional network and community. Bring back concerns, ideas, suggestions and compliments when you believe they may have merit or possibility.

Source: *The Nonprofit Policy Sampler, Second Edition* by Barbara Lawrence and Outi Flynn. Published by Board Source, 2006.