

Item: New Board Member Onboarding Process

Item Summary: The Executive Committee has developed a comprehensive internal New Board Member Onboarding Process to support the successful integration of newly appointed Board Members and strengthen overall Board effectiveness.

The Committee recognized the need for a structured approach that promotes consistency, transparency, and confidence by ensuring all new members receive a clear introduction to their responsibilities, operational expectations, and the Board's governance framework. The proposed process includes four key components:

**Internal Orientation:** A foundational overview provided within the first 30–60 days of appointment, covering governance, legal framework, Board operations, organizational structure, and key resources.

**Executive Officer Walk-Thru:** Pre-meeting sessions designed to help new members understand upcoming agendas, procedural expectations, and relevant statutory or policy context.

**Mentor Board Member Assignment:** Pairing each new member with an experienced Board Member who can offer informal guidance, insight into Board culture, and ongoing support during their first year.

**Ongoing Support and Evaluation:** Regular check-ins and annual review of the onboarding process to ensure continuous improvement.

By establishing a formal onboarding process, the Executive Committee aims to enhance new member preparedness, improve meeting efficiency, and promote informed participation. The plan also supports stronger Board cohesion by creating consistent expectations and facilitating early engagement.

**Requested Action:**

Adopt the New Board Member Onboarding Process as presented (or as edited) and direct staff to implement the outlined onboarding components for all newly appointed Board Members.

# New Board Member Onboarding Plan

## Purpose

The purpose of this onboarding plan is to ensure that all newly appointed Board Members are well-prepared to effectively carry out their duties, understand their responsibilities, and meaningfully participate in Board discussions and deliberations. This plan promotes consistency, transparency, and confidence through structured orientation, mentorship, and executive engagement.

## 1. Internal Orientation for New Board Members

### Timing

- Conducted in-person or virtually within the first **30–60 days** of appointment

### Orientation Content

The internal orientation will include:

#### Governance & Legal Framework

- Board authority, roles, and responsibilities
- Applicable open meeting laws and ethics requirements
- Conflict of interest and disclosure obligations

#### Board Operations

- Board laws, regulations and policies
- Committee structure and assignments
- Meeting procedures, voting, and public participation
- Meeting calendar

#### Organizational Overview

- Mission, vision, and statutory mandate
- Organizational structure and key staff roles
- Budget overview and fiscal oversight
- Current initiatives, challenges, and priorities

#### Tools & Resources

- Access to Board systems (i.e. per diem reporting)
- Communication protocols
- Reference materials and key contacts

## **Materials Provided**

- Administrative Manual (2025 Edition)
- Relevant statutes, regulations, and policies
- Recent Board agendas and minutes
- Strategic Plan

## **2. Executive Officer Walk-Through Prior to Board Meetings**

### **Purpose**

To enhance preparedness and efficiency, new Board Members will participate in a pre-meeting walk-through with the Executive Officer prior to their initial Board meetings.

### **Timing**

- Conducted prior to the first Board meeting, and as needed for the first 2–3 meetings
- Scheduled sufficiently in advance to allow time for questions and review

### **Walk-Through Components**

The Executive Officer will:

- Review the Board meeting agenda and objectives
- Explain the structure of agenda items (e.g., informational, discussion, action)
- Clarify regulatory, policy, or statutory context as needed
- Highlight items requiring Board action or heightened attention
- Explain staff and legal roles, and the Board-staff relationship
- Answer procedural or substantive questions

### **Outcomes**

- Improved understanding of agenda flow and expectations
- Increased confidence in participation
- More efficient and focused Board meeting

## **3. Mentor Board Member Assignment**

### **Overview**

Each newly appointed Board Member will be paired with a seasoned Board Member who will serve as a mentor during the new member's first year of service.

### **Mentor Selection**

- The Board President will assign a mentor based on:

- Experience and tenure on the Board
- Professional background or subject-matter alignment (when feasible)
- Mentors should be members with demonstrated engagement and institutional knowledge.

Note: during the initial implementation of the plan, the President and Vice President will serve as mentors.

## **Mentor Responsibilities**

The mentor will:

- Serve as a point of contact for informal questions regarding Board culture, norms, and expectations
- Explain meeting protocols, committee structures, and decision-making processes
- Offer guidance on reviewing meeting materials and preparing for discussions
- Provide historical context for recurring issues or long-standing initiatives
- Encourage engagement while maintaining independence of judgment

## **Duration**

- The mentoring relationship will generally last 12 months, with flexibility based on the needs of the new member.

## **4. Ongoing Support and Evaluation**

- Periodic check-ins with the Executive Officer during the first year
- Informal feedback from mentors regarding onboarding effectiveness
- Annual review of the onboarding process to ensure continuous improvement

## **Expected Benefits**

- Faster integration of new Board Members
- Improved meeting efficiency and engagement
- Consistent understanding of governance roles
- Strengthened Board cohesion and effectiveness