

Disability Rights Center

Board of Directors: Responsibilities and Expectations

Disability Rights Center – NH (DRC) benefits from the generous service of our Board of Directors. DRC is committed to a Board that is representative of the diverse communities we serve, reflecting the socioeconomic, ethnic, geographic and disability diversity of New Hampshire

To achieve this mandate, one third (1/3) of Board members must be people with disabilities or family members of people with disabilities. One fourth (1/4) of Board members must be attorneys.

Qualifications for Board Membership

Board members are persons who:

- have special knowledge, skill, and/or connections with networks that are important to the work of the Board;
- have a passion to promote DRC's mission; and,
- agree to act, to the best of their ability, to advance the collective and individual duties and expectations of board member stated below.

Collective Duties of Board Members

As a body, the Board has the following major responsibilities:

1. Assist DRC to protect and advocate for the rights of people with disabilities across New Hampshire
2. Ensure that DRC provides high-quality advocacy and protection services that respect the choices of persons with disabilities and, to the extent possible, promote self-advocacy.
3. Set clear and focused priorities for DRC that identify the most pressing needs of people with disabilities and are flexible enough to respond to unanticipated needs when necessary.
4. Ensure that the DRC adheres to high standards of integrity and ethics in all its work.
5. Regularly review and evaluate the agency's mission, goals and activities to ensure they align with the needs of its clients and the greater disability community.

6. Assuring high quality deliberations and decisions with respect to finances, policy-making, program planning and plan implementation, and program oversight. This includes activities such as:
 - a. Creating sound budgets, monitoring revenues and expenditures, dealing with assets and reserves, and reviewing and approving DRC's annual independent audit;
 - b. Monitoring regulatory compliance;
 - c. Assure regular, effective, and strategic organizational planning, and regular monitoring of plan implementation.
 - d. Regular reviewing and approving DRC's personnel, financial, and advocacy services policies.

7. Fulfill the Board's fiduciary responsibility to:
 - a. Ensure DRC's continued financial stability;
 - b. Periodically evaluate DRC's financial system and practices to make sure that they conform to accepted standards for accountability and transparency;
 - c. Periodically assess DRC's management and operations to make certain that DRC uses its human and financial resources efficiently and responsibly to fulfill its mission

8. Select, oversee, and support the Executive Director. Conduct an annual evaluation of his or her performance.

Individual Duties of Board Members

All Board Members have the general duties of:

- CARE -- attending to Board activities with the degree of care they use in personal affairs.
- LOYALTY – placing DRC interests above private interests, being particularly careful to avoid conflicts of interest (disclose any conflict they see and excuse themselves from voting on matters in which they have a conflict).
- OBEDIENCE -- assuring that DRC acts within the general law and within its mission, bylaws, and terms of its grants and contracts.

Specifically, Board members are expected to:

1. Be familiar with DRC Bylaws.
2. Attend Board and committee meetings and retreats, and notify DRC if they are unable to attend. At a minimum, Board members are expected to actively serve on one Board Committee.

3. Actively participate in board and committee meetings and retreats, sharing their special knowledge, expertise, or connections to important networks or communities. Those members with ties to client communities should watch for and share any unrecognized needs they become aware of. At a minimum, members should interact respectfully and civilly, and promote healthy dialogue.
4. Actively participate in program planning, policy making, and oversight. At a minimum, this includes reviewing documents shared with the Board – minutes, financial reports, the annual audit, and other reports and documents.
5. Assist in developing DRC’s strategic plan. At a minimum, members are expected to participate in regular planning retreats and read materials provided in advance.
6. Support DRC’s fundraising. At a minimum, members are expected to make a financial contribution in any amount that fits their circumstances and to work in other ways to increase DRC’s fundraising opportunities such as helping identify potential new contributors.