

Board Director Roles and Responsibilities

General qualifications include:

- Prior service with the ABO and its activities
 - Professionalism
 - Skills relevant to the needs of the Board
 - Clinically active
- One or two non-physician Directors serve as advocates for the public with particular sensitivity to the need for high quality care delivered by competent board-certified ophthalmologists.
 - The Board promotes diversity by recruiting Directors from as wide an age, ethnic, gender, geographic, and practice setting as possible.

A Director of the American Board of Ophthalmology should:

1. Have an impeccable reputation for ethical behavior, integrity, and competence.
2. Be recognized nationally for his/her accomplishments.
3. Be a diligent worker who meets commitments promptly.
4. Be collegial and work harmoniously with others.
5. Have an open mind and be able to consider opposing points of view fairly and respectfully.
6. Support and advocate for the mission of the Board.
7. Have knowledge of and experience with educational testing and the certification process, or be willing to learn.
8. Have the appropriate writing, administrative, and organizational skills to successfully complete tasks likely to be assigned.
9. Be unencumbered by conflicts of interest (or be willing to eliminate existing conflicts of interest before joining the ABO Board of Directors).
10. Be representative of or sympathetic to the broad community of ophthalmologists.
11. Put the interests of the profession ahead of her or his personal interests.
12. Understand and model key leadership attributes, including servant leadership.

General Responsibilities

Directorship requires a strong commitment to the mission and principles of the Board. The Board depends on Directors devoting sufficient time and energy to the responsibilities assigned to them. Physician Directors contribute to the ABO's initial and continuous certification processes in a variety of ways, such as serving as Item Writers and Examiners, as well as future development of quality, safety, and performance improvement assessments.

A Board Director must be willing to commit to the following:

1. Attendance at a minimum of three meetings per year, including two oral examinations and an interim meeting; this typically entails at least 15 days of meeting time annually, including weekends. New Directors also should plan to attend an examination development meeting during each of their first two years of service. Committee assignments may require up to the equivalent of an additional three or more weeks' time spread throughout the year. Finally, Directors may be asked to represent the Board at regional or national meetings.
2. Willingness to accept multiple Board responsibilities and to fulfill commitments in a timely manner.

3. Willingness to become knowledgeable about the methodologies of skills and competency assessment, quality and safety measures and processes, and human factors impacts, among others. Directors should understand the effects of new technology on the patient-physician relationship.

4. Agreement to refrain from promoting, or permitting others to promote, his/her participation in commercial or educational activities (domestic or foreign) under circumstances that exploit, or might be perceived to exploit, his/her familiarity with examinations administered by the ABO or that otherwise might be perceived to compromise the integrity of those examinations.

Fiduciary Responsibility

Board members are responsible for the financial accountability of their organization. Board members act as trustees of the organization's assets and must exercise due diligence to oversee that the organization is well-managed and that its financial health remains sound.

Fiduciary duty requires ABO Directors to be objective, unselfish, responsible, honest, trustworthy, and efficient. As stewards of public trust, Directors must always act for the good of the organization, rather than for their own benefit. They must exercise reasonable care in all decision making, without placing the ABO at unnecessary risk.

Although not all Directors are financial experts, each can be a financial inquisitor. It is essential to understand basic terminology, be able to read financial statements and judge their soundness, and have the capacity to recognize warning signs that might indicate a change in the overall health of the organization. To fulfill this responsibility, Directors may find the following questions helpful:

- Is our financial plan consistent with our strategic plan?
- Is our cash flow adequate?
- Do we have sufficient reserves?
- Are our expenses appropriate?
- Are any specific expense areas rising faster than their sources of income?
- Are we regularly comparing our financial activity with what we have budgeted?
- Do we have the appropriate checks and balances to prevent errors, fraud, and abuse?

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