



Board of Directors Operating Policies

(All policies in this manual have been revised and approved by various committees and the NAMI Vermont Board - February 24, 2017)

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FINANCIAL POLICIES

1. Policy on Use of Funding

Adopted by the NAMI Vermont Board of Directors February 26, 2011

1.1 NAMI Vermont solicits and accepts funds from a variety of individual, public and private sources, including corporations, with the exception of pharmaceutical companies. These funds are used to further its mission and programs of education, support and advocacy for individuals with mental illness and their family members.

- All funding is subject to our Board-adopted Conflict of Interest policy and stringent ethical screens consistent with our mission. Like most nonprofits, NAMI Vermont will reject any proposed funding with conditions attached that would violate our mission or compromise our integrity and independence.
- Only grants and contributions to further NAMI's established mission and program priorities will be solicited and accepted.
- No funds will be accepted for direct legislative advocacy on any issue.
- Any work products (e.g. educational publications) funded with such support will not include corporate logos or branding. This does not preclude acknowledgement of the support in a manner typical of nonprofit voluntary health associations.

1.2 Accepting funding from any source does NOT constitute endorsement by NAMI Vermont of that individual or entity's public policy views.

1.3 NAMI Vermont's applications for and use of all public and private funding fully meets these standards. We pledge to continue to operate in full compliance with accepted public standards of nonprofit conduct in this respect. We practice full transparency of our finances, and welcome public scrutiny of our adherence to all legal and ethical norms for nonprofits.



2. Purchasing Policy

Adopted by the NAMI Vermont Board of Directors April 30, 2011

Approved by the Finance Committee, Governance Committee, and Executive Committee - Feb. 2016

It is essential that uniform purchasing policies be followed by NAMI Vermont staff, officers and directors, and volunteers. In order to maintain financially sound business practices, the following policy will govern purchases, approvals, and reimbursements. Failure to follow this policy may result in revocation of delegated authority, denial of reimbursement, delay in payment, or other sanction up to and including personal liability for unauthorized purchases as determined by the Finance Committee of the Board of Directors.

2.1 Tax Exempt Status

NAMI Vermont is exempt from paying Vermont sales tax. The purchaser of goods or services should inform the supplier of that fact. A copy of the tax exemption certificate should be provided if so requested by the vendor.

2.2 Personal Purchases

NAMI Vermont will not purchase any supplies or equipment for personal use by staff, officers and directors, and volunteers.

2.3 Local Purchasing

NAMI Vermont will endeavor to support Vermont business in purchasing goods and services.

2.4 Purchase Orders

A purchase order system and form(s) shall be implemented in accordance with the Purchasing Policy.

1. All purchases over \$25 that are non-recurring expenditures will follow the purchase order system requiring approvals.
2. All purchases that are not itemized in the budget will follow the purchase order system requiring approvals.
3. All purchases in any amount must have accompanying receipts.

2.5 Bidding Requirements

All purchases of goods or services of \$1,500 or more that are non-recurring must have three (3) quotations. The breaking up of a purchase into individual requisitions to avoid the bid process (pyramiding) is not permitted. Responses shall be in writing except that those under \$2,000 may be verbal and noted by a signed and dated hard copy memo in the file.

2.6 Approval of Purchases and Check Signing

1. All purchase orders must be approved by either the Executive Director or the Treasurer.
2. All checks cut in the amount of \$1,000 or more, with the exception of bills deemed routine (see list of vendors) require the signatures of two check signers.
3. All purchase orders of \$1,000 or more must be approved by the Treasurer or President in addition to the Executive Director.
4. All purchase orders of \$2,500 or more must have the approval of the Executive Committee.

2.7 Reimbursement for Authorized Purchases

1. All purchases made by staff, officers and directors, and volunteers for NAMI Vermont must have prior approval from the Executive Director to guarantee reimbursement, providing that all other requirements of this policy are met. In the case of no ED at the helm, the approval of Treasurer and President shall suffice.
2. An approved purchase order and original receipt is required for reimbursement.



3. NAMI Vermont Investment Policy

Adopted by the NAMI Vermont Board of Directors November 21, 2009

3.1 General Investment Philosophy

NAMI Vermont's financial assets are intended to serve short, medium, and long-term needs of NAMI Vermont as defined by the Board. They are intended to preserve the fiscal viability of the organization and enable future development and strengthening of the organization and its

objectives. All funds must be expended in accordance with the laws and regulations governing 501(c)3 organizations. These funds are the consequence of many years of community support in the form of charitable contributions and their prudent investment and utilization should reflect those sources.

Definition of NAMI Vermont Account Categories

- **Operating accounts:** Checking and/or savings accounts which are used to meet immediate obligations of NAMI Vermont.
- **Operating reserve:** Accounts having 100% liquidity, i.e. cash and cash equivalents, which are immediately transferable to operating accounts in case of cash-flow emergencies caused by unforeseen revenue shortfalls or cost overruns.
- **Long-term reserve:** Accounts that may be invested in assets that are not liquid, assets that have greater risk tolerance and a longer time horizon. This includes:
 - **Vermont Community Foundation (VCF):** This \$50,000 fund is held permanently by VCF, for benefit of NAMI Vermont. Ownership of the principal remains with VCF unless NAMI Vermont experiences a time of hardship. A portion of income is available to NAMI Vermont annually upon request.

3.2 Financial Assets

1. Operating Reserve

The operating accounts, including operating reserves are intended to meet annual cash flow needs. Any funds categorized as operating will only be invested in short-term FDIC insured products.

2. Long Term Reserve Fund

Long term reserves are investments that may have a higher risk level in order to provide greater returns, and do not need to be immediately available for withdrawal.

3.3 Investment Objectives

1. General:

The investment of the funds will comply with the Prudent Investor Act as adopted by Vermont. It allows fiduciaries to use modern portfolio theory to guide investment decisions. A fiduciary's performance is measured on the performance of the whole portfolio, not upon the performance of each individual investment. The act allows the fiduciary to delegate investment decisions to qualified and supervised agents.

2. Risk Tolerance

The primary goal of this Investment Policy (IP) is to generate a long-term return that can meet the current and future spending needs of NAMI Vermont. The primary risk is the failure of the investments to generate the necessary long-term returns to meet this objective.

NAMI Vermont has a moderate to conservative risk tolerance. NAMI Vermont will attempt to manage risk through diversification. NAMI Vermont wishes to meet its long-term return objectives while attempting to limit declines in the market value of the investment assets

but understands that based on historical return data its portfolio will experience periods of decline.

3. Time Horizon

NAMI Vermont has a time horizon of greater than 5 years for any funds it presents to its investment advisor for investment.

4. Cash Distribution Requirements

Short-term liquidity requirements are assumed to be minimal. Liquidity is defined as those funds which the board expects to spend within twelve months. The Board will be responsible for advising the Investment Advisor in a timely manner of the cash distribution requirements.

3.4 Asset Allocation

Asset Diversification: As a general policy, the Investment Fund will maintain reasonable diversification between asset classes and investment categories.

3.5 Investment Advisor

Upon recommendation of the Finance Committee, the Board will consult investment advisors to review and recommend investment of funds whether or not invested in FDIC insured products. The following elements may be considered in selecting an investment advisor: background, experience, investment philosophy, investment style, past performance, efficiency, client service and other elements as necessary.

The Finance Committee will regularly review investment performance with the input of an investment advisor.



4. NAMI Vermont Management and Use of Investments Policy

Adopted by the NAMI Vermont Board of Directors January 30, 2010

4.1 Fund Purposes & Guidelines for Fund Management:

A. NAMI Vermont’s investment accounts serve two purposes:

1. To ensure the sustainability of NAMI Vermont’s current programs & operations; and
2. To grow financial reserves for NAMI Vermont’s future sustainability

B. Investment accounts shall be divided into two funds:

1. **Operating Reserve:** The Operating Reserve shall be managed for capital preservation and liquidity as a buffer for the organization’s operating budget against catastrophic, cash/flow, and unforeseen revenue shortfalls. The Operating Reserve may only be used to meet a loss of operating funds. A balance shall be maintained such that any loan or transfers from NAMI Vermont’s Operating Reserve for these purposes shall not exceed 25% of NAMI Vermont’s annual budgeted expenses. (See Note 1)
2. **Long Term Reserve:** Long term reserves are investments that may have a higher risk level in order to provide greater returns, and do not need to be immediately available for withdrawal.

- a. A portion of earnings and positive changes in the Long Term Reserve (if any) from investments shall be available to provide annual income to NAMI Vermont. The Finance Committee may authorize the transfer of all or some portion of these net earnings to the organization's operating accounts, for the purposes of offsetting deficit. If no transfer is made, earnings shall be retained and reinvested.
- b. **Restricted Fund:** The restricted portion shall be spent only for purposes prescribed. The Restricted Fund may be used as defined by the funder with documentation. The Finance Committee shall approve use of Restricted Funds to assure they are used for appropriate purposes.

4.2 Loans to Cash Accounts and Authorized Agents:

- A. **Loans from NAMI Vermont's Operating Reserve to its operating accounts:** may be authorized by vote of the NAMI Vermont Executive Committee, up to a total of \$40,000 per year, for the sole purpose of offsetting a cash-flow situation. Such loans shall be repaid to the investment account, as soon as the anticipated revenue is received. (A cash-flow situation is defined as a temporary deficit between expected expenses and cash-in-hand, with the anticipation of adequate revenue that can repay the loan.)
- B. **Authorized Agents and Advisors:** NAMI Vermont may retain the services of a qualified Fund Advisor to provide professional management of its Long Term Reserve. NAMI Vermont's Board President and Treasurer are authorized to represent NAMI Vermont to the Fund Advisor, and authorize transfers within the investment account(s), buy or sell orders for securities and other assets, and have ready access to all account information on NAMI Vermont's behalf. NAMI Vermont's Board of Directors also may delegate and authorize other members and employees of NAMI Vermont to communicate with the Fund Advisor on the organization's behalf, with respect to receiving and providing information on behalf of NAMI Vermont about its investment account(s).

4.3 Guidelines for Managing Gifts of Stock and Other Investment Policies

- A. Gifts of stocks, bonds, and other marketable securities and financial instruments other than cash made to NAMI Vermont without restriction by the donor will generally be sold or otherwise liquidated, within 6 months of receipt, or as soon as possible.
- B. Proceeds from the liquidation of such assets will be deposited immediately into NAMI Vermont's Operating Reserve. The Finance Committee will recommend to the Board an investment plan for proceeds exceeding \$2,500.

4.4 Reports

- A. Monthly reports shall be produced showing the status of the main investment accounts, indicating current value of assets, realized and unrealized gains/losses, and any transfers between accounts. These reports also shall show any transfers, including dates, from the operating reserve account to the cash account. These reports will be reviewed by the Finance Committee and made available to the Board.
- B. **A monthly report shall project** the cash/flow situation indicating expected expenses versus anticipated cash-in-hand.

Notes:

1: The figure of 25% is considered adequate to support staff salaries and other costs (rent, utilities, janitorial, etc.) necessary to sustain NAMI Vermont for a three-month period.



5. Funds Transfer Policy

Approved by the Board of Directors, June 2013

Policy

1. Funds may be transferred, not to exceed \$10,000 per calendar month, from operating reserves to the operating account with authorization by the Executive Director, or in his or her absence, the Treasurer. Any transfer of \$10,000 or more should be approved by the Board.
2. The Executive Director or Treasurer shall notify the finance committee and President of any transfers within 30 days of making the transfer.
3. Transfer of funds from the Long Term Reserve requires the prior approval of the Board.



6. Travel Reimbursement Policy

*Adopted by the NAMI Vermont Board of Directors April 18, 2009
Amended 1-18-2014 – Board Meeting
Amended 4-25-2016 - Board Meeting*

6.1 Travel Policy

Travel by the Executive Director must be approved by the Board President. All Board, volunteer, or staff travel must be approved by the Executive Director or appointed designee.

Travelers are asked to book their own airline tickets. Travelers will be reimbursed promptly for all approved travel costs upon their return, or in advance when receipts are submitted for approved trips. Air tickets can be booked through a number of online travel sites, or with an airline directly. If you need assistance in booking a ticket, staff may assist you. **Airline tickets should be booked at least 21 days in advance, if possible, to ensure the lowest-cost ticket is booked.**

If a traveler does not have access to a credit card for booking purposes they should contact the executive director for assistance with booking their tickets.

In the event of an emergency situation, it is up to the individual to use good judgment for travel arrangements. In extenuating circumstances the traveler will make the best effort to contact the Executive Director or the Board Chair (in the event of Executive Director’s travel) to discuss authorization and/or reimbursement.

6.2 Expense Reimbursement

A. Policies

NAMI Vermont pays for all reasonable expenses incurred by members while doing business for NAMI Vermont. This includes attending the Convention or another function as an

official representative of NAMI Vermont, done at the request of the President or Executive Director.

Reasonable expenses include hotel at the allowed rate, transportation at the most reasonable fare available, meals, tips and taxes. NAMI Vermont does NOT pay the expenses of a spouse, children, liquor, in-room movies or entertainment, or excess charges above the specified rate for hotels and transportation, and car rentals.

B. Option to donate expenses

Volunteers must submit their receipts for reimbursement within 30 days and may at their discretion donate their payment separately at a later date back to NAMI Vermont.

C. Reimbursement Guidelines

Reimbursement for hotels, mileage, and allowed per diem will be based on the amounts listed in the Federal GSA Guidelines, found on the GSA website, www.gsa.gov.

- a. Meals and incidentals will be reimbursed up to a per diem or agreed-upon meal allowance by NAMI Vermont with receipts.
- b. A travel advance is allowed when approved by the E.D.
- c. Hotels are reimbursed up to the daily amount allowed for that location, including taxes; hotel receipts must be submitted. If two NAMI Vermont members share a room, each is reimbursed for half the daily cost of the room, up the daily maximum allowed for that location. (NAMI Vermont members are encouraged to share rooms when cost of a room exceeds the allowable rate.)
- d. Taxis are reimbursed at actual cost based on a submitted receipt. Use of taxis is allowed for trips between the point of arrival/departure, airport or station, and the hotel, B&B, or home if within 10 miles. Taxis may be used only for travel within a destination for trips associated with the purpose of the travel. Use of buses and other public transportation is encouraged.
- e. Use of a rental car, if it is not the primary means of travel, must be approved in advance by the Board President, or appointed designee. Use of a private vehicle will be reimbursed using the volunteer mileage rate for a charity as specified in the Federal GSA Guidelines. Parking cost will be reimbursed upon the submittal of a receipt. Use of a private vehicle for long trips will be reimbursed up to the equivalent cost of economy airfare, per person in the vehicle, for the same trip including the cost of transportation from the airport to the final destination.
- f. Airline fares will be reimbursed at actual cost, including taxes and fees, at the lowest available economy class rate. Those choosing to fly in a higher class must absorb the cost difference between that class and economy. Rail and bus transportation will be reimbursed at the most economical class of travel. Overnight rail travel may include sleeping accommodation and will be reimbursed only up to the total cost of what would be incurred through air travel as specified in this policy.
- g. Stipends: If a volunteer is paid more than \$600 or more, NAMI Vermont will prepare a form 1099, which the volunteer will need to include in their tax return.



7. Volunteer Mileage Reimbursement Policy and Procedure

Adopted by the NAMI Vermont Board of Directors 3-24-2012

Amended 4-25-2016 - Board Meeting

7.1 Policy

NAMI recognizes that volunteer time and contributions are vital to our success and achievement. At the same time, NAMI must balance this recognition with our responsibility to be fiscally prudent. NAMI has developed this policy to enable volunteers to continue volunteering when they require financial assistance to meet their responsibilities.

Volunteers shall only be reimbursed for mileage incurred directly in order to meet their specific volunteer responsibilities. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- NAMI Vermont Volunteer teachers, for planning, promoting and teaching classes
- NAMI Vermont Volunteer Support Group Facilitators, for planning, promoting and facilitating groups
- NAMI Vermont Directors, when traveling on required organizational business
- Mileage incurred while completing volunteer work at the request of the NAMI Vermont Executive Director

Volunteers have a mileage reimbursement rate of the IRS standard reimbursement rate for volunteers of a charity (currently \$.14 per mile,) which is not taxable.

NAMI Vermont will not approve mileage that is reimbursed by another source (i.e. DMH, Voc Rehab)

The payment of any mileage reimbursement is contingent on the availability of funding and can be discontinued at any time.

7.2 Procedure

To ensure accurate record keeping and budget management, expense reimbursement requests must be submitted within 30 days of the travel for which the expense was incurred.

To be reimbursed, a volunteer must submit a detailed record of the date, distance, purpose and reimbursement rate requested for each trip, on a form provided by NAMI Vermont for this purpose.

In the event that a volunteer requires an advance of the mileage reimbursement prior to incurring the expense, the volunteer may request the advance by using the NAMI Vermont Mileage Reimbursement form. All advances must be approved by the Executive Director.



8. NAMI Vermont Staff Compensation Policy and Procedure

Adopted by the NAMI Vermont Board of Directors on January 19, 2013

8.1 Policy

The goal of NAMI Vermont's Compensation program is to attract potential employees, meet the needs of all current employees and encourage well-performing employees to stay with our organization. With this in mind, our compensation is built to balance the employees' and NAMI Vermont's needs.

It is NAMI Vermont's desire to pay all employees' salaries and benefits that are competitive with other employers in the marketplace in a way that is motivational, fair, and equitable. Compensation may vary depending upon the performance of the individual and the organization. NAMI Vermont shall endeavor to give all staff an annual cost of living adjustment.

8.2 Procedure

Annual compensation and benefits for all staff shall be determined as part of the budgeting process for the fiscal year. In determining appropriate compensation for the staff, the Board, through the Finance Committee, will employ non-profit industry best practices and existing compensation surveys. The Finance Committee shall document its process for the full Board's review.

The Finance Committee sets a salary and benefits range for the Executive Director. It is the responsibility of the Chair to negotiate with the Executive Director to reach agreement on an annual salary and benefits package within that range, which will be presented to the Board for final approval as part of the overall budgeting process. Once the budget is adopted, the Chair shall draft an employment contract between the Executive Director and the Board setting out the Executive Director's annual compensation.

The Finance Committee will determine a salary and benefits range for the office staff. It is the responsibility of the Executive Director to set each employee's compensation for the fiscal year within the range set by the committee. Staff benefits are detailed in the Employee Handbook. Staff compensation shall be presented to the Board for final approval as part of the overall budgeting process.



ADMINISTRATIVE, STAFF, AND VOLUNTEER POLICIES

9. NAMI Vermont Contract Signing Policy

Adopted by the NAMI Vermont Board of Directors September 16, 2009

Contracts are normally signed by the Executive Director. If there is no Executive Director in place, the following individuals on the NAMI Vermont Executive Committee will be responsible for signing contracts. If there is a conflict of interest (for example, an officer has an affiliation with the contractual organization), then the next individual in line can sign the contract:

- 1) Board President
- 2) 1st Vice President
- 3) 2nd Vice President
- 4) Secretary
- 5) Treasurer



10. NAMI Vermont Code of Ethics

Adopted by NAMI Vermont Vermont Executive Committee, September 2012

10.1 Introduction

We, as NAMI Vermont staff and board members, dedicate ourselves to carrying out the mission of this organization. To that end, we will do the following:

- Recognize that the chief function of NAMI Vermont is to serve the best interests of our constituency.
- Accept as a personal duty the responsibility to keep up to date on emerging issues and to conduct ourselves with professional competence, fairness, impartiality, efficiency, and effectiveness.
- Respect the structure and responsibilities of the board, provide them with facts and advice as a basis for their making policy decisions, and uphold and implement policies adopted by the board.
- Keep the NAMI Vermont community informed about issues affecting it.
- Conduct our organizational and operational duties with positive leadership exemplified by open communication, creativity, dedication, and compassion.
- Exercise whatever discretionary authority we have under the law to carry out the mission of the organization.
- Serve with respect, concern, courtesy, and responsiveness in carrying out the organization's mission.
- Demonstrate the highest standards of personal integrity, truthfulness, honesty, and fortitude in all our activities in order to inspire confidence and trust in our activities.
- Avoid any interest or activity that is in conflict with the conduct of our official duties.
- Respect and protect privileged information to which we have access in the course of our official duties.
- Strive for personal and professional excellence and encourage the professional development of others.

10.2 Policy

NAMI Vermont believes strongly that its members must uphold the highest standards of ethical, professional behavior, and so strives:

- To hold paramount the safety, health, and welfare of the public in the performance of our duties.
- To act in such a manner as to uphold and enhance personal and professional honor, integrity, and dignity.
- To treat with respect and consideration all persons, in accordance with NAMI Vermont's Diversity and Inclusion policy.
- To engage in carrying out NAMI Vermont's mission in a professional manner.

- To collaborate with and support others in carrying out NAMI Vermont Vermont’s mission.
- To build professional reputations on the merit of services and refrain from competing unfairly with others.

10.3 Board Code of Ethics

Adopted by the NAMI Vermont Board of Directors

To be familiar with and committed to the major responsibilities of a governing board including:

1. Setting mission and purposes
2. Appointing the Executive Director
3. Supporting the Executive Director
4. Monitoring the Executive Director’s performance
5. Assessing Board performance
6. Insisting on strategic planning
7. Reviewing educational and public-service programs
8. Ensuring adequate resources
9. Ensuring good management
10. Preserving institutional independence
11. Relating to the community
12. Serving as court of appeals
13. Supporting NAMI Vermont’s fund-raising efforts
14. Devoting time to learn how NAMI Vermont functions—its uniqueness, strengths, and needs, its place in the mental health community
15. To carefully prepare for, regularly attend, and actively participate in board meetings and committee assignments.
16. To accept and abide by the legal and fiscal responsibilities of the board as specified by institutional charter, bylaws, and state statutes and regulations.
17. To vote according to one’s individual conviction, to challenge the judgment of others when necessary, yet to be willing to support the decision of the board and work with fellow board members in a spirit of cooperation.
18. To recognize that the board chair alone speaks for the board.
19. To maintain the confidential nature of board deliberations
20. To refrain from acting as spokesperson, or representing themselves as speaking on behalf of NAMI Vermont, without the President’s authorization.
21. To understand the role of the board as an overall policy-making body and to refrain from participation in administrative work of the NAMI Vermont office.
22. To learn and consistently to use designated institutional channels when conducting board business (e.g., responding to staff and volunteer grievances, responding to inquiries concerning the status of an Executive Director search, etc.)
23. To comply with the NAMI Vermont conflict-of-interest policy and procedure.
24. To refrain from actions and involvement that might negatively impact NAMI Vermont’s reputation, and to resign if such actions or involvement develop and prove harmful to NAMI Vermont.
25. To make judgments always on the basis of what is best for the organization as a whole.



11. Confidentiality Statement

Confidentiality is a hallmark of professionalism. NAMI Vermont employees, volunteers, and other representatives:

- Ensure that all information that is confidential or privileged or that is not publicly available is not disclosed inappropriately.
- Ensure that all nonpublic information about other persons or firms acquired by NAMI Vermont personnel in dealing with outside firms on behalf of NAMI Vermont is treated as confidential and not disclosed.

11.1 Confidentiality Policy

It is the policy of NAMI Vermont that board members and employees of NAMI Vermont may not disclose, divulge, or make accessible confidential information belonging to, or obtained through their affiliation with NAMI Vermont to any person, including relatives, friends and business and professional associates, other than to persons who have a legitimate need for such information and to whom NAMI Vermont has authorized disclosure. Board members and employees shall use confidential information solely for the purpose of performing services as a board member or employee for NAMI Vermont. This policy is not intended to prevent disclosure where disclosure is required by law.

Board members and employees must exercise good judgment and care at all times to avoid unauthorized or improper disclosures of confidential information. Conversations in public places, such as restaurants, elevators, and airplanes, should be limited to matters that do not pertain to information of a sensitive or confidential nature. In addition, board members and employees should be sensitive to the risk of inadvertent disclosure and should for example, refrain from leaving confidential information on desks or otherwise in plain view and refrain from the use of speakerphones to discuss confidential information if the conversation could be heard by unauthorized persons.

At the end of a board member's term in office or upon the termination of an employee's employment, he or she shall return, at the request of NAMI Vermont, all documents, papers, and other materials, regardless of medium, that may contain or be derived from confidential information in his or her possession.



12. Conflict of Interest Policy and Procedure

Adopted by the NAMI Vermont Vermont Executive Committee, September 2012

12.1 Policy

Introduction: NAMI Vermont, as a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization, depends on charitable contributions from the public. Maintenance of its tax-exempt status is important both for its continued financial stability and for the receipt of contributions and public support. Therefore, the IRS, as well as state corporate and tax officials, view the operations of NAMI Vermont as a

public trust that is subject to scrutiny by, and accountability to, such governmental authorities as well as to members of the public.

Consequently, a fiduciary duty exists between NAMI Vermont and its board and staff that carries with it a broad and unbending duty of loyalty and fidelity. The board and staff have the responsibility of administering the affairs of NAMI Vermont honestly and prudently, and of exercising their best care, skill, and judgment for the sole benefit of NAMI Vermont. Those persons shall exercise the utmost good faith in all transactions involved in their duties, and they shall not use their positions with NAMI Vermont or knowledge gained therefrom for their personal benefit. The interests of the organization must have the first priority in all decisions and actions.

NAMI Vermont employees and board members have an obligation to conduct business within guidelines that prohibit actual or potential conflicts of interest. This policy establishes only the framework within which NAMI Vermont wishes its business to operate. The purpose of these guidelines is to provide general direction so that board members can seek further clarification on issues related to the subject of acceptable standards of operation.

An actual or potential conflict of interest occurs when a board member is in a position to influence a decision that may result in a personal gain for the board member, or for a relative, as a result of NAMI Vermont's business dealings. For the purpose of this policy, a relative is any person who is related by blood or marriage, or whose relationship with the board member is similar to that of persons who are related by blood or marriage.

No presumption of conflict is created by the mere existence of a relationship with outside firms. However, if a board member has any influence on transactions involving purchases, contracts, or leases, it is imperative that he or she discloses to an officer of NAMI Vermont as soon as possible the existence of any actual or potential conflict of interest so that safeguards can be established to protect all parties.

Personal gain may result any time an employee, board member, or relative has a significant ownership, receives compensation or special consideration, as a result of any business dealings involving NAMI Vermont.

The materials, products, designs, plans, ideas, and data of NAMI Vermont are the property of NAMI Vermont, and should never be given to an outside firm or individual except through normal channels and with appropriate authorization. Any improper transfer of material or disclosure of information, even though it is not apparent that a board member has personally gained by such action, constitutes unacceptable conduct. Any board member who participates in such a practice shall be subject to disciplinary action by the full board.

Persons Concerned

This statement is directed not only to board members and officers, but to all employees who can influence the actions of NAMI Vermont. For example, this would include all who make purchasing decisions, all other persons who might be described as "management personnel," and all who have proprietary information concerning NAMI Vermont.

Areas in Which Conflict May Arise

Conflicts of interest may arise in the relations of directors, officers, and management employees with any of the following third parties:

- Persons and firms supplying goods and services to NAMI Vermont
- Persons and firms from whom NAMI Vermont leases property and equipment
- Persons and firms with whom NAMI Vermont is dealing or planning to deal in connection with the gift, purchase or sale of real estate, securities, or other property
- Competing or affinity organizations
- Donors and others supporting NAMI Vermont
- Agencies, organizations, and associations that affect the operations of NAMI Vermont
- Family members, friends, and other employees

Conflicting Interests

A material conflicting interest may be defined as an interest, direct or indirect, with any persons and firms mentioned above. Examples of such an interest include, but are not limited to:

- Owning stock or holding debt or other proprietary interests in any third party dealing with NAMI Vermont
- Holding office, serving on the board, participating in management, or being otherwise employed (or formerly employed) in any third party dealing with NAMI Vermont.
- Receiving remuneration for services with respect to individual transactions involving NAMI Vermont
- Using NAMI Vermont's time, personnel, equipment, supplies, or good will for other than NAMI Vermont approved activities, programs, and purposes
- Receiving personal gifts or loans from third parties dealing with NAMI Vermont. Receipt of any gift is disapproved except gifts of nominal value that could not be refused without discourtesy. No personal gift of money should ever be accepted.

Disclosure

The fact that one of the above interests exists does not mean that a conflict exists, or that if a conflict exists, it is material enough to be of practical importance, that it is necessarily adverse to the interests of NAMI Vermont. However, the existence of any of these interests shall be disclosed before any transaction is consummated. It shall be the continuing responsibility of board, officers, and management employees to scrutinize their transactions and outside business interests and relationships for potential conflicts and to immediately make such disclosures.

12.2 Procedure

Transactions with related parties may be undertaken only if all of the following are observed:

- Disclosure of a board member's potential conflict shall be made to the board chair, who shall bring these matters, if material, to the board.
- Disclosure of an employee's potential conflict shall be made to the Executive Director who shall determine whether a conflict exists and is material, and if the matters are material, bring them to the attention of the board chair.

- The board shall determine whether a conflict exists and is material, and in the presence of an existing material conflict, whether the contemplated transaction may be authorized as just, fair, and reasonable to NAMI Vermont. The decision of the board on these matters will rest in their sole discretion, and their concern must be the welfare of NAMI Vermont and the advancement of its purpose. In addition:
 - The material transaction shall be fully disclosed in the audited financial statements of the organization
 - The related party shall be excluded from the discussion and approval of such transaction
 - A competitive bid or comparable valuation must exist, and
 - The board shall document that the transaction is in the best interest of the organization.



13. Conflicts/Mediation Processes

13.1 Between Board Members

NAMI Vermont Bylaws do not provide for a specific procedure to address conflicts within the Board. If direct discussion between the parties does not lead to resolution, it is advisable to engage the President as a mediator. One of the President's key roles is to help maintain harmonious relationships between Board members.

13.2 Between Board Members and the Executive Committee

NAMI Vermont Bylaws provide no procedure for resolving disputes. Direct discussions and a spirit of compromise usually are sufficient to handle difficulties.

13.3 Between Board Members and the Executive Director

Direct discussion with the Executive Director is an essential first step in resolving problems. If that is inadequate, the President should be informed.



14. NAMI Vermont Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Procedure

Adopted by the NAMI Vermont Board of Directors on January 19, 2013

NAMI Vermont shall actively recruit, engage and serve members from every geographic area in Vermont, and from every race, culture, ethnicity, age, religion, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and disability and shall not discriminate in the requirements for membership, provision of service or support or in its policies or actions.

The NAMI Vermont Board of Directors will regularly review their own composition and membership demographics compared to those of the state, in order to aspire towards reflecting that composition.

In keeping with NAMI Vermont's values regarding nondiscrimination and with applicable state and federal law, NAMI Vermont shall include in bylaws, operating policies and procedures and other relevant policy documents, explicit statements that require the organization to embrace the broadest possible definition of inclusion and nondiscrimination.

NAMI Vermont will reach out to and welcome the community at large through our recruitment, marketing, public education, and awareness activities. NAMI Vermont will strive to support recruitment and retention of a diverse and inclusive membership and leadership. Whenever there is a demand and the interests of members can best be served by support through groups sharing some affinity, including but not limited to lived experience or primary language, NAMI Vermont shall strive to offer multiple support groups beyond their baseline family and/or peer groups.



15. Whistle Blower Policy and Procedure

Adopted by the NAMI Vermont Executive Committee September 2012

15.1 Policy

It is the policy of NAMI Vermont that employees or other public stakeholders have an open opportunity to bring to the attention of NAMI Vermont leadership, allegations of wrongdoing or malfeasance on the part of NAMI Vermont staff, officers, volunteers, and independent contractors. This includes but is not limited to violations of law, gross waste of NAMI Vermont funds or property, or abuse or neglect of fiduciary duty. Not by way of elimination but by way of explanation, these allegations will usually fall into the following categories in relation to the individual's connection with NAMI Vermont:

- Commission of criminal offences
- Instances of regulatory non-compliance
- Issues of probity and propriety, e.g. fraud, theft, bribery, corruption and embezzlement

Retaliation towards those who report such allegations will not be tolerated. Those who retaliate, interfere with investigations, or destroy or conceal evidence will be subject to immediate disciplinary actions to the full extent of the law.

Employees, who willfully file complaints based upon information known by the employee making the allegations to be false or misrepresented, will be subject to disciplinary action or other remedies of law.

15.2 Procedures

The Chair of the NAMI Vermont Board and Finance Committee shall receive allegations pursuant to the provisions of this policy. Reports of alleged wrongdoing, should be submitted in writing, and include a verifiable name, address, and telephone number of the reporter. Reports or allegations submitted anonymously may or may not be investigated.

The Board Chair or Finance Committee Chair, or their designee, will conduct an investigation of the complaint. Referrals shall be made to the appropriate law enforcement agencies when there is reason to believe that a crime may have been committed.

Investigations will be conducted promptly and a written report with investigative findings and conclusions shall be sent to the NAMI Vermont Board of Directors within ninety (90) days of the date on which the allegations were received.

An employee or applicant who believes that retaliation prohibited by this policy has occurred must, within sixty (60) days after the alleged prohibited action has taken place, file a complaint with the Board Chair. Each report of retaliation will follow the same investigative policy rule as outlined above. A prompt investigation will be conducted and a written report will be sent to the NAMI Vermont Board of Directors within ninety (90) days of the date on which the allegations were received. The Board of Directors will take appropriate action on the report's recommendations.

This policy is not to be substituted or used in place of other NAMI Vermont personnel policies for personnel matters other than those described above.



16. **Liability and Mandatory Reporting**

Adopted 4-25-2016 - Board Meeting

NAMI Vermont Liability

All NAMI Vermont teachers, facilitators, trainers, volunteers, and staff who perform services for NAMI Vermont programs and events are covered by our liability insurance. NAMI Vermont is accountable for liability issues.

NAMI Liability Statement

NAMI's programs are designed to provide people and their families who are affected by mental illness with a deeper understanding of mental illness and with strategies for living with and recovering from serious mental illness. Program participants will recognize that they are not alone, and feel empowered to advocate for better treatment and services for themselves and for family members.

NAMI programs should not be used to replace the specialized training and professional judgment of mental health professionals. We cannot, and do not, assume the role of a physician or therapist. Self-care information, and family and peer support are valuable assets in working through the many challenges faced by individuals and families who have been touched by serious mental illness. They are complementary to, but not substitutes for, professional assistance.

Please seek immediate professional help:

- If you or a family member have thoughts of suicide or of harming others;
- If you or a family member are unable to provide self-care for essentials of daily living;

- If you or a family member are abusing substances; and/or
- If you or someone else is in danger of being harmed.

NAMI cannot be held responsible for the use of the information we provide. Please always consult a trained mental health professional before making any decision regarding treatment of yourself or others.

NAMI Vermont Mandatory Reporting Policy

Our grant from the State of Vermont requires that anyone (teachers, facilitators, trainers, volunteers, and staff) who performs services in connection to the grant of a NAMI Program is required to report any “reasonable suspicion” of a child or vulnerable adult being abused, neglected or exploited. Someone with a mental illness is considered a vulnerable adult. Mandatory reporting is only for an instance of "current" abuse or neglect, which means instances do NOT need to be reported unless it reflects on “very recent” behavior.

Any teachers, facilitators, trainers, volunteers, and staff of a NAMI Vermont program is required to disclose at the beginning of every support group meeting or class that we are mandatory reporters. Please remember that confidentiality may be broken in cases of abuse, neglect, or potential harm to yourself or others.

Procedure:

1. Please identify yourself as a mandatory reporter when you begin your group or class. Before “*Check-In*” starts, state that you are a mandatory reporter by saying to participants: *“We maintain confidentiality in this group. The only time I would tell anybody about a situation is if someone disclosed information about abuse or exploitation of a person with mental illness or other vulnerable adult or child. Because we accept state grant money, I am a mandatory reporter, just like teachers, therapists, and nursing staff. So, if someone discloses that a vulnerable adult or child is being abused or neglected, I will need to report it to the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living...”*
2. Each NAMI Vermont teacher, facilitator, trainer, volunteer, and staff member should report to the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living within 48 hours if they suspect there is a vulnerable adult or child being abused, neglected or exploited. To report abuse, neglect or exploitation of a vulnerable adult, call 802-871-3317 or fill out the online form here: <http://www.dlp.vermont.gov/abuse-reporting-form/abuse-reporting-form-1> To report abuse, neglect or exploitation of a child, call 1-800-649-5285, the child protection line.

Can I be sued?

Vermont law provides you with immunity from civil or criminal liability as long as your report was made in good faith.

Is my report confidential?

Your identity will not be divulged unless:

- You give us your permission to do so;
- Your report leads to a court or human services board proceeding;
- A court finds probable cause to believe your report was not made in good faith and orders

DCF or DAIL to divulge your identity; or

- The person substantiated for abuse requests a review of the decision, and it is determined that identifying information about you can be provided without compromising your safety.

Handling of crisis calls, specifically suicide.

If there is someone planning suicide, it is not a requirement of our grant to report. However, we should consider referring them to the suicide hotline, local counselor or emergency services, whichever may be needed.

- Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255) - www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org
- National Hopeline Network: 1-800-442-HOPE (4673) - www.hopeline.com
- GLBT National Health Center - GLBT National Hotline 1-888-843-4564 - www.glnh.org
 - GLBT National Youth Talkline: 1-800-246-PRIDE (7743)
 - Online Peer Support Chat: www.glnh.org/chat/index.html
 - Telephone volunteers in their teens and early twenties speak with teens and young adults up to age 25 about coming-out issues, relationship concerns, parent issues, school problems, HIV/AIDS, anxiety and more.



17. NAMI Vermont Record Retention Policy

Adopted by NAMI Vermont Executive Committee January 2013

A. GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT

1. The purpose of this policy statement is to allow NAMI Vermont to identify, retain, store, and dispose of the organization's records in an appropriate, legally sound, and orderly manner.
2. Except as otherwise indicated, documents shall be retained for the number of years indicated in Part B.
3. Irrespective of the retention periods specified in Part B, upon (i) receiving notice of a lawsuit, government investigation, or other legal action against or involving the organization, or (ii) learning of circumstances likely to give rise to such an action, proceeding or investigation, all documents in any way relating to such matter shall be preserved and safeguarded.
4. No officer, director, employee, agent or member of the organization shall knowingly destroy a document with the intent to obstruct or influence the investigation or proper administration of any matter within the jurisdiction of any government department or agency or in relation to or contemplation of any such matter.
5. Employees are expected to utilize documentation practices as trained and are required to comply with the documentation standards outlined in this policy. Failure to do so could result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Employees with questions about this policy should consult with management or seek legal advice.

6. The Organization will maintain accurate and high-quality records electronically or in local, damage-proof storage for the duration of the time periods provided for in this policy. Once any such time period is complete, the records may be destroyed
7. Documents maintained solely in electronic format will be backed up regularly.

B. RECORD RETENTION GUIDELINES

General Corporate Records	Retention Period
Articles of Incorporation and amendments thereto	Permanently
Bylaws	Permanently
Meeting Minutes	Permanently
Patents, trademark registrations, copyright registrations	Permanently
Property records (including leases, deeds, easements, rights of way, appraisals, costs, depreciation reserves, blueprints, plans, end-of-year trial balances, tax records)	Permanently
Membership ballots	3 years following the applicable vote
Membership applications	Membership term, plus 1 year
Correspondence relating to member discipline matters	Membership term, plus 5 years
Contracts	3 years

Accounting, Finance and Tax Records	Retention Period
Income tax returns and filings	Permanently
Audit reports of accountants	Permanently
Cash books	Permanently
Charts of accounts	Permanently
Federal and state tax bills and statements	3 years
Schedules, ledgers and other supporting documentation for financial statements and tax forms	7 years
Bank reconciliations	3 years
Checking records, including account statements, check register	3 years
Social security tax records	7 years
Accounts Receivable and payable	7 years
End-of-year financial statements	Permanently
Budget data	3 years
Banking records, including deposit and withdrawal records, bank statements	7 years
Expense accounts, approvals, petty cash records	3 years
Invoices to members, customers and vendors	7 years

Personnel Records and Payroll Documents	Retention Period
Resumes/applications and related employment materials, including background checks, letters of reference and related documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For applicants not hired For employees 	2 years Employment term, plus 4 years
I-9 Forms Active employees Terminated employees	Employment term Employment term, plus the later of 3 years from date of hire or 1 year following termination of employment.
Compensation, job history and timekeeping records	Employment term, plus 4 years
FMLA/USERRA and related leave records	Employment term, plus 4 years
Performance appraisal/disciplinary action records	Employment term, plus 4 years
Benefit records	Employment term, plus 6 years
Records related to disputed issues involving external agencies or parties, wage charge or suit hour investigation by DOL, EEOC charge, arbitrations, court actions, etc	Employment term, plus 4 years
Records of accommodation to any disabled employee requesting such accommodation	Employment term, plus 4 years
Records of any sexual harassment complaints and the investigations and actions taken in response	Employment term, plus 4 years
OSHA & employee safety records	Employment term, plus 5 years
Workers Compensation claims	30 years after date of injury/illness

Insurance	Retention Period
Insurance records	Permanently
Accident reports	7 years
Appraisals	7 years
Worker compensation claims	7 years
Unemployment insurance	7 years

18. Computer and Communications Equipment Policy

Approved by Governance on 2/20/17. Approved by Executive Committee on 2/24/17

NAMI Vermont provides access to computers, the internet, voicemail and other related technology. Employees and volunteers must use this technology for NAMI Vermont business purposes only, not personal use. NAMI Vermont reserves the right to access and review all electronic files, messages or other data, which are all considered the property of NAMI Vermont. Employees and volunteers should not have any expectation of privacy with respect to such electronic files, messages or other data.

All NAMI Vermont computers used by staff, volunteers and contractors are to be used for NAMI business, not personal use. For example: No personal programs, games, photos, music, videos, documents are to be accessed or downloaded to NAMI computers.



NATIONAL POLICIES

19. Membership Policy (as stated by NAMI national)

Membership

19.1 There shall be three categories of members:

- (1) Members ("Members")
- (2) Local Affiliates ("Affiliates")
- (3) State Organization ("Organization")

19.2 Voting Members. The following categories shall be voting members as provided below:

- (1) Members,
- (2) Affiliates, and
- (3) Organization

that accept the mission of the NAMI organization and pay the annual dues in the amount and manner established from time to time for voting members by resolution of the Board of Directors of NAMI.

(1) Members

(a) Definition - a Member is:

- (i) a person with a mental illness, or
- (ii) a relative of a person with a mental illness, or
- (iii) a friend of a person with a mental illness

A Member may be one individual or a family of individuals living in one household that is counted as one for the purposes of paying dues and voting. A Member accepts the mission of NAMI and shall have paid dues to an Affiliate unless waived by the Affiliate. A Member shall have had his or her annual dues paid by the respective Affiliate to the respective Organization and to NAMI.

Members may become members through an "Open Door" policy that allows for a reduced dues payment. "Open Door" Members are defined by income or economic necessity, at the discretion of the Affiliate member or State Organization. "Open Door" Members shall have all the rights and privileges of members who pay full dues.

(b) Voting rights - Members (i) shall be the voting members of Affiliates, (ii) shall nominate and elect the members of the Board of Directors and adopt and amend the bylaws of their respective Organization, and (iii) may otherwise be voting members of their Organization, all as prescribed by the Bylaws of their Organization, and (iv) shall also be the unit for purposes of determining the number of votes to be allocated to Affiliates in their voting by proportional representation within NAMI. A Member may support and work within several Affiliates but shall be a voting member of only one (1) Affiliate for NAMI and Organization purposes.

(c) Non-discrimination: NAMI shall not discriminate against any person or group of persons on the basis of race, ethnicity, culture, language, national origin, geographic

origin, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, gender expression, education, religion, faith, socioeconomic status or lived experience.



20. NAMI Signature Program Operating Policies (as stated by NAMI national) 2014 – Revised

These policies replace all previous versions of program policies

*Note: Reprint from NAMI Signature Programs Overview – 2014 Document

NAMI signature programs are those programs developed and owned by NAMI. They include NAMI Basics, NAMI Connection, NAMI Ending the Silence, NAMI Family-to-Family, NAMI Family Support Group, NAMI Homefront, NAMI In Our Own Voice, NAMI Parents and Teachers as Allies, NAMI Peer-to-Peer, NAMI Provider Education and any cultural adaptations and/or translations of each of these programs. NAMI has invested considerable time and resources in the development, maintenance and technical support of each of these programs to ensure that they address the goals and mission of NAMI. Therefore NAMI is also invested in ensuring that when these programs are provided in communities that they represent NAMI accurately. The following operating policies have been developed to ensure the ongoing provision of consistent and quality programming at all levels of NAMI.

NAMI State Organizations (NSO) and NAMI Affiliates (NA), their board education committees and staff may not set policies at variance with the NAMI signature program policies stated below. These policies are also to be followed by NAMI program teachers, presenters, facilitators, mentors and trainers (program leaders).

Any operational issues not covered below should be addressed by the NSO in accordance with all applicable laws in their respective state.

Copyright

- All NAMI signature program material is copyrighted. Permission to use any material in a setting other than a NAMI signature program must be sought from and given by NAMI in advance. In every case where permission is granted, NAMI must be referenced as the source of the material.
- No portions of any NAMI signature program can be used as a component of any other kind of program development or provision.
- No group or individual outside of NAMI can rewrite any of the NAMI signature program material.
- Permission to culturally adapt and/or translate NAMI signature programs and materials in either written or verbal form into another language must be sought from and given by NAMI in advance and follow NAMI procedures regarding cultural adaptation and/or translation.

Confidentiality

All NAMI signature programs are built around the principles of mutual trust and respect among participants and leaders. All NAMI program leaders are trained in the importance of creating and maintaining an atmosphere of respect in NAMI classes, support groups and presentations that is conducive to participants' ability to gain valuable information and support regarding mental illness.

This atmosphere of respect includes the assurance of complete confidentiality regarding participation in NAMI programs as well as any information shared by participants about themselves or others. The only exception to this expectation of confidentiality is in a circumstance involving potential harm to a participant or someone else.

Research on NAMI signature programs

Any research studies conducted on NAMI signature programs or using participants in NAMI signature programs must be approved in advance and in writing by the Director of the NAMI Education, Training and Peer Support Center. The individual/institution conducting the research must also be willing to share with NAMI the data, analysis and conclusions from the research project.

Presentation format for signature programs

- The time frames and presentation format for NAMI signature programs must adhere to options provided and not be altered in any way. The classes, presentations and groups must be led by the number of trained leaders specified. The specific program presentations are described in the NAMI Signature Programs Overview – 2014 Document – **Table 1**.
- In NAMI education programs (NAMI Basics, NAMI Family-to-Family, NAMI Peer-to-Peer, and NAMI Provider Education) no more than a one-week hiatus may be taken for holidays which may occur during the course (e.g., Thanksgiving, spring break). More than a one-week break between classes creates too much of a disruption in content presentation.

Who can provide NAMI signature programs?

- All NAMI signature program leaders¹ must be NAMI members.
- All NAMI signature program leaders must be trained and certified by National or State Trainers.
- All NAMI signature program leaders must be at least 18 years of age.
- Untrained individuals are not permitted to serve as teachers in a NAMI education program (NAMI Basics, NAMI Family-to-Family, NAMI Peer-to-Peer and NAMI Provider Education). In cases where a teacher is unable to continue teaching the course, an untrained substitute may be appointed to help with lecturing. The substitute will not be allowed to teach the course again until they participate in a regular Teacher Training Workshop. Untrained individuals are not allowed to be substitutes in the other programs.
- Due to the investment of time and money to train volunteers, prospective NAMI signature program leaders are expected to meet outlined requirements of the NSO for the program for which they are training (for example, teach a minimum of two course cycles for education programs). It is understood that unexpected life situations may occur that will necessitate compassion and flexibility in this policy.
- Specific additional eligibility requirements for each NAMI signature program are listed by program in the NAMI Signature Programs Overview – 2014 Document – **Table 2**.

Who can participate in NAMI signature programs?

- Only people who have the lived experience for a specific education program or support group meet the attendee qualifications to attend that program. These program specific requirements are listed in the NAMI Signature Programs Overview – 2014 Document – **Table 3**.
- Participation in NAMI presentation programs (NAMI In Our Own Voice and NAMI Parents & Teachers as Allies) is open to the general public
- Participation in NAMI Ending the Silence is open to students and schools.
- Professionals (mental health, school, day care workers, etc.) are not permitted to attend NAMI education programs or support groups, unless they also meet the lived experience requirements of that specific program.
- Observers are not permitted to sit in on any NAMI education program or NAMI support group.

Who can become a state trainer for NAMI signature programs?

- All prospective state trainers for NAMI signature programs must be NAMI members.
- All prospective state trainers for NAMI signature programs must be recommended to attend a NAMI Training of Trainers event by their NAMI State Organization (either by the Executive Director or the President of the Board of Directors).
- Eligibility of a state trainer to train may be reviewed and eligibility withdrawn at any time by the NAMI State Organization.
- Program specific eligibility requirements to become a state trainer are detailed in the NAMI Signature Programs Overview – 2014 Document – **Table 4**.

Mandatory Reporting

- Any NAMI signature program leader who also has the designation of being a mandatory reporter in his or her state is required to inform the participants in class/support group of their status at the beginning of the class or at the start of each support group session.
- Any NAMI signature program leader who is not a mandatory reporter in his or her state, but who is concerned about something reported by a participant in their class/support group should discuss those concerns with the sponsoring NSO or NA and follow the policies and procedures of that organization which must comply with the laws in that state.

Program Fees and Stipends

All NAMI signature programs are free to participants. Participants will not be charged a fee of any kind for enrolling and/or participating in any NAMI signature program.

With regard to the stipends discussed below, it is important that all NSOs and NAs be familiar with federal and state law regarding regulations on employees and contractors. Guidance on federal law can be found at www.irs.gov/businesses/small. On that page, click on the title **Independent Contractor (Self-Employed) or Employee**. Additional resources are available on the NAMI Education Helpdesk and on the NAMI intranet. Please consult resources in your state for laws specific to your state.

The information below regards suggested stipend amounts, though we recognize that is at the discretion of NSOs and NAs.

- NSOs and NAs are encouraged to contract with a state trainer for his or her services. We realize this may not always be possible, but when there is grant funding available, we suggest that

each state trainer receive a minimum stipend of \$250 per training given, with the possibility of up to \$500 when funding is available. For online trainings, it is suggested that each trainer receive a minimum stipend of \$50. Trainers should also be reimbursed for all travel expenses, including any travel and meals in addition to their regular stipend.

- If a state trainer from one state agrees to help train in another state the trainer will receive the going rate established by the state hosting the training for its own trainers.
- Policies regarding stipends for NAMI signature program leaders vary by program and are described by program in the NAMI Signature Programs Overview – 2014 Document – **Table 5**.

State Trainings

- State training schedule, format and content may not be altered or condensed in any way. Specific formats and trainer requirements are described in the NAMI Signature Programs Overview – 2014 Document – **Table 6**.
- Not all trainees are guaranteed certification; certification will be decided upon by the state trainers based on the trainee’s ability to demonstrate the skills required and to adhere to the program model.
- State trainers shall be offered accommodations the night before and nights during trainings when travel is required.
- All trainings must be reported to NAMI through the online data reporting system six weeks prior to the training. A link to the online data reporting system can be found on the NAMI Education, Training and Peer Support Center Helpdesk.
- The NAMI state program director/coordinator must submit any documentation required for specific programs to NAMI at the conclusion of the training. This documentation is described in each of the NAMI signature program training manuals.

¹ Program leaders include NAMI teachers, mentors, presenters and facilitators.

NAMI Signature Program Code of Conduct

*Note: Reprint from NAMI Signature Programs Overview – 2014 Document

NAMI signature programs are built around the principles of mutual trust and respect among participants and leaders. Certified program leaders are representatives of NAMI and NAMI holds these leaders to certain standards of conduct during the provision of NAMI services. This Code of Conduct is covered during leader trainings and is included in all NAMI signature program manuals so that participants also know what to expect from NAMI programs.

What we ask of you as a NAMI signature program participant:

- Attend programs with an open mind and open heart.
- Maintain the confidentiality of all participants by not discussing personal topics outside the program.
- Take from the program the information that you believe is most helpful for you.
- Find an atmosphere of support in the program that enables you to feel comfortable sharing with others, knowing that what you share will be respected and held in confidence by the other participants.

What we ask of you as a NAMI signature program leader:

- Provide a safe and respectful environment for program participants.

- Prepare for each class, group meeting or presentation and conduct yourself, to the best of your ability, with courteous and respectful behavior.
- Actively pursue maintaining your own wellness and respect your own emotional and physical resources and limitations.
- Understand the difference between peer support and therapy and be careful not to act in the capacity of a therapist or mental health professional. Offer only the services that you have been trained to provide and ask for assistance as needed.
- Respect the cultural differences of program participants.
- Respect the privacy of program participants by creating an environment of confidentiality in the program setting and by holding in confidence sensitive, private and personal information. As a NAMI program leader, you must also be prepared to break confidentiality when you believe there is a danger of harm to a participant or others.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries by not engaging in romantic, physical or sexual relationships with participants in a NAMI program you are leading. Recognize that it is best practice for participants to attend a class or support group not led by someone with whom they are in a relationship, to avoid potential conflict and the discomfort of other participants.
- Remain accountable for your own behavior and keep personal opinions and actions separate from those made as a representative of NAMI. Understand that your actions and behaviors reflect on the integrity of NAMI signature programs and impact the public perception of NAMI as an organization.