

BOARD MEMBER JOB DESCRIPTION

Preface:

The National Alliance on Mental Illness of Vermont (NAMI Vermont) provides support, education and advocacy for persons with serious mental illnesses and their loved ones. As an independent, state-chartered nonprofit affiliated with a national association, NAMI Vermont offers Vermonters up-to-date information and support on many issues related to mental health, while providing valuable services at a local level. NAMI Vermont offers ongoing support groups around the state, provides nationally recognized Family-to-Family and Provider education, advocates for improvements to Vermont's laws and mental health system, maintains a website, publishes a resource directory, and offers a telephone information and referral service to direct consumers, family members and other interested persons to available services statewide, among other programs.

The NAMI Vermont Board of Directors has legal responsibility for NAMI Vermont.

Term: Candidates are approved by the Board and elected by members at the Annual Meeting for a three-year term.

The collective responsibilities of the Board of Directors include:

- Establish the mission and strategic plan for NAMI Vermont
- Adopt an annual budget; be accountable to protect assets and provide proper financial oversight
- Ensure adequate financial resources to operate the programs and services of NAMI Vermont
- Ensure that NAMI Vermont meets its obligations towards its members, contributors, program participants, staff, and other community stakeholders
- Enhance the organization's public standing, including serving as emissaries of NAMI Vermont
- Establish policies and procedures necessary for the stable operation of NAMI Vermont
- Support the Executive Director and annually review his/her job performance
- Build a competent board by articulating prerequisites for candidates, orienting new members, and periodically and comprehensively evaluating their own performance.

For more information on the roles of nonprofit Boards of Directors, see our Board Manual.

The individual responsibilities of each Director as a member of the team:

- Participate in an orientation to NAMI Vermont and its Board of Directors
- Participate in at least 75% of all bi-monthly board meetings annually* (Under the Bylaws, missing two consecutive Board meetings without excuse is cause for removal.)
- Identify path for using personal skills and attributes to serve NAMI Vermont (Typically this involves participation on at least one committee.)
- Be informed about the organization's mission, services, policies, and programs; keep up-to-date on developments in the field of mental health
- Actively participate in fundraising on behalf of NAMI Vermont
- Review agenda and supporting materials prior to board and committee meetings.

- Contribute to meaningful consensus; ask timely questions and provide constructive feedback to the appropriate person; refrain from making special requests of the staff
- Assist in the recruitment, orientation and ongoing education of board members
- Participate in the Annual Meeting of the membership

* *If I know ahead of time I must miss a meeting, I agree to inform the Board President or committee Chair in advance.*

My rights as a Director of the Board include:

- Access to information required to carry out responsibilities as a Board member
- Access to the corporation's accounting records and files; ability to obtain copies upon request of any records not protected by confidentiality laws
- Ample notice of all Board and committee meetings (14 days prior to the meeting)
- Right to participate in Board discussion and actions
- Right to dissent from any decision or policy of the Board, and have that dissent noted in the written record of the meeting
- Provision of written or electronic copies of minutes of all meetings of the Board, its officers and any committees of the Board.

The desired qualifications of a Director of the Board:

- Strong and long-standing commitment to the mission of NAMI Vermont
- Personal experience with mental illness, or as a family member of an individual with mental illness, or as a mental health provider, or as a mental health advocate is preferred.
- Background/knowledge in one or more of the following areas: public education, advocacy, fund development, strategic planning, finance/accounting, publicity and social marketing, law, or health care, is desirable
- A demonstrated interest in promoting NAMI Vermont through community outreach
- A willingness to develop skills related to board responsibilities. These skills may include: cultivating and soliciting funds, cultivating and recruiting board members and other volunteers, reading and understanding financial statements, learning more about substantive issues in mental health.
- An ability and willingness to serve six to ten hours per month to NAMI Vermont in the performance of Board responsibilities, as stipulated herein.

It is understood that achieving this standard of performance will require every member of the Board to support and trust each other, and to give their best effort. In the best interests of NAMI Vermont, we must be direct with each other about our performance in this role. If a Board member cannot fulfill his or her responsibilities, he or she should resign.