

Board Governance

Recognizing the boundaries between board governance and staff management, re-engagement is a joint effort that should utilize the best knowledge and experience of board and staff alike. In a crisis, the balance of governing and managing can shift. These are considerations to have while your organization finds its new footing post-COVID-19. This will help your board focus on what needs to happen next.

Board Communication

- As you begin to re-engage, inform the board of your plans, phases of re-engagement, etc. Feel free to share the suggestions in this reopening guide with your board so that they understand the considerations associated with reopening.
- Work with the current board chair and chair-elect (if applicable) in partnership with the executive director to ask for any possible assistance or advice through the process, particularly with those board members who are engaged in this process with their own respective companies and employers.
- Through the process, have regular updates (weekly, typically) to the board on how things are going.
- Remember, your non-profit has a full-time job with your mission, and COVID-19-related activities are taking a lot of your time. Keep the board up-to-date on your core mission-related activities as well.

Policies and Procedures

- Through the crisis, you may have had to alter, discontinue or enact policies and procedures as part of a continuation of business plan. On a regular basis, inform and work with board leadership on any other alterations you may need to make.
- Review bylaws and current policies before making big decisions in a time of crisis. This way, you are able to potentially give more leadership to an executive committee for emergency decisions.
- Management decisions should continue to be made by the executive director. Governance decisions are made by the board. Executive directors should keep board informed of those major management decisions happening at the staff level.
- Ensure that you have a crisis communications plan ([see sample](#)) in place that establishes the spokesperson of the non-profit. The Appendix includes links to resources and samples.

Other Leadership Responsibilities

- Ensure board and leadership have a firm understanding of any risk, liability and who assumes it. The board should also approve an Emergency and Disaster Plan to mitigate future crises, such as those found at www.ready.gov/business-continuity-plan.
- Depending on circumstances, a board may have already or may establish a crisis task force depending on the nature of the business.
- Boards and committees SHOULD continue to meet on a regularly established schedule, and they may consider elongating meetings or having emergency or added meetings as the non-profit deals with the crisis.