



**National Propane Gas Association  
2021 Board Orientation**

# Agenda

1. Welcome & Introductions
2. Orientation Portal | Purpose of Orientation
3. Role of BOD and Fiduciary Duties of Board Members
4. BOD Administration and Expectations
5. NPGA Board Structure
6. Q&A

# Orientation Portal

**Mission Statement | Governance Documents |  
Org Charts | IRS Form 990 | Financial Statements**

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**[npga.org/board-orientation-portal/](https://npga.org/board-orientation-portal/)**

**(hidden link | log in required)**

# Purpose of Orientation

To provide newly-elected and appointed NPGA Board members with sufficient information regarding Board member obligations and expectations so that they can function effectively as a member of the Board.

# The Board's Role at NPGA

**“Board means the group of persons vested with management of the business and affairs of the corporation.”**

— *New Jersey Nonprofit Corporation Act*

NPGA is a New Jersey 501(c)(6) nonprofit corporation

“While the term ‘management’ may suggest an operational role, it is understood to refer to supervision and direction of the individuals who manage day-to-day operations, rather than direct operational responsibilities.”

— *Model Nonprofit Corporation Act*

“The board of directors is not expected to operate the corporation on a day-to-day basis. In conventional corporate theory, the responsibility of the board is limited to overseeing operations.”

— *American Bar Association, Guidebook for Nonprofit Directors*

“Reflecting current governance best practices, the appropriate role for the Board is one in which the Board functions as a true oversight board working in partnership with senior management.”

— *Report of ARC Board of Governors*

# What does the law expect?

- ✓ **Attend and participate in meetings**
  - ✓ **Stay informed of purposes, goals, activities, and finances**
  - ✓ **Approve a budget**
  - ✓ **Exercise independent judgment**
  - ✓ **Make informed decisions**
  - ✓ **Do not seek personal financial gain**
- *ABA Guidebook for Nonprofit Directors*

## Directors are **ALLOWED** to:

- ✓ **Delegate authority**
- ✓ **Rely on those to whom authority is delegated**
- ✓ **Take risks**
- ✓ **Make mistakes**



# *Fiduciary Duties*

# What Does Fiduciary Duty Mean?

- Fiduciary comes from the Latin word *fiducia*, meaning “trust.”
- Fiduciary duties are grounded in state law and common law (i.e., court case doctrine).
- In general, fiduciary duty delineates standards of conduct and attention that a Board member must adhere to in the course of carrying out his/her responsibilities to the association.
- There are three primary areas of fiduciary duties:
  - The Duty of **Care**,
  - The Duty of **Loyalty**, and
  - The Duty of **Obedience**.

## Duty of Care

- The Duty of Care describes the level of competence that is expected of a Director, and generally requires:
  - **“Good faith”**: demands honesty, fair dealing, and is measured by reviewing objective facts and circumstances.
  - **“Ordinary prudence”**: the care that an ordinarily prudent person would exercise in a like position under similar circumstances.
  - **“Due diligence”**: requires directors to take an active—not passive—interest in the association’s activities.

# Duty of Care Examples

- **Active Participation:** Directors should pay attention by actively participating in the management of the association, including setting direction, attending Board meetings, and evaluating reports.
- **Committees:** Directors should serve on and actively participate in committees.
- **Board Actions:** Directors should actively participate in discussions pertaining to proposed actions before the Board and make informed decisions.
- **Meeting Minutes:** Directors should ensure that minutes accurately reflect Board discussions and actions.

## Duty of Care Examples, *cont'd.*

- **Charter Documents:** Have working knowledge of the association's Constitution, Rules and Procedures, policies, books, and records.
- **Safeguarding Assets:** Assure that internal controls are adequate to safeguard the association's assets and help prevent fraud.
- **Resources:** Assist the association in obtaining adequate resources to enable it to further its mission.
- **Investigations:** Investigate warnings or reports of illegalities and/or mismanagement.

# Duty of Loyalty

- **The Duty of Loyalty is a standard of faithfulness; a Director must give undivided allegiance when making decisions affecting the association.**
- **A Director is prohibited from using their position as a Director or information concerning the association in a manner that allows them to secure a personal gain, e.g., a pecuniary benefit (including a family member or close associate).**

## Duty of Loyalty Examples

- **Conflict of Interest:** When a Director's private interest interferes with the interest of the association as a whole. Proper clearance pursuant to association policy is required.
- **Loans:** Loans from the association to Directors are largely prohibited by law and are disfavored as a matter of good corporate governance.
- **Corporate Opportunity:** Directors may not divert a corporate business opportunity from the association unless the association decides not to engage in it and proper conflict of interest procedures are followed.
- **Confidentiality:** Maintaining the confidentiality of information about the association.

# Duty of Obedience

- **The Duty of Obedience** requires the Board to be faithful to the association's mission; that is, to carry out the purposes of the association.
- **Obedience to Applicable Laws:** Directors should be familiar with federal, state, and local laws relating to non-profits, e.g., tax laws, IRS requirements, employment laws, non-discrimination laws, etc.
- **Governing Documents:** Directors should ensure adherence to the association's Constitution, Rules and Procedures, and other governing documents.



# *BOD Administration & Expectations*

# Having a Board with Diverse Experience

- **Different View Points Anchored In:**
  - Diverse Professional Experience
  - Historical Perspective of NPGA and the industry
  - Individual Vision for Association
  - Personal Background, Beliefs, Politics, etc.
- **Challenges:**
  - Everyone must prepare to compromise
  - Read material prior to BOD meetings
  - Ask relevant questions
  - Stay in the NOW:
    - Focus on topics and motions as they are discussed
    - Avoid: “Last time I was on BOD...” & “We used to...” statements

# Board Meeting Cycle

## “Regular” BOD Meetings

- Fall / Winter / Summer Board meetings.
- BOD Members receive registration and hotel reservation email approximately 2 months before each meeting.
- Preliminary agenda is sent at the same time.
- Board material goes out approximately 2 weeks prior to meeting.
- Draft minutes are typically presented for approval at the following Board meeting.

# Board Expectations

## Attendance

- BOD members are expected to make BOD meetings a priority.
- With that said, scheduling conflicts sometimes occur.
  - Incumbent state directors and the Canada and Mexico directors must attend at least one Board meeting per year in order to be eligible to run for reelection.

# Board Expectations

- To share your expertise, leadership, and knowledge of the industry.
- To determine membership needs and be prepared to describe them and offer recommendations.
- To serve as a vital two-way communications link between the Board and your constituents.
- To be familiar with the major issues facing the association and industry.
- Encouraged to volunteer on NPGA committees and recruit other committee members.
- When possible, to speak at state or regional PGA meetings.

## Board Expectations

- Not expected to be expert in all subjects brought before the Board, however,
  - Study the agenda, committee reports, and other meeting materials;
  - Consult with your constituency on matters of vital interest prior to the meetings;
  - Participate in discussions at the meetings;
  - Cast votes in the best interests of the industry; and
  - Bring issues or ideas to the table as warranted.
- Adhere to the NPGA Code of Conduct and all applicable NPGA policies.



## Board of Directors

### Officers

Chair  
Chair-Elect  
Vice Chair  
Treasurer

### Elected Directors

#### By Geography

State Directors	50
District Directors	8
Canada	1
Mexico	1

#### By Membership Section

Propane Suppliers	9
Manufacturers	15
Services	4
Distributors	4
Transportation & Storage	1
International	1
Individual/Employee	1

### Appointed Directors

At-Large	24
PropanePAC Steering Committee Chair	1
Standing Committee Chairs	6

### Emeritus Directors

Past Chairs

# Q & A