



## **THINKING ABOUT JOINING A NONPROFIT BOARD?**

**If you are considering board service, make sure you have the answers you need. Ask about...**

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**The board's relationship to the staff**

Is the board satisfied with the performance of the executive staff?

How do board members and senior staff typically work with each other?

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**The organization's programs**

How do current programs relate to the mission?

May I visit the organization to observe a program firsthand?

Does the organization have a strategic plan that is reviewed and evaluated on a regular basis?

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**The structure of the board**

How is the board structured?

Are there descriptions of the responsibilities of the board as a whole and of individual board members?

Are there descriptions of board committee functions and responsibilities?

Who are the board members?

Is there a system of checks and balances to prevent conflicts of interest between board members and the organization?

Does the organization have directors' and officers' liability coverage?

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**The organization's clients or constituencies**

Whom does the organization serve?

Are these clients or constituencies satisfied with the organization?

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**The organization's financial status**

Is the financial condition of the organization sound?

Does the board discuss and approve the annual budget?

How often do board members receive financial reports?

May I see the organization's three most recent Form 990s? (These are "tax returns" for nonprofit, tax-exempt organizations.)

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**Individual board members' responsibilities**

How do you think I can contribute as a board member?

How much of my time will be required for meetings and special events?

How are committee assignments made?

What orientation will I receive to the organization and to the responsibilities of board service?

Does the organization provide opportunities for board development and education?

What is the board's role in fundraising?

Will I be expected to make a specific annual financial contribution?

What role will I play in soliciting donors?

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