



POLICY and PROCEDURE MANUAL
CANADIAN FOSTER FAMILY ASSOCIATION

MANUEL DE POLITIQUE
CFFA DES FAMILLES D'ACCUEIL DU CANADA

September 2015

The Canadian Foster Family Association is a national organization with a mandate to speak as a collective voice for families who foster throughout the country with the primary goal to enhance the quality of care provided to children in care across Canada.

OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the Canadian Foster Family Association (CFFA) is:

- To create public awareness of the role and contributions of foster families in Canada;
- To unite foster parent/family organizations in the provinces and territories, to facilitate the effective resolution of common problems and concerns;
- To provide a central resource for information sharing and communication between member organizations and the service agencies associated with fostering;
- To provide developmental and on-going support to member organizations; and
- To work in consultation and partnership with Health Canada and other departments of the governments of Canada and its provinces and territories for the enhancement of the foster care system in Canada.

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ROLE OF PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL DIRECTOR ON THE CFFA BOARD

Responsibility:

- To pursue the CFFA's mission; and
- To ensure financial and legal affairs are in order.

Qualifications:

- Be an approved foster parent;
- Familiarity with provincial and national fostering issues;
- Commitment to mission of the organization;
- Time to participate; and
- Ability to access e-mail for on-going communication. (Personal e-mail or have someone available to pass on e-mail messages.)
- **Couples and/or immediate family members may not sit on the executive at the same time.**

Term of Office:

- 2 years (minimum)

General Duties:

- To represent your province/territory at the National level;
- To be the main communication link between the CFFA Board and your own provincial/territorial CFFA;
- To actively share the workload of the CFFA by sitting on committees as required;
- To respond to all requests for information from the CFFA;
- To attend and actively participate in all Board meetings ;
- To abide by and support all Board decisions;
- To review Board minutes and other documents prior to Board meetings;
- To reflect the decisions of the Board outside the CFFA;
- To maintain the confidentiality of all Board discussions;
- To keep up-to-date on provincial and national fostering issues and trends;
- To positively represent the CFFA in the community, promote the CFFA and work to increase the membership;
- To notify the President if you are unable to attend a meeting;
- To ensure that all voting delegates are briefed about any motions that will be presented at the AGM;
- To ensure the annual report for your province/territory is submitted when requested for the Annual General Meeting (AGM);
- To liaise with the CFFA President when their province/territory is hosting the National conference; and

- To ensure all CFFA material is passed on to your successor when your term is finished and makes every effort to ensure a smooth transition in the best interests of the CFFA.

Expenses:

Participation on the Board is a volunteer activity and members will not be reimbursed for their time. It is expected that Directors from the provinces/territories will be reimbursed their travel expenses to attend the CFFA Conference by their respective Provincial/Territorial associations. Travel expenses for Executive Members will be reimbursed by the CFFA.

EXECUTIVE ROLES

The voting delegates at the AGM shall elect an Executive which works on behalf of the CFFA to achieve its goals.

The Executive is comprised of the President, 1st Vice-President, 2nd Vice-President, 3rd Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and Past President. It is delegated by the Board of Directors to plan, organize, supervise and manage the affairs of the CFFA. Executive is committed to the development of the CFFA and works cooperatively with Provincial/Territorial organizations. The Executive reports on a regular basis to the Board of Directors and the membership.

Executive members shall be elected from the CFFA Board of Directors and must have a minimum of two years experience on the CFFA Board. Executive members must be foster parents.

President

The President shall:

- Coordinate overall activity of the CFFA and ensure the same complies with all legal requirements and provisions of the Bylaws and Constitution and the by-laws;
- Set the day, time and place of the Executive meetings;
- Attend and chair all meetings, including Executive meetings and the AGM;
- Report on any Executive meetings;
- Be an ex-officio member of all committees of the CFFA;
- Be the official spokesperson of the CFFA;
- Be responsible for Public Relations;
- Assist Treasurer with budgeting;
- Before a meeting is called:
 - (a) prepare an agenda in consultation with other executive members and / or committee chairperson(s);
 - (c) follow the agenda allowing appropriate time to each item;
 - (d) ensure that all members have the opportunity to be heard;
 - (e) call for the vote on motions;
 - (f) determine the validation and timing of motions, and;
 - (g) has the power to cast a vote in order to break a tie.

- Present an Annual Report at the AGM;
- Serve as the liaison between the CFFA and the Federal Government;
- Enter into any agreement or contract on behalf of the CFFA which has previously approved by the Executive Committee and which is required for the transaction of business;
- Ensure that all motions passed are complied with;
- Be the CFFA delegate to the International Foster Care Organization (IFCO) or designate an alternate should they be unable to attend the IFCO meetings;
- Maintain CFFA Website;
- Keep the 1st Vice President informed of CFFA activities;
- Be responsible for Ad Hoc committees;
- Perform such other duties as called upon by the President;
- Ensure that all documentation they have on hand relating to their position at the end of their term of office is turned over to their successor within thirty days. They will make every effort to ensure a seamless transition that is to the full benefit of the CFFA; and
- Serve a minimum of a 2 year term.

Immediate Past President

The Immediate Past President shall:

- Be in an honorary position;
- Be an advisor to the President;
- Assist the Executive in promoting the aims and objectives of the CFFA;
- Endeavour to attend all Executive meetings;
- Perform such other duties as requested by the President;
- Not have a vote on the Executive Committee;

- Serve a maximum of a one-year term immediately following their term of office as President; and
- Ensure that all documentation they have on hand relating to their position at the end of their term of office is turned over to their successor within thirty days. They will make every effort to ensure a seamless transition that is to the full benefit of the CFFA.

1ST Vice President

The 1st Vice President shall:

- Be responsible for the Fundraising Committee;
- Be responsible for the Conference Manual;
- Chair any meeting, and perform the duties of the President in their absence or inability to act;
- Assist the Executive in promoting the aims & objectives of the CFFA;
- Attend all Executive meetings;
- Present a report at the AGM covering the areas of their responsibility;
- Perform such other duties as called upon by the President;
- Ensure that all documentation they have on hand relating to their position at the end of their term of office is turned over to their successor within thirty days. They will make every effort to ensure a seamless transition that is to the full benefit of the CFFA; and
- Shall serve a minimum of a 2 year term.

2ND Vice President

The 2nd Vice President shall:

- Be responsible for the Policy and Procedure/Bylaws and Constitution Committee (P&P committee);
- Perform the duties of the 1st Vice President in their absence or inability to act;
- Assist the Executive in promoting the aims and objectives of the CFFA;

- Attend all executive meetings;
- Present a report at the AGM covering their areas of responsibility;
- Be responsible for the historical records of the CFFA by maintaining and updating, with all identifying information, a record of all CFFA Conferences, including annual President's report, yearly photos of the CFFA Board and significant news releases and articles relating to the CFFA;
- Arrange for the taking of photographs at each Conference as well as at the AGM or specially called meetings;
- Perform such other duties as called upon by the President;
- Ensure that all documentation they have on hand relating to their position at the end of their term of office is turned over to their successor within thirty days. They will make every effort to ensure a seamless transition that is to the full benefit of the CFFA; and
- Shall serve a minimum of a 2 year term.

3RD Vice President

The 3rd Vice President shall:

- Be responsible for ensuring all membership fees are collected prior to the AGM;
- Create and distribute membership cards;
- Maintain updated records of the membership;
- Be responsible for the nominations at AGM;
- Perform the duties of the 2nd Vice President in their absence or inability to act;
- Assist the Executive in promoting the aims & objectives of the
- CFFA,
- Attend all executive meetings;
- Present a report at the AGM covering their areas of responsibility;
- Perform such other duties as called upon by the President;
- Ensure that all documentation they have on hand relating to their position at the end of their term of office is turned over to their successor within thirty days. They will

make every effort to ensure a seamless transition that is to the full benefit of the CFFA; and

- Shall serve a minimum of a 2 year term.

Secretary

The Secretary shall:

- Hold the Seal of the CFFA;
- Keep accurate, concise and clear minutes of all meetings;
- Distribute and file the minutes of the previous meeting(s);
- Distribute the correspondence of the CFFA under the direction of the President and the Executive Committee;
- Ensure that the previous year's AGM minutes are distributed at the next AGM;
- Attend all Executive Meetings and such other meetings as called upon by the President,
- **Maintain an accurate record of all Board of Directors' documentation;**
- Distribute proposed changes of Bylaws and Constitution to Provincial/Territorial offices and Directors at least 60 days prior to the AGM;
- Perform such other duties as called upon by the President;
- Ensure that all documentation they have on hand relating to their position at the end of their term of office is turned over to their successor within thirty days. They will make every effort to ensure a seamless transition that is to the full benefit of the CFFA; and
- Shall serve a minimum of a 2 year term.

In the absence of the Secretary, any board member may be appointed by the presiding officer to perform the duties of the office.

Treasurer

The Treasurer shall:

- Keep an accurate record of all financial transactions of the CFFA;
- Arrange and present an annual audited financial report;
- Be aware of the laws and provisions of the Non-Profit Corporations Act and file such reports as are required with the appropriate officials;
- Comply with the various Labour, Income Tax, Worker's Compensation, Health Care and Unemployment Acts as it relates to withholding employee contributions and making the necessary payments under these Acts;
- Attend all executive meetings;
- Receive and pay all bills;
- Present a financial report at all meetings indicating the current financial position of the CFFA;
- Assist the President in controlling the finances of the CFFA;
- Present a motion to appoint an Auditor at the AGM;
- Present a motion accepting the audited financial statement at the AGM.
- Perform such other duties as called upon by the President;
- Ensure that all documentation they have on hand relating to their position at the end of their term of office is turned over to their successor within thirty days. They will make every effort to ensure a seamless transition that is to the full benefit of the CFFA; and
- Shall serve a minimum of a 2 year term.

BOARD DEVELOPMENT

The CFFA is committed to the ongoing development of the Board.

The CFFA acknowledges the importance of Board development and supports the professional development of Directors. While the opportunities for development may be limited by financial considerations, training and educational opportunities will be offered in conjunction with the Annual Conference **and/or board meeting**. Directors are also expected to take responsibility for their own learning and keep up to date on issues relevant to fostering.

BOARD EVALUATION

The CFFA is committed to on-going evaluation. The CFFA has a responsibility to maintain a competent and capable Board of Directors.

COMMITTEE DESCRIPTIONS

Committees of the Board fall into two categories, Standing committees and Ad Hoc committees. The following are guidelines for the operation of committees.

- The chairperson of each Standing committee shall be a member of the Executive. Committee members shall be persons who through their qualifications, are determined to be an asset to the committee;
- The chairperson of each Ad Hoc committee shall be a member of the board of directors;
- Committees shall hold committee meetings to conduct the business delegated to them, as required;
- Committees shall submit a budget for approval where necessary and keep accurate accounts of funds used. Any expenditure is to be forwarded through the chairperson to the Treasurer for payment;
- Committees shall be disbanded at any AGM but may be reappointed or restructured at any other AGM;
- All chairpersons shall make all material from the committee available to the CFFA at the dissolution of the committee;
- All Ad Hoc committees shall submit terms of reference in accordance with the direction received from the Board of Directors;
- All committees are responsible to the Board of Directors; and
- All committee chairpersons shall report to the Board of Directors and submit a written report of annual activities to the Secretary not less than 60 days before the AGM or bring 50 copies to the AGM.

Duties of Committee Chairpersons

The Committee Chairperson shall:

- Preside over the committee meeting(s);
- Submit written reports, including recommendations of the committee to the President and forward a copy to the Secretary;
- Submit a year-end report at the AGM; and

- Ensure that all documentation they have on hand relating to their position at the end of their term of office is turned over to their successor within thirty days. They will make every effort to ensure a seamless transition that is to the full benefit of the CFFA.

STANDING COMMITTEES

Fund-Raising Committee

The Fund-Raising Committee, under the direction of the 1st Vice President, will endeavour to secure funding to provide financial support for the CFFA.

The Fund-Raising Committee shall:

- Identify sources for and make every effort to secure funding for the overall operational needs and specific projects of the CFFA;
- Coordinate and manage the Silent Auctions which take place at the Annual CFFA Conference; and
- Ensure that all documentation they have on hand relating to their position at the end of their term of office is turned over to their successor within thirty days. They will make every effort to ensure a seamless transition that is to the full benefit of the CFFA.

Policy & Procedure / Bylaws And Constitution Committee

The P & P Committee shall, under the direction of the 2nd Vice President, regularly review the Policies and Procedures and the Bylaws and Constitution of the CFFA.

The P & P Committee shall:

- Receive and prepare policies and/or procedures for presentation to the Board of Directors; and
- Prepare and present Bylaws and Constitutional changes to the Board of Directors for approval. Forward approved changes to the Secretary 75 days prior to the AGMs.

AD HOC COMMITTEES

National Conference

- The provincial director of the host province/territory will liaise with the President and the provincial conference committee.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

The Editor shall:

- Publish and distribute a newsletter three times a year
- Edit articles submitted for publication.
- Ensure that the newsletter includes:
 - a) Presidents message
 - b) Committee reports
 - c) Reports from Provincial/Territorial CFFAs
 - d) Information received from IFCO
 - e) Reports from Executive Officers
 - f) Articles related to foster care
 - g) Any other material that will enhance the fostering experience
 - h) A list of the names, province/territory and position of each board member
 - i) Names of Corporate sponsors
 - j) Membership application
- Ensure that the newsletter is produced within the allotted budgeted amount.
- Upon a change in editor, forward all material to the new editor within two weeks of the appointment.

TYPES OF MEETINGS

Executive Meeting is convened by the President and is attended by the President, 1st Vice-President, 2nd Vice-President, 3rd Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Immediate Past President (if still in office).

Board of Director's Meeting is convened by the President and is attended by the directors from each of the Provincial/Territorial CFFAs who have membership in the CFFA, the Executive Committee members.

President's Meeting is convened by the hosting President at the annual CFFA Conference and is attended by the Presidents/Chairpersons of each of the Provincial/Territorial CFFAs who have membership in the CFFA. There is no legal mandate for this committee and it is seen as a tool to help strengthen the relationships between the CFFA and the Provincial / Territorial organizations.

Committee Meeting is held is necessary by each Committee and are convened by the Chairperson of each committee.

The AGM is open to the public, however only the Director and 2 Delegates from each of the Provincial/Territorial CFFAs who have membership in the CFFA are permitted to present and second motions and to vote on the motions.

Special General Meetings are convened by the President. Meetings are convened when 66% of the Regular Member Organizations request a meeting in writing. Each Regular Member Organization shall have one vote.

Note: Minutes should be kept for all meetings, except committee meetings and must include the following information:

- The date;
- Location;
- Time, including time of adjournment;
- Names of those in attendance;
- The essence of any discussion that takes place; and
- A record of all motions made at the meeting, motions should indicate the name of the person who moved the motion as well as the name of the person who seconded the motion as well as the final result of the vote. Action Items and who is responsible to action them.

BOARD POLICIES

Board Documentation

The CFFA shall maintain a file on each board member that contains

- Documented proof of being an active foster family e.g. License, Letter from authority or agency or a signed Copy of their contract
- Signed Oath of Confidentiality
- Contact Information

Board Discipline

The CFFA is committed to investigating all concerns raised about the conduct of its Directors and taking the appropriate action to address concerns.

Directors on the Board are responsible for the pursuit of the organization's mission and to ensure financial and legal affairs are in order. They are required to meet the responsibilities of their positions as outlined in the "Role of Provincial/Territorial Director on the CFFA Board". It is recognized that there may be times when questions may be raised about the conduct of a board member or members.

In order for any such concern to be addressed by the Board, it must be presented in writing and to the President and include the name and address of the person raising the issue. If the concern is about the President, the 1st Vice President will accept the concern. The person who is the subject of the complaint will be informed that a complaint has been received and that it is being investigated. The Executive Committee will review the complaint, take any action that may be required to resolve the matter and advise the Board when the matter has been concluded. The Executive Committee has the right to consult with outside resources if necessary to assist with assessment and/or to determine what action may be required. Should the person be a member of the Executive Committee, he/she will not participate in any meeting until the matter is resolved.

Communication

The CFFA is committed to the development of effective communication processes.

All CFFA Board members and all Provincial/Territorial organizations shall receive on-going communication from the CFFA including, but not limited to, the following:

- CFFA Newsletter;
- Information on CFFA activities;
- Announcement of the date and place of the AGM;
- Copy of all Annual Reports;
- A list complete with address and phone number of the current Board Members and their positions; and

- Copy of the current Bylaws and Constitution & By-laws and the Policy & Procedure Manual.

The CFFA works to ensure there are mechanisms in place for on-going communication between provincial/territorial organizations. These mechanisms include website, provincial reports in newsletter, information sharing at annual conference and opportunities for networking.

Confidentiality

All Board members must sign an Oath of Confidentiality annually.

Board Directors have a duty to protect the confidentiality of any information received by the Board of Directors and to ensure that all such confidential information will only be used for its intended purpose. (Appendix A) Confidential information must be respected and not disclosed in any circumstances except where there are safety concerns or the information is required by law. The responsibility to maintain confidentiality extends beyond the tenure as a Director.

A breach of confidentiality will result in disciplinary action and if the breach is determined by the Board of Directors to be detrimental to the integrity of the CFFA, it could result in immediate dismissal.

Conflict of Interest

To maintain the integrity of the Board, all efforts shall be made to ensure that a board member is not in a conflict of interest position when making board decisions.

A conflict of Interest is a situation in which someone has competing professional or personal interests. A conflict of interest would prejudice an individual's ability to perform his or her duties and responsibilities objectively.

It is the responsibility of each and every Board Member:

- To act honestly and in good faith and in the best interests of the CFFA;
- To disclose to the Board any real, potential or perceived conflict of interest;
- To avoid making a profit at the CFFA's expense; and
- To disclose any private relationship that might be perceived as influencing their decisions as a director.

- Process:
1. Directors will declare a real, potential or perceived "conflict of interest" and refrain from any debate or vote on the matter.
 2. Directors in a "conflict of interest" shall leave the meeting before the discussion and return after the vote.
 3. If a conflict situation arises, it will be reviewed and adjudicated by a committee appointed by the Board.

Decision Making

The Board of Directors is committed to effective decision making and, once a decision has been made, speaking with one voice.

The CFFA shall make decisions by majority vote, provided that a variety of points of view have been reasonably considered. Once the Board of Directors has made a decision, individual Directors must publicly support this decision and not present a different viewpoint.

Insurance

The CFFA shall carry adequate insurance coverage.

Directors' Liability Insurance must be maintained and it is the responsibility of the Board of Directors to ensure the appropriate policy is in place and renewed annually.

Media Releases/Public Statements

The CFFA from time to time will issue media releases and/or public statements on matters relevant to fostering specifically or children and families generally.

It is the President's explicit responsibility to prepare media news releases. The President will consult with the Executive before the release of any official statement. The President may utilize other members of the Executive or Board of Directors with their consent to be the contact person on a news release. This could also be a Provincial/Territorial Association office or the Executive Director of that organization.

No member of the Executive or Board of Directors shall speak on behalf of the CFFA without the prior agreement or authorization of the President.

The CFFA will advise its provincial/territorial organization when such releases/statements will be issued so the Provincial/Territorial Associations can be prepared in the event they are asked to comment on same.

FINANCIAL POLICIES

Bank Reconciliation

Bank reconciliation must be completed on a bi-annual basis.

The bi-annual bank reconciliation is completed by the Treasurer of the Board of Directors. It is then reviewed, verified and signed by the President.

Cheque Signing

All cheques issued by the CFFA must be signed by two of the designated signing officers.

There will be no signing of blank cheques unless authorized under special circumstances by the Executive Committee.

Signing officers must exercise accountability and responsibility in authorizing all cheques in accordance with Board policy.

Financial Statements

The CFFA shall ensure accurate financial records are maintained.

True and accurate accounts shall be kept of receipts, expenditures, assets and liabilities of the CFFA. The books, accounts and records of the CFFA shall be reviewed by a third party accountant on an annual basis, and the financial statement shall be presented at AGM.

Executive Expenses

Executive members shall be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred conducting board business.

Participation on the Board is a volunteer activity and Directors are not reimbursed for their time.

Expenses for travel and accommodation will be determined using the most cost efficient means available. Should individuals choose more costly means they will only be reimbursed the equivalent of the most cost efficient. (Appendix B)

APPENDIX

- A. Oath of Confidentiality
- B. Expense Claim Form



OATH OF CONFIDENTIALITY

I, _____,
do swear/affirm that I will not, directly or indirectly,
without due authority disclose to any person any
information or other matter that is deemed
confidential within the Canadian Foster Family
Association.

Signed by _____ ,
this _____ day of _____ , A.D., 20__.

Witnessed by _____

EXPENSE REPORT CANADIAN FOSTER FAMILY ASSOCIATION

NAME: _____ POSITION: _____

ADDRESS: _____ POSTAL CODE: _____

RATES:

Breakfast	\$	15.00	
Lunch	\$	15.00	
Dinner	\$	19.20	
Mileage	\$	0.40	
Respite	\$150.00		maximum per 24 hr period

Expenses For Dates:								TOTAL
AIR								
TAXI								
PARKING								
LODGING								
BREAKFAST								
LUNCH								
DINNER								
CHILD CARE								
TELEPHONE								
OFFICE SUPPLIES								
MISC.								
TOTAL EXPENSES								
MILEAGE:			Miles/KM Travelled			TOTAL Miles/KM		
FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:			TO					
			TO					
			TO					
			TO					
	Cheque #			Miles/KM	@	TOTAL MILEAGE		
							GRAND TOTAL	

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

ATTACH ALL INVOICES AND RECEIPTS

