

# SSFOA BOARD ORIENTATION PROCEDURES

Board orientation is intended to prepare new board members for their board role in the organization. Orientation is also extremely useful for all members to ensure they are operating from the same "page." Whether done only with new members or with the entire board, orientation is a strong team-building activity that should be conducted once a year, either before a regular board meeting or during the retreat -- particularly after new board members have been seated.

1. The board chair and the chief executive typically facilitate the orientation session.
2. Ensure introductions and consider using name tags.
3. Review several topics, including:
  - the Board Manual (see "Board Manual Index below")
  - mission, vision and values of the organization
  - some the organization's history
  - roles and responsibilities of the board and the staff
  - administrative calendar which schedules major activities of the board
  - organizational chart, including the list of current and planned committees
  - about how the board conducts meetings, including relevant actions from the Roberts' Rules of Order
4. Ensure adequate time for questions and answers.
5. Consider assigning a "buddy," or current board member to help orient a new board member.
6. Involve new members as soon as possible in relevant committees by asking new members to consider membership on a current or new committees.

## **Contents of Manual**

- names of board members, their biographies, terms of office and a statement of their responsibilities;
- a list of committees and task forces, with their terms of reference, time frames and membership;
- a brief written history of the corporation and/or a fact sheet about the corporation;
- Letters Patent, supplementary Letters Patent and bylaws;
- mission and vision statements;
- strategic framework or plan, and the current annual operating plan;
- minutes from recent board meetings;
- board policies (e.g., conflict of interest, insurance coverage, expense reimbursement);
- the prior year's annual report and audit report;
- current annual budget and latest financial statement;
- banking resolutions and investment policy;
- current list of major funders or partners and/or stakeholder map;
- organizational chart and staff information;
- annual calendar; and,
- promotional material and Web site information.