

CHAPTER 6: BOARD POLICIES

**SECTION 5:
BOARD DIRECTOR ORIENTATION, EDUCATION AND
BOARD DEVELOPMENT**

8.1 INTRODUCTION

- 8.1.1 Directors of the Vancouver Police Board (Board) have both a duty of loyalty and good faith, and a duty of care, diligence, and skill. A Board Director's (Director) conduct is measured against an objective standard that requires informed decision-making and the discharging of duties responsibly.
- 8.1.2 While it is expected that Directors will possess sufficient knowledge, experience, and expertise at the time of their appointment to serve in such capacity, it is recognized that they will not necessarily be experts in all disciplines, in all aspects of governance, or in all areas associated with policing. As such, education and learning is a key driver of continued Director and Board effectiveness and is an ongoing responsibility of individual Directors, Board Office management and the Board as a whole.
- 8.1.3 Acknowledging that Directors are unpaid volunteers, the Director Orientation, Education and Board Development Policy lays out the responsibilities and expectations of the Board and individual Board Directors with respect to developing the knowledge and abilities to govern effectively.
- 8.1.4 Properly oriented Directors are more effective, providing greater value to the organization, and the community which they serve. This Policy will equip Directors to add value, provide effective oversight, and fulfill their fiduciary responsibilities.
- 8.1.5 This policy sets out the responsibilities and expectations of the Board and individual Directors regarding:
- a. Expectations and timeline;
 - b. Initial orientation;
 - c. Ongoing individual Director education;
 - d. Board development; and,
 - e. Policy administration.

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8.2 EXPECTATIONS AND TIMELINE

- 8.2.1 The Board is committed to Director education and development. Each Director is responsible for their ongoing education, and will be supported by the Board in their pursuit.
- 8.2.2 The Executive Director (ED) and Chair of the Governance Committee will ensure an orientation program that is designed to provide ongoing and pertinent knowledge to enable new Directors to actively contribute to the work of the Board, and to promote productive and effective boardroom participation, and understanding of the environment in which they operate.
- 8.2.3 Due to the complex nature of police oversight, and the extent of information available, the onboarding of new Directors will take place over a period of time to minimize the likelihood of overload, and to maximize lasting impact. Onboarding and orientation is an ongoing process that extends throughout the appointed terms.
- 8.2.4 Individual Directors may at any time request from the Board Chair, Governance, and/or the Human Resources Committee Chair, and the Executive Director any additional information or education needs to supplement the orientation program received.
- 8.2.5 The Governance Committee, Human Resources Committee and Executive Director are available to make learning recommendations to Directors who may need to be better equipped in order to fulfill their responsibilities.

8.3 BOARD ORIENTATION

- 8.3.1 All new Directors are expected to receive orientation materials and attend an initial Board orientation within the first two months of appointment to the Board. The Board orientation program will:
- a. Provide each new Board Director with an understanding of the formal governance structure, relevant legislation (e.g. the *Police Act*), the role of the Board, its supporting committees, and the expectations with respect to individual Board Director performance;
 - b. Build an understanding of the nature of policing and VPD, its operations, and working environment including the programs and services it offers;

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- c. Allow for opportunities to meet and get to know fellow Board Directors, Senior Leadership, and do site visits to view the VPD's operations and meet sworn and civilian employees;
- d. Build an understanding of the Board's key relationships, including community groups and individuals, and other interested parties and partners (eg. government representatives, health authorities, Unions, and relevant associations)
- e. Provide a comprehensive set of briefing materials that Directors may use as reference materials. These materials should comprise of information including but not limited to:
 - o Biographical and contact information for all Board Directors, the Chief and Deputies;
 - o Policing governing documents and regulations;
 - o The Board's governance policies;
 - o The current VPD strategic plan and the Board's focus and priority plan;
 - o The current annual work-plan Board;
 - o The most recent quarterly financial and report;
 - o The most recent Public Safety Indicators report;
 - o A summary of Board Director and officer's liability insurance;
 - o Minutes of the last year's board meetings;
 - o Details of board committees and copies of the minutes from the last 3-6 meetings if a new board member will be joining a specific committee;
 - o Schedule of dates for upcoming board meetings; and,
 - o Website references.

This information is accessible through the Board issued devices, and is available to all Board directors at all times.

8.4 ONGOING DIRECTOR EDUCATION

8.4.1 The Board believes in the professionalism of Directors and recognizes the importance of ongoing education as a means of strengthening the effectiveness of individual Directors. Ongoing Director education includes both formal and informal learning opportunities.

8.4.2 Formal Director Education

The Board recognizes the value of formalized learning environments such as classroom-based and online courses. Board Directors are encouraged to seek out external formal

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learning opportunities. In particular, and because the Board recognizes that financial competency is a key skill for all Board Directors, Directors who do not have a strong financial background are encouraged to seek out opportunities for financial essentials training to develop a certain level of comfort and competence with financial statements and the financial discussions and decision-making relevant to a board of directors.

8.4.3 Informal Director Education

Informal learning is available to Directors through such external sources as membership in relevant professional organisations, articles and reports and attendance at relevant seminars or conferences. The Board supports memberships to the Canadian Association of Police Governance (CAPG) and the BC Association of Police Boards (BCAPB). These associations provide access to ongoing governance related learning opportunities.

Internal educational opportunities that are provided to Directors include participation in activities such as:

- a. Ride-alongs;
- b. Attendance at CompStat;
- c. Facility tours;
- d. VPD community events;
- e. Meetings with community partners, Council, unions, associations, and other interested parties;
- f. Attendance at BCAPB and CAPG conferences;
- g. Training courses through Police Services, BCAPB, and/or the Justice Institute;
- h. VPD online training courses;
- i. VPD and Board ceremonies.

8.4.5 The ED shall make Directors aware about relevant formal and informal educational opportunities, and shall from time to time provide relevant governance articles, reports, and research documents, accompanied by commentary on the implications for the Board, to enable self-study by the Directors.

8.5 BOARD DEVELOPMENT

8.5.2 Team-based development is intended to improve the Board's decision-making by providing equal information to all Directors on important subjects, enabling them to

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interact on key issues that can often be critical to pending decisions and reinforcing key issues the Board faces in the context of its role and responsibilities as a board.

- 8.5.2 A Board development program will be established on an annual basis. In developing this program, the Chair of the Governance, Human Resources Committee and the Executive Director shall:
- a. Identify Issues or topics for which Directors believe they need to update their skills and knowledge of policing or police oversight, or address ongoing and emerging issues in the functional areas of the Board (i.e. governance, human resources, finance, freedom of information, policy and service complaints, risk management);
 - b. Consider external and internal educational opportunities;
 - c. Reflect upon key strategic directions of the Board and VPD, major decisions on the horizon, appropriate and significant risk management themes and the landscape within which the Board operates; and,
 - d. Prioritize topics for focused education sessions at regular Board meetings, educational workshops, retreats or other suitable events devoted to education.
- 8.5.3 The Board development program shall include regular presentations by VPD Leadership and staff to educate them, and keep them informed of changes within the policing framework, and drawing on external resources where appropriate to provide the Board with outside expert perspective on matters of particular importance or emerging significance.

8.6 POLICY ADMINISTRATION

- 8.6.1 The Board is cognizant of its responsibility to balance the important need for education, with overall financial prudence. Course, seminar, and conference attendance is specifically discouraged where costs of attendance are high and/or extensive travel is required. Research, fact-finding, study, and related trips abroad are discouraged where there are more cost-effective means of gathering information and knowledge.
- 8.6.2 Course, seminar and conference attendance, and other educational opportunities may be reimbursed from the Board budget only if:
- a. The expenditure is pre-approved by the Chair of the Board, the Chair of Finance, or the Executive Director;

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- b. Where the expenditure is directly related to organizational governance, board effectiveness, or the business and operations of the Board; and,
- c. Where, when appropriate, a report-back is provided to the Governance Committee on the Director's feedback and take-away.

8.7 RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

8.7.1 Related policies and procedures in this Manual include:

- a. Financial Authorities Policy
- b. Code of Conduct for Board of Directors
- c. Conflict of Interest for Board of Directors