

# VERMONT BAR ASSOCIATION

## EXPECTATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF BAR MANAGERS

This document is intended to provide an outline of the expectations and responsibilities of members of the VBA Board of Bar Managers. It was compiled for use by current and prospective Board members, and provides a brief overview of significant Board member responsibilities. If you are considering running for a Board position and have questions about Board member responsibilities, please contact the President of the Bar or any Board member.

### *1. Become familiar with the VBA Constitution and Long Range Plan.*

The VBA Constitution and Long Range Plan are the foundation of the VBA. These documents detail the Board structure and organizational vision which guide Board actions. It is important that each Board member has a clear understanding of the structure of the organization in order to become an informed member of the Board.

### *2. Attend and actively participate in all Board meetings.*

Attendance: The Board meets eleven times per year. Normally, six of these meetings are held in Montpelier. The other meetings take place at the VBA Annual Meeting in the Fall, at the Nominating Committee Meeting in December, at the Young Lawyers Division Thaw Meeting in Montreal in January, at the VBA Mid-Winter Meeting in March, and at the Board retreat in June. Other than the YLD Thaw Meeting in Montreal, the location for the other meetings and the retreat can vary. A Board member is expected to attend all Board meetings. However, there are situations where attendance at a meeting will not be possible due to scheduling conflicts. If a Board member is unable to attend a meeting, he or she should notify the VBA staff of this fact in advance.

Meetings in Montpelier run from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 or 5:00 p.m. Other meeting times vary according to scheduled events. In general, preparation for, travel to and attendance at a Board meeting takes almost a full day.

Preparation: Materials related to current issues being discussed are forwarded to each Board member approximately 10 days in advance of each regularly

scheduled meeting, as are minutes of the last meeting. These materials should be thoroughly reviewed prior to each meeting.

New Board members will be supplied with meeting minutes for the last 3 months in order to bring them up to speed on issues confronting the Board. Other information is available on the Association website ([www.vtbar.org](http://www.vtbar.org))

Participation: Much of the work of the Board of Bar Managers is completed at the monthly meetings. At these meetings, the Board debates policy issues, reviews the financial position of the Association, discusses Bar activities and member services, hears committee reports, considers legislation, directs lobbying efforts, reviews personnel matters as necessary, and makes other decisions necessary for the smooth functioning of the Association. Each Board member has a responsibility to express his or her opinions and concerns on all issues presented at these meetings and to vote accordingly. Such participation is premised on regular attendance and preparation.

Beyond participation at regular Board meetings, each Board member has other Board-related responsibilities. The Board has standing committees and various working committees from time to time, which work on specified issues and present their findings to the Board.

Each Board member is expected to become actively involved in at least one standing committee of the Board. The amount of time committed to this work varies by committee.

### *3. Participate in Association Meetings.*

The VBA holds three major meetings on a yearly basis: the Annual Meeting; the Mid-Winter Thaw in Montreal (organized by the Young Lawyers Division); and the Mid-Year Meeting. The VBA also holds a Solo and Small Firm Conference every other year. Each Board member is expected to register, attend and actively participate in each of these meetings and the associated CLEs. As Board members, we have an obligation to show our support for the CLEs and other activities sponsored by the VBA. Board members are also expected to visit with the exhibitors and sponsors, who play such a major role in allowing us to offer reasonable rates for the major meetings. Active participation by Board members reflects positively on the Association as a whole.

### *4. Provide guidance and feedback to the Executive Director in order to assist staff to effectively carry out their duties.*

One reason the VBA is so successful as an organization is the strength of our staff. Periodically, the Executive Director or other members of the VBA staff may contact a Board member to solicit input on an issue or to gather information. A Board member must be timely in responding to these requests to ensure the VBA functions smoothly.

Since the Executive Director is charged with day to day management of the Association, any Board member who needs the assistance of Association staff members on a project should address his or her request for help to the Executive Director.

*5. Volunteer your time to the members of the Vermont Bar.*

As attorneys, time is perhaps our most valuable commodity. Because of the nature of the position, each Board member will be required to give a portion of his/her time in service to the members of the Bar.

Being a member of the Board is also a financial commitment in part. Members of the Board of Bar Managers serve as volunteers. There is no compensation for this position. Likewise, a Board member does not receive any reduction for the cost of CLE programs which they attend in conjunction with Bar meetings. There is no mileage reimbursement for travel to meetings throughout Vermont. Moreover, Board members will likely be called upon to utilize the resources of their offices while performing member duties. Board members are not compensated for these expenses.

*6. Serve as an ambassador between the Association, its members and the community.*

It's important that members of the Bar know their Board of Bar Managers. As a Board member, any name tag distributed at VBA Meetings will have a special ribbon identifying you as a VBA Board member. This does inspire conversation, so Board members need to be prepared to field questions about the VBA.

*7. Assist in the recommendation and recruiting of new Board Members.*

*8. Perform such other duties as may be requested or needed by the Board.*