

Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship

Board – Executive Team Linkage Policies

The Board will hold the Executive Team accountable for the operational organization, its achievements, and conduct.

1. **THE EXECUTIVE TEAM:** The Executive Team shall be defined by the Board, and currently consists of the Minister, Administrator, Treasurer and the Committee Coordinator. In the event a member of the Executive Team is unable to serve due to an emergency, the Executive Team will continue operating without that member until the Board has designated a temporary replacement.
2. **UNITY OF CONTROL:** Only decisions of the Board acting as a body are binding on the Executive Team.
 - a. Decisions or instructions of individual Board members, officers, committees or congregation members are not binding on the Executive Team except in rare instances when the Board has specifically authorized such exercise of authority.
 - b. In the case of Board members or committees requesting information or assistance without Board authorization, the Executive Team is expected to decline such requests that require, in the Executive Team's opinion, a material amount of staff time or funds, or are disruptive.
3. **ACCOUNTABILITY OF THE EXECUTIVE TEAM:** The Executive Team is the Board's only link to operational achievement and conduct. Accordingly, all authority and accountability of volunteer and paid staff is considered by the Board to be the authority and accountability of the Executive Team.
 1. The Board will never give instructions to persons who report directly or indirectly to the Executive Team.
 2. The Board will refrain from evaluating, either formally or informally, any staff other than the Executive Team and all ministers.
 3. The Board will view Executive Team performance as identical to organizational performance, so that organizational accomplishment of Board-stated *Ends* and avoidance of Board-proscribed *Means* will be viewed as successful Executive performance.
4. **DELEGATION TO THE EXECUTIVE TEAM:** The Board's job is generally confined to establishing top-level policies, leaving implementation and subsidiary policy development to the Executive Team. Accordingly, the Board will instruct the Executive Team through written policies that prescribe the organizational *Ends* to be achieved and proscribe *Means* to be avoided, allowing the Executive Team to use any reasonable interpretation of these policies.

- a. The Board will develop policies instructing the Executive Team to achieve certain results, for certain recipients, within a specified budget. These policies will be developed systematically from the broadest, most general level to more defined levels, and will be called *Ends Policies*.
 - b. The Board will develop policies that limit the latitude the Executive Team may exercise in choosing the organizational *Means*. These policies will be developed systematically from the broadest, most general level to more defined levels, and they will be called *Executive Limitations Policies*.
 - c. As long as the Executive Team uses any reasonable interpretation of the Board's *Ends* and *Executive Limitations* policies, the Executive Team is authorized to establish all further policies, make all decisions, take all actions, establish all practices, and develop all activities. Should the Executive Team deem it necessary to violate Policy, it shall inform in advance the Board President or another Board member if the President is not available. Informing is simply to guarantee no violation may be intentionally kept from the Board, not to request approval. Response from the Board President or individual Board members, either approving or disapproving, does not exempt the Executive Team from subsequent Board judgment of the action, nor does it impede any Executive Team decision.
 - d. The Board may change the *Ends* and *Executive Limitations* policies, thereby shifting the boundary between Board and Executive Team domains. By doing so, the Board changes the latitude of choice given to the Executive Team. But as long as any particular delegation is in place, the Board will respect and support the Executive Team's choices.
5. **MONITORING EXECUTIVE TEAM PERFORMANCE:** Systematic and rigorous monitoring of Executive Team job performance will be solely in light of the expected Executive Team job outputs: organizational accomplishment of *Ends Policies*, and organizational operation within the boundaries established in *Executive Limitations Policies*.
- a. Monitoring is simply to determine the degree to which policies are being met. Data that do not do this will not be considered to be monitoring data. The Board will acquire monitoring data by one or more of three methods:
 - 1) By internal report, in which the Executive Team discloses compliance information to the Board
 - 2) By external report, in which an external, disinterested third party selected by the Board assesses compliance with Policies
 - 3) By direct Board inspection, in which a designated Board member or members, or the Board as a whole, assess compliance with the appropriate policy criteria.
 - b. In every case, the standard for compliance shall be *any reasonable Executive Team interpretation* of the policy being monitored.

- c. All policies that instruct the Executive Team will be monitored at a frequency and by a method chosen by the Board. The Board can monitor any policy at any time by any method, but will ordinarily depend on a routine schedule. Executive Team Schedule of Reports to Board:

Policy	Method	Frequency
Specific Program Outcomes (Ends)	Internal	Monthly
Facility Planning	Internal	Monthly
Treatment of Congregants	Internal	Annually
	External	3-5 years
Treatment of Staff	Internal	6 months
	External	3-5 years
Executive Teamwork	Internal	6 months
Compensation & Benefits	Internal	Annual
Emergency Executive Team Succession	Internal	As Needed
Financial Planning and Budgeting	Internal	Quarterly
	External	3 years
Financial Condition & Activities	Internal	Quarterly
	External	3 years
Asset Protection	Internal	Quarterly
	External	3 years
Grant Activities, when applicable	Internal	Annual
Communication and Support to the Board	Direct Inspection	Quarterly

6. **MONITORING BOARD PERFORMANCE:** The Board systematically will monitor its own performance, relative to its Governance Process and Board-Executive Linkage policies, by including a portion of these policies for review semi-annually.