



AAFP BOARD

RESPONSIBILITIES,
EXPECTATIONS, &
CORE VALUES

AAFP's Mission

The American Association of Feline Practitioners (AAFP) supports its members in improving the health and welfare of cats through high standards of practice, continuing education, and evidence-based medicine.

AAFP's Vision

We are the trusted leaders in feline health and welfare for the veterinary community and cat caregivers.

AAFP's Statement of Purpose

The American Association of Feline Practitioners (AAFP) is a professional organization representing feline practitioners who are passionate about the care of cats. The AAFP is dedicated to advancing the field of feline medicine and surgery by setting the standards of feline care through the publication of practice guidelines, position statements, and by providing continuing education.

Through publications, education, and thriving relationships with other organizations, the AAFP engages the veterinary community and its members by facilitating the exchange of scientific data and ideas.

General Responsibilities of a Board Member

- A. The principal responsibility of a member of the board is to act in the best interests of the Association and its members through directing the Association's operations and affairs.
- B. Board members are the fiduciaries who lead the organization towards a sustainable future tasked with making decisions and adopting sound, ethical, and legal governance policies, as well as making sure the Association has adequate resources to advance its mission and strategic plans.
- C. Summary of the specific duties of a board member:

1. Duty to Understand:

A member of the Executive Board has an obligation to become familiar with the Association and to understand the issues and challenges which it faces. This includes gaining an understanding of the principal operational and financial objectives, strategies and plans of the Association. The board members should also be generally familiar with the results of operations and the financial condition of the Association. This requires that board members do their homework, including reading the reports and other communications that are sent to members of the board. If a board member has a question, the member should contact a director, officer or staff member who is likely to be in a position to provide an adequate answer. The objective is for the board member

to become sufficiently familiar with the Association's activities to be able to exercise independent judgment for the overall benefit of the Association and its members.

2. Duty to Participate:

Board members are expected to attend all meetings of the board and to actively participate in the discussion in an informed manner. This normally requires that board members become familiar with items on the meeting agenda prior to the meeting. Members of the board must by law be afforded an opportunity to hear the comments and views of all other members of the board on particular issues, either at a meeting personally attended by the board member or through a conference call where all board members can hear what others have to say. The reason for this requirement is clear: often, after reading written meeting materials, a board member may reach a tentative decision; but after hearing the issue discussed by others, a board member may gain new understanding and decide that another result will better serve the best interests of the Association. Debate should be thoughtful, on occasion spirited, and always civil.

3. Duty to Make Informed Decisions:

After becoming informed and listening to the discussion, the board member has an obligation to vote in the best interests of the Association and its members, without regard for the personal interests of those who have elected him or her to the board.

4. Duty to See What Decisions are Implemented:

While most decisions are implemented by staff and therefore do not require hands-on involvement of the board, board members nevertheless have a responsibility to provide sufficient oversight to insure the decisions they have made are implemented by staff and others.

- D. In view of these important duties, members elected to the board should possess the integrity, strength of character, practical wisdom, and judgment essential for effective decision making.
- E. Board members should also be prepared to devote the time and attention required of an effective Board Member. There are two in-person board meetings, one coordinated prior to the annual conference, and the other in the spring. There are 3-4 tele-conference meetings scheduled, and occasionally the need arises to hold additional conference call meetings. Board members are also expected to communicate promptly to email messages.
- F. A board director term is two years, commencing on January 1 of the following year after elections.
- G. Board members are required to sign a Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest Policy.

General Expectations of a Board Member

The AAFP is dedicated to creating an atmosphere free of discrimination and harassment, sexual or otherwise. Further, board members, members, and staff are responsible for respecting the rights of their colleagues and/or AAFP personnel. The AAFP supports the Association of the American Veterinary Medical Colleges' Principles of Inclusion, whereas it states, "*We confront and reject all forms of prejudice and discrimination, including those based on race, ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious beliefs, political beliefs, geographic, socioeconomic, and educational background or any other differences that have led to misunderstanding, hostility and injustice.*"

Board members are expected to:

- maintain confidentiality of AAFP business.
- represent the American Association of Feline Practitioners in a professional manner.
- fully participate in the activities of the board, including regular board meetings, leadership orientation and training, and strategic planning.
- adhere to the Code of Veterinary Ethics as determined by national, state, or provincial organizations.
- commit to being an example of living the core values of the Association.
- maintain communication electronically through email and other means of communication. Additionally, any reports required for duty are submitted in a timely manner.

Core Values

Mission and Member-driven: We work collaboratively and demonstrate a constant commitment to the best interests of our members.

Science-based: We lead with science, providing trusted and evidence-based information. We support veterinary teams in their education and awareness of feline health and welfare, increasing the standards of care for cats, and encourage the ongoing pursuit of knowledge.

Professionalism: We uphold high standards for the endeavors of the Association on behalf of our members and the community, acting with integrity, honesty, and respect in all of our individual pursuits and collective initiatives.

Diversity: We commit to convene and nurture a diverse community of individuals, and respect the dimensions of diversity among us and the populations we serve. We further value the differences in ideas, perspectives, and people in our community in order to foster an environment of inclusion in pursuit of excellence in feline medicine and surgery.

Accountability: We practice prudent financial decision-making and accountability, as well as demonstrate commitment, passion, and leadership to our members.

Respect: We practice positive and effective communication, promote individual and organizational growth, work as a cohesive team, and support leadership decisions to be one voice for the Association.