



Canadian Organization for Rare Disorders

Position Description

Duties and Expectations of a Director

Purpose: The Canadian Organization for Rare Disorders (CORD) is committed to ensuring that it achieves standards of excellence in the quality of its governance and has adopted this policy describing the duties and expectations of Directors.

Application: This policy applies to all Directors and is provided before they apply for appointment to the Board.

Position Description: As member of the Board of Directors, and in contributing to the collective achievement of the role of the Board, the individual Director is responsible for the following:

Fiduciary Duties

- Act honestly, in good faith and in the best interests of the corporation.
- Support the organization's mission, purposes, goals, policies, and programs.
- Review the organization's financial statements and otherwise help the Board fulfill its fiduciary responsibilities.
- Assist the organization with development and implementation of funding strategies.

Accountability

- Serve the organization as a whole rather than any special interest group or constituency.
- Avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest that might compromise the Board or the organization, and disclose any possible conflicts to the Board in a timely fashion.

Governance

- Come prepared and well informed to participate in discussions at Board and committee meetings, follow our code of conduct, and support Board decisions.
- Maintain confidentiality of the Board's executive decisions, and speak for the Board or organization only when authorized to do so by the Board, Executive Committee, or when requested by the President.
- Suggest agenda items for Board and committee meetings to ensure that significant policy-related matters are discussed.

Commitment

- A Director is expected to commit the time required to perform duties. It could be that a director will be expected to devote an average of 10-15 hours per month. The Board of Directors meet bi-monthly throughout the year, two meetings of which could be face-to-face.
- Ensure regular attendance at Board Meetings. Provide Secretary with advance notice in the event of an absence.
- Serve on at least one standing committee of the Board.
- Attend activities and events sponsored by the organization whenever possible.
- Represent the Board and/or the organization at local, provincial, national or international events.
- Suggest possible nominees to the Board who are people of achievement and who can make significant contributions to the work of the Board and the progress of the organization.

Education

- Continuously expand knowledge about the activities of the organization and its stakeholders, and the rare disease environment in general.
- Participate in expert training sessions organized by CORD.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. Who can apply to serve on the Board of Directors?

CORD seeks to fill its Board with a diverse group of people who support the organization's mission, purposes, goals, policies, and programs. All applicants must be members of CORD.

Q. How many vacancies exist?

In 2025, there are 3 vacancies on the Board of Directors. Each vacancy is a three-year term (2025-2028).

Q. What skills are required to join the Board of Directors?

We are particularly interested in individuals whose experience and skill set includes a combination of the following:

- Finance, accounting
- Grant writing
- Fundraising and special events
- Health policy development
- Public relations, communications
- Advocacy on a provincial/federal level
- Non-profit, governance, management, administration experience

Q. Are references required for each applicant?

Yes. All nominees will be required to provide a reference as part of the application process.

Q. Are all applicants put forward for the election?

No. The CORD Nominations Committee will review all applications and determine, based on a set of established criteria and supported by an interview process, a slate of candidates to recommend to the Board of Directors.

Q. Who serves on the CORD Nominations Committee?

The Nominations Committee is comprised of at least one member of CORD's Executive Committee, Board Members, and one external member, with support from the Managing Director. Board Members who wish to renew their terms this year are not eligible to serve on the Nominations Committee.

Q. Are Board Members representative of their patient organization?

No. Board members should be fully committed to the best interests of the general membership of CORD and not to any particular constituency.

Q. Is it essential for applicants to have previous Board experience?

No, although it is recommended that applicants have board or committee experience. CORD is a thriving, growing national organization and we are seeking applicants best positioned to lend knowledge and leadership in order to work efficiently to invest in the growth, development and sustainability of the organization.

Q. What is the composition of the Board of Directors?

Currently, the Board of Directors is comprised of the Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Executive Member-at-Large, and Directors.

Q. Is there financial compensation for the Board of Directors?

No. Members of the CORD Board are reimbursed for travel related expenses and accommodation only.

Q. What is the nomination and election schedule?

- The Call for Nominations to the Board of Directors opens on May 15, 2025 and closes on Jun 30, 2025.
- The Nominations Committee reviews all applications at the beginning of July and recommended candidates are asked to participate in a virtual interview.
- Interviews are conducted the week of July 21, 2025.
- All applicants are notified of the status of their application the week of July 28, 2025.
- Successful candidates are nominated as a slate and will be ratified at CORD's Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Aug 18, 2025, from 3:00 pm – 4:00 pm.
- New Board Members will be expected to join the AGM which will be held virtually, followed by a brief board meeting.

Q. What if I have more questions?

For additional information, or to be redirected to a member of the Nominations Committee, please contact: angela@raredisorders.ca