

San Diego County Bar Association

SDCBA Board Members' Guidelines as Liaisons to Committees and Sections

INTRODUCTION

The Board Liaison is the Board's link to the San Diego County Bar Association's committees and sections. *The Liaison plays the primary oversight role, on behalf of the Board*, and provides an informal and formal link between the Board and committee and section leadership. Board Liaison attendance and attention recognizes and acknowledges the importance of those volunteers. Fulfillment of liaison duties reflects on those volunteers' perception of *all* Board members and of the organization as a whole.

Finally, Board members' ongoing attention to the committee and/or section mission and to issues arising in committee and/or section meetings – and bringing those issues to the Board table – provides an early warning system for the Board. This prevents occasions of crisis and surprise.

There are three aspects to San Diego County Bar Association Board's relationship with its committees and sections, all of which are important in order to maximize the effect of our many volunteers' efforts. They are:

- **DUTIES OF THE BOARD LIAISON**
- **COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN BOARD AND COMMITTEES AND SECTIONS**
- **DUTIES OF THE COMMITTEE AND SECTION CHAIR**

I. DUTIES OF THE BOARD LIAISON

- The Board liaison must be familiar with the mission of the committee and/or section, make sure that it does not conflict with the overall mission and goals of the Association, and help the Section or Committee to accomplish it.
- The Liaison should schedule a conversation with the Chair in January. At that time, the Liaison and the Committee and/or Section Chair should go over the mission and the goals for the committee and/or section, the duties of the Liaison and of the Chair, the relationship of the committee and/or section to the Board, and emphasize the importance of attendance at the Orientation and Breakfast meeting held for Committee and/or Section Chairs.
- The Liaison should advise the chair that the Liaison is not an advocate for the committee and/or section, but is a conduit of information from the Board to the committee and/or section and from the committee and/or section to the Board. The Liaison is also a supporter and partner of the chair in achieving the committee and/or section mission.
- The Liaison should attend the Committee and Section Chair orientation meeting, usually held in early January.
- The Liaison should continually, throughout the year, monitor the committee and/or section's progress toward accomplishing its goals, and should also discuss with the Chair that progress.
- During the course of the year, the Board Liaison should serve as an organizational resource for the committee and/or section.
- The Liaison is responsible for advising the committee and/or section about appropriate processes for their activities, including the need for Board approval of policy items or expenditures.

- The Liaison should advise the Board if there are concerns with a committee and/or section, including for example, attendance, leadership or policy problems, and should recommend to the Executive Director in advance of a Board meeting that discussion of the committee and/or section be added to the Board agenda, or that the Committee and/or Section Chair be invited to the Board meeting.
- The Liaison should similarly advise the committee and/or section Chair that the Chair can make a presentation to the Board, upon request.
- Liaison attendance at committee and/or section meetings is very important. The Liaison should attend meetings several times each year. When the Liaison misses any committee and/or section meeting, he/she should contact the Chair soon thereafter to get a report on the missed meeting.
- The Liaison should review the Minutes of the committee and/or section meetings and share key items with the Board where appropriate.
- When the Board makes a decision about a committee and/or section or a committee and/or section recommendation, it is the Liaison's responsibility to deliver that decision to the committee and/or section *in person*.
- The Liaison should participate in formulating the annual goals for the following year.

II. COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN THE BOARD AND COMMITTEES AND/OR SECTIONS

- The San Diego County Bar Association should conduct a Chair Orientation meeting in early January. All Directors and Chairs should attend the meeting, and the annual goals of each committee and section should be discussed.
- Committee and Section Chairs should be invited to attend a Board meeting during the year. The Executive Director should provide each Chair with a short, mid-year and year-end report form to complete in July and December. The Liaison should also assess the committee and/or section's progress for report to the Board.
- The Board should schedule reports from the *Liaisons* at each Board meeting, addressing progress.
- Board Liaisons should report on key items from Committee and/or Section meetings, or meeting minutes, as appropriate, throughout the year by requesting time on the next Board meeting Agenda.

III. DUTIES OF THE COMMITTEE AND SECTION CHAIR

- At the time of anticipated appointment, the committee and/or section Chair should be given a Job Description outlining duties and expectations, and the committee and/or section's annual mission, and shall contact the President or Executive Director to confirm his or her willingness to accept those duties.