



Thank you for considering service on the Board of Directors of Center for People With Disabilities (CPWD).

The mission of CPWD is to provide resources, information and advocacy to assist people with disabilities in overcoming barriers to independent.

As you consider this opportunity, please familiarize yourself with this list of expectations:

As a Board Member –

1. I will interpret the organization's work and values to the community, and promote the organization.
2. I will attend at least 75% of board meetings (held monthly 11 times a year) and special events.
3. I will make a personal financial contribution at a level that is meaningful to me.
4. I will take seriously the major legal responsibilities of serving on a board, including and especially the fiduciary role.
5. I will stay informed about what's going on in the organization. I will ask questions and request information. I will participate in and take responsibility for making decisions on issues, policies and other board matters.
6. I will work in good faith with staff and other board members as partners towards achieving our goals.

From CPWD –

1. I will receive an orientation to the board by the Executive Director (ED) and a current member of the Board of Directors.
2. I will have access to monthly financial reports and an update of organizational activities that allow me to act as a "prudent person" in my legal responsibilities as a board member.
3. Opportunities will be offered to me to discuss with the ED and the Board Chair the organization's programs, goals, activities, and status; additionally, I can request such opportunities.

4. The organization will help me perform my duties by keeping me informed about issues in the community and by offering me opportunities for professional development as a board member.
5. Board members and staff will respond in a straightforward fashion to questions I have that I feel are necessary to carry out my fiscal, legal and moral responsibilities to this organization. Board members and staff will work in good faith with me towards achievement of our goals.
6. If the organization does not fulfill its commitments to me, I can call on the Board Chair and ED to discuss these responsibilities.

For Your Reflection

As you consider joining the board, here are some questions to consider:

Is CPWD the right cause and organization for me?

Approach this decision as if you were planning to make a major donation: you would probably begin by thinking of areas where you have strong feelings – perhaps care for the elderly, eliminating poverty, or human rights. After settling on a subject area, you might then learn about several different organizations working in that field, and investigate ones that seem to have high impact and are well managed. Only after you were fully satisfied would you make the donation.

The next time you consider joining a board, first ask yourself whether you truly feel strongly about the type of work that organization does and the people it serves. Since, as a board member, you will be investing not only money but time and energy, ask yourself whether the organization seems to be a pretty good risk as an investment.

Can I work with the organization and this board at this particular stage in its life?

Throughout an organization's life, board service may be fairly smooth with a few bumps, while at another time, board service may involve a hair-raising roller coaster ride (of course, an unexpected event can throw any board for a loop). What type of board seems right for you right now? What about the diversity of the board; does it represent the stakeholders in the community? You may want a board that really lets you roll up your sleeves and

get to work with the other board members, or you may want a board that is stable and can let you learn about board work in a deliberate way.

What can I, and what will I, contribute to this organization?

What skills, contacts, and perspectives do I have that will be useful to this organization? How, specifically, will the board use what I can bring? Often as board members, we find that some of our talents and contacts never seem to get utilized by the boards we're on. Perhaps you gave up a music career for accounting, or have writing skills that are not used at your job. Perhaps your network includes dozens of influential community leaders. Consider first what you bring to the table, and then, whether you are willing to give that to the organization. Look, too, for vehicles for your skills; if you can't see a specific vehicle (work on an event, help market a service, work with the Treasurer), your desire to contribute may well go unfulfilled. Ask Yourself:

Do I believe in this organization enough to introduce my friends to it? Can I make a commitment to attending at least 75% of the meetings? Am I willing to make a donation? Can I volunteer with other board members at other times than meeting dates? Would I feel comfortable having my name on their letterhead or in the brochure? The right time to ask these questions is before, not after, you have joined the board.

What do I want to get out of being on this board?

An all-too-common experience for board members at the ends of their terms is a feeling that they didn't, after all, really get deeply involved and don't, as a result, feel that they either contributed as much or got as much as they had hoped when they first joined. Board members who plan and ask for what they want in the board will contribute more as well as gain more. For example, if you don't have a finance background but wish you knew more about finance, consider asking to be appointed to a financial task force. If there's a community leader on another committee who you would love to get to know, ask to be on that committee, and put in the time to be sure you get to know all the members well. If one of your reasons for joining the board was to meet new people, volunteer to help any way that makes sense.

Board Member Application Form

Center for People With Disabilities (CPWD)

(all responses are optional)

Full Name _____

Mailing address _____

Which County do you live in? _____

Phone number _____ Email address _____

In lieu of answering the next two questions, please feel free to attach a resume.

Professional/Business/Volunteer affiliations _____

Membership in other organizations _____

In an accompanying letter, please provide a brief biography and address your skills, background, availability and interest in serving on the board.

Nominations will be reviewed for upcoming vacancies and will be maintained for future consideration. Thank you for your interest in serving on CPWD Board of Directors.

Signature of Applicant _____ Date _____