

Aquatic Foundation of Alaska (AFA)

Board–Staff Interaction Policy

Effective Date: October 2025

Approved By: AFA Board of Directors

Reviewed By: CEO / Executive Director

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the **Board of Directors** and **AFA staff** work together effectively, professionally, and within clearly defined boundaries.

This policy protects the integrity of AFA’s governance model, promotes operational efficiency, and ensures staff have a safe and structured work environment free from conflicting direction or unauthorized oversight.

1. Governance vs. Management

- The **Board of Directors** is responsible for **governance** — setting strategy, approving budgets and policies, and ensuring AFA fulfills its mission and complies with the law.
 - The **CEO / Executive Director** is responsible for **management** — overseeing all operations, staff, volunteers, and programs.
 - The Board **does not direct, supervise, or evaluate individual staff members**, other than the CEO.
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2. Communication Pathways

- **All board or committee communication with staff must go through the CEO.**
 - Individual board members and committee leads should not give tasks, feedback, or operational instructions directly to staff or volunteers.
 - Staff should never feel obligated to respond to or act upon any request that has not been approved by their supervisor or the CEO.
 - If board members need information or support from staff (e.g., data, scheduling, reports), the **CEO will determine who handles the request** and ensure the work aligns with staff capacity and priorities.
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3. Role of the CEO / Executive Director

- Serves as the **sole liaison** between the Board and AFA staff.

- Determines which staff members will assist committees or board initiatives.
 - Ensures that staff workloads, schedules, and resources are managed appropriately.
 - Protects staff from being overextended, redirected, or placed in situations that conflict with their defined roles.
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4. Staff Responsibilities

- Staff are accountable to their supervisor and the CEO — not to individual board members or committee chairs.
 - If a board member or committee lead gives an instruction, request, or directive outside of this policy, staff must **politely redirect the inquiry** to the CEO.
 - Staff will keep all communications professional, timely, and mission-aligned.
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5. Board and Committee Responsibilities

- Board members and committee leads are expected to respect AFA's operational boundaries.
 - Committees **advise and support** staff through strategy, fundraising, and resource development — they **do not manage daily operations or assign tasks**.
 - Any need for staff assistance (e.g., administrative help for an event) must be formally requested through the CEO and approved before being assigned.
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6. Enforcement & Conflict Resolution

If a board member or committee lead bypasses this policy:

1. The staff member should immediately notify the **CEO / Executive Director**.
 2. The CEO will address the matter directly with the individual involved.
 3. If the issue persists, it may be escalated to the **Board President** for review and correction.
 4. Continued violations will be documented and reviewed during the next board governance session.
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7. Annual Review & Acknowledgment

- This policy will be reviewed annually by the Governance Committee and CEO.
 - All board members, staff, and committee leads must acknowledge in writing that they have read and agree to abide by this policy.
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Acknowledgment

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read, understand, and agree to follow the AFA Board–Staff Interaction Policy.

Name Position Signature Date

Would you like me to create a **Board & Staff Acknowledgment Form** (a 1-page signature sheet) that you can include in both the **Board Manual** and the **Staff Handbook**?

That form would make everyone’s acknowledgment official each season.