

PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS FOR MEMBERS OF THE OKLAHOMA BOARD OF CORRECTIONS

Board members recognize that being selected to serve as a member is a significant honor. Because Oklahoma's incarceration rates are so high, our Oklahoma Department of Corrections (ODOC) system includes a 77-county, 24-hour, 7-day a week, comprehensive network of institutions, community corrections centers, statewide probation and parole services, correctional industries, agriculture operations, treatment programs, work release, halfway house and private prison contracting and oversight, medical, programs, community sentencing acts, and a variety of other mandates, expectations, and operations. Couple these with death penalty requirements, life and death decisions with hostage and riot situations, and the need to constantly educate all stakeholders, and ODOC has one of the most complex and comprehensive correctional systems in the nation.

This complexity is enhanced by a system that has antiquated facilities in dire need of refurbishment, funding, and staffing shortages, and other increasing demands on the system. ODOC has a budget of over a half billion dollars and over 4,200 employees. Thus, the Board member position is comparable to that of a large corporate director position, as the demands, expectations, qualifications, and external interactions, resemble those of many of our country's major corporations.

The Board sets challenging goals that focus on educating, directing and holding accountable the ODOC to relentlessly seek improvement, while advocating correctional excellence. Because the Board seeks to lead and set an example for all of ODOC's stakeholders, the Board of the State of Oklahoma has adopted certain performance expectations for its members. The following are legal and moral responsibilities, operational responsibilities, professional development requirements, and essential Board duties:

A. Legal and Moral Responsibilities

Board members are expected to conduct themselves above reproach in all of their public and private affairs, and wherever possible, avoid even the appearance of impropriety. They are expected to be models of integrity in their working relationships that demonstrates trust, honesty, and ethical behavior. They realize their high calling and place great importance on their roles as members, and possess a strong belief in the mission and goals of the Board and ODOC.

B. Operational Responsibilities

Board members provide effective oversight to ODOC in the enabling legislative Board guidelines. Board members are expected to:

1. Be completely knowledgeable of the Standard Operating Procedures for the Board and understands the history and purpose of the ODOC.
2. Attend all meetings, Board retreats, advancements, training, and strategic planning events, unless unavoidable personal, family, or business issues preclude them from doing so.
3. Arrive prepared for meetings, having read the agenda, minutes of previous meetings, and any reports and information sent out earlier.

4. Sit as Chair and/or members of the various Board standing and/or ad hoc committees.
5. Treat other Board members with respect and appropriate decorum. Sidebar conversations during meetings should be avoided as being potentially disruptive and discourteous.
6. Be open to members with diverse views, opinions, and expectations.
7. Create an environment that encourages learning, growth, and development of its members.
8. Have relationships with other Board members that demonstrate openness, trust, and mutual respect.
9. Foster an atmosphere open to the exchange of ideas and dialogue before, during, and after Board meetings.
10. Participate fully in Board business during meetings.
11. Use skills and talent to positively influence and impact areas within the Board and the ODOC.
12. Put aside personal positions when compromise is necessary.
13. Continuously challenge themselves to improve.
14. Assure themselves that they know what was decided in meeting and any responsibilities that were assigned to them.
15. Be comfortable with changing established ways of doing business.
16. Understand the ODOC, both financially, and operationally to enable knowledgeable discussion of existing or prospective ODOC policies, including, but not limited to the financial impact of such policies.

C. Professional Development Requirements

Like ODOC employees, Board members are expected to engage in continuous professional development. This includes Board members who:

1. Attend, as a newly appointed Board member, an ODOC orientation to become familiar with ODOC operations.
2. Are knowledgeable of the Modern Rules of Order.
3. Participate in training opportunities.
4. Actively and critically read recommended professional development materials and actively incorporate the lessons learned into action.
5. Develop new skills to contribute to the Board and ODOC.

D. Essential Board Duties

Board members are required by law to:

1. Consider appointments of facility heads and other staff members as desired by the Board.
2. Select architectural firms for projects when the architect's fee is over \$200,000.
3. Approve requisitions for construction contracts where estimated construction costs are greater than \$500,000.
4. Be involved in the selection of sites for new institutions and community corrections centers, and select and approve relocation of existing correctional facilities.
5. Review and approve the proposed ODOC budget before it is submitted to the Office of Management and Enterprise Services in the fall of each year for review by the Governor.
6. Review and approve all emergency expenditures of money that exceed the agency director's authority as allowed by law.
7. Make the final decision in selecting a contractor for the construction, operation or both from a list of the top three qualified prospective private prison contractors identified by ODOC.
8. Evaluate material furnished by ODOC regarding proposed new contracts for the operation, lease, or lease/purchase of a private prison and make a final decision selecting the contractor.
9. Authorize the agency director of ODOC to issue a letter or memorandum of support for any project involving construction or operation of a correctional facility other than the State of Oklahoma according to established procedures.

Board members are required by Board operating procedures to:

10. Establish policies for the operation of ODOC.
11. Refer to the agency director or designee for response any inquiries regarding ODOC's operations, actions, or policies received by Board members from the public, employees, or inmates. If those inquiries are of such a nature that referral to the agency director may be inappropriate, then referral should be made to the chairperson of the Board for appropriate disposition.
12. Encouraged to annually conduct at least one visit to an ODOC institution, community corrections center, and probation and parole office.
13. Serve on or chair one or more of the Board's standing or ad hoc committees.