



BOARD ORIENTATION KIT

DRAFT

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1. General Information

About St. Matthews House

St. Matthew's House (SMH) is a non-profit charitable organization founded in 1967 by the local Anglican churches in inner city Hamilton with a focus on caring for vulnerable populations in the surrounding neighbourhoods. It is located at 412/414 Barton Street East as its main office, with mobile workers across the city. SMH also operates a senior's centre and isolation program at the Eva Rothwell Centre.

Early programming of SMH in the 1960s and 1970s included the distribution of food vouchers and canned goods supplied by area Anglican parishes. SMH also participated in the first Community Committee on Emergency Food and Shelter. Over time, St. Matthew's House has become a critical link in the food security chain in this city.

We work in the heart of Hamilton's "Code Red" neighbourhoods. People living here face, on average, the highest rates of poverty in the city. This is associated with the highest rates of ill-health, mental illness and limited education levels. In some of these neighbourhoods, the average age of death is 65, while the average age of death reaches the mid-80s in more affluent parts of the city (Buist, 2019).

Our Vision: To provide hope and support for people to reach their full potential and lead fulfilling lives

Our Mission: St. Matthew's House is a place of hope that supports people in need

Our Values: Responsiveness, Accountability, Innovation, Diversity and Fairness

[What do we do? OUTLINE PROGRAMS and SERVICES here](#)

2. Governance

[Policy – attached as appendix A](#)

[Board Member Job Description](#)

From governance policy

A Board Member has an obligation to be an active participant and to:

- Be a donor to St. Matthew's House
- Understand the distinction between the strategic and policy role of the board and the day-to-day operational responsibilities of management
- Be informed of the services provided by St. Matthew's House and the terms of service agreements with funders.

- Prepare for and participate in the discussions and the deliberations of the Board and its committees.
- Attend St. Matthew's House events and represent St. Matthew's House in the community
- Be familiar with the organization's financial position and participate in decision making with regards to the fiduciary duty of board members
- Attend Board and committee meetings, understanding that non-attendance of three consecutive meetings without prior notice in a calendar year is reason for removal from the Board.
- Be aware of and subject to the Board conflict of interest guidelines.
- Act honestly and in good faith with a view to the best interests of St. Matthew's House.
- Exercise the care, diligence and skill that a reasonably prudent person would exercise in comparable situations.
- Maintain confidentiality with respect to board deliberations
- Support board decisions once reached in spite of any prior deliberation and differing opinions
- Refrain from illegal, criminal or unethical activities while in a relationship with St. Matthew's House, and proactively disclose any situations which may bring disrepute to the organization to the Chair
- Return all Board materials to St. Matthew's House on leaving the Board

Confidentiality

As a board member, you will agree not to release, discuss or comment on any client data or private information regarding St. Matthew's House. You realize that privacy and confidentiality are of utmost importance in my position at St. Matthew's House and if you are found to have disclosed information without permission of St. Matthew's House, you will be required to resign your position and may be subject to legal action.

Police Checks

As a board member, you are required to submit a police check prior to your tenure. For more information on how to obtain a police check, you can go to <https://hamiltonpolice.on.ca/how-to/obtain-criminal-records-check>

Conflict of Interest Guidelines

Policy G7

A conflict of interest is a perceived or real impediment to a Director's responsibility to support the Board's collective goals and interests, due to a member's affiliations, obligations or other associations and relationships outside the Board. A conflict of interest exists when the Board member participates in making a Board decision, when they know or should reasonably know that the decision may enhance, or be perceived to promote, the private interest of the Board member or the private interest of another person or organization with a formal association to the Board member.

Articles of Incorporation

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Overview

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