

Rogers County Literacy Council Policy Manual

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Membership

The bylaws set forth membership criteria.

Cost of services & scholarships

The one-to-one tutoring service offered to adults will be free of charge. Tutors and clients are expected to purchase study texts. However, at the discretion of the executive director, scholarships for books and materials are available to tutors and clients who are unable to buy them.

Tutors

Tutors must be 18 years of age or older. All tutors must take the Rogers County Literacy Council (“RCLC”) Tutor Training or provide reasonable assurance/proof of tutor certification at any other ProLiteracy Agency. Tutors will be expected and encouraged to attend in-service and advanced tutor training workshops to maintain and upgrade certification standards. At the discretion of the training coordinator, a tutor may be deemed unqualified to meet the terms of the tutor job description and not be assigned to a client.

Meetings

Board meetings are normally held the second Tuesday of the month and notice of any such meetings or change in the date shall be given pursuant to the bylaws. Reports for absence should be submitted to the executive director or the secretary. The following list represents the meetings of the corporation covered by the bylaws:

- Board Meetings
- Executive Committee Meetings
- Annual Meeting of the Corporation
- Special Meetings of the Board
- Special Meetings of the Corporation

It is recommended that Committees meet monthly.

Meetings will be automatically cancelled when Claremore Schools are not in session due to inclement weather.

Tutor in-service meetings

Tutor in-service meetings will be scheduled at a time and place by the Board.

Committee descriptions

The **Executive Committee** is comprised of the Board’s officers (President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer) plus one additional Board member who shall be appointed by the President. This committee shall have the power of the Board of Directors between meetings.

The committee shall recommend to the Board candidates for the position of Executive Director when necessary. This committee shall formulate a job description for the Executive Director, recruit, hire (with the approval of the entire Board), set salary and perform an annual evaluation of the performance of the Executive Director.

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The Executive Committee shall ensure the Board is organized so that it operates efficiently. Other committees, as described below, shall be formed as the Executive Committee recognizes the need, or the Executive Committee shall appoint Board members to be responsible for the areas so described.

The **Management Committee** and the Executive Director shall be responsible for the planning and development of short and long range goals of the organization.

The Management Committee chair shall be appointed by the newly elected President following the Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors. It is recommended that at least two committee members shall have served on the committee from the previous year. This committee shall be responsible for making nominations to fill Board vacancies and shall prepare a slate of officers for the ensuing year's Board. The nominating process can be delegated to an ad hoc committee with a representative of the management committee as an ex officio member.

The **Finance Committee** shall be chaired by the treasurer and meet monthly to review income and expenses of the organization. Recommendations can be made to other committees for expenditures. The Executive Director presents a preliminary budget to committee for review. The committee will make sure the annual budget is tied to outcomes, is in alignment with available resources, includes staff input, and supports programs, administration, evaluation, and fundraising.

The Finance Committee shall be responsible for ideas to increase resources for the organization. Ad Hoc committees are formed for special events planning and implementation. All Board members are encouraged to participate in fund raising activities. Committee members, other than Board members, may be recruited.

The **Program Committee** shall survey the quality and quantity of the programs of the organization. This committee shall make recommendations for new programs and assist in the recruitment of members to development and implement programs.

The **Recruitment and Recognition Committee** is responsible for reviewing policies for interviewing, placement, follow-up, training, and referrals of both tutors and clients. Committee members, other than Board members, may be recruited. The committee will ensure the council has a certified tutor trainer for basic English and ESL.

The **Public Information Committee** shall inform the community of literacy issues and the need for volunteers. Publicity for special projects shall be developed.

Committee reports

The annual reports of each committee shall be delivered orally at the annual meeting. The reports are due to the secretary by November 1. Each committee member shall receive a copy of the committee job description at the first committee meeting or at time of agreement to serve if at a later date. Job descriptions should be reviewed annually in August and submitted to the Executive Committee for Board approval. All committee job descriptions will be submitted to all Board members at the first Board meeting of each fiscal year.

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The executive director will assist the appointed chairs of all standing committees in communicating necessary information to committee members regarding meetings and minutes. The committee chairs will report orally at the annual meeting and at monthly Board meetings whenever possible or needed. The executive director will produce a written and published annual report regarding all pertinent program and committee meetings, financial, and organizational activities. Committee members need not be Board members except as provided in the bylaws.

Board expectations

1. Each Board Member shall demonstrate a commitment to the mission and vision of the council, and be familiar with RCLC's by-laws, policies, and business plan.
2. The Board will set policy and assess and approve programs and services that are appropriate to the mission and vision of the council. The Board will ensure that the organization is in compliance with regulations affecting non-profit organizations and has sound risk-management practices.
3. Each Board Member is expected to attend Board meetings and prepare for them. Board meetings are held regularly each month on a date agreed upon by the Board. A Board member is expected to call the Secretary if he/she is unable to attend a scheduled meeting. A Board member should review minutes from the previous Board meeting and attend appropriate committee meetings to prepare for Board meetings.
4. Each Board Member will attend the annual orientation/planning meeting.
5. The Board will establish and annually update a strategic plan based on sound planning principles and guided by the council's mission. The plan should take into account organization strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges, and include short- and long-term outcomes. The Board will monitor and assess outcomes so as to ensure the quality of products and services, which covers achievement of objectives, completeness, comprehensiveness, accessibility, affordability, number of clients receiving services, and coordination of services with other agencies.
6. Each Board Member is expected to serve on at least one Board committee.
7. Each Board Member is expected to attend the activities of RCLC. A Board member should attend a RCLC tutor training workshop and fund-raising events.
8. Each Board Member is expected to bring in-kind contributions to the organization. A Board member's in-kind contributions are not considered a substitute for tangible contributions.
9. Each Board Member is expected to make a personal cash contribution to the annual operating budget.
10. Each Board Member is expected to assist in raising the funds necessary to implement the approved budget of RCLC.
11. Each Board Member is expected to exercise discretion in conversations with others and to honor confidentiality.
12. Each Board Member is expected to be an advocate of RCLC in the community, establish relationships that further the work of the council, and communicate the council's goals to professionals and others in the service area.
13. Each Board Member is expected to exercise his fiduciary responsibility.

Contributions

RCLC shall refer all non-cash gifts to the Finance Committee for a review of the risks and benefits of the gift in consultation with appropriate experts and with the donor. The committee shall make a recommendation to the Executive Committee regarding acceptance of the gift and any actions to be

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taken to protect RCLC. This policy shall govern such gifts as stocks, bonds, commercial paper, insurance policies, real estate, or any non-cash asset donated to RCLC. Unsolicited gifts, either cash or non-cash, with unusual restrictions will also be reviewed in the same manner.

For all gifts, every donor should receive a written personal acknowledgement of his/her donation within 48 hours. Use the following guidelines when appropriate:

- Obtain the donor's permission before scheduling a public announcement. Allow him/her to review news releases in advance.
- Recognition gifts for donations at higher levels should be tailored to the donor's background and interests. The cost should not exceed 1.5-3 percent of the value of the donation.

Thank-you notes should:

1. State the reason for the Council's gratitude.
2. Identify the project or area improved by the donation (money and/or volunteered time).
3. Describe how the Council has benefited.
4. Include a sincere closing reaffirming the donor's importance to the organization's growth and survival.
5. Have a hand-written signature.

Minutes

Minutes of the Board meetings are sent to Board members only.

Individuals served by RCLC

RCLC offers its program services to clients over 16 years of age, or any person who can be helped by RCLC in the judgment of the Recruitment and Recognition Committee and/or the Programs Coordinator. All such clients are admitted to the one-to-one tutoring program at the discretion of the executive director. Information received during interviews of potential clients, and information retained and monitored by the program coordinator is confidential.

Literacy in families

As part of its mission, RCLC will promote literacy in families through cooperation and collaboration with local educational associations, agencies, library systems, and health and human service providers. Individual learners may be recruited in this way and RCLC will provide service as and when possible.

Equal opportunity

RCLC is committed to the concept and practice of providing equal employment opportunity to all employees and job applicants. RCLC does not discriminate in employment, make any employment decisions, or take any employment actions because of race, color, sex, sexual preference, national origin, religion, political beliefs, pregnancy, age, marital status, handicap not affecting qualifications for a particular position, or the disability of a qualified individual. This policy applies to membership on the Board of directors, any committee or volunteer opportunity, staff, and to persons served by RCLC. RCLC will not tolerate any harassing behavior or conduct, believing that employees, volunteers, and students have the right to work in an environment free of harassment and intimidation. This includes sexual, racial, color, creed, disability, age, political belief, or national origin harassment. Complaints of harassment should be reported to the Executive Director. They also

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may seek the assistance of any member of the Management Committee. Allegations of harassment will be investigated promptly and thoroughly and if warranted, appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, will be taken.

Ethics

It is the policy of RCLC to comply with all laws governing its operations and to conduct its affairs in keeping with moral, legal, and ethical standards. Compliance with the law means not only following the letter of the law, but conducting business in a manner by which RCLC will deserve and receive recognition as a good and law-abiding citizen of the business and nonprofit community.

Safety

RCLC will provide a safe environment for employees and volunteers in which to work, train, and tutor. This includes appropriate maintenance of the physical plant, and proper attention to the security of the premises. In addition, RCLC will maintain a strict policy regarding the locations where tutoring may take place. Otherwise, tutoring must take place in a neutral mutually agreed upon public locations approved by the executive director. Tutoring in the homes of either volunteers or learners is against RCLC's policy. A clear summary of safety policies, written in an easy to read manner, will be posted in the RCLC offices at all times. It will include building safety rules as well as safety policies.

Liability

RCLC disclaims all liability for personal or property injury and any and all consequential damages resulting to clients or volunteers. For the protection of both clients and volunteers, RCLC specifically adopts and posts a clear safety policy.

Memberships and affiliations

RCLC shall maintain its membership in the Oklahoma Literacy Coalition and any such other organizations as is deemed advisable at the discretion of the Board of directors. RCLC shall be an affiliate of ProLiteracy America.

Conferences/professional development guidelines

RCLC shall encourage attendance at literacy conferences locally, statewide, and nationally. Every effort will be made to include conference fees and conferee expenses in the annual budget with the goal of sending appropriate staff whenever possible. RCLC is committed to providing professional development opportunities for all staff members and will allocate funds annually in the budget for this purpose.

Conferences/professional development funding for volunteers and clients

RCLC shall encourage attendance for volunteers and clients at literacy conferences locally, statewide, and nationally. Every effort will be made to provide budget and grant-specific dollars for conference registration, travel, and lodging. A per diem may be provided for volunteers and clients when grant-specific dollars are available for conferences, training, or professional development. RCLC's policy is to encourage volunteers and client conferees to pay for their own food and beverages as an in-kind donation to the organization.

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Awards

Whenever possible individuals will be recommended for awards offered by local, state, and national organizations for outstanding performance at the discretion of the executive director.

Reimbursement policy

1. Reimbursements will be made only for Board-approved council expenses. The exception is the Executive Director spending policy (see below).
2. A receipt must accompany all expenses submitted for reimbursement. If the merchant or provider does not offer a receipt or the receipt is lost, a written explanation of the expense will be acceptable at the Treasurer's discretion.
3. Any expense over \$20 submitted for reimbursement must also be accompanied by a brief written explanation.
4. It will be the Treasurer's judgment to require written explanation for any expense \$20 and under.
5. It will be the Treasurer's judgment to refuse reimbursement for any expense that does not meet the above criteria.
6. Any receipts for legitimate RCLC expenses under \$20 not submitted for reimbursement within ninety (90) days of the date on the receipt will not be covered under this Reimbursement Policy and will not be paid to the member submitting the expense for reimbursement.

RCLC shall reimburse traveling members as follows:

- RCLC shall reimburse 100% of travel expenses *except* for trips to and from the RCLC office and/or tutoring sites.
- Distances longer than 250 miles may be considered for air travel. Air travel for distances shorter than 250 miles must be absorbed by scholarship, grant, or other funds.
- The executive director must approve car rental.
- Car travel will be reimbursed at the prevailing IRS mileage rate or a Board-approved flat amount.
- A per diem of \$26.00 (\$6 for breakfast, \$8 for lunch, and \$12 for dinner) shall be paid to cover food and beverages.

Executive Director spending policy

The Executive Director is authorized to spend up to \$150.00 per month without prior Board approval for minor operational expenses such as office supplies, photocopying, and emergency student book orders under the following conditions:

1. The budget is approved and the appropriate budget categories contain sufficient funds to pay for the items.
2. All justifications, receipts, and/or check requests for credit purchases must be presented at the next Board meeting.
3. The Treasurer is informed at the next Board meeting of any purchase or portion of a purchase to be used *in support of* a specific grant.
4. No capital items are purchased (computer hardware, software, furniture).

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Petty cash

RCLC will maintain a petty cash fund of up to \$50.00 for emergency cash purchases. The Executive Director and the Treasurer will keep the fund supplied, the Executive Director will secure the cash, and fund usage will be reported according to the Executive Director spending policy.

Board manual

The President or his/her appointee will maintain a manual of documents to be distributed to incoming Board members. New and/or replacement documents will be distributed to Board members when appropriate. Board members will keep their manuals current. Examples of documents include policies and procedures, strategic plans, and bylaws.

Record retention policy

The **Secretary** will retain all non-permanent documents (with the exception of bank statements and canceled checks) during her/his term. At the end of that term, she/he will be responsible for sorting documents to be discarded and to be passed to the next Secretary.

The **Treasurer** will retain all bank statements, canceled checks, receipts, and any other budget information and pass them to the next Treasurer.

The **President** will retain all permanent documents, keep them in a safe location, and pass them to the next president.

The following documents will be retained permanently:

1. RCLC Articles of Incorporation
2. RCLC Bylaws
3. Newsletters (chronologically)
4. IRS correspondence
5. Correspondence from the Secretary of State
6. A copy of the current Board Manual

The following documents will be retained for 7 years:

1. All bank statements
2. All cancelled checks
3. All quarterly and annual financial reports
4. Annual records of income/expenses
5. Annual records of fundraising income/expenses
6. Grant documents for grants received
7. Annual statistics reports to state and national organizations.

The following documents will be retained for 2 years:

1. Monthly meeting notes
2. Official correspondence
3. Attendance records
4. Grant applications for grants not received
5. Donor recognition letters

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Explanation of “years” and periods

RCLC’s planning, budgeting, spending, and reporting (both financial and statistical) occur in several different types of “years” and periods. We use a “pool of funds” accounting concept under which all monies received go into one pool, then the pool is apportioned over various operational categories in the annual budget. Grant funds *intended for specific uses by the grantor* become a separate “pool” and must be accounted for separately under their own categories.

Fiscal year

RCLC’s fiscal year is June 1 through May 31. The budget for our fiscal year is prepared and approved in the spring before the start of the new fiscal year. This process coincides with preparation of the United Way funding application for the new United Way fund period. RCLC’s financial reporting to the IRS are by fiscal year.

Calendar year

The calendar year is January 1 through December 31. RCLC program statistics and anticipated financial needs to be met by the *United Way* funding application are gathered by calendar year.

Grant year or grant period

A grant period is usually thought of as a 12-month year, although the grant period may be shorter or longer as determined by the grantor. Grant application data-gathering, budgeting, and reporting are all governed by the grant application and the contract. Grant years are independent of our fiscal and calendar years.