

## **International Mission Board, SBC Trustee Responsibilities**

The International Mission Board (formerly Foreign Mission Board) was created by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1845, and serves as an entity of the SBC. Trustees of the IMB are responsible for establishing overall policy and direction for the organization, and conducting oversight of its operations, but are not directly involved in day-to-day management and administration.

Mission: Making Jesus Christ known among all peoples.

Vision: We will lead Southern Baptists to be on mission with God to bring all the peoples of the world to saving faith in Jesus Christ.

State Representation: The board is elected as follows: (A) One member from each cooperating state and the District of Columbia; (B) One additional member from each state having 250,000 members; (C) An additional member for each additional 250,000 members in each state cooperating with the Southern Baptist Convention. Presently the number of trustees, including the president of the SBC, who is ex-officio on the board of trustees, is 89.

Term of Service: Trustees are elected to a 4-year term. Board members having served two full terms of four years are not eligible for re-election until as much as one year has elapsed. [A trustee, who has served more than half a term, is considered to have served a full term.]

### **General Trustee Responsibilities**

1. Trustees are expected **TO ATTEND** meetings of the Board. Trustees are encouraged to attend all six board meetings each year at the expense of the board, but are expected to attend a minimum of four meetings per year and participate fully in committees to which the trustee is assigned.

Board meetings normally begin in the afternoon of the first day and conclude with the end of the general business session at noon on the third day. Special committee meetings are occasionally scheduled at other times.

Missionary appointment services are an integral part of most meetings of the Board. Accordingly, all trustees in attendance at a Board meeting are expected to attend scheduled appointment services and take the opportunity to meet, congratulate and encourage the new missionaries and their families.

NOTE: It may be necessary for some pastors to be away from their church on Sunday evening and/or Wednesday evening in order to carry out their responsibilities as a trustee.

When a board member is not able to attend the minimum number of scheduled meetings or participate in assigned committee activities, it would be in the best

interest of the board if, after consulting with the chairman, the trustee would consider withdrawing from board membership.

2. Trustees are expected **TO REPRESENT** the interests of all Southern Baptists in global evangelism, not primarily the interests of Southern Baptists in his/her state. In other words, each trustee represents the total constituency, not any particular segment within the geographical United States.
3. Trustees are **TO INTERPRET** international missions in their sphere of influence in the denomination – home, local church, association, state convention, and SBC, as an informed, enthusiastic advocate of global missions. In this respect, trustees are to speak in positive and supportive terms as they interpret and report on actions by the Board, regardless of whether they personally support the action.
4. Trustees are expected **TO BECOME STUDENTS** of the agency, including its nature, programs, people and publications.
5. Trustees are **TO PARTICIPATE** in as many volunteer mission projects as possible.
6. Trustees are **TO EXEMPLIFY** what it means to be Christ-like in decorum and sincerely committed to the Southern Baptist cooperative missions tasks. In this respect, trustees are to speak the truth in love. Trustees are to refrain from speaking in disparaging terms about IMB personnel and fellow trustees.
7. Trustees of the International Mission Board are **TO COVENANT** with the Southern Baptist Convention by wholeheartedly affirming the current edition of the *Baptist Faith and Message*, as the standard for carrying out the programs and ministries of the Board. (Policy 100-5). Annually the new trustees will be given the opportunity to express this covenant by signing a statement affirming the BFM at orientation.

### **Specific Trustee Responsibilities**

1. Review and approve strategy and policy matters
2. Set qualifications for field personnel in all categories of service
3. Review and approve the appointment, re-appointment, employment, termination, resignation, reassignment between regions and retirement of career, associate, and apprentice field personnel
4. Review and approve guidelines for missionary support structures
5. Give oversight to the financial matters of the IMB, including adoption of budget and oversight of investments
6. Approve annual budget and reallocation of budget funds
7. Approve Lottie Moon Christmas Offering capital items
8. Approve sale or transfer of IMB property

9. Approve the selection of auditors to perform the annual audit
10. Review and approve selection, release, resignation or retirement of staff personnel under the direct selection authority of the Board. Set salary structure and benefits for all staff and specific salaries for the president and executive vice president.
11. Review and approve legal resolutions
12. Handle other duties as assigned by the committee or the chairman of the board

### **Trustee Legal Status and Duty**

Legally speaking, all IMB trustees are members of the Board of Directors of a Virginia Non-Profit Corporation that is wholly owned (but not controlled) by the SBC.

- trustee rights and duties are governed by SBC and IMB Constitutions and Bylaws, approved IMB policies, and Virginia law
- civil courts generally refrain from getting involved in the internal governance of religious organizations, based on First Amendment limitations
- legal standard by which trustee decisions are judged: did the trustee act in accordance with his or her good faith judgment as to what is in the best interests of the corporation, and within the framework of established organizational policies?

The essence of the trust that SBC messengers vest in IMB Trustees is to faithfully carry out the Board's four (4) ministry assignments and to periodically report progress

- to do all this within the framework of applicable SBC and IMB Constitutions, Bylaws, approved IMB policies, and the SBC Business and Financial Plan
- in a way that maximizes the effective application of available missionary personnel and financial resources, glorifies God, and points others to Jesus Christ
- to work together as a collegial body to establish policies, strategies and standards to govern the global operations of the IMB
- implicit: to work out differences among trustees so as to keep the Board from splintering into factions and losing its primary focus of advancing the Kingdom

Areas of special concern:

- promptly disclose any financial or other conflict of interest, so the Board can decide whether to disqualify the trustee from acting in an affected matter
- be meticulous in recording and accurately reporting travel and related expenses in connection with claims for reimbursement by the Board
- if in doubt about the propriety of a certain course of action, feel free to consult the Board's legal counsel

## **Trustee Standards of Conduct**

Individual trustees elected to the Board by the messengers of the Southern Baptist Convention should conduct their official and personal affairs in a way that not only contributes to the mission of the IMB but points others to Jesus Christ as the Lord of All.

1. Individual IMB trustees must refrain from public criticism of Board approved actions. Experience has shown that it is not possible to draw fine lines in this area. Freedom of expression must give way to the imperative that the work of the Kingdom not be placed at risk by publicly airing differences within the Board.
2. Trustees must scrupulously avoid either the fact or the appearance of having disclosed information secured during closed or executive sessions of the full Board or any of its committees, or any other non-public information concerning Board operations (regardless of how and where secured) with persons who are not trustees or senior Board staff. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to, quoting or sharing private conversations or statements by fellow trustees or senior Board staff with persons who are neither trustees nor senior Board staff.
3. Trustees are free to discuss all issues of concern with fellow trustees, and such candid exchanges of views are essential to the smooth functioning of the Board.

However, trustees must take special care to avoid participation in any unauthorized subgroup of trustees or other individuals, who communicate on a recurring basis to advance a specific agenda concerning matters falling within the overall authority and competence of the Board.

4. During the course of regular meetings of the Board, trustees will direct all comments to the Chair, and refrain from argumentation that involves questioning the integrity or motivations of fellow trustees.
5. No trustee may make or cause others to make any audio or video recording of Board proceedings without the advance permission of the Chairman.
6. Whenever among individual trustees differences arise that threaten or cause damage to mutual trust and their ability to work together in a cooperative spirit, they shall follow the Biblical process for seeking resolution of such differences and make resolution of such differences their first priority.
7. Trustees who are interested in any aspect of the operations of the Board or the IMB are encouraged to use all available channels and opportunities for securing all relevant information from within the Board and IMB structures.

## **Trustee Disciplinary Action**

All steps of discipline are to follow the pattern of Matthew 18:15-17 and 1 Timothy 5:19-20.

Concerns about possible violations of this policy shall be referred to the Chairman, who shall take appropriate action to address such possible violations, in consultation with board officers and appropriate senior staff.

Depending on the circumstances, appropriate actions could include referral to the IMB Executive Committee (General Policy 1100-10) for investigation, and/or mediation. If the matter is still unresolved, it may be brought to the floor of a meeting of the Board with a motion to censure the violating trustee or trustees, or suspend their active involvement with the Board, or to take the final action of removal from the Board by action of the SBC.

**[Note, this policy supersedes the document, *Ordered by God, Manual for Trustees*, which now becomes a reference document.]**