

## International Ombuds Association

### GUIDING DOCUMENTS

#### Board Behavioral Guidelines

<b><i>At All Times</i></b>	<b><i>Before Meetings<sup>1</sup></i></b>	<b><i>During Meetings<sup>2</sup></i></b>	<b><i>After Meetings</i></b>
<b>Guiding Principles</b>	<b>Essential Elements</b>	<b>Ground Rules</b>	<b>Working Assumptions</b>
◇ Culture of respectful and inclusive dialogue (see Catalyst ground meeting rules attached).	◇ Board members are expected to read preparatory materials and prepare for dialogue.	◇ Every agenda item will be time boxed with the desired outcome on the topic in mind.	◇ As ambassadors to the board and the Ombuds profession, board members must adhere to the decisions of the board with a unified voice.
◇ Listen to others, listen actively. During teleconference calls, please keep yourself on mute unless you have a point.	◇ The goal is to gain deeper understanding, even when we don't always agree.	◇ "Keep the conversation focused on the agenda topic and accept that the meeting facilitator may remind us to keep on topic."	◇ Participate to the fullest of your ability - community growth depends on including every individual voice.
◇ Board members should be aligned on the top three strategic priorities in all decision making.	◇ We commit to three face-to-face meetings to focus on team building and alignment of priorities.	◇ Issues not relevant to the agenda topic may be deferred to the parking lot.	◇ Follow up and follow through on the commitments made to one another.

<sup>1</sup> The board accepts Roberts Rules as its guiding principles. Some items may be included in the [Consent Agenda \(definition\)](#).

<sup>2</sup> The top three strategic priorities will be listed on the reverse side of name cards during face to face meetings.

<p>◇ Be willing to respectfully challenge one another by asking questions, but refrain from personal attacks -- focus on issues.</p>	<p>◇ Meeting Materials: To minimize confusion and allow time for adequate preparation for meetings, Board meeting materials should be made available in one package and at least one week prior to the meeting.</p>	<p>◇ Communications between and during meetings should be kept confidential and kept between board members.</p>	<p>◇ Constructive Dialogue: We will take the initiative to pursue clarification and understanding directly from other Board members regarding proposals they are advocating, concerns they have expressed, positions they have taken.</p>
<p>◇ Participate to the fullest of your ability - community growth depends on including every individual voice.</p>	<p>◇ All proposed agenda items should use the form.</p>	<p>◇ Each meeting will include a review of action items, due dates, and responsible parties.</p>	<p>◇ We have each other's back; we are a team.</p>
		<p>◇ Consider saying "Yes, AND . . ." not "Yes, BUT . . ." <sup>3</sup> and being conscious of body language and nonverbal responses.</p>	

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<sup>3</sup> Instead of invalidating somebody else's story with your own experience, additionally share your own experience.