Principles & Practices Colorado Nonprofit Association

Governance & Leadership

Organizational Assessment and Planning Tool

A nonprofit's governing body, officers, and key employees are responsible for defining and upholding the organization's mission, vision, and values, and for providing overall leadership and strategic direction to the organization. Each nonprofit board should:

- Ensure that the organization is adequately resourced to carry out its mission;
- Advance the ethical and legal integrity of the organization and ensure accountability and good governance practices;
- Ensure that activities and expenses align with mission focus;
- Actively set and implement policies;
- Provide oversight, direction, and moral support for the chief executive in order to further the goals of the organization; and
- Evaluate its own effectiveness as a governing body and as representatives of the community in upholding the public interest served by the organization.

Members of the governing body need to be aware of the legal fiduciary duties related to their work: the *duty of care*, the *duty of loyalty* and the *duty of obedience*.

► Required by law	No/ Not Begun	Somewhat/ In Process	Yes/ Completed	Not Applicable	Not Sure
Board Roles					
1. ► We have a board of directors. *CRS § 7-128-101*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. ► We have all required officers (president, secretary, and treasurer; or as indicated in bylaws) *CRS § 7-128-301; 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Our board members are provided with clear job descriptions and understand their roles and responsibilities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Board Responsibilities: Oversight & Evaluation					
4. ► We are knowledgeable and in compliance with all applicable federal, state, local, and international laws. *990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. Our board reviews and approves new or revised fiscal and governance policies. *990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. Our board annually reviews and approves the budget. *990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our board or the appointed finance committee reviews financial reports quarterly, at a minimum, and monthly if possible. *990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
If an audit is conducted, our board reviews and approves the audit. *990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

► Required by law	No/ Not Begun	Somewhat/ In Process	Yes/ Completed	Not Applicable	Not Sure
All board members are given the opportunity to review and approve the Form 990 prior to submission, and are aware of any other state and local filings. *990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Our board actively participates in and approves the strategic planning efforts of the organization.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Our board conducts an annual evaluation of itself.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Periodically, our board reviews its size, composition, and operational structure.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. Our board annually reviews our articles of incorporation, bylaws, corporate policies, and mission statement, and amends them as needed to reflect organizational growth and development.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. Our board annually conducts a performance review of the chief executive, including his/her compensation. *990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
► Our board ensures that executive compensation is reasonable. *CRS § 7-133-102; IRC §§ 501(c)(3) and 4958; 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. Our board engages in succession planning for the chief executive, board members and key staff.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Board Responsibilities: Fundraising & Development					
12. Our board members volunteer their time and assist in raising external funds.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
One-hundred percent of our board members give financially to our organization.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Expectations for each board member are clearly communicated in writing to all prospective and existing board members.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our board members are provided with fundraising training and support materials.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13. We help each board member identify the roles for which they are best suited.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14. We provide the necessary training and education to empower our board members to advocate for our organization.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our board members act as liaisons with the community by sharing our organization's mission, accomplishments and goals.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our board members solicit feedback from the community about its needs and expectations.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

► Required by law	No/ Not Begun	Somewhat/ In Process	Yes/ Completed	Not Applicable	Not Sure
Board Responsibilities: Independence					
15. A substantial majority (at least two-thirds) of our board members are independent. *990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
16. We have a conflicts of interest policy with disclosure form that must be signed annually by our board and key staff. *990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our board members are required to disclose all material facts and relationships and refrain from voting on any matter in which they have a conflict of interest. *990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We regularly and consistently monitor and enforce compliance with our conflict of interest policy. *990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
17. ► Our board members do not receive monetary compensation for their board duties other than reimbursement for board-related expenses. (If compensation is paid, it must be reasonable in amount.) *CRS § 7-133-102(b); 26 CFR § 53.4958-4(b)(1)(ii); 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Board Procedures					
18. Our board members are provided with an orientation and a board manual.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
19. We have a systematic process for educating board members to ensure that each member is equipped with the information needed to carry out oversight functions, act on all legal and ethical responsibilities, and be knowledgeable of the community served by our organization.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
20. Our board has established a process for recruiting, evaluating and selecting new board members, including staggered terms and term limits.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
21. Our board meets at least quarterly and regular attendance is expected of all board members.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
22. ► We keep minutes of all board meetings and records of any actions taken by the board without a meeting. These are kept as permanent records of our organization. *CRS § 7-136-101; 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
► Minutes and records of actions taken without a meeting are recorded contemporaneously and include the date, time, attendees, motions, and votes. *CRS § 7-136-101; 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

► Required by law	No/ Not Begun	Somewhat/ In Process	Yes/ Completed	Not Applicable	Not Sure
23. ► Our board follows the statutory voting procedures unless otherwise defined in our bylaws. *CRS §7-128-205; 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
24. ► We follow proper statutory criteria when taking action without a board meeting. *CRS §7-128-202*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
25. We have organized committees or task forces to effectively structure our board's roles and responsibilities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Each of our committees have a charter or other clear statement of authority and purpose.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Board Composition					
26. We strive to have board representation that reflects the diversity of our community and constituency.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our board values cultural competency, diversity, and inclusiveness as essential to advancing our mission.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
27. ► We abide by the number of directors stated in, or fixed in accordance with, our bylaws (must have at least one board member; best practice is to have at least 5 board members). *CRS § 7-128-103*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
28. ► We abide by the terms/term limits indicated in our bylaws (directors serve for one-year terms with no limits unless otherwise provided in bylaws). *CRS § 7-128-105*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our board has a clear policy on the length of terms, the rotation of directors (e.g., staggered terms), the number of consecutive terms a board member may serve, and the removal of board members. This policy is stated in our bylaws.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
29. Our board includes members with the diverse skills, background, expertise, and experience necessary to fulfill all needed board roles.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our board has at least one individual with financial expertise (does not necessarily need to be a CPA).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
All of our board members receive financial literacy training as needed.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our board has no more than one employee (typically the chief executive) serving on the board, and he/she does not serve as the chair, vice-chair, secretary or treasurer.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
30. Staff members that may serve on our board do so as ex-officio members without official voting status.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Principles & Practices Colorado Nonprofit Association

Transparency & Accountability

Organizational Assessment and Planning Tool

Nonprofits have an ethical and legal obligation to their constituents and the public to conduct their activities in a transparent and accountable manner. Nonprofits should regularly and openly convey information to the public about their mission, activities, accomplishments, and decision-making processes. Information should be easily accessible to the community in order to increase external visibility and public understanding of the organization in order to ultimately build trust in the organization.

▶ Required by law	No/ Not Begun	Somewhat/ In Process	Yes/ Completed	Not Applicable	Not Sure
Accountability					
1. ▶ We are in compliance with all legally required reporting procedures. *e.g., IRC § 6033; CRS § 6-16-101; 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. We share our evaluation methodology and results with the public.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. We reference and adhere to the established industry standards for the nonprofit sector, our subsector and our particular activity area(s).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Accessibility & Public Information					
4. We provide ongoing opportunities for our constituents to interact with our board and management regarding our activities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Accessibility & Public Information					
5. We make information about our operations, including governance, finances, programs, and activities, widely available to the community and on our website. *990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▶ At a minimum, our organization (unless specifically exempted) makes certain data available to the public, including: Annual Information Return (usually an IRS Form 990, 990-EZ, 990-N, or 990-PF) for the most recent three years; Annual Tax Return (usually an IRS Form 990-T) for the most recent three years if we have unrelated business income; and IRS Form 1023, Application for Recognition of Tax-Exempt Status, including any papers submitted in support of the Application and any letter or other document issued by the IRS with respect to the Application. *IRC § 6104; 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

► Required by law	No/ Not Begun	Somewhat/ In Process	Yes/ Completed	Not Applicable	Not Sure
We charge a reasonable fee (or no fee) for copying and postage expenses incurred by providing these documents.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. We produce an annual report (in print and/or in electronic format) that contains information on our activities, accomplishments, performance and vision for the future.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Solicitation of Community Input					
7. We hold public community meetings to gather and distribute information about our approaches, goals, and effectiveness in carrying out our mission.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We make meeting agendas and descriptions of significant decisions available to those who request them.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. We actively work with other organizations to avoid duplication of services, learn from each other, and share resources when appropriate.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Fairness & Equity Practices					
9. We make information regarding fees and services readily available to the public. Our services are priced equitably when we charge for them.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. We ensure nondiscriminatory service to our constituents.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We ensure that we maintain appropriate confidentiality for our constituents.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. We have a formally adopted, written code of ethics that all of our board, staff, and volunteers adhere to.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Corporate Documents & Records					
12. ► We have a written, mandatory document retention and destruction policy or schedule with guidelines for handling all types of documents, including electronic files and voicemail. The policy includes backup procedures, archival procedures, and guidelines for regular checkups of the reliability of the system. We are prepared to retain any documents that may be or may become involved in litigation or a government investigation. *18 USC § 1519 – a.k.a. Sarbanes-Oxley; 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13. ► We have kept our articles of incorporation, bylaws, resolutions, board meeting minutes, records of actions taken by the board, accounting records, current list of board members, and current list of members (if applicable) as easily accessible permanent records. *CRS § 7-136-101 et. seq.*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Principles & Practices Colorado Nonprofit Association

Financial Management

Organizational Assessment and Planning Tool

Nonprofits have an obligation to act as responsible stewards of their financial resources. ▶ *Nonprofits must comply with all legal financial requirements* and should adhere to sound accounting principles that produce reliable financial information, ensure fiscal responsibility, and build public trust. Nonprofits should use their financial resources to accomplish their missions in an effective and efficient manner, and should establish clear policies and practices to regularly monitor how funds are used. Adherence to best practices, especially for those nonprofits that do not receive an annual audit or financial review, is critical to maintaining compliance and public trust.

▶ Required by law	No/ Not Begun	Somewhat/ In Process	Yes/ Completed	Not Applicable	Not Sure
1. We produce consistent and accurate financial reports at least quarterly.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our income and expense reports compare the budget for the same period to the actual income and expenses and we include explanations for significant variances.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Our board members receive appropriate training on how to read and understand nonprofit financial statements.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our board members are actively engaged in reviewing financial statements and providing fiscal oversight.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. We have devised and implemented internal control procedures that are appropriate for our organizations.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Compliance					
4. ▶ We comply with all financial reporting and tax laws, including withholding and payment of federal and state income taxes and Social Security payroll taxes. *990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. We have our chief executive officer, chief financial officer (or equivalent), board, and audit committee (if applicable) thoroughly review and approve the IRS Form 990 and 990-T (if applicable) to ensure that they are accurate, complete, and filed on time. *990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. Our nonprofit has a qualified independent CPA conduct an audit or review of our financial statements annually or in a manner appropriate to our organization's size and scale of operations.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

► Required by law	No/ Not Begun	Somewhat/ In Process	Yes/ Completed	Not Applicable	Not Sure
In the process of the audit, the auditor is given the opportunity to meet in executive session with our board separately from management and staff. *990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The independent financial audit or review is reviewed and approved by our board. *990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Our board has designated an audit committee to hire the auditor, oversee and evaluate the audit process, meet with the auditor to review the audit's content, and present the audit to the full board for its review and approval. *990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Our audit committee (or board) evaluates the quality of our audit firm and periodically puts the audit out to bid.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
When maintaining the same firm, our nonprofit requests a new audit partner every three to five years in order to ensure a fresh, objective perspective.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Policies					
9. ► We openly communicate the annual reporting information contained on our Form 990 to our constituents and others who request such information. *IRC § 6104; 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We share, at least annually, an overview of data regarding sources of revenue, functional expenditures, and related outcomes (usually in the form of an annual report).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. We ensure that our assets are used solely for the benefit of the organization, and not for personal or other gains.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We have a policy regarding the personal use of assets such as computers, phones, copy machines, etc.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. ► We have a system in place that allows individuals to report financial and other misconduct and must ensure that there is no consequence for doing so – commonly referred to as a "whistleblower policy". *18 USC § 1107 – a.k.a. Sarbanes-Oxley; 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. ► We manage and invest funds prudently and are in compliance with conditions attached to funding. *CRS § 15-1-1103–1109; 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
► We have adopted a sound investment policy, which is reviewed periodically. *CRS § 15-1-1103–1109; 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

► Required by law	No/ Not Begun	Somewhat/ In Process	Yes/ Completed	Not Applicable	Not Sure
13. We have policies that provide clear guidance on our rules for paying or reimbursing expenses incurred by anyone conducting business on behalf of the organization. The policy specifies the types of expenses that can be reimbursed, the approval and review process of expense reports, and the documentation required to substantiate expenses.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our expense reimbursement policy requires that travel and other expenditures on behalf of the organization are undertaken in a cost-effective manner.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14. We neither pay for nor reimburse travel expenditures (other than minor and incidental expenses such as refreshments served at an organization meeting) for spouses, dependents, or others who are accompanying individuals conducting business for the organiza	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15. ► We do not make any loans to board members or officers. *CRS § 7-128-501; 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We expressly prohibit loans to key personnel. *990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
16. ► We do not allow personal use of organizational funds or business credit cards and are aware that any such transaction may constitute private inurement or an excess benefit transaction under the intermediate sanctions rules. *IRC § 501(c)(3) and 4958; CRS § 7-133-101; 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
17. We have a policy that provides clear guidance on the appropriate use of business credit cards that provides consequences for unsubstantiated expenses and personal use of credit cards. *990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our credit card policy specifies oversight procedures including board oversight of the chief executive officer's credit card expenditures. *990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Financial Responsibilities					
18. Our board reviews and approves the annual budget for the organization.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our board considers applicable industry benchmarks for expenditures on programs, administration and fundraising.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

► Required by law	No/ Not Begun	Somewhat/ In Process	Yes/ Completed	Not Applicable	Not Sure
19. We work towards diversifying our funding sources as much as possible in an effort to strengthen the organization's sustainability and public support ratio, and to lessen the impact of a potential loss of a significant amount of its funding from any one source.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
20. ► We comply with specific conditions placed upon donations. *CRS § 15-1-1103-1109; CRS § 6-16-111(1)(i); 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
► We clearly categorize our donated funds as unrestricted, temporarily restricted or permanently restricted in our financial statements and communications in accordance with the donor or grantor wishes/stipulations. *CRS § 15-1-1103-1109; CRS § 6-16-111(1)(i); 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
21. ► We qualify as a public charity either under the "public support test" or the "facts and circumstances test". *IRC § 170(b)(1)(A)(VI) and 509(a)(1); 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
22. We spend a high percentage of our annual budget on programs in pursuance of our mission and consult industry and subsector standards to determine an appropriate range for administration and fundraising ratios.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We provide sufficient resources for effective administration of the organization and, if the organization solicits contributions, for appropriate fundraising activities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
23. We have planned, established, and maintained a financial reserve at a level determined by the organization's management and board to adequately support its operations (typically three to six months of operating expenses).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We have a reserve policy that identifies our target range and when the reserves may be used.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
24. We project, monitor, and make adjustments to cash flow as needed to ensure appropriate cash flow.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Principles & Practices Colorado Nonprofit Association

Fundraising

Organizational Assessment and Planning Tool

Nonprofit organizations provide opportunities for individuals and institutions to voluntarily contribute to causes of their choosing and play an important societal role in serving as the vehicle by which philanthropy occurs. Nonprofits act as the intermediary between donors and beneficiaries, and have an ethical obligation to ensure proper handling of funds to carry out their missions. Nonprofit fundraising should be conducted according to the highest ethical standards with regard to solicitation, acceptance, recording, reporting, and use of funds. Nonprofits should adopt clear policies for fundraising activities to ensure responsible use of funds and open, transparent communication with contributors and other constituents.

▶ Required by law	No/ Not Begun	Somewhat/ In Process	Yes/ Completed	Not Applicable	Not Sure
Charitable Solicitation					
1. ▶ We comply with all federal, state, and local laws concerning fundraising practices. *990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. ▶ We file a registration statement with the Colorado Secretary of State and annually renew our registration with updated financial information and any material changes. (All organizations that solicit funds must do so unless excepted by law.) *CRS § 6-16-104 (1-6)*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. ▶ If/when we contract with professional fundraisers, we ensure they are registered with the Colorado Secretary of State. *CRS § 6-16-104.3 (2, 9), 104.6(2, 9)*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
▶ If/when we contract with professional fundraisers, we actively monitor the receipts and disbursements of those agencies or individuals. *CRS § 6-16-104.6 (8-9)*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. ▶ We provide appropriate training and supervision of anyone soliciting funds on our behalf to ensure that they understand their responsibilities, applicable federal, state and local laws, particularly disclosure requirements for donors. *CRS § 6-16-105, 105.3*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We ensure that anyone soliciting funds on our behalf do not employ techniques that are coercive, intimidating, or intended to harass potential donors.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. ▶ We are aware of and in compliance with requirements for gaming, auctioneering, bingo, and raffles. *CCR § 1505-2(3.0); CRS § 6-16-110; 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

► Required by law	No/ Not Begun	Somewhat/ In Process	Yes/ Completed	Not Applicable	Not Sure
6. We only pursue and accept funding that is in alignment with our organization's strategic direction and mission.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Our fundraising communications are clear, accurate, and honest with regards to information about our organization, activities, and the intended use of funds. Our organization is clearly identified on all fundraising communications.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. We work towards diversifying our funding sources as much as possible in an effort to strengthen the organization's sustainability and public support ratio, and to lessen the impact of a potential loss of a significant amount of its funding from any one source.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Accountability to Donors					
9. We conduct our fundraising activities in a manner that upholds the public's trust in stewardship of contributed funds.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. ► We comply with specific conditions placed upon donations. *CRS § 15-1-1103-1109; CRS § 6-16-111(1)(i); 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
► Our donated funds are clearly categorized as unrestricted, temporarily restricted or permanently restricted in our financial statements and communications in accordance with the donor or grantor wishes/stipulations. *CRS § 15-1-1103-1109; CRS § 6-16-111(1)(i); 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. ► To enable a donor to receive a charitable deduction, we provide contemporaneous written acknowledgement all donors to substantiate their contributions. (Note: Not required unless certain circumstances are met.) *IRC § 170(f)(17); 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
► We provide a receipt for contributions in cash (including those paid by check or credit card) or property (in-kind or non-cash) where the fair market value is at least $250. (At a minimum - it is a best practice to provide receipts for all contributions.) *IRC § 170(f)(8); 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
► We give a written acknowledgment to donors who make a "quid pro quo" donation in excess of $75 (i.e. a payment made partly as a contribution and partly for goods and/or services). *IRC § 6115(a); 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

► Required by law	No/ Not Beg•n	Somewhat/ In Process	Yes/ Completed	Not Applicable	Not Sure
► In order to accurately reflect the value of a non-cash contribution, we use a qualified appraisal to substantiate a donation of property when the fair market value of contributed property is more than $5,000. *26 CFR §1.170A-17(a), (b); 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. We provide public recognition of donors when appropriate and maintain donor confidentiality when requested.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We do not share, trade or sell contact information for any donor without prior permission from the donor.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13. We regularly communicate with donors and grantors regarding our activities and expenditure of funds in periodic or final reports, as agreed upon at the time of donation. We provide responses to questions or requests for additional information in a timely fashion.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Policies & Procedures					
14. We apply a significant percentage of each dollar raised to programs and services in accordance with practices of comparable organizations and commitments made to contributors and the public.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15. Our board and leadership is familiar with the Association of Fundraising Professionals' (AFP) Code of Ethical Principles and Standards of Professional Practice and we ensure that all fundraising professionals and others representing us in fundraising activities adhere to this code.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
16. Consistent with AFP guidelines, we ensure that compensation for fundraising personnel and contractors is not based on a percentage of funds raised or other commission-based formulas.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
17. We are familiar with the legal distinctions between staff, consultants, and contract employees.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We ensure that our staff has the knowledge and ability to adequately manage and supervise all fundraising activities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
18. Our board assumes overall responsibility for raising sufficient funds to meet our budgeted objectives.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
One-hundred percent of our board members should give annually to the organization to the best of their ability or in accordance with a written board giving policy.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
19. We have policies in place that govern the receipt, management and reporting of gifts (cash or non-cash) and grants.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

► Required by law	No/ Not Begun	Somewhat/ In Process	Yes/ Completed	Not Applicable	Not Sure
20. We have clear policies regarding the acceptance of gifts (cash or non-cash). *990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We have a policy regarding acceptance of personal gifts from any constituent to staff members, board members, and volunteers.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
21. We decline gifts (cash or non-cash) that would bring about adverse conditions for our organization or our constituents and gifts given for purposes outside the scope of our mission.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We have clear policies, based on the organization's exempt purpose, to determine whether accepting a gift would compromise the ethics, financial circumstances, program focus, or other interests of the organization.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Principles & Practices Colorado Nonprofit Association

Human Resources

Organizational Assessment and Planning Tool

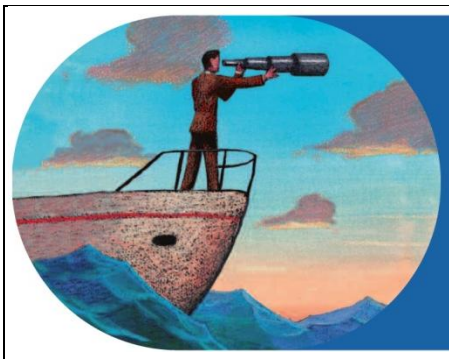
The ability of an organization to make effective use of the energy, time, and talents of its employees and volunteers is essential to accomplishing the organization's mission. Nonprofit organizations should place a high priority on exercising fair and equitable practices that attract and retain qualified volunteers and employees. Like for-profits, nonprofits have an obligation to adhere to all applicable employment laws and to provide a safe and productive work environment. Each nonprofit organization should establish specific policies and practices that promote cooperation and open communication among employees, volunteers and other stakeholders so that they can effectively work together to advance the organization's mission.

► Required by law	No/ Not Begun	Somewhat/ In Process	Yes/ Completed	Not Applicable	Not Sure
General					
1. ► We comply with all federal, state, and local employment laws when hiring and employing personnel. *990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. We continually work to provide a safe and healthy work environment.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
► We carry workers' compensation insurance. *CRS § 8-44-101*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. We have a set of guidelines and procedures for managing employees and volunteers that includes broad and encompassing equal opportunity employment policy, anti-harassment guidelines, and nondiscrimination guidelines.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. We include both employee and volunteer records retention guidelines and procedures in our records retention policy that are consistent with applicable laws and industry best practices.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. We have a clear conflict of interest policy that requires disclosure of relationships, nepotism, and interested-party transactions. *990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our conflict of interest policy includes a disclosure form which is signed annually by staff and volunteers with decision-making authority. *990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our conflict of interest policy includes procedures for managing conflicts of interest and handling situations in which public and private interests intersect. *990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

► Required by law	No/ Not Begun	Somewhat/ In Process	Yes/ Completed	Not Applicable	Not Sure
6. ► We have a whistleblower policy with specific procedures for reporting violations of organizational policy or applicable laws and ensure that those making such reports are protected from repercussions. *18 USC § 1107 – a.k.a. Sarbanes-Oxley; 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. We endeavor to provide compensation in accordance with industry standards and market data in order to obtain qualified employees needed to fulfill the mission of the organization.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Compensation is based on performance and equitable given skills, experience level, and job status.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
► All compensation paid is reasonable and substantiated. *CRS § 7-133-102; IRC § 501(c)(3) and 4958; 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Our board has established and periodically reviews our overall compensation structure using industry-based surveys of comparable salaries and benefits, market data, and internal review.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our board has established and periodically reviews guidelines on employee benefits including medical insurance, retirement plans, sick leave, maternity/paternity leave, vacation, paid time off, and other benefits as appropriate.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. Our board annually conducts a performance review of the chief executive, including his/her compensation. *990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
► Our board ensures that executive compensation is reasonable. *CRS § 7-133-102; IRC §§ 501(c)(3) and 4958; 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. We have a volunteer engagement plan that fits our needs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our volunteer engagement plan identifies adequate resources and organizational needs; establishes effective recruitment, training, support, accountability, and recognition strategies; specifies standards for inclusivity and background checks; and determin	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Employee & Volunteer Engagement					
11. We strive to utilize skilled and diverse employees and volunteers who are suitable for the positions they occupy and are committed to the goals, values, and objectives of our organization.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

► Required by law	No/ Not Begun	Somewhat/ In Process	Yes/ Completed	Not Applicable	Not Sure
We endeavor to continually teach employees and volunteers new skills to improve work skills and industry knowledge.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. We strive to employ personnel and volunteers who reflect the diversity of the community and our constituency. In addition, we value cultural competency, diversity, and inclusiveness as essential to improving the organization.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13. ► We are aware of and in compliance with the rules regarding exempt versus non-exempt employment status, as well as when an individual may be categorized as an independent contractor. *IRS Publication 1779; Fair Labor Standards Act*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14. We thoughtfully consider conducting background checks on employees, volunteers, independent contractors, and paid solicitors.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
► We do conduct background checks for positions that involve children or vulnerable adults, performing financial duties, or serving in other sensitive areas.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
► We follow the practices indicated in the Fair Credit Reporting Act when using a third party to conduct a background check. *Fair Credit Reporting Act*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Training, Development & Retention					
15. We maintain a stable, well-informed workforce.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We work to retain quality employees by providing and periodically assessing factors related to employee satisfaction including: a nice work environment, fair compensation, training, and opportunity for advancement.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
16. We provide volunteer and paid personnel with clear, current job descriptions and the resources they need to conduct quality work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
17. Our personnel receive performance evaluations on at least an annual basis.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
A record of all performance evaluations, along with employee signature and comment, are kept in each employee's personnel records, and should be used to help determine compensation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
18. We support and encourage professional development and education of our personnel.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We actively provide personnel with opportunities for growth, advancement, and new challenges.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

► Required by law	No/ Not Begun	Somewhat/ In Process	Yes/ Completed	Not Applicable	Not Sure
19. To the extent of our ability, we provide paid personnel with benefits including health, dental, and life insurance, as well as the opportunity to financially contribute to retirement plans. *990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
20. We continually solicit and use input from paid and volunteer personnel regarding the organization's activities and results.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
21. Our board engages in succession planning for the chief executive, board members and key staff.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐



Principles & Practices Colorado Nonprofit Association

Planning

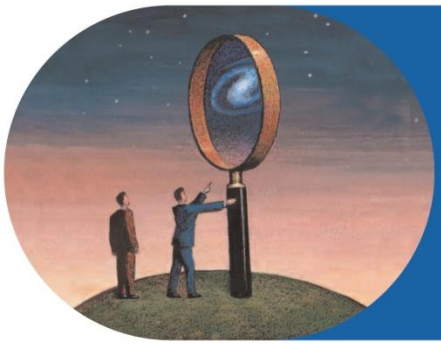
Organizational Assessment and Planning Tool

Organizational planning defines the overall direction, activities, and strategies that will be used to fulfill a nonprofit's mission. Nonprofits should engage in sound planning to define a clear vision for the future and specific strategies for reaching established goals. Nonprofit planning should be proactive rather than reactive. It should incorporate evaluation results and periodic analyses of community needs. The process should be intentional and ongoing in order to best position a nonprofit to achieve its goals.

► Required by law	No/ Not Begun	Somewhat/ In Process	Yes/ Completed	Not Applicable	Not Sure
Mission, Vision & Values					
1. We have a clearly defined, written mission statement that accurately describes the overall aims and activities of our organization and is linked to our values and vision for the future. *990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. We have a clear, motivating vision statement about the organization's future that reflects a world enhanced by the accomplishment of our mission.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. We have a values statement that reflects our core beliefs and principles and drives the work we do. It describes the manner in which we will conduct our work by highlighting those attributes that are most important.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Our board periodically reviews our mission, vision, and values to consider societal and community changes. This review should determine whether these statements are still relevant, and/or whether they should be adapted to address evolving needs of constituents and the public.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Stakeholder Input & Responsiveness					
5. In planning and evaluating our activities, we strive to be responsive to community needs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We solicit input and feedback from a variety of sources, such as board, staff, community members, funders, government officials, and other stakeholders. This input is inclusive of a broad range of views and perspectives and plays an integral role in our decision-making process.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

► Required by law	No/ Not Begun	Somewhat/ In Process	Yes/ Completed	Not Applicable	Not Sure
6. We openly communicate with other nonprofits to share and gather information on lessons learned, best practices, and effective resource allocation, and work to prevent unnecessary duplication of services.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strategic Plan					
7. We create a written strategic plan every three to five years.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our strategic plan reflects the results of an environmental assessment that includes information on strengths and challenges facing our organization, as well as opportunities for, and perceived threats to, mission achievement.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our strategic plan includes clearly defined, measurable goals and objectives that are set by our organization to achieve our mission.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our strategic plan provides an overarching direction for the organization created and fulfilled by staff and board members that is reflective of the our stated mission.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our strategic plan may be reviewed and approved each year.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. We have a thorough understanding of the community in which we operate, including the needs of constituents, services provided by the government and other nonprofits, and applicable trends (e.g. economic, demographic, etc.).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Operational Plan					
9. We annually create a written operational plan which aligns with the strategic plan and specifies how our activities will be implemented on an annual basis.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our operational plan clearly defines specific program, financial, personnel, and evaluation activities; delineates timelines; and assigns specific responsibility for implementation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our operational plan clearly identifies goals and performance measurements.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our operational plan is tied to an approved budget.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our operational plan provides a framework for regular progress reports.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our operational plan is reviewed and updated regularly by staff and board members.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

► Required by law	No/ Not Begun	Somewhat/ In Process	Yes/ Completed	Not Applicable	Not Sure
Risk Management & Disaster Management					
10. We have a risk management plan and a disaster management plan that protects the organization's assets – its property, financial and human resources, documents, and programmatic content and material.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
As risks are identified, we update our plan to mitigate those risks.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We have a crisis communications plan (may be part of risk or disaster management plans).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We have a data backup and recovery plan (may be part of risk or disaster management plans).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. ► We obtain necessary insurance products such as general liability, property, fidelity bond insurance, and directors and officers liability insurance to protect our organization and employees, volunteers, and board members.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
► We have workers' compensation insurance. *CRS § 8-44-101*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our insurance plans are reviewed with the board on an annual basis.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. Our articles of incorporation include a provision limiting the liability of directors to the fullest extent permitted under Colorado law.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our bylaws include board liability and indemnification language that clearly define the circumstances under which the organization will indemnify its directors, officers, volunteers, and employees against claims arising from the performance of their duties.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We have appropriate directors and officers insurance. (Note that there are statutory limits on the ability of a nonprofit corporation to limit officer and director liability and to indemnify directors.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐



Principles & Practices Colorado Nonprofit Association

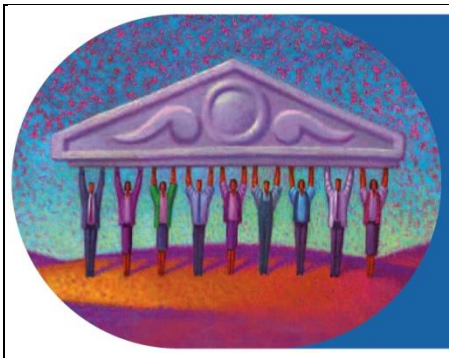
Evaluation

Organizational Assessment and Planning Tool

As organizations that serve the public, nonprofits have an obligation to demonstrate their contribution to the public good. An essential responsibility of every nonprofit organization is to assess the impact of its actions and to respond appropriately. A nonprofit also has the responsibility to collect and disseminate data using ethical methodologies. Nonprofits should regularly measure their performance both in terms of effectiveness, such as outcomes and results of services, and efficiency, such as service delivery systems. They should share this information with their constituents and the public and use it to continually inform the planning process and improve the quality of their programs and activities.

► Required by law	No/ Not Begun	Somewhat/ In Process	Yes/ Completed	Not Applicable	Not Sure
Stakeholder Input & Responsiveness					
1. We have committed to effective and efficient delivery of services, and always strive to improve processes, programs, and results to increase its impact relative to our mission.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. We have a regular system for assessing opportunities for improvement of our services, programs, and internal processes in order to best serve our constituents.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. We actively collect and respond to the experience, needs, and satisfaction of stakeholders.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We solicit input and feedback from a variety of sources, such as board, staff, community members, funders and other stakeholders. This input is inclusive of a broad range of views and perspectives and plays an integral role in our decision-making process.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Our programs should take into account and respond to the experience, needs, and satisfaction of the constituents they serve.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We have a grievance procedure to address complaints.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. We conduct program evaluations in ways that are appropriate for the community served.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. We employ appropriate data collection and analysis tools in order to produce accurate, timely, and useful evaluation information.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Policies & Procedures					
7. Our evaluation efforts are ongoing and in accordance with our strategic and operational plans.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

► Required by law	No/ Not Begun	Somewhat/ In Process	Yes/ Completed	Not Applicable	Not Sure
Our measurement systems/results are practical and useful to improve ongoing processes, activities, and results.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our measurement systems/results are used to evaluate organizational effectiveness and inform the planning process in order to maximize impact.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. We have a thorough understanding of the community in which we operate, including the needs of constituents, services provided by the government and other nonprofits, and applicable trends (i.e. economic, demographic, etc.).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. We have defined, ongoing, and sustainable procedures in place for evaluating our programs, procedures, and outcomes in relation to our mission.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. Our performance measurements are determined in advance to allow for adequate time and resources to create an environment for successful review.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our systems of evaluation and anticipated outcomes should be realistic, specific, measurable, and appropriate to the size and scope of our organization's activities. Measurements may include both qualitative and quantitative data.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
End Uses					
11. We use our evaluation results to inform the planning process in order to strengthen our organization and programs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. We communicate our evaluation results to a broad range of stakeholders in promotional or informational materials (i.e. annual report, brochures, etc.) at least annually.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13. We actively share the impact of our accomplishments, demonstrate use of funds, and provide reasoning behind program changes developed as a result of relevant findings to current and prospective funders and donors.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14. We actively assess the usefulness and accuracy of our evaluation practices and modify them as needed.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐



Principles & Practices Colorado Nonprofit Association

Advocacy, Public Policy & Civic Engagement

Organizational Assessment and Planning Tool

Advocacy is the active support of an idea or a cause. A nonprofit should advocate on behalf of its constituency, organization, and the nonprofit sector as a whole in order to advance the mission of the organization. Involvement in advocacy, public policy, and civic engagement will vary in sophistication dependent upon an organization's mission and strategic direction. Nonprofits should encourage broad community participation in these efforts and, in the process, provide appropriate assistance when needed. These practices pertain only to nonpartisan public policy issues.

When a nonprofit advocates for or against specific pending legislation or ballot issues, federal and state lobbying rules will apply. Lobbying activities are permitted but a nonprofit must not violate the prohibition on endorsing a candidate or elected official and must stay within regulatory limits on activities that meet the definition of lobbying. By knowing and observing these rules, nonprofits may legally include lobbying activities directed at specific legislation or ballot issues in their advocacy efforts.

► Required by law	No/ Not Begun	Somewhat/ In Process	Yes/ Completed	Not Applicable	Not Sure
Advocacy & Engagement					
1. We proactively develop specific strategies to address key issues facing our organization, its constituency, and the charitable sector and include our stakeholders in those efforts.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. We encourage board members, staff, volunteers, and constituents to act as advocates and ambassadors for our organization and the entire charitable nonprofit sector.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. We ensure that individuals who act as advocates and ambassadors for our organization are knowledgeable about our programs and activities and prepared to speak on our behalf when appropriate.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. We ensure that information provided about or emanating from our organization is timely and accurate and that the social and political context of the information is clear. We understand that information provided by our organization to the general public, the media, and policy makers becomes a matter of public record and these activities may be subject to lobbying limitations and political campaign prohibitions.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. If engaged in public policy and/or advocacy activities, we have adopted a written policy that clarifies the scope of the work, as well as the time and resources to be allocated to those activities, including clear guidelines that explain and adhere to the limits on lobbying activity and prohibit political campaign activity.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

► Required by law	No/ Not Begun	Somewhat/ In Process	Yes/ Completed	Not Applicable	Not Sure
6. We build relationships with elected officials, community leaders, and other nonprofits in order to strengthen our ability to effect community change and impact public policy.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We carefully scrutinize the afore mentioned relationships to ensure there is no express or implied endorsement of a candidate for public office or attempt to influence legislation outside the permissible limit.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. We provide board, staff, stakeholders, and the public with nonpartisan resources and training on issues important to us and our constituencies.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. We conduct public forums for nonpartisan discussion or provide venues for constituents to express concern about the effects of various policy choices.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. ► We ensure that the if ever we are engaged in promoting public participation in federal, state and local policy, our activities are nonpartisan and educational in nature or within permissible lobbying limitations. *IRC § 501(c)(3) and 501(h); 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. We encourage citizen participation in local, state, and federal policy-making efforts amongst our stakeholders.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Public Policy					
11. We continuously maintain an understanding of the current public climate and the resulting impact on policy.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. ► We understand that a nonprofit may support or oppose legislation subject to the lobbying limitations. *IRC § 501(c)(3) and 501(h); 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We participate in and support the formation and amendment of public policy consistent with our organization's mission.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We take appropriate public positions on relevant issues while developing coalitions and communicating with other organizations to inform the public about these issues.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Political Campaign Activity					
13. ► We do not make any contributions or expenditures in connection with a candidate, a political committee that supports or opposes a candidate, or a political party. *IRC § 501(c)(3); 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
► We do not engage in any activity that promotes or discourages a vote on behalf of any individual candidate. *IRC § 501(c)(3); 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

► Required by law	No/ Not Begun	Somewhat/ In Process	Yes/ Completed	Not Applicable	Not Sure
We are careful not to engage in activities that could be perceived as endorsements of candidates or political parties.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14. ► We understand that nonprofits are prohibited from supporting or opposing any elected official or candidate for public office and comply with that prohibition. *IRC § 501(c)(3); 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15. We ensure that board and staff distinguish between personal opinion and organizational positions. *990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lobbying					
16. ► If ever we are engaged in lobbying activities subject to state and federal reporting requirements we file accurate and timely reports of our lobbying activities with the IRS and with the Office of the Colorado Secretary of State (CRS § 24-6-303; 990). *CRS § 24-6-303; 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
17. ► We do not engage in more than insubstantial lobbying activities. *IRC § 501(c)(3) and 501(h); 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
► We know and understand the tax law limits on the amount of permissible lobbying. *IRC § 501(c)(3) and 501(h); 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
► We are aware of the IRC 501(h) election. *IRC § 501(c)(3) and 501(h); 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
18. ► We are aware that federally funded nonprofits that engage in lobbying activities must organize their legislative activity so that no federal funds are used for this purpose. *OMB Circular A-122; 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Principles & Practices Colorado Nonprofit Association

Communications

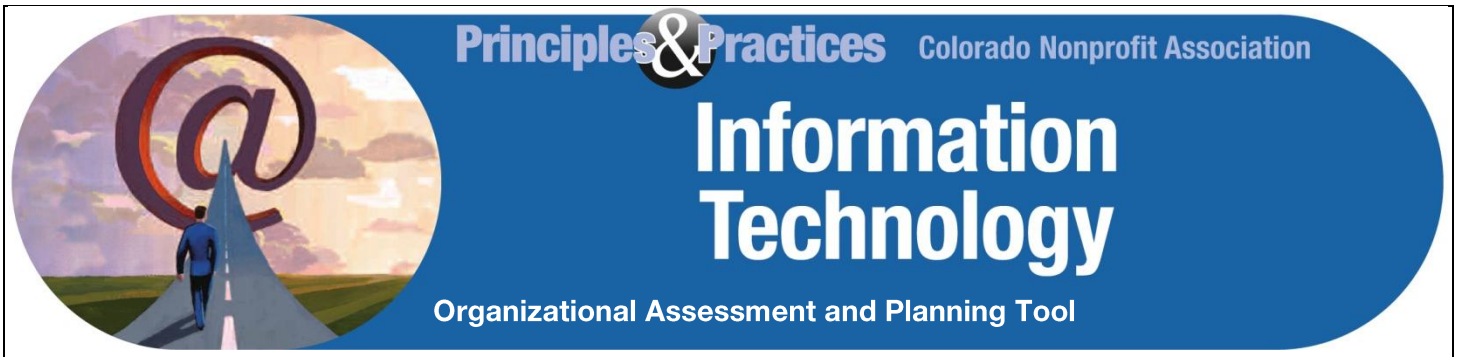
Organizational Assessment and Planning Tool

Excellent internal and external communications will advance a nonprofit's mission, inspire its stakeholders, and increase its impact. Every nonprofit should aspire to engage stakeholders with impactful communications. Effective communications also help to ensure public trust in the organization. Internal communication is essential to motivate, inform, and counsel employees and volunteers and to set the stage for excellent external communication. External communications are necessary to: attract and retain stakeholders; raise public awareness; and increase understanding, commitment, and funding for the organization.

► Required by law	No/ Not Begun	Somewhat/ In Process	Yes/ Completed	Not Applicable	Not Sure
General					
1. Our communications adhere to the highest ethical and professional standards, as well as any applicable industry-specific standards, and exhibit transparency, fairness, and honesty.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The afore mentioned standards are clearly stated in writing and made part of the orientation of all employees and volunteers, including board members.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. We have a clearly defined, written communications plan that supports the organization's strategic plan that is strategically integrated and central to all organizational planning and demonstrates accountability to constituents and the public.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our communications plan include goals, target audiences, key messages, strategies, tools, intended outcomes and the means to evaluate results.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our communications plan ensures that we are making the appropriate information available to the public and communicating in a clear and timely manner with those who request information.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our communications plan is shared and regularly reviewed with our staff, board and key volunteers.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our communications plan is updated regularly to ensure the plan stays current with the organization's priorities, communication trends such as social media, and technological capabilities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. We have a social media policy that outlines clear rules around the use of social media and that designates one person to oversee social media efforts.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

► Required by law	No/ Not Begun	Somewhat/ In Process	Yes/ Completed	Not Applicable	Not Sure
4. We have clear policies pertaining to communication practices and procedures such as outreach efforts, frequency of communications, graphic standards, rules around print and electronic communications, approval for institutional facts and messaging, and expected response for internal or external concerns.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The afore mentioned policies or procedures are included in our written communications plan.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. We have clear policies regarding confidentiality of certain communications, images, and personal information.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. We have a written plan for communicating with the public and the media at a time of crisis or emergency that includes a procedure to communicate internally as well. (May be incorporated into a disaster management plan or written communications plan.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. We copyright or trademark organizational materials as appropriate.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. We have considered establishing and promoting a clear brand.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our brand is supported by our logo, graphic standards, messaging, tone, and actions. All communications are consistent with our brand.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
All of our employees, board members and volunteers understand and are familiar with the brand our brand.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our brand provides strategic benefits to the organization as a whole.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Internal Communications					
9. Our internal communications are guided by clear policies and practices.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. We encourage internal communication that welcomes alternative perspectives and encourages participation at all levels in order to build and maintain camaraderie.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our management actively solicits, carefully listens, and respectfully responds to the views of internal constituents.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. The line of communication between the staff and the board is clearly defined and well understood. Methods for conveying information, processes, concerns, and accomplishments to the board are also clearly defined and understood.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

► Required by law	No/ Not Begun	Somewhat/ In Process	Yes/ Completed	Not Applicable	Not Sure
External Communications					
12. We have a graphic standards policy that provides the rules for using the organization's fonts, primary colors, accent colors, logos, and other details in accordance with our brand and communications plan.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13. Our external communications are guided by a clear, mission-driven plan and employ consistent use of the our graphic standards.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our marketing and public relations efforts are timely and accurate.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14. Our communications are clear, easily accessed, and kept up to date.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15. We have identified key spokespersons for our organization and ensure processes to provide appropriate, accurate and timely information for those individuals to use for internal and external communications.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
All internal constituents are aware of who is designated as the spokesperson(s).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
16. We have a written procedure that stipulates who has the authority to make public statements on behalf of the organization and the procedures for developing the statements.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our board members, staff, and volunteers are trained on the organization's statements, positions, policies, and procedures.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
17. We ensure that board and staff distinguish between personal opinion and organizational positions. *990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
18. Our constituents are provided with appropriate, ongoing opportunities to interact with the board and management regarding the organization's activities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
19. We have a written grievance policy in order to promptly and respectfully respond to grievances or complaints from stakeholders.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐



A nonprofit should manage information with regard to confidentiality, safety, accuracy, integrity, reliability, cost-effectiveness, and legal compliance. A nonprofit should invest in appropriate technology to enhance capacity and thereby improve its efficiency, effectiveness, and accuracy in the achievement of its mission. A nonprofit should also ensure the security of sensitive or confidential information, and ensure its document retention and destruction policy adequately protects electronic information.

► Required by law	No/ Not Begun	Somewhat/ In Process	Yes/ Completed	Not Applicable	Not Sure
Information Management & Policies					
1. We have reliable information systems in place that provide timely, accurate, and relevant information to facilitate workflow and track our data.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. We have a policy that addresses personal use of the organization's information and technology, such as computers, phones, social media, data, etc.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. We have a policy that prescribes how all organizational information is gathered and stored, how accuracy is maintained, how and what information is backed up, and who is authorized to view or manipulate that data.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. We have specific policies addressing information system security if employees or volunteers have remote access to secure or confidential information.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We ensure that secure or confidential information is not taken from the organization in any manner unless expressly authorized.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. ► We have a written, mandatory document retention and destruction policy or schedule with guidelines for handling all types of documents, including electronic files and voicemail. The policy includes backup procedures, archival procedures, and guidelines for regular checkups of the reliability of the system. We are prepared to retain any documents that may be or may become involved in litigation or a government investigation. *18 USC § 1519 – a.k.a. Sarbanes-Oxley;; 990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. We have a social media policy that outlines clear rules around the use of social media and designates one person to oversee social media efforts.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

► Required by law	No/ Not Begun	Somewhat/ In Process	Yes/ Completed	Not Applicable	Not Sure
7. We have designated one person as primarily responsible for overseeing the maintenance of our organization's information systems, delivery of technical support, and coordination with outside assistance.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We have at least one other person who is equipped to serve as a backup.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. All of our staff and volunteers receive ongoing information systems and technology training relevant to their work. They also receive electronic security training that addresses the prevention of, and appropriate response to, threats.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Technology Infrastructure					
9. We have a written technology plan that is integrated into our short- and long-term strategic and operational plans and that staff and board members are familiar with.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our technology plan includes periodic assessments of technology and provides information regarding expected technology acquisitions, upgrades, and maintenance costs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. We invest in computer hardware and software, email and website hosting, internet access, telecommunications equipment, and any other technology infrastructure deemed appropriate to enhance and streamline our ability to achieve our mission.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. We allocate sufficient resources for technology, system maintenance, and training.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. We have a catastrophic recovery plan and utilize at least minimal security measures, such as off-site electronic backup, firewalls, and up-to-date software that provides protection from threats like malware.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13. We are aware of and in compliance with all regulations and industry standards relating to the types of data the organization collects, transmits, and stores. These may include requirements for: the protection of health care information under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA); the protection of credit card information in compliance with the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS); or the online collection of information from children under the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14. We actively monitor ongoing technological developments that may have an impact on our information systems or our ability to fulfill our mission.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Principles & Practices Colorado Nonprofit Association

Strategic Alliances

Organizational Assessment and Planning Tool

Strategic alliances can take many forms, and are known by many terms. An alliance may be an informal arrangement for sharing information and resources, strengthening policy initiatives, or increasing operational efficiency. Alternatively, an alliance may be a formal arrangement such as a joint venture, partnership, consolidation, or merger with nonprofit or for-profit entities. A nonprofit should carefully consider and understand all implications before entering into any kind of alliance. Informal and formal alliances can help to strengthen individual nonprofit capacity and the capacity of the sector as a whole. Nonprofits should also assess the viability of strategic alliances with public, private, and charitable organizations prior to engaging in an alliance. Nonprofits should initiate and promote cooperation and coordination whenever feasible to maximize positive impact in the communities they serve.

► Required by law	No/ Not Begun	Somewhat/ In Process	Yes/ Completed	Not Applicable	Not Sure
Assessment					
1. We actively seek strategic alliances as a means to help achieve goals, improve effectiveness and organizational efficiency, maximize the impact of charitable resources, strengthen community connections with constituents and others, and improve services.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. We carefully consider how entering into strategic alliances will affect all parties involved and identify the key staff, board, and other stakeholders that should be involved.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Decisions regarding alliances are consistent with the strategic goals of our organization.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strategic alliances are never made purely to meet funding challenges.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. On a regular basis, our board conducts a community assessment to identify organizations providing similar services and to assess our relationships with those organizations.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Relationship Building & Strategies					
4. We are knowledgeable about other organizations providing similar or complementary services in our community and/or service area and are prepared to identify, promote, and provide referrals to other organizations that may be better able to meet the needs of constituents.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. When appropriate, we support the advancement of our mission by fostering relationships with: similar organizations; state, regional, and national associations; governmental entities; and businesses.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

► Required by law	No/ Not Begun	Somewhat/ In Process	Yes/ Completed	Not Applicable	Not Sure
6. To promote overall accountability within the sector, we openly communicate with other nonprofits to gather and share information on lessons learned and best practices. We are open to sharing resources when appropriate.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. If ever we were to enter into a partnership or strategic alliance, we would ensure that agreements are consistent with our policies, especially around constituent and donor confidentiality.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. We would be open to consolidating and/or merging with another organization if it would be in the best interest of our constituents, community, or service area.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. We have written policies and procedures governing the activities of our chapters, branches or affiliates to ensure operations are consistent with the mission of our organization. *990*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. We have a written policy or procedure that requires us to evaluate our participation in joint venture arrangements under applicable federal tax law, and take steps to safeguard the organization's exempt status.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. We actively work to establish communication channels, mutual understanding, and natural alliances among the government, nonprofit, and for-profit sectors to take advantage of the total resources of the community.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐