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7.1 ASSOCIATION OFFICE

INTRODUCTION:

The Chief Executive Officer and office staff shall carry out the day-to-day operations of the Association, contract with and correspond with Member Boards, and perform needed functions for the Association. The Board of Directors shall provide leadership and policy guidance between business meetings of the Delegate Assembly. Special requests by the Board of Directors for support requiring staff time must first be communicated to and approved by the Chief Executive Officer.

POLICY:

1. The Chief Executive Officer shall develop and administer personnel policies as approved by the Board of Directors.
2. Staff at the Association office shall do the following, as well as carry out other tasks as needed:
 - a. Assist as needed in scheduling, planning, and conducting the Annual Meeting of the Delegate Assembly, Association Education Conference, membership training meetings, and meetings of the Board of Directors, committees, and task forces.
 - b. Provide information to members as needed and requested, with emphasis on data valuable in regulatory activities.
 - c. Serve as media point of contact and respond to media inquiries.
 - d. Publish newsletters, which will include input from members and stakeholders. Information shall also be provided by memos, letters, electronic communications, and other means as needed.
 - e. Prepare and publish appropriate handbooks and manuals and make them available to Member Boards.
 - f. Monitor accounting policies and procedures and facilitate the reimbursement of Association expenses.
 - g. Direct and assist in the paid item writer/reviewers program as needed, tracking items and editing for form and grammar.
 - h. Oversee psychometric reviews as needed, providing any needed measurement information in relation to the examination.
 - i. Register candidates for the ASWB licensure examinations in accordance with jurisdictional laws and operations policy.
 - j. Upon request, provide reports to the Board of Directors regarding the types of insurance carried by the Association, and the level of coverage provided.
 - k. Provide regular reports to the Board of Directors regarding all programs and services offered by the Association through its departments.
 - l. Upon request, provide reports to the Board of Directors regarding employee benefits packages offered by the Association.
3. Title to, or ownership of, all Association equipment is vested in the Association. A current equipment inventory list shall be maintained at all times.

Adopted 1984. Revised 1986, 1990, 1992; confirmed by the Executive Committee April 1995. Revised by the Board of Directors 1998, September 2003, October 2004, August 2012, January 2016, January 2019, January 2020.

7.2 CODE OF CONDUCT

INTRODUCTION:

The Association is guided by and committed to living its corporate values. These core values are: Respect, Accountability, Integrity, Service, and Excellence, forming the acronym *RAISE*.

Consistent ethical behavior is expected of employees, members of the Board of Directors, volunteers and committee and task force members, and consultants (collectively referred to as ASWB personnel). Such behavior includes protecting the validity of the social work licensing examinations and conducting any business and/or providing volunteer service on behalf of the Association by adhering to the principles of confidentiality and signed confidentiality statements.

POLICY:

1. All ASWB personnel shall perform their duties in an ethical and honest manner regarding ASWB business, operations, policies, and procedures. They shall be responsible for:
 - a. Performing their responsibilities, services, and activities ethically, competently, efficiently, and honestly, in keeping with Association policies and applicable federal, state, and local laws.
 - b. Adhering to the fiduciary responsibilities of their role in the Association and safeguarding the physical and financial resources of the Association.
 - c. Avoiding dishonesty, including fraud, theft, lying, or misuse of Association funds or property to include technology and credit cards. Any reported acts of dishonesty shall be investigated and if necessary reported to the auditor, the Board of Directors, or law enforcement authorities. Penalties for dishonesty may include immediate termination of employment or volunteer service with the Association.
2. Confidentiality agreements must be executed by all ASWB personnel to protect the business and financial affairs of the Association, particularly in regard to the examination program.
3. ASWB personnel shall communicate and interact with professionalism and civility on behalf of the Association.
4. ASWB personnel shall conduct themselves without personal conflicts or the appearance of impropriety or by exercising undue influence over ASWB personnel and others.
5. ASWB personnel should be mindful of the possibility for potential, perceived, and actual conflicts of interest and shall disclose these conflicts as requested by ASWB. If a member of the ASWB Board of Directors or any other volunteer becomes aware of such a conflict, the appropriate course of action may be to recuse (sit out) or resign (withdraw completely).
6. When approached by news media, social media outlets, magazines, books, or other online or digital channels about the Association, ASWB personnel shall respond on behalf of the Association only if authorized by the CEO or the CEO's representative; otherwise, ASWB personnel shall advise media representatives to send their inquiries to info@aswb.org, subject: media contact. Refer to Policy 7.5, Social Media and Policy 7.6, Media Relations for additional guidance.

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7. The Association expects and encourages good faith reporting to foster the ethical integrity of its operations. No retaliation or adverse action shall be taken against any ASWB personnel who makes a good faith report of wrongdoing.

Adopted by the Board of Directors, April 23, 2009; revised August 2012, January 2016, January 2017, January 2018, April 2019.

7.3 LEADERSHIP COVERAGE AND EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS PLAN IN THE ABSENCE OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

INTRODUCTION:

This policy provides for leadership coverage during an absence of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) due to unexpected illness, accident, or other unforeseen event that prohibits him or her from fulfilling his or her duties and provides a plan for communicating with stakeholders during this absence. It does not replace the ASWB Personnel Policies (i.e., leaves), rather provides further clarification for this key role.

POLICY:

1. If an accident, sudden illness, or other unforeseen event occurs when the CEO is fulfilling employment duties in the office or while on travel for ASWB, the following steps will be taken:
 - a. The person receiving notification will immediately contact the Chief Operating Officer (COO). If the COO is not available, the next person to be contacted is the Director of Finance and Administration.
 - b. The COO or the Director of Finance and Administration will notify the CEO's personal emergency contacts.
 - c. The COO will implement the appropriate Leadership Coverage and Emergency Communication Plan according to the anticipated length of absence of the CEO.
2. If an accident or sudden illness occurs while the CEO is at home or on private travel, the staff person contacted will immediately notify the COO, who will put into effect the Leadership Coverage and Emergency Communications Plan appropriate to the anticipated length of absence.
3. Definitions
 - a. A temporary or unplanned leave of absence is designated as less than four weeks.
 - b. A short-term leave of absence is designated as one to three months.
 - c. A long-term leave of absence is designated as more than three months.
 - d. "Acting CEO" is defined as the staff member appointed by the Board to carry out the CEO duties and responsibilities temporarily until the return of the CEO.

Short-term Leadership Coverage and Emergency Communications Plan (four weeks or less)

The COO, in consultation with ASWB's Board President and the Director of Communications and Marketing, will prepare a statement for release to staff and other essential stakeholders (i.e., the Board of Directors, Member Boards, and other appropriate groups).

- A meeting of the Senior Management Team will be convened by the COO within 48 hours of notification to discuss leadership coverage for the CEO's duties.
- The COO will manage assignments and have the authority of the CEO during this time.
- The COO will keep the Board President informed on a regular basis, at a minimum once per week.

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- The COO will consult with the Director of Finance and Administration to review all account signature cards and establish a temporary signatory during the CEO's absence.
- The Senior Management Team will report to the COO. Staff members will continue to report to their assigned directors or supervisors.
- The COO will review the CEO's calendar commitments and delegate as appropriate.
- Near the end of four weeks, the Board of Directors, in consultation with the COO, will discuss the CEO's prognosis and/or capability of returning to work, based on medical authorization, if applicable.
- The Board of Directors, in consultation with the COO, may consider designating the COO to the position of Acting CEO. The position description of Acting CEO will specify that the COO may serve as Acting CEO in the absence of the CEO, unless otherwise decided by the Board of Directors.

Extended Leadership Coverage and Emergency Communications Plan (longer than four weeks)

When notified that the absence of the CEO will extend beyond four weeks, the Acting CEO will implement the following plan:

- The Acting CEO will notify the Board President and the Senior Management Team that the extended plan is being implemented.
- The Board President will notify the Board of Directors that the extended plan is being implemented.
- The Board President, in consultation with the Board, will consider a salary adjustment for the Acting CEO.

The person appointed as Acting CEO will have the authority outlined below, except as may be defined by the officers of the Board of Directors:

- Staffing—authorized to hire and terminate staff
- Financial—authorized to sign checks and authorized to expand resources in consultation with the Board Treasurer and Board President, as needed
- Public Policy—authorized to take public policy positions on behalf of the organization
- Media—authorized to speak on behalf of the organization or designate a spokesperson
- Contracts—authorized to enter into and execute contracts
- Programs and services—authorized to develop new programs and assume new programmatic responsibilities on behalf of the organization in consultation with the Senior Management Team and Board as necessary
- Collaboration/partnerships—authorized to enter into partnerships or develop collaborations with external parties in consultation with the Senior Management Team and Board as necessary

The Board President and Board of Directors will have the responsibility for monitoring the work of the Acting CEO. The Acting CEO will provide regular updates and will meet the Board President as both determine is necessary. The Board President will also be mindful of the special support needs of the Acting CEO serving in this temporary leadership role and will act to address them.

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In the event of a long-term temporary absence of the CEO, the Acting CEO will give consideration to assigning another staff person temporarily to fill the position vacated when the role of Acting CEO was assumed. This is in recognition that it may not be reasonable to expect the Acting CEO to carry the duties of both positions during a long-term absence of the CEO. The position of a temporary appointment would focus on covering the priority areas in which the Acting CEO needs assistance.

If it is determined by the Board that the CEO will not be able to return to the position, the Board President will appoint a Transition Task Force and a Search Committee in accordance with 7.4, CEO Succession Plan.

4. The following communication activities shall take place as soon as either the Short-Term Leadership Coverage and Emergency Communications Plan or the Extended Leadership Coverage and Emergency Communications Plan is implemented:
 - The Acting CEO, in consultation with the Director of Communications and Marketing, will prepare a public statement for the Board President's approval. The statement will limit personal details to maintain the CEO's privacy and will comply with all legal and regulatory requirements, such as HIPAA.
 - The Acting CEO will convene an all-staff meeting to convey the statement. Staff will be apprised of any change in leadership and will be reassured that ASWB will continue operating as usual.
 - The Board President will inform the Member Boards and other appropriate stakeholders about the CEO's absence, reassuring them that ASWB will operate as usual.
 - An out-of-office message will be placed on the CEO's email and voicemail with information about how to contact the COO or Acting CEO for assistance.
 - The Acting CEO will provide updates to the Board President on a regular basis, at least once per week.
 - All external inquiries will be referred to the COO or Acting CEO.
 - The Board President will provide updates to the Board of Directors on a regular basis.

Adopted by the Board of Directors August 6, 2016. Revised January 2018, January 2019.

7.4 CEO SUCCESSION PLAN

INTRODUCTION:

A succession plan for the CEO position ensures sustainability for the Association by providing a proactive and orderly plan for executive leadership transition. A succession plan for the CEO position is more than a routine risk management and sustainability planning tool; it is a disciplined, strategic process.

The optimal period for the CEO to announce his/her departure from that role or proposed commencement of a new role in the Association is at least six to twelve months before the date of departure. The ASWB Board understands that the time required for successfully completing a planned leadership transition is approximately eight to twelve months.

Guiding Principles

- The goal of the CEO succession plan is to maintain continuity of the Association's mission-related work. The succession plan also presents an opportunity for the Association to continue to grow and develop.
- One of the most important responsibilities of the ASWB Board of Directors is to select the CEO. The Board should ensure that the entire selection process is transparent, fair, and professionally managed.
- The Board shall work proactively to develop a diverse finalist pool that is reflective of ASWB and its membership.
- At any time, there can only be one CEO for the Association.

POLICY:

1. The appointment of the CEO is the responsibility of the Board, and the Board President oversees the CEO succession planning and implementation process.
2. To ensure that the best possible candidate is hired, the Association may consider both internal and external candidates when filling the CEO position.
 - a. Currently sitting ASWB Board members are not eligible to apply for the CEO position and they cannot resign their position on the ASWB Board to apply for the position.
3. If the current CEO exits the Association prior to the appointment of the new CEO, the Board may appoint an interim CEO to carry out the CEO duties temporarily until the new CEO is identified and hired.
4. The Board President and the Past President or President-Elect shall appoint a Transition Task Force and designate a chair.
 - a. The Transition Task Force will determine the readiness of internal candidates and recommend whether the Board should seek potential outside candidates through a national search.
 - b. If the Board decides to seek external candidates, a search firm may be hired and a Search Committee will be formed to assist with the external search.

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5. The exiting/interim CEO's role during the transition and after the new CEO starts shall be developed in consultation with the Board President and/or Transition Task Force. The role shall be communicated to the ASWB Board. The exiting/interim CEO may be involved in some transition activities, including serving on the Transition Task Force.
6. Candidates shall be interviewed and finalist(s) presented to the ASWB Board for selection of the successful candidate to serve as incoming CEO.
7. The Board President, with Board approval, makes the job offer to the selected candidate.
8. Upon acceptance, the Board President and ASWB staff attorney may enter into contract negotiations with the selected candidate within two weeks, not to exceed two months.
9. The Transition Task Force designs and implements an effective orientation and launch for the incoming CEO to ensure that the Board and the incoming CEO forge a successful partnership by clarifying priorities, respective roles and responsibilities, and expectations and plans for monitoring and evaluating performance.

The roles of the Transition Task Force and Search Committee are outlined in more detail below.

Transition Task Force

The Transition Task Force is a crucial component for the ongoing stability of ASWB during the implementation of the succession plan.

- The members are: Past President or President-Elect, Secretary, CEO or Interim CEO, Director of Communications and Marketing, and a Board member chosen by the Board President.
- The Transition Task Force may facilitate a meeting with the full Board to review the Association's strategic plan, discuss opportunities and challenges facing the Association, and identify leadership characteristics and critical competencies needed in the new CEO.
- The Transition Task Force shall design the Request for Proposals (RFP) to hire the search firm, specifying expectations of process, communication, time frames, decision-making, and fees. The Transition Task Force shall recommend search firm(s) to the Board of Directors for approval.
- The Transition Task Force will develop and execute a transition communication plan to inform staff members and stakeholders about the selection process.
- The Transition Task Force will plan a recognition and closure process for the outgoing CEO.
- The Transition Task Force, in consultation with the incoming CEO and outgoing CEO, will work to create a smooth transition, including introductions to staff and key stakeholders.

Search Committee

The Search Committee is a crucial component to help ensure the selection of a qualified and capable leader who fits well with the Association's mission, vision, values, culture, goals, and objectives, and who has the necessary skills to lead the Association.

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- The Search Committee consists of: Board President, Board Treasurer, and a Board member chosen by the Board President with the approval of the Board; two senior management staff members chosen by senior management; and two Member Board representatives chosen by the Board President with the approval of the Board. A human resources staff member will participate in a consultant capacity with no voting rights.
- The Search Committee will collaborate with the Board-approved search firm to:
 - Perform a compensation package study
 - Develop protocols, interview questions, selection criteria, and interview processes
 - Conduct interviews as directed by the search firm
- The Search Committee will recommend final candidate(s) to the Board of Directors for final selection.

Adopted by the Board of Directors January 28, 2018. Revised January 2020.

7.5 SOCIAL MEDIA

INTRODUCTION:

This policy is intended to protect the interests of the Association and its members by defining the requirements expected in the use of social media. Any mention of ASWB or of an association with ASWB must be done appropriately and with care for the accuracy and suitability of comments. Social media offers the opportunity for people to gather in online communities of shared interest and create, share or consume content. The Association recognizes the benefits of social media as an important tool of engagement and enrichment for its members, member staff, Association staff, directors, volunteers, and other individuals who represent the Association. Along with those benefits are associated risks to the reputation of the Association, its members and followers, and individuals who might interact with the Association through social media channels.

POLICY:

1. Social media includes the development or sharing of content by an individual. It includes, but is not limited to:
 - Maintaining a profile page on social or business networking sites (such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, or Google+)
 - Content sharing including photo sharing sites such as Pinterest and video sharing sites such as YouTube
 - Commenting on blogs for personal or business reasons
 - Leaving product or service reviews on retailer sites or customer review sites
 - Taking part in online votes and polls
 - Taking part in conversations on public and private web forums (message boards)
 - Editing a Wikipedia article or other editable page
2. This policy includes anything posted online where information is shared that might affect members, staff, directors, or the Association as a whole. It applies to Association members and their staff, ASWB staff, directors, volunteers, and any individuals representing themselves as agents of ASWB (collectively, “ASWB representatives”). When individuals clearly identify an affiliation with ASWB and/or discuss their involvement with ASWB in areas defined as social media, they are expected to behave and express themselves appropriately and in ways that are consistent with ASWB’s stated values and policies.
3. The boundaries between an individual’s profession, volunteer time, and social life can often be blurred. It is therefore essential that a clear distinction is made between what one does in a personal or professional capacity and what one does, thinks, or says in his/her capacity as an ASWB representative. When using the Internet for professional or personal pursuits, ASWB representatives should take care to follow certain guidelines to ensure ASWB’s intellectual property, confidential information, and the reputation of ASWB as a whole.

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4. Any use of social media by ASWB representatives must not contain information that is confidential or in any way sensitive about ASWB or its members.
5. ASWB representatives may not use the ASWB brand to endorse or promote any product, opinion, cause, or political candidate. Any such endorsements must clearly be portrayed as representative of the individual and not representative of the views of ASWB.
6. Any trademarks belonging to ASWB or its members may not be used in personal social media applications, except where such use can be considered incidental (where incidental is taken to mean “happening in subordinate conjunction with something else.”). Trademarks include ASWB or ASWB member logos, and images depicting ASWB representatives where they can be identified as being affiliated with ASWB, except with the permission of those individuals and within other stated guidelines.
7. Social networking sites allow photographs, videos, and comments to be shared with thousands of other users. ASWB representatives should recognize that it may not be appropriate to share photographs, videos, and comments in certain situations, such as when content is recorded at a private ASWB event. In such instances, representatives could potentially breach privacy rights or inadvertently expose ASWB to claims of copyright breach. Representatives should not post information when they have been asked not to or for which consent has not been sought and given. They must also remove information about another person if that person asks them to do so.
8. ASWB representatives should also not appear publicly in inappropriate situations that might result in photographs, videos, or other social media content that would be controversial for ASWB if it could in any way be linked to their role as a representative. Under no circumstances should offensive comments be made about other representatives or ASWB online.
9. A breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action by ASWB or one of its members. Representatives should report any known or suspected breach of this policy to their supervisor or other designated individual.

Adopted by the Board of Directors August 2012. Revised January 2016, January 2017, April 2019.

7.6 MEDIA RELATIONS

INTRODUCTION:

The Association recognizes the benefits of news media, social media, publishers, conferences, and other information outlets (collectively, “the media”) as important avenues for engagement to increase awareness of ASWB, its mission, and activities. This policy is intended to protect the interests of the Association and its members by defining the requirements related to interacting with the media to ensure consistency of messaging, accuracy, fairness, and timeliness. Individuals contacted by media representatives about ASWB or their affiliation with the Association must respond appropriately to protect the reputation and brand of ASWB. Policy 7.5, Social media offers additional guidance.

This policy applies to Association members and their staff, ASWB staff, directors, volunteers, and any individuals representing themselves as agents of ASWB (collectively, “ASWB representatives”). When individuals clearly identify an affiliation with ASWB and interact with media representatives, they are expected to behave and express themselves appropriately and in ways that are consistent with ASWB’s stated values and policies.

POLICY:

1. The ASWB CEO or the CEO’s designated representative is the spokesperson for the Association.
2. The Director of Communications and Marketing is the designated point of contact for all media inquiries. The Director of Communications and Marketing is responsible for all official Association interactions with media sources, including coordination of information relating to general news or topics requiring an institutional response.
 - a. The Communications and Marketing department is responsible for issuing press releases and other materials requested by media representatives, developing materials in response to media requests, and providing oversight of communications and marketing projects in all forms across the association.
3. Individuals contacted by the media about the Association may not respond on behalf of ASWB or as if they are spokespersons for ASWB unless authorized by the ASWB CEO or the CEO’s representative.
4. Media representatives should be advised to send their inquiries to info@aswb.org, subject: media contact.
5. ASWB representatives who speak to the media or provide written comments through print, online, or digital media channels on issues related to ASWB, its membership, the examinations, or regulation and licensure in general should make it clear during the interview or in the commentary that they are stating personal views and are not expressing the formal position of ASWB unless they are authorized by the CEO or the CEO’s representative to serve as a spokesperson for the Association.
 - a. Any such media interaction must not contain, or link to information that is confidential or in any way sensitive about ASWB or its members.

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- b. For tracking purposes, volunteers must notify ASWB's Director of Communications and Marketing before providing personal commentary or responding to a personal interview request and must forward a copy of all such commentary to ASWB.
6. ASWB representatives who present at conferences on issues related to ASWB, its membership, the examinations, or regulation and licensure in general should notify ASWB in advance of the opportunity so that ASWB can provide appropriately branded presentation materials and review content for accuracy and branding.
7. Individuals may not use their role with ASWB, its name, imagery, brand, trademarks, or logos to promote or endorse any product, opinion, cause, political party or candidate, or religion. The ASWB name, imagery, brand, trademarks, or logos also may not be used for commercial endorsements or for personal benefit. Any such endorsements must clearly be portrayed as representative of the individual and must include a disclaimer that the views represented are not those of ASWB.
8. Individuals must observe the copyright and intellectual property rights of others and of ASWB. Individuals are expected to follow copyright and compliance laws and guidelines when applicable and not use copyrighted images, text, or software without permission or in violation of the copyright laws of the United States and Canada. It is acceptable to use the Facebook sharing or Twitter retweet functions to share content.
9. Failure to observe this policy may result in disciplinary action by ASWB or one of its members. Such action may include verbal or written warnings or termination of employment by ASWB or termination of engagement as a representative of the Association. Individuals should report any known or suspected breach of this policy to the Association office.

Adopted January 2019. Revised April 2019.

7.7 LEGAL SERVICES

INTRODUCTION:

Legal counsel is available for Association operations and to the Board of Directors, officers, and staff as needed and permitted by policies.

POLICY:

1. Legal counsel shall serve the Association through the Chief Executive Officer. This shall not preclude members of the Board of Directors from consulting with legal counsel when circumstances warrant.
2. Services of ASWB legal counsel shall not be requested by Member Boards, unless specific authorization has been obtained from the Chief Executive Officer or from the Board of Directors in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer.
3. Legal counsel shall be requested to participate in meetings from time to time as determined by the Board of Directors and Chief Executive Officer. Board members may ask questions and seek advice of counsel as desired during the meeting.

Adopted 1982. Revised 1986, 1992; confirmed by the Executive Committee April 1995. Revised by the Board of Directors September 1998, January 2016, January 2017, January 2020.

7.8 FISCAL PROCEDURES

INTRODUCTION:

The Association shall operate in ways that ensure fiscal responsibility and accountability.

POLICY:

1. Cash deposits shall be made in a timely manner and credit card deposits reconciled to detail revenue reports. Reconciliation of banking activity to the general ledger will be accomplished in a timely manner with investigation and resolution of reconciling items.
2. Appropriate records of Association financial activities shall be maintained according to customary bookkeeping and accounting standards for not-for-profit entities.
3. Financial institution accounts for the Association shall be routinely reviewed by the Chief Executive Officer or Chief Operating Officer, and all funds over and above routine operating budget shall be deposited into investment accounts annually following policies established by the Association, after the President and Treasurer have been notified that funds are sufficient to do so.
4. All financial investments shall be evaluated by the Chief Executive Officer to determine whether the funds should be used for the operating budget or reinvested.
5. The Association shall report the financial results of operations according to the schedule established by the Finance Committee and at least quarterly.
6. An independent audit of the Association's financial statements shall be conducted annually and all other required reports filed in a timely manner.
7. The Chief Executive Officer is authorized to expend funds for the day-to-day financial management of the organization and to ensure that adequate internal controls exist over expenditures through signature or electronic approval by appropriate executive/financial staff.
8. A fiscal year budget shall be submitted to the Finance Committee in time for reasonable approval by the Board of Directors prior to each fiscal year and use reasonable assumptions and projections as background. Financial reports shall be made to the Delegate Assembly on budget variances greater than \$10,000 and 10 percent.
9. Officers and staff who are insured as required by the bylaws shall be insured for an amount selected at the discretion of the Board of Directors. The amount of insurance coverage shall be reviewed by staff at the time of policy renewal.
10. At each Annual Meeting of the Delegate Assembly of the Association, and at other times as directed by the Board of Directors, an account of financial transactions and financial status of the Association shall be rendered by the Treasurer or President, or their designee.
11. The Chief Executive Officer and the Chief Operating Officer are empowered to execute contracts of \$3,000 or more for customary business operations. Contracts for less than \$3,000 shall be reviewed and approved by executive staff prior to implementation and may be signed by staff at the director and manager levels.

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12. The Association shall record fixed assets with purchase prices greater than \$5,000 as capital assets in the accounting records and depreciate those assets using guidelines set forth by the U.S. Internal Revenue Code.
13. The Association shall maintain a fixed asset schedule of tangible property that shall be reviewed every year. Items removed from inventory will be sold or donated as deemed appropriate by the Chief Executive Officer or Chief Operating Officer.

Adopted 1983. Revised 1986, 1987, 1989, 1990; confirmed by the Executive Committee April 1995. Revised November 1996, September 1997, September 1998, October 1999, December 1999, February 2000, August 2001, May 2003, August 2005, April 2007, August 2009, May 2010, August 2012, January 2016, January 2017, January 2019, January 2020.

7.9 RECORDS

INTRODUCTION:

Because accurate and accessible print and electronic records are essential to the operation of the Association, a central depository of necessary documents and information shall be maintained.

POLICY:

1. Select records of the Association shall be available by appointment during regular business hours by members of the Board of Directors and/or Member Boards. In keeping with IRS regulations, the annual return (Form 990) and application for exemption will be provided upon request unless otherwise available electronically.
2. The following records shall be kept for a minimum of three years: correspondence and roster of Delegates, Alternates, and officers.
3. The following records shall be kept for a minimum of ten years: contracts, roster of Member Boards, accounting records, and minutes of committees.
4. The following records shall be kept indefinitely: Minutes of the proceedings of the Delegate Assembly and Board of Directors, the Articles of Incorporation and bylaws, audits, tax returns, retirement plan documents, employee records, examination scores, all former reports related to the ASWB examinations (e.g., annual technical reports, practice analysis reports, designated appropriate information and studies), all information related to disciplinary processes, and decisions on accommodations granted in accordance with applicable law related to individuals with disabilities in the United States and human rights legislation in Canada.
5. Records must be kept securely and shredded or otherwise appropriately destroyed or deleted when the expiration time has been reached. Electronic versions must be adequately safeguarded through password protection or another encryption.
6. The Association shall follow the record retention policy for most business and accounting records as prescribed by the U.S. Internal Revenue Code.

Adopted 1990. Revised 1992; confirmed by the Executive Committee April 1995. Revised by the Board of Directors September 1998, August 2012, January 2016, January 2019, January 2020.

7.10 NEWSLETTER ADVERTISEMENTS

INTRODUCTION:

Advertisements in ASWB newsletters may be accepted according to the following policies.

POLICY:

1. The Association may accept advertisements for its newsletters.
2. Advertisements must not conflict with the objectives of the Association.
3. The Association, through the Chief Executive Officer, reserves the right to refuse any advertisement.

Adopted September 19, 1992. Confirmed by the Executive Committee April 1995. Revised by the Board of Directors, September 1998, October 2004, January 2016.

7.11 RESEARCH SUPPORT

INTRODUCTION:

Engaging in and encouraging research on matters related to legal regulation is stated in the bylaws as a central purpose of the Association. To fulfill this purpose, the ASWB Board of Directors may consider providing support to individual research projects that are related to the Association's mission and goals, and that follow Association policy.

POLICY:

1. All requests for research support, data access, or other assistance must be in writing and submitted to the ASWB Board of Directors for its review and approval.
2. If data are being requested, the researcher must present the Board of Directors with an explanation of how that data will be used.
3. If data are made available, researchers must be willing to enter a confidentiality agreement with the Association regarding the use, reproduction, ownership, and security of the data. Such use must comply with all applicable ethical standards.
4. All requested data must be accessed through the Chief Executive Officer or Chief Operating Officer.
5. The ASWB Board of Directors reserves the right to deny access to any proprietary or confidential data.
6. If support or data are provided, the Association must be appropriately cited in the research product and all future publications that may result from the research product.
7. The Association reserves the right to require review and approval of any research product developed under this policy prior to the product's dissemination.
8. The Association must receive complimentary copies of the research product prior to dissemination.
9. The researcher must be willing to present the research product at an Association meeting.
10. The ASWB Board of Directors may provide written support, limited access to Association data, and/or award a research grant or in-kind services on the basis of merit.
11. The ASWB Board of Directors may designate funds for research support in annual Association budgets.
12. The ASWB Board of Directors reserves the right to deny any request for research support.

Adopted by the Board of Directors January 1996. Revised September 1998, October 2004, April 2016, January 2017, January 2019, April 2019.

7.12 ASWB SPEAKERS, FACILITATORS, AND LIAISONS

INTRODUCTION:

The Association is committed to educating the public, the social work profession, and other regulators and regulatory board associations on issues related to social work regulation. To that end, the ASWB Board of Directors may provide support to representatives who have been designated by the Association to speak or present on behalf of the Association at meetings or conferences of other organizations.

POLICY:

1. Members of the ASWB Board of Directors, Association office staff, Member Board staff, members of Member Boards, or ASWB consultants may serve as liaisons to other organizations at the designation of the Board President.
2. All requests for speakers, presenters, and liaisons must be made through the Association office. The Chief Executive Officer or Board of Directors shall select the appropriate individual(s) for the event.
3. Upon approval by the ASWB Board of Directors, the Association may pay all related expenses for the designated speaker, facilitator, or liaison in accordance with Policy 3.3, Travel Arrangements and Expenses.
4. Requests for financial assistance or reimbursement from individuals not selected by the ASWB Board of Directors or Chief Executive Officer shall be denied.

Adopted by the Board of Directors November 1996; revised September 1998, October 2004, August 2012, January 2016, January 2017, January 2019.

7.13 INVESTMENTS

INTRODUCTION:

This Investment Policy establishes the objectives and guidelines for the investment of the Association's reserve funds. Reserves are normally the result of accumulated surpluses in the financial operations of the activities and programs assigned to ASWB funds. The reserves are maintained to facilitate the continuing operation of activities in the event of unusual financial conditions, or to address unbudgeted and extraordinary expenses.

POLICY:

1. Investments shall be made in ways that secure capital and its purchasing power relative to inflation.
2. At least 60 percent (Short Term Fund) of the Association's investments shall be made in a manner that will ensure maximum return on the investment with minimal, low, or conservative risk.
3. Up to 40 percent (Long Term Fund) of the Association's investment funds may be placed in bond or stock mutual funds.
4. Whenever prudent, the Association's investments shall be made in socially responsible instruments whose criteria meet with the approval of the Board of Directors.
5. Staff shall report to the ASWB Finance Committee and Board of Directors on a regular basis concerning the status of all Association investments.
6. The Finance Committee shall review, at least annually, the Association's long-term strategies for investments and, where applicable, make recommendations to the Board of Directors.
7. The Finance Committee shall employ the included Guidelines for Investment Recommendations and Review, which may be modified from time to time.

Guidelines for Investment Recommendations and Review

To implement and monitor the Association's investment policies, the Finance Committee shall use the following guidelines in evaluating the Association's current and potential investments.

1. Investment Objectives

Reserve funds will be separated into two accounts: one for potential short term needs, and one for long term.

The objective of the Short Term Fund (60%) is preservation of capital and liquidity. Its risk tolerance shall be considered "Conservative."

The objective of the Long Term Fund (40%) is capital appreciation, with a time horizon of seven to ten years. Its risk tolerance shall be considered "Moderate."

Allowable investments for each fund are shown under #3 below.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

ASWB Board of Directors: The Board of Directors of the Association shall have final approval of any changes to this Investment Policy, based on recommendations from the Finance Committee.

ASWB Finance Committee: It is the responsibility of the Finance Committee to review this policy annually, in consultation with the Investment Advisor, and propose any changes to the Board of Directors.

ASWB Chief Executive Officer: The authority of investment discretion and decisions lies with the Association's Chief Executive Officer or designated Executive Management staff, based on recommendations from the Investment Advisor, in accordance with the constraints of this policy. Staff shall provide information about the investment performance and any recommendations made by the Investment Advisor to the ASWB Treasurer on a quarterly basis. Any investment issues requiring immediate action that are brought to the attention of staff by the Investment Advisor will be brought to the Finance Committee immediately.

Investment Advisor: The Investment Advisor shall provide monthly and quarterly statements to ASWB, which will include the transactions and performance of the short and long term funds. The Investment Advisor shall also provide recommendations for any changes to the portfolios to the Association's CEO or designated Executive Management staff.

3. Allowable Investments

- Money Market Funds
- CDs insured by the FDIC
- Treasury Bills
- U.S. Government and Agency Securities
- Corporate Notes and Bonds
- All types of Mutual Funds, including REITS and alternative investments with daily liquidity
- Exchange Traded Funds, except those using leverage
- Short duration bond funds

4. Prohibited Investments and Transactions

- Individual stocks
- Commodities and Futures Contracts
- Private Placements
- Individual Options
- Short selling (except within mutual and bond funds)
- Margin Transactions

5. Benchmarks and Target Rates of Return

Each investment fund shall have a target rate of return, net of fees, equal to a blended benchmark of appropriate indexes at the target allocations shown in the tables below.

6. Asset Allocation Guidelines**Short Term Fund:**

Asset Class	Minimum, %	Maximum, %	Target, %
Cash & Equivalents	0	20	10
Fixed Income	35	75	55
Equities	15	35	25
Alternative Investment	5	15	10

Long Term Fund:

Asset Class	Minimum, %	Maximum, %	Target, %
Cash & Equivalents	0	10	5
Fixed Income	15	45	30
Equities	30	60	45
Alternative Investment	5	30	20

Adopted December 30, 1990. Revised 1992; confirmed by the Executive Committee April 1995. Revised September 1997, October 1999, August 2001, May 2003, April 2004, May 2008, August 2012, October 2013, April 2015, January 2016, January 2019.

7.14 RESERVE FUNDING

INTRODUCTION:

The Association is committed to ensuring its continued operation through the establishment of reserve funds, some of which may be set aside for specific purposes.

POLICY:

1. At the close of the fiscal year, 20 percent of all revenue over expenditures shall be assigned to a General Reserve Fund, with the remaining 80 percent to be assigned to a Designated Reserve Fund.
2. The General Reserve Fund shall be used at the discretion of the Board of Directors and Chief Executive Officer, following the fiscal procedures policies established by the Association.
3. Funds in the Designated Reserve shall be divided into two subcategories: 30 percent of the total Designated Reserve shall be assigned to an Exam/Legal Defense Fund, and the remaining 70 percent of the total Designated Reserve shall be assigned to an Operating Business Expense Fund.
4. The Association shall continue to build its reserves toward the goal of establishing and maintaining an Operating Business Expense Fund equal to 18 months' operating expenses at minimum, and an Exam/Legal Defense Fund totaling \$5 million at minimum.
5. Funds in the Exam/Legal Defense Fund shall be accessible by the Association only after approval of the Board of Directors and notification of the ASWB Delegates.
6. Funds in the Operating Business Expenses Fund shall be accessible by the Association only after approval of the Board of Directors.
7. Staff shall report to the Finance Committee and Board of Directors on a regular basis concerning the status of all reserve funds.
8. The ASWB Finance Committee shall review this policy annually to reassess reserve goals as identified above.

Adopted by the ASWB Board of Directors October 1999. Revised May 2003, October 2004, May 2010, May 2011, August 2012, April 2016, January 2019.

7.15 APPROVED CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION:

Through its Approved Continuing Education (ACE) Program, the Association provides a detailed review of the educational and programming standards, qualifications, administration, program development and promotion of providers of social work continuing education.

Participation in the program provides assurance that continuing education for social workers offered by these providers meets consistent, rigorous standards, guided by the Association's mission of public protection.

The ACE Program allows individual boards the opportunity to be relieved from the need to review every provider in detail for themselves, since approved providers will already have been held to the high standards applied by ACE. Individual boards will determine the extent of their recognition and use of the program. Individual boards, if they choose, may also recognize providers and/or individual course offerings and determine if the subject matter is consistent with the board's requirements.

POLICY:

1. The Continuing Competence Committee, appointed by the President with the approval of the Board of Directors, reviews policies that apply to the program. The committee shall be composed of a majority of licensed social workers with diverse backgrounds, representing practice and academics.
2. Providers seeking ACE approval must complete an application form supplied by the Association according to the instructions. Continuing education providers shall be evaluated based on the application and other information, to ensure that they meet ACE program standards and criteria.
3. Providers who meet these standards shall be recommended to the ASWB Board of Directors for approval as ASWB ACE-approved providers.
4. Initial approval is for one year. Providers may submit applications for renewal to extend the approval for additional three-year terms. Each extension shall be made only after successful completion of a thorough review by staff, conducted on the same criteria as the review for initial approval. The provider may be asked to respond to requests for any needed additional information or documentation to ensure that the ACE Program standards and criteria continue to be met.
5. Providers that apply but are not approved to be part of the ACE program, or whose approval is suspended or not extended, may appeal to the Board of Directors through the Chief Executive Officer.
6. As part of the ACE standards, approved providers must present evidence of programming related to social work, such as theories and concepts of human behavior in the social environment, social work practice, knowledge and skills, social work research, programs or practice evaluations, social work management, administration or social policy, ethics, and other areas deemed by individual boards to be important and relevant to current social work practice.

VII. Methods of Operation

7. Providers shall include a precautionary message that social workers should consult the licensing law or the board in their jurisdiction about the acceptability of a particular course or program when fulfilling continuing education requirements.
8. The Association's mission encourages consistency within social work regulation, but use of the ACE program will be customized by ASWB Member Boards to meet the specific needs of each jurisdiction. Member Boards may choose to recognize ACE providers by referencing the ASWB ACE program and its standards and criteria in their board regulations.
9. Approved providers shall be assigned a number, which they may use on promotional materials as evidence of their inclusion in ACE. They will also be listed on the Association website and on lists provided to jurisdictional boards.

Approved by the Board of Directors August 18, 2001. Revised August 2012, April 2016, January 2017, January 2018.

7.16 CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE AND EXHIBITS

INTRODUCTION:

As part of the ASWB mission to increase public and professional understanding of the importance and value of social work regulation to public protection, Association leaders and staff attend or exhibit at a number of national, international, and jurisdictional conferences each year. Printed materials appropriate to the attendees may be distributed from a booth, or education programs about licensing or the examinations may be presented to groups according to the following policy. Funded attendees shall adhere to Policy 3.3, Travel Arrangements and Expenses.

POLICY:

1. The Association shall exhibit at a limited number of jurisdictional conferences per year, depending on available funds and staff time.
2. The Association shall respond to invitations from jurisdictional organizations to exhibit and shall accept invitations in the order that they are received.
3. Attendance in any year will depend on dates available in the ASWB calendar; if there are conflicts and staff or exhibit materials are already committed, an invitation from a jurisdictional organization will have to be declined.
4. The Association may pay all exhibit fees and efforts will be made to send at least one staff member or volunteer to manage the exhibit. The jurisdictional board shall be encouraged to bring any written materials of its own as handouts for social workers.

Adopted January 26, 2002. Revised October 2004, August 2012, January 2016, January 2017, January 2019.

7.17 PUBLIC PROTECTION DATABASE

INTRODUCTION:

The Public Protection Database (PPD) is a databank developed and maintained by the Association as part of its mission of protection of the public. Actions taken by jurisdictions relative to individuals are reported to PPD, and have been since 1991 when the program began under its original name, the Disciplinary Action Reporting System. PPD serves as a resource for regulatory boards investigating the professional background and current licensure status of social workers in their jurisdictions, or of applicants for licensure.

Jurisdictional boards are encouraged to maintain the quality of this service by reporting to the PPD in a timely manner all board actions taken in reference to current licensees, licensure applicants, unlicensed individuals, licensees applying for renewal or reinstatement, and licensees who have had actions taken against them.

POLICY:

1. PPD is a means by which social work regulatory boards can review data related to the background of individuals seeking licensure or renewal. Because the system is designed to “flag” individuals, boards are expected to check with the jurisdiction that took the action for more detailed information.
2. All actions reported by boards to PPD shall be entered and maintained in the system.
3. Information accepted and stored may include the complete name of the licensee, any alias or other name used, both home and work addresses, gender, date of birth, Social Security/Social Insurance number, license number, licensure board, school granting degree, year of graduation, and degree received. Information to be recorded on the reporting board includes board name, board contact and title, telephone number, and report date.
4. For disciplinary actions, an action code according to the National Practitioner Databank (NPDB) coding structure shall be recorded, as well as a code for the Basis for Action. Other details as available are recorded.
5. Once a record is entered into PPD it will not be expunged because of later decisions or actions, or the passage of time. All succeeding actions involving the licensee shall be added to the record.
6. Reports on actions in PPD shall be posted periodically for access by all Member Boards.
7. The Association may act as the reporting agent to the NPDB for any of its Member Boards that make such a request and file the required written authorization.
8. Social work regulatory boards are encouraged to continue to report to PPD even if they self-report to NPDB and other databanks.

Approved by the Board of Directors January 2002. Revised April 2002, October 2004, February 2007, November 2010, August 2012, January 2016, January 2017.

7.18 FEES AND DUES REVIEW

INTRODUCTION:

The Association recognizes that the financial health of the organization is a crucial factor in the ongoing operation of the ASWB examination program and other services. Because the fees charged for the examinations and the dues assessed to members are major revenue centers, and because changes to these fees have far-reaching effects, the Association shall carefully monitor these fees and the timelines for possible changes.

POLICY:

1. The examination fees charged by the Association shall be reviewed by the ASWB Finance Committee at intervals of no more than five years.
2. The examination fees charged by the Association shall be reviewed after a fiscal year that ends with an operating deficit, or when extraordinary circumstances occur as determined by the Board of Directors.
3. Member Board dues charged by the Association shall be reviewed by the ASWB Finance Committee at least every seven years, or more frequently as determined by the Board of Directors.
4. A review of the examination fee and membership dues structure shall include a recommendation from the ASWB Finance Committee to the Board of Directors, accompanied with the rationale behind the recommendation.

Adopted May 1, 2003. Revised October 2004, August 2012, January 2016.

7.19 RISK MANAGEMENT

INTRODUCTION:

As part of its commitment to operate in ways that minimize potential harm to the Association, its Member Boards, the examination program, and staff, the Association of Social Work Boards and its Board of Directors shall make efforts to assess and manage risk.

POLICY:

1. ASWB staff shall prepare an annual audit of risk faced by the Association. The audit will outline sources of risk, types of risk, and efforts being made to manage risk.
2. The ASWB Board of Directors shall review the risk audit and develop plans for addressing pertinent risks.
3. The ASWB Board of Directors may assign additional risk assessments to ASWB committees, task forces, staff, consultants, or subcommittees of the board, as appropriate.
4. The existence of a level of risk shall not preclude the Association from engaging in a given activity, service, or policy.

Adopted April 29, 2004. Revised by the Board of Directors August 2012.

7.20 ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

INTRODUCTION:

The Association and its employees shall take all possible steps to reduce waste and to minimize environmental impact. Association volunteers, including the Board of Directors, shall be encouraged to be mindful of environmental impact.

POLICY:

1. The Association should purchase the most nonpolluting and energy-efficient technologies available.
2. Office supplies with a high content of recycled materials shall be purchased.
3. Suppliers with a responsible record for supplying materials that are the end product of recycling shall be used when possible.
4. Use of paper shall be reduced as much as possible through electronic communication when feasible and double-sided copying.
5. All materials that can be recycled shall be collected in conveniently located bins. Such materials include aluminum cans, plastic bottles, newspapers, copy paper, and printer and toner cartridges.
6. Carpooling shall be used by employees and volunteers for official ASWB business when practical.
7. All plumbing in the Association's buildings shall be maintained free from leaks.
8. Employees shall be vigilant about keeping lights and equipment turned off when not needed.
9. Reasonable temperatures for heat and air conditioning shall be maintained.
10. Environmentally friendly supplies for cleaning and for use in kitchens and bathrooms shall be used.
11. Standard office lighting shall be as energy efficient as is feasible.
12. Hotels with environmentally responsible policies, such as recycling and reduced use of water and electrical power, shall be given preference for use for Association meetings.

Adopted by the Board of Directors January 2009. Revised August 2012, January 2016.