

## **VII. METHODS OF OPERATION**

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## 7.1 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 members of the Board of Directors, volunteers and committee and task force members, and consultants (collectively referred to as ASWB representatives). 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. ASWB staff conduct is governed by ASWB Personnel Policies.

### **POLICY:**

1. All ASWB representatives shall perform their work 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 volunteer service with the Association.
2. Confidentiality agreements must be executed by all ASWB representatives to protect the business and financial affairs of the Association, particularly in regard to the examination program.
3. ASWB representatives shall communicate and interact with professionalism and civility on behalf of the Association.
4. ASWB representatives shall conduct themselves without personal conflicts or the appearance of impropriety or by exercising undue influence over ASWB staff and others.
5. ASWB representatives 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 representatives shall respond on behalf of the Association only if authorized by the CEO or the CEO's representative; otherwise, ASWB representatives shall advise media representatives to send their inquiries to

[info@aswb.org](mailto:info@aswb.org), subject: media contact. Refer to Policy 7.5, Social Media and Policy 7.6, Media Relations for additional guidance.

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 representative 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, April 2022.**

**2022 Note: former policy number 7.2**

## 7.2 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. The Board will be informed of personnel policies when significant changes are made.
2. Staff at the Association office shall carry out operations in support of ASWB's mission, policies, bylaws, and strategic objectives. Representative tasks include:
  - a. Providing support for all activities of the Association, including the Annual Meeting of the Delegate Assembly, Association Education Meeting, membership training meetings, and meetings of the Board of Directors, committees, and task forces.
  - b. Providing information to members as needed and requested, with emphasis on data valuable in regulatory activities.
  - c. Serving as media point of contact for the Association and responding to media inquiries.
  - d. Overseeing psychometric reviews as needed, providing any needed measurement information in relation to the examination.
  - e. Providing, when requested, reports to the Board of Directors regarding the types of insurance carried by the Association, and the level of coverage provided.
  - f. Providing regular reports to the Board of Directors regarding all programs and services offered by the Association through its departments.
  - g. Providing, upon request, reports to the Board of Directors regarding employee benefits offered by the Association.

**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, April 2022.**

**2022 Note: former policy number 7.1**

## 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 due to unexpected illness, accident, or other unforeseen event that prohibits the CEO from fulfilling employment 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 Senior Director of Finance and Support Services. If that individual is not available, the next person to be contacted is the Senior Director of Member Engagement and Regulatory Services.
  - b. The Senior Director of Finance and Support Services or the Senior Director of Member Engagement and Regulatory Services will notify the CEO's personal emergency contacts.
  - c. The Senior Director of Finance and Support Services 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 Senior Director of Finance and Support Services, 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 Senior Director of Finance and Support Services, in consultation with ASWB's Board President and the Director of Communications, 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 Director Team will be convened by the Senior Director of Finance and Support Services within 48 hours of notification to discuss leadership coverage for the CEO's duties.

- The Senior Director of Finance and Support Services will manage assignments and have the authority of the CEO during this time.
- The Senior Director of Finance and Support Services will keep the Board President informed on a regular basis, at a minimum once per week.
- The Senior Director of Finance and Support Services will consult with Senior Director Team to review all account signature cards and establish a temporary signatory during the CEO's absence.
- The Senior Director Team will report to the Senior Director of Finance and Support Services. Staff members will continue to report to their assigned directors or supervisors.
- The Senior Director of Finance and Support Services 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 Senior Director of Finance and Support Services, 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 Senior Director of Finance and Support Services, may consider designating a member of the Senior Director Team to the position of Acting CEO. The position description of Acting CEO will specify that a member of the Senior Director Team 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 Director 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 in the CEO job description and other applicable policies as required by the Board.

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, but no less than every other week. 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.

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, 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, outlining how ASWB will continue to operate as usual.
  - An out-of-office message will be placed on the CEO's email and voicemail with information about how to redirect communications to appropriate staff.
  - 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 Senior Director of Finance and Support Services or the 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, April 2022.**



## 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 a 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 typical amount of 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 be only 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 individual is hired, the Association may consider both internal and external candidates when filling the CEO position. A search firm shall be hired to assist with the search process, including seeking potential candidates through a search conducted in the United States and Canada.
  - 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. The Board President after input and approval from the Past President or President-Elect shall appoint both a Transition Task Force and a Search Committee and designate a chair for each. Appointed Board members shall remain in place regardless of changes to their position on the Board of Directors.
  - a. The Transition Task Force is a crucial component for the ongoing stability of ASWB during the implementation of the succession plan. 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.

- b. 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. The Search Committee in coordination with the search firm shall interview qualified candidates and present finalist(s) to the ASWB Board for selection of the successful candidate to serve as incoming CEO.
4. 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.
5. The Board President, with Board approval, makes the job offer to the selected candidate.
6. Upon acceptance, the Board President and ASWB legal counsel may enter into contract negotiations with the selected candidate within two weeks, not to exceed two months.
7. 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.

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

**Transition Task Force**

- The members are: Past President or President-Elect, Secretary, CEO or Interim CEO, Director of Communications, 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 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 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 the Senior Director Team; and two Member Board representatives chosen by the Board President with the approval of the Board. A human resources staff member selected by the Senior Director Team 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, April 2022.**

## 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. ASWB staff conduct on social media is governed by ASWB Personnel Policies. Any mention of ASWB or of an association with ASWB must be done appropriately and with care for the accuracy and suitability of comments. The Association recognizes the benefits of social media as an important tool of engagement and enrichment for its Member Board members and staff, Board of 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. For purposes of this policy, *social networking* includes but is not limited to video or wiki postings; posts on sites such as Facebook and Twitter; and use of chat rooms, personal blogs, or other similar forms of online journals, diaries, or personal newsletters not affiliated with ASWB.
2. This policy includes anything posted online where information is shared that might affect Member Board members or staff, the ASWB Board of Directors, or the Association as a whole. It applies to Association Member Board members and 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.
  - a. The goal of authorized social networking and blogging is to become a part of the industry conversation, promote web-based sharing of ideas and exchange of relevant information, and discuss ASWB-specific activities and events.
  - b. ASWB representatives are responsible for ensuring all blogging and social networking information complies with ASWB's written policies.
  - c. Representatives who engage in social networking as representatives of ASWB must understand that some readers may view the individual as a spokesperson for ASWB. Therefore, representatives blogging or commenting as representatives must state that views expressed in their blogs or on social networking sites are their own and not those of the Association or of any person or organization affiliated with or doing business with ASWB.
  - d. Unless specifically authorized to represent the Association as a spokesperson, representatives are prohibited from speaking on behalf of ASWB. If contacted by the media or press about a blog post or commentary they published that relates to ASWB, representatives are required to direct such inquiry to [info@aswb.org](mailto:info@aswb.org), subject: media contact.

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 the 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 is protected.
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 Board 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 potentially millions 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 the Association office.

**Adopted by the Board of Directors August 2012. Revised January 2016, January 2017, April 2019, April 2022.**

## 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 Member Board members and staff, ASWB Board of Directors, volunteers, and any individuals representing themselves as agents of ASWB (collectively, ASWB representatives). ASWB staff interactions with media are governed by ASWB Personnel Policies. 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 is the designated point of contact for all media inquiries. The Director of Communications 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 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.
  - a. Media representatives should be advised to send their inquiries to [info@aswb.org](mailto:info@aswb.org), subject: media contact.
4. 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.

- b. For tracking purposes, volunteers must notify ASWB's Director of Communications before providing personal commentary or responding to a personal interview request and must forward a copy of all such commentary to ASWB.
- 5. 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.
- 6. 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.
- 7. 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 or Twitter platforms to share content.
- 8. 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 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, April 2022.**

## **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 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.**

**2022 Note: former policy number 7.9**

## 7.9 FISCAL PROCEDURES

### **INTRODUCTION:**

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

### **POLICY:**

1. Financial institution accounts for the Association shall be routinely reviewed by the Chief Executive Officer or designee, 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.
2. All financial investments shall be evaluated by the Chief Executive Officer to determine whether the funds should be used for the operating budget or for capital expenses or should be reinvested.
3. The Association shall report the financial results of operations according to the schedule established by the Finance Committee and at least quarterly.
4. 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.
5. 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 and shall identify unfavorable variances greater than \$10,000 and 10 percent.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. The Chief Executive Officer is authorized to designate staff members at the senior director and director levels to sign contracts of \$10,000 or less for customary business operations. Designees shall get approval from the Finance department before executing such contracts.

**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, August 2022.**

**2022 Note: former policy 7.8**

## **7.10 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**

<b>Asset Class</b>	<b>Minimum, %</b>	<b>Maximum, %</b>	<b>Target, %</b>
Cash & Equivalents	0	20	10
Fixed Income	35	75	55
Equities	15	35	25
Alternative Investments	5	15	10

**Long Term Fund**

<b>Asset Class</b>	<b>Minimum, %</b>	<b>Maximum, %</b>	<b>Target, %</b>
Cash & Equivalents	0	10	5
Fixed Income	15	45	30
Equities	30	60	45
Alternative Investments	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.

2022 Note: former policy number 7.13

## **7.11 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 \$10 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, April 2022.**

**2022 Note: former policy number 7.14**

## **7.12 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. 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.

**Adopted May 1, 2003. Revised October 2004, August 2012, January 2016, April 2022.**

**2022 Note: former policy number 7.18**

## **7.13 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.**

**2022 Note: former policy number 7.19**



## 7.14 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 staff designated by the CEO.
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, April 2022.**

**2022 Note: former policy number 7.11**

## **7.15 APPROVED CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAM**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

Through its Approved Continuing Education 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 as well as individual courses.

### **POLICY:**

1. The ACE program allows individual boards that accept ACE approval the opportunity to be relieved from the need to review every provider and/or individual course offering in detail for themselves, since approved providers will already have been held to the high standards applied by ACE.
2. A provider of continuing education for social workers or an individual social work continuing education course that receives ACE approval has met consistent, rigorous standards, guided by the Association's mission of public protection.
  - a. Provider approval evaluates organizations for their ability to provide high-quality course offerings for social work continuing education credit.
  - b. Individual course/conference approval evaluates individual courses and conferences and approves them for licensees to earn continuing education credit.
3. Providers seeking ACE approval must complete an application and shall be evaluated according to ACE program standards and criteria.
4. The ASWB Board of Directors shall be apprised on a quarterly basis of those providers and individual courses/conferences that have met ACE standards in the quarter.
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. Member Boards that choose to recognize ACE providers may do so by referencing the ASWB ACE program and its standards and criteria in their jurisdictional regulations.

**Approved by the Board of Directors August 18, 2001. Revised August 2012, April 2016, January 2017, January 2018, April 2022.**

## 7.16 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.**

**2022 Note: former policy number 7.17**

## **7.17 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 in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer.
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, April 2022.**

**2022 Note: former policy number 7.12**