



THE ONTARIO SQUARE AND ROUND DANCE FEDERATION INC.

Friendship Set to Music

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Communication

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Administrative Guidelines Communications

General

1. The square and round dance movement is unique organizationally compared to other volunteer organizations. The key word is "independent". Although national, provincial, area, and Club levels exist, each level is self governing. This could be contrasted to other organizations in which the national level sets the policy and method of operation for the provincial, area, and club levels. Indeed in the square and round dance movement, the basic building block is the Club level, and all other levels exist to support its operation.

2. The word "independent" gives the clue about the nature of the relationships that exists between the various organizations in the movement. There is no branch office-head office relationship at any level. Every action must be done in the spirit of cooperation, and the action must be in a subject area where an organization has a role to play.

Communication Tone

3. In keeping with the volunteer and independent nature of the movement, it is essential that all communication, whether written, verbal, or electronic, be polite and respectful. Personal remarks about any person should never be made.

4. Under the authority of this Guideline, it is the duty of the Secretary of the Federation to ensure both internal and external communication is in keeping with the nature of the movement. Accordingly, all Board members, are to monitor communication and refer to the Secretary any communication which is considered inappropriate. After investigation, the Secretary shall take whatever corrective action required, ranging from a letter to the offending member requesting retraction and an apology, to bringing the matter before the next meeting of the Board of Directors for resolution as it sees fit. In the event of offending communication from the Secretary, the President shall initiate corrective action.

Internal Communication

5. Board members are free to communicate internally to any other Board member, with an information copy if desired to the Secretary. In order to prevent wasted duplication, copies should only be circulated when essential. The Secretary reports on communication at Board meetings, and if any member desires a copy of any communication, it can be provided or ordered at that time.

External Communication

17. In keeping with standard business traditions, external communication to other organizations should be addressed to the president or secretary of the organization. Typically, as well, external communication should be signed by the president or secretary, except in cases where a Director's task requires direct communication, such as membership and convention coordination. Informational copies should usually be addressed to the president or secretary of an organization as well

18. Federation letterhead or equivalent computer generated format shall be used for all written external communication.

19. A copy of all external communication shall be sent to the Secretary.

Envelopes

20. The use of Federation envelopes is encouraged to provide a ready means of identification of incoming letters, and provide advertising and promotion of the Federation to the general public. The title of a person or couple should be omitted from the address on the envelope.

21. Because Directors represent Associations, a retiring Director from an area Association should turn over remaining supplies to the incoming replacement Director from that same area.

Communication Files

22. Copies of minutes of Board and General meetings, annual financial reports, and significant communication shall be kept by the Secretary, and may be kept by other Directors if the subject matter warrants inclusion as an historical document.

23. Directors may keep files of communication sent and received. For Directors charged with the specific responsibilities of membership, legal information, public relations and publicity, and professional development, a separate subject file shall be kept with sufficient information to provide guidance for future holders of the office. It is important to bear in mind that responsibilities for an office will often be turned over without the benefit of a specific turnover meeting.

24. Because the Federation does not have a permanent office and storage area, it is important for all Directors to purge files from time to time of unnecessary communication. This should be done particularly before turning over the files to another Director. It is always a matter of judgement on what to keep and what to throw out. A suggested criterion is simply to judge the documents on whether they will aid a new Director in doing his or her job. Bear in mind as well that the Secretary keeps all the critical documents, and all minutes and yearly financial statements.

25. Outgoing Directors or executives shall pass files to the replacement as soon as practical.

Computer Formatted Files

26. File copies of significant computer generated documents should be provided to the Secretary, either in writing or other electronic medium to prevent retyping. This should include all guidelines, terms of reference, significant reports, etc. Please note that there is no requirement for any Board member to own or use a computer, but if a computer is used, then a copy of significant documents should be given to the Secretary.

27. The files should be provided, if possible, in Word format, however, if this is not possible, the file should be supplied in the original format and also in the text file format (also called ASCII format). Most word processing programs can read or convert Word formats, and most conversion programs can change between the most popular word processing programs.

28. The Federation letterhead format is available from the Secretary for any members wishing to use it.

E-mail or Phone

29. Directors should use the phone or email as required to perform their duties.

30. For phone bills, a Director should keep a list of the person called with the charge and give it to the Treasurer for reimbursement. Both GST and PST are charged on phone bills.

31. *With the increased use and common availability of e-mail, this means of inexpensive communication is encouraged. However, either a hard (paper) copy of the message or a computer file should be created for retention of this information.*

Changes from the previous version are made are indicated in italics.