

Does your nonprofit or charity need a LAWYER?

See reverse for the **8-Point Board Governance Checkup** to find out if your board is in good legal health.

Healthy board governance is a critical component of organizational effectiveness and legal compliance. At some point, almost all board members have concerns that their role is not clear or their work is difficult and confusing. A VLS lawyer can provide legal governance advice or can even help mediate an internal crisis.

Volunteer Lawyers Service provides free legal services to eligible Ontario nonprofit organizations and charities. Legal advice from a VLS lawyer can help protect your organization from potential pitfalls and limit risk.

VLS recruits lawyers who volunteer their time to help the charitable sector with their legal needs. Lawyers specialize in areas of business law relevant to nonprofit and charitable organizations such as incorporation, charitable registration, board governance, contracts, or trademark registrations.

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Take the VLS 8-point Board Governance Checkup:

Healthy board governance is a critical component of organizational effectiveness and legal compliance. Use this Board Governance Checkup to identify areas where you may need help.

	YES	NO
1. Do your board members understand the legal responsibilities and liabilities associated with board membership including things like conflicts of interest and fiduciary duties (acting in good faith, duty of care)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Does your organization use proper administrative procedures such as providing written agendas and materials in advance of a meeting, recording minutes, and maintaining a minute book?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Does your chair effectively manage meetings using proper rules of order such as making and voting on a motion, adding agenda items and following rules of order?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Are there personality issues on the board such as a dominant member, side conversations, excessive rambling, lack of follow-through, an argumentative member, or members who do not contribute?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Does the board conform to its by-laws in areas such as positions on the board (Treasurer, Secretary, etc.), quorum at meetings, number of members on the board, or remuneration of directors?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Are there policies and procedures in place for board member recruitment, orientation for new members, and a formal succession planning process?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Is your board's oversight role well defined, and do the board and senior staff work effectively together within a mutually understood framework?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Do board members fully comply with their financial responsibilities, including understanding the budget and budget process?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you answered NO to any of these questions, consider whether free governance advice from a VLS lawyer could increase the effectiveness of your board. VLS can also help resolve difficult situations such as an organizational crisis or board-staff relations through its mediation services.

