



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF AMERICA

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Structure of Boys & Girls Clubs of America

Congressional Charter

A congressional charter is a law passed by Congress that states the mission, authority and activities of a group. The Congressional charter was issued in 1956 to Boys Clubs of America to promote health, social education, vocational, and character development of youth throughout the United States. It was amended in 1991 to include “Girls” in the name. Congress stopped issuing charters in 1992 so future amendments are not guaranteed.

The charter states eligibility for membership will be determined by the Constitution and each member shall have the right to one vote on each matter submitted to a vote.

The remaining charter provisions are standard corporate requirements.

Constitution

The Constitution states the purpose of the Corporation, Boys & Girls Clubs of America (BGCA), is to provide national leadership in the development of the Boys & Girls Clubs of America Movement; develop activities which will enable Member Organizations to render better service to their members; and provide assistance to communities in the establishment of new Clubs. It identifies several governing bodies of BGCA.

Board of Governors

- The Board of Governors manages the business, property and affairs of the Corporation. It consists of no less than 21 members who are elected by the National Council.
- The Board of Governors establishes policies consistent with the National Council, approves and carries out plans and programs of service to Member Organizations, elects new Member Organizations, charters new Clubs and revokes membership.
- The Board of Governors fixes the compensation of and prescribes the employment terms of the President of the Corporation.

Membership

- The membership of BGCA shall consist of Member Organizations which operate one or more Clubs in accordance with requirements for membership and operating standards established by the National Council.
- If any Member Organization does not meet the established requirements for membership or operating standards, membership may be terminated, put on provisional status or otherwise conditioned.
- Member Organizations control their own affairs, including but not limited to safety; compliance with federal, state and local laws; physical facilities; finances; policies and programs, and personnel policies and decisions. Member Organizations have sole authority to establish the terms of employment of its employees and officers. Neither the Board of Governors of the Corporation nor the Corporation itself shall have control over the affairs of Member Organizations, including employment decisions.

National Council

- The policies of the organization are determined by the National Council. The National Council establishes requirements for membership, establishes operating standards, elects board members and determines membership dues.
- The National Council consists of a delegate from each Member Organization, with each organization being entitled to one vote for any piece of business brought to the Council for election. A quorum is 25% for all meetings; a majority vote is required to approve business, including new operating standards, and two-thirds vote to change the Constitution.
- The Chairman of the Board of Governors is the Chairman of the National Council.

National Area Council Committee (NACC)/Area Councils

- The NACC consists of at least two, but not more than four representatives of Member Organizations from each region of BGCA. The NACC is responsible for the establishment of Areas Councils. A member of the Board of Governors chairs the NACC.
- The NACC representatives are local Board volunteers – each have responsibility for several Area Councils.
- The membership of each Area Council shall consist of at least one board member and the CEO of each Member Organization in the area of such Area Council.
- The Area Councils provide a liaison function between Member Organizations and BGCA, provide a forum for meeting and receiving information from Member Organizations for proposed items at the National Council meeting.
- Area Councils are responsible for vetting proposed agenda items for the National Council meeting and determining if they should be submitted to the NACC.
- NACC and the Chairman of the National Council establish the agenda for the National Council meetings.

Membership Requirements and Operating Standards

BGCA assumes the responsibility of upholding the articles and provisions of the Constitution and Member Organizations, once accepted, have the right to be identified with BGCA Movement, right to receive services and the right to participate in and vote at annual meeting of the National Council. They also have the obligation to fully comply with requirements of membership and operating standards as adopted by the National Council.

Eligibility Requirements

In order to be chartered as a new Member Organization, entities must:

- Be a legal entity and use and display as the first words “Boys & Girls Club(s) of...”
- Be governed by a document that meets requirements for membership and operating standards and include in its purpose the health, social, educational, vocational, character development and guidance of the members of club it operates.
- Have funds in hand or pledged for the first year of operation.
- Have a governing body and have one or more Clubs that are meeting the requirements for membership and operating standards.
- Employ a full-time paid Chief Executive Officer (CEO) who will be responsible to the governing body and shall have executive and administrative control. New CEOs shall attend an orientation sponsored by BGCA within the first eight months.

Member Organization Operating Standards

In order to remain affiliated, Member Organizations must maintain the below summarized operating standards. The full language can be found at bgca.net/Operations/MembershipRequirements/Pages/Membership.aspx:

Extent of Operations

1. Every site must have separate Club quarters that can be identified as a Club for its members, with sufficient floor area and space suitable for diversified and constructive program of activities.
2. Depending on the number of members and times of operations a site will be designated as a Unit, an Extension, a Community Impact or a Military-Affiliated Outreach.

Safety Standards

1. **General Safety.** Maintain and operate safety in Club facilities and during all Club activities in a reasonable and prudent manner to protect children, employees, volunteers and visitors. Each Club facility shall comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws for protection and safety.
2. **Annual Safety Assessment.** Complete and submit an annual online safety assessment to its board.
3. **Board Led Safety Committee.** Maintain a board-led committee that meets regularly.
4. **Emergency Response Plan.** Adapt and implement the Boys & Girls Club Movement's national emergency response plan.
5. **Communication.** Report potential criminal matters to law enforcement immediately and no later than 24 hours to BGCA if there has been a critical incident related to the organization.
6. **Insurance.** Maintain comprehensive General Liability insurance and Sexual Misconduct Coverage, Directors and Officers Liability, and Employment Practices Liability coverage with minimum limits of \$1 million. BGCA must be named as an additional insured on the General Liability and Sexual Misconduct policies.
7. **Background Checks.** Conduct specific criminal background checks of all employees (including minors), board volunteers and all other volunteers who interact with youth. Clubs must have a policy for determining employment when an applicant refuses consent to background check, makes false statements, is registered as a sex offender, or has been convicted of certain felonies. References must be obtained for candidates who worked at another Club.

Financial and Operations Standards

1. **Audit.** Conduct an annual audit of financial statements (if revenue less than \$250,000) and provide a copy to BGCA within 9 months of fiscal close.
2. **Code of Ethics/Compliance.** Establish and maintain a Code of Ethics and comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws and reporting requirements and conduct business with high ethical standards.
3. **Annual Report.** Provide BGCA an annual report of its organization, membership activities, attendance, and finances, attested to by CEO and Board Chair.
4. **Organizational Assessment.** Annually conduct an organizational assessment and develop an annual improvement plan.
5. **Dues.** Pay annual membership dues to BGCA as determined by the National Council.

Personnel Standards

1. **Unit Director and Staffing.** A director shall be employed at each site for at least as many hours as such site is in operation (can be the CEO). Every site shall maintain sufficient paid and volunteer staff qualified in personality, character, experience, education and training.
2. **Benefits.** Provide retirement plan, comprehensive medical insurance, group term life and long term disability insurance.
3. **Compensation and policies.** Establish and maintain comprehensive employment policies and compensation programs.



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
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