The Canadian Association of Journalists
L'Association Canadienne des Journalistes

COMMITTEE GOVERNANCE POLICY

Policy intent

To define expectations, duties and responsibilities of committees,and subcommittees, working groups, caucuses or chapters (herein referred to as "committee/committees"). This policy governs the activities of any CAJ committee, except where an approved terms of reference (TOR) policy specifies that a point supersedes this policy.

Policy responsibility

CAJ Board

Policy

1. **Terms of reference**
   - 1.1. Each CAJ committee shall have a TOR, approved by the board of directors, which must include at least:
     - 1.1.1. the authority of the committee;
     - 1.1.2. the role of the committee;
     - 1.1.3. the membership of the committee;
     - 1.1.4. the responsibilities and objectives of the committee; and
     - 1.1.5. whether the committee is a standing, ad hoc, or advisory committee.
   - 1.2. Additionally, the TOR is recommended to include:
     - 1.2.1. the scope of the committee
     - 1.2.2. the reporting duties of the committee;
     - 1.2.3. any special privacy requirements of the committee; and
     - 1.2.4. the resources allocated to the committee.
   - 1.3. The TOR for an ad hoc committee must include an anticipated timeline for the committee to complete its role and objectives. A standing committee does not require a completion date.
2. **Membership of the committee**
   - 2.1. The membership of each committee must include:
     - 2.1.1. a minimum of two directors, unless otherwise stated in the TOR;
     - 2.1.2. a defined maximum number of directors;
     - 2.1.3. except where otherwise noted within a TOR, the ability for the committee to have non-director CAJ members-at-large who have authority to vote on committee matters; and
     - 2.1.4. a CAJ staff person, as a non-voting member.
   - 2.2. Should there be more directors interested in sitting on a committee than the TOR allows, the board can conduct a secret ballot to determine who will be given a seat on the committee.
   - 2.3. Members of a committee are expected to fulfill the responsibilities listed in the TOR for the committee which requires at minimum:

2.3.1. active participation in any discussions of the committee; and
2.3.2. good faith efforts to assist the committee in any active work it engages in.

3. Vacancies on the committee

3.1. Vacancies with proposed individuals to fill them are to be filled by a vote of the board of directors by the next regularly scheduled board meeting or by signed resolution.
3.2. If an ad hoc committee has fewer than the minimum number of directors, as defined in the TOR, and is unable to fill the vacancies, it shall be suspended until the board of directors appoints enough people to meet the minimum requirements.
3.3. If a standing committee has fewer than the minimum number of directors, as defined in the TOR, the board of directors shall fill these seats by the next board meeting. If no directors volunteer for these seats, the board of directors shall fill these seats with one of the executive committee members or appoint others as needed, in accordance with the committee TOR.

4. Chair

4.1. Unless otherwise specified in the TOR, the chair of a committee shall be selected by a vote of the committee members.
4.2. The chair is expected to:
4.2.1. ensure the committee fulfills its objectives within the timelines stipulated in the TOR;
4.2.2. lead and facilitate discussions of the committee, addressing new initiatives;
4.2.3. ensure all members of the committee are active and participating, and that methods of participation are fair and understood by all committee members;
4.2.4. report to the board of directors as required by the TOR; and
4.2.5. report to the executive committee any committee members who are not fulfilling their requirements.

5. Operations

5.1. The executive committee shall ensure that committee chairs are fulfilling their roles and keeping the committee on track to ensure that deadlines are met.
5.1.1. Should the executive committee determine that a committee chair is not fulfilling their role, an item for discussion will be added to the next board meeting to address the issue.
5.2. Committee members who feel that the chair is not fulfilling their role shall report their concerns to the executive committee.
5.3. If a committee is not meeting its objectives and working according to timelines due to the fault of the chairperson, the executive committee may appoint a new chair to ensure that committee goals are met.
5.4. Standing committees are to report activities to the board of directors at each board meeting.
5.4.1. This activity is typically to be assigned to the chair however the chair may delegate this activity to another committee member who is a director if the chair will be unavailable for the board meeting.

5.5. When an ad-hoc committee reaches any deadline in the TOR, a report must be presented to the board of directors on its progress. If goals have not been met, the board of directors shall review the timelines and remaining tasks and determine if a revision of the TOR, leadership, or membership is needed.

6. Renewal

6.1. Unless otherwise specified in the TOR, all committee memberships are to be reviewed regularly to ensure that all non-director committee members are CAJ members in good standing, as defined within the *Membership Management Policy*.

Related References, Policies, Procedures and Forms:

This Policy References:

Membership Management Policy

This Policy is Referenced by:

All approved terms of references policies in effect

Forms and documents:

None

Policy History:

Original Approval Date: Sep 10 2023
Last Review Date: November 13, 2025 (formal)
Review by Date: November 2027