



Surprise Regional Chamber of Commerce Policies and Procedures Manual

Why Chambers Exist:

Chambers have a fervently-held belief that the health of the business community and the health of the larger community in which it lives are inextricable. And the work of a chamber in helping business succeed – is central to the success of the community as a whole.

What is Chamber

A **chamber of commerce** is an organization of businesses seeking to further their collective interests while advancing their community, region, state or nation. Business owners in towns, cities and other territories voluntarily form these local societies/networks to advocate on behalf of the community at large, economic prosperity and business interests.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Surprise Regional Chamber of Commerce is to champion economic prosperity, foster a pro-business climate, and to improve the quality of life in our region.

Vision Statement

To be universally recognized for our unique and invaluable role in helping businesses prosper and helping our communities thrive.

We are

- A **catalyst** for business growth
- A **convener** for leaders and influencers
- The **champion** for stronger communities

Our Focus:

- Building communities to which residents, visitors, and investors are attracted;
- Promoting those communities.
- Striving to ensure future prosperity via a pro-business climate;
- Representing the unified voice of the employer community;
- Reducing transactional friction through well-functioning networks

Core Program Areas (MVP)

- Helping **Members** grow while enhancing their image and credibility among consumers and other businesses.
- Being a catalyst for business growth, and helping all businesses prosper by being the **Voice** of the business community and an ardent proponent of the free enterprise system.
- Educating the **Public** on how they can support the current and future economic prosperity of the region built on thriving employers.

HOW OUR CHAMBER OPERATES

Dividing Duties Between Board and Staff

Every nonprofit has a board of directors that is the ultimate responsible body for the organization. In the beginning of the nonprofit's existence, it is common for the board members to wear different hats and function also in the staff capacity. As soon as it is feasible, most boards designate or hire their first chief executive who then manages the daily affairs. The chief executive reports to the board and other staff hired later report to the chief executive. The structure defines accountability but everyone working together for the same objective is what makes these partnerships succeed.

Primary Roles of Board

When defining the role of the board, it is important to remember that the role refers to the group, not to the individual board members. The board functions as a team. Individual board members inherently have no authority – no individual rights – over the organization but must assume accountability for their own actions.

The governing body together has three main foci:

- Direction – The board guards the mission of the organization and, through guidelines, steers it in the right direction.
- Oversight – The board monitors the activities, the health, and the ethical behavior in the organization.
- Resources – The board ensures that the organization is well-equipped to fulfill its mission – adequate finances, capable staff, and esteemed reputation.

Primary Role of Staff

When the board hires the first chief executive, it delegates the daily management to that person.

Maintaining a regular contact with the board and particularly the chair, the chief executive keeps the board informed about the issues and activities that are part of the life in the organization. In fact, the board would have great difficulties making well-rounded decisions without constant input from the chief staff person. The rest of the staff – in due time – will help the chief executive more efficiently implement the directives the board has set.

Typical Staff Duties

- Provide general guidance, advice, direction, and oversight.
- Provide reports, suggestions, best practices and other direction to ensure the achievement of key performance measures.
- As a consultant, share good and bad news with volunteer leadership.
- Assist in planning and evaluation activities
- Oversee budgeting and the monitoring of expenses.
- Assist committees in fundraising.
- Identify potential new committee members.

- Meetings: Confer with the Chairperson before meetings: scheduling meeting dates and aid in creating agendas
- Draft, clarify or review policies and guidelines as required.
- Prepare and maintain all rosters.
- Send meeting notices.
- Maintain and record (or delegate such recording) minutes.
- Contacting and conferring with board or committee members who fail to attend meetings

Election Procedure

The nominating committee presents a single slate of Board Candidates to the board of directors for consideration. The Candidates are declared elected by the Board at the December meeting and assume their roles in January.

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee consists of the Chair of the Board, Chair-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer and past Chair of the Board. It exercises powers of the Board between Board meetings.

Committees

A committee system is the most effective means of harnessing energies and abilities of volunteer workers. The committees are responsible to the CEO/President of the Chamber. Board members may choose to sit on various committees to give feedback to the Board. While some committees may be on-going standing committees, the Board may assign Ad-hoc committees as needed.

How the Chamber is Financed

The Surprise Regional Chamber of Commerce is financed primarily by the investment of its members. The maintenance of an adequate level of support from all businesses and professional interests in the communities is essential to finance the programs that are vital to community growth and development. Additional funding is obtained through non-dues activities, such as fee-for-service, donations, special events, grants and publications. The Chamber can impact its budget four ways- sell more, charge more, cut expenses or find new streams of revenue.

The members financial investment is determined by the Surprise Regional Chamber of Commerce's Board of Directors and may be adjusted time to time to meet organizational needs.

MEMBERSHIP

Billing

The Chamber staff will determine a regular schedule for the annual billing of dues. Membership investment dues are billed two months prior to the anniversary date of application. A member is considered “active” if their dues are paid in a timely manner. The Chamber’s Bylaws call for a delinquent member to be dropped from membership after their account is ninety (90) days past due.

Communications

The Surprise Regional Chamber of Commerce shall strive to maintain regular communications with membership. This may be done through monthly newsletter, meeting notices and news releases to local media. Chamber staff may be assisted by various committees such as the Social Media Committee, Publicity Committee and Government/Public Affairs Committee.

Member Lists and Privacy

The Surprise Regional Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to protecting the privacy of our members. To that end, we have instituted certain policies to help us make sure our data files remain in a safe, trusted and secure environment. The Surprise Regional Chamber of Commerce does not rent, sell, or otherwise share our proprietary customer/member lists with third parties. The Chamber adheres to all Can-Spam laws such as sending out unsolicited communications, opt-out requirements, etc.

Credit Cards: The Chamber ensures that information is transferred, using secure transmission technology, to a trusted, PCI compliant, third party for processing and securely stored by them to handle your transactions. Credit card information is not stored on the Chamber website or in our database. The Chamber must never have access to a member’s credit card information.

Membership Discounts

The Chamber may provide discounts or special pricing to organizations that advocate on behalf of businesses and provided services or activities that help the Chamber achieve its mission. The Chamber may also conduct special marketing efforts that included discounts, incentives or commissions.

The following organization may be considered for special pricing:

- Business leads and networking groups (Membership applies to the group, not individual businesses within a group)
- Business incubators
- Chambers of Commerce (local, state and national)
- DECA Clubs
- Legislators

- Media outlets
- Non-profit business organizations (BBB, SBA, SCORE, SBDC, etc.)

Whistleblower/Complaint Resolution Policy

In keeping with the policy of maintaining the highest standards of conduct and ethics, the Chamber will investigate complaints of suspected fraudulent or dishonest use or misuse of its resources or property by staff, board members, consultants, volunteers, or clients. To maintain the highest standards of service, Chamber will also investigate complaints concerning its programs, services and employees.

Staff, board members, consultants, volunteers, clients, and community members are encouraged to report suspected fraudulent, dishonest and unethical conduct or problems with services provided, pursuant to the procedures set forth below. This policy supplements, and does not replace, any procedures required by law, regulation, or funding source requirements.

Reporting. A person's concerns about possible fraudulent, dishonest, or unethical practices, use or misuse of resources or property, or program operation, should be reported to the CEO or the Chair of the Board. Alternately, to facilitate reporting of suspected violations where the reporter wishes to remain anonymous, a written statement may be submitted to one of the individuals listed above.

Investigation. All relevant matters, including suspected but unproved matters, will be promptly reviewed and analyzed, with documentation of the receipt, retention, investigation, and treatment of the complaint. Appropriate corrective action will be taken, if necessary, and findings may be communicated to the reporting person and his or her supervisor, if appropriate. Investigations may be conducted by independent persons such as auditors and/or attorneys. Investigators will endeavor to maintain appropriate confidentiality, but confidentiality is not guaranteed.

No Retaliation. No director, officer, employee, volunteer, member or client who in good faith reports suspected fraudulent, dishonest, unethical behavior, use or misuse of its resources or property or complaints concerning the services the Chamber provides shall suffer harassment, retaliation, or adverse employment or other consequence. This Whistleblower/Complaint Resolution Policy is intended to encourage and enable employees, members, volunteers and others to raise serious concerns within the organization prior to seeking resolution outside the organization.

This protection from retaliation is not intended to prohibit supervisors from taking action, including disciplinary action, in the usual scope of their duties and based on valid performance-related factors. Individuals making complaints must be cautious to avoid baseless allegations; employees who intentionally make false allegations are subject to disciplinary action in accordance with Personnel Policies.

Conflict of Interest Policy

All board members and staff must comply fully with the terms and conditions outlined in the Chamber's annual conflict of interest form. The CEO is responsible for having the board and staff complete the annual conflict of each January or prior to the completion of the IRS form 990.

EMPLOYMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Equal Employment

It is the policy of the Chamber to establish and administer all policies and benefits in a manner consistent with all current State and Federal statutes and guidelines regarding equal employment. All decisions regarding employment, promotion, staffing, disciplinary action, leave and benefits will be made in accordance with these statutes and guidelines

Hiring

The President/CEO of the Chamber has the sole responsibility for hiring staff personnel required to conduct the business of the Chamber within limitations approved by the Board. New hires will receive an orientation immediately upon employment and a performance evaluation ninety (90) days following their hire date.

Employment Records

Correct and accurate employment records are important. Information concerning address, phone number, person to call in case of accident, change in name, marital status and number of dependents must be kept up to date. The employment records are maintained by the President/CEO of the Chamber.

Employee personnel records are the property of the Chamber; employees, however, shall have access to review their files. Included in the personnel records are copies of all performance appraisals, salary, and withholding tax changes, promotions, disciplinary actions, commendations, sick leave, and vacation use; training completed and all other material appropriate to and necessary for maintaining a complete employment history.

Performance Evaluation/Salary Review

Performance evaluations are conducted to help each employee know what is expected of him/her, to assess performance against past objectives, to provide time to discuss any concerns or questions about his/her job and set mutual goals for the future.

Staff will receive bi-annual performance evaluation on their anniversary date of hire. The President/CEO reviews all staff. The President/CEO's annual performance evaluation is conducted by the Chair of the Chamber Board of Directors and shared with the Board. The Executive Committee may provide feedback in the President/CEO's evaluation.

Salary and increases are based on the following factors, but not limited to:

- Annual evaluation
- Salary range for position
- Education and experience for the position
- Attitude, cooperativeness, loyalty, and dedication
- Initiative
- Attendance, punctuality, and length of service
- Performance
- Ability to follow and carry out instructions
- Cost of living factor
- Budget

Hours of Work

Regular work hours are from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM Monday through Friday. Employees are allowed one hour for lunch.

Sick Leave

When an employee expects to miss work because of sickness or accident, they should notify the President/CEO for the Chamber a minimum of 1 hour prior to the beginning of their shift, explaining the reason for the absence and expected day of return. All regular full-time employees will accrue paid sick leave on the basis of eight hours per month.

These hours may not be carried over into the following year. A total of 12 days of paid sick leave per year is allowed for employees.

Forced Absence

It is recognized that circumstances other than illness and vacation sometimes result in absence from work. Employees are paid for time spent away from work, up to five working days in the event of a death in the immediate family. Employees are also paid for jury duty, or while engaged in summer training with the military reserve.

Personal Day

Employees shall be given 1 paid personal day per calendar year after six months of employment that is non-cumulative. The procedures and policies regarding personal days shall be the same as vacation time.

Absence Without Pay

On occasion, an employee is unavoidably away from work. Employees with no accrued sick or annual leave are granted reasonable leave without pay upon approval of the President/CEO of the Chamber.

Grievance Procedure

Should an employee feel they have a grievance or complaint in connection with your employment, please discuss the matter with the President/CEO. The President/CEO will respond orally but will also provide the employee with a written response. A copy of this response shall be kept in the employee's personnel records. If the problem is still not resolved or if you find it difficult to discuss the problem with the President/CEO, you may contact and set up a meeting with the Chair of the Board. EMPLOYEES SHALL NOT COMMUNICATE A GRIEVANCE TO CHAMBER MEMBERS, Other BOARD MEMBERS OR CITY OFFICIALS IN ANY OTHER MANNER.

Disciplinary Action

The Chamber shall try to remedy attitudes, situations, or poor performance that violate Chamber policies, procedures or standards. Offenses will be dealt with in the following order:

1. Warning (verbal)
2. Reprimand (written)
3. Dismissal

The above is intended merely as a procedural guide toward effective discipline.

Disciplinary action shall be taken on a case-by-case basis, with consideration given to the employee's performance and disciplinary record. The Chamber is not obligated to follow this discipline order in every case.

Accidents

Should an employee receive injuries during the performance of his/her duties, he/she should report said injuries immediately to the CEO. Prompt reporting of accidents is for the protection of the employees, who are covered by Worker's Compensation

Salaries

Employee salaries are determined by the President/CEO based on budget allocations and salary framework (itemized by employee) is approved by the Board of Directors. Increases in salaries are based on job performance. Staff salaries and performance are reviewed by the President/CEO on an annual basis and raises are generally given in the month following the performance review.

Time Records

Non-exempt employees are required to complete a bi-weekly time record of hours worked. All employees also complete a "Daily Attendance Record," which reports vacation and days off work.

Pay Period

Salaries are paid on every other Wednesday. Employees are allowed to have pay checks direct deposited into banking institutions.

Overtime

Staffing requirements sometimes dictate that non-exempt employees work special events or attend meetings not scheduled during regular work hours. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE EMPLOYEE TO INSURE THAT A 40-HOUR WORK WEEK IS NOT EXCEEDED. In the event workloads and schedules require the employee to work over-time, then that employee will submit a list of approved overtime hours to the President/CEO to be paid at a rate of 1 ½ times the employees hourly rate. All overtime hours must be approved by the President/CEO prior to putting in the hours in order to get paid.

Compensatory Time

"Comp Time"- an hour off at some later date for every hour worked- is not allowed in the Private Sector under Federal Law. However, rearranging an employee's schedule during a pay period is permissible. The forty hours must be worked during a seven-day period (Monday to Sunday.) Prior approval from the President/CEO is required.

Salary Deductions

By law, the Surprise Regional Chamber of Commerce makes the following deductions from the salary of employees:

- A. Federal Income Tax. The amount of this deduction is dependent upon the amount of salary, the number of exemptions claimed, and any special instruction the employee may give authorizing amounts withheld.
- B. Social security. This is provided for all employees under the Federal Insurance Contribution Act. An equal amount is paid by the Chamber to help provide this protection.
- C. State Income Tax. This tax follows the Federal Withholding provisions described above. The President or Director of Operations will be happy to explain in detail any payroll deductions made from the employee's paycheck.

Surprise Regional Chamber of Commerce may terminate an employee with or without notice under, but not limited to, the following circumstances:

- Violation of Chamber Policies and Procedures
- Excessive absences or tardiness
- Releasing confidential information to anyone without proper authority
- Soliciting or accepting personal gratuities in excess of \$25
- Insubordination
- Theft, destruction, or abuse of office
- Unacceptable work performance
- Unprofessional conduct
- Distribution, possession or consumption of intoxicants and/or dangerous drugs or reporting to duty under the influence of such substances
- Falsifying employment records, time sheets, records, or any data used by the Chamber
- Use of obscene or abusive language, gossip or spreading of rumors

A terminated employee may be asked to vacate the premises immediately in a situation where the employee's continued presence may be detrimental to the proper functioning of the organization. Employees leaving the Surprise Regional Chamber of Commerce either by resignation or termination shall be entitled to all accumulated sick leave.

Resignation

For the convenience of the Chamber, when an employee decides to resign, he or she should give the following notice:

1. Two Weeks' notice- Clerical Staff
2. A minimum of three weeks' notice- Management Staff

References

It is the policy of the Surprise Regional Chamber of Commerce to not give references for an employee outside of verifying dates of employment.

Vacations

Employees may take vacations at any time; however they must prearrange such vacations to avoid conflict with scheduled and other work of the Chamber that may require their presence. No more than two employees may take vacation at the same time. In the event of a conflict, preference is given to the employee with service seniority.

Requests for specific vacation dates should be submitted, in writing, to the President/CEO at least 30 days prior to the desired date to avoid conflicting requests and allow orderly planning.

Vacation Eligibility Schedule

Ten Working Days- after completion of one year of full-time employment.

Fifteen Working days- after completion of three years of full-time employment.
Twenty Working Days- after completion of five years of full-time employment.

Employees may not carry over vacation time beyond the end of their anniversary date. If an employee does not take the full number of vacation days by the employee's next anniversary date, he/she will lose time.

Unused vacation will be paid when an employee leaves the Chamber's employment.

Paid Holidays

The holidays observed by the Surprise Regional Chamber of Commerce are:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- President's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Columbus Day
- Veteran's day
- Thanksgiving Day and day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve and Christmas Day

Medical Insurance

The Chamber medical insurance compensation for full-time, exempt employees. The amount of this compensation is determined by the board of directors.

Dental Insurance

The Chamber does not presently provide Dental Insurance for employees.

Disability Insurance

The Chamber does not presently provide short term or long term insurance for employees.

Retirement Benefits

The Chamber does not presently provide retirement benefits.

Worker's Compensation

Employees are protected under the provisions of Worker's Compensation, which provides medical and hospital care and partial compensation for time lost due to an accident or occupational injury or disease during the course of employment. The Chamber pays a considerable sum each year for this protection. Prompt reporting of accidents arising out of or in the course of employment is essential to protect the employee's insurance interests.

Education Program

Tuition aid is not available to all full-time employees, however, the Chamber may provide opportunities for staff members to attend conferences and/or specialized training programs that will help staff further their knowledge of the Chamber profession. Employees should make arrangements with the President/CEO or Director of Operations prior to attending training programs.

OFFICE PROCEDURES

Correspondence

The President/CEO and Chair of the Chamber Board are the official spokespersons for the Chamber. Copies of correspondence should be maintained in hard copy and/or computer files. Whenever a letter is written over the signature of the CEO, Board Chair or a Committee Chair, a copy should be sent to that person. Prior permission for such correspondence is necessary even if the letter is standard or routine.

Employees are expected to answer all inquiries or requests within two working days. If a delay is anticipated in order to gather information, the request should be immediately acknowledged. Neatness and accuracy are essential for Chamber correspondence.

Mail

Outgoing mail should be placed in the mail tray for processing. Mail should be retrieved daily and a person assigned by the Chamber should handle and sort the mail.

Filing

The Chamber maintains an adequate and systematic set of files as established by the staff person in charge and as approved by the Director of Operations. A permanent set of records is kept for all Board of Directors meetings and committees.

Leaving the Office

When an employee is carrying out assigned duties outside the office, he or she must make certain that a member of the staff knows of the absence, the destination and the approximate time of return.

Office Neatness

Keep offices neat and orderly at all times. Keep tops of desks, files and bookcases clear of unnecessary items. Keep the Visitor Center neat and attention should be paid to outdated material, papers, and books. It is the responsibility of each staff member to keep their desks and work area clean. Desks should be cleared of unnecessary items at the close of each day and placed in a proper place prior to leaving the office. All staff personnel should keep the general appearance of the Chamber facilities neat.

Personal Appearance

The Chamber represents the business community and employees should dress appropriately to interact with the public, members and officials. Business attire should be worn Monday through Thursday. Fridays can be more casual.

Use of Telephones

When talking on the telephone, employees should remember they represent the Chamber and its members. Answer all calls promptly, courteously and professionally. Any personal calls should be kept to a minimum during work hours.

Purchasing of Supplies

All supplies and equipment should be purchased by the designated staff member. Whenever feasible, these items should be purchased from Chamber members first, then local businesses. Members/local businesses must meet all criteria regarding quality, price, performance as determined by the President/CEO. No purchase is made for any purpose that is not designated in the Chamber budget or approved by the Chamber President/CEO or Director of Operations. The President/CEO or Director of Operations should assign a staff member to assure that inventory is adequate. All purchases should be divided equally among members to assure fairness. All purchases must be approved by the President/CEO or Director of Operations.

Reimbursement- Expenses and funding Issues

The President/CEO will approve all travel and other expenses in advance. The employee should provide the Chamber with receipts for all expenses for Chamber records. A receipt should be provided for all purchases.

Mileage Reimbursement

Employees driving their own car on Chamber business are entitled to reimbursement at the current federal rate. A record of the miles must be maintained on the appropriate forms and turned in one week before pay day.

Employees driving their own vehicles must maintain their own auto insurance under guidelines of the Arizona Department of Insurance for Motor Vehicles and also must maintain a valid drivers license. A copy of both must be kept current and a copy kept in the employee's personnel file. The Chamber is not liable for any insurance deductible.

Request for Advance of Funds

The President/CEO must approve a request for advance of funds and all expenses should be accounted for within 15 days after travel.

Petty Cash

The Chamber reimburses minor out-of-pocket expenses of the staff. To receive payment, employees should fill out a petty cash voucher and have it approved by the Director of Operations. The petty cash fund will be the responsibility of the Administrative-Assistant. A record along with receipts must be kept of all petty cash expenditures.

Handling of Finances

Paying of Invoices

The Surprise Regional Chamber of Commerce seeks to maintain its credit standing at the very highest level at all times. This is accomplished by the prompt paying of bills.

Meeting Minutes

Adequate minutes are required of all official Chamber Committee Meetings, task forces, Board of Directors and Executive Committee. Minutes should include time, date, location and names of those present, and absent. Minutes should be brief, yet adequately reflect all the actions taken. They should be distributed with the planned agenda to all committee members three working days prior to the next meeting. Assigned Chamber personnel must keep copies of the minutes in the Chamber.

Cooperation of Employees

The Chamber, by its nature, is an example of teamwork. A high degree of teamwork is necessary at the staff level. Employees having slack time are expected to offer their assistance to others when needed. In turn, any employee confronted with an emergency assignment can expect cooperation from all other employees.

Suggestions

Constructive feedback and suggestions from employees are encouraged and welcomed. Staff members will make every effort to give credit and recognition for suggestions and ideas that are implemented to better serve the membership and staff.

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES

Organizational Affiliation

Chamber staff members should consult with their supervisors before accepting any positions with other organizations or making public statements that might have an adverse effect on the Chamber. The Chamber will pay membership dues in certain recognized business organizations as provided for in the Chamber budget and approved in advance by the President/CEO. The employee pays for all other organization dues.

Personal Conduct

Chamber staff should conduct themselves in an orderly manner in relations with the public and fellow workers. Since the Chamber is judged to a great extent by its personnel, it is most important that employees maintain conduct above reproach at all times.

Confidential Matters

Since the Chamber is entrusted with many confidential matters, employees must keep such matters in the strictest confidence. Employees must keep in the strictest confidence any information acquired concerning Chamber matters. If a question arises as to whether certain information is confidential or not, employees should assume that it is.

Recommendations/Endorsements

Since the Chamber is supported by many firms in competition with each other, it does not make recommendations or endorsements of products or services.

Solicitors

The Chamber does not purchase program advertising or tickets for social events. Refer solicitations to the Chamber President/CEO.

Participation in Fundraising Campaigns

It is the policy of the Chamber to neither participate in fundraising campaigns of other organizations nor officially endorse any particular drive among the many local worthy causes.

The Chamber will sponsor activities that raise funds for the Chamber and not totally be dependent upon membership fees. The Chamber may charge a fee or per cent of net income in addition to expenses when co-sponsoring projects or activities.

Contributions Policy

The Chamber is a non-profit organization that regularly seeks funding for its programs and activities. As such, the Chamber is not in a position to make contributions to other non-profit groups, schools or community functions.

The Chamber may be a member of non-profit organizations that involve the business community or support causes similar to those supported by the Chamber. Generally speaking, the Chamber will join those organizations if there is a reciprocal membership investment in the Chamber.

The Chamber may provide support for a significant, established community event if the event is considered appropriate to the mission of the Chamber.

Budget Control

The Chamber operations are geared to anticipate annual receipts and expenditures. Income estimates are made at the beginning of each year. Expense estimates for the operation of programs are made at the same time. From these estimates an annual budget is prepared and ultimately adopted by the Board of Directors.

In order to stay within budgetary limitations, all Chamber expenditures must have approval in advance before any commitment is made.

Prior to November of each year, the Finance Committee and the President/CEO will prepare a proposed budget for the Board's consideration in November. The Board of Directors will review the proposed budget, at the November meeting, making the adjustments they consider necessary in allocation of funds and the anticipated revenue. Monthly financial statements will be prepared by the Finance Committee and will be reviewed by the Board monthly.

Publicity

The Chairman of the Board of the Surprise Regional Chamber of Commerce and the President of the Chamber are the official spokes-persons for the Chamber. The President or Board Chair will approve all publicity referring to the organization, its officers, directors and personnel. Staff should release no information about the Chamber to the media without prior clearance. Committee Chairs are not allowed to speak in the media on behalf of the Chamber without express approval from the Board Chair or President/CEO. No stories or comments are to be given to reporters by any members of the staff without similar approval.

Use of Equipment

The Chamber equipment should be used only for Chamber operations and related functions. Chamber policy does not permit use of any Chamber equipment for personal reasons. Any exception requires advance permission. The Director of Operations and President/CEO will be responsible for determining use of the Chamber's equipment.

Use of the Internet

The Chamber utilizes the Internet and e-mail for much of its communication with the members and general public. Employees have access to the Internet and will have an e-mail address for work purposes. Employees may not use the Internet or their e-mail address for personal use. All e-mails sent from the Chamber may e monitored.

Personal use of e-mail or the Internet may be considered reasons for dismissal. E-mails from unknown parties should be deleted, and unknown e-mails that contain attachments should not be opened, since they may carry viruses that could affect the Chamber's network of computers.

Gift Policy

Gifts, favors and payments may be given to others at the Chamber's expense, or accepted by Chamber employees and directors, if they meet all of the following criteria:

- They are consistent with acceptable business practice;
- They are of limited value;
- They are in a form that could not be construed as a bribe or payoff;
- They are not in violation of applicable laws and general ethical standards; and
- Public disclosure of the facts will not embarrass the Chamber

This provision applies to directors where any gift, favor or payment is being made in order to influence the director's actions as a member of the board or where acceptance of the gift, favor or payment could create the appearance of a conflict of interest.

Acceptance of Government Funding

The Surprise Regional Chamber of Commerce is committed to upholding the highest standards of ethical behavior while maintaining its autonomy. The Chamber is an advocate for its members, the business owners, and the community at large. To achieve its goals and maintain the public's trust, it Chamber must ensure its policy independence, budgetary independence, and program autonomy.

The policy covers all funding from governmental entities that come in the form including, but not limited to, sponsorships, grants, fee-for-service contracts or advertising.

Guiding Principles:

- All government must support our mission, key objectives or helps us achieve specific key goals as identified by the board of directors
- It is understood that those who provide financial support also receive the benefit of aligning themselves with the Chamber. The Chambers name and public credibility, and brand reputation must be protected and fostered
- The acceptance of financial support may not compromise the integrity of the Chamber or hinder any Chamber activities including its advocacy efforts.

- Fee-for-service contracts will include an allocation of overhead, allowance for staff time and all associated direct costs. Any equipment purchased will remain the property of the Chamber
- The Chamber will exercise control over any program, event, activity, publication or communication supported by outside funding. All contracts are for work performed, not milestones of performance (number of attendees, participants, etc.)
- The Chamber exercises control over how its name and logo are presented

Due Diligence

Every potential funding source must be reviewed to assess whether there is a shared interest in the Chamber's mission and objectives; every financial proposal must be reviewed to determine if it will advance the goals or objectives of the Chamber.

- The funding relationship must be reduced to a written agreement.
- The agreement should identify the type of support (e.g., sponsorship, grant or fee-for-service); the event or activity being funded; the amount of funding and payment schedule; conditions and limitations on use of the Chambers name and logo, or any reference to the funding.

Complaint Resolution Process

The process below is not for employees of the Chamber.

Informal Formal Conflict Resolution and Complaint Process

1. Individuals who have a complaint should first attempt to discuss the matter with the Chamber employee responsible for the area or activity.
2. If the matter is still not addressed in a satisfactory manner, you should request to speak to the person's supervisor.
3. The supervisor, the next level of management or the CEO will analyze the merits of the complaint within ten (10) working days will meet with the employee/customer to inform the person of the proposed plan of action.
4. In some situations, this may be difficult or inappropriate. In these cases, the person may pursue a formal review.

Formal Complaint/Issue Resolution Process

1. Individuals may wish to initiate the formal problem resolution process must prepare a written statement, stating the reasons for the complaint and the relief desired. The complaint must include supporting details, written documentation, etc. If applicable, recommended resolutions should be provided. All information will be submitted to the

CEO.

2. Within thirty (30) working days of receiving the conflict resolution request or complaint, the CEO will complete the investigation and prepare a written response on behalf of the Chamber. The CEO will forward a copy of the response to the Chair of the Board.
3. If the party is not satisfied with the CEO response, the individual must prepare a written response, to the CEO's decision. The CEO will consult with the Chair of the Board to provide a joint resolution statement within 20 days. This decision will be final. The board does not consider or act on complaints that have not been explored at the appropriate administrative level.

Public Policy Stands

We believe that taking stands on relevant policy matters and promoting those positions are important ways in which we serve our constituents and our cause. We must not only serve our communities; we must advocate for the business community at large. We will use our voice strategically and thoughtfully. The following outlines the principles by which we will consider taking policy stands, and a process to follow when making such a decision.

1. Only the board of directors, by a majority vote, can decide on an official policy stand.
2. Suggestions for taking a policy stand can come from anyone. These suggestions should be sent in writing to the Chair of the Board of Directors, the CEO and the Public Policy chair.
3. The Chair and the CEO can bring the suggestion to the board meeting for discussion or can refer the issue to a Public Policy chair/committee. The board should be kept in the communication loop for all public policy stances and communications.
4. The criteria used by the board and committee/task force will be based on the following. We will consider taking an organizational stand IF all of the below are the case:
 - The issue directly or indirectly affects our constituents and/or our organization.
 - The issue draws on our expertise and knowledge as an organization.
 - Along with the policy stance, we develop a realistic plan for how to communicate our stand to the appropriate people and what we will do to implement the stand. (For example, in some cases, the Chamber will want to take a leadership role on an issue and assess its ability to play that role. In other cases, the Chamber will decide that taking a stand will be heartening to our constituents and to staff, but undertaking a large campaign is not realistic for the organization.)
5. Letters to officials, letters to editors, and open letters to the public on this stand will be approved by the Chair of the Board of Directors and the CEO. The Public Policy Chair and the CEO may serve as spokespersons.

6. The CEO may act on any policy matter that has been previously approved by the board, such as an official policy, endorsement, or annual legislative agendas.

7. Public policy stands will be posted on our website. The Chamber may issue an Action Alert, an Advisory, Facebook post or use other media to promote or advertise our position.

8. Public policy stands expire after one year from adoption unless the board acts to extend the period. This keeps the Chamber from having positions on stale issues or ones where a new stand might be required.

9. If we foresee that public policy stands will use significant time or financial resources, or if this is an election season, the CEO will consult with the Public policy chair and Chair of the board.

Request Support from National, State, and Regional Chambers

Harnessing the Power of the Unified Voice of the Business Community

The Surprise Regional Chamber Commerce collaborates* with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the largest and most influential lobbying group in America! Also, working with the Arizona Chamber of Commerce and the West Valley Chamber of Commerce Alliance we are able rally resources and mobilize around common issues giving our Chamber a louder voice at all levels of government.

The Chamber may participate in initiatives, actions, campaigns, action alerts, and other activities initiated by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Arizona Chamber of Commerce, and the West Valley Chamber of Commerce as long as it relates to the mission. If there is a question or concern regarding such actions' appropriateness, the CEO will confer with the Public policy chair and Chair of the board.

Candidate Endorsement Policy

As the stewards of a strong business climate, it is the responsibility of the Chamber to ensure that the interests of business are being represented in the political decisions of our community leaders. It is the Chamber's objective to support pro-business candidates for a better the NW Valley.

The Chamber will, from time to time, consider publicly endorsing individual candidates for public office. The Chamber will also, from time to time, make public recommendations on ballot measures and legislative issues that have direct impact on the business community. Seeking legislation germane to the common business interest is a permissible under the Internal Revenue Code (IRC) section 501(c)(6), and the Chamber may further its exempt purposes by lobbying as its sole activity without jeopardizing its exempt status.

Endorsement Principles:

- The Chamber will make decisions based on Chamber legislative policy, Chamber endorsement criteria, and a candidate's alignment with Chamber and its Legislative Policy.
- The Chamber is non-partisan and will support candidates whose viewpoints align with Chamber policies and objectives.
- Candidates who are ultimately endorsed must support the Chamber, understand the concerns and interests of our members and the business community.
- The Chamber will take steps necessary to hold our elected officials accountable for decisions they make or don't make.

Candidate Endorsement of Incumbents:

An incumbent elected official who has demonstrated a voting record that aligns with the Chambers priorities, as demonstrated by scorecard rating of 90% or more may be recommended for an Chamber endorsement by the Government Relations chairperson, with the approval of board members.

Candidate Endorsements:

- The Government Affairs Committee/Chair, the CEO and the Chair of the board (or designee) may participate in the reviews, interviews and makes formal recommendations to the Chamber Board of Directors.
- Pre-Screening – following the close of filing for an elected public office of a qualified candidate, the Government Affairs Committee/Chair will evaluate candidates and recommend races that have significance for the Chamber.
- The Government Affairs Committee/Chair may send a questionnaire to all candidates. Candidates wishing to be endorsed by the Chamber must return the written questionnaire prior to being interviewed by the Government Affairs Committee/Chair.
- The Government Affairs Committee/Chair will invite candidates to an interview. Candidates will not be interviewed if they have not completed the questionnaire, if one was provided.
- A slate of recommended candidates for endorsement will be presented to the Chamber Board of Directors. Following Board approval, the Chamber will disseminate the information to members of the business community, the media and others.
- The Chamber Board of Directors reserves the right to accept part of the Government Affairs Committee endorsement recommendations. Endorsement recommendations must be voted on and approved by at least two-thirds (2/3) of the quorum of the Board of Directors.

Ballot Measure Endorsement Process:

Step One: The Government Affairs Committee/Chair will review issues that have an impact on business following the close of filing for ballot measures, or when specific on-going legislation is brought forward.

Step Two: The Government Affairs Committee/Chair will review the issue, evaluating the pros and/or cons, then prepare their recommendation(s) to be presented to the Chamber Board of Directors for approval and adoption. The endorsement recommendation must be voted on and approved by at least two-thirds (2/3) of the quorum of the Board of Directors.

Step Three: After Board approval, the Chamber will disseminate the decision to the Chamber members, the business community and related organizations.

Other Considerations:

- The Chamber regards the ethics of an endorsement and may retract its endorsement, as voted on by a 2/3 of the quorum of the Board of Directors, if a candidate does something that makes them unbecoming to hold public office.
- The Chamber is not required to make an endorsement for every race.
- Violation of any aspect of the Candidate Endorsement Policy may result in revocation of endorsement.

Government Representation on Policy Making Committees and the Board of Directors

Background:

A chamber of commerce is an organization of businesses seeking to further their collective interests while advancing their community. Business owners voluntarily form these local societies/networks to advocate for the community-at-large, economic prosperity, and business interests. The Surprise Regional Chamber of Commerce, like most chambers, is an ardent proponent of the free market system, resisting attempts by the government to overly burden private sector enterprise and investment.

Chamber Brand and Reputation

The Chamber brand and reputation is what an organization says about itself and what others say about it. The Chamber brand slogans echo our mission and include statements such as:

- We are the voice of business.
- We hold elected officials accountable.
- We endorse candidates that advance policies, ordinances, and legislation that encourages economic growth, job creation, and a less intrusive government.

Policy:

The Chamber has determined influencing public policy, including candidate endorsements, to be one of its most essential functions. Our leadership (board and staff) has a fiduciary duty to the organization, including loyalty, allegiance, confidentiality, and support of our mission. The Chamber leadership must, first and foremost, always act in the best interest of the organization. They must also avoid real or perceived conflicts of loyalties when serving the business community and our members.

The Chamber values open communication with the government (local, county, state, and federal) and needs prudent safeguards to protect our brand name, reputation, and decision-making process. Consequently, government representatives (elected officials or government employees) may not serve in any official capacity as an officer, director, employee, or on a policy-making committee. Government representatives may not participate in or observe formal deliberations of any policy-making body. Nothing in this policy prohibits a government representative from making a report at a meeting, as long as the representative is excused after their statements. The board of directors will determine when and whom will asked to address the board.