

Servas Canada Constitution

I Name

The name of this organization is Servas Canada.

II Authority

This Constitution forms the framework for the operations of Servas Canada with specific details outlined in Servas Canada's policies and procedures documents named at the end of this text.

The Board of Directors is the national governing body of Servas Canada and is responsible to the membership of Servas Canada. This Board is the ultimate authority in making binding decisions.

III Purpose and Aims

The purpose of this organization is:

To promote peace and mutual understanding between peoples, cultures and nations by establishing the following aims:

- Providing travellers from Canada and abroad opportunities to visit Canadian and international hosts in their homes
- Encouraging Servas travellers to participate in the life and daily routines of families and communities in which they are guests
- Encouraging Servas members to learn about cultural, community and individual perspectives through shared dialogue between the host or host family and the traveller
- Fostering the growth and improvement of Servas' purpose through a variety of means including co-operating and working with Servas communities and programs locally, nationally and internationally
- Inspiring Servas members to be culturally tolerant, respectful and understanding in all their interactions with hosts and travellers they encounter

IV Membership – General

Members are people who identify with the purpose and aims of the organization who are accepted as travellers or hosts and/or are supporters/helpers who contribute to the furtherance of the purpose of the organization through volunteer contributions or active participation in the organization.

Servas Canada members in good standing are approved hosts as listed in the most recent Host List, travellers with valid Letters of Introduction (LOIs) and/or Servas Canada supporters/helpers as described above. Each Servas Canada member in good standing is entitled to one vote.

– Board of Directors and non-Board Officers

Any Servas Canada member in good standing is eligible to become a Board Director or a non-Board officer. Non-Board officers include host/traveller interviewers, host coordinators or any other appointment approved by the Board to meet the needs and operation of the organization.

To fulfill a Servas Canada Board Director position, the procedure outlined in Section VIII Executive – Nomination and Election Process is followed. New local host coordinators and interviewers are recruited and oriented by existing local interviewers and host coordinators with assistance of the National Host Coordinator and National Interviewer Coordinator.

The Board of Directors may create committees for specific tasks, e.g. Nominations Committee, Host List Committee, Outreach Committee. These committees will provide regular reports to the Servas Canada Board of Directors. Membership on these committees will include Servas Canada members in good standing, as recommended by the Nominations Committee, and if possible will include one current Board Director as a committee member.

V Decisions

Decisions made by the Board of Directors shall follow Servas Canada and Servas International philosophy and procedures.

Insofar as possible, Board decisions shall be made by consensus. In case of failure to achieve consensus, Board decisions shall be by a majority vote of the Board of Directors. A majority vote is at least one more than half of the votes cast by all present Board members including the vote cast by the National Secretary and excluding all abstentions.

For decisions to be binding, a quorum, consisting of a majority of all Board of Directors, is required.

The National Secretary is responsible for the day-to-day operational functioning of Servas Canada. Major decisions such as a change in Servas Canada policy, precedent-setting rules, spending that exceeds the approved budgeted amount by \$500, removal of any Servas Canada member shall be made by the Board of Directors.

Over-ruling of a decision of the National Secretary shall be by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.

VI Finances

Servas Canada shall place all funds in a bank account in an institution insured by Canada Deposit Insurance, and accessible to Board of Directors signatories including the Treasurer, either the National Secretary or the Deputy National Secretary and one other Board member designated by the Board of Directors. For all transactions, only one signature is required.

The Board of Directors shall approve an annual budget by March 31st of the current year.

Financial statements are distributed to the Board of Directors at least annually and in time for each Board meeting. A financial review or external audit of the financial records of Servas Canada will be conducted at the request of the Board, or at the request of twenty per cent (20%) of Servas Canada members in good standing.

Surplus funds will be placed in an interest-bearing term deposit with an insured financial institution.

VII Amending Formula

The Board may occasionally wish to make changes to the Constitution. Any and all such changes shall require approval of a 2/3 majority of the entire Board of Directors. These proposals shall be circulated to all Servas Canada members in good standing two months ahead of enactment. The changes come into effect unless a majority of Servas Canada members in good standing object to the Board-approved Constitutional recommendations.

VIII Executive – Board of Directors

Any Servas Canada member in good standing may accept a nomination from another Servas Canada member in good standing or may nominate her/himself to be a member of the Board of Directors.

There shall be at least five, and no more than nine, members of the Servas Canada Board of Directors. The Board shall include the National Secretary, the Deputy National Secretary, the Treasurer and at least two, up to six other Servas Canada members in good standing. As far as possible, the makeup of the Board of Directors shall reflect the geographical distribution of hosts across Canada.

– Terms of Office

Directors will normally serve a three-year term. As far as possible, terms will be staggered for positions of National Secretary, Deputy National Secretary and Treasurer. The Board of Directors shall select the National Secretary, Deputy National Secretary and Treasurer by majority vote.

Directors may serve two consecutive three-year terms with the possibility of a third term if no other appropriate candidates are found. After a one-year absence from the Board of Directors, a candidate may be nominated again for the Board.

Utilizing a majority vote, the Board of Directors has the right to remove a member from office for due and stated cause. A bilingual appeals process is available when necessary with the

Appeals Committee being made up of the Peace Secretary and two Servas Canada members in good standing who are not on the Board.

– Nomination and Election Process

A Nominations Committee, including the Deputy National Secretary and up to two other Servas Canada members in good standing (who are not on the Board of Directors) will seek suitable candidates for Board positions as needed. A non-Board Servas Canada member chairs the Nominations Committee.

The Nominations Committee provides the current Board of Directors with a list of nominated candidates, including a brief narrative written by each nominee, for Board selection and approval.

In the event that there are more nominees than openings on the Board, then a Servas Canada-wide election will be held to fill the open positions. The Deputy National Secretary recommends a Returning Officer from Servas Canada membership (members in good standing) for approval by the Board of Directors. The Returning Officer will distribute ballots, the list of nominees for election and the brief narrative written by each candidate to all Servas Canada members in good standing. Ballots are returned to the Returning Officer within one month of distribution. Ballots will be counted by the Returning Officer and confirmed by the Deputy National Secretary who will then report the election results to the Board and to the general Servas Canada membership in a timely manner.

In the event of a tie, the Board of Directors will select from the tied candidates.

– Meetings

The Board of Directors shall meet at least twice annually and shall commit to a Board retreat at least every three years. The National Secretary will call non-retreat Board meetings as required.

Adequate notice of all Board meetings, including emergency meetings, must be given to all Board members.

Any Board member may call an emergency Board meeting with approval of 1/3 of the entire Board of Directors when an immediate Board decision is required. For all other meetings, the National Secretary will consult with the Board of Directors to select a suitable date prior to scheduling Board meetings.

– Vacancies

The Board may appoint a new Director to serve out the remainder of a vacating Director's term.

If, as a result of vacancies on the Board, there are fewer than five Directors in office, the nomination and election process shall be undertaken to fill Board positions for the remainder of the terms.

Enacted in 1989.

Amended on November 28, 1999 in Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Amended on January 27, 2008 at a Servas Canada Board meeting

Amended on April 2, 2016 at the Servas Canada Board retreat in Montreal, Quebec, Canada

Enacted on August 28, 2016.

Signed by

National Secretary

Deputy National Secretary

The following policies and procedures are currently in place:

Servas Canada Policies and Procedures

Servas Canada Board and non-Board Officer Job Descriptions

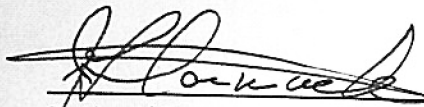
Servas Canada Handling Complaints Procedures

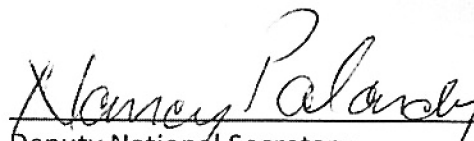
Servas Canada Spending Policy

Various guides and procedures for Canadian hosts, interviewers, and travellers

Amended on April 2, 2016 at the Servas Canada Board retreat in Montreal, Quebec, Canada
Enacted on August 28, 2016.

Signed by


National Secretary
Julie L. Coomack


Deputy National Secretary
Nancy Palardy

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- Servas Canada Board and non-Board Officer Job Descriptions
- Servas Canada Handling Complaints Procedures
- Servas Canada Spending Policy
- Various guides and procedures for Canadian hosts, interviewers, and travellers