



## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS SEOCHC Board of Directors**

### **Who does South East Ottawa Community Health Centre serve?**

South-East Ottawa Community Health Centre (SEOCHC) is committed to the health and well-being of all people within the communities it serves. SEOCHC provides a full range of health and social services to individuals and families who live in the South-East Ottawa area, as well as particular populations across the region. Resources are generally focused south west of Highway 417, north of Hunt Club and east of the River. SEOCHC pays particular attention to people who face barriers in attaining their full health potential. We have a mandate to support newcomer and immigrant communities, as well as those that face barriers and poor health outcomes due to social determinants of health including: LGBTQI2S+ people; people living with mental health challenges; people dealing with addiction; frail and isolated seniors; families with low income; racialized people; Francophones; Indigenous, Métis, and Inuit peoples.

### **What type of board is the SEOCHC Board?**

The SEOCHC Governance Board provides leadership and operates on a policy and strategic level rather than from an operational or management focus. The Board creates the vision and mission of the Centre, sets strategic directions and ensures that the goals of the organization are met. The Board is made up of twelve (12) volunteer community members and two (2) staff representatives. The Executive Director and Past President are ex-officio.

### **What language is used at Board meetings?**

The Board of Directors conducts its business in English.

## **How often do Board meetings occur?**

Meetings are held in person, with occasional hybrid options, every month on the fourth Thursday, except December and July (no meetings during these months). There is also an annual general meeting held in September (will be in June in 2025). Meetings are generally held from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. Board development sessions are sometimes held prior to the meetings.

## **How much time is required to be a Board member?**

The monthly meetings run two to three hours. The annual general meeting is typically two hours. Documents for the meetings are made available to board members one week in advance of each board meeting. Preparation for each meeting will take a few hours. Board members are encouraged to serve on working groups or committees, which typically meet once each month, up to eight times each year. A Board member can expect to commit between six to eight hours each month, for events, meetings and preparation.

## **What is the term length for Board members?**

A Board member is elected for a two-year term at an Annual General Meeting, by SEOCHC's members. After six (6) continuous years of service, Directors shall leave office for a minimum of one (1) year before seeking re-election. Occasionally, a Board member may be appointed by the Board if there is an unexpected vacancy. These terms are always less than two years.

## **What happens if a Board member misses a Board meeting?**

If a member is unable to attend a meeting, it is expected that they will inform the Executive Assistant as soon as possible. A Board member who does not attend 3 meetings must meet with the President to discuss the reasons.

## **What are the action teams and committees of the Board?**

The Board has several Board committees and occasional working groups, which include the Executive Committee, Finance & Human Resource Committee, Equity and Advocacy Committee, Nominating Committee and Audit Committee. Occasionally, ad-hoc action working groups may be created by the Board for specific goals. The Centre's committees are comprised of Board members, staff, and community members with experience and knowledge related to the purpose of the committee.

## **How do Board members receive Board information and communications?**

Board members will receive Board information via email from the Executive Assistant. The emails will include the Board's meeting agendas and packages, governance and policy documents, financial reports, committee documents, meeting minutes, as well as information about SEOCHC's programs, accreditations, and strategic direction. If files are too big for email, a link to One Drive or Google docs will be provided. Board packages can also be made available in paper format upon request.

## **Do the Board members and the SEOCHC staff work together or socialize?**

There are always two staff representatives serving on the Board as non-voting members, bringing with them the voice of the staff. As well, the Executive Director attends each Board meeting. In addition to this, we endeavour to host SEOCHC staff events throughout the year that Board members may attend (December pancake breakfast, Board/staff social, staff meetings, etc.).

## **What are the benefits of serving on the Board of Directors?**

In addition to lending your time to support SEOCHC to meet its vision of healthy, caring, inclusive communities, serving on the Board provides many opportunities for professional and personal development through seminars and training opportunities. It provides opportunities for leadership development, networking with other like-minded individuals, and gaining valuable experience in non-profit governance and management. Additionally, serving on a board allows you to build connections with community stakeholders, government agencies, and funding partners, further expanding your professional network, and enhancing your career prospects. And of course, there is the pride one can take in knowing the volunteer efforts that are being made are providing tangible benefits to the community!

As a volunteer board member, you have the chance to contribute your skills, expertise, and passion to shape the strategic direction and decision-making processes of the organization. This role allows you to actively participate in key governance functions, including policy development, financial oversight, and organizational performance, helping to ensure the organization remains accountable and effective in fulfilling its mission.

Ultimately, being a volunteer governance board member in SEOCHC offers the chance to be part of something bigger than yourself and to contribute to the collective effort to create equitably healthier and more vibrant communities across Ontario.

**Are Board members compensated for their service?**

Board members are volunteers and they are not compensated for their contributions. If there are costs related to being a board member (i.e. parking, child care, travel, etc.) there are paid for or reimbursed by the organization.

**How are Board Members selected or appointed?**

Board members are elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) by the membership of the corporation. The Nominating Committee of the Board of Directors puts out a call for applicants, assesses readiness and appropriateness for service and puts the approved slate of candidates up for election at the AGM.

**What is the Board's role in organizational governance and decision-making?**

The Board of Directors is a governance board which means that they do not make decisions about the operations (programs and services). They are focused on strategic planning, ensuring the policies and frameworks are supporting service excellence, mitigating risk, and ensuring that we are meeting our mandatory funding requirements.

**What ethical and legal responsibilities do Board members have? Are there any conflicts of interest policies or guidelines that Board members must adhere to?**

There are a number of responsibilities as a Board member and there are both organizational by-laws and policies that guide the behaviour, actions and responsibilities.

**What training or orientation is provided to new Board members?**

Board members are given a general volunteer orientation to the organization and then they do a special orientation with the Executive Director. They are welcomed by the Board Chair and given an opportunity to identify others on the Board willing to support and mentor during the course of their term.

**How does the Board address Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion within its membership and decision-making processes?**

The Equity Advisor at SEOCHC supports the nominating committee to ensure that our processes and environment is conducive to advancing diversity, equity and inclusion. This includes training and coaching opportunities for Board members, review of processes and documents, as well as reflecting on feedback.

## **Who should apply to serve on the Board?**

Anyone who is committed to the mission, vision and model of health and well-being is encouraged to become involved on SEOCHC's Board. Those who reflect the rich diversity of the people living in South East Ottawa are particularly welcome. SEOCHC encourages you to apply to serve on our Board, if you:

- live within SEOCHC's catchment area;
- comply with recruitment priorities;
- support the mission of SEOCHC;
- are 18-years of age or older;
- are willing to become a member of SEOCHC;
- are able to commit six to eight hours a month to attend meetings, advocacy and networking activities; and
- are able to serve a minimum two-year term.

## **How can individuals express interest in serving on the Board or inquire about available positions?**

If you are interested in running for a position on the SEOCHC Board please contact us at [office@seochc.on.ca](mailto:office@seochc.on.ca). You will have to complete a membership application before the AGM, if you are not already a member.