

Canadian
Bioethics
Society



Société
canadienne
de bioéthique

Not for Profit Corporation By-laws

May 2020

By-law No. 1

A by-law relating generally to the conduct of the affairs of

Canadian Bioethics Society/Société canadienne de bioéthique

(the "Corporation")

BE IT ENACTED as a by-law of the Corporation as follows:

Section 1 - General

1.01 Definitions

In this by-law and all other by-laws of the Corporation, unless the context otherwise requires:

1. "Act" means the *Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act* S.C. 2009, c.23 including the Regulations made pursuant to the Act, and any statute or regulations that may be substituted, as amended from time to time;
2. "articles" means the original or restated articles of incorporation or articles of amendment, amalgamation, continuance, reorganization, arrangement or revival of the Corporation;
3. "board" means the board of directors of the Corporation and "director" means a member of the board;
4. "by-law" means this by-law and any other by-laws of the Corporation as amended and which are, from time to time, in force and effect;
5. "meeting of members" includes an annual meeting of members or a special meeting of members; "special meeting of members" includes a meeting of any class or classes of members and a special meeting of all members entitled to vote at an annual meeting of members;
6. "ordinary resolution" means a resolution passed by a majority (for example more than 50%) of the votes cast on that resolution;
7. "proposal" means a proposal submitted by a member of the Corporation that meets the requirements of section 163 (Shareholder Proposals) of the Act;
8. "Regulations" means the regulations made under the Act, as amended, restated or in effect from time to time; and
9. "special resolution" means a resolution passed by a majority of not less than two-thirds (2/3) of the votes cast on that resolution.

1.02 Interpretation

In the interpretation of this by-law, words in the singular include the plural and vice-versa, words in one gender include all genders, and "person" includes an individual, body corporate, partnership, trust and unincorporated organization.

Other than as specified in 1.01 above, words and expressions defined in the Act have the same meanings when used in these by-laws.

1.03 Execution of Documents

Deeds, transfers, assignments, contracts, obligations and other instruments requiring execution by the Corporation may be signed/approved by one (1) or more of its officers or directors in accordance with Corporation financial policies. In addition, the board may from time to time direct the manner in which and the person or persons by whom a particular document or type of document shall be executed. Any signing officer may certify a copy of any instrument, resolution, by-law or other document of the Corporation to be a true copy thereof.

1.05 Financial Year End

The financial year end of the Corporation shall be determined by the board of directors.

1.06 Banking Arrangements

The banking business of the Corporation shall be transacted at such bank, trust company or other firm or corporation carrying on a banking business in Canada or elsewhere as the board of directors may designate, appoint or authorize from time to time by resolution. The banking business or any part of it shall be transacted by an officer or officers of the Corporation and/or other persons as the board of directors may by resolution from time to time designate, direct or authorize.

1.07 Annual Financial Statements

The Corporation may, instead of sending copies of the annual financial statements and other documents referred to in subsection 172(1) (Annual Financial Statements) of the Act to the members, publish a notice to its members stating that the annual financial statements and documents provided in subsection 172(1) are available by contacting the Corporation and any member may, on request, obtain a copy free of charge electronically or by prepaid mail.

Section 2 - Membership

2.01 Membership Conditions

Subject to the articles, there shall be two classes of members in the Corporation, namely, Class A members (active) and Class B members (honorary).

The following conditions of membership shall apply:

Class A Members (Active)

1. The Society is for persons who have an interest in teaching, research, policy or clinical aspects of bioethics.
2. The authority for issuing Class A memberships is delegated to the Membership Officer.

3. Class A members shall be entitled to receive notice of and to attend all meetings of the members of the Corporation and each Class A member shall have one (1) vote at each such meeting, except for meetings at which only members of another class are entitled to vote separately as a class.
4. The term of membership of a Class A voting member shall be annual, subject to renewal in accordance with the policies of the Corporation.

Class B Members (Honorary Life-time)

1. On the recommendation of any member of the Corporation, an individual may be nominated by the Board for election as an honorary life-time member at the Annual Business Meeting. Recipients of the Canadian Bioethics Society Lifetime Achievement Award and the Distinguished Service Award shall be granted honorary life-time member status. Honorary life-time members are non-voting and pay no membership dues in the Corporation.
2. Except as otherwise provided by the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act, S.C. 2009, c.23 the Class B members shall not be entitled to receive notice of, attend or vote at meetings of the members of the Corporation.
3. The term of membership of a Class B member does not expire.

Pursuant to subsection 197(1) (Fundamental Change) of the Act, a special resolution of the members is required to make any amendments to this section of the by-laws if those amendments affect membership rights and/or conditions described in paragraphs 197(1)(e), (h), (l) or (m).

2.02 Notice of Meeting of Members

Notice of the time and place of a meeting of members shall be given to each member entitled to vote at the meeting by the following means:

1. by e-mail to each member entitled to vote at the meeting, during a period of 21 to 35 days before the day on which the meeting is to be held; or
2. at the request of a member, the notice can be provided to the member by mail.

Pursuant to subsection 197(1) (Fundamental Change) of the Act, a special resolution of the members is required to make any amendment to the by-laws of the Corporation to change the manner of giving notice to members entitled to vote at a meeting of members.

Section 3 - Membership dues, termination and discipline

3.01 Membership Dues

Members shall be notified electronically of the membership dues at any time payable by them and, if any are not paid within one (1) calendar month of the membership renewal date, the members in default shall automatically cease to be members of the Corporation.

3.02 Termination of Membership

A membership in the Corporation is terminated when:

1. the member dies, or, in the case of a member that is a corporation, the corporation is dissolved;
2. a member fails to maintain any qualifications for membership described in Section 2.01 of these by-laws;
3. the member resigns by delivering a written resignation to the president of the board of the Corporation in which case such resignation shall be effective on the date specified in the resignation;
4. the member is expelled in accordance with Section 3.03 below or is otherwise terminated in accordance with the articles or by-laws;
5. the member's term of membership expires; or
6. the Corporation is liquidated or dissolved under the Act.

Subject to the articles, upon any termination of membership, the rights of the member, including any rights in the property of the Corporation, automatically cease to exist.

3.03 Discipline of Members

The board shall have authority to suspend or expel any member from the Corporation for any one or more of the following grounds:

1. violating any provision of the articles, by-laws, or written policies of the Corporation;
2. carrying out any conduct which may be detrimental to the Corporation as determined by the board in its sole discretion; or
3. for any other reason that the board in its sole and absolute discretion considers to be reasonable, having regard to the purpose of the Corporation.

In the event that the board determines that a member should be expelled or suspended from membership in the Corporation, the president, or such other officer as may be designated by the board, shall provide twenty (20) days notice of suspension or expulsion to the member and shall provide reasons for the proposed suspension or expulsion. The member may make written submissions to the president, or such other officer as may be designated by the board, in response to the notice received within such twenty (20) day period.

In the event that no written submissions are received by the president, the president, or such other officer as may be designated by the board, may proceed to notify the member that the member is suspended or expelled from membership in the Corporation. If written submissions are received in accordance with this section, the board will consider such submissions in arriving at a final decision and shall notify the member concerning such final decision within a further twenty (20) days from the date of receipt of the submissions. The board's decision shall be final and binding on the member, without any further right of appeal.

Section 4 - Meetings of members

4.01 Persons Entitled to be Present

The only persons entitled to be present at a meeting of members shall be those entitled to vote at the meeting, the directors and the public accountant of the Corporation and such other persons who are entitled or required under any provision of the Act, articles or by-laws of the Corporation to be present at the meeting. Any other person may be admitted only on the invitation of the chair of the meeting or by resolution of the members.

4.02 Chair of the Meeting

The Chair of the Meeting will be the President or their delegate.

4.03 Quorum

A quorum at any meeting of the members (unless a greater number of members are required to be present by the Act) shall be 10% of the members entitled to vote at the meeting. If a quorum is present at the opening of a meeting of members, the members present may proceed with the business of the meeting even if a quorum is not present throughout the meeting.

4.04 Votes to Govern

At any meeting of members every question shall, unless otherwise provided by the articles or by-laws or by the Act, be determined by a majority of the votes cast on the question. In case of an equality of votes either on a show of hands or on a ballot or on the results of electronic voting, the chair of the meeting in addition to an original vote shall have a second or casting vote.

Section 5 - Directors

5.01 Election and Term

Subject to the articles, the members will elect the directors at the first meeting of members and at each succeeding annual meeting at which an election of directors is required, and the directors shall be elected to hold office for a term expiring not later than the close of the third annual meeting of members following the election,

Section 6 - Meetings of directors

6.01 Calling of Meetings

Meetings of the board may be called by the president or any two (2) directors at any time; provided that, for the first organization meeting following incorporation, such meeting may be called by any director or incorporator.

6.02 Notice of Meeting

Notice of the time and place for the holding of a meeting of the board shall be given to every director of the Corporation not less than 7 days before the time when the meeting is to be held by one of the following methods:

1. by e-mail to each director; or
2. at the request of a member, the notice can be provided to the member by mail.

Notice of a meeting shall not be necessary if all of the directors are present, and none objects to the holding of the meeting, or if those absent have waived notice of or have otherwise signified their consent to the holding of such meeting. Notice of an adjourned meeting is not required if the time and place of the adjourned meeting is announced at the original meeting. Unless the by-law otherwise provides, no notice of meeting need specify the purpose or the business to be transacted at the meeting except that a notice of meeting of directors shall specify any matter referred to in subsection 138(2) (Limits on Authority) of the Act that is to be dealt with at the meeting.

6.03 Regular Meetings

The board may appoint a day or days in any month or months for regular meetings of the board at a place and hour to be named. A copy of any resolution of the board fixing the place and time of such regular meetings of the board shall be sent to each director forthwith after being passed, but no other notice shall be required for any such regular meeting except if subsection 136(3)(Notice of Meeting) of the Act requires the purpose thereof or the business to be transacted to be specified in the notice.

6.04 Votes to Govern

At all meetings of the board, every question shall be decided by a majority of the votes cast on the question. In case of an equality of votes, the chair of the meeting in addition to an original vote shall have a second or casting vote.

6.05 Committees

The board may from time to time appoint any committee or other advisory body, as it deems necessary or appropriate for such purposes and, subject to the Act, with such powers as the board shall see fit. Any such committee may formulate its own rules of procedure, subject to such regulations or directions as the board may from time to time make. Any committee member may be removed by resolution of the board of directors.

Section 7 - Officers

7.01 Description of Officers

The Board shall consist of the President, the President-Elect or the Past-President, eight Officers, a Graduate and an Undergraduate Student-at Large, the Treasurer and the Communications Officer.

1. The President-Elect, Officers (Diversity, Membership, Conference Liaison, Partnerships and Community Relations, Fundraising, New Initiatives, Deputy Communications, Social Media), the Treasurer and the Communications Officer shall be elected at the Annual Business Meeting of the Society relevant to the terms of their appointments.
2. The Graduate and Undergraduate Students-at-Large shall be elected at an annual Student Business Meeting of the Society at which only registered Society members who are bona fide students shall be eligible to attend and vote. The names of the duly elected Students-at-Large shall then be presented at the next Annual Business Meeting of the Society for ratification by the Society membership.
3. Ordinarily, one person will serve, sequentially and consecutively, as President-Elect, President, and Past-President. The term of office for the President shall be two years; the terms of office for the President-Elect and the Past-President shall be one year each.
4. The eight Officer positions, Diversity, Membership, Conference Liaison, Partnerships and Community Relations, Fundraising, New Initiatives, Deputy Communications, and Social Media, shall be elected to serve two-year terms, renewable once.
5. The Graduate Student Member-at-Large and Undergraduate Student Member-at-Large member shall be elected to serve two-year terms, renewable once.
6. The Treasurer and the Communications Officer shall each be elected to three-year terms, renewable once.

The board may, from time to time and subject to the Act, vary, add to or limit the powers and duties of any officer.

7.02 Guidelines for Appointment of Officers

1. No person shall serve on the Board for more than six consecutive years.
2. The Board of the Society shall:
 - a. Strive to alternate the Presidency between professionals in health sciences and professionals in the social sciences, public policy, humanities or law;
 - b. Attempt to have at one Anglophone and one Francophone student representative;
 - c. Strive to have at least one person from each of the following disciplines or categories who has or has had significant involvement in teaching, research or clinical aspects of:
 - i. Philosophy or Theology
 - ii. Health Law or Public Policy
 - iii. Medicine
 - iv. Nursing
 - v. Other health professions
 - vi. Social sciences or humanities
 - vii. Research ethics or health-related research.
 - d. Strive to have membership from the following geographical regions: Western, Central, Eastern, Atlantic and Northern.

7.03 Vacancy in Office

In the absence of a written agreement to the contrary, the board may remove, whether for cause or without cause, any officer of the Corporation. Unless so removed, an officer shall hold office until the earlier of:

1. the officer's successor being appointed,
2. the officer's resignation,
3. such officer ceasing to be a director (if a necessary qualification of appointment), or
4. such officer's death.

If the office of any officer of the Corporation shall be or become vacant, the directors may, by resolution, appoint a person to fill such vacancy.

The nomination and renewal of the appointed officer will occur at the next Annual Business Meeting.

Section 8 - Notices

8.01 Method of Giving Notices

Any notice (which term includes any communication or document) to be given (which term includes sent, delivered or served), other than notice of a meeting of members or a meeting of the board of directors, pursuant to the Act, the articles, the by-laws or otherwise to a member, director, officer or member of a committee of the board or to the public accountant shall be sufficiently given:

1. if delivered personally to the person to whom it is to be given or if delivered to such person's address as shown in the records of the Corporation or in the case of notice to a director to the latest address as shown in the last notice that was sent by the Corporation in accordance with section 128 (Notice of directors) or 134 (Notice of change of directors); or
2. if mailed to such person at such person's recorded address by prepaid ordinary or air mail; or
3. if sent to such person by telephonic, electronic or other communication facility at such person's recorded address for that purpose; or
4. if provided in the form of an electronic document in accordance with Part 17 of the Act.

A notice so delivered shall be deemed to have been given when it is delivered personally or to the recorded address as aforesaid; a notice so mailed shall be deemed to have been given when deposited in a post office or public letter box; and a notice so sent by any means of transmitted or recorded communication shall be deemed to have been given when dispatched or delivered to the appropriate communication company or agency or its representative for dispatch. The administrator may change or cause to be changed the recorded address of any member, director, officer, public accountant or member of a committee of the board in accordance with any information believed by the administrator to be reliable.

The declaration by the administrator that notice has been given pursuant to this by-law shall be sufficient and conclusive evidence of the giving of such notice. The signature of any director or officer of the Corporation to any notice or other document to be given by the Corporation may be written, stamped, electronic/digital or printed or partly written, stamped, electronic/digital or printed.

8.02 Invalidity of any provisions of this by-law

The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision of this by-law shall not affect the validity or enforceability of the remaining provisions of this by-law.

8.03 Omissions and Errors

The accidental omission to give any notice to any member, director, officer, member of a committee of the board or public accountant, or the non-receipt of any notice by any such person where the Corporation has provided notice in accordance with the by-laws or any error in any notice not affecting its substance shall not invalidate any action taken at any meeting to which the notice pertained or otherwise founded on such notice.

Section 9 - Dispute resolution

9.01 Mediation and Arbitration

Disputes or controversies among members, directors, officers, committee members, or volunteers of the Corporation are as much as possible to be resolved in accordance with mediation and/or arbitration as provided in Section 9.02 of this by-law.

9.02 Dispute Resolution Mechanism

In the event that a dispute or controversy among members, directors, officers, committee members or volunteers of the Corporation arising out of or related to the articles or by-laws, or out of any aspect of the operations of the Corporation is not resolved in private meetings between the parties, then without prejudice to or in any other way derogating from the rights of the members, directors, officers, committee members, employees or volunteers of the Corporation as set out in the articles, by-laws or the Act, and as an alternative to such person instituting a law suit or legal action, such dispute or controversy shall be settled by a process of dispute resolution as follows:

1. The dispute or controversy shall first be submitted to a panel of mediators whereby the one party appoints one mediator, the other party (or if applicable the board of the Corporation) appoints one mediator, and the two mediators so appointed jointly appoint a third mediator. The three mediators will then meet with the parties in question in an attempt to mediate a resolution between the parties.
2. The number of mediators may be reduced from three to one or two upon agreement of the parties.

3. If the parties are not successful in resolving the dispute through mediation, then the parties agree that the dispute shall be settled by arbitration before a single arbitrator, who shall not be any one of the mediators referred to above, in accordance with the provincial or territorial legislation governing domestic arbitrations in force in the province or territory where the registered office of the Corporation is situated or as otherwise agreed upon by the parties to the dispute. The parties agree that all proceedings relating to arbitration shall be kept confidential and there shall be no disclosure of any kind. The decision of the arbitrator shall be final and binding and shall not be subject to appeal on a question of fact, law or mixed fact and law.
4. All costs of the mediators appointed in accordance with this section shall be borne equally by the parties to the dispute or the controversy. All costs of the arbitrators appointed in accordance with this section shall be borne by such parties as may be determined by the arbitrators.

Section 10 - Effective date

10.01 Effective Date

Subject to matters requiring a special resolution, this by-law shall be effective when made by the board.

CERTIFIED to be By-Law No. 1 of the Corporation, as enacted by the directors of the Corporation by resolution on the 17th day of December, 2019 and to be confirmed by the members of the Corporation by special resolution on the 5th day of June, 2020.

Dated as of the 17th day of December, 2019.



Dianne Godkin, President



Kevin Reel, President-Elect

Revision: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the date for the special resolution will be the 25th day of June, 2020.

Dated as of the 25th day of May, 2020.



Dianne Godkin, President



Kevin Reel, President-Elect