

# Durham Co-op Market

## POLICY REGISTER

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Policy Type: Ends  
Policy Title: A – Global End  
Last Revised: **DCM: May 10, 2014**

1. To serve the Durham community by selling high quality food and other products, with a special emphasis on locally grown foods and locally produced goods as well as affordability.
2. To reinvest profits into the Durham community.
3. To practice sustainability in our business practices by using resources wisely, and by promoting goods produced in a sustainable manner.
4. To foster a workplace for all workers of the cooperative based on respect, dignity, and fair compensation.

Policy Type: Executive Limitations  
Policy Title: B – Global Executive Constraint  
Last Revised: **DCM: May 10, 2014**

The General Manager must not cause or allow any practice, activity, decision, or organizational circumstance that is unlawful, imprudent, or in violation of commonly accepted business and professional ethics and practices, or in violation of the Cooperative Principles.

Policy Type: Executive Limitations  
Policy Title: B1 – Financial Condition and Activities  
Last revised: **DCM: May 10, 2014**

With respect to the actual, ongoing financial conditions and activities, the General Manager must not cause or allow:

1. the Cooperative to be unprepared for future opportunities;
2. the development of fiscal jeopardy; or
3. key operational indicators to be below average for our industry.

The GM must not:

1. Allow sales growth to be inadequate.
2. Allow operations to generate an inadequate net income.
3. Allow liquidity (the ability to meet cash needs in a timely and efficient fashion) to be insufficient.
4. Allow solvency (the relationship of debt to equity) to be insufficient.
5. Allow growth in ownership and owner equity to be insufficient.
6. Default on any terms that are part of the Cooperative's loans and leases.
7. Allow late payment of contracts, payroll, loans or other financial obligations.
8. Incur debt other than trade payables or other reasonable and customary liabilities incurred in the ordinary course of doing business.
9. Acquire, encumber or dispose of real estate.
10. Allow tax payments or other government-ordered payments or filings to be overdue or inaccurately filed.
11. Use restricted funds for any purpose other than that required by the restriction.
12. Allow financial record keeping systems to be inadequate or out of conformity with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).

Policy Type: Executive Limitations

Policy Title: B2 – Business Planning and Financial Budgeting

Last revised: **DCM: May 10, 2014**

The General Manager must not cause or allow business planning and budgeting to:

1. deviate significantly from the Board's Ends;
2. risk financial jeopardy; or
3. fail to be derived from a multiyear plan.

The GM must not:

1. Create plans or budgets that
  - a. Risk incurring those situations or conditions described as unacceptable in the Board policy "Financial Condition and Activities."
  - b. Omit credible projection of revenues and expenses, owner investment and return, separation of capital and operational items, cash flow, and disclosure of planning assumptions.
  - c. Have not been evaluated for feasibility.
2. Provide less money for the Board during the year than is set forth in the board budget.

Policy Type: Executive Limitations  
Policy Title: B3 – Asset Protection  
Last revised: **DCM: May 10, 2014**

The General Manager must not allow assets to be unprotected, unreasonably risked, or inadequately maintained.

The GM must not:

1. Allow equipment and facilities to be inadequately insured, or otherwise unable to be replaced if damaged or destroyed, including coverage for any losses incurred due to business interruption.
2. Allow unnecessary exposure to liability or lack of insurance protection from claims of liability.
3. Allow deposits or investments to be unreasonably risked.
4. Allow inadequate security of premises and property.
5. Allow data, intellectual property, or files to be unprotected from loss, theft, manipulation or significant damage.
  - a. Allow improper usage of members' and customers' personal information.
6. Allow purchasing that is uncontrolled.
7. Allow purchasing that is subject to conflicts of interest, without prior disclosure to the board, except as procedurally controlled to assure openness, competitive opportunity and equal access to "inside" information.
8. Allow lack of due diligence in contracts.
9. Allow damage to the Cooperative's public image.

Policy Type: Executive Limitations

Policy Title: B4 – Membership Rights and Responsibilities

Last Revised: **DCM: May 10, 2014**

The General Manager must neither fail to provide sufficient opportunities for members to be informed of their rights and responsibilities nor cause or allow members to be misinformed.

The GM must not:

1. Create or implement a member equity (common shares) system without the following qualities:
  - a. The required member equity (common shares), or fair share, is determined by the Board.
  - b. Members are informed that equity (common shares) investments are a) at risk, and b) generally refundable, though the Board retains the right to withhold refunds when necessary to protect the Cooperative's financial viability.
  - c. Equity (common shares) will not be refunded if such refunds would lead to a net decrease in total member paid-in equity, or would risk, cause or exacerbate non-compliance with any Financial Condition policy.
2. Implement a patronage dividend system that does not;
  - a. Comply with IRS regulations.
  - b. Allow the Board to examine a range of options and implications, so the Board can make a timely determination each year concerning how much, if any, of the Cooperative's net profit will be allocated and distributed to members.

Policy Type: Executive Limitations

Policy Title: B5 – Treatment of Customers

Last Revised: **DCM: May 10, 2014**

The General Manager must not be unresponsive to customer needs.

The GM must not:

1. Operate without a system for soliciting and considering customer opinion regarding preferences, product requests, complaints and suggestions.
2. Allow an unsafe shopping experience for our customers.

Policy Type: Executive Limitations  
Policy Title: B6 - Staff Treatment and Compensation  
Last revised: **DCM: May 10, 2014**

The General Manager must not treat staff in any way that is unfair, unsafe, or unclear.

The GM must not:

1. Operate without written personnel policies that:
  - a. Clarify rules for staff.
  - b. Provide for fair and thorough handling of grievances in a way that does not include the board as a participant in the grievance process.
  - c. Are accessible to all staff.
  - d. Inform staff that employment is neither permanent nor guaranteed.
2. Cause or allow personnel policies to be inconsistently applied.
3. Provide for inadequate documentation, security and retention of personnel records and all personnel related decisions.
4. Establish compensation and benefits that are internally or externally inequitable.
5. Change the GM's own salary.
6. Change the GM's own benefits, except as his or her benefits are consistent with a package for all other employees.

Policy Type: Executive Limitations  
Policy Title: B7 – Communication to the Board  
Last Revised: **DCM: May 10, 2014**

The General Manager must not cause or allow the Board to be uninformed or unsupported in its work.

The GM must not:

1. Submit monitoring reports that are untimely or inaccurate, or that lack operational definitions and verifiable data directly related to each section of the policy.
2. Report in an untimely manner any actual or anticipated noncompliance with any Board policy, along with a plan for reaching compliance and a proposed schedule regarding follow-up reporting.
3. Allow the Board to be unaware of relevant legal actions, media coverage, trends, public events of the Cooperative, or internal and external changes.
4. Withhold his/her opinion if the GM believes the Board is not in compliance with its own policies on Governance Process and Board-Management Delegation, particularly in the case of Board behavior that is detrimental to the work relationship between the Board and the GM.
5. Deal with the Board in a way that favors or privileges certain directors over others except when responding to officers or committees duly charged by the Board.
6. Fail to supply for the Board's consent agenda all decisions delegated to the GM yet required by law, regulation, or contract to be Board-approved.

Policy Type: Executive Limitations  
Policy Title: B8 –Board Logistical Support  
Last Revised: **DCM: May 10, 2014**

The General Manager must not allow the Board to have inadequate logistical support.

The GM must not:

1. Provide the Board with insufficient staff administration to support governance activities and Board communication.
2. Allow the board to be without a workable mechanism for official board, officer or committee communications.
3. Allow directors to be without an updated copy of the Policy Register and the Bylaws.
4. Provide inadequate information and notice to members concerning Board actions, meetings, activities and events.
5. Allow insufficient archiving of board documents.

Policy Type: Executive Limitations  
Policy Title: B9 – Emergency GM Succession  
Last revised: **DCM: May 10, 2014**

To protect the Board from sudden loss of GM services, the GM must not have less than one other manager sufficiently familiar with Board and GM issues and processes to enable her/him to take over with reasonable proficiency as an interim successor.

Policy Type: Board Process

Policy Title: C – Global Governance Commitment

Last Revised: **DCM: May 10, 2014**

Acting on behalf of our owners, the Board ensures the success of the cooperative by working together effectively, empowering and holding accountable professional management, providing strategic leadership for our cooperative, and perpetuating our democratic organization.

Policy Type: Board Process  
Policy Title: C1 – Governing Style  
Last Revised: **DCM: May 10, 2014**

We will govern in a manner consistent with the Four Pillars of Cooperative Governance (Teaming, Accountable Empowerment, Strategic Leadership, Democracy). In order to do this, we will:

1. Be a strategic leader by focusing our vision outward and toward the future.
2. Ensure effective systems of delegating authority to professional management, holding the use of that power accountable, and clearly distinguishing between board and management responsibilities.
  - a. Observe the 10 Policy Governance principles (Ends Policies, Ownership, Board Process Policies, Board Holism, Board-Management Relationship Policies, Governance Position, Limitations Policies, Policies/Decisions Come in Sizes, Any Reasonable Interpretation, Monitoring)
3. Maintain team discipline, authority and responsibility.
4. Practice the habits of a successful democracy.
5. Obey all relevant laws and bylaws.

Policy Type: Board Process  
Policy Title: C2 – The Board’s Job  
Last Revised: **DCM: May 10, 2014**

In order to govern successfully, we will:

1. Practice, protect, promote and perpetuate a healthy democracy for our Cooperative.
2. Hire, compensate, delegate responsibility to, and hold accountable a General Manager.
3. Use a strategic process to establish the GM’s compensation, and complete this process in a timely manner.
4. Assign responsibility in a way that honors our commitment to empowerment of the Board, GM and volunteers, and clearly establishes the distinction of roles.
5. Rigorously monitor operational performance in the areas of Ends and Executive Limitations, and Board performance in the areas of Board Process and Board-Management Relationship.
6. Perpetuate the Board’s leadership capacity using:
  - a. a robust recruitment, qualification and nomination process for board candidates;
  - b. fair elections; and
  - c. ongoing education and training.
7. Perform other duties as required by the bylaws or because of limitations on GM authority.

Policy Type: Board Process  
Policy Title: C3 – Agenda Planning  
Last Revised: **DCM: May 10, 2014**

We will follow a strategic multi-year workplan and annual agenda that focuses our attention upward and outward.

1. We will create, and modify as necessary, an annual calendar that includes tasks and events related to our multi-year workplan, membership meetings, Board training schedule, monitoring schedule, and the GM evaluation and compensation decisions as outlined in our Board-Management Relationship policies.
2. Board meeting agendas will be determined by the Board president, and may be modified at the meeting by a majority vote of the Board.

Policy Type: Board Process  
Policy Title: C4 – Board Meetings  
Last Revised: **DCM: May 10, 2014**

Board meetings are for the task of getting the Board’s job done.

1. We will use Board meeting time only for work that is the whole Board's responsibility. We will avoid committee issues, operational matters, personal concerns and other topics that are not the highest and best use of our time.
2. Meetings will be open to the membership except when closed session is officially called.
  - a. We may occasionally use closed session to deal with confidential matters, as long as the purpose of the session is stated. When possible, announcement of the closed session should be on the published agenda.
  - b. Attendance at closed session is limited to board members only. However, the board may choose to invite additional participants.
3. We will seek consensus through discussion. We will then finalize and document decisions through the use of motions, seconds and majority vote.

Policy Type: Board Process  
Policy Title: C5 – Directors’ Code of Conduct  
Last Revised: **DCM: May 10, 2014**

We each commit ourselves to ethical, professional and lawful conduct.

1. Every director is responsible at all times for acting in good faith, in a manner which she/he reasonably believes to be in the best interests of the Cooperative, and with such care as an ordinarily prudent person in a like position would use under similar circumstances.
2. Directors must demonstrate unconflicted loyalty to the interests of the Cooperative’s owners. This accountability supersedes any conflicting loyalty such as that to advocacy or interest groups, membership on other Boards or staffs, and the personal interest of any director acting as an individual consumer or member.
  - a. There will be no self-dealing or any conduct of private business or personal services between any director and the Cooperative except as procedurally controlled to assure openness, competitive opportunity and equal access to “inside” information.
  - b. At a new director’s first board meeting, he/she will complete the “Conflict of Interest Disclosure” form, and will verbally report to the whole board any potential conflicts. Any subsequent potential conflicts will be reported to the whole board immediately.
  - c. When the Board is to decide on an issue about which a director has an unavoidable conflict of interest, that director shall abstain from the conversation and the vote.
  - d. A director who applies for employment at the cooperative must first resign from the Board.
  - e. Any director who is also a paid employee has the same duties and responsibilities as any other director, and has the additional duty of clearly segregating staff and Board responsibilities. Any director who is also a paid employee will resign from the Board if and when their employment ends.
3. Directors may not attempt to exercise individual authority over the organization.
  - a. When interacting with the GM or employees, individual directors must carefully and openly recognize their lack of authority.
  - b. When interacting with the public, the press, or other entities, individual directors must recognize the same limitation and the inability of any

director to speak for the Board except in accordance with explicitly stated Board decisions.

4. Directors will respect the confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature and must continue to honor confidentiality after leaving Board service.
5. To the extent possible, directors will prepare for, attend, and participate fully in all Board meetings and trainings.
6. Directors will support the legitimacy and authority of the Board's decision on any matter, irrespective of the director's personal position on the issue.
7. Any director who does not follow the code of conduct policy can be removed from the Board by a 2/3 majority vote of the remaining Board.

Policy Type: Board Process  
Policy Title: C6 – Officers’ Roles  
Last Revised: **DCM: May 10, 2014**

We will elect officers in order to help us accomplish our job.

1. No officer has any authority to supervise or direct the GM.
2. Officers may delegate their authority but remain accountable for its use.
3. The president ensures the Board acts consistently with Board policies.
  - a. The president is authorized to use any reasonable interpretation of the provisions in the Board Process and Board-Management Relationship policies.
  - b. The president will chair and set the agenda for Board meetings.
  - c. The president plans for leadership (officer) perpetuation.
  - d. The president may represent the Board to outside parties.
4. The vice-president will perform the duties of the president in her/his absence.
5. The treasurer will lead the Board’s process for creating and monitoring the Board’s (not the Cooperative’s) budget. In addition, the treasurer will:
  - a. facilitate the Board’s understanding of the financial condition of the Cooperative.
6. The secretary will make sure the Board’s documents are accurate, up to date, and appropriately maintained. In addition, the secretary will:
  - a. be responsible for the integrity of the documents of the cooperative by keeping on file all the most current versions of policies and bylaws; and
  - b. perform such other administrative duties of the Board as may be required, including the duties of treasurer if that position is temporarily vacant.

Policy Type: Board Process  
Policy Title: C7 – Board Committee Principles  
Last Revised: **DCM: May 10, 2014**

We will use Board committees for the sole purpose of accomplishing our job.

1. Committees will reinforce and support Board holism.
  - a. In particular, committees help the whole Board move forward when they research alternatives and bring back options and information.
2. Board committees may not speak or act for the Board except when formally given such authority for specific and time-limited purposes.
3. The Board will establish, regularly review and control committee responsibilities in written committee charters.
  - a. We will carefully state committee expectations and authority to make sure they do not conflict with authority delegated to the GM.

Policy Type: Board Process  
Policy Title: C8 – Governance Investment  
Last Revised: **DCM: May 10, 2014**

We will invest in the Board’s governance capacity.

1. We will make sure that Board skills, methods and supports are sufficient to allow us to govern with excellence.
2. We will incur governance expenses prudently, though not at the expense of endangering the development and maintenance of superior capability.
  - a. We will use training and retraining liberally to orient new directors and board candidates, as well as to maintain and increase existing directors’ skills and understanding.
  - b. We will arrange outside monitoring assistance as necessary so that the Board can exercise confident control over organizational performance.
  - c. We will use outreach mechanisms as needed to ensure our ability to listen to owner viewpoints and values.
  - d. We will use professional and administrative support as necessary.
3. We will develop the Board’s annual budget in a timely way so as to not interfere with the development of the Cooperative’s annual budget. In no case will we complete this work later than 30 days prior to the date the GM’s budget is due for submission.

Policy Type: Board-Management Relationship  
Policy Title: D – Global Board-Management Connection  
Last Revised: **DCM: May 10, 2014**

The Board's sole official connection to the operations of the cooperative will be through the General Manager.

Policy Type: Board-Management Relationship

Policy Title: D1 – Unity of Control

Last Revised: **DCM: May 10, 2014**

Only officially passed motions of the Board are binding on the GM.

1. Decisions or instructions of individual directors, officers, or committees are not binding on the GM except in rare instances when the Board has specifically authorized this power.
2. In the case of directors or committees requesting information or assistance without Board authorization, the GM can refuse any requests that, in the GM's opinion, may disrupt operations or that require too much staff time or resources.

Policy Type: Board-Management Relationship

Policy Title: D2 – Accountability of the GM

Last Revised: **DCM: May 10, 2014**

The General Manager is the Board's only link to operational achievement and conduct.

1. The Board will view GM performance as identical to organizational performance so that organizational accomplishment of Ends and organizational operation within Executive Limitations will be viewed as successful GM performance.
2. The Board will not instruct or evaluate any employee other than the GM.

Policy Type: Board-Management Relationship

Policy Title: D3 – Delegation to the GM

Last Revised: **DCM: May 10, 2014**

The Board delegates authority to the GM through written Ends and Executive Limitations policies.

1. As long as the GM uses any reasonable interpretation of the Board's Ends and Executive Limitations policies, the GM is authorized to establish all further policies, practices and plans for the cooperative.
2. The Board will respect and accept the GM's choices as long as those choices are based on reasonable interpretations of Board policies.
3. If the Board changes an Ends or Executive Limitations policy, the change will not apply retroactively.

Policy Type: Board-Management Relationship  
Policy Title: D4 – Monitoring GM Performance  
Last Revised: **DCM: May 10, 2014**

The Board will systematically and rigorously monitor and evaluate the GM’s job performance compared to expectations set forth in Board policies.

1. The Board will acquire monitoring information by one or more of three methods: (a) by internal report, in which the GM discloses policy interpretations and compliance information to the Board; (b) by external report, in which an external, disinterested third party selected by the Board assesses compliance with Board policies; or (c) by direct Board inspection, in which a designated director or committee assesses compliance with the policy.
2. In every case, the Board’s standard for compliance will be any reasonable GM interpretation (as described by operational definitions and metrics) of the Board policy being monitored. The Board is the final arbiter of reasonableness but we will always judge with a “reasonable person” test rather than with interpretations favored by individual directors or by the Board as a whole.
3. The Board will accept that the GM is compliant with a policy if he/she presents a reasonable interpretation and adequate data that demonstrate accomplishment of that interpretation.
4. The Board will monitor all policies that instruct the GM. The Board can monitor any policy at any time by any method listed above but will ordinarily follow the schedule outlined in the Board Annual Calendar.
5. The Board’s annual evaluation of the General Manager, based on a summary of monitoring reports received from January 1<sup>st</sup> through December 31<sup>st</sup>, will be completed by March 30<sup>th</sup> of the following year. The Board will make its decisions concerning the evaluation no later than March 30<sup>th</sup> following the review period.