

Nonprofit Center of Northeast Florida Protocol for Public Policy Engagement (Adopted 2017)

The Nonprofit Center is sometimes asked, at other times initiates, engagement on policy issues. It is important for the organization to follow a protocol for determining when it is appropriate for the Nonprofit Center to speak, act or ask its members to act or speak on an issue.

Policy Protocol

Step One: Alignment

In general, the CEO first decides that taking a policy position --

- **Advances the Nonprofit Center mission.**
 - ❖ *The Nonprofit Center connects, strengthens and advocates for local nonprofits to create a more vibrant northeast Florida.*
- **Is consistent with Nonprofit Center values.**
 - ❖ *The Nonprofit Center values excellence and leadership, and strives to always be welcoming, unafraid and reflective in its work.*
- **Furthers one or more of the strategic goals of the Nonprofit Center.**

- **Is consistent with the Nonprofit Center internal and external practices and programs.**

- **Is in the best interest of our members.**
 - ❖ The Nonprofit Center is a membership organization and assumes a leadership role for the nonprofit industry, and consideration should be given to opportunities that raise the profile of the sector and champion its well-being. Without presuming to speak for each of our 300 members, we can convey (like other trade associations) a collective voice on behalf of the sector.

Part Two: Assessment and Tactics

Once the CEO is satisfied that the criteria for engagement are, to a high degree, met, she then determines:

- **What action is appropriate:**
 - ❖ public or private?
 - ❖ Spoken or written?
 - ❖ Alert Media?
 - ❖ Official/on the record?

Part Three: Board Consultation and Risk Assessment

The CEO uses her judgement whether to consult the board before taking any action. Discussing her assessment and tactics with the Board Chair is an important interim step. Seeking full Board engagement is influenced by:

- **Timeliness of the action – is it an urgent matter that requires instant decision-making?**
- **Level of public and political interest – the higher the interest level, the more likely Board consultation.**
- **Assessment of opposition to the Nonprofit Center’s position and likely consequences**
- **Whether additional resources are required to advance the position.**