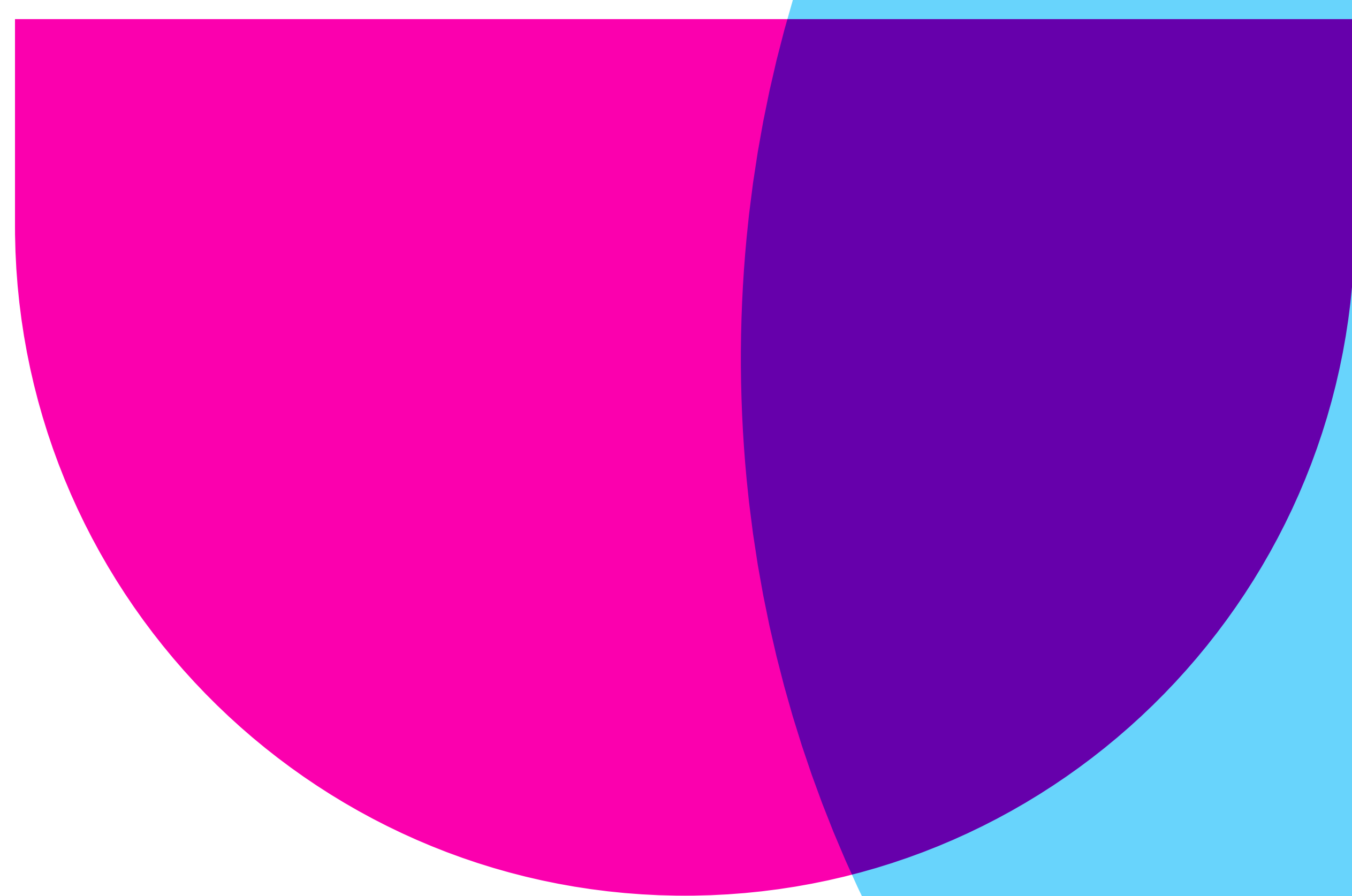
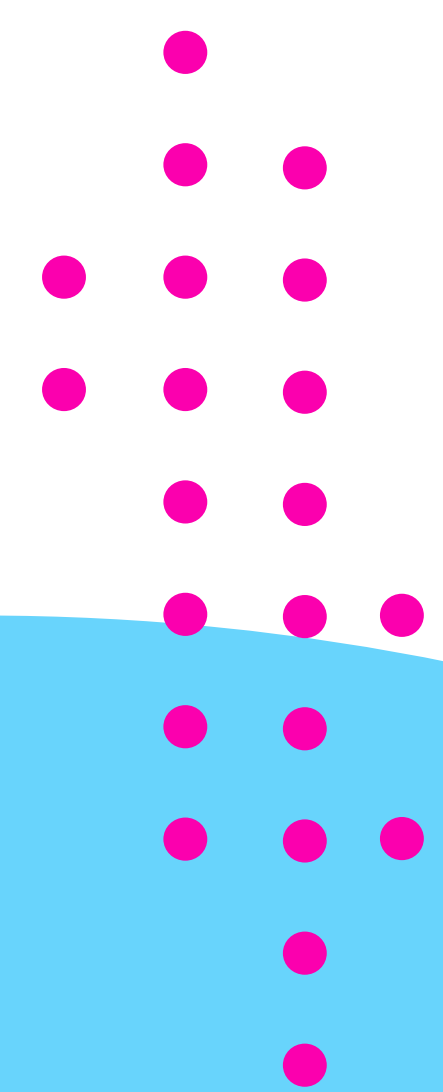


# The Complete Guide to Committee Types, Roles, and Responsibilities





A board of directors focuses on critical issues that impact the organization or nonprofit, yet sometimes it needs to establish subgroups with specialized knowledge, known as committees, to solve specific needs and provide sound guidance.

Regardless of if you're a seasoned board member, new committee recruit, or simply looking to better understand the inner workings of board committees, this guide outlines common committee types, roles, and responsibilities. You'll also discover how meeting management software helps committee members enhance collaboration and effectiveness.



## What is a Committee?

**A committee is a group of individuals appointed or elected to perform a specific function. Committees are established within organizations, governments, and other institutions to address specific issues, make decisions, or provide recommendations.**

With a board of directors, committees are established to streamline the board's work, allowing for more detailed examination and effective management of the organization's operations, governance, financials, and strategic planning. Each committee is led by the committee chair.





## Standing Committee

A standing committee is a permanent committee established by a board of directors or other governing body to address ongoing and long-term issues facing the organization. Unlike short-term or special committees, standing committees meet regularly and perpetually.

Standing committees allow a board of directors to delegate specific responsibilities, enabling more thorough oversight and better management of critical areas. This structure promotes high standards of governance, accountability, and strategic direction.



## Executive Committee

The executive committee consists of key leaders and executives within the organization. It serves as a central decision-making and oversight body responsible for shaping the organization's strategic direction, policies, and operations.

The composition of an executive committee varies by the organization, but typically includes top-level executives such as the CEO, CFO, and COO.

Executive committee roles and responsibilities include:

- **Strategic planning:** Formulates the organization's strategic plans by assessing market trends, evaluating opportunities and risk, and setting long-term goals
- **Decision-making:** Makes key decisions on important matters such as mergers, acquisitions, and investments
- **Performance monitoring:** Monitors the performance of the executive team and reviews financial reports and key performance indicators (KPIs) to assess progress toward strategic goals
- **Governance and compliance:** Reviews policies and procedures, oversees compliance with legal and regulatory requirements, and promotes ethical behavior and responsible corporate citizenship







## Compensation Committee

A compensation committee designs, oversees, and optimizes executive compensation packages. By meticulously evaluating executive compensation, incentive plans, and alignment with company goals, compensation committee members ensure a balance between adequately compensating leadership and safeguarding the company's financial health.

Compensation committee roles and responsibilities include:

- **Executive compensation oversight:** Determines appropriate compensation, bonuses, stock options, and benefits
- **Incentive plan management:** Designs incentive plans around achieving strategic goals and KPIs to enhance long-term value for the organization
- **Performance evaluation:** Evaluates the performance of executive leaders to ensure alignment with key goals and business objectives
- **Succession planning:** Collaborates with the board to identify and develop potential successors for executive positions to ensure continuity



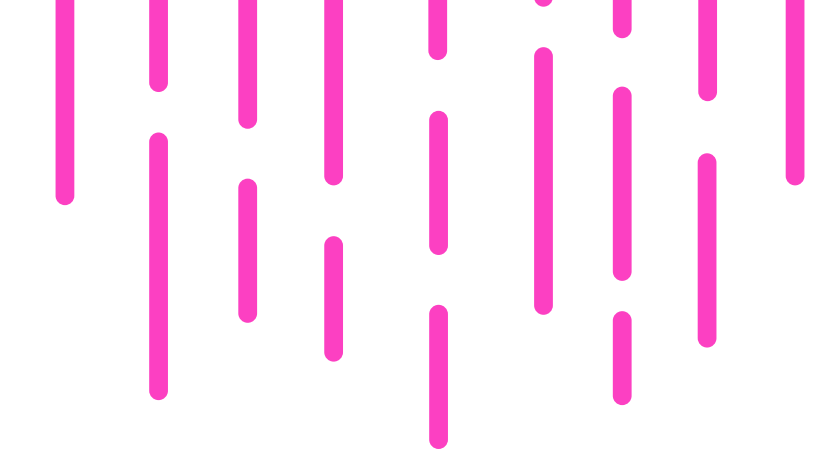
## Finance Committee

A finance committee carries out all the duties associated with financial oversight. The committee plays a critical role in ensuring the organization's financial practices, policies, and performance align with its overall goals and objectives.

Finance committee roles and responsibilities include:

- **Develop a financial plan and budget:** Leads the development and oversight of the organization's budget, including reviewing and approving the annual budget, monitoring real-time financial performance against the budget, and recommending adjustments as needed
- **Financial reporting:** Prepares accurate and timely financial reports and presents them to the board, including reviewing financial statements, balance sheets, income statements, and cash flow statements
- **Investment management:** Oversees the organization's investment strategies and policies, including reviewing the performance of investment portfolios and ensuring investments align with the organization's risk tolerance and long-term financial goals
- **Risk management:** Assesses financial risks and develops mitigation strategies, including evaluating financial controls, ensuring compliance with financial regulations, and overseeing insurance policies





## Nomination Committee

A nomination committee is responsible for identifying, evaluating, and recommending candidates for board membership and senior executive positions. This committee ensures the board selects individuals with the appropriate skills, experience, and diversity to effectively govern the organization.

Nomination committee roles and responsibilities include:

- **Filling senior and executive roles:** Oversees board recruitment and succession planning
- **Candidate induction and training:** Trains and inducts the new members, walks new members through the company's strategy and goals, and introduces the new member to the board of directors
- **Annual board evaluations:** Examines the board's competence and progress to determine whether the board achieved its goals in alignment with the overall strategy

## Committee Responsibilities

Board committees enhance the board's ability to govern seamlessly and ensure the organization operates in a transparent, accountable, and ethical manner. Each committee's specific responsibilities are typically outlined in the board committee charter or terms of reference, which guide its activities and objectives.

Some qualities of a highly effective committee include:

- Commitment to the mission
- Active participation
- Collaboration
- Communication skills
- Problem-solving skills
- Dependability

Typical committee responsibilities include:

- **Provide oversight and monitoring:** Provides detailed oversight for the specific committee specialization, and monitors compliance with laws, regulations, and internal policies
- **Inform strategic planning:** Contribute to the development and implementation of the organization's strategic plans, while ensuring committee decisions align with the organization's long-term goals.
- **Produce a board committee report:** Provides a summary of the committee's activities, findings, and recommendations to the full board to inform them of the committee's work
- **Give expert, sound analysis:** Conducts in-depth analysis, provides specialized expertise on complex issues, and makes recommendations to the full board
- **Develop policy:** Develops and reviews policies related to their areas of focus, ensuring alignment with the organization's goals and regulatory requirements
- **Engage stakeholders:** Meets with key stakeholders, including shareholders, employees, and regulatory bodies, to gather input and feedback



# Committee Roles

Board committees typically include several key positions, each with specific responsibilities to ensure the committee achieves its mission. While exact roles vary depending on the organization and committee, most include the following positions.



## Chairperson

The committee chair is elected or appointed to lead a particular committee within the organization and ensure the committee fulfills its responsibilities and mandates. The chair serves as the primary liaison between the committee and the full board, as well as between the committee and senior management.

Key responsibilities of the committee chairperson include:

- **Plan committee meetings:** Schedules the date and time, determines the format (virtual or in-person), plans the agenda, and runs the meeting
- **Schedule cross-committee meetings:** Coordinates meetings with other committees to collaborate on issues and achieve organizational goals
- **Distribute and manage committee documents:** Prepares reports, presentations, and other materials to help the committee reach its goals
- **Leverage board management software:** Uses board meeting technology to enhance collaboration, store and distribute secure documentation, and streamline board operations



## Vice Chairperson

The vice chairperson assists the chair in their duties and fills in for them when necessary. The vice chair is typically the next in line for the chairperson, providing continuity in leadership.

Key responsibilities of the vice-chairperson include:

- **Facilitate meetings:** Presides over board meetings in the chairperson's absence
- **Provide mentorship and guidance:** Supports the development of new board members and helps mentor future leaders in the organization
- **Serve as committee liaison:** Acts as a bridge between the board and various committees, enhancing communication and coordination
- **Manage special projects:** Takes the lead on special projects or initiatives as delegated by the board chair







## Secretary

The board secretary plays a crucial role in ensuring the board's efficient operation and adherence to governance practices. The secretary serves as a liaison between the board of directors and the organization's management, and is responsible for administrative, compliance, and communication tasks.

Key responsibilities of the secretary include:

- **Prepare agendas:** Collaborates with the chair to prepare the agenda for committee meetings
- **Distribute documents:** Ensures agendas, minutes from previous meetings, and reports are distributed to board members in advance of key meetings.
- **Take meeting minutes:** Records accurate and complete minutes during meetings, capturing key discussions, decisions, and action items.
- **Record attendance:** Keeps an accurate record of board member attendance at meetings.



## Treasurer

A committee treasurer is responsible for managing and overseeing the financial affairs of a specific committee within an organization. The treasurer ensures the committee conducts financial activities responsibly, transparently, and in alignment with the organization's overall financial policies and goals.

An effective treasurer must demonstrate attention to detail, a solid understanding of financial principles, and the ability to communicate financial information effectively to the committee and the broader organization.

Key responsibilities of the treasurer include:

- **Develop budgets:** Creates and manages the committee's budget, ensuring alignment with the organization's overall budget and objectives
- **Track expenses:** Monitors committee expenses, ensuring they stay within the budget and are properly documented
- **Give financial updates:** Provides regular financial updates to the committee, including income reports, expenses, and budget variances
- **Monitor revenue:** Tracks all income generated by the committee's activities, ensuring accurate accounting and reporting







## Members-at-Large

At-large committee members don't hold specific officer positions (such as secretary or treasurer) but play an integral role on the committee. The role and responsibilities vary depending on the organization and the specific committee, but generally at-large members provide valuable input and assistance across various topics when necessary.

Key responsibilities of members-at-large include:

- **Vote on key decisions:** Participates in decision-making processes, including voting on committee recommendations and actions.
- **Provide extra support:** Assists with planning and executing committee projects, events, and initiatives.
- **Lead special assignments:** Manages special assignments or roles as designated by the committee chair or the organization's leadership.



## How OnBoard Powers Modern Boards

Board committees provide specialized knowledge to help the larger board solve key issues and govern effectively. Modern boards increasingly leverage meeting management software to drive collaboration between committees, improve transparency, and streamline communication.

OnBoard's comprehensive [board portal software](#) includes powerful features and capabilities to help committees work smarter, move faster, and achieve their goals.

Key OnBoard features that committees can utilize include:

- The ability to host committee-only meetings
- Roles and terms management
- Skills matrices
- Board composition
- Board and committee evaluations
- User and committee access controls and permissions



[Schedule a demo](#) to learn why over 5,000 organizations across the world power their operations with OnBoard.