

Board Orientation Session Plan

PURPOSE	To bring the board together to provide board development and increase leadership. To foster an engaged board with strong relationships and commitment to NCJW. To identify current challenges and brainstorm solutions.
PRODUCT/OUTCOMES	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Get to know one another. 2. Learn the history of the section. 3. Understanding of the role of the board. 4. Implement best practices for board and committee meetings.
PEOPLE	All board members
PLACE	Room with space for break-out sessions Time: 2 hours
PREPARATION	<p>Meet with one or two board members to uncover what's working, current challenges. Determine how you will know that the retreat was a success. Consider board composition: tenure, personality issues, anything you should know about prior to meeting them.</p> <p>Develop a timeline of key events for the section on flipchart paper or poster board to be posted on the walls.</p> <p>Print out handouts (feel free to substitute others):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Governance 101 2. Board Expectations 3. Job Descriptions 4. Board Norms 5. Board Member Profile Survey 6. My Personal Goals
MATERIALS	<p>Flipchart stand & paper</p> <p>Markers</p> <p>Handouts</p> <p>1 x 1" Post its™</p> <p>Name tents and/or name tags</p> <p>Pads of paper for notes</p> <p>Pens</p> <p>Painters tape (better for walls than masking tape)</p>

Facilitators Guide: Board Orientation

Time	Activity/Process	Notes
0:00 – 0:15 15 min	<p>Introduction</p> <p>Board chair reviews purpose of meeting and introduces facilitator (if applicable)</p> <p>Introduction of participants – quick intros</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Name 2. Role on board 3. What one thing connects them to NCJW <p>Review outcomes, ground rules and agenda</p>	<p>Ensure quick intros by going first to model brevity</p>
0:15 – 0:35 20 min	<p>Our History, Our Selves</p> <p>Have everyone go to the timeline. Have them write their names on the small sticky notes and place them on events that they either took part in or were the chair.</p> <p>Have everyone walk by and each person shares one highlight of their NCJW experience.</p> <p>Return to seats. You might share some highlights from NCJW Inc. relating to the timeline. <i>See Facilitator Resource: NCJW National History below.</i></p> <p>President or ED may want to share accomplishments from the last year.</p>	<p>Post the timeline of Section events</p> <p>Options: You can use different colored sticky notes for when someone first became involved or was event Chair, etc.</p>
0:35-0:50 15 minutes	<p>High Performing Governance Practices</p> <p>Briefly provide an overview of current governance practices.</p> <p>Ask: <i>What are specific examples for each of the “hats”?</i></p>	<p>Handouts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Governance 101 - Committee Chair Responsibilities

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	<p>Review the distinction of board work and committee work.</p> <p>Do not go over every handout. You can use this sample presentation.</p> <p>Have them read through all the handouts and mark up what is relevant and important for the section.</p>	
<p>0:50 – 1:20</p> <p>30 min</p>	<p>Implementing Best Practices for Board and Committees</p> <p>In small groups, review their notes on the handouts and come up with a list of best practices for their board and committees.</p> <p>Report backs:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Rotate around groups giving one best practice at a time. Ask the other groups if they had that practice on their list. If everyone agrees, add it to a flipchart labeled: OUR BEST PRACTICES.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Continue until all best practices are listed on the flipchart.</p> <p>Ask the group for their level of agreement as to implementing those practices.</p>	<p>- Implementing Governing Board Best Practices (Governance 101)</p> <p>Label a flipchart:</p> <p>OUR BEST PRACTICES</p> <p>Take a picture of the list to share afterwards or type up.</p>
<p>1:20 – 1:40</p> <p>20 minutes</p>	<p>Board Roles & Expectations</p> <p>Provide overview of the board expectations, job description, and board norms handouts. Have time for board members to ask questions.</p> <p>Ask the group for their level of agreement as to meeting these expectations.</p> <p>Introduce the Board Member Profile Survey to gauge the talents and resources each board member brings to NCJW.</p>	<p>Handouts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Board Expectations - Job Description - Board Norms - Board Member Profile Survey

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	<p>Take time for each board member to complete the survey and turn it in. Use these surveys to prepare for one-on-one meetings with each board members and determining asks for board members to take on special responsibilities and projects.</p>	
<p>1:40 – 2:00 20 min</p>	<p>Wrap up and close</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Answer any questions. 2. Pass out the Personal Goals Worksheet handout. Ask them to begin filling out the handout. 3. Have them share just one commitment they will honor. 4. Thank them for their involvement. 5. Pass out evaluations. 	<p>- Personal Goals Worksheet</p>

Facilitator Resource: NCJW National History

In 1893, Hannah G. Solomon of Chicago was asked to organize the participation of Jewish women in the Chicago World's Fair. When Solomon and her recruits discovered that participation was not substantive, but would consist of pouring coffee and other hostess duties, they walked out. Solomon then took matters into her own hands, building on the courageous action and volunteer work she had been leading for years. By the end of the World's Fair, Solomon and the accompanying delegate body of women had founded the National Council of Jewish Women, changing forever the role of Jewish women and the nature of volunteerism.

In every decade since then, NCJW has prioritized the most pressing issues of the moment – from providing for the needs of immigrant women and children in the early 1900s, to more recent struggles combating sex trafficking and promoting equal pay for women, voting rights, advocating for a fair and independent judiciary, immigrant rights and protecting reproductive health, rights and justice.

NCJW has had a Washington presence since the late 1930's/early 1940's. In fact, as of September the whole organization is now headquartered in Washington. But, even before this — in fact since our inception — NCJW leaders like all of you understood what was needed in your communities. Indeed, it's so fitting to take a short walk back in time through some of the many legacies of NCJW while here in the birthplace of the organization – founded in 1893 by Hannah G. Solomon.

Volunteers served as “friendly visitors” to home-bound disabled children and families in need. NCJW sections established vocational schools and listed an impressive array of free libraries, employment bureaus, kindergartens and day nurseries, among so many projects.

At the turn of the century, the flow of immigrants increased. Girls and women arriving alone and penniless too often found prostitution, exploitation, and impoverished living conditions waiting for them. NCJW volunteers met and cared for young Jewish women arriving at Ellis Island. By 1911, NCJW's service had spread to 250 cities! By 1923, we had helped more than 65,000 immigrants in eastern port cities alone.

Our earliest advocacy efforts supported minimum wage laws and protection for women and girls in factories. Since then, NCJW has consistently worked to improve conditions for women in the workplace. In 1985, NCJW's Mothers in the Workplace research showed the dire need for a federal family leave policy. This study spurred NCJW to play a leading role in the almost decade long effort to pass the Family and Medical Leave Act. We were at President Clinton's side when he signed the bill into law in 1993.

Our work for children was indeed ground breaking. NCJW established the first penny lunch stations in public schools. In 1909, NCJW's work to regulate child labor earned a seat at the table at President Taft's historic White House Conference on Child Welfare.

Our Shattered Lives, program manual addressing domestic abuse, spurred sections around the country that found innovative ways to take action – starting hotlines, shelters, community awareness programs, and advocating for legislation like the Violence Against Women Act or VAWA – which passed and was signed into law in 1994, in which NCJW played a leading role in both writing the bill with then Senator Biden and attended the bill signing and subsequent reauthorizations.

In 1968, we launched the NCJW Research Institute for Innovation in Education (RIFIE) at Hebrew University. One of its best known initiatives is HIPPI (Home Instruction for Pre-School Youngsters), which aims to help low-income parents become their 3 to 5 year-old's first teacher at home. This successful program spread throughout Israel and, in the 1980's, internationally. As First Lady of Arkansas, Hillary Clinton embraced HIPPI and has championed it ever since. Today, HIPPI USA is independent of NCJW and supported by many sections across the country.

Throughout the 1960s, NCJW worked hard to pass landmark civil rights legislation, leading to recognition at the highest level. In July 1963, all 47 NCJW board members received an invitation from President John F. Kennedy to a White House meeting to further civil rights; forty attended. That meeting led to the formation of the Women's Committee on Civil Rights, a group of prominent women's groups that included NCJW.

At NCJW's 1965 convention, Senator Robert F. Kennedy presented two NCJW awards named for his brother. "I know how much President Kennedy valued your service in the civil rights crisis in 1963," said Senator Kennedy. "Civil rights legislation would never have been passed if it had been left only to us in politics. It was the interest of people all over the country that accomplished it – and no organization did more than the National Council of Jewish Women."

There is much, much more to share – NCJW played a role in the passage of major pieces of civil rights legislation.

When it came to reproductive rights, NCJW joined its voice to those in the early 1900's speaking out for women's access to contraception and working with family-planning champion Margaret Sanger. In the 1920's and 30's, NCJW pioneered the establishment of birth control clinics, which were often called Mother's Health Bureaus. In the mid 1920's, the Detroit Section opened a Mother's Health Clinic – the first birth control clinic between New York and Chicago. The Brooklyn section followed suit in 1932, supplying funds and volunteers to their Maternal Health Center for more than a decade. In 1946, the Brooklyn Mother's Health Clinic linked its services with Planned Parenthood which eventually took over the clinic.

In the '90's, NCJW members across the country gathered signatures of 750 rabbis from over 40 states, successfully urging the Senate to uphold President Clinton's veto of the so-called "Partial Birth Abortion" bill. This extraordinary effort was cited on the floor of the US Senate.

Today, NCJW continues to work to advocate for reproductive health, rights, and justice for all, safeguard voting rights, ensure a fair and independent judiciary, and advance gender equality in

Israel. We are 100,000 strong, with 60 sections and action teams in 28 states. Our powerful voices make progressive change.