



STANDARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

governance and advisory bodies

Dioceses are governed by the bishop who is required by canon law to establish certain advisory councils. The college of consultors, finance council and presbyteral (priests) council are all required by canon law. Canon law further encourages the establishment of a pastoral council. In some matters of major import, the bishop requires the consent of the finance council and the college of consultors. Effective diocesan advisory bodies should serve to further the mission of the organization, establish management policies and procedures, ensure that adequate human resources (volunteer and/or paid staff) and financial resources (earned income, grants, and charitable contributions) are available, and actively monitor the diocese's financial and programmatic performance.

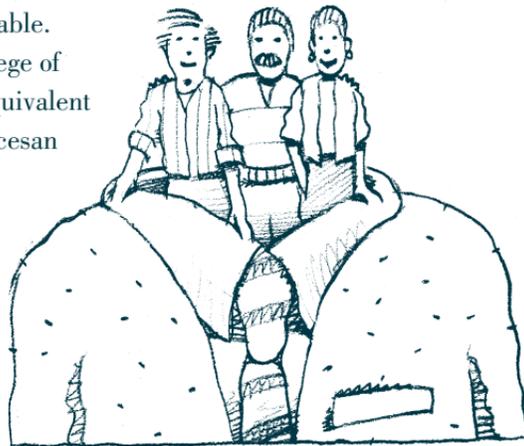
ADVISORY BODIES' RESPONSIBILITIES

- (6) “A diocesan bishop must take care that all the affairs which belong to the administration of the whole diocese are duly coordinated and are ordered to attain more suitably the good of the portion of the people of God entrusted to him.” (canon 473, §1) The diocesan pastoral council and presbyteral council should engage in long-term and short-term planning activities to further the mission of the diocese, to define specific goals and objectives related to the mission, and to evaluate the success of the diocese’s ministry programs toward achieving the mission.
- (7) Recognizing that dioceses have different corporate structures based on the civil law of various jurisdictions, the diocesan pastoral council, finance council and presbyteral council should establish policies for the effective management of the diocese, including financial and, where applicable, personnel policies.
- (8) The diocesan finance council should prepare and approve the diocese’s budget annually and periodically assess the diocese’s financial performance in relation to the budget. As part of the annual budget process, the finance council should review the percentages of the diocese’s resources spent on ministry programs, administration, and fundraising. The finance council should also approve the findings of the diocese’s annual audit and management letter and plan to implement the recommendations of the management letter.
- (9) The finance council, pastoral council and presbyteral council should periodically review the appropriateness of the overall compensation structure of the diocese in light of Catholic Social Teaching regarding workers’ rights to a just wage.



ADVISORY BODIES' COMPOSITION

- (10) In compliance with canonical requirements, the diocesan pastoral and finance councils should be composed of individuals who are personally committed to the mission of the Church and possess the specific skills needed to accomplish the mission.
- (11) Where an employee of the diocese is a voting member of a diocesan advisory council, the circumstances must insure that the employee will not be in a position to exercise undue influence.
- (12) Canon law requires the college of consultors to have no fewer than six (6) and no more than twelve (12) members. The diocesan finance council is required to have no fewer than three (3) members. In general, diocesan advisory councils should have no fewer than five (5) unrelated members. Seven (7) or more members are preferable.
- (13) Canon law establishes the terms of the members of the college of consultors and finance councils. Canonical statutes, the equivalent of bylaws, should set forth term limits for the service of diocesan pastoral council members.
- (14) Canon law requires that diocesan pastoral council membership should reflect the diversity of the communities served by the diocese.
- (15) Members of the diocesan advisory councils should serve without compensation for their service as council members. Members may only be reimbursed for expenses directly related to carrying out their council service.



ADVISORY BODIES' CONDUCT

- (16) The presbyteral council, pastoral council and finance council are each responsible for its own operations, including the orientation, education, training and development of members, periodic (i.e., at least every two years) evaluation of its own performance, and where appropriate, the selection of new members.
- (17) The presbyteral council, pastoral council and finance council should establish stated expectations for members, (including any expectations for participation in fundraising activities, committee service, or ministry program activities).
- (18) The presbyteral council, pastoral council and finance council should meet as frequently as is needed to fully and adequately conduct the business of the diocese. At a minimum, each council should meet four (4) times a year.
- (19) The diocese should have written policies that address attendance and participation of council members at meetings. These policies should include a process to address noncompliance with these policies.
- (20) Written meeting minutes reflecting the actions of the council, including reports of council committees when acting in the place of the full council, should be maintained and distributed to council and committee members.

