

**OCEAN COUNTY BUSINESS ASSOCIATION
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
Approved by Membership June 15, 2017**

The Ocean County Business Association (OCBA) was founded in March, 1980 with the sole purpose of doing business with members and referring business to members. The OCBA founders wanted the organization to be comprised of qualified businesspeople and have category exclusivity. OCBA was a success from the start.

The OCBA is managed and maintained in accordance with the Bylaws, which have been developed consistent with other business organizations, Roberts Rules and best practices. From time to time these Bylaws are amended with the approval of membership. The policies and procedures are presented to support the Bylaws and provide guidance to the Board of Trustees and Membership.

Terms and Definitions:

Member: Is the actual business, such as sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, and/or LLC and is represented by a Regular Member, Associate Member and/or an Honorary Member.

Member in Good Standing: Is a business, which includes all of its representatives, who has complied with the terms as set forth in the Bylaws, including attendance and all financial obligations, as well as does business with other OCBA members and refers business to other OCBA members. A Member in Good Standing is required to uphold all requirements of the Code of Ethics.

Code of Ethics: **Respect** all customers, employees, suppliers and competitors; **Resolve** complaints in a timely manner; **Promote** our products and services with integrity and honesty; **Advance** the health and welfare of the community; and Provide goods and services as promised and on time.

1. Types of Membership:

- a. Regular Member: A Regular Member represents a sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, and/or LLC is of good character, engages in ethical professional practices and is able to refer business. This member must comply with all requirements of the Bylaws, including attendance and timely payment of dues.
- b. Associate Member: An Associate Member is an additional representative of the firm who is able to refer business. This member may be designated by the regular member and approved by the Board of Trustees to attend meetings and participate in the affairs of the association. At the discretion of the Board, each business is allowed at least one associate member and this member must comply with all requirements of the Bylaws, including attendance and timely payment of dues.
- c. Honorary Member: A regular member who has retired but wishes to remain active in the organization may be voted into Honorary Membership by the Board of Trustees. Honorary Members do not pay dues and will be expected to pay for meetings attended. Membership may be revoked by the Board of Trustees at any time.

2. **New Member Recruitment:** An OCBA member is encouraged to help grow the organization by recruiting qualified business and community professionals. To qualify for membership the applicant must: Represent a category not yet occupied by a current member; derive 75% of their business from the specified classification; be in business for at least one (1) year; belong to no other category-exclusive networking organization; and the member representative must have the ability to refer and commit to business. Any application received for membership will be reviewed by the membership committee and all policies and procedures for membership will be completed prior to the approval of a member by the Board of Trustees. No one is considered a member until approved by the Board.
3. **Commercial:** Every meeting, at least one representative of a member business will give a five minute “commercial” about the business or organization. Commercials are to be presented by the Regular or Associate Member and they may only discuss business within their member category.
4. **Dues:** Dues are billed in two installments – January and July – and must be paid promptly. Dues cover the cost of membership, plus the meal for a Regular Member and/or the Associate Member who attends. The dues structure is set whereas the Regular and Associate Member pay the same fee, are allowed to attend the same meetings and events and gain the same benefits of representing their businesses or organizations.
5. **Attendance:** Members are expected to comply with the Bylaws relative to member compliance. Meetings are held twice per month (1st and 3rd Thursday), though due to special events, alternate meetings dates may occur from time to time. Each member representative has an obligation to sign-in at the greeters table at each meeting they attend and attendance is solely the representative of the members. The attendance sheet is removed at 45 minutes after the meeting begins. If you arrive after that time, your attendance **will not** count. Members should always aim for **100 percent attendance** because *you can't network, if you don't attend*.
6. **Referral Sheets:** The main purpose of OCBA is to purchase products and services from fellow members and to refer business to them. You are not expected to sever any existing business ties you may already have, but we simply ask that you consider OCBA members as you continue to operate your business. Referral sheets are placed at your meal table and you are expected to complete at every meeting and hand into the OCBA secretary at the end of every meeting. These sheets are used to track the amount of business exchanged in OCBA and the accuracy and legitimacy are extremely important since a Member in Good Standing is evaluated, in part, on the amount of business to business he/she performs.
7. **Guest Policy:** Members are encouraged to bring guests to OCBA meetings. Members should never bring a guest who is a direct competitor of another member or maybe a conflict to a member or a political candidate or official. Guests are welcome to join OCBA for a meal but are not permitted in the business portion of the meeting. There is a nominal fee to cover the meal cost, unless the guest is a prospective members, then the meal is on OCBA. Prospective members are allowed one (1) free meal during the introduction and application process. Guests who are not prospective members are allowed one (1) visit per quarter and they must pay for meal.

8. **Member Opportunities:** All Members in good standing are provided added visibility and exposure through the OCBA web site, magazine and other OCBA events. Each member is highlighted and included in the member listing on the web site. All articles and advertisements in the magazine are exclusively members of OCBA and a member can provide an article to the editor as often as they choose. Except for advertising fees and special events, all member opportunities costs are included in membership fees, so these opportunities are only open to those members in good standing.

9. **Leaves of Absence:** The Bylaws provides the Board of Trustees the power to approve a leave of absence to a member. Leaves of Absence must be approved by the Board. The member must provide a sufficient reason for the request and though the Board will review and act appropriately upon all requests, the Board does not consider business conflicts, such as “too busy” an adequate reason for a leave. Dues must continue to be paid during any leave of absence.

10. **Suspension and Expulsion:** A member who is deemed guilty of “conduct inconsistent with the objectives of the OCBA” or “conduct inconsistent with the ethics of his or her business or profession” may be expelled from the organization by official action of the Board of Trustees. All such actions will comply with the process and procedure outlined in the Bylaws.