

## Board Member Reprimands: Due Process Guidelines

In a professional Zoom meeting setup, Eliza Kragh appears on the left side of the screen. She has short, dark, and slightly wavy hair, wearing a dark navy or black long-sleeve top. She is seated in a black chair against a soft beige background. On the right side is Mark Apodaca, distinguished by his short, graying hair and beard. He is wearing glasses and a dark sweater with a light gray collar. His hands are clasped together in front of him, and his background is a light beige or pale greenish color, with a hint of a wooden structure visible on the right side, suggesting a bookshelf or cabinet.

Eliza begins warmly, "Hello everyone! I'm Eliza Kragh, and today I'm joined by Mark Apodaca, a parliamentary procedure expert. Today we're discussing an essential topic regarding reprimands."

She continues with a focused expression, "Mark, could you explain how a member properly reprimands a board member?"

Mark responds thoughtfully, "Robert's Rules contains three chapters on disciplinary procedures. It's important to note that discipline and reprimand are two distinct concepts. We must first consider the reason for the reprimand."

He elaborates on the framework, "The organization's bylaws should address how to handle such situations. Policy procedures should also provide guidance on this matter. Typically, reprimands are handled within the board itself."

Mark explains the process, "After the conference concludes, newly elected officers begin their terms. Most state organizations operate with two-year officer terms. The board assumes primary responsibility for organizational governance."

He outlines communication channels, "Members may communicate concerns to the board through email or direct approach. However, the board must take appropriate action. If specific procedures aren't outlined in the bylaws or policy manual, the organization's objectives become the guiding principles."

Mark details the procedure, "When a board member violates these objectives, the governance committee addresses the issue. The governance committee meets with the board member to seek resolution. If the president determines no violation occurred, but the board disagrees, they may challenge this decision."

He continues explaining the process, "The board can inform the president of clear violations of organizational objectives. The president must then decide whether to agree or disagree with these concerns. Members may challenge the president's ruling by declaring it 'out of order.'"

Mark outlines the appeal process, "If the president dismisses this concern despite evidence of an objective violation, members can motion to appeal the president's decision, requiring a second to proceed. Members may request the president's explanation for the ruling. The president must provide their reasoning. Members may present opposing viewpoints if they disagree with the president's decision."

He explains the voting process, "The membership can vote to override the president's decision. For serious violations of organizational objectives, the board may issue a reprimand. The board maintains authority during their two-year term to operate the organization. This concludes the reprimand procedure."

Eliza seeks clarification, "You've explained how the board can reprimand a board member. What rights do individual members have in this process?"

Mark emphasizes the importance of evidence, "Evidence must be gathered to support any violation claims. Documentation such as emails can serve as evidence of violations. Without evidence, there is no basis for disciplinary action. Hearsay evidence cannot justify reprimands, as this may lead to further complications."

He stresses documentation, "Documented proof makes the violation actionable. The board should develop comprehensive guidance and policies. These should outline procedures for handling violations and implementing reprimands. Due process procedures must be clearly defined."

Mark warns of potential issues, "Without established due process, reprimands cannot be properly executed. This leads to ongoing organizational challenges. Clear guidance for due process is essential. When serious violations occur, these guidelines provide a framework for action."

He shares his observations, "Many organizations lack proper due process procedures in their policies. Some boards have issued reprimands without sufficient justification. For organizational efficiency, establish clear due process guidelines for reprimands. This prevents unnecessary complications and delays."

Eliza notes, "Members should review bylaws for existing due process procedures. Should these be absent, amendments can be proposed at annual meetings."

Mark recommends, "I recommend adding these to policy procedure guidance. They shouldn't be in the bylaws. Bylaws explain the structure of the organization, how it's established and operated. Policy procedures explain how to handle emerging issues. These policies guide the board in resolving issues."

He emphasizes the importance of policies, "Without policy guidelines, issue resolution becomes challenging. Organizations with strong policies successfully resolve issues through established

guidance. Publishing policies on the organization's website increases member accessibility. During their term, the board maintains authority over reprimand processes."

Eliza observes, "Members need access to both bylaws and procedures to understand their rights."

Mark agrees, "Both documents are essential for organizational function. New members should receive copies of bylaws for review. Bylaws explain organizational structure. Policy manuals detail procedures for organizational operations."

He adds an important point, "Additionally... Many bylaws I've reviewed lack a code of conduct. These should address conflicts of interest, confidentiality, and bylaw violations. Many bylaws omit these elements. This creates potential organizational challenges."

Mark emphasizes, "A code of conduct is essential in organizational bylaws. Policy procedures should expand on these guidelines. This prevents complications and delays."

Eliza reflects, "Education is indeed the key. Understanding parliamentary procedures benefits both board and members." She holds up a book, "Do you recommend this specific book?"

Mark endorses the resource, "This book provides a concise overview of Robert's Rules of Order. It's an excellent resource. For deeper understanding, consult Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, 12th Edition. The brief version references specific sections in the complete edition. It's valuable for learning basic parliamentary procedures."

Eliza comments, "It's designed for clear understanding and implementation."

Mark continues, "I encourage organization members to start with this book. Apply this knowledge during annual meetings. Familiarize yourself with state nonprofit statutes regarding annual meetings. Understanding parliamentary procedure prepares members for effective participation. This enhances meeting efficiency. I recommend purchasing this version."

Eliza concludes, "Education enables collective growth. Together we can advance the Deaf community."

Mark shares his credentials, "As a Professional Registered Parliamentarian, I complete annual continuing education. Our training workshops span multiple days. Ongoing education is required. We must understand various perspectives. I've had excellent instructors. Many are certified parliamentary procedure educators. I regularly attend NAP conferences and leadership training sessions. Topics include bylaws and disciplinary procedures."

Eliza expresses gratitude, "Thank you for explaining due process for all members. I recommend purchasing this helpful guide."

She concludes warmly, "Thank you, Mark!"