

Bylaws



Board of Directors 2024

President: James Stutheit (He/Him)

Vice President: Janet Schwartzenberger (She/Her)

Treasurer: Terry Auclair (He/Him)

Secretary: Derik Curley (He/Him)

Member at Large-Support Group Coordinator: Leonard Jenkins (He/Him)

Member at Large-Title Coordinator: Bobby Wire-Roberson (He/Him)

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-Mission-

Leading with love to create a caring, affirming world for LGBTQ+ people and those who love them. Focusing on Education, Advocacy, and Support for the Local Community.

-History of PFLAG Spokane-

The Spokane Chapter of the Parents, Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) was organized in 1984 by Helen Bonser, who after her daughter Terri came out as a Lesbian, was moved to act after witnessing the lack of civil rights for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ+) persons at the local and national levels. By organizing the PFLAG Spokane Chapter, Helen began her advocacy for LGBTQ+ rights and recognition as well as women's rights and civil rights for all citizens of the United States. Helen put her training and skills in Mental Health Counseling to support the local LGBTQ+ community by providing discount cost and sometimes free counseling services to its members. She organized a team of other counselors to work within the community providing mental health as well as physical health services. She achieved her goal of providing wellness services to the Spokane LGBTQ+ community without cost becoming a hindrance to those services. Helen, along with her friend Katie Urbanek, organized the first ever Gay Pride March in Spokane in 1992. The March received threats of gun violence which prompted Helen to step out in front of the participants to offer protection and show solidarity for the event. Her husband, Tom Bonser, was a security officer on the first march as well as years of marches that followed. The AIDS epidemic that was ravaging the gay community beginning in the early 1980's prompted Helen to advocate for compassionate care for those men who were dying from the disease. She would visit them in the hospital, touch and hold them when no one else would out of fear of contracting the disease. She provided grief support to the families to cope with the pain and loss. There is a story of the first man she encountered during her visit at the hospital. The dying man was estranged from his father, yet still loved him. Helen wrote a letter to the father, telling him about his son and what a wonderful person he had become. This compassionate act of reaching out to the man's father brought forth a reconciliation for the father and son before the son passed. All this activism from organizing the PFLAG Spokane chapter to organizing Gay Pride Marches and working tirelessly to improve the wellness of the Spokane LGBTQ+ community through community organization, wellness promotion and compassionate care for those community members dying of AIDS and related illnesses was brought to reality by Helen Bonser and her partner organizations out of a sense of community spirit and a desire to make Spokane a safe place to live for not only her out and proud daughter Terri but also for the entire LGBTQ+ community. Helen Bonser was active in supporting the Spokane PFLAG Chapter from its inception until her death in 2021. Her 37-year association with the organization created numerous relationships with other community groups including The Inland Northwest Business Alliance and TOPS that brought about positive changes for the LGBTQ+ community. She was an inspiration to her family and community for her dedication to PFLAG Spokane.

Helen was honored for her work during the AIDS crisis.

-Name and Affiliation of the Organization-

The name of the corporation shall be Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) Spokane Chapter and shall hereafter be referred to as PFLAGSC or “The Chapter”.

PFLAGSC is a chapter of PFLAG Inc. and is self-governing.

As a member of PFLAG Inc., the chapter is obligated to observe PFLAG Inc. Bylaws I.E., Dues, and other rules or regulations pertaining to the Chapters that make up PFLAG Inc.

-Purpose-

Support PFLAG National- The Purpose of the chapter shall be to support the mission of PFLAG National, which is to create a caring, just, and affirming world for LGBTQ+ people and those who love them. The Chapter shall not engage in any activities that jeopardize the tax-exempt status of PFLAG National under Internal Revenue Code section 501C3, including Funding, endorsing, or contributing to the election campaign of any candidate for public office.

-Policies and Procedures-

PFLAG Inc. and PFLAG chapters that have completed the necessary paperwork and filed with the state of Washington are considered to be a tax-exempt organization by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). 501C3 is a federal tax code that allows the filer(s) (in this case PFLAG National and our Chapters) to file as a tax-exempt organization and collect tax-deductible donations. The IRS imposes strict federal guidelines and violation of these rules can result in loss of 501C3 status.

A Chapter may advocate for or against a bill, law, or particular issue. The Chapter cannot, however, endorse or oppose a political candidate (of any kind) or Party.

Below are the recommendations for Chapters that deal with political issues:

Yes, You Can:

- Support or lobby for the passage of a specific bill.
- Invite everyone running for local and state office to come speak to your chapter.

- Conduct Non-Partisan public education campaigns.
- Conduct non-partisan voter registration and get-out-to-vote drives.
- Work with all political parties to get policy positions included on the party's platform.

No, You Cannot:

- Support or lobby for a particular political party.
- Support or lobby for or against any candidate running for Congress, senate, president, etc.
- Invite just one candidate or party to come speak to your chapter.
- Make any campaign contributions.
- Ask candidates to sign pledges on any issues.

The Chapter shall take no legal action without the approval of the Board of Directors of PFLAGSC.

PFLAG Inc. and PFLAGSC Logo may be used on Chapter publications, advertisements, materials to be sold for fundraising purposes, letterhead, publicity, and whatever other uses are consistent with the national objectives and authorizing the chapter as outlined in the PFLAGSC Trademark Listing agreement online.

Any use of the logo requires approval by the Board of Directors.

-Membership-

Non-Discrimination Policy:

PFLAGSC does not and shall not discriminate based on race, color, religion, gender, gender expression, age, national origin, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in any of its activities or operations.

Eligibility of Membership:

Any person who subscribes to the purpose of the chapter and pays annual dues (Aka an “Active” member) can be a member and is entitled to the rights and privileges of membership.

Restrictions:

Any person convicted of a violent, child, embezzlement, or discrimination-related felony of any type will be an automatic membership denial. In the Past (10) Ten years you cannot have a Drug-related, theft of property, or assault (DV) Felony to be an active member.

Annual Dues:

Annual dues are due October 1st of each year. The price for “active” Membership will be \$20.00 set by the Board of Directors. Members who have paid their dues are considered “active” for the fiscal year.

Elections:

Members in “active” status shall be eligible to vote at the General Meeting and Annual meeting. All items to be voted on shall be decided by a simple majority of those present at the meeting in which the vote takes place; this includes absentee ballots received at or before the annual meeting. Voting by proxy is not permitted. Each member is entitled to a vote. If it deals with finances, there must be a board vote on the matter in the Board meeting following the General Vote to pass.

Confidentiality:

Membership information and the mailing list of the Chapter are considered confidential. Only the Board of Directors and supporting members specifically authorized by the board shall have access to this information when required for official business.

Conflict of Interest Policy:

Board members are required to put the interests of PFLAGSC above their interests. A conflict of interest is when a Board Member is in a position to influence a decision that may result in personal gain or for a relative, as a result of PFLAGSC’s business dealings.

Rights of Resignation:

Any member may voluntarily withdraw from membership upon written notice to the Secretary or the Treasurer of the Chapter.

Rescinding of Membership:

If given cause, any membership may be rescinded by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board of Directors. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Breach of confidentiality
- Voluntary resignation.
- Disrespectful behavior towards another member/attendee.

- Misuse or misappropriation of chapter assets.
- Other just cause.

Except in the case of voluntary resignation, a member shall be notified in writing by the president of the Board or Vice President pending termination and be allowed to appear before the Board and appeal the proposed action in a closed board meeting.

-Meetings of Membership-

Board Meetings:

The Board of Directors shall hold regular monthly Board Meetings in person or electronically.

General Chapter Meetings:

Regular meetings of the membership shall be held once per month and are open to Non-members, visitors, and guests. Advance notice of fourteen (14) day's notice must be given if meetings are to be postponed, canceled, or held somewhere that is not the usual way or spot. (Please see the operational procedures for more info).

Special Meetings:

The Board of Directors may hold special meetings as needed, called by the President or Vice President. Must give 5 business days' notice of special meetings.

Annual Meetings:

An annual meeting of the general membership shall occur in September of each Year. At the Annual Meeting, the membership shall elect directors and officers that are up for election at that time. The membership will receive reports on the activities of the Chapter, and then determine the direction of the chapter in the coming year.

Quorum:

A quorum for the Annual meeting of the general membership shall consist of at least (20%) of the active membership: this includes Absentee Ballots.

- Code of Ethics -

Ethics Code:

This Code of Ethics states the values of PFLAGSC and provides a code of conduct for its Board of Directors and titles.

PFLAGSC board members and titleholders will dedicate themselves to carrying out the mission of this organization.

They Will:

- Recognize that the chief function of PFLAGSC is to serve the best interests of its constituents.
- Accept as a person's duty and responsibility to keep up to date on emerging issues and to conduct themselves Professionally, using competence, fairness, impartiality, efficiency, and effectiveness.
- Keep the community informed about issues affecting PFLAGSC.
- Conduct Organizational and Operational duties with positive leadership, exemplified by open communication, creativity, dedication, and compassion, with respect and always demonstrating integrity.
- Shall exercise discretionary authority within the law to carry out the mission of the organization.
- Avoid any interest or activity that would be considered a conflict of interest, concerning conducting official duties/business.
- Always strive for personal and professional excellence leading by encouraging the professional development of others.

Financial Management:

- **Check Signing:** The Board President, Vice President, or Treasurer is authorized to sign checks.
- **Expenses are Expense Reimbursement:** The Board of Directors must approve extenuators by approving them at a board meeting each month. Each month's Expenses must be explained. In the event, that a Board member must be reimbursed for an authorized expense, a receipt must be provided to the treasurer who is responsible for appropriate documentation of the reimbursement.

-Board of Directors-

General Powers:

The Board of Directors shall manage the business of the Chapter.

The board of directors shall have control of and be responsible for the management of the affairs, transactions, and property of the chapter. Members of the board may conduct business in the name of the Chapter only when specifically authorized by the Board of Directors.

Number, Tenure, Requirements, and Qualifications:

- The Board of Directors shall consist of Officers and At-Large members.
- The Number of At-Large Members is to be set by the Board of Directors.
- The Number of Directors shall be fixed from time to time by the board of directors but shall consist of no less the three (3) and no more than fifteen (15), and include the following officers: President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Vice President is optional.
- Per the IRS regulations for granting 501C3 status, if spouses both serve on the Board of Directors, the Board must have at least three (3) other members who are not part of the same family.
- A quorum of the board of directors must include the President and 2 other Board of Directors.
- Each member of the Board of Directors shall be a general member of the chapter whose membership is Active.
- Term for all Board of Directors Positions Shall be for Two (2) years and staggered so no than half (1/2) of the Director's terms expire. (The president, Vice President, and Secretary Expire one year then the Treasurer and the 2 Members-At-Large the next)
- Each member of the Board of Directors shall attend at least sixty percent (60%) of the regular Board of Directors meetings and General Meetings, annually and must not have three (3) consecutive unexcused absences at either meeting over a twelve (12) month period.

Forfeiture:

Any Member of the Board of Directors who fails to fulfill any of his or her requirements as outlined in this document shall automatically forfeit their seat on the Board of Directors.

- The Secretary shall notify the Board of Directors in writing that a position has been declared vacant, and the Board of Directors may proceed to fill the vacancy.
- Members of the Board of Directors who are removed for failure to meet any or all the requirements in this document are not entitled to vote at the annual meeting and will not be entitled to the procedure outlined in these bylaws.

Vacancies:

Whenever any vacancy occurs within the Board of Directors, it shall be filled without undue delay by the majority of the remaining members of the Board of Directors.

Term Limits:

No Chapter officer (Board Member) may serve more than three (3) consecutive two (2) year terms in the same position. No chapter officer or Board member may serve on the board for more than ten (10) years.

Compensation:

Members of the Board of Directors shall not receive any compensation for their service as a Director.

Parliamentary Procedure:

Any Questions concerning parliamentary procedure at meetings shall be determined by the president, by referencing Robert's Rules of Order.

Removal of a Director:

Any Member of the Board of Directors may be removed at any time, by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the Board of Directors, if in their judgment, see that it's in the best interests of the Chapter.

Board Member Expectations:

- Be dedicated to the PGLAG Mission and the vitality of the chapter.

- Attend board meetings and assigned committee meetings; read financial reports and minutes.
- Maintain membership in the chapter.
- Serve on a board committee.
- Avoid speaking or acting on behalf of the PFLAG board unless authorized to do so by the board of directors.

Board Member Job Descriptions:

President:

- The President of the Board is the Chief Executive officer of the Organization.
- The President develops the board addenda before the Board meeting. (With input from the whole Board), distributes the agenda before the Board Meeting, facilitates Board meetings, and helps with monthly support or Program meetings.
- Serves as spokesperson of the Chapter.
- Facilitate Planning, Programming, and Development,
- Appoint committee chairs and committee members.
- Serves as Ex officio member of all committees.
- The President shall have access to all bank accounts and assets.
- All social media will be the President's responsibility. Admin access Etc.

Vice President:

- The Vice President Facilitates meetings in the absence of the President and handles chapter duties at the request of the President.
- Maintains the Monthly sign-in sheet for the meeting.
- Helps the Chapter Membership in any way they can.

Secretary:

- The Secretary will provide minutes of the board meetings to the Board Members.
- Write thank you notes to donors and speakers.
- Provide a board list (Contact information) to the Board Members.
- Acts as email liaison to the National office.

- Maintains a history notebook and calendar of events.
- The secretary will also check the email from the chapter website and disseminate it to the appropriate officer.

Treasurer:

- Collects and Photocopies donations and membership checks.
- Makes all deposits promptly.
- Prepare monthly financial reports of the chapter for the Board meetings. Expense and income data.
- Reconcile Checking and savings accounts.
- Maintains a list of Donors.
- Will keep contact information on all members.
- Provide records at the Board of Director's request.
- Checks PO Box regularly.
- File required nonprofit forms with Washington's Secretary of State's Office.
- At the end of the fiscal year compile all of the year's financial records into one electronic file and file the 990-N form with the IRS.
- PFLAG'S Fiscal year is November 1st to October 31st.
- Keeps Copies of current Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws.
- Keep adequate records of all the accounts and finances.
- Any request by a member or outside source to inspect the documents of the organization will be allowed to be at a natural location, chosen by the board where the person or representative from the organization or business, may inspect onsite only. (No copies or photos of the documents may be taken). This process will be done in no more than 45 days of request. This may not apply to the IRS or any other state/federal agency.
- Monetary funds will be held at Banner Bank, or any other FDIC-insured institution that the board has chosen.
- The President and Treasurer will have the authority to make any purchases that are necessary for the operations individually up to one hundred (\$100.00) pretax, without notifying each other or board approval.

- If the President and Treasurer agree and have notified each other that purchases are necessary for the operations of the organization, they may spend individually up to two hundred dollars (\$200.00) pretax.
- Must Carry Board Insurance.

Member -At-Large-Support Group Facilitator:

- Assist the needs of members to determine appropriate support group size, dynamics, and topics.
- Train and coordinate other facilitators in support group facilitation techniques and topics. (Including PFLAG Mission, confidentiality policy, shearing Circles, and resource referrals.
- Develop and Train other support groups as needed, such as families with AIDS support, straight spouses, Parents of LGBTQ+ Children, Children of LGBTQ+ Parents, LGBTQ people, First Time Visitors, Families, and Friends of Transgendered people.
- Refer people to other resources within the community.
- Develop inclusive opportunities for support group participants to be involved in PFLAGSC's activities outside of support groups.

Member-At-Large- Title Coordinator:

- This position can be held by a title holder or anyone who would like to Facilitate between the titles of PFLAGSC and the Board of Directors regarding the needs of each title as things arise.
- The success of every title is your responsibility.
- You must keep track of each title making sure their requirements are being met, keeping the president informed.
- Helping coordinate fundraisers and Education events with board approval.
- This position expires each year at the annual Ball or Each March. There will be an application and interview process for this position.

Amendments:

These bylaws may be altered, amended, or repealed. New bylaws may be adopted by the Majority vote of the Board of Directors.

-Committee Chair Positions-

The President will appoint the committee chair(s) and committee members. Committee members can be Board members as well as non-board members.

Responsibilities of Committee Chairs:

- Attend all committee meetings.
- Call and preside over meetings of the committee.
- Set the agenda for the meetings.
- Record discussions and recommendations made by the committee.
- Report the committee's activities and recommendations to the Board.
- Invite the Board President to attend committee meetings.
- Work with the President to determine who should serve on the committee.
- Delegate responsibilities to other committee members and encourage their full participation.
- Evaluate the work of the committee with other committee members and the board president ensuring the committee's work aligns with the strategic plan.

PFLAGSC Committee Volunteer Chair Description:

- Each Committee Chair will lead the efforts to carry out the duties of the assigned committee.

Fundraising and Membership Committee Chair:

- Identify local sources of income such as foundations, major donors, and businesses.
- Develop and manage Fundraising Events.
- Develop a New Members Welcome Kit or welcome new members with a phone call or letter.
- Provide a membership list to other chapter leaders. (Treasurer or Secretary)
- Coordinate membership drives and member retention campaigns.
- Introduce new members and visitors to support group facilitators so they feel welcome and open to share during small group activities.

Public Relations Committee Chair:

- Develop Local press lists.
- Field media calls and refer to the President of the Board.
- Draft and disseminate press releases on chapter activities.
- Hold Press conferences as needed with the approval of the Board.
- Assist with spokesperson training.
- Serve as point of contact for originations seeking speakers.
- Place speakers with engagements.
- Follow up with speakers to evaluate the needs and success of the presentation.
- Shall assist the President in all Social Media aspects.
- Develop an optimal posting schedule, considering web traffic and engagement metrics.
- Create engaging text, image, and video content to sustain the reader's curiosity and create a buzz around PFLAGSC activities.
- Process member requests to PFLAGSC private Facebook Group.
- Respond to all comments and messages on PFLAGSC social media channels.

Communications Committee Chair:

- Develop newsletter and the Annual Report.
- Design the layout of the chapter newsletter.
- Write, collect and publish (With approval from the board) interesting and relevant articles, updates, and alerts.
- Coordinate advertising for the newsletter.
- Report onboard actions from minutes provided by the secretary.
- Ensure timely production and delivery of the Newsletter.
- Lead the development of an annual report on PFLAGSC's activities and outcomes.

Volunteer Committee Chair:

- Assess volunteer needs of programs, projects, and committees.
- Recruit new volunteers from current and potential members, assess skills and interests.

- Place Volunteers from current and potential members to assess skills of interest.
- Place volunteers in programs, projects, and Committees needing assistance.
- Serve as Volunteer “Cheerleader” to encourage ongoing commitment, GO TEAM!
- Set up and/or maintain the chapter's helpline.
- Work with the communications committee to publicize the Helpline.
- Coordinate Full coverage for answering the Helpline.
- Train volunteers to answer the helpline knowledgeable and confidently.
- Coordinate Volunteers to welcome new members and visitors to PGLAGSC meetings.
- Arrange for refreshments to be available at meetings.

Education Committee Chair:

- Oversees all aspects of the scholarship program.
- Developing a scholarship timeline with the board.
- Maintaining the scholarship form and review of the form, criteria for selection, and Qualifications.
- Scholarship committee and its functions and responsibilities.
- Board Approval on all Scholarships.
- Develop new programs for upcoming chapter meetings.

Advocacy Committee Chair:

- Work with chapter and community members to identify area(s) of interest for advocacy initiatives.
- Research/Monitor advocacy issues in the area in various media.
- Oversee the chapter's skills-building and planning for advocacy initiatives (may involve work with program committees) i.e., voter registration training, and lobby visit preparation, to list a few.
- Facilitate the acquisition or development of materials such as letters, talking points, brochures, fact sheets, booklets etc.
- Works with president and all other committee chairs to ensure that the chapter is welcoming and inclusive of people of color, bisexual and transgender people, youth, poor working class, divers’ faith communities, people with disabilities.