

Keeping Minutes

Guidance for State Coalitions

State coalitions should be keeping meeting minutes of all Board and Executive Committee meetings; as well as any committee or membership meetings where votes and formal actions take place. Minutes are legal documents and should be kept according to your document retention policy.

As with many things, the guidance on how to keep minutes, what to include, what not to include, and how to structure them varies considerably. But the good news is that the Internet is full of good information and resources that can help you. Here are a few; but you can search for others on your own.

- [Nonprofit Law Blog – NEO Law Group](#)
- [Board Effect](#)
- [Wild Apricot](#)

Some organizations keep sparse minutes; others, longer, more detailed minutes. The national Jump\$tart Board generally shoots for something in the middle. We record a good summary of every agenda item as a record and reminder of what took place – which is particularly useful to members who were absent. We avoid trying to record everything that was said and who said it, as it can inhibit participation in the discussion. Additionally, we try to be respectful of our volunteer Board’s time, so we strive to keep the minutes concise.

Duties

Keeping meeting minutes is generally assigned to the Board Secretary (or recording secretary). If the Secretary is absent from a meeting, the President/Chair may appoint another Board Member to take the minutes.

If possible, the Secretary should be given the agenda, the attendee roster, written reports, and other pertinent items to review in advance. To record key information accurately, it is acceptable for the Secretary to interject during the meeting to ask for clarification, such as – *Who was that who seconded the last motion?*

Approval

The minutes are complete when approved or amended at the next meeting.