



## Supporting Your GM During a Pandemic (or other great crises)

How can a Board and individual directors support their GM during a pandemic (or other crises)? Most of what you will find here will be generally useful even in “normal” times. During times of great crisis, these guidelines become even more important.

1. Stay steady. Continue with your existing board work plan and responsibilities -- except when it makes sense to make exceptions.
2. Stay informed. Pay attention to what is happening at the operational level and what is going on in the world around you. Still, you may have some questions that don't have answers.
3. Stay ready. The board may be called on to make decisions (or to grant authority to the GM that you might not have anticipated) quickly. Know what your “action without a meeting” policies are, and be ready to use that process.
4. Appreciate your GM and staff. Say thank you privately *and* publicly. Say it frequently.
5. Don't make the GM's job harder! Stay out of the way. Don't ask too many questions. Consider having all questions go to the board president, who can then get answers from the GM and relay them to the full board. Don't demand too much reporting. Don't offer too much advice.
6. Ask your GM if there's anything you can do to help. It's okay if the answer is no. If the answer is yes, do your best!
7. Communicate with your member-owners. Consider developing “talking points” together. If the board has an existing official channel, use it; this may not be the time to ask staff to create new mechanisms. Check with your GM to make sure what you are saying (either as a whole board or as an individual director) is helpful rather than harmful.

(This is a summary of a webinar presentation. You can hear more detail in the recorded webinar in the Columinate Library.)