

Policies and Procedures for the Scottish Country Dance Society of Boston, MA, Inc.

Last revised June 2026

A Branch of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society

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INTRODUCTION

This document records policy decisions made by the Executive Committee over the years. It is meant to provide guidance on administrative matters that the By-Laws do not address directly. It should be distributed to new Executive Committee members. It may be amended at any time at the discretion of the Executive Committee but should be reviewed annually.

Because these decisions are often made in response to particular inquiries, the absence of guidance on a particular topic should not be interpreted as an intentional omission. Requests for guidance, and suggestions for additions or other modifications to this document, should be submitted to the President (president@rscdsboston.org).

BRANCH ORGANIZATION and OPERATIONS

The Executive Committee appoints the Branch representative to the Pinewoods Camp, Inc. Board of Directors for the term prescribed by PCI. Such appointments may be renewed for subsequent terms.

The Executive Committee appoints delegates to represent the Branch at the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society AGM. The Branch does not pay the expenses of attending that AGM.

The Executive Committee may select the Branch representative to the Teachers Association Canada ("TAC") AGM. The Branch will pay the registration fee for the Branch representative.

Each member of the Executive Committee is assigned as a liaison to various Branch events, activities, and classes. The liaison serves as the contact person for communications between Branch members who chair an event or committee, or oversee a Branch function or class, and the Executive Committee. Promptly after the annual Executive Committee changeover meeting, liaisons should identify themselves and provide contact information to the Branch members in charge of the event, committee or function and the Class contact for each activity or class to which they were assigned. Liaisons are expected to communicate with those in charge of an event, committee, or function and with their Class contacts at least monthly, to report those communications to the Executive Committee at its monthly meeting, and to report any decisions or suggestions made by the Executive

Committee back to the appropriate individuals. Liaisons should encourage event and committee chairs, those in charge of Branch functions, and Class contacts to let them know about any matters they wish to bring to the attention of the Executive Committee.

To ensure the smooth operation of Branch, event liaisons should ensure that any documents containing guidelines, timelines, and useful information are transferred to any newly appointed organizers of events such as the Fall Concert, Pinewoods Benefit Ball, Highland Ball, and Pinewoods camp sessions.

Conflict Of Interest Policy

Branch members who are elected to office, serve on committees, or manage Branch functions or events include individuals who are qualified to provide teaching, music, or other professional services to the Boston Branch for which they are eligible to receive compensation. The Branch has an interest in ensuring that the process for selecting individuals or groups to provide compensated services considers all qualified individuals, including those who serve on a committee or are otherwise involved in managing a function or planning an event. At the same time, the Branch wishes to ensure that the selection process is fair to all qualified individuals and to avoid any appearance of impropriety in the selection process. To that end, to avoid possible conflicts of interest, it is Branch policy that a committee or group that is engaged in a selection process utilize the following procedures.

Those responsible for making the selection should initially develop a candidate list of individuals or groups, such as a band, who are qualified to provide the services. Any participant in the selection process, and any person attending a meeting which considers the selection process, who is on that list or is so closely connected to a person on the list that he or she might benefit from any financial arrangements between the Branch and the candidate, must leave the meeting during any discussion of those on the candidate list and may not vote on the selection. If the selection is made by oral vote, no person on the candidate list may be present when the vote is taken. If the vote is made by written preferential ballot, a person on the candidate list may be present in the room.

Statement on Gender-neutral Instructions

Members of our community have let us know that traditional, gendered terminology for dance instructions (First Man, First Woman) imposes on

their dancing activities rigid categories that negatively affect aspects of their daily lives. The Boston Branch of the RSCDS (and the SCD community at large) aspires to be an open, welcoming, and inclusive organization. The updated RSCDS Code of Conduct asserts that the global Society welcomes “all dancers and music lovers, regardless of gender/gender identity, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, religion or employment status”(rscds.org/safer-spaces). We honor and respect all those who were trained using gendered terminology, and we will not impose any particular practice on teachers and MCs. At the same time, we honor the reality of gender fluidity and the freedom of gender expression. In this spirit, we encourage the generous and open-minded exploration of alternatives to gendered terms, and we support efforts to enable dancers, teachers, and MCs to become more adept in and comfortable with their use. We hope that, over time, one form of gender-neutral terms will emerge as the most accepted alternative and become familiar and accessible to all.

FINANCIAL

Equipment Rental

A charge will be made if the Branch sound system is used for any non-Branch event. The Executive Committee shall set the fee schedule and periodically review it. The Executive Committee must approve each request for such use. Branch events get priority for reserving the Branch sound system.

The fee for use of the sound system for non-Branch events is \$90 for a one-night event and \$180 for a weekend event. (*Last reviewed 2026.*)

Both Branch and non-Branch event organizers may email reservation inquiries to equipment@rscdsboston.org. Thirty days' notice are required for all reservations.

Branch Events

Any Branch member or group may present to the Executive Committee a proposal for an appropriate event, activity, or party for which it seeks Branch sponsorship, but cannot assume that sponsorship or funding will be granted. No event will be funded unless a budget has been submitted to and accepted by the Executive Committee, which may require changes to any proposed budget.

The budget must identify any potential financial benefit that the member, any person closely connected to the member, or group may receive if the proposal is approved. Proposals and budgets should be sent electronically to the Branch secretary and treasurer for distribution to the Executive Committee well in advance of the proposed event.

The member or group seeking sponsorship of the event may be asked to attend an Executive Committee meeting and to provide further information on the proposal. For any event that the Branch has funded, a full financial report must be submitted to the Executive Committee within 60 days after the event.

COMMUNICATIONS

Tartan Times

The Tartan Times is issued four times a year. The Tartan Times does not accept advertising or publish commercial announcements.

The Tartan Times is a community-building publication, aiming to "educate, celebrate, and inspire". The website or calendar is the place to advertise upcoming events and class information.

Electronic distribution is the preferred method for distributing the Tartan Times. The Executive Committee may periodically establish a subscription price for hardcopy delivery of the Tartan Times.

Website

Events in New England and the Albany region that are sponsored by members of the Boston Branch may be posted on the Branch website. For web postings, event organizers are expected to provide complete and accurate information that includes all relevant details about the event. Flyers, cribs, and other materials should be provided in PDF form. To facilitate the use of electronic mapping and GPS systems, postings should include street addresses for all event venues. Submissions must also provide contact information for a person who may provide any additional information about the event. The webmasters are not expected to track down information that the organizers do not supply.

The Branch Secretary shall advise the webmasters of the results of Branch elections and liaison appointments so that the information can

be posted on the Branch website.

Calendar

Branch events and some related non-Branch events may be listed on the Branch electronic calendar by sending an email to calendar@rscdsboston.org. Emails should include the name and date of the event, its street address, its beginning and ending times, an email contact for further information, and any flyers or cribs in PDF form, as well as any other information (musicians, meal information, ticket price, etc.) the organizers feel is relevant. If all this information is not available at the time, the calendar listing can be updated as information becomes available.

Alternately, event organizers and class leaders may email calendar@rscdsboston.org to request access so they can create and update calendar listings themselves. Instructions on doing this shall be maintained on the branch website. The Executive Committee can revoke access.

For non-Branch events, the calendar organizer may determine whether to list them on a case-by-case basis. In disputed cases, the ultimate decision rests with the Executive Committee.

Social Media

The Executive Committee shall ensure that the Branch maintains a presence on social media platforms to advertise and promote events and classes. In 2025, the Committee created the post of Social Media Coordinator. This person will survey class leaders to gather information about current social media efforts, identify appropriate platforms for the desired audience(s), and design an appealing standard format for posting material. The Coordinator will solicit and receive content from class leaders, event coordinators, and Branch members and will post the material so gathered to the relevant platforms. The Coordinator will encourage and help publicize SCD activities involving “real-world presence” at local Highland Games, town festivals, and community centers as well as regular class meetings. The Coordinator will work with the Executive Committee liaison for publicity (currently the Branch Secretary) to keep the committee informed about progress and challenges and resources needed for success. The Coordinator’s efforts will initially focus on pilot programs with one or two classes, with the goal of enhancing the outreach and robust health of all interested classes in the future.

Meetings

Meetings of committees of the Branch, including the Executive Committee, may take place electronically. Annual meetings of the Society should be hybrid events, if possible, with facilities for on-line attendees to take part and vote.

MEMBERSHIP

Branch officers (President, VP, Secretary, Treasurer.) must be members of the Branch.

Membership Fees

The Executive Committee, at or before its meeting in May of each year, shall set membership fees for the next membership year and promptly notify the membership chairs of its decision.

Basic membership categories include regular members, associate members, and junior members. The Executive Committee may establish additional membership subcategories, such as limited income, multiple individuals at the same address, and benefactor or supporting member, with fees below or above those for basic memberships. Fees for all membership categories shall include a component that reflects the cost of dues that must be paid to the RSCDS and shall incorporate any applicable adjustments to the RSCDS dues structure, e.g., reduced dues for younger members.

Membership Forms

The new membership application form shall be posted each year on the Branch website on or before the start of Pinewoods Scottish Sessions and shall remain available on the website until replaced by the application for the following year.

A link to the membership application form shall be sent by e-mail to the membership list in late August or early September of each year, with a reminder that memberships expire as of September 30.

A link to the membership application form shall be sent by e-mail on or about October 1 of each year to members who have not yet renewed with a reminder that for inclusion in the directory renewals must be received by the November SAGM.

Member Directories

Member directories should be distributed electronically to Branch members and any others who are authorized to receive a directory. The directory should be delivered to members of the executive committee and to class contacts within a week of its creation.

BRANCH CLASSES

For an independent Scottish Country Dance group to be sponsored by the Boston Branch and designated as a Branch Class, the group must meet the following conditions:

- The group desires to be a Branch Class, and the Executive Committee of the Boston Branch determines that such designation for this class is in the interest of the Branch and of the RSCDS.
- The primary purposes of the group are teaching and performing Scottish Country Dances.
- A minimum of four members of the group must be Branch members. All dancers in the group should be encouraged to become members of the Boston Branch and to participate in Boston Branch activities.
- Group-sponsored activities are open to all who are interested in Scottish Country Dancing who comply with the Branch participation policy.

A Branch Class is entitled, upon submission of appropriate documentation, to receive liability insurance coverage purchased by the Branch that covers Branch-sponsored activities. A Branch Class may also be entitled to additional sponsorship benefits as determined by the Executive Committee. These include (*last reviewed 2026*):

- ...for classes with eight or more Branch members, a \$290 music subsidy (no more than once a year), upon request by the Branch Class, for musicians engaged to play at a Branch dance.
- ...for classes with 12 or more Branch members, the above music subsidy is increased to \$390 instead.

A Branch Class that sponsors an event for which it receives a subsidy from the Boston Branch shall structure its admission fees to provide a price break to Boston Branch members.

The designation as a Branch Class may be terminated by either the independent class or the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee may modify the requirements for becoming a Branch Class and the sponsorship benefits.

Classes in the area served by the Boston Branch that are not designated as Branch Classes may be listed on the Branch website, receive publicity for their weekly classes and special events in Branch communications. Insurance and music subsidies are not available to classes that are not designated as Branch Classes.

To ensure access to Branch resources, each class, whether or not it is designated as a Branch Class, shall identify a Class Contact and provide the Secretary with the name, address, and contact information for that person. Upon receipt of membership information from the Membership Chair, class liaisons on the Executive Committee shall inform classes of their membership counts.

Teaching In Branch Classes

Branch classes shall primarily be taught by teachers with the RSCDS Teaching Certificate or those who have completed the Core Training for Instructors (CTI). If a teacher has passed Part 1 of the Teaching Certificate (Units 1–3), the Branch encourages them to take Part 2 and can assist in finding a Mentor to prepare them for Units 4 and 5.

BRANCH EVENTS

All regularly scheduled classes and their special parties are Branch events, but there are other special events scheduled throughout each year that are Branch events because they are covered by the Branch's insurance policy or receive other financial assistance from the Branch.

Non-discrimination Policy

The Boston Branch is committed to at all times providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members and guests. To that end, the Branch does not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), national origin, age, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, genetics, disability, marital status, or military service, in any of its activities or operations. These activities include, but are not limited to, the selection and hiring of teachers and musicians, the selection of volunteers and vendors, and election to and termination from its Executive Board.

Participation Policy

Events and classes sponsored by the RSCDS Boston Branch are intended to be pleasurable occasions for learning and enjoying the performance of Scottish country dancing. To foster those goals and to ensure the safety of all, the Branch expects that everyone attending a Branch event will conduct themselves courteously and with appropriate respect for other participants and in compliance with the rules or regulations of the venue.

Physical contact and flirting are integral parts of Scottish country dancing, but it is important to be sure that everyone involved is a willing participant, both on and off the dance floor. If someone is making you uncomfortable by touching you, flirting with you, making suggestive comments, following you, etc., you are encouraged to inform the event organizers or any member of the Executive Committee, so they can address the issue.

The RSCDS Boston Branch reserves the right to deny participation to any person who is unable to conform to these standards and whose behavior is determined by the event organizers to be offensive, dangerous, disruptive to the enjoyment of the event by other participants, or in violation of the venue's rules or regulations. If a person is required to leave an event for these reasons, no refund of registration or other fees will be made.

This policy will be published on the Branch website as well as printed in documents such as the Pinewoods booklet. It will also be mentioned in the first night announcements at events such as ESCape and Scottish Sessions at Pinewoods, and members of the Executive committee attending that session will be asked to identify themselves.

The following information on procedures for implementing the participation policy will be distributed to all Event Organizers. Event organizers who are advised or observe that a person attending an event is engaging in behavior that is offensive, dangerous, disruptive to the enjoyment of the event by other

participants, or in violation of the venue's rules or regulations will meet with that person to discuss their concerns.

The person's continued participation in the event shall be conditioned upon compliance with a written agreement specifying what actions or behaviors must be modified. If the person is unable or unwilling to comply with those conditions, they may be required to leave the event immediately and may be denied admission to future events.

Policy Regarding Youth Participation

The Branch wants to encourage the participation of children* and other young people in Scottish dancing since they represent the future. However, we want to make sure that this participation can be conducted without causing emotional or physical harm to vulnerable participants. The Branch requires that children may only attend a Branch event when accompanied by a parent or designated guardian. If anyone observes a child being threatened with abuse in anyway at a Branch event, they should immediately report the incident to the parent or guardian who is present at the event. In addition, the Branch shall appoint a *Safety Liaison* who is a member of the Branch and (if possible) a member of its Executive Committee. If anyone observes a young person or other vulnerable adult being threatened with abuse in anyway at a Branch event when a parent or guardian is not present, they should report the incident to the Safety Liaison as soon as possible. It will be the responsibility of the Safety Liaison to bring the incident to the attention of the Executive Committee of the Branch.

* Defined in all states covered by the Boston Branch as individuals under the age of 18.

Alcohol Policy

State laws prohibit the consumption of alcohol by anyone under age 21 and impose severe penalties for supplying alcoholic beverages to such a person. It is the policy of the Boston Branch to ensure that participants in events it sponsors comply with state law.

Participants in Branch events who consume alcohol in violation of state law may be denied participation in the event or in future events. Anyone over age 21 who supplies alcohol to or otherwise enables its consumption by participants in Branch events who are under 21 violates Branch policy and consequently may be denied participation in Branch events.

This policy will be published on the Branch website as well as printed in documents such as the Pinewoods booklet.

The following information on procedures for implementing the alcohol policy will be distributed to all Event Organizers:

Event and class organizers who are advised or observe that 1) a person attending who is under age 21 is consuming alcohol; or 2) that a person over age 21 is supplying alcohol to or otherwise enabling such consumption, shall take action to ensure the immediate termination of the illegal activity. Such actions include confiscation of any remaining alcohol, notice to the adults responsible for the minor, and immediate notice to any person over 21 that the illegal activity must be discontinued. For any person at the event who violates the policy, continued participation in the event is conditioned upon compliance with a written agreement that the illegal activity will cease immediately, and no further violations will occur. If the person is unable or unwilling to comply with those conditions, he or she may be required to leave the event immediately and may be denied admission to future events.

Candidate Classes

The Teaching and Music Committee may develop proposals for submission to the Executive Committee for Candidate Classes designed to prepare dancers to take the teacher certification examinations administered through the RSCDS.

The proposal shall specify the process for identifying candidates for teacher training and include a list of recommended teachers, musicians, course timelines, class locations, and a comprehensive budget addressing all potential expenses and all sources of income, including fees to be paid by participants. The Executive Committee makes the final decision on the teachers and the proposal.

Workshops

The Teaching and Music Committee may plan proposed workshops or special classes to be sponsored by the Branch. Budgets for such events shall be submitted to the Executive Committee for approval.

Boston Scottish Country Dancers / Demonstration Team

The Executive Committee appoints the BSCD teacher and administrator,

and annually sets the honoraria to be paid to these individuals.

Pinewoods Benefit Ball

The Salem class engages the hall and selects and hires the musicians and MCs for this event.

Musicians playing for the Pinewoods Benefit Ball may sell their own CDs at the ball location.

The net proceeds of the Pinewoods Benefit Ball will be donated to Pinewoods Camp, Inc.

Highland Ball and Weekend

The budget for the weekend should separate expenses for each component, such as the Welcome Dance, the Ball, and the Sunday Brunch and specify fees for attending the Ball, the Welcome Dance, or the Brunch. The budget may include reduced fees for some attendees, such as junior or observing attendees.

The following individuals are eligible to receive free or reduced-price tickets to the Highland Ball: The co-chairs, musicians, including the piper, brunch host, MCs, and up to two sound people. The organizers of the Welcome Dance will receive free admission to that dance, but not to the Ball.

Musicians at Highland Ball Weekend events may sell their own CDs at those events. Other Vendors may sell their wares at the Sunday Brunch only.

Fall Concert, Ceilidh, or Other Special Events

The goals of Fall Concerts and other special events are to:

- Celebrate Scottish dance and music.
- Expose the audience to Scottish Country Dancing.
- Use the Boston Scottish Country Dancers demonstration team to present Scottish Country Dancing artistically and to encourage participation by new dancers.
- Provide an opportunity for the audience to participate in Scottish Country Dancing.

- Provide performance opportunities for local artists.

The Executive Committee has discretion over who may sell their wares at the event.

RESIDENTIAL EVENTS

Pinewoods Scottish Sessions

The Pinewoods Scottish Sessions chairs shall set an application deadline, preferably no later than April 1. Based on the applications for the sessions that are postmarked or received electronically by that date, the chairs shall determine whether admission must be determined by lottery. If no lottery is required, the chairs shall promptly notify applicants of their admission to the selected session(s). If admissions to the Pinewoods Scottish Sessions must be determined by lottery, preference may be given to applicants who were not admitted because their lottery number was not reached in the previous two years. A separate lottery should be conducted for each Pinewoods Scottish Session. If either or both the Pinewoods Scottish Sessions have not been filled by applicants who apply by the deadline, the chairs shall take appropriate steps to publicize the fact that applications may still be submitted for any unfilled session.

“Staff,” for purposes of the Pinewoods Scottish Sessions, consists of the Pinewoods chairs, full-time teachers, full-time musicians, and those holding other full-time staff positions as required by Pinewoods Camp. Teachers who teach occasional classes or MC an evening dance party, camper musicians, and those who take on other minor assignments are not considered staff.

Teachers and musicians on the Pinewoods staff, as defined above, may sell their books, CDs, and other products through the Bookstore. The Pinewoods Scottish Session chairs will also identify a Vendor Day during each session at which persons who operate independent retail businesses may be permitted to offer Scottish and Scottish themed goods for sale. Any vendor seeking permission to sell at the Pinewoods Scottish Sessions must comply with the Pinewoods Camp, Inc.’s insurance requirements and operate within Pinewoods Camp space limitations.

Pond neighbors on both Long and Round Ponds may watch any of the

evening dances. The session chairs may designate an evening on which pond neighbors may join in the dancing.

Staff may bring children of any age. Other children under the age of 18 may apply to Pinewoods Scottish Sessions, and the Pinewoods Chairs will have discretion to determine the approval process for such applications to best meet the needs of the community (as an example, in the event of a lottery, giving lower priority to children who are not experienced Scottish dancers or musicians). Young dancers should be prepared to participate in regular programming; Scottish Sessions is still a primarily adult space that welcomes some non-adults, and will not provide any special youth-oriented programming.

A final report on the Pinewoods Sessions will be given at the Branch Semi-Annual General Meeting.

English-Scottish-Contra (ESCape) Session at Pinewoods

The ESCape Committee will consist of four people, two RSCDS representatives approved by the Boston Branch Executive Committee and two CDS representatives approved by CDS-Boston Centre.

The Executive Committee must approve the ESCape budget.

Teachers and musicians on the ESCape staff may sell their books, CDs, and other products through the Bookstore. The session chairs may also identify one or more Vendor Days during each session at which persons who operate independent retail businesses may be permitted to offer Scottish and English goods, including dance clothing, for sale. Any vendor seeking permission to sell at ESCape must comply with the Pinewoods Camp, Inc.'s insurance requirements and operate within Pinewoods Camp space limitations.

Profits and losses from ESCape Sessions will be shared equally by the Branch and by CDS-Boston Centre. A final report of the current year's session will be given at the Branch Semi-Annual General Meeting.

Summer's End

Summer's End, formerly known as the "New Hampshire Highlands Weekend" is a Branch-sponsored event since the Branch covers its insurance.