

British Columbia Geocaching Association

Standard Operating Procedures

This document outlines the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the BCGA. It is maintained by the directors, as described in the BCGA Bylaws..

Section 1: Membership Application.

Who can be a member?

1. British Columbia Residents over the age of 16. Any BC resident 16 years of age or older can become a member of the BCGA subject to the approval of the directors or a Membership Manager as appointed by the directors. BC Resident members are entitled to a vote in the organization as described in the by-laws. To be eligible as a resident, the member must have lived in B.C. for at least 3 months immediately preceding application for membership and/or the annual validation of membership.
2. Non-British Columbia Residents. Non BC residents may have access to the BCGA services, on request and approval by the directors. However non-residents are not entitled to vote for directors or for any resolution in the BCGA annual general meeting. Non-BC residents are not considered “members” of the BCGA.
3. Persons not in good-standing with another organization. Persons who are banned or considered “not in good-standing” with any geocaching organization will normally not be allowed membership in the BCGA. This will normally apply to members who are, or have been, banned from geocaching.com forums or website use. This may apply to members banned from other organizations also, at the discretion of the directors. Such persons have the right to appeal a decision of the Board of Directors by applying in writing for a review of the decision. After further review by the Board of Directors, the decision will be final, without appeal for a period of 3 years.

The Membership Application Process

4. As a registered society, it is important that every member (voting member in the society) is a real person, registering with his/her real name and address. It is the responsibility of the member to update his/her information, particularly with regard to eligibility. If the member is found to not be in compliance with this requirement, directors may choose to inform that his/her membership may be terminated. The member may choose to reapply for membership, ensuring that eligibility requirements are met.
5. To join the BCGA, a BC resident must fill out an application form. Forms will be available on the BCGA website, and on occasion, in person from regional BCGA representatives. This form must be filled out with the full name, geocaching handle, address, e-mail and signature of the applicant. For security purposes, and due to the wide geographical nature of our membership, a “member identity verification” section must also be filled out. Member identity verification will take one of the following forms:

- a. photocopied driver’s licence or other government issued photo ID which includes

current address. Applications with photocopied ID must be mailed or hand delivered to the BCGA or its representatives;

- b. signed identity verification from a BCGA member in good standing.
- c. Other proof of BC residency such as a utility bill or tax notice.

6. Completed membership forms must be submitted to the BCGA, and a person becomes a member on approval of the directors. No person will normally be denied membership unless they fall into one of the non-eligible categories described in sections 2 or 3 above. The directors will notify new members of acceptance by e-mail or regular mail. Members will be contacted by email in a manner deemed appropriate by the directors unless the member has specified otherwise.

7. Membership Renewal - BCGA members sign up for a one year term of membership. Annual renewal is not automatic, but a member in good standing may renew their membership on line or by e-mail. They will receive a renewal reminder/request annually with confirmation of name, address etc. Failure to renew will result in removal from the membership list.

8. Membership Cost - Membership in the BCGA is free. There are no fees associated with joining nor renewing membership in the BCGA. The BCGA is a donation-funded organization. Members are encouraged to support the BCGA and will be solicited for a donation once per year. There may also be, on occasion, fund-raising drives.

Members in Good Standing

A member is considered to be in good standing if:

- a) They continue to meet the eligibility for membership under the Who Can Be A Member section
- b) They update their membership annually during the grace period extended by the directors
- c) They are not subject to any proceeding to be expelled from membership under Section 8 of the Society Bylaws
- d) They have not been suspended for violation of the Society's Acceptable Use Policy

Section 2: Regional Representation

9. The BCGA will attempt to maintain representation in all regions of British Columbia. One person in each region identified by the BCGA directors will act, on a voluntary basis, to represent the BCGA in their region. This local rep will act as a "go-to" person for local geocachers, the media, public enquiries for general information, liaison and BCGA information and applications. The reps will also be asked, on occasion, to set-up local events on behalf of the BCGA. These events will usually serve specific purposes (membership drives, geocaching promotion, information/meet-n-greet etc.) These events may receive BCGA support in the form of gifts, prizes and info packages. Regional reps will normally liaise with a Director of BCGA through email, but may also be asked to participate in a conference call, messaging session or Skype call.

Section 3: Meetings

10. Due to the geographic locations of the board members, Directors' meeting may be held by an electronic means. Minutes of these meetings will be taken by the Secretary, or someone appointed to take minutes in the absence of the Secretary, as if the meeting was in person. A summary of the attendees of the meeting, agenda items, and decisions made will be recorded as minutes of the meeting and posted to the website.

Section 4: Nominations

The Board of Directors has identified the following procedures with regard to nominations for directors at an Annual General Meeting

- Any member in good standing of the BCGA can be elected to the BCGA board of directors.
- Any member in good standing of the BCGA may nominate another member of the BCGA in good standing to the board of directors.
- A member in good standing of the BCGA may be nominated for more than one position
- Nominations do not have to be seconded
- A nominee can only be elected to one position on the BCGA board
- As per our bylaws in regards to the election process the BCGA board of directors reserves the right to run the election process which at this time is considered to include the nomination of positions in any manner deemed appropriate by the directors.
- The election process shall be observed by an independent Returning Officer appointed by the Directors to ensure integrity of the voting process. This person may be a member of the Society.
- Nomination forms will be available online on the Society's website and forms will be submitted directly to the Returning Officer for verification. A deadline for nominations will be set by the directors.

Section 5: Policies

- Travel and Expenses
- Acceptable Use
- Conflict of Interest
- Privacy Policy

Travel and Expenses Policy

Financial expenditures will normally be approved in advance by the Board of Directors. Expenditures under \$300 do not need approval of the Board at a meeting, but may be approved by a majority through electronic communications. The expenditures should be reported by the treasurer at either a Director's meeting or the AGM. Expenditures over \$300 need to be approved motion at a Directors' meeting.

Acceptable Use Policy

While the administrators and moderators of this website will attempt to remove or edit any generally objectionable material as quickly as possible, it is impossible to review every message. Therefore you acknowledge that all posts made to this website express the views and opinions of the author and not the administrators, moderators or webmaster (except for messages by these people) and hence will not be held liable.

You agree that the webmaster, administrator and moderators of this website have the right to remove, edit, move or close any message at any time should they see fit.

Where a website user who is also member of the Society is suspended for violation of the Acceptable Use Policy the directors may proceed to expel the member from the Society per Part 2, Section 8 of the Society's bylaws.

A. Use of Forums

You agree not to post any abusive, obscene, vulgar, slanderous, hateful, threatening, sexually-oriented or any other material that may violate any applicable laws.

Failure to comply with BCGA's Acceptable Use of Forums policy may result in action from the Board of Directors to suspend the website user's account in the Society's website. The normal process will be to remove the content from the website and warn the website user that further breaches of acceptable use may result in suspending the account. In the event that the account is suspended, the account will be suspended for a minimum of one year, at the discretion of the Directors, depending on the severity of the breach. The website user may apply in writing after one year to have his/her account reinstated.

B. Use of Website

Any attempt by a website user to deliberately attempt unauthorized access to the website or any of its modules for the purpose of viewing or altering any records or data stored therein will result in the immediate and permanent ban of the user from retaining an account on the website. The suspended website user may submit an appeal in writing to the directors for consideration. After review the Directors decision is final.

Directors may also choose to inform your service provider of inappropriate use of the Society's website. The IP address of all posts is recorded to aid in enforcing these conditions.

Privacy Policy

The British Columbia Geocaching Association is a Society registered in the province of BC. As such the BCGA's Board of Directors must conduct the Society's business in full compliance with the British Columbia Privacy Act. Please see <http://www.oipc.bc.ca/for-private-organizations.aspx> for more information.

1. Privacy Officer – the privacy officer of the Society shall be the person currently holding the position of Vice President of the Society. If this position is vacant then the President will perform this task. Contact will be made to admin@bcgeocaching.com
2. Private Information held
 - a. The Society retains on its servers the information received from the website users when they set up an account containing their user name and email address. This is used to allow users to access the website. The user agrees to the use of their email address for the society to send newsletters containing items of interest to geocachers in BC unless the user opts out of this.

- b. The Society retains the information of members provided by them in paper form and in electronic form on its website as a register of members required by the BC Society Act. This contains information members update annually. Photocopied ID sent in with an application will be destroyed (shredded) after membership has been verified. The member's name and contact information will be stored electronically, kept secure, and made available to the directors only for BCGA administrative use. Members' geocaching user name will however, be viewable to other members.
 - c. The IP address of correspondence received through the website or on posts to the forums is recorded for the purposes of contacting the ISP in the case of abuse. This is only available to the directors or administrators.
 - d. The Website makes use of "cookies" solely for the purpose to facilitate login and to assist in password reset. These cookies are stored on the user's computer and are not used for any other purpose by the Society.
3. Location of Records
 - a. The Society retains the original paper membership forms submitted at the registered office of the society.
 - b. Electronic information is stored on our servers located in the United States
 - c. Email addresses may be stored on the server of a contact management provider for the sole purpose of sending newsletters or for communicating with members. These servers are located in the United States.
4. The Society will not make any private information of website users or members available for use by any 3rd party unless users or members specifically provide their consent.
5. A website user or a member of the Society may send a written request to have their personal information removed from the server. The effects of this removal are:
 - a. In the case of a website user, this will remove access to certain areas of the website including forums as a valid email address is required for access.
 - b. In the case of a member, the removal of information from the server will result in the above. Additionally the member will not receive formal notices of meetings, nominations, or other information communicated to members. The member will also not be able to participate in electronic voting of the Society. The member will need to renew their membership annually via mail to the registered office of the Society.

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