

CAM/CAB Responsibilities, Fees & Salaries

WHAT DOES A CAM OR CAB DO?

- The CAM or CAB is employed by and works at the discretion of the community association Board of Directors.¹ Typically, the CAM or CAB takes direction from the president of the community association.
- If the community association hires a CAB, the CAB must assign a licensed CAM to carry out the duties that require licensure. It cannot place an unlicensed person onsite to carry out the responsibilities stated F.S. 468 Part VIII, or as defined by the Florida Supreme Court, unless there is a licensed CAM stationed onsite and supervising the unlicensed person on a regular basis.
- The CAM's specific duties are determined by the community association, the CAB (if the CAM is employed by one), or both. The CAM's responsibilities should be defined in a **written** contractual agreement and/or position description.
- Typically, the CAM:
 - Acts as an agent for the community association
 - Implements directives and policies of the Board
 - Provides administrative oversight
 - Supervises maintenance and operational services
 - Carries out other day-to-day activities
- **The CAM is bound by the community association's documents, governing law, administrative rules, and any contract or job description.** State statutes include penalties for CAMs (and CABs) who do not adhere to these in carrying out their functions.
- The Board of Directors is always the responsible party; it can never delegate certain responsibilities to another. Specific areas that may never be delegated include:
 - Policy making
 - Amending the documents
 - Any authority granted to members by the documents or by statute
 - Borrowing money
 - Setting insurance limits
- The Board grants the CAM **authority** to carry out certain functions but does not transfer its responsibility for decision-making for the community association. There are two basic types of authority:
 - **Actual:** Authority is expressed in writing or implied by actions of the Board, for example, contract language that states that the CAM shall supervise the maintenance and janitorial employees.
 - **Apparent:** The Board knowingly permits the CAM to act on its behalf. For example, once the Board hires the CAM, the Board knowingly permits the CAM to communicate directly with the community association attorney, even though that authority is not specifically stated in the contract.

¹ The CAM may be employed directly by the community association or work through a CAB.

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- The CAM has a fiduciary responsibility to the Board. That is, the Board has placed special confidence in the CAM that he or she will act honestly and place the community association's interests above his or her own.

HOW ARE FEES AND SALARIES OF CAM AND CABS DETERMINED?

- Salaries for CAMs vary regionally throughout Florida. The Florida Community Association Journal (FLCAJ) annually surveys professionals working in the community association field. Each January, it publishes a salaries & benefits summary, which prospective CAMs may find very helpful, as they look for employment. The survey compares differing regions of Florida. Also, it provides hourly rates for bookkeepers, administrative assistants, maintenance employees, and so on. As an individual with limited experience in the field may be able to gain employment through a different entry level – such as administrative assistant, this information can be very helpful.
- Keep in mind that portfolio and onsite CAMs may have very different salaries. Additionally, a portfolio CAM may gain or lose monies, based upon the number and types of properties managed.
- For onsite CAMs, a salary is usually a fixed amount. For part-time (or portfolio) management, the fee is often based upon an amount per door (or unit). Usually, a salary or fee depends upon the number of units in a community association and the responsibilities that the CAM will have.
- For portfolio management, fees can vary as widely as \$6 per door per month to \$20 per door per month. To determine what you as a CAM could charge, you need to determine the number of hours you expect to spend servicing the community association and price your time accordingly. Keep in mind that the acceptable fee is conditioned upon the financial standing of the community association. You may want to survey some of the community associations in the area to see what the acceptable rate is.
- Onsite CAM salaries vary significantly, depending upon the size and location of the community and the responsibilities, duties and experience of the CAM. When the position is advertised, the community association may indicate a salary range. If the CAM will work through a CAB, the community association will be charged not only for employee taxes and benefits but also for a profit margin.
- A community association or CAB may or may not offer benefits, such as health insurance. While CABs usually have human resource policies in place that define leave time, increases, holidays, etc., community associations that hire CAMs directly frequently do not. These are often negotiated with the contract between the association and CAM.
- A CAM should have a written agreement for services, whether he or she is working through a CAB or directly for the community association. It clarifies duties, what the community association expects of the CAM, and what he or she will receive in return for these services.

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HOW SHOULD YOU STRUCTURE YOUR RESUME?

- Most management companies and associations will require that you submit a resume, summarizing your experience.
- Since many new CAMs do not have community association- identifiable experience, they will need to adjust their resume. Specifically, an individual needs to identify experience he or she has that is similar to experience needed as a CAM. For example, if you managed a restaurant, you may have prepared and managed a budget; reviewed financial reports; overseen janitorial and maintenance activities; handled customer complaints; performed periodic inspections, etc.
- By restructuring your resume to identify tasks you performed, and to focus on relevant experience, you may be able to make your resume more attractive to a community association.
- You should also consider an entry level position within the profession (especially within a management company). If you are hired as an administrative assistant, for instance, you may be able to gain the experience necessary to move to the next level – a CAM. And, it is easier to be promoted from within a CAB than from outside of it.

REACHING OUT FOR JOBS

- For many professions, a newly licensed individual may join the local Chamber of Commerce, a religious organization, an athletic club, or other social group, through which he can develop relationships and promote his business. While many Florida residents live in community associations, only a limited few serve on the board and participate in the hiring and firing of personnel. Therefore, a newly licensed CAM may need to seek a different path to the CAM job market.
- Another problem is that most areas in Florida do not have organized professional entities, that market to and promote CAMs and related professions.
- Community Associations Institute (CAI) is a national community association related organization. It offers memberships to CAMs, CABs, directors and officers of associations, and vendors who market and sell to community associations. Most states have local chapters, some of which are very active, holding meetings, conferences and social events on a regular basis. In such chapters, you can introduce and promote yourself to the local community.
- Some areas also have locally organized groups. Some only permit CAM membership, others invite CAMs, directors & officers, and vendors, to participate. For assistance in finding such groups, contact the CAM Program Director.
- There are job placement services that focus only on community association positions. While most charge a fee if they are able to place you, it may be well worth the investment. You may want to research these in your area.
- Lastly, keep in mind that, with limited experience in the community association industry, it might be wise to seek an entry level position (such as a concierge or administrative assistant), or, alternatively, a position with a vendor who does business with community association. Oftentimes, getting your foot in the door will help you to achieve your long-term goals.

ARE CAMs AND CABs LEGALLY PROHIBITED FROM TAKING CERTAIN ACTIONS?

- **The Florida Supreme Court has ruled that certain activities, if performed by a CAM or CAB, may constitute an unauthorized practice of law.** We have discussed this in the CAM prelicensure text.
- **The CAM or CAB may never take action that requires a vote of the members or that the documents reserve for Board action.**
- The Florida Bar Standing Committee on the Unlicensed Practice of Law (UPL) and the Supreme Court of Florida, from time to time, agree upon clarifications of CAM activities that may be considered UPL, those may need clarifications from an attorney, and, finally activities that are permissible for a CAM to carry out.
- **It is important that a CAM or CAB not perform any duty that should be performed by a professional, such as an attorney, accountant, engineer, plumber, electrician, etc., unless the CAM or employee of the CAB is licensed or certified to perform that duty. Furthermore, a CAM or employee of a CAB should never perform a duty of a CAM that he or she is not qualified to do.**