



## TNCPE Board of Examiners – Commitment Description and General Information

### Board of Examiners

Serving as a TNCPE examiner provides unparalleled professional development supported by training in the Baldrige Excellence Framework™, our nation's standard of excellence. Examiners gain leadership skills and business acumen while helping drive organizational excellence in Tennessee and the surrounding region. Service as an examiner offers access to an extensive network of quality professionals, as well as benchmarking and growth opportunities, and exposure to best practices across a wide range of industries.

The Board of Examiners is made up of leading quality, business, health care, manufacturing, and education experts from across the Southeast. It includes individuals selected from industry, professional and trade organizations, government agencies, non-profit groups, or other groups.

While examiners will do the majority of their work between June and November, the term of service is one full year beginning after training is complete. Some examiners participate in special projects throughout the year.

All examiners must take part in a comprehensive three-day preparation course covering the TNCPE examination process and the Baldrige Framework, which includes the *Criteria for Performance Excellence*, the Baldrige core values, and the scoring system. Preparation of case study pre-work is required before attending the training session. In addition, new examiners must complete online orientation to become familiar with examiner expectations and to begin the training pre-work. Those selected to be examiners must have time available beginning in late Spring through Fall to complete pre-work, attend the training course, conduct reviews, participate in a team consensus meeting, conduct site visits, and complete final feedback reports for the applicants.

### Selection of Examiners

Examiners who served on the board in previous years are required to reapply if they wish to serve again in 2024.

The TNCPE Awards Program seeks to establish a Board of Examiners capable of evaluating small business, manufacturing, service, education, health care, government, and other organizations. In addition, examiners serve as ambassadors of the award program and TNCPE. Candidates must have a reputation for ethical conduct and integrity. They must demonstrate a willingness and commitment to meet team deadlines and at all times adhere to the high standards of TNCPE. Coverage and balance of all sectors are important considerations in selection because award applicants come from many types of organizations across the region.

### Appointments

Examiners are appointed by the president of the Tennessee Center for Performance Excellence to serve for one full year (July 2024 to July 2025). Appointments are subject to the Conditions of Involvement and the Code of Ethical Standards.

## Notification Process

The examiner application deadline is April 1, 2024. Notification, indicating selection status, will be sent to all examiner candidates within 2 weeks after the close of the applications. Selected examiners must return the confirmation notice and commitment statement to be officially accepted and scheduled for training.

## Master Examiners

High-performing experienced examiners are invited to serve as master examiners at the discretion of the TNCPE president. At a minimum, master examiners will have completed three years of service on the Board of Examiners, demonstrated an in-depth understanding of the Baldrige framework, and served as either a team leader or scorebook editor. After accepting the master examiner designation, examiners will serve in leadership roles on future TNCPE teams and may be asked to participate in special projects. Master examiners must complete the entire three-day examiner training course once every three years to stay current with changes in the Baldrige framework and TNCPE processes. In the alternate years, master examiners are only required to attend one day of training.

## Examiner Training

Multiple training sessions will be held in person in 2024. Additionally, one virtual training will be offered for those examiner candidates with travel restrictions. Applicants should indicate their preferred training session.

Every effort will be made to place examiners in their preferred sessions while balancing the proportion of new and experienced examiners. Training sessions will be confirmed with acceptance notification.

In addition to the three-day training, New Examiner Orientation is required of all first-year examiners. This orientation is recommended for second-year examiners, as well. Applicants can indicate their New Examiner Orientation date in their application.

## Examiner Qualifications

Examiner applications are evaluated based on breadth of experience; diversity of experience; leadership and external representation; knowledge of business, industry specialization, or quality practices; and examiner and team skills. It is expected that all potential examiners will be available to complete their assignments during the primary evaluation period (August – October).

- **Breadth of experience** refers to having demonstrated experience that covers topics in all or most of the seven Criteria categories. Current or previous positions may show responsibility for a wide range of activities. For example, employment history may show marketing expertise demonstrating an understanding of Customers (Category 3), supervision of a large enough number of people to understand the Workforce Category (Category 5), or production leadership to understand Operations (Category 6).

- **Diversity of experience** refers to having in-depth experience in one or more sectors, such as manufacturing, service, health care, education, or government. Given the conflict of interest restrictions in assigning examiners to evaluate applicants, the award program seeks candidates with broad experience.
- **Leadership and external representation** refers to the ability to communicate as a spokesperson for performance excellence and for TNCPE, analytical skills to serve as a strong examiner, and interpersonal skills to serve as a good team member.
- **Knowledge of business, industry specialization, or quality practices** refers to knowledge or skill in an area of high need for the program, such as experience in small business operations, senior management, statistical methods, health care, government, or financial results. Expertise may be demonstrated through relevant job experience, papers or articles written, research conducted, and degrees or certificates earned.
- **Examiner and team skills** refer to the skills to serve as a good team member and the team-based skills that have proven to be useful as an examiner. These skills include leadership ability, analytical ability (particularly as it applies to evaluating an organization), problem-solving skills, facilitation skills, communication skills (both oral and written), ability to use examiner software, collaboration, time-management skills, and the commitment to meet deadlines.

## TNCPE Board of Examiners – Conditions of Involvement

### Duties of Examiners

Examiners review, analyze, comment upon, and score written applications and prepare Feedback Reports for applicants. The role of an examiner requires participation in consensus meetings and site visits. Examiners also make significant contributions to the Tennessee Center for Performance Excellence by serving as ambassadors through outreach and educational activities.

### Terms and Conditions of Appointment

#### 1. Completion of Application

Examiner applications must be received by TNCPE no later than April 1, 2024.

A Recommendation Form must accompany each New Examiner Application. Return examiners are not required to provide a recommendation.

Examiner applicants will be informed of their status as 2024 examiners soon after the April 1<sup>st</sup> deadline. After applying, if a candidate finds they are unable to accept an appointment if offered, the applicant should immediately notify the Tennessee Center for Performance Excellence office.

#### 2. Code of Ethical Standards

Examiners are expected to carry out their duties and responsibilities in the award program per the Board of Examiners Code of Ethical Standards.

### 3. Disclosure of Conflict of Interest

Members of the Board of Examiners are individually responsible for preventing conflicts of interest. Examiners will be asked to certify that no conflict of interest exists. Examples of conflicts of interest include having the organization as a past, present, or future employer or client, and other affiliations that could be perceived to influence the examiner's actions.

### 4. Term of Appointment

The term of appointment to the Board of Examiners is approximately one year. This period extends for one year after completion of the training course.

### 5. Time Commitment

Applicants for the Board of Examiners should carefully consider the time commitment required to meet the award assessment schedule. The actual commitment will depend on the number and levels of applications reviewed. Although the program seeks to accommodate varying schedules, service on the BOE is a one-year commitment. Examiners must be able to participate in the program's primary review periods. A person who is considering applying to become a member of the Board of Examiners should be aware that **time equivalent to 12-20 days may be required to fulfill the commitment from May through November**, including pre-work, training, individual evaluation, consensus, site visit, and Feedback Report preparation, with a peak workload from August through October.

6. A review of written award applications may be conducted at the examiner's work location or home. Business is also conducted via email, mail, examiner software, virtual meeting platforms, and telephone. Travel is often necessary for training and/or site visits. **All examiners are expected to participate in independent review, consensus review, site visit, and preparation of the final Feedback Report. Failure to complete this commitment will result in the examiner being invoiced \$695 to cover the costs of training.**

### 7. Training Course

Participation by examiners in a training course is required and critical to the award program's success. The course includes a detailed review of the Baldrige Excellence Framework, TNCPE evaluation process, consensus development, site visit requirements, and Code of Ethical Standards.

Each examiner must attend one of the three-day training classes scheduled in June and July and must complete a case study evaluation before attending class. Please understand that no part of the three-day session may be missed. New examiners must also complete online orientation.

### 8. Adherence to Award Process

Examiners are expected to meet all requirements associated with a fair and competent evaluation, including the use of the award Criteria and scoring system, adherence to the evaluation process, fulfillment of site visit requirements, and avoidance of conflicts of interest. Thorough documentation and written communication are essential parts of the overall review process.

### 9. Compensation and Reimbursement

The Tennessee Center for Performance Excellence is a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation. Application fees are kept to a minimum to encourage broad participation and the program operates with maximum voluntary support. Recognizing that some examiners must travel out of town to complete site visits, TNCPE may reimburse site visit travel expenses for examiners for which their employers will not cover the expense. A Reimbursement Request form and receipts must be submitted to be

reimbursed for site visit travel expenses.

Level 2 application: reimbursed for receipts with a maximum of \$350

Level 3 application: reimbursed for receipts with a maximum of \$525

Level 4 application: reimbursed for receipts with a maximum of \$700

#### **10. Examiner Training Fees**

First-year examiners will be charged \$595. Second-year examiners will be charged a \$395 fee.

Examiner training fees will be invoiced upon acceptance to the Board of Examiners and the fee is due at least one week before the three-day preparation course. There is no charge for examiners returning for their third (or more) year of service.

- 11. Examiners are expected to fulfill their commitment to TNCPE.** If an examiner withdraws from training after the training fee is paid but at least 4 days before the training course, TNCPE can offer a refund of 50% of the training fee paid. TNCPE does not offer any refund of training fees within three business days of the examiner's selected training course.

Examiners returning for their third year or more (who do not pay for training) will be assessed a fee of \$100 for withdrawing from examiner training or rescheduling to a different training class without three business days' notice.

After training is completed, each examiner will be assigned to a team to evaluate an applicant's organization. If the examiner fails to complete all four stages of the evaluation process, the examiner will be assessed the full training fee of \$695. For a first-year examiner, the \$595 fee will be applied to the full fee and the examiner will owe TNCPE an additional \$100. Similarly, a second-year examiner will owe TNCPE an additional \$300. A returning or master examiner will be assessed the full \$695 fee.

## TNCPE Board of Examiners – Code of Ethical Standards

### Rules of Conduct

The following Rules of Conduct are established to maintain the confidentiality of TNCPE Award Program application information, including the identity of applicants. In addition, these rules preserve fairness in the examination process. The rules pertain to the entire Board of Examiners, including judges, team leaders, and master examiners.

Examiners must agree to a standard code of conduct and non-disclosure, and

- will conduct themselves professionally, guided by truth, accuracy, fairness, respect, and responsibility in all their interactions
- will maintain and safeguard fairness in the examination process and the confidentiality of all award application information, including the identity of applicants
- will treat as confidential all information about the applicant and the applicant's operations gained through the evaluation process
- will encourage and maintain a professional working environment that promotes respect for award applicants, their employees, and all members of the examiner team
- will respect the climate, culture, and values of the organization being evaluated
- will not intentionally communicate false or misleading information that may compromise the integrity of the award process or decisions therein
- will not at any time (during or after the evaluation cycle) independently give feedback to applicants regarding scoring or overall performance
- for a period of three years after the evaluation, will not approach an

organization they have evaluated for their personal gain, including the establishment of an employment or consulting relationship

- if approached by an organization they have evaluated, will not accept employment or a consulting arrangement from that organization for three years after the evaluation.



## **Code of Ethical Standards – Declaration of Principles**

Members of the Tennessee Center for Performance Excellence Board of Examiners pledge to uphold their professional principles in the fulfillment of their responsibilities.

In promoting high standards of public service and ethical conduct, examiners:

- will avoid representing conflicting or competing interests, or placing themselves in such a position where their interest may be in conflict - or appear to be in conflict - with the purposes and administration of the TNCPE Award Program
- will not review an organization with which they or their family members have an employment relationship
- will not serve as examiners of a primary competitor, customer, or supplier of any organization (or subunit of an organization) that employs them, has a financial interest in, or with which they anticipate a consulting arrangement
- will not review an organization that represents more than 5% of their investments
- may review an organization they have previously reviewed only after three years.

## **Disclosure of Conflict of Interest**

Those selected to serve on the Board of Examiners must sign and agree to adhere to TNCPE's Conflict of Interest and Non-Disclosure Agreement immediately upon receiving their application assignment(s). Conflict of Interest takes into account employers, significant ownership, client relationships, and affiliations that may present or seem to present a conflict of interest to the examiner's ability to impartially fulfill his/her TNCPE duties. Such information will be kept confidential. A Conflict

of Interest/Non-Disclosure Agreement must be completed for each application assigned.

## TNCPE Board of Examiners – Estimated Time Commitment

<p><b>Training Case Study</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TNCPE emails case study in May</li> <li>• Examiner completes 10-15 hours of pre-work</li> <li>• Examiner evaluates, scores, and brings case study pre-work to 3-day examiner training session</li> </ul>
<p><b>Examiner Training Sessions</b></p> <p><b>Online Orientation (required for new examiners)</b></p> <p><b>Three-day examiner training (required for all examiners)</b></p>	<p><b>New Examiner Orientation:</b> Completion of online orientation is <b>required</b> for new examiners and recommended for second-year examiners.</p> <p><b>Training:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance required at the full 3-day class</li> <li>• Travel time should be factored in by examiner</li> <li>• Travel expenses paid by examiner</li> <li>• TNCPE assigns teams following training</li> </ul>
<p><b>Independent Review of Assigned Application</b></p> <p>August-early September</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schedule 15-30+ hours depending on level, length, and complexity of assignment</li> <li>• Independent reviews completed by late August/early September (exact date will be set by team leader)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Team Consensus Meetings</b></p> <p>Completed 2-3 weeks prior to site visit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1/2 day to one day, plus preparation time</li> <li>• Can be either a virtual or face-to-face meeting at a location central to team members</li> </ul>
<p><b>Site Visits</b></p> <p>September</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level 2: One day + one day to finalize report</li> <li>• Level 3: Two days + one day to finalize report</li> <li>• Level 4: Three days + one day to finalize report</li> </ul>
<p><b>Site Visit Preparation and Follow-Up</b></p> <p>Scheduling coordinated by team leader and applicant organization. The team leader will advise TNCPE office of dates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow preparation time to create site visit worksheets prior to site visit</li> <li>• Evenings during site visit are spent sharing information and updating feedback comments.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Reports</b></p> <p>Final Feedback Report delivered to TNCPE after site visit is completed to allow sufficient time for judges' review.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consensus Report is generated at team consensus meeting</li> <li>• Site Visit Report is completed the day following site visit.</li> </ul>