

*For **Washington State Irrigation District Elected Officials**, the **duty of care** is a legal and ethical responsibility requiring board members to act in the **best interests of the district**, using **reasonable care, diligence, and good judgment** when making decisions or taking actions on behalf of the district.*

What "Duty of Care" Means for Irrigation District Board Members

1. Act in Good Faith

- Decisions must be made honestly, with loyalty to the district, not for personal gain.

2. Exercise Reasonable Judgment

- Officials must make **informed decisions** by:
 - Reviewing meeting materials in advance.
 - Understanding the district finances, policies, and infrastructure.
 - Asking questions and seeking expert advice when necessary (e.g., engineers, legal counsel).

3. Attend and Participate

- Regular attendance at board meetings is expected.
- Active participation in discussion and voting is part of fulfilling their duty.

4. Avoid Negligence

- Ignoring issues, failing to investigate complaints, or making uninformed decisions may be a breach of duty of care.
- For example: approving a water rate hike without reviewing financial data could be negligent.

5. Follow the Law and Bylaws

- Compliance with RCWs (Revised Code of Washington), district bylaws, and open public meetings laws is part of this duty.
- Example: improperly noticed meetings could be challenged legally.