

VERIFIED PRESENCE PROTOCOL™ (VPP™)

Governance & Stewardship Framework v1.0

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1. Purpose of the Governance Framework

The Governance & Stewardship Framework defines how authority is exercised, how neutrality is preserved, and how institutional trust is maintained within the Verified Presence Protocol™.

The framework exists to prevent:

- unilateral control
- vendor or platform capture
- regulatory fragmentation
- erosion of semantic integrity

while supporting:

- authoritative governance
- institutional confidence
- enforceable legitimacy
- long-term protocol stability

2. Core Governance Assertion

The protocol remains neutral.

Governance remains authoritative.

VPP™ governance does not control implementations.

It governs protocol meaning, integrity, and accountability semantics.

3. Stewardship Structure

3.1 Protocol Steward

The Verified Presence Protocol™ is stewarded by a designated entity (“the Steward”) responsible for:

- maintaining the official protocol definition
- controlling versioning and semantic integrity
- administering licensing and certification frameworks
- governing Trust Mark usage
- representing the protocol institutionally

At inception, stewardship is operated by the founding entity, subject to the constraints defined in this framework.

3.2 Separation of Concerns

To preserve neutrality and prevent capture, governance explicitly separates:

Function	Responsibility
Protocol semantics	Steward
Implementation methods	Licensees
Technology choices	Implementers
Content and outcomes	End institutions

No implementer, vendor, or licensee may control protocol meaning.

4. Governance Bodies (Baseline)

4.1 Stewardship Board

Initial governance authority resides with a Stewardship Board composed of:

- the Protocol Steward
- independent governance advisors
- legal and compliance oversight

Responsibilities include:

- protocol integrity
- licensing standards
- enforcement decisions
- conflict resolution

4.2 Advisory Participation (Non-Binding)

As adoption grows, non-binding advisory participation may be introduced, including representatives from:

- regulated institutions
- audit and compliance bodies
- governance and policy experts

Advisory input informs evolution but does not grant control.

5. Decision-Making Authority

5.1 Reserved Powers

The Steward retains authority over:

- protocol definition and updates
- Trust Mark standards
- licensing eligibility
- compliance interpretation
- enforcement and revocation

This authority exists to prevent fragmentation and preserve semantic consistency.

5.2 Consultative Input

Stakeholder input may be considered for:

- future protocol versions
- sector-specific adaptations
- regulatory alignment

Final authority remains with the Steward.

6. Versioning and Change Control

All protocol changes follow a controlled process:

1. proposal
2. impact analysis
3. advisory input (where applicable)
4. Steward approval
5. controlled release

Backward compatibility and institutional continuity are maintained.

7. Neutrality Safeguards

To prevent governance capture:

- no single licensee may dominate governance
- conflicts of interest must be disclosed
- governance participation may be limited
- protocol semantics remain implementation-agnostic

8. Transparency and Accountability

Governance actions may be:

- documented
- internally auditible
- subject to review

Transparency is balanced with institutional discretion.

9. Enforcement Authority

The Steward may:

- revoke certifications
- suspend or terminate licenses
- issue corrective directives
- publish revocation notices when appropriate

Enforcement is proportional and institutionally framed.

10. Summary

The Governance & Stewardship Framework establishes an authoritative governance structure that preserves neutrality without diluting control.

By anchoring protocol integrity in defined stewardship and separation of roles, the Verified Presence Protocol™ operates as a stable institutional trust layer.

Verified Presence Protocol™

A governed trust protocol for accountable execution.