

CREATING A COLLABORATION AGREEMENT OR MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

PURPOSES & BENEFITS

A collaboration agreement or memorandum of understanding (MOU) puts down in writing the group's guiding principles or norms and how they'll work successfully together in order to accomplish their community organizing work.

HOW TO USE THIS TOOL

Use this tool in conjunction with the "Collaboration Agreement Example" tool, which can be found in the same section of the toolkit as this one, to identify and develop the relevant components of the collaborative group's collaboration agreement or MOU.

In addition to the tools to develop a collaboration agreement or MOU in this section of the toolkit, don't forget to use the "What I Have to Contribute to & How I Benefit from This Collaborative," "What Does It Mean for Us to Collaborate?" and "Collaboration Benefits" discussion points developed during the "Come Together" Step 1A above when developing a collaboration charter or MOU.



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A collaboration agreement helps to set a group up for success by articulating and making explicit expectations about the purposes of the collaboration, who will be involved in the collaboration and how members of the collaborative will work together. It also functions as an anchor when the group is struggling to maintain focus or experiencing chaos.

The format for a collaboration agreement is flexible and should be designed to meet the needs of the group. It should, however, be a result of collaborative process among all the members of the collaboration.

Key items to consider including in your collaboration agreement include:

- **Vision** – A short statement that articulates an alternative view of the community and answers the question of what it would look like if the group “got it right.”
- **Mission** – a short statement that describes how the collaborative sees their work contributing to the vision.
- **Values and Assumptions** – A short list with a brief explanation of key points of agreement regarding domestic and/or sexual violence
- **Structure of the Collaboration** – Explains how the collaboration will be structured, such as who will chair the collaboration, the use of subcommittees or other relevant items.
- **Roles and Responsibilities** – This section should articulate the expectations for participation, such as who will participate, what it means to participate and specific responsibilities for partners in the collaboration.
- **Communication Practices** – This section explicitly describes how communication will occur and may include items such as communication between meetings and recording and distribution of minutes.
- **Confidentiality Expectations** – A brief statement regarding what, if any, of the collaboration work is intended to be confidential, what is meant by confidentiality and how potential exceptions to confidentiality will be handled.
- **Decision-Making Processes** – A section explaining how decisions will be made and any additional decision-making rules.
- **Conflict Resolution Process** – This section articulates a specific process of how conflicts among collaborative members will be resolved.
- **Communication Plan** – Describes how communication with the media on behalf of the collaborative will be handled, should the occasion arise.

