

Orange County Continuum of Care Code of Conduct

Overview

The Orange County Continuum of Care (CoC) Code of Conduct (Code of Conduct) is a commitment to creating safe, inclusive spaces and opportunities for authentic engagement amongst CoC Board members (Members); committee, ad hoc and working group members; CoC staff; CoC general members; and members of the public attending CoC meetings, including people with lived experience of homelessness and community partners. The commitment to ensure a safe, inclusive space happens within all meetings of the CoC, including but not limited to meetings of the CoC Board, committees, ad hocs and working groups.

Applicability

All participants of all CoC meetings are accountable to one another and encouraged to follow this Code of Conduct to ensure everyone in attendance feels safe, respected and included. The Code of Conduct is applicable to:

- CoC Board members
- CoC committee, ad hoc and working group members
- Collaborative Applicant staff
- CoC general members
- Members of the Public attending CoC meetings

Core Values

The CoC Board is committed to fostering diversity within the CoC Board and its committees, ad hocs and working groups to reflect the identities and experiences of people experiencing homelessness in Orange County. Further, the CoC Board is committed to valuing and respecting the dignity of all persons, and establishing inclusion and equity within the practices of meeting preparation and facilitation. As such, the CoC Board instructs that the Orange County CoC is driven by the core values listed below:

1. **Equity.** Authentically engage and center diverse voices, including people with lived expertise, within the decision-making process of the CoC.
2. **Dignity.** Every person has the right to be treated ethically, and to be valued and respected.
3. **Safety.** Create an environment where all feel safe, valued and treated with dignity.

Code of Conduct Guidelines

The core values of the Orange County CoC are lived out through the Code of Conduct Guidelines at all CoC meetings.

1. **Every person participating in CoC meetings will be engaged with value, inclusivity and dignity.**
 - Meeting facilitators and participants will treat one another with dignity and respect.
 - Authentic engagement of people with lived expertise will be centered in decision-making processes.
 - CoC Board and Committee membership will receive public comment for consideration before voting on a recommended action.

- Public comments are opportunities to lift thoughts, concerns and feedback. Members of the public will be provided opportunities to share verbally or in writing at least 24 hours before the meeting and special accommodations will be made as needed to ensure inclusive participation.
 - All persons will receive equitable treatment without discrimination of race, color, national origin, religion, sex (including pregnancy and gender identity), age, marital and parental status, disability, sexual orientation, or genetic information.
- 2. Communication of meeting topics and expectations for facilitation and/or participation in CoC meetings will be accessible.**
- Meeting materials will be accessible online and in-person, as requested and in accordance with the Brown Act requirements, to remove barriers to participation from members of the public.
 - Value-based communication, person centered, or strength-based communication centered around the values and vision of the CoC, will be the goal.
 - All CoC meeting participants will seek to communicate in ways that are not harmful, even in disagreement. Communication styles, nonverbal body language, posturing and/or and word choices will not seek to further escalate a conversation or conflict.
- 3. Uphold and maintain a safe and secure environment for all meeting spaces.**
- Disruptive behavior is prohibited from all meeting spaces to ensure safety and security of meeting participants. “Disruptive behavior” means behavior that disrupts, disturbs, impedes, or renders infeasible the orderly conduct of the meeting.
 - If a meeting participant’s behavior is disruptive, the CoC Board officers, Committee Chairs, or Committee Vice Chairs of the CoC meeting will warn the meeting participant of their behavior. If the meeting participant does not stop the disruptive behavior, they will be asked to leave the meeting.
 - Verbal or physical threats or violence – including name-calling, bullying, or othering of meeting participants – will not be tolerated.

Implementation and Accountability

The CoC Board, and those facilitating CoC meetings such as, the CoC Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs and Collaborative Applicant are committed to ensuring these values are honored and willing to respond and provide the leadership that is needed to implement the Code of Conduct within CoC meetings.

There is a commitment to orienting the public as to how to share input and engage in meeting space. For each CoC Board meeting and committee meeting, there is a description on the process of providing public comment and engaging within the public meeting space. The Code of Conduct will be publicly available on the CoC webpage and can be made available at meetings of the CoC Board and committees.

Violations of the Code of Conduct can result in a verbal warning, being removed from a meeting space, and other consequences in accordance with local laws.

No Code of Conduct can cover every possible situation, therefore, if you have any concerns about the Code of Conduct or related questions, the Office of Care Coordination, as the Administrative Entity and Collaborative Applicant for the Orange County CoC, can be contacted by phone at (714) 834-5000 or by email at CareCoordination@ocgov.com.