

Office of Health Equity Advisory Committee (OHE-AC) Community Agreement
Draft
(Updated May 2022)

I. The purpose of the OHE-AC Community Agreement

Developing community agreements is a helpful strategy in defining how a group of people want to work together. The OHE-AC Community Agreement (“the Agreement”) seeks to provide a common framework that identifies concrete and explicit expectations for all AC members in the space. It offers “**ground rules**” and resources for all participants to create an environment and culture that is compassionate, respectful, inclusive, and equitable. The Agreement is also a reflection of our **shared values** and provides guidance for all members on how work is done, how conflicts are managed, and how we treat one another.

However, these ground rules and shared values only benefit us when there is active participation. We recommend that all AC members including existing and incoming members continue to build awareness and understanding around and actively practice these agreements. Additionally, rules and practices of values are not static, and the Agreement should ultimately serve our evolving understanding of and goal for equity and allow room to continue to grow. For example, just in the last two years, shared understanding of “equity” within the state government has evolved.¹ Therefore, the OHE-Advisory Committee should set aside time every year to review and update this document as a group, in order to continue to incorporate new lessons and understandings.

II. Community Value Agreement

[The AC will also need to build a shared set of values] - perhaps refer to [Guiding Principles and Strategic Priorities - California Health and Human Services?](#)

III. Community Agreement for the Facilitator

Who is the Facilitator?

A facilitator is a person who plans, guides and manages a group event to meet its goals. Facilitators for the AC (“the Facilitator”) often include the AC’s Chair, Co-chair, appropriate OHE staff, and anyone who might be designated to facilitate a specific discussion or conversation in order to reach our meeting objectives. It is important to note that the Facilitator is a process expert, and might not necessarily be a content

¹ https://sgc.ca.gov/about/docs/20200922-Updated_2019-2022_SGC_Racial_Equity_Action_Plan.pdf

expert. The content expertise often lies within the participants such as AC members as well as the communities that the AC members work with.

Why is the Facilitator's role important?

The Facilitator holds **power and responsibility** in moving a group process along with effectiveness and efficiency, and managing differences and conflicts with fairness and equity for the AC. Because of this power dynamic, it is important for the Facilitator to build awareness of how they show up in meeting spaces, including their own prejudices and biases in order to exercise their power consciously and effectively.

Meanwhile, a well-curated and contained facilitation practice can help create processes and spaces where people feel they belong, and where our shared Agreement can be upheld, so that meeting participants can work through the interpersonal and organizational conflict that is inherent in systems change towards equity.

What are the agreements for the Facilitator?

The following content is adapted from Human Impact Partners' Container Building Approach + Practices and [Anti-Racism and Allyship 7 Day Journey](#)

The Facilitator agrees to:

- **Be courageously anti-racist in group practices.**
 - Acknowledge that structural inequity and racism is ever-present in our institutions and systems, which affect all of us and may show up in our meetings and shared spaces. Make these principles known at the onset of our meetings
 - Invite group participants to self identify themselves and how they want to be addressed, including race, ethnicity, gender and gender identity, (dis)ability status
 - Use clear and intentional language when addressing racial identities and disparities to avoid further marginalizing or erasing a particular community. (Read a helpful [guide](#).)
 - Actively create space and hold space for Black, Brown, Immigrant and Indigenous people and other communities of color in meetings
 - Honor and uplift the lived experience, stories and expertise of those directed impacted in strategic and policy discussions
 - Welcome differences and discomfort and not be deterred by mistakes
 - Commit to continuous learning and unlearning around how to become antiracist. Continue to identify and dismantle group practices that stem from white supremacy, racial capitalism, and colonialism

- **Offer emotional regulation tools for the group.** Recognize that because of systemic inequities, systems change and equity work bring up discomfort, pain, and emotional dysregulation that will affect how the participants show up and how we achieve our shared goals.
 - Consider offering emotional regulation tools, which offer language and frameworks for participants to identify and share with each other where their minds, bodies, and hearts are at, without having to point to or disclose specific reasons, triggers or emotions. Some of these tools include the [Window of Tolerance tool](#), and the [Emotion Sensation Feeling Wheel](#)
- **Create space for pleasure.**
 - Equity work is difficult. Consider incorporating appropriate alternatives such as fun activities, art, and music in our meetings.
- **Foster collaboration and authentic exchange among the group.**
 - Share a meeting agenda before each meeting.
 - Communicate goals and expectations for participants at the onset of meetings.
 - Ensure all participants' opinions are received and/or followed through.
 - Provide time for reflections and debriefs.

IV. Community Agreement for the Participant:

Who is the Participant?

Participants for the AC (“the Participant”) include all members of the OHE-AC and can further include government officials and employees including CDPH-OHE staff and members of the public who join the AC meetings. The following agreements should apply to all members of the AC.

Why is the Participant’s role important?

In addition to the roles spelled out in the OHE-AC By-laws, how the Participant shows up in meetings and shared spaces is critical in achieving our shared goal of equity. Participant’s words and actions can help create a safe environment that fosters comfort, compassion and inclusivity. More importantly, a Participant’s actions can also help create a “brave space” to cultivate productive dialogues so that all are encouraged to speak honestly and critically from their own experience towards the end of mutual learning and liberation. In doing so, it is important for the Participant to establish agreements so they can hold themselves and each other accountable.

What are the agreements for the Participant?

(The following content is adapted from Changelab Solutions’s meeting agreement and CHHS Justice Equity Diversity Inclusion (JEDI) Committee’s Brave Space agreement.)

The Participant agrees to:

- Be courageously anti-racist in group practices
- Show active compassion in meeting spaces
- Reflect on implicit or unconscious bias
- Assume good intentions from each other, and understand the difference between intent and impact
- Do the work of understanding what kind of power dynamics we individually bring into the room, such as organizational title, race, gender, etc.
- Be reflective and reflexive
- Encourage curiosity and growth
- Let go of ego
- Address harm caused, whether unintentionally or not
- Participate in your own way
- Recognize the value of lived experiences
- Speak to connect, not to argue or fill the silence
- Understand the goal is not to always agree—it is to gain a deeper understanding that can improve our work
- Listen actively, without distractions. Be conscious of body language and nonverbal responses
- Trust in your own experience
- Use “I” statements, avoid generalizing (“we”, “they” or “you”)
- Recognize my current access and privilege

V. Signatures:

I, _____ (print name), have carefully read and understood and hereby offer my signature to agree to this document as the **Facilitator**. By offering my signature I plan to continue to build my understanding and practice around equitably facilitating the OHE-AC meetings and shared spaces.

Signature

Date

I, _____ (print name), have carefully read and understood and hereby offer my signature to agree to this document as the **Participant**. By offering my signature I plan to continue to build my understanding and practice around equitably participating in the OHE-AC meetings and shared spaces.

Signature

Date

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