

**HOMELESS SHELTER TASK FORCE  
GROUND RULES ADOPTED ON 12-11-09**

**Procedural Ground Rules – Describe task force routines**

1. Meetings start and end on time.
2. We will not use cell phones, pagers, or text/e-mail devices during meetings.
3. Observers are welcome at meetings but are not participants. A voluntary sign-in sheet will be provided for observers.
4. One person speaks at a time.
5. We will limit our comments in meetings to a maximum of three minutes.
6. Task force members who miss a meeting have the responsibility to “catch up” by contacting a task force member who attended or a member of the staff support group.
7. We will use the consensus decision making model to reach decisions. Consensus does not mean unanimity.
8. We agree to use each others first names.
9. We agree to share our contact information with other task force members. That information will not be shared outside the task force without our permission.

**Conceptual Ground Rules – Describe general behaviors in task force meetings**

1. We will treat each other with respect.
2. We agree to disagree respectfully.
3. We will focus on the problem, not the person.
4. We agree to make every effort to attend all meetings.
5. We agree to communicate honestly and to use direct communication with each other.
6. We agree to thoroughly review all materials between meetings.
7. We agree to fully participate in task force meetings.
8. We agree to maintain our senses of humor.

**Behavioral Ground Rules – Describe specific actions**

1. We will share all relevant information, whether or not it supports our thinking.
2. We will use specific examples and will agree on what important words mean.
3. We will explain our reasoning and our intent, by explaining to others what leads us to make a comment, ask a question or take an action. Doing so makes our motivation and intentions clear.
4. We will focus on needs and interests, not positions and solutions.
5. We will combine advocacy and inquiry. In some groups some people make statements and never ask questions. Others ask questions and never say what they're thinking. Still others stay silent.
6. We will *listen to understand* and *speak to be understood*.
7. We will remain curious about and open to the perspectives of other task force members.
8. We have the following options when the press or other persons request information about the work of the task force:
  - a. Refer them to an official statement from the task force
  - b. No comment
  - c. Express your personal opinion and indicate that it is your personal opinion.
  - d. Speak to a member of the press “off the record.”