

Guidelines for Managing Working Group Membership

In the rare instance where a working group member is negatively impacting the workflow of the group or repeatedly disregards the ground rules as established at the group's commencement, the Executive Sponsor, as designated by the Department, should first privately counsel the working group member and, if problematic behavior persists, has the right to rescind that individual's membership in the group.

Some examples of behavior that may undermine the progress of a working group include:

1. **Dominating debates or discussions:** An individual or group of individuals dominates discussions and, whether intentionally or not, intimidates other working group members from fully participating in the working group. If left unchecked, dominating behavior reduces psychological safety and thus contradicts the department's goal of engaging with a wide array of stakeholder voices.
2. **Lack of participation/non-contributor:** As volunteers, working group members cannot be reasonably expected to attend every scheduled meeting. On the other hand, frequent absences disrupt proceedings, reduce the group's coherence, and often impede progress toward the fulfillment of the group mandate. If a member misses three consecutive meetings in a row without explanation, the Executive Sponsor may wish to consider removing the individual from the group.
3. **Lack of preparation:** This individual does not review meeting materials, does assigned homework, comes to meetings unprepared and meeting time is used to get this person up to speed. The Executive Sponsor may wish to gauge the working group member's level of interest in continuing participation in the working group.
4. **Fails to respect group dynamic or process:** This individual repeatedly circumvents the Executive Sponsor designated by the Department, does not adhere to established protocols, uses their position in the group to further their own personal interests in department operations that are outside of the scope of the group, invites outside agencies or individuals to participate with or present to the working group (except for public comments in an open meeting) without first receiving approval from the Executive Sponsor or continually makes rude comments or interrupts other group members.

In each of these cases, the Executive Sponsor should arrange to meet with the individual, away from the working group, to discuss the problematic behaviors. Remind the person of their roles and responsibilities and the overall goal of the working group. Try to find out the reasons for the issue and discuss resolutions. Send a follow-up email confirming their commitment to moving forward within the scope of the working group activities. If the behavior continues, the Executive Sponsor should consider whether to

remove a working group member or perhaps reassign them to another group that better suits their interests.

Finally, while each working group member offers a unique perspective and lived experience that's critical to successful development of the Department's policies, it should be noted that all working group members have equal privileges regarding access to information pertaining to the working group and ability to voice their opinions.