

Council Operating Principles

State Rehabilitation Council

Reviewed August 2021

1. We are all equal and have something to share and contribute to the Council.
2. We demonstrate respect for each other by listening well, using attentive body language (eye contact and posture), and avoiding interrupting. We take turns speaking and no one dominates the conversation. We stay on the subject at hand and avoid ever surprising each other or staff. If something sensitive needs to be addressed, we talk to the staff prior to the meeting.
3. We appreciate the diversity among our Council – in geography, abilities, backgrounds, ages, work history, relationship with VR, etc.
4. We acknowledge that to disagree is acceptable; we honor different perspectives and points of view. We remain friends and always assume good intent by our fellow Council members and staff people.
5. We focus on the good of everyone, not individual agendas or issue advocacy.
6. We welcome questions and, at the same time, don't overuse devil advocacy.
7. We operate in a safe environment to honestly and openly share what we think and what we want.
8. We attend all meetings unless we have a conflict of great importance – and stay for the entire meeting.
9. We come prepared to our meetings by reading the materials sent in advance.
10. We utilize a Council Chair who facilitates our meetings, keeps us on task and at the same time encourages discussions, and invites concerns early on in the conversation about any proposals.
11. We utilize agendas for each meeting, so we can prepare and think about the subjects on the table in advance of the meeting. We brainstorm ideas for the next meeting agenda at the end of each meeting. We ask staff to put items on the agenda prior to the meeting and avoid bringing up un-announced proposals during announcements or public comment.
12. We make sure to always, to the best of our ability, turn problems or concerns into learning experiences for all involved.
13. We appreciate humor.
14. We bring and relay both VR success stories from people we know and our home towns, and negative concerns as well, but withhold judgement, realizing we don't know the whole story.
15. We welcome new members and make them feel comfortable and up to speed on how we work and our responsibilities.