

Shared Governance & Red Flag Meetings
March 2023 Sanctuary Monthly Training

Shared Governance/Democracy

- The commitment to democracy refers to the concept of shared governance within the community.
- Recognizing the inherent power differentials in traditional hierarchical organizations
- Encourages the community members to share decision-making in whatever ways are most appropriate for their group.
- Makes the assumption that all interpersonal traumas are based in an abuse of power, and that engaging clients in their own decision-making can serve as a corrective experience.
- Authoritarianism can be dangerous, since even the best-intentioned leaders run the risk of abusing their power when making decisions in isolation.
- The challenge of committing to democracy is not only incumbent on those with who have overt power through their roles as leaders. It is also the responsibility of community members to step forward and participate in decision-making.
- Complex problems are best solved with complex problem-solving: the best thinking of people with different perspectives and experiences and approaches.
- In short: all of us together are smarter than one of us alone.

What is shared governance?

In its simplest form, shared governance is shared decision-making based on the principles of partnership, equity, accountability, and ownership at the point of service. This management process model empowers all members of the workforce to have a voice in decision-making, thus encouraging diverse and creative input that will help advance the missions of the organization. In essence, it makes every employee feel like he or she is “part manager” with a personal stake in the success of the organization.

This feeling leads to

- longevity of employment
- increased employee satisfaction
- better safety and healthcare
- greater patient satisfaction
- shorter lengths of stay

Those who are happy in their jobs take greater ownership of their decisions and are more vested in outcomes. Therefore, employees, individuals, the organization, and the surrounding communities benefit from shared governance.

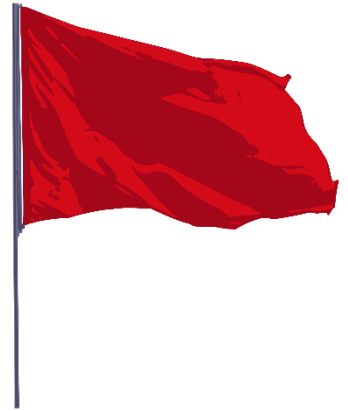
“It is about hearing from everyone who is going to be most impacted by a decision. Why do it? When you’re involved in creating something, you care about what you’ve created. And when you care about something, you take responsibility for it. So democratic decision-making, actually leads to better decisions and more commitment to those decisions. And behaving democratically starts by recognizing that all voices are important in decision-making, both those who are central and perceived to hold the power, but also people who are on the margins. And it’s important to bring those voices together, because **all of us are smarter than one of us alone**. If we think about democracy in the context of the individuals that we work with...for many of them...most change has been forced upon them. So when we involve them in creating the future, we actually recognize and esteem them. Democracy in a group

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setting isn't the absence of rules, but it's actually the active engagement in making the rules. And so participation is both a right, but importantly, it's a responsibility, where staff are held accountable for those decisions that are being made.”
-MacKillop Institute

TOOLKIT ITEM: Red Flag Reviews – they are short meetings in which most of the focus is on coming up with SOLUTIONS rather than focusing on describing the problem or storytelling. It is not a complaint session!

- Anyone can call a red flag review to respond to a community need or concern.
- If you are invited, you must make this a priority and go!
- It is based on the idea that many people coming together to address a problem are more likely to come up with innovative solutions – you might also invite people who are not regularly part of the team to get a fresh perspective.
- People in the room are assigned tasks and report back at the next meeting about progress.
- Consider the effects of the incident on the staff members.
- Remain hopeful about the future.
- Develop a plan and share it with everyone! Be sure to include the individual (if applicable).
- Schedule a follow-up meeting.



Why Red Flag Reviews are important:

- Based on the notion: No one of us is as smart as all of us.
- The more hands helping to solve a problem, the more likely it is to be handled well (especially if each person is given a task or role).
- Sometimes voicing a problem with a team relieves unspoken tensions or fears 0 the problem may not be the individual's, but the team's problem.
- It places the responsibility of working through the problem on the entire team.