**Resolution Virginia Member Center Expectations On Cooperation, Collaboration, Competition and Confidentiality**

The following text addresses interest among Resolution Virginia member organizations and directors serving on the Resolution Virginia board to set expectations regarding how Resolution Virginia members will work together and when and how they may compete. Each member organization is expected to contribute to the development of and, to the best of their ability, follow the expectations. Any questions about the guidelines should be addressed to the President of the Resolution Virginia board or, if concerns arise about the President’s participation in concerning actions, they may be addressed to the Vice President.

Cooperation:

Though Resolution Virginia program members work primarily in unique regions of Virginia and largely serve unique populations, with the widespread adoption of video conferencing, geographic boundaries are no longer solid. Member centers share many experiences as non-profit organizations providing conflict engagement services. Some examples of cooperative activities across member centers include:

* Giving and receiving advice between individual centers;
* Sharing presentations, forms and language that supports center activities;
* Offering reciprocal discounts for training and other activities to center staff, interns and volunteers[[1]](#footnote-0);
* Sharing information regarding opportunities that are of potential interest to other centers;
* Referring potential clients and other opportunities; and
* Providing other types of in-kind support.

Collaboration:

Collaborative work among member centers helps Resolution Virginia fulfill its mission. Opportunities to collaborate in support of Resolution Virginia’s mission should be sought and enabled by the Resolution Virginia board and staff. Some examples of collaborative activities across member centers include:

* Joint participation in the application, service delivery and reporting of Resolution Virginia grants;
* Collection of data to support public education and fundraising efforts;
* Communication and advocacy with Dispute Resolution Services of the Supreme Court of Virginia, legislative bodies and other institutions;
* Participation in state-wide public education efforts;and
* Working together on joint projects that expand the services centers offer.

Individual member centers may also choose to collaborate directly with one another for projects that could benefit from resources larger than can be provided by one center.

Competition:

Competition among member centers helps clients by providing an array of service choices. With the widespread adoption of Zoom, most of the services centers provide are available virtually, and geographic boundaries are no longer clear definers of which center serves which clients. It is therefore important that Members agree to the following non-compete policy:

* Members will not provide mediation services to residents whose geographic location is within the geographic boundaries of another center without first referring clients to the local center. If clients do not want to use their local center, other centers may engage in the work.
* Members will always check with other centers when initiating programming or other activities (not including training) that are likely to draw clients from other centers’ target population.

Some examples of competitive activities include member centers individually submitting or pursuing:

* requests for proposals from government agencies, businesses and non-profit organizations in Virginia;
* requests for proposals from entities outside the Commonwealth of Virginia; and
* center fundraising.

Confidentiality

To foster an environment that allows members to openly share challenges and setbacks, so that other members can provide support, and so that the group can determine when challenges are of concern to the group as a whole, it is essential that what is shared at Resolution Virginia meetings stays confidential. If a member feels it is necessary to breach confidentiality, they are expected to first communicate with the Executive Director of the center they are concerned about, and if the issue is not resolved in that conversation, communicate with the Resolution Virginia Executive Director. Failure to maintain confidentiality can result in loss of membership in Resolution Virginia.

1. Centers giving and receiving discounts will communicate with one another to coordinate participation and verify participant eligibility. [↑](#footnote-ref-0)