



Terms of Reference

January 2010

1. MISSION STATEMENT

CODA is a community- based initiative dedicated to developing awareness and understanding of the abuse of people with disabilities and working towards prevention.

2. VALUES

CODA is inclusive and collaborative. We strive to respect a diversity of perspectives and value the lived experience of people with disabilities.

3. BACKGROUND

The CODA was created as a result of a town hall forum on April 30, 2009 entitled “Rising Strong: Disability, Abuse and Prevention” organized by Crime Prevention Ottawa in partnership with REACH and other community agencies, the City and the Ottawa Police Service.

4. OBJECTIVES

CODA’s goal is to develop our community’s capacity and to address issues of disability and abuse by:

- Providing an open forum for discussion of disability and abuse and other related issues;
- Creating a collective voice to define emerging priorities; influence policy, legislative changes, and funding regarding disability and abuse issues;
- Advocating for the rights and needs of people with disabilities in abusive situations or who are at risk of being abused, in the Ottawa region;
- Raising awareness and engaging in public education activities;

- Promoting, facilitating and engaging in research activities to document and better understand relevant issues;
- Developing training and capacity building opportunities both for people with disabilities and for agency staff;
- Developing and promoting collaborative initiatives, interagency networking and collaborative partnerships;
- Advocating for the development of services appropriate for those who have been abused and ensuring service accessibility.

5. MEMBERSHIP

The membership of CODA will include: persons with a disability, community agencies, government officials, Police and persons who have an interest in the area of disability rights and human rights. The City's Advisory Committees will also be invited to provide representatives.

CODA will strike a Membership Subcommittee to complete a review of the membership in June each year to assess ongoing needs. The subcommittee will suggest and invite new members based on identified gaps in representation. All requests for new membership will be brought forward to the full committee for consideration and approval.

6. ACCESSIBILITY AND ACCOMMODATION

CODA will strive to be accessible and to accommodate the needs of people with disabilities including the availability of documents in multiple formats as appropriate and as funding allows. This is a collective responsibility which will include a commitment from members to seek partnerships and innovative ways to accommodate everyone's needs both administratively and financially.

7. BILINGUALISM

Long lasting documents like a definition of abuse or terms of reference will be translated into English and French. Working documents such as minutes or notes will be in English only. All public education material should be translated.

8. CO-CHAIRS

The Co-Chairs' role is to be neutral, facilitating and ensuring collaboration within the Network. Co-chairs for this committee must include a person with a disability. CPO will chair the committee until co-chairs are selected.

Co-Chair responsibilities are:

- calling and chairing the monthly meetings, setting agenda
- ensuring the timely progression of the meetings
- striking subcommittees as needed and monitoring their activities
- preparing correspondence at the direction of the committee
- circulating information that is pertinent to the membership
- representing the first official point of contact for the Network
- developing workplans and the committee structure

Tenure – the Co-Chairs will have two-year terms. At the end of each two-year term, in June, the Chair may present himself/herself for re-election. At this time, the opportunity exists for other interested members to run for the positions. The Past Chair will support the Chair and provide continuity of leadership and corporate knowledge.

9. DECISION MAKING

When possible, decisions made by CODA will be made using a consensus model. When decisions are being made or actions are being taken, member agencies who disagree or wish to abstain may withdraw from those specific decisions or courses of action without repercussion.

10. SUBCOMMITTEES

CODA will not have an “Executive Committee”. Subcommittees will be struck on an as-needed basis. Subcommittee Chairs report to the CODA as a whole through the Co-Chairs.

11. ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

The administrative support (taking and distribution of minutes, conference preparation support, organizing meeting accommodation and so on as needed) will be provided by a member agency. Every effort will be made for committee members to receive meeting materials seven days in advance of meetings. Communication will primarily be electronic unless otherwise requested.

12. MEETING GUIDELINES

Meetings will be held at City Hall or at another accessible location. The committee will meet approximately every two months: twice each autumn and three times between January and June at a time and date to be agreed upon by consensus.

Regular meetings will take the following format:

- Acceptance of Agenda
- Acceptance of Previous Minutes
- Business Arising from the Minutes
- Reports from Sub-Committees
- New Business
- Roundtable Updates
- Next meeting date
- Adjournment

13. WORK PLANNING

Once a year, in September, CODA will have a planning session during a regular meeting. This will include a review of accomplishments to date and setting a workplan for the coming year. At this meeting efforts will be made to identify emerging issues, service gaps and prevention opportunities