

FIRST COMMUNITY COALITION MEETING GUIDELINES



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| <p>Plan and schedule a first meeting</p> | <p>The first meeting of a coalition is important. If it is a high-energy, optimistic meeting that gets people excited, you are off to a good start. Determine a meeting place that is conducive to an expanding group and is accessible for most stakeholders.</p> |
| <p>Meeting content</p> | <p>The agenda should depend on your particular issue(s) and purposes, and on the needs of your community.</p> |
| <p>Introductions all around</p> | <p>Everyone present should give a brief statement of who they are, the organization they represent, if applicable, and the nature of their interest in the issue.</p> |
| <p>Start defining the issue around which the coalition has come together</p> | <p>This might mean the group coming up with an actual statement, or it might entail an initial discussion, followed by a small group being asked to draft a possible coalition purpose for the next meeting.</p> |
| <p>Discuss the structure of the coalition</p> | <p>What kind of group will it be, how (if at all) will it be run, what kinds of things will it actually do? Is hiring staff a reasonable goal, either currently or in the future?</p> |
| <p>Discuss creating a common vision and agreeing on shared values about the direction of the coalition</p> | <p>This is the first step toward developing the vision and mission statements that will define the coalition and guide its work.</p> |
| <p>Open discussion about leadership and/or a core group of the coalition</p> | <p>While many stakeholders are necessary to support the work of the coalition, a core group of individuals should be chosen as a core group who will maintain the coalition structure.</p> |
| <p>Review action steps to be done before the next meeting, and who has agreed to do them</p> | <p>It is important that people leave the first meeting feeling that something has been accomplished. If there are tasks being worked on, and specific results expected at the next meeting - even if those results are simply statements or preliminary plans to react to - coalition members will have that feeling.</p> |
| <p>Schedule the next meeting</p> | <p>If possible develop a regular meeting schedule at this first meeting; it may make more sense to schedule only the next meeting and wait until the membership stabilizes.</p> |

