

MASS Collaboration

**Movement for
Access
Safety &
Survivors**

Charter



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“To recognize that we move against a common enemy does not mean that we beat the same drum or play the same tune. It means that we are committed to a future.” Audre Lorde

Introduction

The MASS Collaboration is a collaboration between:

- Boston Area Rape Crisis Center (BARCC)
- Boston Center for Independent Living (BCIL)
- Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)
- MBTA Transit Police

The goal of our collaboration is to create sustainable systemic change within and between our organizations, so that survivors/victims of sexual violence with disabilities in the Boston area have access to quality services that promote safety, empowerment and healing.

Research has shown that the rate of sexual violence against people with disabilities is very high. A national study showed that persons with a disability of any kind have an age-adjusted rate of rape or sexual assault that was more than twice the rate for persons without a disability (National Crime Victimization Survey, 2007). The 2010 Massachusetts Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance System also found that adults with a disability were more than twice as likely to experience sexual violence as adults

without a disability (Massachusetts Department of Public Health, 2011).

Survivors/victims with disabilities experience many barriers to disclosing, reporting and obtaining services. This includes fear of not being believed and/or being judged, fear of retaliation, fear of losing basic needs such as personal care or transportation, inaccessible services, and fear of discrimination by service providers and systems.

We believe that our project brings together an unconventional set of collaborators to create systemic change. In addition to the more obvious access and service issues that exist at a rape crisis center and an independent living center for survivors/victims with disabilities; we recognize that there are unique risk factors specific to using the transit system. Boston's public transportation system, with its own Transit Police force, is widely used by people with disabilities and this creates exciting possibilities for impacting broad change.

We are committed to gaining a greater understanding about the barriers that survivors/victims with disabilities encounter and building on our existing strengths to address these gaps and improve our response and services.

Focus of our Work

It is important to us that our focus of work be consistent with our value of “nothing about us without us.” (See Values on pages 22 to 26) Therefore, based on the scope and expertise of the participating organizations who have a voice at the table, our collaboration has decided to focus our work on people with disabilities who have experienced sexual violence.

Purpose of Charter

This Charter is the result of many months of in-depth discussions where our collaboration has had the opportunity to share and learn from each other, grapple with complex topics, integrate new perspectives into our worldviews, and grow in trust with each other. The purpose of the Charter is to define the direction of our work, document inter-agency commitment, memorialize our decisions, and create a structure to allow our process and work to continue. This document is not static; as our collaboration develops and our work takes more shape, we will be reviewing and when necessary revising this Charter to meet our on-going needs.

Language

We value the dignity of all people and recognize each individual as a unique person. To reflect this belief, we commit to using people first language.

Our collaboration also recognizes that people who experience sexual violence each have their own ways of identifying themselves and we are committed to respecting the preferences of each individual. For the purpose of the Charter, we have decided to be inclusive of the language used by participating organizations; therefore we will use the term survivor/victim when talking about people who experience sexual violence.

Design

In our attempt to create a document that is as accessible as possible to a range of visual needs, including to those who are visual learners, we have decided to:

- Use Arial font;
- Use at minimum, 16 point font for the body of the text;
- Use spacing of at least 25 percent of font size¹;
- Use Microsoft Word heading styles;
- Include tables, diagrams, and other visual depictions;
- Explain all tables, diagrams and other visual depictions in text to be accessible to screen readers;
- Offer this document in alternative formats including Braille and audio. To request this document in alternative formats contact Shelley Yen-Ewert at 617-649-1287 or synewert@barcc.org.

¹ *Accessible Print Materials: Formatting Guidelines to Accommodate All Audiences*; Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Office on Health and Disability, 2007.

Vision Statement

The MASS Collaboration envisions Boston as a city in which the culture within and between victim services, criminal justice, transportation, and disability advocacy and service systems promote the healing, empowerment, and safety of people with disabilities who have experienced sexual violence.

Survivors/victims with disabilities will receive equal, responsive, safe, barrier-free services from compassionate professionals, staff, and volunteers who are knowledgeable about and comfortable with supporting survivors/victims with disabilities.

Mission Statement

The mission of the MASS Collaboration is to change the culture within and between all collaborating systems to enhance services to promote healing, empowerment and safety for people with disabilities who have experienced sexual violence. We will accomplish this by incorporating the voices and needs of survivors/victims with disabilities to:

- Build formal and informal connections between our systems;
- Increase the knowledge, skills and confidence of professionals, staff, and volunteers;
- Enhance and develop policies and protocols based on best practices and current research about serving survivors/victims with disabilities in order to increase access to safe, responsive services.

Collaboration Members

We are defining all of the members of the MASS Collaboration, so that all parties are clear about who is involved in the collaboration and the language used to define the parts of the collaboration.

Organizations: The four collaborating organizations of the MASS Collaboration are the Boston Area Rape Crisis Center (BARCC); the Boston Center for Independent Living (BCIL); the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) Department of System-Wide Accessibility and Office of Transportation Access (THE RIDE); and the MBTA Transit Police. For more information about these organizations see the section Member Agencies (pages 15 to 20).

Executive Leadership: The role of the Executive Leadership is to be the primary leadership for the collaboration. The Executive Leadership approves all decisions and deliverables, ensuring that the perspective of their organization is upheld. The Executive Leadership also steers the vision of the organization regarding this collaboration; and ensures that their organization participates in and commits to this project. Each organization has an Executive Leadership representative. Representatives of the Executive Leadership are named in the Member Agencies section (pages 14 to 19) under their organization.

Supporting Leadership: Within our collaboration, the term “supporting leadership” is used for organizational leadership who will be accessed at critical points of the project as determined by Team Members, but will not have an extensive role in the collaboration. Because of the leadership role of these individuals and entities, their knowledge of, input into, and/or approval of aspects of the project are critical to the success of the project. For the MBTA and MBTA Transit Police the primary supporting leadership is the General Manager of the MBTA. For BARCC and BCIL the supporting leadership is their Board of Directors.

Team: The Team is composed of its Team Members and the Project Manager.

Team Members, also called Representatives: The Team Members are the core of the collaboration. Team Members attend regularly scheduled meetings; share their organization’s expertise and perspectives; contribute to producing all deliverables; facilitate communication between the Team and their organization; and engage their organizations in the process of systemic change. Each organization has one Team Member representing their organization. Team Members are named in the Member Agencies section (pages 14 to 19) under their organization.

Project Manager: The role of the Project Manager is to help build the collaboration by being a neutral facilitator ensuring that the perspective of all the organizations are represented; coordinating the process and progress of the project; drafting deliverables; and providing project support to each organization. The Project Manager of the MASS Collaboration is Shelley Yen-Ewert. Although Shelley works at BARCC she does not represent BARCC in this collaboration.

Liaison: The representative for the MBTA works within the Department of System Wide Accessibility Office. Because of the vast size and complexity of the MBTA we have developed a specific role of Liaison to ensure the engagement and inclusion of THE RIDE. The Liaison works within the Office of Transportation Access-THE RIDE and will attend RIDE specific collaboration meetings to provide information about and perspectives from THE RIDE. She will also facilitate communication with THE RIDE in conjunction with the MBTA representative. The Liaison is named in the Member Agencies section (pages 14 to 19) under the MBTA Department of System-Wide Accessibility and Office of Transportation Access.

Member Agencies

Boston Area Rape Crisis Center (BARCC)

The mission of the Boston Area Rape Crisis Center (BARCC) is to end sexual violence through healing and social change. BARCC strives to fulfill this mission by offering free, comprehensive care to victims of sexual violence and their families, and by providing community awareness and prevention services to reduce victimization and perpetration. For nearly 40 years, BARCC has helped thousands of victims; over 50,000 on the hotline alone. Today, BARCC remains committed to creating a world in which sexual violence is history. As a high volume center, BARCC is known for their ability to collect and analyze field practice data to gain knowledge of survivor and community needs. This information is combined with the latest research to develop new and improved programs and to create systemic change that benefits survivors and reduces perpetration. BARCC has received numerous awards including the National Crime Victim Service Award in 2009. More information on BARCC can be found at www.barcc.org.

Gina Scaramella, Executive Director is the collaboration representative for the Boston Area Rape Crisis Center and part of the collaboration's Executive Leadership.

Boston Center for Independent Living (BCIL)

The Boston Center for Independent Living (BCIL) is the second oldest Independent Living Center in the country. Through a team of over 30 staff, BCIL serves people with any disability and any age in Boston and 34 surrounding communities. As part of a national network of over 500 Independent Living Centers, BCIL's mission is to improve the lives of people with disabilities by providing needed services and advocating for the rights of consumers. Services include a personal care attendant (PCA) program, peer mentoring, and support for people to obtain housing, secure benefits and health care, and gain employment. Advocacy work includes, among others, ensuring the accessibility of the MBTA on both the fixed and paratransit routes and the parity and quality of health care in hospitals. BCIL also offers information and referral to enhance consumer and community knowledge of available services and programs as well as to answer the general accessibility concerns facing residents and visitors to the city. In all, thousands are impacted each year through BCIL's work. More information on BCIL can be found at www.bostoncil.org.

Bill Henning, Executive Director, is part of the collaboration's Executive Leadership.

Karen Schneiderman, PhD, Senior Advocacy Specialist is the collaboration representative.

Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)

The MBTA is the nation's oldest and fifth largest public transportation agency. It consists of a network of fixed-route buses, subways, commuter rail trains and commuter ferries, as well as an extensive paratransit service. In total, the MBTA serves 175 cities/towns and provides 1.3 million trips per day.

Numerous departments comprise the MBTA, including The Department of System-Wide Accessibility, the Operations Department (which contains THE RIDE) and the Transit Police Department—each of which has a role within the collaboration. All three departments are distinct from one another and are overseen by the MBTA's General Manager/MassDOT Rail & Transit Administrator. More information on the MBTA can be found at www.mbta.com.

MBTA'S Department of System-Wide Accessibility and Office of Transportation Access—THE RIDE

The MBTA's Department of System-Wide Accessibility (SWA), established in 2007, works with all other MBTA departments to execute the T's mission of becoming the global benchmark for accessible public transportation. SWA is committed to creating a fixed-route system that is safe, dependable and inclusive, thereby expanding the transportation options for all customers, including those with disabilities. The Department is involved with the development of policies,

procedures and trainings related to improving accessibility, the review of all design plans, and oversight of an internal access monitoring program.

The Office for Transportation Access—THE RIDE is the MBTA's door to door paratransit service. On average, THE RIDE provides over 8,000 customer trips per day. Organizationally, it is nested within the MBTA's Operations Department.

Laura Brelsford, Assistant General Manager for System-Wide Accessibility is the MBTA's representative within the collaboration. She is also the Executive Leadership representing the MBTA fixed-route.

Mike Lambert, Deputy Administrator and Assistant to the General Manager and Melissa Dullea, Director of Planning and Schedules, are the collaboration's Executive Leadership representing the MBTA RIDE.

Carol Joyce-Harrington, Assistant Manager, MBTA-THE RIDE, is the MBTA Liaison.

MBTA Transit Police

In 1968, under Chapter 664 of the Acts of 1968, legislation signed into law the creation of a cross jurisdictional department that could police the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority's growing transportation network. The MBTA Transit Police's primary function is to protect the lives and safety of MBTA patrons, MBTA

employees and the public in general. As part of that function, officers respond to possible criminal activity which occurs on the MBTA and investigate such crimes. In addition, responsibilities include the prevention and investigation of internal security issues, including employee theft and contract / vendor fraud. The Department is also charged with the protection of MBTA property and revenue.

The MBTA Transit Police's fundamental duties are to safeguard lives and property within our transportation system and uphold the constitutional rights of all people by following a set of core values that reflect the finest nature of policing. Those set of core values are: Fairness, Truthfulness, Professionalism, Perseverance, Treating All Persons with Dignity and Respect, Service before Self and Integrity.

While the MBTA Transit Police Department has primary jurisdiction on MBTA property and vehicles, MBTA Transit Police Officers have full police authority throughout and within the 175 cities and towns comprising the MBTA service district. Policing responsibility is shared with local cities and towns by means of concurrent jurisdiction and in a few instances through mutual aid agreements.

Andrea Purcell is the MBTA Transit Police's representative within the collaboration. In her role as a Detective in the Criminal

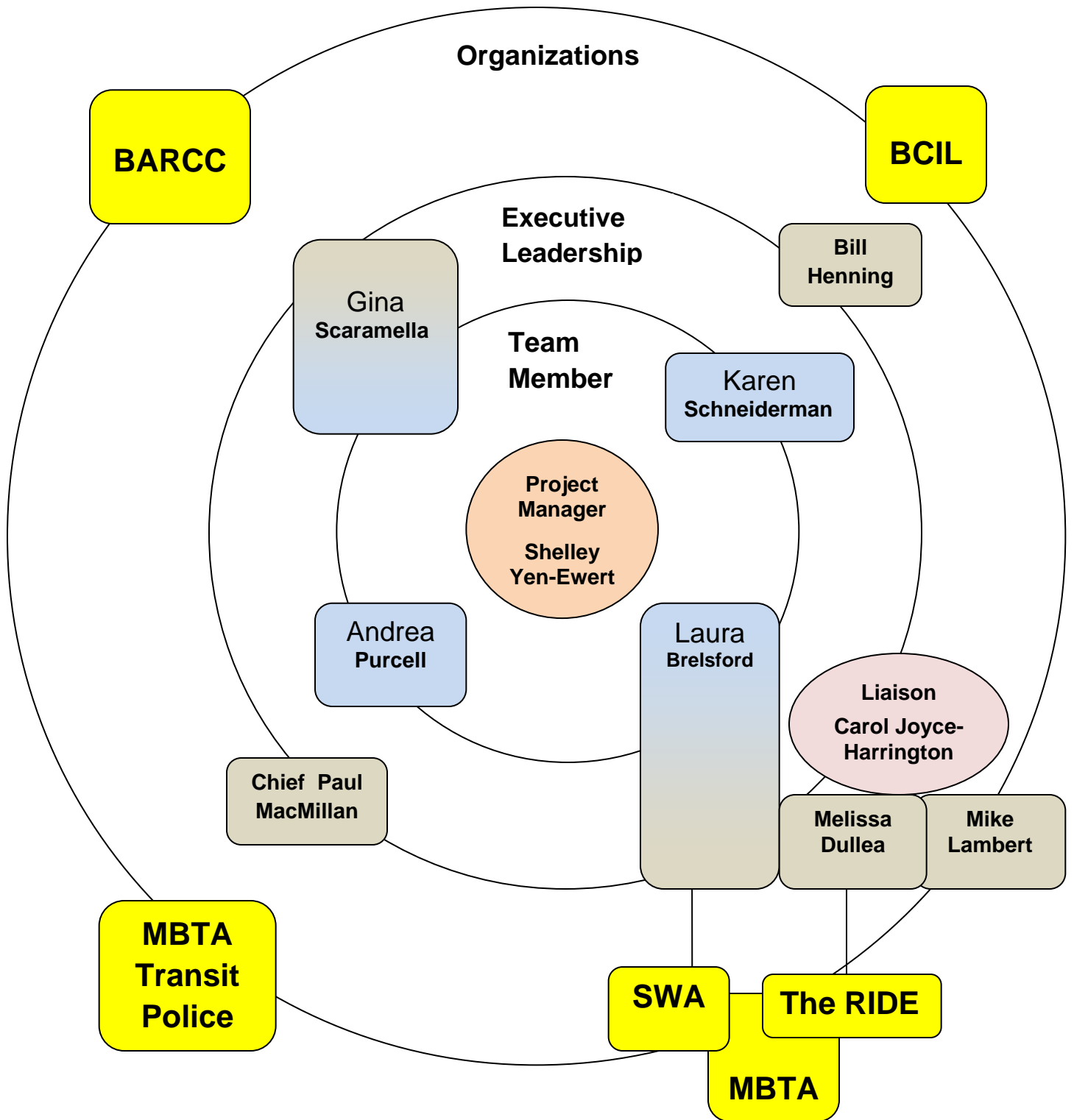
Investigation Unit, she investigates crimes that occur on the MBTA and its property.

On November 6, 2008, the MBTA Board of Directors appointed Deputy Chief Paul MacMillan as the Chief of the MBTA Transit Police Department. Chief MacMillan is the first MBTA Transit Police Officer to rise through the ranks to be Chief in the forty year history of the MBTA Transit Police Department. Chief MacMillan is part of the collaboration's Executive Leadership.

Diagram: Collaboration Structure

The following diagram summarizes the above information by visually depicting the organizations involved in this collaboration and the members of the collaboration who will be most actively involved in this project: the Executive Leadership, the Team Members, the Liaison and the Project Manager.

Diagram: Collaboration Structure



Values

Through a process of learning about each other's values and exploring differences and similarities between our organizations, our collaboration has created the following shared values based on our fundamental belief in the dignity of all people. These values will inform all of our decisions, interactions, and work.

Access: Survivors/victims with disabilities have the right to be able to fully obtain and participate in services available to the general public. This includes, but is not limited to attitudinal, physical, communication, cultural, programmatic, and financial access. We believe that it is the responsibility of organizations to create services that are accessible to survivors/victims with disabilities.

Accountability: Our collaboration is committed to accountability in the following ways:

- We believe that we are responsible to each other to uphold the commitments and agreements we have made.
- We believe that we have the responsibility to create sustainable services for survivors/victims with disabilities that are consistent with our stated vision, mission and values.
- In order to prevent re-victimization and create safe environments we believe that people who commit sexual

violence should be held responsible for their actions by their families, communities, and systems.

Collaboration: We believe that working in collaboration will result in more creative, effective, and sustainable change. We are committed to actively building a collective identity that reflects shared understanding of our work, authority, responsibility, and resources.

Equality: We believe that everyone is entitled to the same quality of service. This means that even though the methods of providing services or the content of services may not be the same for everyone due to individual needs, everyone should have the same opportunities for the best possible outcome.

Empowerment: We believe in the autonomy of survivors/victims with disabilities. Although we understand that self-determination can be limited by laws, systemic structures, and the capacity of the individual to understand their choices, we commit to empowering all individuals to the greatest extent possible. This includes working in partnership with survivors/victims with disabilities regarding processes and services that impact them, providing options, respecting their choices, and ultimately, helping survivors/victims with disabilities feel like they have control and can affect change in their lives.

Inclusive: We value, respect and seek to inform our work through diverse backgrounds and perspectives. In our work with each other and with survivors/victims with disabilities we strive to ensure full participation for all individuals. We commit to creating, through attitudes, actions and policies, accessible environments where everyone feels welcome, safe and valued.

Integrity: Integrity means that there is consistency between an inner belief system and the external manifestation of those beliefs. For our collaboration, integrity means that all of our values, decisions, language, actions, policies, services etc. will be consistent with our belief that all people have intrinsic value.

Justice: Our collaboration is committed to working towards justice and providing options for justice. Specifically, we are committed to working towards justice in these ways:

- Social justice. We believe in the dignity of all human beings and the principles of human rights and equality. We are committed to working towards social justice by examining our own privileges and biases, working with survivors/victims with disabilities in a holistic way, and providing equal, accessible and inclusive services.
- We believe that there should be consequences for people who commit sexual violence. We commit to creating policies and environments that hold people who offend accountable.
- Additionally, we recognize that survivors/victims with disabilities may each hold their own personal definitions of

justice such as being able to return to school, move to safe housing etc. We commit to listening to and supporting survivor/victims in their own pursuit of justice.

“Nothing About Us Without Us”: This slogan, used by the disability rights movement, communicates the idea that no policy should be decided without the participation of the group(s) affected by that policy. We believe that our policies, protocols and services must be informed by the people we provide services to and are committed to engaging survivors/victims and people with disabilities to inform our work.

Respect: We will approach all interactions with everyone in the collaboration and survivors/victims with disabilities with open minds, seeking to understand and honor differences in perspectives and experiences.

Safety: We believe that everyone should have the freedom to live without fear of harm. We are committed to creating safe environments for survivors/victims with disabilities through:

- Services which are equal, non-judgmental, supportive, confidential and transparent.
- Policies and protocols that work towards reducing the risk of re-victimization.

Self-Awareness: We believe that part of creating change is modeling change. To do this we are committed to being open to learning from diverse perspectives and reflecting on our own assumptions, privileges and biases and how our worldview impacts our thoughts and actions. It is not enough to be self-aware though; we believe that growing self-awareness must be translated into changing attitudes, interactions and actions.

Universal Design: Universal design is the philosophy that everything that is created by people, such as built environments, technology, products, teaching methods, application procedures, services etc. are usable to the greatest extent possible by everyone without need for adaptations. Although we recognize that there are currently limitations to our ability to achieve universal design we commit to striving towards this outcome. For everything that we create through this collaboration, we commit to exploring how and working towards universal design.

Assumptions

The following are our collaboration's shared assumptions. As with our shared values, these assumptions will inform our decisions, interactions, and work.

- All forms of oppression, including able-ism, contribute to sexual violence. Pervasive myths about the issues of sexual violence and disability impact society's perceptions, attitudes and responses to survivors/victims with disabilities; this leads to increased vulnerability to sexual assault, reduced access to services, and victim-blaming or discrimination by responders.
- People who commit sexual violence target and exploit vulnerabilities, relationships, and surroundings (such as crowded or isolated places) to camouflage their actions. People with disabilities may be targeted because of actual or perceived vulnerabilities specific to their disability. This includes, but is not limited to dependence on a caregiver for personal care, myths that limit information and knowledge conveyed about sexuality and sexual violence, and limitations in accessibility of services and systems.
- There are unique risk factors and vulnerabilities to sexual violence for people with disabilities who use public transportation.

- We view survivors/victims with disabilities holistically. Because of this we recognize that sexual violence causes harm throughout many aspects of a survivor/victim's life. As a collaboration, we seek to support survivors/victims with disabilities in a holistic manner, recognizing that survivors/victims with disabilities have a broad range of needs which may include basic daily needs; safety; empowering and supportive relationships and services; and justice.
- Accessible and safe public transportation is important for survivor/victims with disabilities to be able to fully participate in society and access services. For some people with disabilities public transportation is their only source of transportation. The experience of sexual violence can compound existing and/or create additional barriers to transportation resulting in increased isolation.
- Because public transportation is so widely used by people with disabilities, it has the potential to be a unique platform to create change for survivors/victims with disabilities.
- Because of the MBTA Transit Police's proactive and innovative approaches to policing and its specific focus on the transit community, Transit Police is in the unique position of having a high impact on the safety of riders with disabilities.

- Survivors/victims with disabilities have a right to equal victim services and information related to safety, support and resources.
- The responses of the first individual(s) to receive disclosures/reports of sexual violence from survivor/victims with disabilities is key to facilitating the survivor/victim's comfort with obtaining services and ultimately, to her/his healing.
- Survivors/victims, including survivors/victims with disabilities, are never to be blamed for being victimized. Our collaboration is committed to providing caring, non-judgmental responses and services to survivors/victims with disabilities.
- All survivors/victims with disabilities are unique individuals. Each person may have different needs at different times. It is important for responders to listen, offer options, and respect the choices made by survivor/victims with disabilities.
- Creating environments that indicate that an organization is receptive to survivors/victims with disabilities and their needs can increase comfort with disclosing or reporting, facilitate access to services, and create expectations regarding how they will be treated if they disclose, report, or seek services. Such environments can be created through messaging and

staff conversations that are knowledgeable, inclusive, and supportive.

- Working with survivors/victims, including survivors/victims with disabilities has an impact on all responders. It is important for systems and the individuals within systems to support responders, provide options and resources to reduce stress and secondary trauma, and have policies supporting the safety of staff. Providing support services to responders is critical to retaining an experienced, compassionate, and responsive staff.
- Creating sustainable changes to services for survivors/victims with disabilities requires working on individual, community, systemic, and societal levels.
- Each organization in our collaboration has the intent to and plays a key role in providing safe, accessible, supportive services to survivors/victims with disabilities.
- Working collaboratively creates more effective, sustainable change.
- We are optimistic that even in the face of challenges our collaboration has the capacity to create change.

Commitments and Contributions

The MASS Collaboration is committed to enhancing services for survivors/victims with disabilities. Each of our organizations and the individuals in our collaboration have valuable knowledge, skills, and experiences to share in this work. We are documenting these contributions and commitments to highlight our intentions as a collaboration and to ensure a clear understanding of our commitments within our team and our organizations; and to be transparent about our commitments to external entities.

As a Collaboration (Organizations, Team Members, Liaison and Project Manager), we commit to:

- Share the expertise of our organizations.
- Learn about each others' organizations, roles, and expertise.
- Learn about the historical and societal context of the experiences of people with disabilities.
- Learn about the issue of sexual violence and the historical and societal context of the experiences of survivors/victims.
- Learn about sexual violence against people with disabilities and the unique risk factors and barriers survivors with disabilities experience.
- Examine our own privileges and biases in regards to oppressions, including ableism, sexism, racism, heterosexism etc., which impact survivors/victims with disabilities.

- Uphold the vision, values, communication plans and other operations of the collaboration as outlined in this collaboration charter.
- Make decisions by consensus (See Decision-Making Process on pages 39 to 44).

As Organizations, we each commit to:

- Abide by the signed MOU agreement.
- Provide an average of approximately 8 hours per week of staff time and resources to attend collaboration meetings and engage in work related to communication within our organization and developing deliverables.
- Provide staff time to attend OVW required technical assistance meetings/trainings.
- Identify, in a timely manner, a new staff representative, with the input of the Team, if the current staff representative is unable to continue participation in the collaboration.
- Review, provide feedback and approve deliverables.
- Facilitate communication throughout our organizations including with staff and if applicable, Supportive Leadership.
- Follow the External Communication Plan (see pages 84 to 95) when communicating with multidisciplinary collaborators and external stakeholders.
- Participate in all phases of the project including collaboration building and Charter development; planning and participation in the needs assessment; development of the needs assessment report; and development of a strategic plan.

- Provide resources, including staff and if applicable, Supportive Leadership and volunteer time, to participate in surveys, interviews, focus groups and/or other modes of data collection, for the needs assessment.
- Follow through on the implementation of activities identified through the strategic plan.
- Enhance the culture of our organization to include prioritizing issues of access, safety and support to survivors/victims with disabilities.
- Build on our existing strengths and best practices to create systemic change within our organization, as guided by the findings of the needs assessment, to increase visibility about the issue of sexual violence against people with disabilities and increase access to safe, responsive services for survivors/victims with disabilities.
- Commit to reviewing and enhancing our organizational policies and protocols.
- Approach differences and disagreements between collaborating organizations with respect for each organization's role and perspective.

In addition to the commitments and contributions made by all collaborating organizations, each organization has unique contributions and commitments.

BARCC commits to:

- Handle the administration of the project including fiscal management, hiring of project staff and consultants, and reporting.
- Hire, supervise and evaluate the Project Manager.
- Ensure communication with OVW.
- Provide time for the fiscal manager to help the Team gain a greater understanding of the budget and budget process.
- Share specific expertise about a survivor/victim-informed approach to sexual violence services with the collaborative partners.
- Assist collaborative partners in understanding and developing policies and procedures that are based on knowledge about the impact of trauma, especially as related to disclosure to reduce the potential for secondary harm.
- Assist in providing access to victim/survivor voices for the needs assessment.
- Change internal practices to be more accessible, knowledgeable, and skilled with providing rape crisis services to sexual assault survivors with disabilities.

BCIL commits to:

- Provide community linkage to people with disabilities and expertise on the historical and societal context of the experiences of people with disabilities.
- Change internal practices to create environments that allow survivors/victims to share with a greater degree of safety and

comfort; and be more communicative, knowledgeable and skilled about effective first response and support to sexual violence disclosure.

- Assist collaborative partners in understanding and developing policies and procedures to create inclusive services for people with disabilities.
- Assist with providing access to voices of people with disabilities for the needs assessment.

MBTA commits to:

- Contribute its expertise regarding the everyday transportation needs of people with disabilities.
- Provide ridership data and extensive input regarding the benefits and challenges of serving riders with disabilities in both their fixed route and THE RIDE services.
- Assist collaborative partners in understanding and developing policies and procedures that are based on knowledge about accessible public transportation and the unique barriers faced by customers with disabilities.
- Assist in providing access to voices of customers with disabilities who rely on public transportation for the needs assessment.
- Change practices internally as well as with vendors who provide rider services to help to ensure a safer environment; and to be more communicative, knowledgeable and skilled about effective first response to sexual violence disclosure.

MBTA Transit Police commits to:

- Contribute its expertise regarding law enforcement's first response and investigation of victims of crime as it relates to sexual violence on transit.
- Provide access to crime data and trends.
- Assist collaborative partners in understanding and developing policies and procedures that are based in knowledge of the criminal justice system.
- Evaluate and modify response protocols where necessary to ensure accessible, knowledgeable and skilled on-scene response and investigation to sexual assault victims with disabilities.

As Team Members, we each commit to:

- Devote an average of approximately 8 hours per week to collaboration work including the following:
 - Attend weekly collaboration meetings.
 - Participate in producing deliverables including reviewing, providing feedback, and occasionally drafting portions of deliverables.
 - Attend OVW required technical assistance meetings/trainings.
 - Acquire leadership approval for all deliverables.
- Engage our organizations in:
 - Establishing a collaborative charter,
 - Identifying the tools and scope of the assessment,
 - Participating in the needs assessment,

- Developing the needs assessment report
- Creating the strategic plan, and
- Participating in the implementation of identified project activities.
- Act as agents of change within our organizations.
- Keep a collaborative and engaged spirit alive by:
 - Being willing to engage in and trust the process.
 - Actively sharing ideas and suggestions, and providing input.
 - Sharing our knowledge, skills, and gifts.
 - Promoting curiosity, interest, and respect for each other's organization.
 - Being open-minded and willing to understand each other's different organizational roles, disciplines, and perspectives.
 - Encouraging and supporting each other in the process and work.
 - Taking risks to be honest and open with each other.
 - Providing input to the Project Manager regarding her/his work on the project.
 - Keeping a sense of humor in the process.
 - Communicating, in a timely manner, any issues that may impact her/his work as a Member, including any potential extended absences, resignation etc.

As the MBTA Liaison, I commit to:

- Attend RIDE focused meetings with the Team at least once during each phase of planning and development and during implementation at a to be determined schedule.
- Provide subject matter expertise on THE RIDE.
- Provide THE RIDE's perspectives on discussion items and proposed decisions raised by the Team.
- Ask questions and be open to learning about the collaboration and the subject matter expertise of other organizations in order to be able to provide relevant information about THE RIDE to the Team and communicate effectively with THE RIDE.
- Communicate at least every other week with the representative from the MBTA.
- Communicate with the Project Manager as needed.
- Facilitate communication between the Team and the leadership and staff of THE RIDE in conjunction with the representative from the MBTA.
- Review and provide feedback on deliverables.

As the Project Manager, I commit to:

- Plan and facilitate meetings.
- Manage the timeline to balance process with completion of deliverables.
- Draft deliverables, incorporate input and feedback from Team Members, and propose changes to deliverables.

- Provide timely communication via minutes, e-mail and other modes of communication identified by the collaboration.
- Be the liaison with OVW and Vera.
- Work with the BARCC Managing Director on budget modifications.
- Complete semi-annual progress reports.
- Ensure that each organization's leadership receives regular updates about the project.
- Ensure use of the Charter as the framework for collaboration efforts.
- Ensure that all decisions are made by consensus (see Decision Making Process on pages 39 to 44) and when necessary, mediating disagreements or seeking assistance with mediation.
- Ensure that all meetings are accessible.
- Build an environment conducive to safe, open, equitable communication.
- Engage the diverse learning and communication styles of Team Members to ensure that all Members can fully participate.
- Identify potential problems or issues and raise questions or concerns for discussion.
- Create space for celebrating our work together.
- Communicate, in a timely manner, any issues that may impact her/his work as Project Manager, including any potential extended absences, resignation etc.

Decision-Making Process

Consensus Decision-Making

Our collaboration will use a consensus decision-making model for determinations and choices that could impact the direction of our work. The Project Manager and Team Members will determine the appropriate times to use this model.

Consensus decision-making consists of both:

- A process in which all shared thoughts and perspectives regarding the issues, questions, and concerns about a decision are explored and a full effort to address all concerns are made.
- A decision that is made in the best interest of the collaboration and the work. Consensus decision-making does not mean that all members agree with all the details of the decision or that individuals have changed their own ideas and perspectives; it means that every member has reached a mutual understanding, agrees to support a decision, and commits to taking action on the decision for the benefit of the collaboration and project.

Reason for Using Consensus Decision-Making

A consensus decision-making process can be time-consuming and may at times be uncomfortable as participants grapple with and try to integrate new, different, and sometimes seemingly opposing thoughts. We believe that the benefits of using a consensus decision-making model for the purposes of creating internal systemic change are worth the challenges that may arise in using such a model. We are using a consensus decision making process because:

- We value the perspectives of all the organizations and Team Members and believe that all roles, experiences and opinions are vital to the work of this collaboration.
- We believe that the work of incorporating diverse viewpoints to create shared understanding will result in better solutions.
- We believe that sustainable agreements and change require that all parties involved are genuinely part of the decision-making process and agree to support and commit to the final decision in order to be fully engaged in the work going forward.

Consensus Decision-Making Method

Gradient: We will use the following gradient as a tool for decision-making during meetings which may, if applicable, include additional meetings outside of Team Meetings such as group meetings with Executive Leadership and/or the MBTA Liaison:

1- I fully agree. I commit fully.

- 2- I don't fully agree, but agree that the decision is the best for the collaboration and commit fully to act on the decision.
- 3- I need more information or would like to continue talking.
- 4- I prefer something different.
- 5- I disagree. I'm unwilling to go forward.

Initiation of Polling: It is the Project Manager's responsibility to initiate a poll using the gradient, but any Member may initiate a poll to determine the level of agreement or disagreement of a topic during a discussion or after a decision is proposed. Polling will occur at minimum when final decisions on concepts, topics or deliverables are being made, but may occur during discussions to clarify positions of each member.

Polling Method: Each member will take turns stating her/his position on the gradient and the reason for choosing that position. The reason behind a position is the most critical part of this process and therefore we have outlined possible questions for Members (or meeting participants) to discuss when explaining the reason for her/his position:

1- I agree. I commit fully.

- What do you like about the proposed decision?

2- I don't fully agree, but agree that the decision is the best for the collaboration and commit fully to act on the decision.

- What aspects do you like about the proposed decision?
- Why do you believe this is the best decision for the collaboration?
- What hesitations do you have?
- What would need to change for you to be able to fully agree?

3- I need more information or would like to continue talking.

- What information do you need?
- What aspects do you like about the proposed decision?
- What hesitations do you have?
- What would need to change for you to be able to fully agree?

4- I prefer something different.

- What is your preference?
- What aspects do you like/dislike about the proposed decision?
- What would need to change for you to be able to fully agree?

5- I disagree. I'm unwilling to go forward.

- What are your specific concerns?
- How can your concerns be addressed?
- What choices/decisions would you suggest?

Decision-Making:

- Our collaboration agrees to move forward with a decision when all members are at *1-I agree. I commit fully.*
- Our collaboration may move forward if all members are at least at *2- I don't fully agree, but agree that the decision is the best for the collaboration and commit fully to act on the decision.* The Team will discuss and decide based on the context of the decision and the reasons why the Member can not fully agree whether to continue to work toward full agreement or to move forward with the decision.
- Our collaboration will not move forward with a decision if any member is at a 3 or above.

Revisiting Decisions

After a decision is made, Team Members understand that if there is new information that may alter a decision or if someone in the collaboration would like to re-visit a decision, this can be brought to the Team. The individual interested in re-visiting the decision or who has new information impacting a decision will raise the issue to the Team and provide the reason why s/he thinks the decision should be re-visited. The Team will determine, by consensus, whether to make changes to the decision.

Difficulty Reaching Consensus

If after exhausting all discussion questions we are unable to reach consensus, we will take a break from discussing the issue and determine, as a Team, when to revisit the issue and if applicable, what to do during the break to obtain needed information. With additional time to process and additional information that may arise over time, it is our hope that we will be able to obtain fresh perspectives that will enable us to reach consensus upon revisiting the discussion. If we are still unable to reach consensus, we will contact Vera for guidance and/or mediation.

Decision-Making Authority

Because different people or groups of people in the collaboration have different roles and responsibilities, in addition to defining our collaboration's decision-making process, we have designated certain decision-making authority to specific people in the collaboration. In this process we have taken into consideration each organization's own decision-making structure because we recognize that each one has its own decision making structure to decrease liability and ensure integrity to their organization's mission.

Team Members as a group are given the authority to, by consensus:

- Set the direction of the collaboration's work including its vision, mission and philosophies.
- Work with the fiscal manager to determine how to allocate discretionary grant funds.
- Determine the ideal qualities of Team Members and Project Managers for the success of the project and provide input to Executive Leadership regarding selection of new Team Members and Project Managers.
- Determine and request changes to the collaboration work process including setting priorities and timelines, determining the schedule and length of meetings etc.
- Initiate decision-making and conflict resolution process.
- Review and request changes to agenda and minutes.
- Reflect on and evaluate the group process, the Project Manager's performance and her/his own performance.
- Determine when internal and external stakeholders, including Vera and OVW, should be consulted in regards to the development of deliverables.
- If determined appropriate by the Team, initiate contact with Vera or OVW following guidelines set in External Communications (see pages 84 to 95).
- Approve deliverables prior to sending to Vera and OVW.
- Represent the collaboration to other grantees in situations such as all-grantee meetings.

Project Manager is given authority to:

- Manage the administrative aspects of the project including:
 - Creating agendas with Team Member input.
 - Scheduling meetings with Team Member input.
 - Preparing materials for meetings.
 - Assigning tasks to Team Members.
 - Providing the administration of TeamWork, our project management site.
- Facilitate meetings.
- Initiate conflict resolution and decision-making process.
- Reflect on and evaluate the group process, her/his own performance and the performance of Team Members.
- Initiate contact with OVW and Vera.
- Submit deliverables to Vera after approval by Team Members; and to OVW after approval by both Team Members and Executive Leadership.
- Submit OVW process reports.
- Represent collaboration to other grantees in situations such as the project director listserv and conference calls, and all-grantee meetings.

Executive Leadership and Supportive Leadership have the authority to approve any and all changes to their organizations such as, but not limited to:

- Determining the representative for their own organization with input from the Team about the qualities of the representative that would best fit the work of the collaboration.
- Hiring, supervising, and with input from the Team, removing their organization's representative from the project.
- Approving and signing MOUs.
- Reviewing and approving policies and project budgets for their own organizations.
- Approving how the strategic plan is implemented in their organizations.

In addition, the **Executive Leadership** is given the authority to approve deliverables before submission to OVW.

Fiscal Manager (BARCC Managing Director) is given the authority to:

- Provide the fiscal administration of the project budget.
- Work with the Team to determine allocation of discretionary grant funds and provide final approval of project budget.
- Submit fiscal reports to OVW.
- With input from the Team, submit requests for extensions to OVW.

Conflict Resolution Philosophy

The MASS Collaboration believes that conflict can arise because people are unique and hold different perspectives; and because some issues are complex and difficult to grapple with. We believe that when conflict is acknowledged and handled positively, it can lead to a better understanding of ourselves, other perspectives, and ultimately innovative ideas.

The MASS Collaboration understands that we are a diverse group of organizations and individuals with different roles, experiences and perspectives. We commit to engaging in difficult conversations to benefit the growth and work of the collaboration while at the same time seeking to understand and respect each other's roles and opinions. We have developed the following conflict resolution plan to guide our collaboration should conflict arise.

Conflict Resolution Plan

Guidelines

Our collaboration agrees to approach conflict resolution with an attitude of trusting in the positive intent and goodwill of everyone in the collaboration. When working towards the resolution of conflict our collaboration agrees to follow these guidelines:

- Respect the individuals involved.

- Directly acknowledge and address the conflict with the involved party(ies).
- Listen and learn about the other party's intent and the context of their thoughts and decisions.
- Focus on the facts and impact.

Between Organizations

Some of the collaborating organizations have had past experiences of engaging in some level of conflict with each other and creating positive solutions to their conflict. We understand that it's important to acknowledge conflict and discuss the situation to gain a better understanding of the perspective of other parties in order to work towards resolution.

Because of on-going differences between the MBTA and BCIL due to BCIL's role in advocating for prioritization of riders with disabilities as well as the potential for any collaborating organizations to be in conflict with each other, we have decided to err on the side of caution and encourage active communication in our conflict resolution plan between organizations. Our collaboration has agreed to take the following steps when there's potential conflict between organizations:

1. If a Member identifies potential or existing conflict, such as differences in priorities, political differences, tensions between their organization and another collaborating organization, the

Member, even if s/he is unsure whether these differences will impact the collaboration, will raise the issue in a Team Meeting for discussion.

If the issue is urgent, the Team Member who identifies the conflict or potential conflict will call the Project Manager to discuss the situation. The Team Member and Project Manager will determine the method of communicating the situation with the rest of the Team which may include scheduling an emergency meeting by phone or preferably, in person if possible.

2. The Team will assess the specific situation including how the different parties view the conflict and will determine if the concern will impact the work of the collaboration.

3. If there are concerns that the conflict will impact the work of the collaboration, the following steps would be included in the plan:

- The Project Manager and representative(s) will meet with the leadership of the parties separately.
- Depending on the results of the separate meetings, a meeting with leadership and representatives from all parties as well as the Project Manager may be convened.
- If the conflict can not be resolved at this point outside mediation with Vera and/or OVW may be sought.

Because we understand and respect the importance of each organization and their roles and expertise, we will take all possible steps to resolve conflict including seeking the assistance of our technical assistance provider, Vera and our funder, OVW, to retain the integrity of the collaboration, but we understand that there may be situations in which an organization may choose to end participation in the collaboration as a result of conflict. If an organization decides to end participation with the collaboration, we agree to take the following steps:

- The Project Manager will notify and engage OVW in this process.
- The organization's Executive Leadership and the Project Manager will discuss the situation and the reasons for ending participation. The Project Manager will document the conversation.
- Ideally, the Executive Leadership will submit a letter to the Project Manager indicating withdrawal from the collaboration.
- The Executive Leadership will work with the fiscal manager (BARCC's Managing Director) to complete financial closeout of the contract.

Between Team Members:

If conflict arises between Team Members:

- Members agree to discuss the issue privately with the Member with whom they are experiencing conflict or can

decide together to raise the issue in a Team Meeting for discussion.

- If Members meet privately and are unable to resolve the issue, Members will discuss the issue with the Project Manager or decide together to raise the issue in a Team Meeting.
- Depending on the circumstance and the decisions of all involved, the Project Manager may mediate between only the involved parties or mediate the situation through a Team Meeting.
- If the issue is not resolved at this point, the Project Manager will contact Vera.

If conflict arises as a result of different philosophies, perspectives etc.:

- The Project Manager will facilitate a conversation about the issue within a Team Meeting.
- Team Members will openly discuss the issue, agreeing to:
 - Focus on the common goal.
 - Demonstrate respect, curiosity and interest while each Member shares her/his perspective.
 - Seek areas of agreement between different perspectives.
 - Acknowledge differences between perspectives.
 - Seek to understand the reasons Members have for holding different perspectives.
 - Determine what needs to be agreed to and what doesn't. If agreement needs to be reached, work towards

determining whether an alternative perspective from the ones shared exists.

- If the conflict is not resolved, Team Members agree to take a break from the conversation and seek additional information and perspectives before resuming conversation at a set amount of time.
- If conflict can not be resolved within the Team, the Project Manager will seek assistance from Vera.

Between Project Manager and Team Member:

If conflict arises between the Project Manager and Team Member:

- The Project Manager and Team Member(s) agree to discuss the issue privately or can decide together to raise the issue in a Team Meeting for discussion.
- If the Project Manager and Team Member(s) meet privately and are unable to resolve the issue, the parties agree to bring the issue to a Team Meeting for discussion. The Team can determine whether to choose a specific Team Member (who is not one of the parties of the conflict) to mediate the discussion.
- If the issue is not resolved or the Team decides to seek mediation directly with Vera instead of mediating within the Team first, the Team will determine who will contact Vera for mediation.

Between Team and Leadership of an Organization:

Because we believe the best process for resolving conflict between the Team and Leadership is dependent on the situation and the parties involved, we have chosen to create a flexible, situation specific process for resolving conflict in these circumstances. If there is conflict between any individual within the Team or the Team as a whole and the Leadership of any organization, the Team will meet to discuss the strategy for resolving the conflict and determine:

- The most effective person(s) to mediate the conflict;
- The most effective method of communication (following Guidelines above)
- If applicable, the information and resources needed to resolve the conflict.

Confidentiality

Regarding The People We Serve

The MASS Collaboration recognizes that all participating organizations have their own confidentiality policies and will respect these policies. No member will be expected to break their organization's confidentiality policy. In general, Team Members will not discuss information regarding the people they serve; however if there is a situation when this information is beneficial to the collaboration's work, only generalities or aggregate information will be discussed. No potentially identifying information will be shared. For example, the context of a high profile case related to the grant project may be discussed, but the fact that the Transit Police are investigating the case and the confidential details of the case would not be discussed.

Regarding Our Organizations

The MASS Collaboration understands that to create sustainable change within and between all of our organizations, honest dialogue about our organizations and the work we do is necessary. This includes acknowledging both the strengths and challenges that each organization has in regards to responding to and providing services to survivors/victims with disabilities.

In order to facilitate open dialogue while at the same time protecting the privacy of organizations, sensitive information will be kept confidential between Team Members. Sensitive information includes, but is not limited to:

- Political issues within organizations;
- Policies and procedures that may be discriminatory, re-victimizing, or create barriers to services;
- Issues related to staff or personnel and their interactions with survivors/victims with disabilities.

When sharing sensitive information, Team Members agree:

- Not to provide the names or any identifying information of individuals involved.
- If Members are unsure whether an issue is “confidential” or “sensitive,” the Member will discuss the issue and any parameters about discussing the issue with their Executive Leadership prior to discussing the issue with the Team.

Although the Team will be conscious of generally maintaining confidentiality regarding discussions within meetings, if Members are specifically requesting that certain information be kept confidential, the Member will inform the Team to prevent any misunderstandings.

Before sensitive information can be shared with Vera, OVW or other external entities, the following process will be followed:

- The Project Manager or Team Member will propose discussing the sensitive information with external entities and explain the reason for sharing this information (e.g. assistance is needed with mediating conflict).
- The Team will discuss whether the information should be first discussed with other individuals in the collaboration, such as the relevant Executive Leadership and the MBTA Liaison, prior to discussing it with external entities.
- The Team will, if applicable, discuss the framing of sensitive information to external entities.

Minutes: Although the Project Manager will not document explicitly confidential information in minutes, minutes should be kept confidential within the Team unless it is determined by Team consensus to share the minutes with specific individuals.

Regarding Personal Information Shared By the Team

- If personal information is shared by one person on the Team with another, this information will be kept confidential between the parties.
- If personal information is shared by anyone on the Team at a meeting, this information will be kept confidential within the Team.
- All Team Members understand that because of the Project Manager's role that if personal information is shared that may impact the collaboration, the Project Manager may need

to share information with her/his supervisor, Vera or OVW to obtain guidance and support. Before sharing any information, the Project Manager will inform the Team Member that s/he may need to disclose the information and discuss how the Team Member would like the information to be shared.

- It is understood that if someone on the Team is an individual who is covered under the mandated reporting requirements (see Mandated Reporting below) and s/he discloses information about abuse or neglect to another member of the Team or to the Project Manager, a report may need to be made to protective services.
- The individual receiving the disclosure will determine whether to file a report and will include the individual who is disclosing in the process.
- All involved individuals will determine how and what to disclose to the Team, if necessary.

Mandated Reporting

In Massachusetts there are several laws mandating that certain professionals report suspected abuse or neglect with protective services. Below are brief summaries of the laws; however, the MASS Collaboration understands that not everyone in the collaboration is a mandated reporter, that even non-mandated reporters can make reports, and that decision making about mandated reporting at the individual and organizational level is complex.

Mass. General Law Chapter 119, Section 51A mandates reporting suspected abuse or neglect of individuals under 18 to the Department of Children and Family.

Mass. General Law Chapter 19A mandates reporting suspected abuse, neglect, financial exploitation and self-neglect of individuals 60 years and older to the Office of Elder Affairs.

Mass. General Law Chapter 19C mandates reporting suspected abuse or neglect of persons with disabilities between 18-59 years old, whether in state care or in a private setting and who suffer serious physical and /or emotional injury through the act and/or omission of their caregivers, to the Disabled Persons Protection Commission. For purposes of this reporting statute, a person with a disability must be wholly or partially dependent on another for

assistance with daily living needs. For example, dressing, hygiene, medication administration, eating etc.

Mass General Law Chapter 111 Sections 72F and 72G mandates reporting suspected abuse or neglect of patients and residents of certain facilities, as defined by the law, to the Department of Public Health.

Organizations which are Mandated Reporters

The following organizations and their Representatives are mandated reporters: BARCC, BCIL, and MBTA Transit Police. The MBTA System Wide Accessibility Office and the representative of the MBTA is not a mandated reporter; however staff from THE RIDE are mandated reporters. The Project Manager is also a mandated reporter.

We recognize that if information that could trigger a report is shared to individuals and their agencies within the scope of their work, such as via consultation or referrals, these individuals and agencies will need to follow their agency's mandated reporting policies.

In addition, if any organization in the collaboration receives information regarding someone within their organization who is committing abuse or neglect, they will need to follow their

agency's policies and protocols for such situations, including the possibility of reporting to law enforcement.

Mandated Reporting within the Collaboration

Our collaboration has agreed to empower individuals as much as possible within the scope of mandated reporting requirements. To accomplish this, we agree to:

- Further discuss and explore mandated reporting and our different perspectives regarding mandated reporting. This includes a process of reviewing our organizations' mandated reporting policies.
- Discuss and establish criteria for the needs assessment plan that provides the broadest options for survivors/victims with disabilities. This could include hiring outside facilitators who are not mandated reporters, but could provide a range of options and resources including the option of reporting to protective services.
- Inform individuals, such as participants in a focus group, that if they disclose personal information about possible abuse or neglect that we may need to share this information with the appropriate agencies.
- Make all efforts possible to notify the individual when a report will be made and work with the individual to involve her/him in the reporting process.

In addition, if information is disclosed regarding abuse or neglect by someone working within any of the participating organizations, we agree to share this information with the representative of the organization.

During the needs assessment planning process a more detailed protocol regarding mandated reporting will be created, incorporating all the above agreements.

Internal Communications within Team

Because we believe that clear, open communication within the Team is foundational to our ability to understand each other and work effectively, we have taken the time to develop our team internal communication plan through a process of discussion, trial, review and revision. We believe that having a planned, thoughtful, flexible process for communication will facilitate our work and prevent misunderstandings.

This section on Internal Communications within the Team is divided up into two parts:

- *Types of Communication* briefly describes each category of communication and the forms of communication that will be used for each category.
- *Forms of Communication* provides detailed guidelines for the use of each method of communication.

Types of Communication

General Communication

General communication is day-to-day communication such as discussing and determining logistics for meetings, conferences etc. Our collaboration identified e-mail as the preferred method for general communication.

Emergency Communication

In an emergency, which includes inability to come to a meeting at the last minute, communication should be made either through phone calls or text. Everyone in the team has been given an emergency contact list with each member's phone number and preferred method of contact.

Substantive Communication

Substantive communication includes discussions and decisions regarding our philosophies, direction of our work, and deliverables. It also includes relationship building and conflict resolution. Because of the nature of substantive communication, we agree to primarily use meetings for these types of communication and occasionally, phone calls or phone conferencing.

Communication Regarding Feedback of Documents

If substantive discussion is needed regarding feedback of documents, these communications will occur in meetings or may occur occasionally through phone calls or phone conferencing. For editing of format, language or quick questions and comments, communication can be done via TeamWork, our on-line project management site or if there are technical problems with TeamWork, via e-mail.

Forms of Communication

Text

- For those who prefer to communicate via text, texting can be used for brief emergency communication (e.g. not being able to make a meeting because of illness).

Phone

- Emergency communication for those whose preferred communication is phone.
- Alternative to one-to-one in person meetings for communications that are specific to two individuals and requires discussion (e.g. making up a missed meeting).
- Alternative to e-mail communication if an individual prefers to communicate by phone regarding something that can be communicated via e-mail (e.g. question about assignment).
- Option of calling into a meeting when it is not possible for a Team Member to be physically present at a meeting (see Meetings below for more information).
- Option of using phone conference call occasionally for discussions in addition to meetings as determined by the Team.

E-mail

- Because of the potential for written communication to generate misunderstandings due to lack of body language,

tone of voice, and immediate interaction, e-mail should only be used for communication that is fairly neutral and is unlikely to generate strong emotions or conflict.

- Communication around logistics (e.g. advanced scheduling and cancellation of meetings etc).
- Alternative to project management site for sending documents and providing feedback in situations where there are technical problems with the on-line project management site.
- E-mails relevant to the entire Team or the Team's work should be sent to the entire Team. E-mails specific to an individual can be sent just to the individual.
- If the sender requires a response within an indicated amount of time, the sender will include this information in the e-mail. If the recipient does not respond in the indicated amount of time:
 - The sender will attempt to follow-up with a text or phone call to the recipient.
 - If anyone on the Team is experiencing technical problems which could result in the inability to receive communication in the usual manner (e.g. work e-mail), particularly when time sensitive responses may be required, it is the responsibility of the Team Member to notify the Project Manager and the Project Manager to notify Team Members in order to determine an alternate form of communication.

- If there is no response to the text or phone call, the sender will bring the content of the e-mail for discussion at the next Team Meeting.
- If the response is required prior to the next Team Meeting and the recipient does not respond and does not provide alternate forms of communication, the recipient is allowing the responses of the other Team Members to determine the outcome of the e-mail communication.

TeamWork: On-Line Project Management Site

- The Project Manager will maintain a calendar with the meeting schedule, vacations, and other dates when members are unavailable to attend meetings. Team Members will input their own vacation time and other anticipated absences into the calendar and will notify the Project Manager of additions/changes made.
- The Project Manager will add assigned tasks to the Task List. All members are responsible for checking-off their tasks when completed.
- Documents will be uploaded to this site. All members will edit format and language and provide quick questions and comments to the document via this site. Significant questions/concerns that may be controversial or require significant discussion should be brought to meetings.

- The messaging feature can be used as an alternative to e-mail for posting messages that can be read by everyone on the Team. Private messages to specific individuals will not be posted on TeamWork and the same parameters for e-mails will be followed.

Meetings

Team meetings are defined as face-to-face meetings. Although we include the option for one member at a time to conference into the meeting, we do not use the term “meeting” to include conference calls and on-line interactions.

Meetings are the crux of our work together. We have identified them as the forum in which to best have meaningful discussions and make decisions about issues that impact the direction of our work. Because of this we have had many discussions to strive to balance the needs of individuals with the needs of the team, the need to ensure that all organizations are fully represented, and the need to move the work of the project forward in a timely manner. The following outlines the guidelines we have made regarding team meetings.

1. Meeting Logistics

Schedule of meetings:

- Generally, meetings during the planning and development phase will be held weekly for 2 hours/week. The meeting schedule may change throughout the course of the project.

Decisions for changing the overall meeting schedule will be determined by consensus (see Decision Making Process on pages 39 to 44).

- If there are missed meetings or additional time is needed, longer or additional meetings may be scheduled by consensus of all members.

Meeting Topics:

- Team Members will identify topics that they believe would require the presence of all members to discuss during a meeting. The guiding principle is that topics which Team Members identify as possibly resulting in strong differences in opinion should be discussed only if all Members are present.
- The Project Manager will send out an agenda prior to each meeting.

Starting meetings:

- Meetings will start when the majority of expected Members are present, but no later than 10 to 15 minutes after the start time.
- If the majority of Members are not present after 10 to 15 minutes, a decision will be made by Members who are present whether to start the meeting, wait for a majority of members or cancel the meeting.

Breaks:

- For 2 hour meetings, there will be no set breaks. Members can take a break or request a break whenever necessary.
- For meetings longer than 2 hours, scheduled breaks will be included.

Phones and Data Systems:

- It is understood that some Members of the group may need their phones or data systems on during all meetings; however it is expected that attending to electronic devices will be kept to a minimum during non-break times.
- For additional circumstance, when phone calls or data systems may need to be responded to during a meeting, Members will make an announcement at the beginning of the meeting.

If a Member needs to step out of the meeting, either the Member and/or the Team will make a decision, based on content of discussion, whether to take a break or to continue and summarize later.

Ending Meetings:

- In general, the Project Manager will end meetings on-time.
- If a meeting starts late, Members agree to have the meeting end late if necessary and possible, but no more than 10 to 15 minutes later unless otherwise determined at the beginning of the meeting.

2. Communication of Inability to Attend Meeting

We believe that all Members are committed to attending all meetings; however we understand that circumstances will occur which will prevent members from attending some meetings. To maximize our ability to plan, we commit to proactively communicating the inability or potential inability to attend a meeting.

Our proactive planning process includes:

- Project Manager or Members will communicate meetings at least a week in advance or as soon as they know that they may potentially miss a meeting.
- The Project Manager will periodically schedule meeting time to discuss the upcoming meeting schedule and any possible absences.
- Options for advanced communication of meetings include inputting absences on the on-line project management account calendar, e-mailing the Project Manager (or for the Project Manager, e-mailing all Members) or making an announcement at a meeting.

In an emergency:

- Members will call or text the Project Manager.
- Project Manager will call or text all Members if possible. If this is not possible, the Project Manager will contact the BARCC representative who will call or text all Members.

3. Cancellation of Meetings

The guidelines we have developed around when to cancel meetings are based on our belief that each member's representation of their organization is critical to the process and that being inclusive increases the effectiveness of our work.

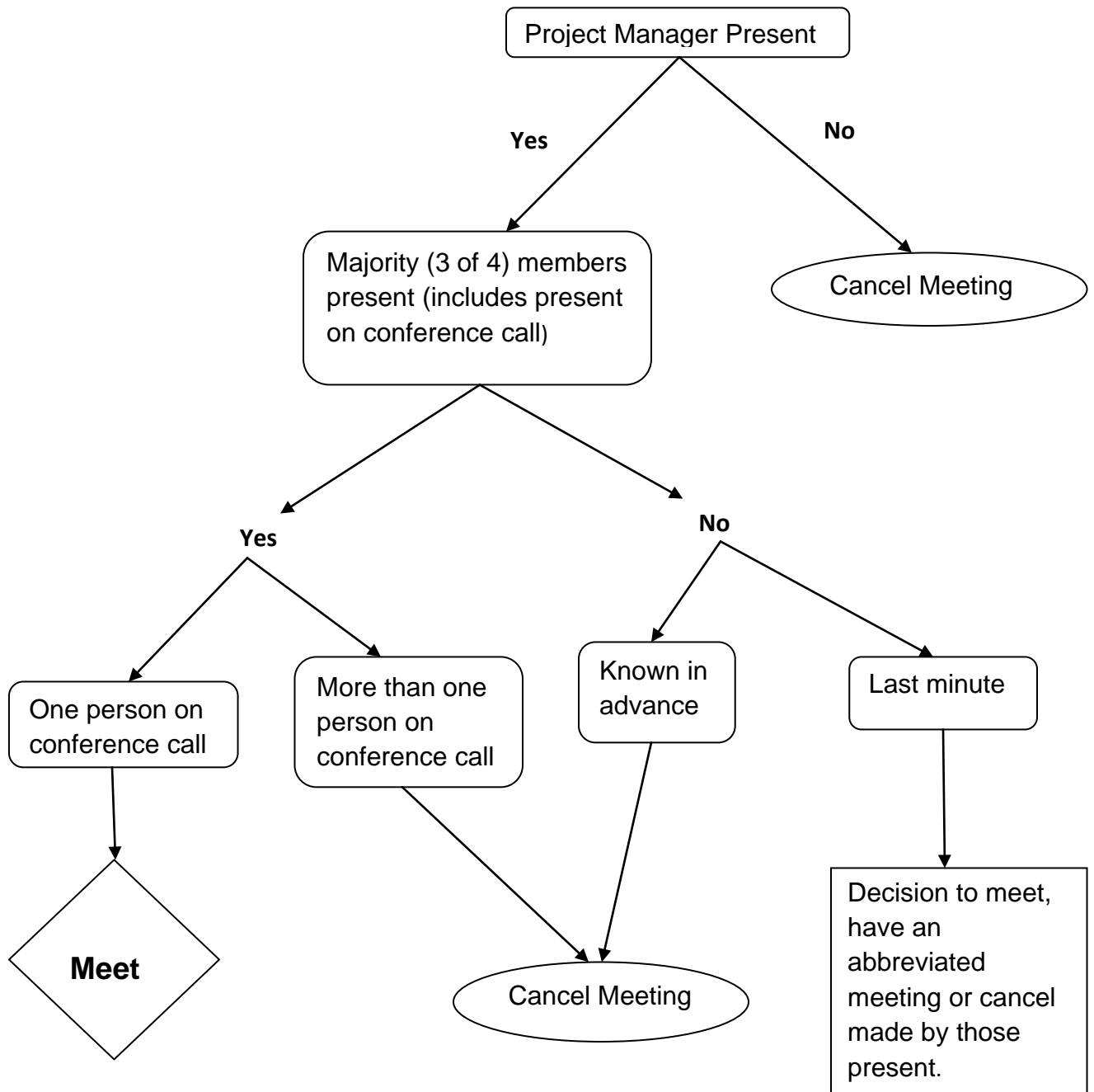
We have determined that in regards to cancellations of single meetings that the meeting will be cancelled if:

- The Project Manager can not attend;
- A majority of members is not present;
- More than one person needs to conference call in rather than being at the meeting in person.

Diagram: Flow Chart for Cancelling Single Meetings

A flow chart of this decision-making process is included below. As a team we trust each other to make the best decisions around whether or not to meet in the case of last minute cancellations, so we have included the option of meeting even if the above conditions aren't met.

Diagram: Flow Chart for Cancelling Single Meetings



Weather Emergency Plan

The Project Manager will make decisions around cancelling a meeting due to inclement weather erring on the side of safety.

The decision will be e-mailed to participants by 8pm the night before the meeting. All members will e-mail the Project Manager by 10pm to acknowledge receipt of the message. If the Project Manager doesn't hear back from a member she will text or call the member.

4. Making-Up Meetings

Member unable to attend a meeting

In order to ensure that a member who misses a meeting can obtain information from the meeting and provide input, the following options for making-up meetings are provided:

- Meeting minutes are sent to all members by the Project Manager by the end of the week that the meeting was held.
- The member can meet or have a phone conversation with the Project Manager when the Project Manager, the absent member and/or the members in attendance determine that the meeting is too substantive for minutes to adequately communicate what happened in the meeting or there is a decision to be made.
- The team can summarize and re-visit substantive aspects of the meeting at the next meeting.

Making up cancelled meetings

If a series of meetings in a row need to be cancelled or a meeting is cancelled during a time that will critically impact the work plan, the team will discuss and decide by consensus whether to extend initially proposed deadlines, schedule longer meetings, or add meetings.

Communication Regarding Extended Absence of Project Manager

If there will be an extended absence of the Project Manager, the Team will discuss the specifics of the situation and make a determination regarding how to handle the situation. If the absence is due to an emergency, the Executive Leadership of BARCC, who supervises the Project Manager, will discuss the situation with the Team and discuss possible options. A decision will be made by consensus of the Team (see Decision-Making Process on pages 39 to 44).

Internal Communication Plan between Team and Organizations

Why? As representatives in the MASS Collaboration, we believe in open communication between the team and our organizations throughout the course of the project:

- So that the individuals in each of our organizations can share in and be excited about the vision and mission of this work.
- So that the leaders who steer the vision of the collaborating organizations, and the staff who provide the services are: informed, contribute their expertise, have an opportunity to ask questions and/or raise concerns about our process to result in sustainable, systemic change within their organization that improves access and services to survivors/victims with disabilities.

Who? We believe that in order to create systemic change within each organization that we need to intentionally communicate with individuals at all levels of the organization. This includes communicating with the:

- Executive Leadership
- Supportive Leadership
 - Board Members, when applicable (BARCC and BCIL)

- General Manager of the MBTA
- MBTA Liaison
- Staff
- Volunteers, when applicable (BARCC)

How? We believe that the communication plan will be most effective if it's flexible and tailored specifically to each organization. Through exploration of each organization's structures and methods of communication, we have developed unique communication plans for each organization which have been distributed to all Team Members. In creating these plans we have taken into consideration:

- The most effective method of communication for each audience;
- The most effective spokesperson(people) for each audience;
- The time period during the project when each audience should be informed about/participate in the project;
- Balancing the amount of communication with organizational leadership and staff time to ensure the efficient use of these resources.

Although we have developed unique communication plans with each organization, we have also found commonalities between all of the organizations at times of work product delivery and transitions to new project phases.

The shared communication needs through the development of the Strategic Plan are outlined below. The communication plan for the implementation phase will be determined by consensus as a clearer idea of the plan is formed.

We will communicate with the **Executive Leadership**:

- Via a brief quarterly update. This update will be written by the Team and sent to all Executive Leadership to ensure that consistent communication across all of the collaborating organizations occurs on a regular basis. This report may be sent to other individuals at each organization as determined by Team Members.
- At least once during each phase of the planning and development phase, and additionally as needed, especially when approval of decisions or documents are needed.
- The primary person/people who will communicate with the Executive Leadership is the representing Member. In addition, the Project Manager or both the Member and Project Manager together may communicate with the Executive Leader. Communication can be initiated by either party.
- During the Collaboration Building and Needs Assessment phases the methods of communication, depending on circumstances, include e-mails and/or face-to-face meetings.
- During the Needs Assessment Reporting phase we will ensure that there is at least one face-to-face meeting

between the Executive Leadership, Project Manager, and representative Member to discuss organization specific aspects of the needs assessment report.

- During the Strategic Planning phase there will be at least one face-to-face group meeting convened that will include the Executive Leadership from all of the organizations, all representing Members, and the Project Manager.

We will communicate with **Supporting Leadership** (Boards, General Manager of MBTA):

- At minimum once during the Collaboration Building phase of the project to introduce them to the project and obtain input and/or approval as needed.
- At minimum once during the Strategic Planning phase to update them on the project and obtain input and/or approval as needed.
- At other points as determined by Members or Supporting Leadership.
- For the Boards, meetings will be scheduled at existing board meeting times. Both the Project Manager and representing Member will communicate together to board members.
- The MBTA representative will communicate to the General Manager of the MBTA via the department's liaison to the General Manager.

We will communicate with the **MBTA Liaison:**

- By scheduling meetings between the Team and the Liaison at least once during each phase of planning and development. The content of these meetings will be focused on THE RIDE and THE RIDE's role in the project.
- The Project Manager will coordinate the scheduling of these meetings which includes giving the Liaison at least two weeks notice and providing the Liaison with the agenda and questions prior to the meeting.
- By providing the Liaison with the written quarterly update report.
- By providing the Liaison with more frequent updates as determined by Members, the Liaison and/or the Project Manager.
- The primary person communicating with the Liaison will be the representative of the MBTA. The Liaison and Representative will meet at least every other week.
- The secondary person communicating with the Liaison will be the Project Manager. Either party may initiate communication.

We will communicate with **Staff and Volunteers:**

- At minimum once during the Needs Assessment phase at an existing staff/volunteer meeting to introduce staff and volunteers to the needs assessment.
- Throughout the needs assessment phase to collect data.

- At minimum once during the Strategic Planning phase at an existing staff/volunteer meeting to update and obtain input for the strategic plan.
- At other points as determined by members.
- Depending on the organization, the person/people communicating to the staff/volunteers would be the Member, the Project Manager, and/or the Executive Leadership of the organization.

Chart: Shared Communication Plan Between Team and Organizations

The following chart provides a visual summary of the above information regarding communication with the Executive Leadership, Supportive Leadership, Liaison, and Staff and Volunteers. The chart highlights the minimum communication between the Team and these audiences at major points in the planning and development phase of the project.

Shared Communication Plan Between Team and Organizations

Period of Time Throughout Project (divided by deliverables)

Audience



	Collaboration Building and Charter	Needs Assessment	Needs Assessment Report	Strategic Plan
Executive Leadership	E-mail and one-on-one meetings* with member, project manager or both during collaboration building process and for final approval of charter.	E-mail and one-on-one meeting with member, project manager or both in preparation for needs assessment.	One-on-one meeting with member and project manager.	Group meeting with all members of executive leadership.
Supporting Leadership	Member and project manager introduces project at board meeting. MBTA representative ensures project is introduced to the MBTA General Manager.			Member and project manager presents at board meeting. MBTA representative ensures plan is communicated to the MBTA General Manager.
Liaison	MBTA representative introduces liaison to project.	At minimum, one RIDE specific meeting with Team. Regular meetings with MBTA representative.	At minimum, one RIDE specific meeting with Team. Regular meetings with MBTA representative.	At minimum, one RIDE specific meeting with Team. Regular meetings with MBTA representative.
Staff and Volunteers		In preparation for needs assessment the member, project manager and/or executive leadership will communicate at an existing staff meeting (and for BARCC, at existing volunteer meetings).		Plan will be communicated by the member, project manager and/or executive leadership at an existing staff meeting (and with BARCC, at existing volunteer meetings).

*Meetings are defined as face-to-face meetings

Resignation of Team Member

To facilitate continuity of representation from all organizations, we ask that if a Team Member is unable to continue participating in the collaboration s/he will inform the Team as soon as s/he is aware of this possibility. The Project Manager and, if possible, the Team Member will schedule a meeting with the Executive Leadership of the organization to discuss the process of having the organization identify a new representative in a timely manner, the qualifications for a new representative, and to discuss how to ensure the organization's continued representation around decisions in the interim. Qualifications, in addition to the commitments outlined by OVW and this Charter, will be determined by Members. As a collaboration, we may, depending on circumstances, decide by consensus to pause the work of the project until a new representative is available.

When a Team Member resigns and a new representative is assigned, the Team will determine, based upon the timing and circumstances of the transition, a plan for how to integrate the new member into the team, so that the new member can be updated, feel part of the Team, and be a part of the shaping of a new team dynamic.

External Communication Plan with External Stakeholders

External stakeholders are individuals and groups outside of our organizations who will be impacted by or who can influence the project's work. Our external stakeholders include, but are not limited to: our funder, OVW; our technical assistance provider, Vera Institute of Justice; customers, consumers, survivors and victims; membership or umbrella organizations that our organizations are a part of; and organizations that our agencies work with as well as other relevant individuals.

We recognize that it is beneficial to communicate with external stakeholders because they may share common goals with us and can be part of the work. Not only can insights from external stakeholders enhance our work, but although our efforts are focused on internal systemic changes, our work can influence other efforts, effecting a broader scope of change. In addition, increasing awareness about the project leads to higher expectations from stakeholders regarding safety, access, and response from our organizations, thus inviting feedback from stakeholders and fostering accountability.

Vera and OVW

Our plans for communicating with Vera and OVW were created with the intention of empowering all members, creating transparency in communication, and providing smooth coordination of communication.

Vera

- The Project Manager will be the primary person communicating with the Vera technical assistance provider. The Project Manager will be transparent with the Team about any communications with Vera.
- Any Member can contact Vera. To ensure transparency, any Member who wants to communicate with Vera, including communicating privately with Vera, will discuss her/his intentions at a meeting and the communication will be coordinated through the Team.
- Any one on the team can propose a conference call or site visit with Vera during a meeting.
- If the Project Manager is unavailable and the Team wishes to communicate with Vera, the Team can select a substitute Team Member to communicate with Vera.

OVW

- The Project Manager will be the primary person from the Team communicating with OVW.
- If a Team Member wishes to communicate directly with OVW, the Team Member will discuss her/his intentions at a meeting and the communication will be coordinated through

the Team. The Project Manager will send an e-mail to OVW notifying OVW that a Team Member will be initiating contact and if applicable, providing the context for the contact.

- The fiscal manager (Managing Director from BARCC) will communicate with OVW regarding the fiscal management of the grant.
- The Executive Leadership of BARCC may communicate with OVW if OVW initiates contact with her or about general OVW-related matters. If the Executive Leadership of BARCC wishes to communicate with OVW regarding specific concerns or activities of the collaboration, she will follow the same process as other Executive Leadership.
- If the Executive Leadership of any of the collaborating organizations wishes to speak with OVW s/he will communicate his/her intention to their Representative or the Project Manager and the communication will be coordinated through the Team. The Project Manager will send an e-mail to OVW notifying OVW that an Executive Leadership member will be initiating contact and if applicable, providing the context for the contact.

Other External Stakeholders

Communication with stakeholders about our collaboration and our collaboration's work may be planned (e.g. presentation made at a meeting) or unplanned (e.g. arises in an informal conversation with a stakeholder); therefore we have strived to create a

communication plan that allows for flexibility, provides the ability to capitalize on opportunities to broadly communicate about the collaboration, and ensures coordinated, consistent and accurate information.

- Any leadership, staff or volunteer from our collaborating organizations can talk about our project with external stakeholders, but must use the Talking Points developed by the Team (See Talking Points below). The Team Member and/or Project Manager will meet with leadership, staff, and if applicable, volunteers, to distribute and discuss the Talking Points.
- If information is requested that is outside the scope of the Talking Points, the question/request should be referred to the organization's representative.
- The Member will then communicate the question/request with the Team at the next meeting or with the Project Manager if the request is urgent.
- The Team or the Project Manager will then determine, based on the nature of the question, who will communicate with the stakeholder.

In an effort to efficiently record communication with external stakeholders, so that we have the benefit of knowing which external stakeholder has knowledge about the collaboration:

- If an individual in the organization has a planned communication about the collaboration (e.g. in a presentation at a meeting) or a communication ensues about

the collaboration which generates follow-up communication or activity, the individual will notify their organizational representative regarding who they communicated with. The Team Member will e-mail the Project Manager who will log the communication.

External Communication with General Public/Media

Some of the reasons we may potentially communicate with the media include: highlighting our collaboration and project; generating support for our work; breaking the silence about the problem of sexual violence against people with disabilities; reducing the isolation of survivors/victims with disabilities; providing resources; using it as an outlet to create change; sharing what we have learned about how collaboration building can create systemic change; and clarifying misconceptions.

Our external communication plan with the general public/media applies broadly to many forms of media, including, but not limited to newspapers, radio, television, our organizations' websites, and social media such as blogs, Twitter, and Facebook. In addition, our communication plan applies to, but is not limited to communications:

- Specifically about the collaboration;
- About issues of sexual violence against people with disabilities;
- About each other's organizations or their work.

We acknowledge the potential positive and negative impact of media and in our communication plan with media strive to:

- Provide accurate information;
- Provide consistent communication, so that the same messages are being communicated;
- Respect the expertise of each other's organizations;
- Respect the role and expertise of each organization's existing internal media liaison(s). These are individuals in each organization who have been identified either in the organization's media policy or informally, as the primary contact for the media. Team Members will meet with these internal media liaisons to ensure that they receive our collaboration's talking points, guidelines, communication process, and contact list.
- Protect the relationship of our collaboration by following the guidelines regarding communicating to media provided in this Charter;
- Coordinate and track communication with media.

Proactive Communication (Communications to media initiated by our collaboration)

- Anyone in the collaboration can initiate proactive communication.
 - If the person initiating is a Team Member, s/he should e-mail the Project Manager who will raise the request with the Team during a meeting.

- If the person initiating is someone else from our organization (e.g. Executive Leadership, staff etc) s/he should contact their Representative (Team Member) to make the request. The Team Member will e-mail the Project Manager who will raise the request with the Team during a meeting.
- Depending on the nature of the request, the Team may do any of the following:
 - Discuss how to handle the request.
 - Determine whether anyone else from our organizations should be notified or consulted.
 - Determine who will draft the content of the communication.
 - Draft the content of the communication. Depending on the type and nature of the communication the Team may request assistance from any of the internal media liaisons or other staff.
 - Discuss whether to name any organization or individual as a resource for further information. The Team will determine who will be the best resource based on the nature of the communication.
- The Project Manager will log any proactive communication to the media. If any information is available in print or electronic copy, a copy should be forwarded to the Project Manager.

Reactive Communication (Communications received by our collaboration from media)

- If an organization receives a request from the media, the organization should follow its own internal media protocol and ensure that its internal media liaison is contacted. The internal media liaison will determine, based on the nature of the request, whether to refer the request to another organization or their Representative.
- For requests specifically about the collaboration, the internal media liaison should refer the communication to their Representative. If the Representative is not available and the request is time sensitive, the media liaison should contact the Project Manager.
- The Representative may respond or may elect to contact the Project Manager and request that s/he respond. If the Team Member is unable to reach the Project Manager within an hour or within the time necessary to meet the media timeline, the Team Member may choose to refer the communication to the Executive Leadership of their organization who would use the provided Talking Points (see Talking Points below).
- Communications with media that are referred to a Team Member or the Project Manager will be logged by the Project Manager. If any information is available in print or electronic copy, a copy should be forwarded to the Project Manager.

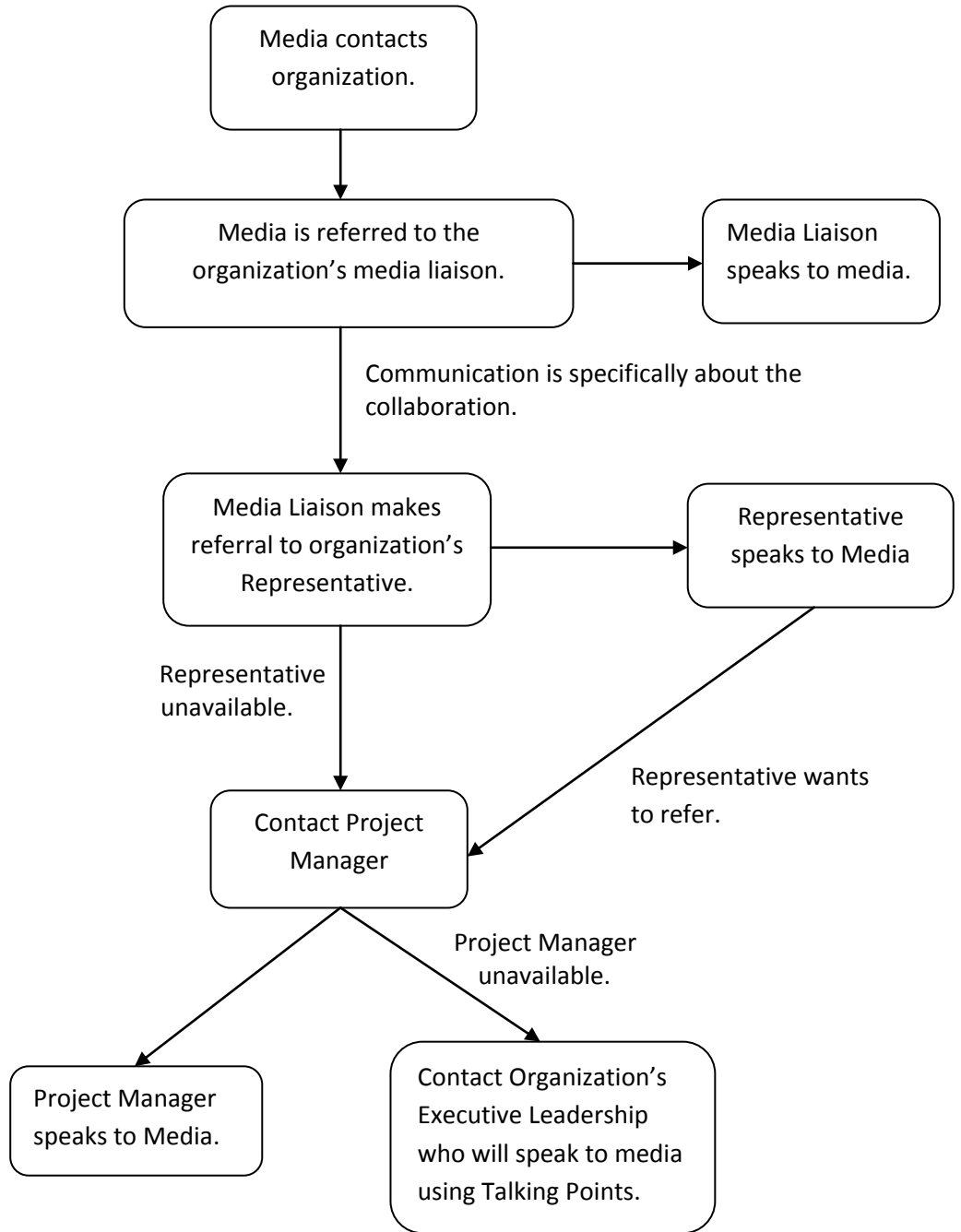
Crisis Communication

- Organizations which receive a crisis communication should follow its own internal media protocol and refer requests to their internal media liaisons. If the crisis communication generates communication specifically about the collaboration, the internal media liaison will determine whether to refer to their Representative.
- The Representative may respond or may elect to contact the Project Manager and request that s/he respond. If the Team Member is unable to reach the Project Manager within an hour or within the time necessary to meet the media timeline, the Team Member may choose to refer the communication to the Executive Leadership of their organization who would use the provided Talking Points.
- Communications with media that are referred to a Team Member of the Project Manager will be logged by the Project Manager.

Diagram: Flow Chart for Media Communication

The following flow chart summarizes the above information regarding the process for communicating to media for reactive and crisis communication.

Flowchart for Reactive and Crisis Communication



Guidelines and Talking Points for External Communication

Guidelines for Communicating with Media

- Obtain the name and organization or media outlet of the person making the inquiry.
- The best approach with the media and anyone seeking information is to be prompt, helpful and honest. We want people to be excited and feel positively about our work.
- Make sure you understand each question before answering. If you cannot answer the question, or are uncomfortable providing a response, take the person's number and advise him/her that someone who can provide the information will contact him/her as soon as possible.
- Do not offer speculations or gossip.
- Do not discuss any information "off the record."
- Do not discuss confidential information of any kind.
- Do not answer a reporter's question with "no comment."
- Provide your phone number and/or e-mail address for follow-up questions and, if applicable, ask when the information will be made public and in what format. Ask to be sent a copy if the publication is not going to be easily accessible.
- Thank the person for their interest and inform the Project Manager of the conversation so she can log it.
- If any information is available in print or electronic copy, a copy should be forwarded to the Project Manager.

Guidelines for Communicating about Each Other's Organizations:

- Respect each other's organizations and their roles.
- State facts.
- Talk about the impact of the issue, not the intention of the organization.
- Don't attribute individual blame.
- Don't make inflammatory comments.

Talking Points

- In fall of 2011, BARCC, BCIL, MBTA Transit Police and the MBTA were awarded one of 5 competitive grants nationally by the Office of Violence Against Women to improve services for people with disabilities who have experienced sexual assault.
- Sexual Violence is a pervasive problem and the rate of sexual violence against people with disabilities is especially high.
 - Persons with a disability of any kind have an age-adjusted rate of rape or sexual assault that was more than twice the rate for persons without a disability (National Crime Victimization Survey, 2007).
 - The 2010 Massachusetts Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance System also found that adults with a disability were more than twice as likely to experience

sexual violence as adults without a disability

(Massachusetts Department of Public Health, 2011).

- Share the collaboration's vision and mission statement. (See Vision and Mission pages 10 and 11)
- There are two phases to this grant: a planning and development phase and an implementation phase. The planning and development phase includes collaboration building, a needs assessment to inform change within and between our organizations, and a strategic plan.
- All of the organizations have a strong commitment to working together to create accessible quality services for survivors/victims with disabilities. We believe our collaborative efforts will make a significant impact on survivor/victims with disabilities in the greater Boston area.
- For further information, contact the representative at your organization or the Project Manager.

Work Plan

The following work plan will guide our work during the three years of this grant. This schedule may be adjusted as needed.

October 2011

Hire Project Manager

November 2011

New Grantee Orientation

December 2011

Vera Site Visit

January to September 2012

Develop Collaboration Charter

September to January 2012

Develop Needs Assessment Plan

January to May 2013

Conduct Needs Assessment

May and June 2013

Develop Needs Assessment Report

June to September 2013

Develop Strategic Plan

September 2013 to October 2014

Implementation

Glossary of Key Words

Because words have different meanings to different people, our collaboration has discussed the key words we use and have developed a shared understanding of the following words.

Ableism: The conscious or unconscious belief that people with disabilities are inferior to people without disabilities. Prejudice and discrimination against people with disabilities leads to segregation, social isolation, and policies and practices that limit opportunities to full societal participation and access to services.

Barrier-Free: Our collaboration defines “barrier-free” as an environment that allows full access and participation for survivors/victims with disabilities. Barriers to services include, but are not limited to myths and stereotypes about survivors/victims and people with disabilities; limitations to physical and communication access; policies that limit access to services; and financial barriers.

Culture: Learned, shared and transmitted values, beliefs, symbols, practices, customs etc. through which people interpret their experiences and which guide their actions. Culture is not static, but changes in response to various influences. In addition to societal culture, our collaboration uses the word “culture” to include the culture within organizations and between the organizations of our collaboration. Organizational culture includes

the organization's values, assumptions, philosophies, priorities, policies, expressed and implied rules or norms, internal operations, and interactions with those outside of the organization.

Disability: Our collaboration is defining disability in accordance with the newest definition developed by the World Health Organization. According to this definition disability is the interaction between a person, his or her functional ability, and the environment. This definition emphasizes functional ability over a medical diagnosis. We acknowledge that this does not negate the physical and psychological health issues that people with disabilities face, but we recognize that many functional limitations are the result of socially created norms regarding physical, communication, information, social, service, and policy environments. The experience of disability can be minimized by creating environments that are universally inclusive and when necessary, providing individualized accommodations.

http://www.accessingsafety.org/index.php/main/main_menu/understanding_disability/a_new_definition

Fixed Route Services: The modes of public transportation that adhere to regular and standardized routes—e.g. bus, subway, Commuter Rail and Commuter Ferry. Fixed route services serve the general population, including customers who have disabilities.

Healing: The word healing can have positive and negative feelings associated with it, especially because of the ways it has been used in reference to people with disabilities. Our collaboration uses this term specifically to talk about healing from sexual violence. We recognize that how each survivor/victim defines and experiences healing is personal.

Paratransit: A mode of public transportation that does not operate on fixed schedules or routes, but instead based on individual customer needs, including the specific location the customer is traveling to/from as well as their desired travel times. Within the MBTA/THE RIDE, paratransit is limited to serving customers who have disabilities that prevent them from fully using of the fixed-route system. Customers must apply for the service and be deemed eligible before scheduling trips.

Responsive: Our collaboration defines responsive as being knowledgeable and skilled, interacting with survivors/victims with disabilities as individuals, offering and explaining a wide range of options, and providing resources and services based on each individual's choices.

Secondary Trauma: This is also discussed as “vicarious trauma” and “compassion fatigue.” Secondary trauma is the stress and trauma reactions that responders/professionals experience as a result of hearing about traumatic experiences when supporting survivor/victims.

Secondary Harm: Secondary harm, also known as secondary victimization, is the additional trauma that survivors/victims of sexual violence may experience when disclosing, reporting or accessing services. Survivors/victims may experience secondary harm by systems and responders who refuse to provide services, provide inadequate services and/or who respond in a victim-blaming and unsupportive manner due to the acceptance of myths and stereotypes about sexual violence.

Sexual Violence: A wide spectrum of sexual acts, including acts that may or may not be defined in criminal law, that is non-consensual, forced or coerced. Coercion may be physical, mental, emotional or due to a power imbalance between the person who is offending and the victim. A person is not able to consent if they are incapacitated or if they have a mental disability that results in the inability to consent. Examples of sexual violence include, but are not limited to rape, unwanted sexual touching, excessive or inappropriate bathing or care of breasts and genital area, verbal sexual harassment, and forcing someone to watch sexual acts.

Both survivors/victims of sexual violence and people who commit sexual violence can be from any background; they can have disabilities and be of any race, gender, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation etc.

Significant Other: People with a meaningful personal connection to the survivor/victim. These are individuals who have a significant impact on the life of a survivor/victim and will most likely also be impacted by the sexual violence. Significant others include family members, guardians, partners, and friends.

Survivor: Our collaboration has chosen to use two terms, survivor and victim, to refer to someone who has experienced sexual violence, but we recognize and respect any language individuals use to describe themselves and their experience. The term “survivor” tends to be post-incident and process focused.

Systems Change: A shift in the culture of a system and the way the system makes and acts on decisions about priorities, policies, allocation of resources, and service delivery. Our collaboration is focused on systems change within and between all of the participating organizations.

Trauma : An event, series of events, or on-going stress that causes great disruption and distress, is experienced as overwhelming, incomprehensible and senseless, and causes one to feel unable to exert control on their environment. We recognize survivors/victims with disabilities may experience a range of trauma including sexual violence and disability discrimination.

Victim: Our collaboration has chosen to use two terms, survivor and victim, to refer to someone who has experienced sexual violence, but we recognize and respect any language individuals use to describe themselves and their experience. The term “victim” is often focused on the sexual victimization itself and is commonly used in institutional and legal systems, including the criminal justice system.

