

1. Background

United Way works to help people in need reach their potential. In accomplishing that goal, the organization utilizes a variety of tactics and approaches. In addition to providing funding for local programs designed to improve lives in Olmsted County, United Way of Olmsted County (UWOC) advocates on behalf of people in need and prioritizes policies that ensure care for vulnerable and marginalized persons. By delivering a limited set of direct service offerings, the organization ensures that critical needs are provided; and through collaboration and partnership, UWOC works to align systems to empower individuals toward long-term improvements in their conditions, leading to long-term changes for our entire community.

2. Goal

United Way of Olmsted County's staff volunteer advisory groups are intended to enhance the organization's understanding of community conditions and best practices in the field. Each group provides perspectives and/or advice for consideration by UWOC's staff in making decisions and implementing impact strategies throughout the community.

3. Purpose

The purpose of the Listening Team is to gain public knowledge as it relates to hearing the voices of individuals who are not commonly heard and on whose life experience there exists little or no local-level data. As part of the Listening Team, you will gain public knowledge through hosting and/or processing community conversations and/or being a United Way representative at community group meetings as they apply to the volunteer advisory group goal.

4. Equity

Equity seeks to undo discrimination and bias to create a just and fair society in which all can participate, prosper, and reach their full potential. Equity shall guide all stages of Listening Team activities. This includes team formation; membership recruitment and selection; determination of meeting dates, times, and places; determination of organizational processes; distribution of member workload; and implementation or delivery of work products. UWOC is committed to cultivating equitable working environments for volunteers and staff.

5. Membership

a. Composition

- i. Team size shall be restricted to 12 members maximum, including an assigned United Way staff leader.
- ii. The Listening Team shall consist of members with a variety of skills, life experiences and/or passion that help to enhance United Way's understanding of community conditions.
- iii. Membership within the Listening Team shall appropriately reflect the diversity of identities, cultures, and individuals across Olmsted County.
- iv. Membership to the Listening Team is open to interested community members; agency representatives of UWOC's funded partners past and present; students;

- youth; business, religious, community, or government leaders; or other interested parties.
- v. The Listening Team will be chaired by a UWOC staff member.
- b. Selection
 - i. Membership recruitment and selection shall be guided by UWOC's commitment to equity as a core organizational value.
 - ii. Members shall be selected by United Way staff based on the principles outlined in this document.
 - iii. Community members shall be invited to apply for membership when there are open positions.
 - iv. Invitations may be issued to the community at large through media, including social media; the Get Connected volunteer portal; the United Way of Olmsted County website; outreach to businesses, agencies, or community organizations; or other methods. Direct invitations may also be issued to specific individuals or community groups.
 - c. Terms
 - i. The term of membership will be one year minimum, with the option to extend to a second year. Membership terms will be staggered amongst members.
 - ii. A member may not serve concurrently on more than one volunteer team except by UWOC staff invite.
 - d. Changes in membership
 - i. Except in the most extreme circumstance, members are expected to adhere to term of service.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

- a. Roles of Members
 - i. Listening Team members serve in an advisory capacity to the UWOC staff. The role is designed to provide a broader, and inclusive perspective to learning about the community and gaining public knowledge through Listening Team activities.
- b. Responsibilities of Members
 - i. Members will attend meetings regularly.
 - i. Members will be expected to complete work assignments between meetings.
 - ii. Attendance at community conversations and/or community meetings or event, and review of additional supporting materials is required.
 - iii. Community Conversations Hosting and/or Processing activities
 - Attend Community Conversation training session
 - Participate in community conversations as agreed to as either the Conversation Leader or Conversation Note-Taker.
 - Complete hard copy or online the Community Conversation Final Report form to United Way within 2 business days after the conversation.
 - Provide all conversation documents back to United Way within 2 business day after the conversation.
 - iv. Community Group Meeting United Way Representative activities
 - Attend Community Group Meeting training.

- Participate in community group meetings as they pertain to UWOC goal.
 - Participate in community group meeting as agreed to representing United Way.
 - Provide summary report within two business 2 days after the meeting.
- v. Other Public Knowledge activities
- Other activities to gain public knowledge as it relates to this Charter's goal that are identified will be the responsibility of the Listening Team.
- vi. Membership may be terminated upon recommendation of UWOC staff should a member fail to participate in regular meetings or homework assignments to the extent that it negatively impacts the work of the Research Team.
- vii. Team members are expected to adhere to UWOC Volunteer Handbook guidelines.
- c. UWOC Staff
- i. A UWOC Staff Leader will be assigned to the Listening Team and will serve as the team's chairperson.
 - ii. A designated UWOC staff member will keep summary notes from Listening Team meetings, which will be conveyed to all members of the team and archived for UWOC records.
- d. Visitors
- i. At times, additional UWOC staff may request to attend a Listening Team meeting, as it pertains to their work or UWOC needs.
 - ii. With the exception of invited presenters, attending for a specific agenda time and purpose, other visitors are not allowed at Listening Team meetings.
 - iii. Visitors shall observe the responsibilities and guidelines set forth in this document. Visitors shall also respect the organization and informal culture of the team.

7. Operations and Logistics

- a. The Listening Team will operate according to the preferences of the given group and its UWOC staff leader.
- b. Listening Team meetings will be every other month for 90 minutes.
- c. Meetings dates and times, style of meeting, and decision-making processes shall be determined by team members.
- d. Listening Team activities could be Monday – Sundays with varied hours.
- e. Listening Team activities may be brought to the group either by UWOC staff or members of the Listening Team, and the UWOC staff leader will determine priorities.
- f. Any product that leaves the work group will be reviewed by both UWOC staff and individuals with contextual expertise before becoming publicly available.
- g. Onboarding will include an ethics training to ensure that work produced by the Research Team: promotes the dignity and autonomy of the individuals, families, and communities with which it engages; preserves the anonymity and confidentiality of those whose lives are represented; frames findings in a manner that is factual while being neither accusatory nor exculpatory; and is carried out in an environment that promotes trust, accountability, and transparency.