**CONTRA COSTA COUNTY**

**CIVIL GRAND JURY**

**TEAM BUILDING**

**&**

**COLLABORATION**

**TEAM BINDER**

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***Created by the 2019-2020 Civil Grand Jury as a Contra Costa Civil Grand Jury Reference Guide***

**Team Building and Collaboration Committee**

The Team Building and Collaboration Committee promotes kindness, respect, and tolerance of each other's differences. It reinforces collegiality and collaboration among jury members in their work efforts and assists in conflict resolution to achieve the goals of the Grand Jury. The committee encourages the concepts of "**TEAM** -**T**ogether **E**ach **A**chieves **M**ore" and working together for the common good of the county. The Team Building and Collaboration Committee serves a dual purpose: to foster unity and encourage Grand Jurors in making connections with each other, and collaboration to resolve differences between jurors.

Team building is at the core of the Grand Jury's work: we are nineteen different people, but we speak as one jury through our reports. The varied nature of the work we do necessitates good communication, a reduction of bias, willingness to compromise, and a commitment to doing the work necessary to produce high-quality reports.

Practicing the "**Five Principals of Collaboration" Trust, Respect, Willingness, Empowerment, and Effective Communication** is the other goal of the committee. Collaboration helps when there are differences of opinion between jurors on report tasks, the direction of reports, division of labor, or personal conflicts. We use a peer-based approach to resolving differences. When there is an issue between jurors, the Committee Chair is consulted first to see if matters can be resolved to everyone's satisfaction. If no agreement is reached, the issue is elevated to the Foreperson and/or Foreperson Pro Tem for consultation and resolution. If there is still conflict, the Foreperson then elevates to the Supervising Judge to resolve the issue.

**TEAM BUILDING**

**COLLABORATION/TEAMWORK SKILLS**

The ability of a group to work together toward a common goal is at the heart of the Grand Jury work. The year begins with nineteen people of different backgrounds, skills, professions, and talents; by the end of the year, a successful Grand Jury team has published a series of reports that required every one of those people to join together and work collaboratively. These skills can be developed and strengthened during the year, but a Grand Jury cannot do its work without them.

Conflict Resolution: Following and practicing the guidelines below will reduce conflicts. However, disagreements will arise from time to time that will require the Conflict Resolution Team to mediate and support jurors.

What are the basic skills needed for successful teamwork?

* **Active Listening**: This goes beyond just hearing your colleague's words, to listening without judgment, and ensuring you understand the meaning behind what they say. Ask for clarification or explanation if you are not sure and take time to summarize the information before going on.
* **Turn Your Cell Phone Off:** Pay attention to people and the work at hand.
* **Written Communication:** A lot of collaboration happens through writing. The Grand Jury will have people with many different levels and skills in writing; make use of those skills in creative ways so that each Juror gets experience in some aspect of report writing. At the same time, be mindful of how your writing might be received or interpreted by others; a neutral, professional tone works well.
* **Email Etiquette**: Read those emails!!!!!!!!! And then read again. When you send an email to jurors, check it before you send it. NOT reading your emails and not responding promptly will slow down the investigative process. It is also disrespectful to your fellow jurors.
* **Show respect for other juror's insights on report writing**: Make sure everyone has a chance to be heard on the structure of reports, style, content, findings, and recommendations
* **Investigation Leads:** Should give credit to contributors, i.e., "Bob did a great job with the charts and graphs."
* **Verbal Communication**: A significant amount of Grand Jury collaborative work is done through discussion and respectful debate. How something is said (tone) is just as important as what is said. "Respectfully disagreeing" is a Grand Jury skill well-worth practicing and perfecting; it goes a long way to reaching consensus and allowing everyone to feel their opinions are heard. When you speak, stay on topic, be as clear as possible, and keep it short so that others have a chance to contribute. Unless previously agreed upon, keep your comments to two minutes. One speaker at a time (ONE VOICE). If you have had a chance to speak, wait for others to have a turn before you speak again. No side conversations! It is distracting.
* **Nonverbal Communication**: Body language and tone have a big impact on how your verbal communication is received. Always consider both what you are saying and how you are saying it. It is common to feel some frustration and impatience during discussions but make the effort to not communicate that through body language. Show with body language that you are present and paying attention, respectfully.
* **Respect for Diversity/Gender**: Hopefully, your Grand Jury will have a healthy level of diversity in gender, ethnic backgrounds, life experience, and professional backgrounds. That is how the real world looks! To make it work, you must reflect and acknowledge any implicit biases you may have so that you can work respectfully with your colleagues. Be aware and call attention to behaviors that could be subtle forms of discrimination, such as if a minority colleague is consistently being talked over or ignored in discussions. Be sensitive about ethnic and/or religious backgrounds. Each Juror has a wealth of knowledge, experience, and talents to contribute bring everyone in and build consensus together.
* **Be aware that "Bad Behavior" is seen and noticed by other jurors:** We are a small group of people and some discussion will occur between jurors about other jurors. It will quickly be noticed if a juror is not acting in a professional and respectful way.
* **Get Everyone Involved**: Find out their strengths and talents and expand on them to deepen involvement and ownership of Grand Jury work. This may take some encouragement and mentoring; some of our tasks (like interviews) can make some jurors nervous and reluctant to participate.
* **Video/Zoom Conferencing Norms/Practices:** Please try to be in a room or place where you will not be disturbed. Please make sure no one at home can overhear your Grand Jury work; it is confidential. Be patient and flexible with tech issues and be willing to learn new skills so that you can contribute more fully to discussions. Please put your pet/pets in a quiet place. Try to have good natural lighting for your session or good artificial light. Be aware of the location of the microphone on your computer and try to speak close to it. Please mute your phone. You may need to mute your audio feed to help reduce background noises. Remember to un-mute when you need to speak!
* **Work Ethics**: Most of the above is part of good work ethics. Potential jurors MUST commit to working hard, following through, participating, and putting in the time required to get the job done.

**GROUND RULES FOR JUROR CONDUCT DURING MEETINGS**

**Contra Costa County Civil Grand Jury**

**Ground Rules**

* Use an agenda (Standard Jury Approved Template).
* Keep meeting minutes (Standard Jury Approved Template).
* Silence mobile devices.
* Begin meetings on time and stay until the meeting is concluded.
* Phone or email the Foreperson if you are going to be late or for an excused absence.
* Come to meetings prepared.
* Be inclusive, do not form cliques.
* Everyone participates. No one dominates.
* One speaker at a time. Do not interrupt—no side conversations.
* The Foreperson or Chair controls the floor. Raise your hand to be acknowledged.
* Listen to understand other' points of view.
* Keep an open mind. Discard biases.
* Speak so everyone can hear you.
* Keep your comments brief.
* Contribute constructively to the discussion.
* Focus on the issue at hand.
* Keep a team mentality.
* Treat Grand Jury members with mutual respect, trust, and dignity, assume they are acting in the best interest of Grand Jury business. Never resort to name-calling or bullying.
* Never undermine other Grand Jury members, either directly or indirectly.
* Strive for consensus. Work to resolve disagreements. If necessary, seek assistance from others. Be prepared to accept and support the resolution.
* Ask for and give help; welcome help when offered.
* Ask questions to understand, not to defend individual positions.

**CC Civil Grand Jury**

**Code of Collegiality**

* **Show Up Promptly**
* **Prepare Diligently**
* **Listen Attentively**
* **Speak Thoughtfully**
* **Question Assertively**
* **Collaborate Respectfully**
* **Compromise Graciously**

**Team Building/Skill Development Activities**

Grand jurors can engage in group activities that teach or enhance needed skills while also learning more about each other.

For example, each member of the jury can be asked to present a "Teaching Minute" at a plenary meeting. This involves picking a relevant section from the list of penal code sections in Tab 2 of the CGJA Training Manual and presenting the information to the rest of the group.

Or jurors can be asked to present a summary of a section of the grand jury's procedures manual, present a short discussion of a particular issue and address concerns or questions the jurors may have through the term.

Another great idea is for jurors to form teams to prepare for and conduct a short mock interview to present to the other jurors.

And teams can work together to critique and edit a report from an earlier jury.

And of course, ice breaker exercises and social activities can be effective in providing an opportunity for jurors to get to know each other and are fun too!

**CONFLICT**

**RESOLUTION**

**STEPS TO RESOLVING JURY CONFLICTS**

**Foreperson, Pro Tem, Committee Chairs**

A conflict resolution meeting requires patience and teamwork. Instead of imposing a solution on the parties, you should guide them to their own equitable resolution. Your role is to be direct, to clarify the issues, to keep the atmosphere respectful, and to help the parties come to a meeting of the minds through negotiation and compromise.

**It is usually better not to meet separately with the parties**. If you allow them to talk to you individually, they might see you as the judge or arbitrator and try to convince you of the rightness of their position and thereby end up more polarized – which would make resolving the conflict unnecessarily difficult. Instead, schedule a meeting where all the parties can work together to solve the problem.

While every situation is unique, we suggest you ordinarily follow these steps as you facilitate the conflict resolution meeting:

1. Committee Chair is the initial point of contact, elevating to the pro tem if the conflict has not been resolved.
2. Collect as much information about the problem from as many sources as possible.
3. Before you sit down with the juror/jurors, organize your thoughts, and write an outline of all the points you want to cover. This ensures that you do not forget any important issues.
4. Discretion works in everyone's favor. Choose a quiet time and a private place to respect privacy and to minimize distractions, and parties can talk openly and respectfully.
5. Set the ground rules. Assure them that each can speak their mind without interruption but must allow the others to do the same. Make sure the participants agree to the ground rules.
6. At the beginning of the meeting, have the parties acknowledge the conflict and agree on what it is. The conflict cannot be resolved until the jurors agree on what needs to be resolved. Ask each party to describe how they see the problem. This step can go a long way to solving the conflict, as it allows everyone to compare perceptions. In some cases, they may learn that the conflict is nothing more than a misunderstanding of the other person's position.
7. Discuss the impact the conflict is having on the grand jury or the individual jurors. Often, putting the needs of the grand jury before individual needs can help refocus the jurors' attention away from "winning" and toward a common goal.
8. Be sure the parties understand the impact the behavior has on the jury.
9. Get each person to explain how they feel the problem can be solved in a way that might be acceptable to the other jurors involved in the conflict—brainstorm possible solutions. Explore whether a realistic solution can be devised that meets at least some of the needs of all the parties. Ask each person to consider compromising for the good of the entire grand jury. Assure the parties that you know they can reach a fair and reasonable resolution.
10. As they work toward a resolution, try to keep the parties looking forward. Do not allow them to focus on the past or assign blame. Keep people and problems separate. Do not allow anyone to label one of the parties as the "troublemaker."
11. Write down the issues or approaches the parties agree to. Narrow the dispute point by point until the parties reach a full agreement
12. Articulate the solution. Make sure the parties share the same understanding of the steps that will be taken and by whom. Have each of them describe what each participant will be doing to resolve the conflict.
13. Clearly state the consequences that not meeting the goal could lead to possible dismissal from the grand jury.
14. When a solution has been found, congratulate the parties, acknowledge their contributions, and express your confidence that they will take the steps they have agreed to and will move forward from this point. Let them know that you will be monitoring the situation to see that progress is being made and the agreed-to-actions are being taken.

***Resolving conflict can be challenging. But the Foreperson's and Pro Tem's leadership roles includes the responsibility to deal with conflicts***

***swiftly and effectively.***

**Discussion Points**

1. **Preventing Conflicts**

* Early in the term, focus on team building
* Model respectful interaction
* Speak clearly and respectfully
* Open communication
* Practice active listening. Listen first, talk second
* Do not jump to conclusions about what the speaker has said
* Understand the perceptions and feelings of others
* Do not tolerate rudeness or sarcasm by one juror against another
* Never allow disagreements to get personal
* Insist that everyone sticks to the facts and not engage in put-downs, shunning, or other bullying tactics
* Always address conflicts as soon as they emerge. Do not let them fester; the individual parties will become more entrenched, and damage to the jury's collegiality will deepen

1. **Resolving Conflicts**

* Set the ground rules. Establish a safe meeting environment that allows the parties to speak openly and respectfully
* At the beginning of the meeting, have the parties acknowledge the conflict and agree on what it is
* Ask each party to describe how they see the problem
* Discuss the impact the conflict is having on the grand jury
* Get each person to explain how they feel the problem can be solved in a way that will be acceptable to other jurors involved in the conflict
* Help them work towards a resolution
* When a solution has been found, congratulate the parties, acknowledge their contributions
* Let them know you will be monitoring the situation to see that progress is being made

1. **Dealing with Serious Misconduct**

You should immediately report to your legal advisor and the judge any serious or intentional misconduct, such as:

* a deliberate breach of confidentiality (which constitutes a misdemeanor)
* a refusal to recuse when required by law to do so
* a refusal to follow state law or the judge's charge
* substance abuse that interferes with a juror's performance
* physical or verbal threats