



## CALIFORNIA TRUTH & HEALING COUNCIL

### PRINCIPLES FOR RESPECTFUL MEETINGS

The California Truth & Healing Council embraces transparency, inclusion and respect for all experiences, viewpoints and backgrounds and encourages all available methods for public participation. The Council supports public participation as a process to make better decisions that incorporate the interests and concerns of all communities and meet the needs and purpose of the Council.

Council Members, Staff and many participants are members of the population seeking collective healing, so we ask that you engage with the Council, Staff and each other with respect and with your whole heart in a healing mindset.

Many of those doing this work are navigating systems that were not built for us, to make change that was never contemplated—this in itself takes an enormous amount of patience and emotional integrity, and we are all doing our best to make strides in these spaces.

To honor the contributions of all participants to this critical work, we are continually working to improve the experience of those who choose to engage with the work of the Council.

To provide feedback about what is or isn't working, or to make suggestions, we encourage you to reach out to our team at [info@catruthandhealing.com](mailto:info@catruthandhealing.com).

The following principles are intended to guide your participation with the California Truth & Healing Council.

In order to create a space where participants feel welcomed, respected and able to speak comfortably, we will uphold the following principles in all convenings of the Council; we ask that all participants (Council Members, Authorized Representatives, Staff, moderators and the public) work towards sharing in their stewardship.

If you are a participant in a convening with the Council, we ask that you:

- Engage in the work of the Council and with others in an open and respectful way.
- Engage in behaviors that will make others feel welcome.
- Take care of your emotional, mental, spiritual and physical well-being.
- Seek support as you need it.

The Council looks to all participants to be partners in helping to create safe, inclusive, and respectful environments. All forms of discrimination, harassment and bullying are prohibited in any Council activity, including but not limited to Listening Sessions, Subcommittee meetings and events. During a presentation, if you experience or witness

any unacceptable behavior, please notify Council Staff by emailing [info@catruthandhealing.com](mailto:info@catruthandhealing.com). More information on expected conduct and meeting etiquette is available in the Council Code of Conduct.

### **1. Engage in this space and with others in an open and respectful way.**

- Seek to understand and learn, rather than to be right.
- Affirm the person, critique the ideas. Provide feedback constructively and with the intent for mutual growth and healing; welcome feedback and challenges to your opinions.
- Avoid contributing to assumptions or generalizations about tribes, tribal communities or other groups. Do not ask individuals to speak for their (perceived) group; speak only for yourself.
- Offer participants the benefit of the doubt. Spirited discussions are expected on these topics; see this as a sign that folks are engaged and care, and remember to be respectful as you speak, read, and listen.
- Honor confidentiality; do not share others' experiences or information without permission.
- Assume that you have relative privileges and both explicit and implicit biases.
  - Know that others may or may not have had similar opportunities, experiences, and background as you. Recognize that their contributions are equally valuable.
  - For those from dominant identity groups, refrain from contributions that prioritize dominant experiences over those who have been marginalized.

### **2. Engage in behaviors that will make others feel welcome.**

- Make behavioral adjustments for virtual communication:
  - If you wouldn't say something to someone's face, refrain from saying it virtually (by voice or text).
- Know that use of strong language, capital letters, and exclamation marks can be easily misinterpreted online as unwelcome yelling or aggressive behavior.
- Remember that tone does not carry via text: people might not realize you're joking or being sarcastic.
  - Leave space for others to engage and express comments and ideas if you have spoken recently by letting people finish their thoughts before adding new ones.

### **3. Take care of your well-being.**

- Take steps to ensure your physical comfort. Some examples in virtual meetings include: shift your sitting/standing position often, take a purposeful deep breath regularly, raise your eyes to look beyond the screen and/or sit back from the computer when possible to relieve eyestrain, keep a glass of water nearby and take sips throughout sessions. Please consider physically leaving the computer during breaks.
- Participate as you are able to and adjust your presence as needed, whether that be turning off video or stepping away entirely. It is not expected that all participants will or should be present for the entirety of the Council's work. We know and support that you will take time to eat, take care of your families and

pets, etc., but be aware that virtual convenings will be recorded and available to the public.

- Set up supportive resources such as food, water, ergonomics and privacy while offloading responsibilities (if possible) in advance of convenings. Plan for breaks and stick to them.
- Seek support from your own networks or from provided resources as needed.
- Please alert Council Staff to any concerns as soon as possible (by emailing [info@catruthandhealing.com](mailto:info@catruthandhealing.com)).

#### **4. Seek support as you need it.**

We recognize that participants bring their entire selves and histories with them to the Council, and that topics explored during the course of this work may stimulate emotions and thoughts that would benefit from accompaniment and support. Although trauma responses can come from a variety of sources and contexts, the Council understands that those who have experienced disparate treatment due to their Native identities may specifically want to seek assistance related to historical trauma and related issues discussed with the Council.

Council Staff will be providing supportive resources for participants to be available for the duration of the Council's work.

