MID-WILLAMETTE VALLEY HOMELESS ALLIANCE

Dignity Lens

Questions to ask yourself before sharing content with the public

This tool is intended to be used for content shared with the public. We hope to apply it for all content, yet we also realize that there are valid reasons for some internal content to be shared differently sometimes. The Dignity Lens questions can still be a guiding tool, even when we may need to make exceptions for some internal content.

<u>Why: about us and consent</u>

- What is our intent sharing the content? Who is likely to see this?
- Does this content add value, and is it true, necessary, and kind?
- Are we centering on ourselves or the people we serve? Is it possible to involve the client in crafting this message?
- Do we have something personal to gain?
- Does it include a person's name, picture or their story in a way that could identify them? If yes, do we have their **informed** consent? For sharing once, or more?
    - Is a Release of Information (ROI) needed? If so, make sure to get a signed ROI before sharing content. *If you don't have a ROI of your own, the Homeless Alliance will be creating a generic one to share with anyone who needs one.*

<u>How: specifics related to the people we serve</u>

- Does the content depict and immortalize people in their worst moments (reducing dignity, humanity, and accuracy, since any frozen moment is not a complete picture)?
- Does the content carry risk of harm?
- Does the content perpetuate negative stereotypes about the people we serve?
- Does the intended sharing enable "othering" (an "us vs. them" mentality, where "us" is the accepted norm and "them" is excluded)? *For example:*

"They are dirty, lazy, drug addicts, or criminals; they don't respect anything; they are crazy, dangerous, violent; they are not like us; they are less-than, immoral."

- If the intended sharing is about a specific person or group, does it reflect the accomplishments, bravery, and humanity of the person/people?

Things to consider: words carry meaning

- Use the word "trash" instead of "garbage". Garbage has a negative connotation, but everyone creates trash as a part of life.
- More communication tools are coming!