

SAN KO FA FACT SHEET

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Guidelines for Developing A Memorandum of Agreement

A memorandum of agreement (MOA) is a document developed to formalize the exchange of resources between two or more collaborating agencies. MOAs are recommended over “Letters of Support” because the relationship between collaborating agencies (who they are, what they will do for each other, how and under what circumstances) is described clearly and agreed upon by both agencies. MOAs are sometimes referred to as “collaborative agreements,” “letters of understanding” or “referral/linkage agreements.” MOAs are developed between private or public organizations where assistance is needed in reaching the target population, and/or facilitating the necessary resources and technical assistance to carry-out program activities. MOAs are not legally binding but good faith agreements that demonstrate a committed plan for collaboration which will reduce duplication of services and maximize agency and program effectiveness. The following components should be addressed in an MOA:



- ? Statement of agreement to collaborate and for what purpose (what are the goals of collaboration effort?): Provide full name, address and a description of each collaborating agency.
- ? Statement of services or goods each collaborating agency is willing to provide or exchange. An example would be: the People of Color AIDS Coalition (POCAC) agrees to accept food coupons from clients of Us Helping Us (UHU) to collect and return food coupons during the last week of each month to UHU, to participate in monthly training sponsored by UHU, etc.; and UHU agrees to accept referrals for counseling and prevention case management from POCAC, to provide training slots for all POCAC staff, to provide monthly statistics on referrals received from POCAC, etc.
- ? Statement of how services or goods will be provided or exchanged. For instance, if one agency will be issuing mental health referrals and another agency will be accepting them, both agencies should agree on a protocol to be followed for the referral process, and include this protocol on the MOA. These collaborating agencies should clearly define what referral form will be used, how referrals will be documented and tracked, what the procedure for feedback on referral completion or problems encountered will be, etc. Persons responsible for conducting the services should be identified by titles (i. e., the referral specialists will be making referrals to POCAC). The collaborative agreement will be easier to execute if the MOA is specific.
- ? Statement of responsibilities related to confidentiality.
- ? Statement of responsibilities related to documentation and reporting expected from each agency.
- ? Statement of how the MOA content (collaboration agreement) will be reviewed, evaluated and updated if necessary.
- ? Statement defining the length of the agreement (start and termination clause).
- ? Collaborating agencies may want to include a statement of indemnity. For instance, no element of this agreement will be construed to imply any form of financial obligation or liability, nor to confer on one party the capacity to represent or act as an agent of the other.
- ? Statement clarifying the date of the agreement and signatures of agency personnel authorized to commit collaborating agencies to provide services and share resources.

For more information, call the technical assistance analyst at the Mississippi Urban Research Center, 1-866-578-6872 (JSU-MURC).

