

CCNW Zoom Support Groups

Helpful Tips & Guidelines

In addition to the usual group guidelines, these tips and guidelines are specific to Zoom support group meetings to help us get the most out of this platform:

- **CONFIDENTIALITY AND RISK MANAGEMENT:** By participating in the Zoom support groups you are taking the same type of risk that you do in any online transaction. CCNW will do everything possible to maintain your privacy from the information technology (IT) management end, including the use of elevated ZOOM encryption tools. To help us further protect privacy we need your assistance. Just like in our in-person support groups, we ask you to keep any information shared in the Zoom support groups confidential. In addition, we ask you to protect privacy by shielding your screen from others, and the audio from others listening. Using headphones is one way to help with this if you are in a shared or public space. Do not take screenshots during the meetings unless your facilitator is sharing resources. Do not record the meetings. Do not share the meeting ID number or password with anyone. Participants receive meeting information from the group facilitator.
- The counselor facilitating the meeting will be more active than you might be used to in the in-person meetings in order to help the group get the most out of the Zoom platform.
- Log in for the meeting a few minutes before the start time so you have a chance to test out your equipment, check your camera view and sound connection, and settle in. The host will “admit you” to the meeting at the start time.
- Please use the video option! We feel more connected when we can see each other, and it helps group participants feel safe.
- Position your camera properly; put it in a stable position and focused at eye level. Avoid having your light sources behind you, as that puts your face in shadow. Check to see what’s going to be behind you, because that’s our background view for the call.
- Stay close to your internet router during the meeting to improve video quality.
- Expect a slight delay with the video feeds. Because of this delay, we cannot hear or understand if we talk over each other. We need to let one person speak at a time and be mindful about taking turns.
- Everyone’s computer or smart phone setup is a little bit different. It’s natural to be watching the face of the person who is speaking, and since most of us are not looking at the computer camera constantly, the lack of eye contact can feel strange.
- If you’re using Zoom on your smart phone, you won’t have the gallery view (multiple squares) option of all participants. You’ll only be able to see the person who is speaking/last to speak. The program automatically switches the screen to whoever is

speaking.

- Look at your camera frequently, *especially* when you're speaking, this helps mimic eye contact.
- Mute your microphone when you're not speaking and minimize background noise when you are. The facilitator can also mute your microphone and will do so as needed.
- Use your non-verbal communication options and body language when you're listening. This lets others know that you're engaged on the call and listening to what they're saying.
- Limit distractions during the meeting, including multi-tasking, eating, or watching TV.
- Watching yourself on screen can be distracting. We suggest putting a post-it over your square to help you until you get used to not focusing on yourself or try using the "speaker view" display option so that whoever is speaking is shown larger on your screen.