



# POC Sensitivity Training: Identification

## **WHO ARE WE: STAFF, BOARD, PARTNERS, DONORS, VOLUNTEERS**

POC has been around for about 32 years with different names. At its core, POC has ALWAYS been diverse in religion, gender, politics, ethnicity, education, abilities, etc. This makes US ALL

- Open minded
- Respectful
- Welcoming
- Free to ask for help

We are comprised of:

- A Foundation Board that makes us a non profit
- Donors, volunteers, staff (full and part time)
- A rich cultural diversity
- A rich program and partner effort



# POC Sensitivity Training: Identification Continued

## WHO ARE WE:

- POC works with many agency partners on site and off site to provide programs and pay part of staff costs.
- POC has a board that allows for fundraising and mission guidance
- POC runs its own program:
  - **Adult Leadership:**
    - ROLE women's program
    - IWC: IL Welcoming Center
    - A2J: Access to Justice and Housing Eviction Prevention
  - **Education and Employment:**
    - Learning Lab/ Enrollments/ Tutoring/Resume Assist.
  - **Youth and Family**
    - Family enrichments/Community school
    - ICompete (partner)
    - Violence Prevention



# POC Sensitivity Training

**Sensitivity Training is defined as: BECOMING AWARE**

An effort to **make employees aware of their attitudes and behaviors toward others (coworkers, volunteers, partner agencies, clients, board, donors and anyone that engages with POC Staff), so that they become respectful of people with different experiences, backgrounds and communication styles because EVERYONE HAS BIASES!**

This includes people who are different in race, color, gender, religion, age, ability, sexual orientation, ethnicity and other categories protected under **(8) Civil Rights Acts: Prohibited discrimination** in public accommodations, facilities, and schools. Outlawed discrimination in federally funded projects. Created the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to monitor employment discrimination in public and private sectors.



## **POC Sensitivity Training: IMPLICIT BIAS (implied/indirect/unconsciously done)**

**In a horse arena, we have a horse, an ostrich and a goat.**

- **A second horse enters the arena. Where does he go?**

**You are part of a research survey project.**

- **You enter a room with many tables with one open chair in each.**
- **In one table, sit mainly elderly caucasian women.**
- **In another table, sit African American males**
- **In another table sit 20/30 something Latino/a/x**
- **Where do you sit?**

**We cannot help but seek what we know and what is comfortable to us. We tend to categorize things to help us understand social worlds.**



# POC Sensitivity Training: BIAS

**Bias** is a prejudice in favor of or against 1 thing, person, or group compared with another usually in a way that's considered to be unfair. Biases may be held by an individual, group, or institution & can have negative or positive consequences. There are 2 types of biases 1. Conscious bias(also known as explicit bias) and 2. **Unconscious bias (also known as implicit bias)**

It is important to note that biases, conscious or unconscious, are not limited to ethnicity and race.

Biases may exist toward **any** social group.

**Unconscious biases are social stereotypes about certain groups of people that individuals form outside their own conscious awareness.** Everyone holds **unconscious beliefs** about various social groups, and these biases stem from one's tendency to organize social worlds by categorizing. [These are also learned via family groups and experiences].

**Unconscious bias is far more prevalent than conscious prejudice and often incompatible with one's conscious values. Certain scenarios can activate unconscious attitudes and beliefs. For example, biases may be more prevalent when multi-tasking or working under time pressure.**

-Unconscious Bias Training/USC @ SF. DEI



## **POC Sensitivity Training:**

**For the purpose of this training, let's focus on client sensitivity.**

**Because we are human, we have internal, unconscious biases that cannot be helped. Categorizing is part of human cognition BUT MUST be identified.**

**When we first see or engage with a client we tend to prethink and hence pre-judge. Pre-thinking is great b.c. it allows us to be prepared, but it can also lead to biases.**

- Ex: On a Saturday we notice an elderly gentleman with long hair and rough beard, pushing a cart in front of CRC. The cart has many bags in it. He wears a well worn coat.
  - Who is he? Why is he here?

**When we further engage in case management or further question asking for an intake, we tend to take into account the differences/similarities between us even more.**

- If we let our bias/stereotypes get in the way, we will miss the opportunity to listen and truly be helpful.



# POC Sensitivity Training:

For the purpose of this training, let's focus on client sensitivity.

## How do we engage without prejudice or prejudgement but still be prepared?

- **Become self aware:** Notice when you are mentally stereotyping. Know your own biases: Implicit Association Tests <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/iatdetails.html>
- Become knowledgeable about the people that call POC sites, home and the programs that are running as these bring in specific audiences.
- **Know that not ALL cases are the same.** Even if you are from the same familial group, your stories will be different! Pakistan V. India. Mexico V. Guatemala, etc. etc.
- Practice being professionally prepared to stop active stereotyping.
  - This means being patient with the client & letting them explain
  - This means focusing on what the client is telling/asking- being mindful
  - This means being comfortable with knowing what tools you have to aid the client **versus** mentally focusing on *what you think the client is going to ask next and jumping to your tool box.*
  - This means being aware that if you don't have the tools, you **MUST** ask for help
  - This means knowing that his story will be different than his brothers.



# POC Sensitivity Training:

For the purpose of this training, let's focus on client sensitivity.

## How do we engage without prejudice or prejudgement but still be prepared?

- **Know the myths:**
  - Everyone that is of low level English literacy is uneducated
  - Everyone that is from South/Central America is undocumented.
  - Women who seek assistance at POC are all victims
  - African American folks do not get served at POC
  - ? Other myths you have heard
- **Know their rights**
- **Learn their stories**
- **Speak with sensitivity/know the terms**
  - **Culture is personal, private. Speak of it on the client's terms. (Papeles v. documentos)**
  - We don't say victim of DV, we say survivor
  - We don't say poor, we say low income/marginalized.
  - We don't say "these people", we say, our client(s).
- **BE AWARE OF MICROAGGRESSIONS!**





# POC Sensitivity Training:

For the purpose of this training, let's focus on client sensitivity.

How do we engage without prejudice or prejudgement but still be prepared?  
Recognize and Avoid microaggressions.

What are MICROAGGRESSIONS!

*noun*

plural noun: **microaggressions**

1. a statement, action, or incident regarded as an instance of indirect, subtle, or **unintentional discrimination** against members of a marginalized group such as a racial or ethnic minority.
  - Microassault: touching someone's hair to see if its real or how it feels
  - Microinsult: "You articulate so very well"/ "You don't look Black"
  - Microinvalidation: "Everyone can succeed in society if they try hard enough"



# POC Sensitivity Training:

For the purpose of this training, let's focus on client sensitivity.

How do we engage without prejudice or prejudgement but still be prepared?

Avoid Microaggressions. They usually are:

- **Without intention or malice but more out of ignorance**
- **Come up when we are too busy and not focused on the client**
- **Given without engagement from the client.** Ex: Client greets you and says that they are here to learn about registration for English Language courses. You respond "Great, but you know I can understand you just fine". This is different from a client who has engaged and is concerned that they are not understood.
- **Offered as (false) compliments:** "When I see you, I don't see color"
- **Offered in an effort to make the client feel as if you are one with them.** "I know what you are going through. As a woman, I feel your pain".

It is easy to become overwhelmed at the front desk or one on one with a client with many needs. To avoid lack of sensitivity:

- Ask for help.** Ask for guidance.
- No matter how difficult the case/client, **treat each client with the dignity & respect** that you wish you and yours were treated with.
- Keep in mind that **you are representing ALL of us.**



## Sensitivity to client's privacy: CONFIDENTIALITY

- ROI- ROI-ROI If you don't have it. DON'T Share it!
- Ensure the client that information on our Charity Tracker will be for **continuation of care, grant reporting purposes, and coordination of services only**. We do not sell client information. We do not share information with the Fed Government. We do not report client's full names on grants.
- No fireside chats. The walls are listening.
  - If you must debrief, do so with your supervisor ALONE.
  - POC is a large family. Many of you were once clients or your family were. These cases are marked as confidential and only certain admin have access to them.
- Do not share one client story with another client. Even if names are left out, clients know each other well.
- DO not share client information with another agency unless an ROI has been signed, uploaded and shared.
- DO NOT have pictures of client info on your phones. Ask clients to email from their phones to your email to upload to CT. Show them how it works.
- Do not work on CT outside of POC hours and outside of your assigned computer.
- Client stories are private and when shared with you, are for purposes of service alone. Please DO NOT share these stories with friends or family. Respect that a client has trusted you.

## Sensitivity to client's legal status:

- **Undocumented vs documented: “papeles vs chueca”**
  - Alien - don't use it even if it is the USA term used
  - Moving towards “registered persons”
  - “What is your legal status”
  - “Are you eligible to work in the US?”
  - Do you have a social security number?
  - FYI: LPR- Legal permanent resident- has a green card
  - We can ask if they need immigration assistance. “Do you need help in obtaining immigration relief?”.
  - Never ask: Are you in the country illegally?



## Four words on discrimination: POC DOESN'T TOLERATE IT

**POC does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in any of its activities or operations. These activities include, but are not limited to, hiring and firing of staff, selection of volunteers and partners, and provision of services. We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our staff, clients, volunteers, subcontractors, partners, and clients.**