

La Leche League of MN/DAs Area Leader Agreement

1. Each Leader connecting to La Leche League of Minnesota and the Dakotas:
 - a. Signs the LLLI Statement of Commitment upon accreditation, agreeing to abide by LLLI policies for Leader volunteers, and re-commits to abide by the LLLI Statement of Commitment when paying annual Leader dues.
 - b. Maintains good standing as a member of LLL of MN/DAs by communicating with Area Team members and submitting statistical, activity, and financial reporting in accordance with the Area, Area Network, and LLLI policies, and by responding in a timely manner to communication initiated by Area Team members.
 - c. Provides Area administrators with current contact information (address, phone number, and email address).
 - d. Communicates with the other Leaders directly impacted by their work, irrespective of the Area or Area Network to which they or the other Leaders belong.
 - e. Is supportive of and mutually accountable to the Leaders in the Area. Mutual or lateral accountability can be demonstrated by:
 - i. Filling an Area Team position
 - ii. Attending Leader workshops and Chapter Meetings
 - iii. Sharing Leader and Group news in Area publications
 - iv. Sharing news with a District Advisor for inclusion in an Area publication
 - v. Participating in online discussion via the MN/DAs Facebook group or email
 - vi. **Mutual accountability can be demonstrated in other ways as well but each Leader must find a way to connect with fellow Leaders for enrichment and support.
 - f. Stays current with Area information as well as with breastfeeding/chestfeeding information relevant to their work as Leader by:
 - i. Engaging in five activities every 2 years that contribute to continuing education.
 1. Activities include, but are not limited to, attending Leader Day and Area Conference presentations, attending a webinar, or reading a relevant book.
 - ii. Tracking continuing education activities on the spreadsheet provided by the Area Team.
 - g. Continues to grow in skills and education with equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) by:
 - i. Fulfilling the following requirements every 2 years:
 1. 1 hour anti-racist education
 2. 1 hour on a topic related to LGBTQ+ issues
 3. 1 hour on a topic related to disability issues
 - ii. Tracking EDI requirements on the spreadsheet provided by the Area Team.
 - iii. **Lived experience does not count toward fulfilling the EDI requirement.
 - iv. **New Leaders to the Area will commit to finishing their EDI education requirements within 6 months of accrediting.
 - h. Provides breastfeeding information, education and support, not specific advice, allowing each mother/parent to make the best decision for their situation and family.
 - i. Agrees to support all breastfeeding, chestfeeding, and human milk feeding families, inclusive of their race, ethnicity, immigration status, national origin, creed, age,

sexual orientation, gender identity, family structure, primary language, ability, or socio-economic status.

- j. Takes care not to use their trusted position with nursing parents to promote personal viewpoints (breastfeeding or otherwise) or gain financially.
- k. Promotes a meeting environment that welcomes nursing parents and intentionally initiates and redirects meeting discussions to maintain a positive tone.
- l. Ensures that their activities as an LLLI volunteer are consistent with LLLI Philosophy and the LLLI Policies and Standing Rules.
- m. Keeps confidential the personal and medical information of the parents and children with whom they work, unless otherwise required by law.
- n. Helps maintain the understanding among nursing parents and the public that:
 - i. LLLI focuses on matters relating to breastfeeding/chestfeeding, as defined by its philosophy, and does not endorse other causes.
 - ii. The primary role of an LLLI Leader is to provide nursing parents with information, education, and support on matters relating to breastfeeding, as defined by LLLI Philosophy.
 - iii. Working in cooperation with any other organization does not imply endorsement of the viewpoints of that organization by LLLI or the Leader.
- o. Submits for review by the Area Team any Group financial contracts and/or project budgets that are in excess of the Group's cash reserves or liquid investments.
- p. Reviews the La Leche League of MN/DAs Area Leader Agreement annually. On years when a Leader Day occurs, the Area Leader Agreement will be read aloud at the event.

2. Conflict Resolution (Grievance Policy)

- a. If any Leader has concerns about another Leader fulfilling the responsibilities outlined in the Area Agreement:
 - i. The concerned Leader should first reach out to the other Leader to try to resolve their concerns within 14 days of the initial issue.
 - ii. If the concerned Leader is unable to resolve their concerns within 14 days, they should contact the Communications Skills support person or the District Advisor.
 - iii. If these secondary measures of bringing in a third person do not lead to resolution, the Area Team will create a conflict resolution team consisting of 3-5 Leaders from the Area who are not involved with the conflict, ideally including a member of the Communication Skills team as well, within 10 days of receiving information about the conflict from the District Advisor or Communication Skills Instructor.
 - iv. If the conflict resolution team fails to resolve the issue within 21 days of beginning the work, the team will obtain support from AN (Mosaic).
 - v. The ultimate decision lies with La Leche League of MN/DAs and will be communicated to Area Leaders within another 14 days after receiving guidance from Mosaic. If the Area and Leader cannot reach a mutually agreed upon solution within the bounds of this agreement, the Leader will be disconnected from the Area, following a letter to the Leader from the Area Team and conflict resolution team.
- b. If a Leader does not meet the Leader obligations outlined in the LLL of MN/DAs Area Leader Agreement, they may be involuntarily removed and/or retired from the Area and/or LLLI.

- c. Prior to calling for a Leader removal: Those Leaders in disagreement with a Leader should use all means possible to communicate their difficulties and seek a resolution using Appendix A: Guidelines for Skillful Conversation.
3. All Leaders connecting to La Leche League of MN/DAs have the right and responsibility to choose a decision-making body for the Area.
 - a. Currently, the Area Team serves as this decision-making body.
 - b. The Area Team will consist of: Area Coordinator of Leaders (ACL), Coordinator of Leader Accreditation (CLA), Area Professional Liaison (APL), and Area Financial Coordinator (AFC). Additionally, LLL of MN/DAs may have the following positions as a part of the Area Team: an Area Coordinator of Events (ACE), an Area Communications Coordinator (ACC), a Communications Skills Coordinator (CSC), an Area Equity Advocate (AEA) and any other positions the Area Team sees fit.
 - c. Open Area Team positions will be announced to the Area. Interested Leaders will contact a member of the Area Team; Leaders may also recommend other Leaders for open positions. The Area Team will evaluate interested Leaders and appoint Area Team members.
 - d. Decisions by the Area Team will be made by consensus whenever possible and by majority vote if consensus is not reached, taking care that the needs of the minority are also met as well as possible.
 - e. Discussion among the Area Team members will take place via email, phone, and at Area Team meetings.
 - f. Removal of an Area Team member:
 - i. In the unlikely event that a member of the Area Team is not adequately serving Minnesota and the Dakotas Leaders, MN/DA Leaders may call for them to be replaced prior to the end of their term. This procedure should not be undertaken lightly. The intent of this procedure is to counterbalance the self-selecting nature of the Area Team, so that a majority of MN/DA Leaders can make certain the Area Team is effective in the event that one or more of the members are no longer leading MN/DAs in the direction desired by a large majority of Leaders.
 - ii. Prior to calling for an Area Team member removal: Those Leaders in disagreement with an Area Team member should use all means possible to communicate their difficulties and seek a resolution using Appendix A: Guidelines for Skillful Conversation. Those Leaders in disagreement with an Area Team member must send a signed letter (by post or email) to the Area Team informing them of the issue(s) which have caused them to lose confidence in the Area Team member, and allow the Area Team 30 days to discuss and attempt to resolve the issue. The Area Team is obligated to send a written response explaining their views and any actions which will be or have been taken on the situation to the MN/DA Leaders within those 30 days.
 - iii. In order to call for a removal of an Area Team member: More than 65% of Minnesota and the Dakotas Leaders must be in agreement that removal of an Area Team member is needed. This can be determined by an anonymous poll (open for at least five business days) sent via email to all Leaders in good standing. Discussion via email and the Leader Facebook group must be openly allowed and encouraged. However, all discussion and voting on all Area email lists must begin and end within a 30 day period. This limit will allow for open discussion among all Leaders but keeps the process from continuing to produce dissent within the Area if enough Leaders are not

- convinced. No second call for removal of the same Area Team member may be made for six months after a failed attempt.
- iv. In the event that a removal of any Area Team member occurs: The former member must give to the Area Team any and all records and Area belongings which are in their possession. They will continue to be a Leader of the Minnesota and the Dakotas Area, but they may not take any Area position for at least two years.
 - v. Any Leader who feels they have been treated unjustly by this procedure may file a grievance with Mosaic.
 - g. Prior to finalization of contracts, the Area Team agrees to submit for review by the Mosaic Council any financial contracts and/or project budgets that are in excess of the Area's cash reserves or liquid investments and that all MN/DA entities (LLL Groups or project committees) will likewise submit any such contracts/budgets to the MN/DA decision-making body for review.
4. Should a change to the Area Agreement be desired in the future, it can be initiated and voted on by current Leaders in good standing. Voting can take place via a digital ballot emailed to every Leader in good standing. The measure will be passed by two-thirds of the returned votes.

Appendix A: Guidelines for Skillful Conversation

1. Listen and inquire for understanding. Listen to how you're thinking.
 2. Suspend judgment. This doesn't mean giving up your own point of view. Relax the debate inside your head and listen to try and understand the other person.
 3. Use "I" statements. Speak from your own experience.
 4. Share your thinking. Articulate your assumptions.
 5. Allow yourself and others to be inarticulate.
 6. Express and welcome divergent views. It's okay to challenge the status quo. Allow space for contentious viewpoints.
 7. Respect silence. Be aware of pace.
 8. Stick with difficult and important issues. This is a critical aspect of leadership.
 9. Respect confidentiality. Respect the sharing of sensitive information. When in doubt, ask before sharing.
 10. Take responsibility for your own participation.
 11. Have one conversation at a time.
 12. Assume good intent.
 13. Avoid over-generalizations and cultural stereotypes.
- Originally written by Linda Pierce of Shell*