King County Immigrant and Refugee Commission
GROUP NORMS
Adapted from Visions Inc., “Guidelines for Productive Work Sessions”

TRY IT ON: Be willing to “try on” new ideas, or ways of doing things that might not be what you prefer or are familiar with.

PRACTICE SELF FOCUS: Attend to and speak about your own experiences and responses. Do not speak for a whole group or express assumptions about the experience of others.*

UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN INTENT AND IMPACT: Try to understand and acknowledge impact. Denying the impact of something said by focusing on intent is often more destructive than the initial interaction.

PRACTICE “BOTH / AND”: When speaking, substitute “and” for “but.” This practice acknowledges and honors multiple realities.

REFRAIN FROM BLAMING OR SHAMING SELF & OTHERS: Practice giving skillful feedback.

STEP UP / STEP BACK: Encourage full participation by all present. Take note of who is speaking and who is not. If you tend to speak often, consider “moving back” and vice versa.

PRACTICE MINDFUL LISTENING: Try to avoid planning what you’ll say as you listen to others. Be willing to be surprised, to learn something new. Listen with your whole self.

RIGHT TO PASS: You can say “I pass” if you don’t wish to speak.

DISAGREE WITH IDEAS: When presented with a different point of view, ensure to express disagreement with the idea rather than the person expressing it.

PLEASE HELP: If you are not running to another commitment following our meeting, please help with room cleanup.

*Remember that Commission meetings are public. While we will respect the dignity of anyone who shares information or personal views at our meetings, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.