

Covia's Position on Community and Diversity

Each of us is unique, a uniqueness that can create beauty, friction, synergy and conflict. Covia's mission is to bring similar-yet-different people together under an umbrella called community, whether they live together, work together, or participate in the same program. Community in its best sense is about bringing together a group of people who care about each other and feel they belong together and help each other create meaning and purpose.

Covia believes that community is the healthiest and strongest way that we can come together in shared lives and experiences. Through community, we celebrate diversity: diversity of education, culture, language, world view, ability, perspective, personality and of course, race, religion, sexual orientation, political views, and all the myriad ways that humans can be alike or different.

Community makes us strong through the different perspective and experiences each individual brings to the table. We strive to continually build community to honor those individual qualities in the context of healthy and respectful relationships.

Covia's Guiding Principles



As we evolve into a new organization with Front Porch, we will work to connect and build trust in our relationships and treat each other with respect and fairness; we will collaborate through listening and communication.

To support the statutory rights of residents and to live our values, Covia promotes community through several practices: prioritizing transparency and communications; adhering to the *Resident Communication Policy*; working with elected Resident leadership; enhancing opportunities for resident voice; and supporting chaplaincy and the work of the chaplains. These rights and practices are found in Resident Agreements, Resident Handbooks, and House Rules. Covia educates and trains staff on cultural competency, language use, leadership, and communication and maintains policies to prohibit coercion and harassment throughout the system.

While Covia celebrates the diversity of each human with whom we connect, we set the standard that when someone expresses their opinion – be that in a conversation, a meeting, an assembly, or a march – that they do so with consideration of others within the community. This is not intended to temper the passion of opinion, but rather to find ways to express our ideas in a manner that upholds the dignity and equity of others. When we exercise these standards, we achieve rich and diverse communities.

We expect that your passion remain non-violent to person or property; that we are compassionate and kind; that when we assemble, we do not leave anything visible behind us. Additionally, because of the nature of Covia's tax exemption, we require that no expression beyond individual conversations occur that reference any political party, candidate, or elected official.

Building a healthy community takes a lot of intentional effort. Sometimes that effort means expressing yourself in a manner that doesn't degrade the beliefs of others. Sometimes it means letting someone else express something that you don't believe in. We think it can also mean having hard conversations about differences. These actions are displays of contrast and blending, and when approached with respect, are evidences of a beautiful community.