



## ***The Awareness of Low-Income Voices (ALIV(e))***

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

A Terms of Reference document is a tool that can provide a structure for a developing group. It acts as a guide for how we want our group to work.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The Leadership Roundtable of Opportunities Waterloo Region recognized the need for participation of community members experienced with poverty or low-income in order to contribute their wisdom to the work of the organization.

### **MEMBERSHIP:**

The Opportunities Resource Group will be inclusive of persons who support the mission of Opportunities and have self-declared, current experience with poverty or low-income. As much as possible, every sector of low-income will be represented (low-income workers, ODSP, OW, etc) and diversity of group membership is important. The goal to work collaboratively together and with other sectors is a key requirement for membership.

### **GENERAL MANDATE**

The Opportunities Resource Group represents the voices of the low-income sector. It provides suggestions/ideas for action or feedback on current (or possible new) focus areas to the LRT. It may also, at times, have suggestions for actions that can be spearheaded by the group.

### **SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- a. Convene/attend regular discussion meetings in order to provide feedback on topical items to the LRT.
- b. Provide suggestions regarding specific projects
- c. Provide information regarding policy/programming issues as experienced by members of the Group

### **REPORTING RELATIONSHIP & ACCOUNTABILITY:**

The Opportunities Resource Group will report to the Leadership Roundtable of Opportunities Waterloo Region through the staff of Opportunities and LRT representation in the Group.

### **LINKAGES AND COMMUNICATION:**

LRT members who represent the low-income sector will act as liaisons between the Resource Group and the LRT. The Resource Group can formulate suggestions for actions or focus areas to the LRT for their consideration. In turn, the LRT submits its recommendations to Opportunities' Board of Directors. The Opportunities' Board of Directors is responsible for final decisions.

### **STRUCTURE AND RESOURCES:**

The Resource Group will be supported by Opportunities Waterloo Region. Opportunities' staff will be the group's support for facilitation, minute-taking, and meeting coordination. Opportunities' staff will provide transportation options for individuals whenever possible (by arranging transportation or travel expenses to and from meetings).

**MEETINGS:**

Meetings will be scheduled with the Group by consensus but in consideration of the timeliness of the response required to the LRT. Currently, the Group wishes to meet Mondays, in the morning on a bi-weekly schedule at least until the September LRT meeting. The location of the meetings will vary between venues in Kitchener and Cambridge.

**DECISION MAKING PROCESS:** By consensus.

**BENEFITS TO GROUP MEMBERS:**

- Learning/educational opportunities on issues related to poverty such as: Community Conversations Series and tele-learning sessions
- Networking opportunities; share information on local resources
- Learn about the current local, provincial, and national efforts to reduce and prevent poverty
- An opportunity to be part of making a positive difference to the lives of other folks