

MWD Direct Report Team Operating Agreement

April 2025



Team goals and objectives

- Determine how to implement the **organizational strategy and direction** approved by the Board (based on recommendations of the General Manager)
- Shape healthy culture by **enhancing relationships** and **modeling values**
- Establish **disciplined internal governance** to synchronize performance across all Departments
- **Work with, and educate, the Board** to align with, and support, the direction of travel of the Direct Report Team

Team Members and Team Roles & Responsibilities

Team Members

- General Manager
- General Counsel
- General Auditor
- Ethics Officer

Team Roles

Strategic Allies

Direct Report Team members act as strategic partners to one another, focusing on the organization's overall success rather than solely on their departmental interests.

Collaborative Problem-Solvers

Direct Report Team members work together to address challenges that affect the entire organization. They engage in collaborative decision-making about resource (human and financial) allocation and prioritizing initiatives based on the biennial planning objectives.

Organizational Stewards

Direct Report Team members consider the needs of the organization beyond the demands of their functional responsibilities. They approach their work with an "MWD first, department second" mindset.

Team Responsibilities

Collective Accountability

Direct Report Team members share accountability for delivering organization-wide goals, and ownership of each goal is allocated to the appropriate team member. They support one another in achieving organizational objectives.

Cross-Functional Collaboration

Direct Report Team members are responsible for fostering interdepartmental collaboration and breaking down silos and modeling this behavior to the organization. This includes reaching out to colleagues anywhere in the organization to create partnerships that add more value than individual functional teams could achieve alone.

Strategic Decision-Making

Direct Report Team members are tasked with considering and making decisions that benefit the entire organization, not just their individual departments. The Direct Report Team members make recommendations, based on their areas of expertise, that are beneficial to the District as a whole.

Organizational Culture Building

Direct Report Team members are responsible for creating and modeling the values-based culture of the organization. This includes building collective ownership in the organization's culture and aligning with its core values and mission.

Peer Support

Direct Report Team members are expected to support their fellow leaders, sometimes even prioritizing this over supporting their direct reports. This includes having each other's backs, looking out for one another, and providing support when challenges arise.

Communication expectations

- Regular Direct Report Team meetings
- Text & email communications between meetings

Feedback mechanisms

- In person, in meetings if all team members affected.
- In person, 1:1 in private, if only between two team members.
- Timely feedback is key.

Conflict resolution

- In person, face-to-face. Either 1:1 or as a team if it affects more than two team members.
- Follow a conflict resolution process:
 - Acknowledge the conflict openly
 - Define the problem from an organizational perspective
 - Meet to discuss the issue
 - Analyze the root cause
 - Focus on organizational goals
 - Develop a solution
 - Implement continuous improvement
- If the Team cannot resolve, request meeting with the Chair of the Board to help resolve.

Change requests

- Bring to Direct Report Team meeting

- For larger changes, develop a change management plan (e.g., following [Kotter's 8 step process](#) or similar).

Meeting structure and frequency

- Monthly meetings – Direct Report Team
- Quarterly newsletter to all employees with MWD overall and Dept updates
- Semi-annual in person Management Forums

Team norms and values

- Direct Report Team is the “First Team” for MWD – keep the best interest of MWD first and the interest of individual departments second.
- Team Norms
 - **Cohesion** across Departments
 - **Clarity** on MWD priorities and decision-making process
 - More **efficient execution** across the organization to optimize resources (human and financial)
 - Transparent and honest **communications** to build trust

Operating Agreement maintenance

- Review this document semi-annually by all Direct Report Team members and update as needed.