

Formalize Partnerships

There are various options you can consider to formalize prevention work with your partners. Possible approaches include formal agreements, coalition or task force membership, or regular standing meetings with the partner. These strategies can support continued suicide prevention work even when a funding cycle or specific initiative ends. Although not every partnership can be formalized, identifying the appropriate ways to “bake in” partners’ key suicide prevention functions is critical to continuing your suicide prevention efforts over the long term.

This worksheet will help you think through the best approach to formalize your partnerships. Keep in mind that different approaches may be needed for different collaborators. Think about which approach will make the most sense given your own situation. If a formal agreement makes the most sense, you can refer to the checklist below, as well as [this resource](#) from the Center for the Application of Prevention of Technologies that provides a template and walks you through the different sections of a standard formalized agreement. *If a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is a good option for your partners, the checklist below can help you develop your formalized agreement.*

MOU Checklist

Describe the purpose of the MOU

- Identify shared goals
- List specific and measurable objectives for each goal (including how it will be met and how it will be measured and tracked)

Describe each partner’s roles and responsibilities

- Provide some background information
- Describe each partner’s roles and responsibilities briefly in relation to suicide prevention
- Provide the main contact and an alternative contact

Describe the governance structure (if applicable)

- Provide a description of the structure (e.g., how decisions will be made, frequency of meetings)

Describe funding parameters (if applicable)

- Detail any fiscal agreements (including any in-kind contributions of each partner)

Describe communication

- Acknowledge confidentiality policies of each partner
- Describe branding decisions

Describe reporting and evaluation

- Include any desired requirements for reporting on progress, challenges, funding updates, etc. Include information about timing for these reports.
- Provide information on evaluation details (e.g., timing, methods used, who is responsible for the evaluation)

Describe how to handle intra-partnership conflict

- Provide an agreed-on protocol for productively addressing intra-alliance conflicts between staff and partners
- Include the consequences of repeatedly not adhering to the protocol

Specify the effective dates of the MOU

- Include the start date, duration, termination, and how to handle modifications or amendments
- Provide partners’ signatures and titles, including a space for the date signed