



Community Relations Commission (CRC) of Goshen CRC Statement of Principles



As a Community Relations Commission and as individuals, we celebrate the community that is Goshen. We believe in Goshen, which is why we have made it our home. We also want Goshen to be a place of positive community relations in which all residents can enjoy equality as well as life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

At the same time, we recognize that our community is experiencing challenging times and we have observed significant demographic, social, and economic changes over the past 10 years. All of us, regardless of background, are encountering realities that we have never encountered before. During times such as this it is important to name and claim basic principles that remind us who we are and what we aspire to be so that all people can lead lives of dignity and peace. We view this as an important step toward achieving positive community relations.

Therefore, in recognition of our similarities and differences, both within the Commission and the broader Goshen community, the CRC declares its commitment to the following principles:

Respect for each other and respect for each other's rights

Open communication and engagement

Honesty

A safe community

Acceptance that change has positive and negative consequences

Tolerance of differences

Support for equality and freedom from discrimination

As the Community Relations Commission, these are the principles we aspire to be known for. We encourage others to embrace these same aspirations. While we recognize that it is important to actively pursue these principles, we will be mindful of the potential need to review and adjust this set of principles from time to time.

Adopted December 8, 2009

Community Relations Commission (CRC) of Goshen Statement of Principles – Why and How

(1) Respect for each other and respect for each other's rights

Working together constructively requires that we respect each other and respect each other's rights. Such respect opens the door to communication, which can open the door to positive community relations.

We demonstrate respect by listening to each other at monthly CRC meetings and by listening to the community in public and private settings.

(2) Open communication and engagement

Communication and engagement are fundamental means for revealing similarities and differences and developing positive relationships.

We communicate and engage at monthly CRC meetings and periodic special meetings. We also communicate and engage by connecting with:

- The Neighborhoods of Goshen
- The Goshen Ministerial Association
- The Goshen Chamber of Commerce
- The Intercultural Network
- Other individuals and groups within the community.

We also are committed to finding new ways to improve communication with and in the community.

(3) Honesty

Honesty and open conversation help us foster trust and develop a more complete understanding of the entire community.

We pursue trust and understanding by listening to others, sharing our own experiences and telling of the experiences of others.

(4) A safe community

A safe community leads to both individual and collective freedom: for example freedom to learn; freedom to be in public places; freedom to have relationships with friends, acquaintances and even strangers; freedom to choose where we live; etc.

We value and pursue a safe community by respecting laws and democratic processes. We ask the same of all within our community.

We support programs such as Peacemakers, which empowers youth to resist involvement in gangs, violence, and drugs and to transform conflict.

(5) Acceptance that change has positive and negative consequences

Change happens, and we need to accept that it has positive and negative consequences. Such acceptance leads to a more complete understanding of the reality of the community as a whole.

We support positive activities, programs, and initiatives that serve and celebrate the people of Goshen.

We are committed to learning from those who have experienced some of the negative impacts of change in our community.

(6) Tolerance of differences

Tolerance, acknowledging the rights of others, is a basic expression of respect and opens the door to discussion which can lead to understanding and ultimately the acceptance of differences.

We create opportunities and provide safe spaces for people with differences to communicate and experience positive interaction such as during Diversity Day and gatherings in neighborhoods of Goshen.

(7) Support for equality and freedom from discrimination

We affirm America's principles of freedom and equality and we stand for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

We provide a discrimination hotline and facilitate further processing of cases of discrimination by connecting callers with mediators and/or the Indiana Civil Rights Commission as appropriate.

We acknowledge that the primary stated purpose and responsibilities of the Community Relations Commission — namely ensuring equal opportunity for all and freedom from discrimination — are presently unrealized. We are committed to seeking the legal and financial resources to allow the CRC to carry out its statutory responsibilities to address discrimination complaints.