MARIN COMMISSION ON AGING ANNUAL RETREAT
Friday, October 30, 2026
GROUND RULES

These ground rules are not intended to discourage differences of opinion or limit open and honest discussion. To the contrary, diverse perspectives, constructive debate, and respectful disagreement are welcomed and essential to the Commission's work. We may not always agree, but we are expected to listen to one another, engage in good-faith dialogue, and express differing views in a manner that respects the dignity of others.

These expectations are consistent with the standards reflected in our meeting agendas, the County's Code of Ethics, and guidance from HHS leadership. All commissioners should be committed to addressing conduct that becomes disrespectful or disruptive, and each of share in the responsibility for maintaining an environment in which everyone can contribute meaningfully and our work can move forward productively.

GROUND RULES

1. Respectful Dialogue
All participants must remain civil and courteous and refrain from questioning others' character or motives. Threatening, profane, or abusive language is not permitted.

2. Uphold the County Code of Ethics
Commissioners are expected to maintain respect toward staff, colleagues, and the public, actively promote public confidence, listen to all viewpoints, and comply with laws governing public meetings.

3. Chair Will Intervene When Needed
If conduct becomes disrespectful or disruptive, the Chair will take immediate steps to restore order, including redirection, reminders of ground rules, calling a recess, or pausing discussion.

4. Staff Warning Authority
Staff may issue **one formal warning** if conduct violates the Code of Ethics. If behavior continues, staff will report the incident to County Leadership.

5. No Intimidation or Harassment
Yelling, hostile behavior, or actions that cause distress or disrupt the meeting are strictly prohibited.

6. Collective Responsibility to Maintain Order
Commissioners should support the Chair's efforts to maintain decorum rather than remain passive when disruptive behavior occurs.

7. Follow Meeting Structure
Speak one at a time, adhere to the agenda, respect time limits, and follow the Chair's facilitation.

8. Public Comment Protocol
The Chair determines timing and length of public comment, generally two minutes per speaker.

9. Staff Interaction Boundaries
Per County Leadership, staff will not engage in one-on-one interactions with the commissioners present at the October 15 incident. Staff will operate through paired communication or management oversight.

10. Consequences for Violations
Violations may result in warnings, Chair intervention, recess, documentation, and reporting to County Leadership.