

**Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance
National Capital Area Chapter
Disruptive Participant Policy**

The DBSA Support Group Guidelines were created by the national office to ensure support group meetings are a safe place for peers to share. DBSANCA strives to always meet those same guidelines.

When a participant violates the guidelines, it is a disruption to the functioning of the support group. Our facilitators are trained to redirect disruptive behavior. However, if a facilitator determines that the participant is unable or unwilling to follow their guidance, the facilitator may ask the participant to leave the support group for the remainder of the meeting.

If a facilitator or participant reports instances of disruptive behavior to a Board Member and/or Facilitator by a particular individual, a verbal warning will be issued. A facilitator will speak with the individual privately. The facilitator will direct the participant to the Disruptive Participant Policy which outlines the process the Board of Directors will follow if the disruptive behavior continues to be an issue.

If, after the verbal warning, the Board of Directors continues to receive reports of disruptive behavior, a second and final warning will be issued before the Board votes to ban a participant from attending support groups.

If the board votes to ban a participant from attending support groups, he or she will be notified.

Appeals Process

A banned participant may request a meeting to appeal the board's decision. If a meeting is granted, the participant will have 10 minutes to state their case. The board's final decision and notification to participant will be made within two weeks.

Six Month Review

After six month's absence, a banned participant who wishes to return to the support group may submit a written request to the board of directors. In making its decision, the board will consider the participant's progress and the initial reason for the ban.

Violent and/or Threatening Behavior

The Disruptive Participant Policy does not apply to violent or threatening behavior. Such behavior is covered in our Crisis Response Policy.

Documentation

All disruptive behavior reports, actions, results, and follow-ups must be recorded in writing via email and submitted to the Board.