

DE-ESCALATION & CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The Produce Plus Program provides critical support to community members who want to purchase fresh fruits & vegetables. Due to limited funds, Produce Plus is unable to serve everyone who qualifies or to serve everyone who experiences food insecurity.

Farmers' Market Brigade Volunteers and market staff may interact with Customers who feel frustrated or upset by the program's rules and operations, including long lines, limited checks, program eligibility rules, and more.

We encourage Farmers' Market Brigade Volunteers to consider the following **de-escalation tactics** if any conflict arises while setting up and distributing Produce Plus checks to Customers.

Remember CLARA:

- **C**alm and center yourself.
- **L**isten actively to the other person.
- **A**ffirm what they're saying.
- **R**espond non-confrontationally.
- **A**dd information if they seem open to it.

Other conflict-resolution strategies include:

- Introduce yourself, ask for their name, and use it often.
- After listening to a person's whole concern/question, paraphrase what they're saying and ask if you got it right.
- Clearly explain program rules while continuing to recognize the Customers' concerns and feelings.
- Encourage Customers to call the Produce Plus Customer hotline, 202-888-4834.

In escalated situations, remember to:

- Move and speak slowly.
- Keep hands lowered, visible, and open.
- Be mindful of body language: relax, give them space, don't loom.
- Make eye contact, but not constantly.
- Speak quietly or match their volume and slowly lower.

If any situation remains escalated, ask for help from a Market Manager, Market Champion or Volunteer Leader.

To report an incident, please call 202-601-9200 ext. 211 or email produceplus@dcgreens.org.

