**Guidelines for PFLAG Blue Ridge Meetings**

1. The purpose of this meeting is to create a safe and supportive atmosphere for all of us here tonight, where we can share, listen, learn and grow.
2. Our support group focuses on challenges and feelings associated with coming out as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and/or transgender (LGBT) and the way it touches relationships with families, friends and our larger communities. We understand that we are all here to better understand our own feelings about sexual orientation and gender identity and to support each other as we learn to embrace our own sexual orientation or gender identity, or that of our loved ones.
3. We are supportive rather than confrontational. Anyone who is uncomfortable may make this known to the facilitator.
4. Confidentiality is essential. We are each responsible for making sure that the things we hear and the identities of people present do not leave this room. This is not only for the privacy of the individuals present, but for the protection of the loved ones we are here to support, since some of them are not publicly “out” regarding their sexuality or gender identity.
5. Each of us is at a different place in dealing with the topics of sexual orientation and gender diversity. We have found that giving empathy and respect, rather than judgment and advice, helps us all.
6. We each speak from our own experiences, and respect the experiences of others. By speaking of our own experience and feelings, we help others to realize they are not alone and give them the power to resolve their own issues.
7. We are conscious of the amount of time we are using in order to leave adequate time so that others may also speak; however, please do not let this guideline make you hesitate to share your story.