

ACCOUNTABILITY FOR REASONABLENESS (A4R) ETHICAL DECISION-MAKING TOOL

Ontario Shores has adopted an organizational ethical decision-making framework, the **Accountability for Reasonableness (A4R)**, to aid decision makers throughout the organization in setting priorities and reaching decisions that are legitimate and fair.

What is Accountability for Reasonableness (A4R)?

Accountability for Reasonableness (A4R) is an ethical framework that describes the conditions of a *fair decision-making process*. It focuses on *how* decisions should be made and *why* these decisions are ethical.

There are five conditions that optimize fairness in the process of decision-making:

Value	Description
Empowerment	In order to minimize power differences, efforts should be made to adequately involve relevant stakeholders into decision making.
Relevance	Decisions should be made explicitly with stakeholder views in mind, and should be based on the best available evidence.
Transparency	Decisions should be publicly defensible. The process by which decisions were made must be open to scrutiny and the basis upon which decisions are made should be publicly accessible to affected stakeholders.
Revisions and Appeals	There should be opportunities to revisit and revise decisions as new information emerges, as well as mechanisms to address disputes should they arise.
Compliance	There should be either voluntary or public regulation of the process to make sure that the other four conditions are met.

Please contact the Ethics Department if you would like assistance using this tool, or if you have an ethical issue or concern: ethics@ontarioshores.ca.