What is a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)?

MOU is a written agreement that clarifies relationships and responsibilities between two or more organizations that share services, clients, and resources.
What is a Memorandum of Understanding?

A memorandum of understanding (MOU) is a legal document describing an agreement between parties. It is a more formal alternative to a gentlemen's agreement, but generally lacks the binding power of a contract.

In private law, MOU is a common synonym for a letter of intent (LOI).
Why is it important to have MOU?

MOU can strengthen the ability of two or more organizations to mutually solve problems.

Participating parties benefit from the interchange of ideas and practices. Communities affected by MOUs reported that the partnerships have enhanced services and products provided by the respected parties involved in MOUs.
What is actually included in MOU?

MOUs cover a variety of issues and topics. Each partner agency needs to contribute to the process of crafting MOU. Effective MOUs can be as short as one page or quite lengthy.
MOUs should address:

1. Clarification of agency roles.
2. Referrals across agencies.
3. Assessment protocol.
4. Perimeters of responsibility.
5. Case management intervention.
6. Interagency obligations.
7. Agency liaison/coordination.
9. Periodic review of the MOU.
What are the potential problems that arise during the MOU process?

1. Misperceptions about each agency's goals, missions, and philosophy.
2. Possible tension involves confidentiality and the various implications for each agency.
3. Assessment on decisions and levels of intervention.
What is a Contract?

A **contract** is a "promise" or an "agreement" that is enforced or recognized by the law. In the **civil law**, contracts are considered to be part of the general **law of obligations**. A contract is a common synonym for a memorandum of agreement (MOA).
What is a Memorandum of Agreement?

A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) is an official agreement between an institution and another institution (business, government agency, research center, university, etc.). Full execution of MOA should be referred to a supplement that attached to the official MOA.
What is a Supplement?
A supplement is a more specific document that exists under the official MOA. A supplement CAN NOT exist without a MOA. It becomes active on the date of signing and expires on the date of the MOA. A MOA is a common synonym for a contract.
Benefits of MOU@MOA between Public & Private

1. Extend the reach of messages and programs.
2. Generate broader societal support.
3. Speed up response and innovation cycles.
4. Connect organizations that share goals.
5. Gain insight and perspective from diverse businesses.
6. Solve problems through new technology sharing.
8. Raise awareness about better teamwork.
Initial Assessment of MOU@MOA

1. Do mutual benefits exist for all potential partners? If so, they must be explicit and transparent.
2. Would the benefit to society be greater than the benefit to either partner?
3. Is there a well-defined and substantial benefit based on the nature of operations of parties involved in MOU@MOA?
4. Is there mission alignment?
5. Could shared objectives and/or mutual programmatic goals be established?
6. Is there a clear, identifiable, substantial leadership role for parties involved, and is there a designated lead and champion within the agency?
Initial Assessment of MOU@MOA establishment

7. Could partnering with the private entity present a conflict of interest (real or perceived)?
8. Would the potential partner receive direct monetary benefit from the partnership? If so, what is the financial accountability.
9. Do the potential benefits outweigh the risks associated with a partnership?
10. Is there an opportunity for return on investment (ROI).
11. Are those activities that were outlined have a manageable size and scope with specific timelines and milestones?