

NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA INTERGROUP BYLAWS

ARTICLE I: DEFINITION AND PURPOSE

1. *Definition:* The North Central Florida Intergroup, Incorporated, hereinafter called Intergroup, or NCFI, shall consist of all Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) groups in Gainesville, Florida and surrounding areas. Any other groups in the North Central Florida area who wish to participate in Intergroup will be welcome.
2. *Purpose:* The purpose of Intergroup shall be to serve the AA groups in Gainesville, Florida and surrounding areas. Intergroup shall perform services necessary or desirable for the recovery of alcoholics within the aims of the fellowship of AA, providing a vehicle through which the AA groups and individual members may "carry the message to the alcoholic" within the framework of the Articles of Incorporation (Appendix 1), Twelve Traditions of AA (Appendix 11), the "Guidelines for Intergroups" published by the General Service Office (Appendix 9), and the Twelve Concepts for World Service as outlined in the "The AA Service Manual" (Appendix 12). Intergroup shall provide the following services:
 - a. Cooperate with, but not as an affiliate of, the AA groups in Gainesville, Florida and surrounding areas;
 - b. Perform functions necessary or desirable for the recovery of alcoholics within the stated aims of the fellowship of AA;
 - c. Maintain an answering and referral service for the benefit of all area AA groups and for all alcoholics of the area. Its objective will be to transmit and address requests for help to the members of AA, thus providing an opportunity for members of such groups to do Twelfth Step work so necessary for continued sobriety;
 - d. Aid in establishing new groups and provide assistance (not financial) for their growth. It shall also disseminate information and suggestions from the AA General Service Office. Groups should consult their local District Committee Member (DCM) to register as a new group with the General Service Office.

ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP

1. *Membership.* Any AA group within Gainesville, Florida and the surrounding area is entitled to be a member of Intergroup. Each AA group may elect an Intergroup Representative and, if desired, an alternate.
2. *Intergroup Representatives.* It is suggested that Intergroup Representatives serve a period of one year from the time of election or until they are recalled or replaced by the AA group they represent. It is also suggested that Intergroup Representatives have a minimum of one year sobriety and be a member of the group that elects them. Each Intergroup Representative gets only one vote.
3. *Duties.* Each participating group shall have one vote in NCFI proceedings to be cast by the Representative from that group, or if the Representative is not present, by the alternate. Normally, the Intergroup Representative is expected to vote and act for the group at each Intergroup meeting without consulting the group on every issue. When it is necessary to know the conscience of the groups on a particular issue, the vote on such an issue will be postponed until the next meeting.

ARTICLE III: NCFI MEETINGS

1. *Meetings and Officers.* NCFI meetings shall be held monthly and at any other time that a meeting may be called by a quorum of the duly elected Intergroup Officers or upon written request of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the participating Intergroup Representatives. These meetings shall be presided over by the Intergroup Chairperson; in the Chairperson's absence, the Alternate Chairperson may preside over a meeting. In the event that neither of these officers is present at a meeting, those representatives present may elect an officer to preside at the meeting.
2. *Committees.* A representative of all Intergroup committees must be present at all monthly Intergroup meetings to provide a report for their committee. If the committee's chairperson is not available, another representative of the committee must attend in their absence. See Appendix 3 for Committees.
3. *Notice.* Due notice of all meetings will be given to all Intergroup Representatives prior to such meetings. These notices, along with the previous month's minutes, shall be sent via email to the last known address of each group's representative on record at the Intergroup office and/or publication in *The POST*. This shall constitute proper notice.
4. *Voting.* An Intergroup Representative may cast only one vote, representing their group's conscience, on each issue that may come to the floor. Officers are not allowed to vote, unless they are also representing an AA group as that group's Representative.

ARTICLE IV: QUORUM FOR NCFI MEETINGS

1. *Quorum.* A quorum will consist of all present Intergroup Representatives at an announced and noticed NCFI meeting.

ARTICLE V: INTERGROUP OFFICERS

1. *Composition, eligibility, and terms.* The Officers shall consist of the following: Intergroup Chairperson, Alternate Chairperson, Treasurer, Alternate Treasurer, Secretary, and Alternate Secretary, as elected by the Intergroup Representatives. Each elected member serves a one-year term. The Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary, Alternate Chairperson, Alternate Treasurer, and Alternate Secretary shall be elected in October, beginning to serve the first of January. Officers are to be members in good standing of Gainesville, Florida and the surrounding area AA groups. In the spirit of rotation, a person should serve only two terms as an Officer without a break in service.
2. *Attendance.* In the event that an elected officer shall fail to appear for three (3) consecutive, regularly scheduled NCFI meetings, without first announcing the intent to be absent, that Officer's term of service shall be terminated by recall. Officer meetings will be scheduled on an as needed basis.
3. *Recall.* An Officer may be recalled from office by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the participating Intergroup Representatives. This action can be initiated by a proper motion from the floor during a NCFI meeting but will not be voted on until the next regularly scheduled meeting.
4. *Vacancies.* Vacancies of an Office will be filled at the next regularly scheduled NCFI meeting. Nominations will be made from the names submitted. A vote of participating Intergroup Representatives will elect the replacement. The newly elected Officer will

serve the remainder of the vacated term. The elected Officer will remain eligible for re-election.

ARTICLE VI: QUALIFICATIONS OF OFFICERS

POSITION	REQUIRED SOBRIETY	PREFERRED PRIOR INTERGROUP SERVICE
CHAIRPERSON	3 YEARS	1 YEAR OF SERVICE
ALTERNATE CHAIRPERSON	2 YEARS	1 YEAR OF SERVICE
TREASURER	3 YEARS	1 YEAR OF SERVICE
ALTERNATE TREASURER	2 YEARS	1 YEAR OF SERVICE
SECRETARY	2 YEARS	1 YEAR OF SERVICE
ALTERNATE SECRETARY	1 YEAR	0 YEAR OF SERVICE

ARTICLE VII: DUTIES OF OFFICERS

1. *Principles before personalities.* Each person duly elected as an Officer shall discharge their responsibility as a trusted servant bearing in mind at all times that their actions are for the benefit of all AA groups and that principles should come before personalities.
2. *Description of duties.* Each trusted servant elected to serve in office as set out in Article VI shall perform such duties as specified in the corresponding appendices.
 - a. *Chairperson* - Appendix 4
 - b. *Alternate Chairperson* -Appendix 4
 - c. *Treasurer*- Appendix 5
 - d. *Alternate Treasurer* - Appendix 5
 - e. *Secretary*- Appendix 6
 - f. *Alternate Secretary* -Appendix 6
3. *Committees.* The Intergroup Chairperson shall be an ex-officio member of all committees formed. The Intergroup Representatives shall elect committee Chairpersons/Alternate Chairpersons, as needed to perform the various services outlined in Appendix 4. The Chairperson and Alternate Chairperson of each committee shall appoint members to their committee from AA membership-at-large as required to effectively perform the duties of the committee.
4. *Paid employees.* In order to maintain essential and desirable services, the Officers may, with the approval of a vote of two thirds (2/3) of the participating Intergroup Representatives, employ the service of a paid Office Manager and other paid employees as may be deemed necessary for the efficient performance of the purpose of the office. These employee(s) shall not be member(s) of the Officers or Intergroup Representatives. This will be done within the framework of Tradition Eight of Alcoholics Anonymous and to the end that office expenses can be kept to a minimum. Paid employee(s) may be removed from position by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the participating Intergroup Representatives. This action can be initiated by a proper motion from the floor during an announced and noticed NCFI meeting but will not be voted on until the next regularly scheduled meeting. See Appendix 7 for job description.
5. *Financial reports.* Periodic reports shall be prepared by the Treasurer in cooperation with the Office Manager. These reports shall include an audit of the books of the Intergroup Office, tendered annually and/or when authorized by the Officers or required by a written resolution of the Intergroup Representatives.

If a report is not challenged within thirty (30) days from posting, the Officers may consider that the report has been approved and accepted by the groups.

6. *Quorum.* A quorum shall consist of two-thirds (2/3) of the Intergroup Representatives present at an announced and noticed meeting.
7. *Position charter.* The position charter for the Officers' functions and the position charter for the Officers shall be a part of the Bylaws of Intergroup (Appendix 8).

ARTICLE VIII: FINANCING

1. *Income.* The financing of all administrative activities of NCFI shall be from pledges, gifts, and contributions from the participating groups and individuals (within the Twelve Traditions of AA) and income from such projects, activities, or sales as may be authorized by the participating Intergroup Representatives.

ARTICLE IX: AMENDMENTS, RATIFICATION, AND REPEAL OF BYLAWS

1. *Ratification.* These Bylaws or any amendments, changes, or repeals thereof may be ratified and adopted by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the participating Intergroup Representatives at an announced and noticed NCFI meeting, provided the proposed change had been submitted at a previous regular or specially called, announced, and noticed NCFI meeting.
2. *Notification.* A copy of all Bylaws and amendments thereto shall be made available to those Intergroup Representatives present at the meeting at which the written proposal is made and/or on the Intergroup website.

ARTICLE X: DISSOLVEMENT

1. *Dissolution and distribution of assets.* In the event that Intergroup is dissolved all property of Intergroup shall be distributed among the member-groups of Intergroup. This distribution shall be overseen by the existing Officers. Distribution will be made on a pro rata basis according to the percentage of Group contributions for the previous twelve months.

APPENDIX I

**Electronic Articles of Incorporation
For**

NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA INTERGROUP, INCORPORATED

**Electronic Articles of Incorporation
For**

**N17000012237
FILED
December 11, 2017
Sec. Of State
dlokeefe**

NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA INTERGROUP, INCORPORATED

The undersigned incorporator, for the purpose of forming a Florida not-for-profit corporation, hereby adopts the following Articles of Incorporation:

Article I

The name of the corporation is:

NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA INTERGROUP, INCORPORATED

Article II

The principal place of business address:

2632 NW 43RD STREET
1182
GAINESVILLE, FL. US 326067420

The mailing address of the corporation is:

2632 NW 43RD STREET
1182
GAINESVILLE, FL. US 326067420

Article III

The specific purpose for which this corporation is organized is:

THE PRIMARY PURPOSE FOR WHICH THE CORPORATION IS ORGANIZED IS TO ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN A CENTRAL ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS SERVICE OFFICE AND TELEPHONE ANSWERING SERVICE IN ORDER TO CARRY THE MESSAGE OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS.

Article IV

The manner in which directors are elected or appointed is:

AS PROVIDED FOR IN THE BYLAWS.

Article V

The name and Florida street address of the registered agent is:

JOHN D FARRELL
2632 NW 43RD STREET
1182
GAINESVILLE, FL. 326067420

I certify that I am familiar with and accept the responsibilities of registered agent.

Registered Agent Signature: JOHN D. FARRELL

Article VI

The name and address of the incorporator is:

PAUL N. BIBLER
2632 NW 43RD STREET
1182
GAINESVILLE, FL 326067420

Electronic Signature of Incorporator: PAUL N. BIBLER

I am the incorporator submitting these Articles of Incorporation and affirm that the facts stated herein are true. I am aware that false information submitted in a document to the Department of State constitutes a third degree felony as provided for in s.817.155, F.S. I understand the requirement to file an annual report between January 1st and May 1st in the calendar year following formation of this corporation and every year thereafter to maintain "active" status.

Article VII

The initial officer(s) and/or director(s) of the corporation is/are:

Title: P
PAUL N BIBLER
2632 NW 43RD STREET, SUITE 1182
GAINESVILLE, FL. 326067420 US

Title: VP
BILL BOSTA
2632 NW 43RD STREET, SUITE 1182
GAINESVILLE, FL. 326067420 US

Title: S
ANNIE OPUDA
2632 NW 43RD STREET, SUITE 1182
GAINESVILLE, FL. 326067420 US

Title: T
MARK REIHART
2632 NW 43RD STREET, SUITE 1182
GAINESVILLE, FL. 326067420 US

Article VIII

The effective date for this corporation shall be:

01/01/2018

APPENDIX 2

THE DIRECTORS OF NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA INTERGROUP, INCORPORATED

1. *Purpose.* The primary purpose for which the corporation is organized is to establish and maintain a Central Alcoholics Anonymous service office and telephone answering service in order to carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous.
2. *Composition, eligibility, and terms.* The Directors of the corporation will consist of: President, Vice President, and Secretary as elected by the NCFI Representatives. Each elected director serves a 3-year term. Each year the Intergroup Representatives of NCFI will nominate members in good standing in the Gainesville, Florida and the surrounding area AA groups for service as a Director for a 3-year term in *August*. The nominees will be published in *The POST* that is distributed at the *September* meeting and posted on the NCFI website. Elections will be held at the regular NCFI meeting in *October*. The elected Director will become active in *January*.
3. *Qualifications.* It is strongly suggested that all Directors and nominees have 5 years of sobriety, experience with general service, and general knowledge/understanding of the Twelve Traditions.
4. *Recall.* Directors may be recalled from office by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the participating Intergroup Representatives at an announced and noticed NCFI meeting. This action can be initiated by a proper motion from the floor during an announced and noticed NCFI meeting but will not be voted on until the next regularly scheduled, announced, and noticed NCFI meeting.
5. *Vacancies.* Vacancies of a Director will be filled at the next regular scheduled, announced, and noticed NCFI meeting. Nominations will be made from the names submitted. A vote of participating Intergroup Representatives will elect the replacement at the announced and noticed NCFI meeting. The newly elected Director will serve the remainder of the vacated term. The elected Director will remain eligible for re-election.
6. *Filing List of New Directors Yearly.* Each year after the new Director has been nominated, the updated list of Directors will be submitted to the State of Florida in the NCFI Annual Report.

APPENDIX 3

COMMITTEES

The following positions are nominated and voted on by Intergroup Representatives at an announced and noticed NCFI meeting. All members of Alcoholics Anonymous are eligible, and one year continuous sobriety is suggested. Attendance at monthly Intergroup meeting is required.

ACTIVITIES CHAIR: Updates activities calendar on the website. Publicizes special events with the help of ad hoc committees; e.g., annual picnic, Gratitude Dinner, Founders' Day Supper, any dances or workshops that Intergroup or District 14 plans.

ARCHIVES LIAISON: Coordinates with District 14 Archives Committee.

INTERGROUP AWARENESS COMMITTEE: Visits groups not participating in Intergroup, explains all Intergroup activities and encourages them to send a representative to the regular monthly meetings. This committee is chaired by the **Alternate Chairperson** of Intergroup.

THE POST COMMITTEE: Publishes and distributes monthly *The POST* ("Power of Sober Thinking") newsletter in print and on the website. *The POST* includes changes of group officers, minutes from Intergroup and District meetings, sobriety birthdays, and area events. Deadline for submission is the 12th of the month preceding publication date. *The POST* is distributed at the monthly Intergroup meeting with the office manager providing ample copies and is available on the NCFI website.

PHONE COORDINATOR:

WEEKLY

- Maintains three schedules- Phone Volunteers, Pinch Hitters, and 12th Steppers (names, phone numbers, times schedule/available) - and provides an update to Intergroup Office Manager to be saved on Intergroup computer.

MONTHLY

- Attends monthly Intergroup meetings or supplies a report to the Chair and advises Intergroup Reps of empty slots in schedules or need for additional volunteers and encourages announcements at meetings.

REGULARLY

- Maintains mailing list and email addresses of Phone Volunteers, Pinch Hitters, and 12th Steppers.
- Mails or emails updated materials (phone schedule, where & when, pinch hitter, and 12th step lists, etc.) to Phone Volunteers and Intergroup when changes are made.

WEBSITE COMMITTEE: The Website Committee shall be responsible for maintaining the NCFI/District 14 website (see contract in Appendix 10) and all related files for

backup security and other related purposes; and shall work together with *The POST* staff and the Activities Chairperson to coordinate publication of AA-related events and any associated flyers. The Website Committee shall also ensure that any notices of changes to the Meeting Schedule (the "Where & When") are updated weekly on the website promptly shared with Intergroup's Office Manager. The Website Committee shall meet quarterly, at a place and time they establish; and may meet more frequently when circumstances so warrant.

APPENDIX 4

INTERGROUP CHAIRPERSON RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Chairs monthly NCFI Meetings.
- Attends monthly District 14 meetings as NCFI liaison.
- Facilitates Gratitude Dinner and other Intergroup events.
- Serves as ex-officio member of all Intergroup committees.
- Ensures that annual Alachua County Occupational License renewal, Florida Uniform Business Report (Dept. of State), and Florida Solicitation of Contributions statement (Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services) are prepared by Office Manager and Treasurer and are filed.
- Ensures that Certificate of Exemption from payment of Florida sales and use tax is renewed with the Florida Dept. of Revenue minimum 60 days before expiration date and prepared by Office Manager and Treasurer (must be renewed every 5 years).
- Ensures that information is provided to the Internal Revenue Service to maintain NCFI's federal tax-exempt status at all times and within 90 days after the Advancing Ruling Period ends and prepared by Office Manager and Treasurer.
- Writes monthly "Chairperson's Corner" column for *The POST*.
- Ensures smooth running of all Intergroup functions.

ALTERNATE CHAIRPERSON RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Chairs Intergroup Awareness Committee.
- Chairs NCFI meetings in Chairperson's absence.
- Represents NCFI at District 14 meetings in Chairperson's absence. Must attend 3 meetings with Chairperson to understand the role.
- Such other duties and any activities as are deemed necessary by Intergroup Chairperson.

APPENDIX 5

TREASURER RESPONSIBILITIES:

Daily/Weekly/Monthly:

- Ensures all bills are paid on time and signs checks (telephone, rent, insurance, salaries, etc.).
- Ensures all checks, inventory, and sales income data are recorded into bookkeeping software, spreading sales income and sales tax collected to the correct accounts.
- Reviews and reconciles all checking/savings (CD) accounts.
- Generates and reviews the following report for distribution at the monthly Intergroup meetings and publication in *The POST*: Balance Sheet (Assets & Liabilities), listing of all expense transactions, and listing of all income transactions.

Quarterly

- Makes sales tax deposit; reviews sales tax report for previous fiscal month prepared by Office Manager; completes monthly sales tax calculations and the State sales tax deposit coupon; and remits coupon and check for sales tax collected to State of Florida Department of Revenue (before submission deadline).

Annually

- Closes books for the fiscal year and presents at following January monthly Intergroup meeting.
- Backs up bookkeeping records for the year to a portable medium (CD, zip drive, etc.)
- Prepares annual tax return and submits by IRS deadline.
- Has return signed by the directors of NCFI and mails to I.R.S.
- Files Tangible/Intangible Property Tax Return before filing deadline.

ALTERNATE TREASURER RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Fills in for Treasurer when necessary.
- Shadows Treasurer until able to duplicate all responsibilities.
- Must be present and participate with Treasurer during the monthly and annual review process.

APPENDIX 6

SECRETARY RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Takes minutes of the monthly NCFI meetings, types and distributes them, and sends an electronic and/or hard copy to *The POST* committee for inclusion in the newsletter. Also responsible for monthly agenda and attendance at Intergroup meeting.

ALTERNATE SECRETARY RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Fills in for Secretary when necessary.
- Shadows Secretary until able to duplicate responsibilities.

APPENDIX 7

REQUIREMENTS OF OFFICE MANAGER OF NCFI

Prerequisites: Minimum of three (3) years continuous sobriety in Alcoholics Anonymous. Group service experience and Intergroup Representative experience. General administrative experience in office management, preparing correspondence, filing, and communicating with the public. Proficiency in word processing, spreadsheet and accounting software. General understanding of the AA structure from the group-level to the General Service Offices; familiarity with the AA Service Manual. Must attend the monthly NCFI meeting and steering committee meetings. Must be flexible on other occasions where NCFI is involved in community projects. Required skills: Strong interpersonal skills – including appropriate telephone and office etiquette. Strong verbal and written communication skills. Must be able to maintain high level of confidentiality. Must be organized and have the ability to multi-task in a rapidly changing environment. Must have ability and desire to work with an always changing volunteer leadership of NCFI.

Key Responsibilities and Duties:

1. Properly facilitate volunteer staffing of Intergroup Office, scheduling of volunteers, and having volunteer schedule easily available in the office.
2. Making sure proper office hours are maintained - substituting for volunteers when necessary.
3. Responsible for maintenance on all office equipment. Ensures office remains maintained and organized consistent with the stated purpose of NCFI.
4. Keep running inventory on all books, literature, chips, and medallions – re-ordering in a timely manner so that adequate quantities are in stock to meet needs of groups and committees.
5. Updates meeting schedule for the Where and When, shares information with *The POST* Committee, shares information with Phone Coordinator, and updates Webmaster.
6. Copy all NCFI literature, Where and When, brochures, flyers, questionnaires, etc. for use of groups.
7. *The POST*: Assist in the monthly newsletter preparation. Pick up and distribute to groups and mail to group subscribers.
8. Purchase office supplies as needed (paper, print cartridges, stationary, stamps, coffee, etc.).
9. Process and respond to mail as appropriate.
10. Review and record all contributions, send individual acknowledgments, and copy checks for records.
11. Work in conjunction with Treasurer in preparing monthly income and expense report to be published in *The POST*.
12. Monitor all sales, charges, and contributions on a weekly basis for preparation of bank deposit.
13. General filing and necessary paperwork.

14. Serve as a point of contact between service entities and groups.
15. Assist NCFI Committees where necessary and maintain calendar of meetings at the Intergroup office.
16. Be of service to the AA community as a representative of NCFI.

APPENDIX 8

POSITION CHARTER FOR THE OFFICERS OF NCFI & FUNCTIONS

1. *Composition.* The following Officers elected by the participating Intergroup Representatives shall serve as the Officers: a) Intergroup Chairperson, b) Alternate Chairperson, c) Treasurer, d) Alternate Treasurer, e) Secretary, and f) Alternate Secretary.
2. *Accountability.* The Officers shall report to the Intergroup Representatives.
3. *Operations.* The Officers shall oversee the routine operation of NCFI. The Chairperson will be the direct administrative officer in the NCFI operations. Salaried employee(s) will report to the Chairperson.
4. *Emergency Action:* When expediency requires immediate action, 2/3 of the Officers may authorize an action between regular monthly NCFI meetings. Such emergency actions shall be reported to the next regularly scheduled Officers and NCFI meeting. When normal time permits authorizations will be made at the regular announced and noticed NCFI meetings.
5. *Officer Responsibilities.* The Officers will have primary responsibility in their designated areas; i.e. the Treasurer in finance, the Secretary in documentation and records, the Chairperson in administration areas and the Alternate Chairperson will assist other Officers when required. Nothing herein is to be construed as authorizing unilateral action by any Officer.
6. *Special Committee Assignments.* The Officers shall structure and define requirements for special committee assignments and recommend these to the Intergroup Representatives for approval at an announced and noticed NCFI meeting.
7. *Election and Accountability.* Officers are elected by the participating Intergroup Representatives at an announced and noticed NCFI meeting and are responsible to the Intergroup Representatives.
8. *Office Oversight.* The Officers oversee and are responsible for the operation of the NCFI office functions and paid employee(s).
9. *Twelve Traditions.* The Officers shall establish policies as required to ensure compliance with the Twelve Traditions of AA by NCFI, the Intergroup Representatives, and by any subcommittees that may form in the future. The Officers shall not attempt to determine any AA group's compliance with the Twelve Traditions of AA, nor shall it be part of the Officers' function to publicly censure any member, AA group, or AA member.

APPENDIX 9

A.A. GUIDELINES-CENTRAL OR INTERGROUP OFFICES

A.A.® Guidelines

Central or Intergroup Offices

from G.S.O., Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163

The A.A. Guidelines below are compiled from the shared service experience of A.A. members throughout the U.S. and Canada. They also reflect guidance given through the Twelve Traditions and the General Service Conference. In keeping with our Tradition of autonomy except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole, most decisions are made by the group conscience of the members involved. The purpose of these Guidelines is to assist in reaching an *informed* group conscience.

WHAT IS A CENTRAL OR INTERGROUP OFFICE?

A central or intergroup office is an A.A. service office that involves partnership among groups in a community - just as A.A. groups themselves are partnerships of individuals. A central/intergroup office is established to carry out certain functions common to all the groups - functions which are best handled by a centralized office - and it is usually maintained, supervised, and supported by these groups in their general interest. It exists to aid the groups in their common purpose of carrying the A.A. message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

FUNCTIONS OF A CENTRAL/INTERGROUP OFFICE

A.A. experience has demonstrated that central/intergroup offices are helpful, particularly in populous areas. There are nearly 700 central/intergroup offices throughout the world, performing vital A.A. services. These constitute a network of service outlets and A.A. contacts to help carry the A.A. message.

The following suggestions outline the basic services a central/intergroup office might offer:

- 1) *A.A. Inquiries* - By providing an Alcoholics Anonymous listing in the local telephone directory and on appropriate websites, the central/intergroup office may receive inquiries from those seeking help. They will refer the caller to a nearby A.A. group, where sponsorship may be arranged, or have a twelfth stepper contact them. Many local A.A. offices now have their own websites.
- 2) *Office Facilities* - The central/intergroup office can maintain a conveniently located office in which paid workers and/or volunteers coordinate local A.A. services.
- 3) *Meeting Lists and Other Literature* - At regular intervals, the central/intergroup office may publish and distribute up-to-date lists of meetings and other information about local A.A. services. Many intergroup/ central/intergroup offices sell A.A. Conference-approved literature for the convenience of local groups.
- 4) *Information Exchange* - The service office may function as a clearinghouse for the circulation and exchange of information among all the A.A. groups in the community. In this same connection, a logical function of the central/intergroup office is to provide "exchange" meetings, where group program chairpersons meet regularly to exchange meetings with other groups.
- 5) *Local Committees on Public Information (P.I.) and Cooperation with the Professional Community (C.P.C.) in cooperation with district and area P.I. and C.P.C. committees*- The central/intergroup office is an ideal contact with those in the community seeking information about A.A. Thus, A.A.'s relations with the public and professionals in the alcoholism field are often handled through the cooperation of gen-

eral service committees and central/intergroup offices. To avoid duplication of efforts and other difficulties, good communication between all parts of A.A. is paramount. A.A. Guidelines and Workbooks on P.I. and C.P.C. are available on G.S.O.'s website at www.aa.org.

6) *A.A. in Correctional and Treatment Facilities* - The central/intergroup office can maintain contact with local groups in correctional facilities and treatment facilities, offering literature and prerelease A.A. contacts and arranging for A.A. speakers and visitors to meetings. When there is a corrections or treatment committee for this purpose, the service office may assist it through close cooperation with local hospitals and prisons.

Central/intergroup offices handling institutional contacts can find A.A. Guidelines and other service material on aa.org for shared experience in providing these services.

7) *Local A.A. Events*- An A.A. central/intergroup office is a logical body to manage the details of an annual dinner, picnic, or convention, if the participating groups wish it.

8) *A.A. Bulletin or Newsletter*- The preparation of a publication for periodic distribution to A.A. groups is often a function of the central/intergroup office.

9) *Accessibilities* — Many central/intergroup offices carry information on groups that are wheelchair accessible, or which may provide American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation for members who are Deaf. Some offices have equipment or materials for communicating with alcoholics who have visual and auditory challenges, those who are housebound or chronically ill, those who are living with the effects of brain damage or stroke, and others who may have less visible challenges.

MAKING A GOOD BEGINNING

Like many well-meant ventures in A.A., central/intergroup offices sometimes suffer because they are conceived and established without advance planning. The unhappy and damaging experiences of such ventures indicate that a few questions should be raised before a central/intergroup office is opened.

One question should concern actual need. Is there a sufficient number of groups in the community to justify opening a central/intergroup office? Is there a widely-expressed need? Has the potential impact on other local A.A. offices in the community been discussed? Are the groups willing and able to support such a service office financially? Have the groups been consulted as to whether such an office could address their specific service needs? Will they cooperate with and support a new office's aims and purposes? (If, after such consideration, an office seems impractical or not necessary at the time, a tele-

phone answering service may fill the service needs of the community. If additional information is needed, G.S.O. has Guidelines on A.A. Answering Services.)

Questions should also be raised about proposed locations for the central/intergroup office and the personnel and equipment needed. It's sometimes tempting to consider moderately priced or free facilities supplied by agencies or organizations working in the field of alcoholism or in other fields. But it's better to forgo this short-term advantage if there's any likelihood that A.A. would lose its independent status in the bargain or appear in the public mind at least to be sponsored or controlled by the other organization.

The question also comes up whether to buy property or a building. A.A. traditionally does not own property, "lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose." Experience also indicates that it is not fair or wise to commit future A.A. members to financial obligations for which they have not initially assumed responsibility, so renting a facility has proved best. It may also appear attractive to consolidate the central/intergroup office with the facilities and operations of a club. But the risks and pitfalls involved in this are almost too numerous to mention here. One reason for discouraging this is the possibility that the problems of operating the club and the service office will become intertwined, to the detriment of each activity. An even more important point is the need for keeping a clear separation between club operations and A.A. group activities; any strong identification with a club may impair a central/intergroup office's ability to serve the groups.

A central location for the office is usually desirable, if finances permit. It's also well to take in possible future needs at the same time the original quarters are being considered; sometimes it's possible to rent facilities in buildings where adjoining rooms may become available later. Sufficient room should be provided for copying, mailings, committee meetings, and consultation with newcomers. Since a central/intergroup office is intended to provide services for all A.A. groups in a community, experience indicates that it is best for the office not to give or rent space to any one group for meetings. The decision, however, is really up to each office, acting autonomously.

GETTING UNDER WAY

Once some of these preliminary matters have been satisfactorily disposed of, the road is clear for the formal organizational work. Here's a suggested plan that has worked well.

Each group in the community is asked to send both a representative and an alternate representative to a special meeting to form a central/intergroup office committee (also called a steering committee in some places). In large communities, it is sometimes necessary to divide the group into zones, with a zone representative serving several groups. Once formed, the committee takes over the responsibility for the project and outlines its aims and purposes for approval by the participant groups. Such an outline might cover these points:

- 1) Listing of all groups in the community that want to participate.
- 2) A reminder that financial support is voluntary and not a condition of membership (in keeping with A.A. tradition).
- 3) A clear explanation that responsibility for the maintenance of the service office rests with the groups. Therefore, each group should name a central/intergroup office representative and an alternate to

serve a specified term as the connecting link between the group and its central/intergroup office.

4) A summary of the functions of the central/intergroup office and an explanation of how it will be staffed and operated.

5) A discussion of how the service office will handle such vital matters as inquiries from newcomers, relations with the press, and similar duties.

6) Assurance that the service center will be operated in keeping with A.A.'s Twelve Traditions.

GROUP REPRESENTATION AT A CENTRAL INTERGROUP OFFICE

Service centers usually have no authority on their own account; they derive it from the participating groups. Central/intergroup offices are essentially A.A. service entities, "directly responsible to those they serve," as described in Tradition Nine. Local group representatives reflect the groups' conscience in the service center operations. In most communities, a central/intergroup office committee or steering committee is set up to handle the administrative activities of the service office. The steering committee holds regularly scheduled meetings and deals with general policy and plans. Periodically, the steering committee reports to group representatives on central/intergroup office problems and accomplishments. It is extremely important to keep a two-way flow of information going between the central/intergroup office and groups.

STAFFING THE INTERGROUP

Most A.A. central/intergroup offices now employ at least one paid full-time secretary or manager, as well as A.A. volunteers - members who respond to Twelfth Step calls at the office, answer the telephone, and often carry out other service office duties. Large offices may also have paid clerical workers on the staff to assist the full-time person. Although the principles involving certain paid employees of A.A. service centers are now widely known in A.A., it is still helpful to review the appropriate A.A. Tradition at the time of opening a new service office. As it states in Tradition Eight: "Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers." It should be clear from this that the paid secretary functions as a paid employee of the central office - not as an A.A. member - during duty hours and is hired largely on the basis of professional skill.

Regarding compensation for paid workers, Bill W. writes in "Twelve Concepts for World Service" as follows: "We believe that each paid executive, staff member, or consultant should be recompensed in reasonable relation to the value of his or her similar services or abilities in the commercial world." Also, Social Security and certain insurance benefits are provided, as well as sick leave and vacations. It is suggested that the central/intergroup office full-time secretary also be accorded a vote as well as a voice on the steering committee. This policy is successfully followed by A.A. World Services, Inc.: The staff coordinator - a paid employee as well as an A.A. member - also serves as a director and thus has a vote on policy matters.

SUPERVISION - MAKING THE OFFICE SERVE

It's plain that the success of the central/intergroup office requires community-wide agreement on matters concerning administrative

responsibility and authority. The steering committee should reach an early consensus on this; if necessary, they should explain it in the bylaws or some other set of guidelines. For, while it's difficult to establish hard-and-fast rules and then live by them, it's at least reasonable to clarify such matters as the functions of the office and the extent of the paid secretary's authority and duties.

Some decisions can be entrusted to the paid secretary. In other cases, it may be wiser for the steering committee to maintain full oversight of many matters. In any case, it's important that problems get an early review by someone who is authorized to deal with them and can solve them as quickly as possible. Otherwise, the service office operations are bound to suffer.

Special attention might be given to the following matters in the operation of the office:

1) *Fair distribution of Twelfth Step calls.* However tempting it may be to assign follow-up calls to those individuals and groups that seem especially willing, the Twelfth Step work is something all the groups in the community should be encouraged to share. But it's also important that calls are distributed according to the location of the group; that is, newcomers should usually be put in touch with the group nearest to them.

2) *After closing hours,* A.A. volunteers or a telephone answering service - carefully chosen - should handle incoming calls. (See Guidelines on A.A. Answering Services.)

3) *Authority and responsibility* should be related. It is unfair to assign certain responsibilities to a paid secretary or volunteer without giving commensurate authority.

FACING FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Incorporation: By its very nature, a service office involves making financial commitments quite different from those usually encountered in the operation of an A.A. group. Office facilities have to be leased; a secretary must be hired and paid; office supplies must be purchased; the telephone bill has to be paid regularly. To adequately take care of these responsibilities, it is generally wise to incorporate separately special facilities, such as a service office, which require money or management.

Since group purposes, local conditions, and state laws vary, it is suggested a local lawyer be consulted regarding such incorporation. At the same time, the following points might be emphasized: If possible, eliminate the name "Alcoholics Anonymous" from the corporate title. (This name is the sole property of A.A. as a whole.) Limit the activities of the corporation to the one locality only. Expenses create a need for financial responsibility that should be recognized at the outset; if properly understood and dealt with, it never need become a source of trouble.

Sometimes, however, central/intergroup office ventures have gotten caught up in disputes over money, authority, and like matters—thus becoming less effective in carrying the A.A. message. It's not always clear why these troubles have come up, but often it's been because the proper functions of a central/intergroup office were not clearly explained or understood, or there was some disregard of the principles in A.A.'s Twelve Traditions.

Suggested methods of financing a central/intergroup office:

1) *Group Collections.* A.A. groups participating in the financial support

of the service office may choose to make their contributions by setting aside fixed sums from their regular collections. Many groups pledge a fixed amount, which is paid periodically. This assures the central/intergroup office of a regular income, and certainly helps it to plan the best means of meeting its own obligations.

Occasionally there are groups that do not support a central/intergroup office. In these cases, the spirit of contributing voluntarily, that prevails throughout A.A., applies. If groups can't or choose not to pay their share of the costs, they shouldn't be denied the services of the office.

2) *Special Contributions.* Some groups provide a special collection box or basket in a convenient place during meeting times, inviting members to contribute. In that same vein, A.A. members may make individual contributions, on a pledge or voluntary basis, directly to the service office. Also, many A.A.s make contributions to their central/intergroup office in celebration of their A.A. birthday or anniversary. Some offices accept electronic Seventh Tradition contributions through their websites.

3) *Sale of Literature.* Many service offices publish their own meeting lists; others also produce introductory pamphlets explaining A.A. These can be sold at a slight profit to help defray office expenses. It is also possible to buy books from G.S.O. for resale at the retail price, the profit going to support the central/intergroup office. The Conference-approved literature catalog describes various discounts.

4) *Special Events.* Some service offices hold yearly banquets, conventions, and similar events, using the "profits" for support of the office.

For help in financial planning, the 1977 General Service Conference recommended that "a suggested prudent reserve... preferably be one to 12 months' operating expense, depending on local needs."

CENTRAL/INTERGROUP OFFICES AND G.S.O.

The common experience has shown that A.A.'s worldwide unity is best served if A.A. groups maintain their own separate contacts with G.S.O. Direct group contact with G.S.O. doesn't take the place of services provided by a local service office, but helps G.S.O. to keep in closer touch with all groups.

There are, however, some important areas of interest in which close contact between the central/intergroup offices and G.S.O. is not only desirable but necessary. Some central/intergroup offices, for example, like to be provided with New Group Information Forms so that newly formed groups can be immediately listed with G.S.O. These forms as well as forms for changing group information, are available on aa.org.

Groups should not assume that if they list themselves with a central/intergroup office they are automatically listed at G.S.O. New groups are encouraged to send a Group Information Form directly to the General Service Office, P.O. Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163, or emailing records@aa.org.

NEWSLETTERS OR BULLETINS

Newsletters or bulletins published by central/intergroup offices may include not only office news and events, but similar information about the groups and committees served by these offices (such as meeting

times, openings of new groups, or changes of group meeting locations or officers). Frequently, material from A.A. literature is reprinted and discussed, and articles on subjects of interest to A.A.s also are published.

Experience indicates that, as in most A.A. service activities, it is prudent to make a committee (rather than one or two individuals) responsible for the format, planning, and content of the bulletin. Many local publications quote from A.A. literature such as the Big Book, the *Twelve and Twelve*, *The A.A. SeNice Manual*, and Conference-approved pamphlets. Any A.A. newsletter, bulletin, or meeting list is more than welcome to use this material. Please be sure to include the proper credit line in your publications, in order to insure that the copyrights of A.A. literature are protected.

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More suggestions you might consider, based on local experience with A.A. newsletters and bulletins.

- Scheduling a 'theme issue,' centering on some aspect of the A.A. program and using excerpts from Conference-approved material (with proper credit) relating to the theme.
- Asking for and publishing letters from your A.A. readers.
- Carrying highlights of minutes from various committee meetings - central/intergroup office steering committee, institutions, public information, etc.
- Including committee financial reports and records of group contributions.
- Running occasional appropriate cartoons. (If these are from the A.A. Grapevine or Conference-approved pamphlets, please remember that illustrations, too, are copyrighted, and the proper credit should accompany any of these that are used.)
- Running a "Calendar of Events" feature.

- Conducting a subscription campaign (perhaps making announcements at group meetings), to build paid readership.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is the key to working together - Central or Intergroup Office and General Service Area Committee or the District Committee and the General Service Office of A.A. In 1990 the General Service Conference stressed the importance of communication and recommended that delegates establish and maintain contact with offices in their areas to share Conference information and assure that central/intergroup offices have a voice in the Fellowship through their existing service structure.

Try to find out what is going on by getting together from time to time with corresponding committees in your area. It is important to share ideas and discuss activities so as to avoid duplication of effort. It is not important who does the work (the General Service Committee or the Central/intergroup office Committee in your area) but that the work gets done - that help is there for the next alcoholic who needs us and our Fellowship.

Central/intergroup offices and general service area committees are complementary, rather than competitive, A.A. operations. Both exist to help insure A.A. unity and to fulfill A.A.'s primary purpose of carrying the message.

In 1986, the first A.A.W.S./Intergroup/Central Office Seminar was held to discuss questions on literature distribution, pricing and discounts, and to share ways to work together. Seminars are now held each year. Seminar history and information can be found at: www.icoaa.org.

For its own part, G.S.O. also seeks to keep central/intergroup offices well informed. As a regular policy, the G.S.O. newsletter, Box 4-5-9, as well as activity updates and A.A.W.S. Highlights, are sent to each central/intergroup office that lists itself with G.S.O. Therefore, it is important to remember to update office contact information. The staff member on the Group Services assignment is the liaison with central/intergroup offices. You may contact Group Services by calling (212) 870-3400 or emailing groupservices@aa.org.

GOOD LUCK AND SMOOTH SAILING

We hope these suggestions will help make your central/intergroup office venture a vital and fruitful addition to the A.A. activity in your area. These are suggestions only, and it's the spirit and cooperation behind the central office idea that will make it work.

If you are starting a new office please write to G.S.O.; your office will be added to the mailing list and you will receive a Central/intergroup Office Kit and some literature.

Your office will be included in the U.S. and Canadian Directories so that you may share A.A. experience with others and be available for any alcoholic seeking help.

www.aa.org

APPENDIX 10

WEBSITE CONTRACT BETWEEN INTERGROUP AND DISTRICT 14

Unified AA District 14 and Intergroup Website Agreement

Hosting

District 14 Will relinquish hosting abilities to Intergroup, who will manage hosting for one website with all District and Intergroup information. District 14 will aid by agreeing to pay half of whatever hosting costs are incurred for as long as Intergroup manages and hosts all District data and website information.

Domain

District 14 will be the sole owner of domain name "aagainesville.org" and Intergroup will own "northcentralflaa.org" with the understanding that District will continue to pay for half of the registration of domain names.

Data

Intergroup will take over management of data for District 14, and therefore, store all files regarding website for both District and Intergroup on Intergroup's hosting account. With District contributing to costs, they are the owners of any data regarding District 14. Should District be separated from the Intergroup website at any time, all data regarding AA District 14 shall be relinquished back to District's hosting account.

Communication

While Intergroup will maintain the entirety of the website for District and Intergroup, District will have a website committee acting as liaison. The website committee will communicate all plans, updates, and information regarding the website for both Intergroup and District 14. The liaison will take back any requests and suggestions made by District to the Intergroup meeting for deliberation. AA District 14 agrees to pay half of all hosting costs and domain name registrations to Intergroup. AA District 14 has the right at any time to remove their data and domain from Intergroup's hosting account, with the understanding that all data and hosting will be managed by District from that point forward.

Intergroup Chair

Signature: Greg Norman

Print Name: Greg Norman

Date: L)zjg

Date: r/12/rg
C I

District 14 DCM

Signature: Cathy Cooper

Print Name: Cathy Cooper

Date: t!Jrtfi!
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Date: 9:/:/;g
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APPENDIX 11

THE TWELVE TRADITIONS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

The Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
6. An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

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APPENDIX 12

THE TWELVE CONCEPTS FOR WORLD SERVICE

Service Material from the General Service Office

(SHORT FORM)

The Twelve Concepts for World Service were written by A.A.'s co-founder Bill W., and were adopted by the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous in 1962. The Concepts are an interpretation of A.A.'s world service structure as it emerged through A.A.'s early history and experience. The short form of the Concepts reads:

1. Final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.
2. The General Service Conference of A.A. has become, for nearly every practical purpose, the active voice and the effective conscience of our whole society in its world affairs.
3. To insure effective leadership, we should endow each element of A.A.-the Conference, the General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives-with a traditional "Right of Decision."
4. At all responsible levels, we ought to maintain a traditional "Right of Participation," allowing a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.
5. Throughout our structure, a traditional "Right of Appeal" ought to prevail, so that minority opinion will be heard and personal grievances receive careful consideration.
6. The Conference recognizes that the chief initiative and active responsibility in most world service matters should be exercised by the trustee members of the Conference acting as the General Service Board.
7. The Charter and Bylaws of the General Service Board are legal instruments, empowering the trustees to manage and conduct world service affairs. The Conference Charter is not a legal document; it relies upon tradition and the A.A. purse for final effectiveness.
8. The trustees are the principal planners and administrators of over-all policy and finance. They have custodial oversight of the separately incorporated and constantly active services,

exercising this through their ability to elect all the directors of these entities.

9. Good service leadership at all levels is indispensable for our future functioning and safety. Primary world service leadership, once exercised by the founders, must necessarily be assumed by the trustees.
10. Every service responsibility should be matched by an equal service authority, with the scope of such authority well defined.
11. The trustees should always have the best possible committees, corporate service directors, executives, staffs, and consultants. Composition, qualifications, induction procedures, and rights and duties will always be matters of serious concern.
12. The Conference shall observe the spirit of A.A. tradition, taking care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds and reserve be its prudent financial principle; that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others; that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote, and whenever possible, substantial unanimity; that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; that it never perform acts of government; that, like the Society it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action.

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The text of the complete Concepts is printed in *The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service* (BM-31).