

Washtenaw Area Service Committee Guidelines

Effective March 11, 2007

Revised March 11, 2007

Revised March 9, 2008

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STAY CLEAN

Service Prayer

God, grant us knowledge that we may serve according to your divine precepts. Instill in us a sense of your purpose. Make us servants of your will and grant us a bond of selflessness, that this may truly be your work, not ours - in order that no addict, anywhere, need die from the horrors of addition.

Everything that occurs in the course of N.A. service must be motivated by the desire to more successfully carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers. It was for his reason that we began this work. We must always remember as individual members, groups, and service committees; we are not and never should be in competition with each other. We work separately and together to help the newcomer and for our common good. We have learned, painfully, that internal strife cripples our fellowship; it prevents us from providing the services necessary for growth.

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Definition and Purpose

Definition

The Area Service Committee is made up of Group Service Representatives, Subcommittees, and Administrative Servants.

Purpose

The Washtenaw Area Service Committee (WASC) has been created by member groups to better carry the message of N.A. recovery to the addict that still suffers and to promote unity in service. We serve as an educational and communications tool between and directly to the member groups we serve. The WASC will provide service and support to strengthen member groups; attract addicts to N.A. meetings; accomplish tasks which groups find difficult to do alone; provide a link with the worldwide fellowship of N.A.; coordinate business and activities common to the welfare of N.A. groups; and maintain the 12 Steps, 12 Traditions and 12 Concepts of Service in Narcotics Anonymous.

Guiding Principles

We believe these Guidelines to be in keeping with the 12 Steps of Narcotics Anonymous, the 12 Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous and the 12 Concepts of Service in Narcotics Anonymous. Where conflict arises, the spiritual principles behind the Steps, Traditions and Concepts, as expressed in our Group Conscience, shall be our guide. In no case should these Guidelines be in conflict with those guiding principles.

Consensus

For a formal decision making process for resolution of matters brought to the WASC, the committee will seek consensus. We shall strive for substantial consensus of all N.A. members present and all area elected and appointed members (GSR's) in our decision making process. If this is not found, substantial consensus by the GSR's only will be sought. Failing consensus of the GSR'S resulting in the matter returning to the member groups for a decision.

For further detail on the consensus process employed by the WASC, see "Explanation of the Consensus Process" later in this document.

Membership

Member groups of the WASC elect membership by regularly attending the monthly meeting of the A.S.C. A Group is represented by a single voting member, their Group Service Representative (GSR).

Otherwise, a member is defined as anyone attending 2 consecutive WASC meetings. In most cases, all members present at the WASC meeting will be included in the consensus process.

Motions

All members of the committee may make motions. A motion is simply a suggestion for a change. Motions do not need to be seconded.

Voting Procedure

Quorum

A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of active member groups. If a group is not represented at two consecutive regularly scheduled WASC meetings, it will be accorded "inactive" status for the sake of quorum computation at the second meeting. Active status shall be returned upon that group attending a WASC meeting. A quorum must be reached; once quorum is reached it will be maintained through the close of business.

Washtenaw Area Service Committee of Narcotics Anonymous Guidelines

Discussion

Acting as Facilitator, the Chairperson (or Co-Chairperson) will guide a process to establish consensus from all N.A. members in attendance at the WASC meeting. Everyone shall have the right to participate in discussion. The Chairperson (or Co-Chairperson) will recognize the member participating in the discussion before they speak, and the comments should be directed to the committee as a whole. For further detail on the consensus process employed by the WASC, see "Explanation of the Consensus Process" later in this document.

Election of Trusted Servants

Election of Trusted Servants requires consensus of all members present when only one nominee is under consideration. When an election is contested, or if consensus cannot be reached, a simple majority of GSR's present is required to elect Trusted Servants. A simple majority is defined as one more than half.

All positions are a 1 year term, except RCM and RCMA which are 2 year terms. The WASC will hold elections for the following positions in the following months:

February: Chair, Co-Chair, Treasurer, and Co-Treasurer,

August: Secretary, Co-Secretary, RCM, RCMA, and all Sub-Committee Chairs. (RCM and RCMA every 2 years only)

If a (prospective) nominee is absent they may submit a letter of willingness, including their qualifications. Resignation can be given at will. If a position is vacated in mid-term a new trusted servant may be voted in immediately and the position will re-open to any nominee(s) the next election for that position.

Removal

A Trusted Servant will be considered to have voluntarily resigned if any of the following occur:

- ANY use of mind or mood altering substances considered to be relapse,
- 2 consecutive absences without a written report or pre-arranged representation
- 4 absences in a year

A vote for involuntary removal for failure to perform the duties and responsibilities of the position requires 2/3 of the GSR's present at the WASC meeting. This is an extreme action and should not be undertaken lightly. A vote to remove a trusted servant MUST take place at least one month after the issue is raised to provide GSR's the opportunity to establish Group Conscience.

Qualifications

All trusted Servants must have the willingness and a desire to serve, a *working* knowledge of the 12 Steps, 12 Traditions, and 12 Concepts of N.A., an understanding of the N.A. service structure and the responsibilities of the position held, and the ability to give the time and resources necessary to fulfill the position.

Administration positions also must have prior service experience, such as a GSR, Group Secretary, Group Treasurer, or Sub-Committee member. All Administrative positions are voting members, except the Chairperson. The clean time requirement for each position is listed with that position description.

Washtenaw Area Service Committee of Narcotics Anonymous Guidelines
Positions, Clean Time, Duties, and Responsibilities

Chairperson

- Minimum 2 years continuous abstinence from all drugs
- Guides the decision making process of consensus as Facilitator
- Strives to keep meetings orderly and peaceful
- Attempts to maintain an atmosphere of recovery through the use of principled discussion
- Not a voting member, but casts the deciding vote when a majority vote of GSR's results in a tie
- Has knowledge of all Area Administration positions
- Arranges the agenda for and presides over the monthly ASC meeting.
- Handles correspondence not covered by other administrative positions or sub-committees.
- A co-signer on the WASC bank account

Co-Chairperson

- Minimum 1 year continuous abstinence from all drugs
- To assist the Chairperson in the performance of their duties
- Assume the duties of the Chairperson in their absence
- Stays current with all sub-committee activities
- Maintains WASC Guidelines and review suggested changes

Secretary

- Minimum 1 year continuous abstinence from all drugs
- Keep accurate minutes for the WASC meetings
- Types, edits (typo's, profanity, inappropriate wording), and distributes copies of the minutes to each GSR, Sub-Committee Chair, and Administrative member no later than 10 business days after the WASC meeting; a GSR Report Form is sent with the minutes to GSR's
- Maintains a current contact list of WASC Trusted Servants and GSR's; this list is accessible only to these listed servants
- Minutes shall be postal mailed and/or emailed, per requests
- Maintains files and archives, which includes a copy of the minutes and any correspondence with the WASC
- Should have access to personal computer, software, and email to facilitate writing and distributing the minutes on a timely basis
- **Submit budgets in April, August, and December**

Co-Secretary

- Minimum 1 year continuous abstinence from all drugs
- To assist the Secretary in the above stated duties, and perform the duties of the Secretary in their absence

Regional Committee Member (RCM)

- Minimum 2 years continuous abstinence from all drugs
- Attends all MRSCNA meetings (every other month), participating in any decisions
- Represents and speaks for the members and groups of the Washtenaw Area in matters pertaining to the Michigan Regional Service Committee (Region or MRSCNA)
- Provides two-way communication with the Michigan Region
- May serve on Sub-Committees, but not as a Chair
- Must provide a thorough report from the MRSCNA meetings
- Must be prudent in travel and lodging, access to transportation will be needed

Washtenaw Area Service Committee of Narcotics Anonymous Guidelines

Regional Committee Member Alternate (RCMA)

- Minimum 1 year continuous abstinence from all drugs
- Spends the first year becoming familiar with the job of the RCM, performing the duties of the RCM's in his/her absence
- Must attend all WASC meetings and MRSCNA meetings, when approved by WASC
- Must be prudent in travel and lodging, access to transportation will be needed

Treasurer

- Minimum 2 years continuous abstinence from all drugs
- Maintains all financial records and oversee financial activities of the W.A.N.A.
- A co-signer on the WASC bank account, (all checks must have 2 signatures to insure validity)
- Receives all donations from individuals, groups, and sub-committees
- Makes a report of contributions and expenditures at every WASC meeting
- **Prepares and presents semi-annual (August) and annual (February) reports.** Annual report shall include the recommended amount of prudent reserve for the following year
- **Submits in January, May, and September a projected budget** based on the prior months meeting at the WASC
- Ensure 1 copy of the monthly bank statement is sent by the bank to the WASC post office box and makes the most recent statement available at every WASC meeting
- Deposits all funds received into the WASC bank account by the end of the third business day following the WASC meeting
- Follows the suggestions in the World Service Committee (WSO) Treasurers Handbook
- Whenever possible, cash received at the monthly WASC meeting should be distributed prior to drafting a check
- Will be legally liable for any and all funds handled

Co-Treasurer

- Minimum 2 years continuous abstinence from all drugs
- May be called upon to co-sign checks when Chairperson or Treasurer is unavailable (all checks must have 2 signatures to insure validity). IS NOT A LEGAL CO-SIGNER ON THE ACCOUNT.
- Assists in the duties of the Treasurer and performs duties in the absence of the Treasurer

Cosigners

The co-signers for the WASC accounts shall be the current Chairperson-and Treasurer. All checks must have 2 signatures from the above positions. The Treasurer or Chairperson is responsible for removing and adding co-signers as rotation of service occurs. A co-signer must first meet any and all criteria the bank requires.

Prudent Reserve

The WASC shall strive to maintain a prudent reserve. The WASC will decide by consensus if any portion, and how much, of our prudent reserve must be used. **The Prudent Reserve amount will be determined by the Treasurer in the annual report in January.** The following basic operating expenses need to be the basis, but not limited to, determining the amount:

1. The last 2 months bills for bank charges, phone line, minutes, H&I, and PI/meeting list
2. The last 3 months of rent
3. The last 6 months of P.O. Box rent
4. RCM Travel cost
5. Additional expenses...\$100.00
6. Activities...\$500.00.

Washtenaw Area Service Committee of Narcotics Anonymous Guidelines

Sub-Committee Responsibilities

- It is suggested that sub-committees use the WSO guidelines for that sub-committee. Under WASC approval guidelines and requirements may be developed for specific functions and positions.
- All Sub-Committee Chairpersons and any members handling N.A. funds must have at least 1 year of continuous abstinence.
- **Budgets are submitted in April, August, and December and approved in May, September, and January.** Budgets must be itemized and broke down into monthly expenses.
- Money will be disbursed monthly or bi-monthly, all receipts must be provided the following WASC meeting and/or for reimbursement.
- In the event of an emergency in between WASC meetings, the Treasurer and at least 2 Administration members can approve up to \$100.00 to be received by the Chair of that sub-committee
- A monthly report of each sub-committees activities, including expenses, is submitted at the WASC meeting
- Each sub-committee meets monthly to communicate and make plans together. Meetings should take place in a public location with date, time, and location published well in advance to allow anyone interested to attend.
- All sub-committees must be in regular contact with each other, helping one another and sharing activities and goals.
- A sub-committee must get prior consent before performing the duties of another sub-committee, consent from the Chair of that sub-committee is recommended.
- Sub-Committees utilize the MRSCNA contacts and exchange information with them.

1) Ad Hoc

- Created to address a question or special project that does not fit into any of the existing sub-committees purposes
- WASC will clearly specify the purpose and function for each Ad Hoc committee formed
- Upon completion of the Ad Hoc committee's work, the committee shall be dissolved

2) Activities

- Coordinate various economical activities bringing addicts together in an atmosphere of recovery, also encouraging greater unity
- Workshops, learning days, picnics, and speakers, dances ...
- Whenever possible, produce an additional income for the Washtenaw Area's use
- All fundraisers must be in compliance with local and state gambling laws; contact MRSCNA Treasurer for current status

3) Public Relations (PR)

(Umbrella Structure: Integration of Hospitals & Institutions, Public Information, Phone line, Web Page, meeting list distribution, and Outreach)

- Carry the message of recovery to the non-addict and addicts in hospitals, institutions, or any facility who otherwise might not hear our message.
- Reading and primary use of the Public Relations Handbook for direction, structure, guidance. We will also consult with the Hospitals & Institutions handbook, as needed. (The WASC has provided a copy of both of these to the chair. All chairpersons pass the handbooks to the next chair.)
- Write a new contingency plan with every rotation of service.
- Maintain a telephone information service (Phone Line) providing up to date and accurate meeting and contact information (web address, P.O. Box, Help line) for the Washtenaw Area. Our messages need to be articulate.

Washtenaw Area Service Committee of Narcotics Anonymous Guidelines

- Oversee our web page; weekly updating of meetings and activities; keeping the site “cleaned out”; sorting the email and immediately forwarding to the appropriate committee/ Trusted Servant or contacting the PR chair if it is a direct PR/HI issue. Any changes must be N.A. recovery related and approved first.
- Create, print and distribute meeting lists quarterly, or as needed, to N.A. meetings and other appropriate locations in the Washtenaw Area.
- Develop working group to focus on our N.A. community’s relations with any and all non-addicts that are in exposure with addicts, both in and outside of hospitals, institutions, and various facilities.
- Plan and complete various projects, including mailings, to reach our public announcing our presence, our primary purpose, and how to contact us. Many of the suggested projects are found in the PR Handbook. At least 3 to 4 projects a year is recommended
- Respond to media inquiries, conduct public presentations
- Keep up to date lists of contact/conversations with community contacts. Keep current records of IP Rack locations and content.
- Conduct monthly (minimum) subcommittee meeting. Conduct training for all trusted servants. Conduct workshops/activities as needed, to increase awareness and participation with the PR subcommittee.
- Services include, but not limited to, establishing support meetings, provide information about N.A., arrange and conduct panels in hospitals, institutions, and other facilities.

Donations to Michigan Regional Service Committee (MRSCNA)

The RCM and/or RCMA will deliver a donation (check) from the WASC to the MRSCNA at the bi-monthly service meeting. If 2 consecutive meeting are missed, the 2 donations are mailed to the MRSCNA Treasurer.

At LEAST 10% of all monthly donations/income from the Washtenaw Area groups and activities will be given, regardless of prudent reserve status. In addition, any monies available above our prudent reserve may be included.

Money Distribution and Reimbursement

Any WASC funds must be used directly for service efforts, carrying the N.A. message only! ***BE PRUDENT!*** Several expenses require prior consent from the WASC body. If you are unsure, ask first.

- Receipts must be produced in order to receive reimbursement
- If you are given money for an expense a head of time, receipts and any change are expected at the following WASC meeting
- As responsible, productive members of society trust is implied, however, any person receiving N.A. funds is responsible and accountable for them.
- *Any theft will be legally prosecuted by the WASC*

Washtenaw Area Service Committee of Narcotics Anonymous Guidelines

Explanation of the Consensus Process

Adapted from the *Guide to the Mid-West Zonal Forum, Published January 2011.*

Other than Elections all decisions are made using consensus. General guidelines are outlined below.

All members present are full participants in the decision making process.

Consensus exists when each member of the group can say:

1. I have had the opportunity to voice my opinions
2. I believe the group has heard me
3. I can actively support the group's decision as the best possible action at this time, even if it is not my first choice.

Ground rules

- Stay open minded.
- Listen and share the time.
- Don't forget why we're here.
- Stay focused on the subject at hand.
- To agree and to disagree... Lively conversation is part of the process.
- Avoid repetition.
- It's important to start and stop on time.

Consensus Process

- A. Motion (simply an idea or proposed solution) is presented by facilitator.
- B. Discussion (*see Procedure for Discussion, below*)
- C. Facilitator asks for Participant Action Options (*see Action Options, below*) on the motion. Without objection (Block) the motion passes.
- D. If consensus cannot be reached, the Facilitator determines whether the matter should be tabled for Group consideration, or if a 2/3 majority vote of GSRs is required.
- E. Once the decision has been made, act upon what you decide

Only reaching another consensus can change a consensus decision.

Procedure For Discussion: The Chairperson is ultimately responsible for driving the consensus process and acts as Facilitator, framing questions, and stating questions for consensus. This provides a general guideline for establishing consensus:

1. Define the problem or decision.
2. Figure out what must be done to reach a solution.
3. Brainstorm possible solution. (*see Brainstorming Guidelines, below*)
4. Discuss pros and cons attempting to narrow down the list of ideas / solutions.
5. Adjust, compromise, and fine tune so all members are satisfied.

Participant's Action Options: All members should participate in the consensus process. Each member has one of three possible action options on any given question:

1. To Give Consent (Yes) - When everyone in the group (except those standing aside) say "Yes" to a motion, consensus is achieved. To give one's consent does not necessarily mean that one wholeheartedly approves of every aspect of the motion, but it does mean that one is willing to support the decision and stand in solidarity with the group, despite one's disagreements.
2. To Stand Aside (Abstain) - An individual stands aside when he or she can not personally support a motion, but feels it would be alright for the rest of the group to adopt it. Standing aside is a stance of principled nonparticipation. The number of Stand Asides SHOULD BE noted in the minutes. If

Washtenaw Area Service Committee of Narcotics Anonymous Guidelines

there are more than a few Stand Asides, consensus has not yet been reached. The Facilitator will determine this.

3. To Block (No) - This step prevents the decision from going forward, at least for the time being. Blocking is a serious matter and should be exercised with great care. This should be done only when one truly believes that the pending proposal, if adopted, would violate the spiritual principles of the 12 Steps, 12 Traditions, or 12 Concepts or the morals, ethics or safety of the whole group.

Silence will be interpreted as Consent.

Brainstorming Guidelines: When Brainstorming, the following general guidelines are suggested.

- One good idea leads to another...
- No and can't do not exist.
- Creativity has no limits.
- Be a part of... Participate.
- Think fast. Analyze later.
- Judging, evaluating, and criticizing are not a part of brainstorming!
- HAVE FUN!!!!

Remember this is a spiritual process and should be governed by our 12 Steps, 12 Traditions, and 12 Concepts of Service.

Additional Notes & Consensus Changes

- Group Report Forms are available online at our website, there are also sent out with emailed minutes. If you receive minutes by postal mail contact the Secretary and request a form with your minutes. Generally, report forms are not provided at the WASC meetings.
- Any changes to our infrastructure may be brought up anytime by anyone, no forms need to be filled out, filed, and approved first.
- No one position has any power over another. Anonymity and unity are the basis for Narcotics Anonymous service, particularly a Consensus Based body.
- ***Our P.O. box address is:***
P.O. Box 3020
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106-3020
- **Our Phone Line provides** current local meeting listings only, no answering machine/voice mail services available. **The number is 734.913.9839.**
- ***Our Website address is*** <http://www.michigan-na.org/washtenaw>
- **If any non-addict or facility asks you, your group, or anyone you know about our fellowship and wants additional information or a possible presentation, PLEASE,** get a name and number/email from that person and contact our Public Information Chair (or the H&I Chair if no PI is Available). Give them our email address too, if possible. Our Public Image determines whether or not addicts will get our N.A. message, it is for this reason we have in place a working infrastructure based on our 12 Traditions, Traditions that can protect us from the internal and external forces that can destroy us.

“...By following these guidelines in our dealings with others and society at large, we avoid many problems. That is not to say our Traditions eliminate all problems. We still have to face difficulties as they arise: communication problems, differences of opinion, internal controversies, and troubles with individuals and groups outside the fellowship. However, when we apply these principles we avoid some of the pitfalls....”

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