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# North Florida Area District 6 Service Position Guidelines

# List of Service Positions

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## **Group Representative (GR) Guidelines**

**LINK TO:** [AL-ANON/ALATEEN SERVICE MANUAL](#)

## *DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVE*

Chairs and facilitates all District meetings. Represents the groups in the District at Area World Service Committee (AWSC) meetings. Serves as a resource and information source for the groups.

### **Duties:**

- Schedules and chairs District and Panel meetings
- Electronically distributes District meeting minutes to the Group Representatives (GRs)
- Serves as liaison with the GRs to ensure continuity within the groups and Panel
- Visits all groups in the District, particularly new groups, to assure they receive all necessary information and help
- Helps the groups understand and apply the Traditions to fellowship activities
- Attends AWSC meetings, North Florida Area (NFA) Assemblies and reports District activities
- Submits Red Light/Green Light topics to AWSC
- Provides Red Light/Green Light guidelines to the volunteer presenter
- Assists the Delegate in disseminating Conference information and reports

### **Service Responsibilities:**

- As a District Officer, the service position has a voice and a vote at Panel meetings: a voice but no vote at District meetings
- Enlightens members of service opportunities
- Encourages service at group and District levels
- Prepares GRs for Spring and Fall Assemblies and distributes information
- Supports all District and NFA events
- Keeps all receipts for District expenses and promptly submits to Treasurer for reimbursement

### **Tools Recommended:**

- Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual
- Service Sponsor
- Computer and word processing software/skills
- [Al-Anon Guideline G-37 \(Click to View\)](#)

### **Tips:**

- Work closely with District Information Service Liaison (DISL) and Area Information Chairperson
- Work closely with the Alternate District Representative for development and support

### **Who is Eligible:**

- All outgoing and past GRs who have or will have completed three years of service in that position, who are not also members of AA and who have not previously served a full three-year term as District Representative. The District Representative is elected by the GRs for a three-year term.

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## *ALTERNATE DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVE*

Serves as a resource and information source for the groups. In the absence of the District Representative (DR), chairs the District meetings.

### **Duties:**

- Attends District and District Information Service Liaison (DISL) Chairperson meetings
- Attends Area World Service Committee (AWSC) and Assembly meetings with DR when available
- Attends AWSC in the absence of the (DISL)
- Attends Panel meetings as scheduled by DR
- Completes the term as DR if the DR steps down
- Solicits volunteers to read Steps, Traditions, and Concepts at District meetings
- Presents highlights from The Forum, group sharings, concerns, and anniversaries
- Provides blank motion forms for use by Group Representatives (GRs)
- Reviews written motions for content prior to passing to DR
- Maintains the District Service Positions Manual and provides suggested service guidelines as needed

### **Service Responsibilities:**

- As a District Officer, the service position has a voice and a vote at Panel meetings: a voice but no vote at District meetings unless currently serving as a GR
- Enlightens members of service opportunities
- Encourages service at group and District levels
- Coordinates group visits with DR to provide support, answer questions or help with group problems
- Keeps all receipts for District expenses and promptly submits to Treasurer for reimbursement

### **Tools Recommended:**

- Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual
- Service Sponsor
- Computer and word processing software/skills
- [Al-Anon Guideline G-37 \(Click to View\)](#)

### **Tips:**

- Work closely with DR to provide assistance as needed

### **Who is Eligible:**

- All outgoing and active past GRs who have or will have completed three years of service in that position, who are not also members of AA and who have not previously served a full three-year term as Alternate DR. The Alternate DR is elected by the GRs for a three-year term.

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## *DISTRICT SECRETARY*

Records and develops District and Panel meeting minutes. Provides the District meeting minutes to the District Representative (DR) for approval and distribution.

### **Duties:**

- Attends District and Panel meetings or provides an alternate
- Electronically records District and Panel meetings
- Emails drafts of District minutes to DR for distribution to Group Representatives (GRs)
- Asks for motion to accept minutes
- Responsible for Roll Call at District meetings
- Maintains an updated list of motions, copies of written motions and Panel minutes in a binder if applicable

### **Service Responsibilities:**

- This service position has a voice and a vote at Panel meetings: a voice but no vote at District meetings
- Enlightens members of service opportunities
- Keeps all receipts for District expenses and promptly submits to Treasurer for reimbursement

### **Tools Recommended:**

- Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual
- Service Sponsor
- Computer and word processing software/skills

### **Tips:**

- Communicate to GRs how they can help by identifying themselves and their group during Roll Call
- Deliver the minutes as soon as possible after meetings

### **Who is Eligible:**

- Any Al-Anon member willing to serve who has not previously served a full three-year term in this capacity. Being a GR is not required, but at least one year of active Al-Anon service is recommended. An AA member is eligible. The Secretary is elected by the GRs for a three-year term.

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## *DISTRICT TREASURER*

Manages the finances of the District, including but not limited to: receiving and disbursing funds; maintaining accurate financial records; reconciling bank statements; and preparing and presenting periodic financial reports and the annual budgets.

### **Duties:**

- Opens and maintains local bank account and proper signatory requirements
- Receives the monthly bank statement and ensures the checkbook is in balance
- Accepts, deposits, and maintains a record of all group and individual contributions
- Accepts and deposits the monthly contributions from the Literature Distribution Center
- Pays all bills in a timely manner
- Obtains expense receipts and reimburses Officers and other AI-Anon members for District projects and expenses
- Provides a financial report for each District meeting including a copy of the current income and expenses, the budget, and year-to-date contributions
- Retains electronic copies of financial records for audit and archival purposes
- Backs up all District computer files regularly, if applicable
- Develops a proposed annual budget to be presented to the Group Representatives (GRs) for approval
- Collects, processes, and distributes all mail received at the District post office box
- Attends District and Panel meetings

### **Service Responsibilities:**

- As a District Officer, the service position has a voice and a vote at Panel meetings: a voice but no vote at District meetings
- Establishes and maintains a working relationship with all Officers, Chairpersons, and other AI-Anon members
- Is available as a resource to the groups and cooperates with other North Florida Area Districts and Officers

### **Tools Recommended:**

- AI-Anon/Alateen Service Manual
- Service Sponsor
- Computer and financial software
- Reimbursement form
- [AI-Anon Guideline G-41 \(Click to View\)](#)

### **Tips:**

- Possess ability to work with numbers and simple spreadsheets
- Have ability to read bank statements, maintain a balanced check book, and produce financial reports
- Have ability to explain financial reports and budgets to others

### **Who is Eligible:**

- Any AI-Anon member willing to serve who has not previously served a full three-year term in this capacity. Having served as a GR is not a requirement but beneficial and three years of active AI-Anon membership is recommended. An AA member is eligible. The District Treasurer is elected by the GRs for a three-year term.

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## *DISTRICT INFORMATION SERVICE LIAISON (DISL)*

Serves as the communication link between the District Information Service (DIS), the Area World Service Committee (AWSC) and the North Florida Area (NFA) Assembly.

### **Duties:**

- Attends District and Panel meetings
- Requests each DIS Chairperson electronically submit a report to DISL prior to District meetings
- Coordinates presentation of chairpersons' reports at District meetings
- Chairs DIS Chairperson meetings as needed
- Attends AWSC and NFA Assembly meetings
- Submits electronic reports to the Area Website Chairperson prior to AWSC and NFA Assembly highlighting District activities. Coordinates reports with District Chairpersons
- Provides highlights from AWSC and NFA Assembly meetings at District meetings

### **Service Responsibilities:**

- As a District Officer, the service position has a voice and a vote at Panel meetings: a voice but no vote at District meetings
- Enlightens members of service opportunities
- Keeps all receipts for District expenses and promptly submits to Treasurer for reimbursement

### **Tools Recommended:**

- Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual
- Service Sponsor
- Computer and word processing software/skills
- [Al-Anon Guideline G-4 \(Click to View\)](#)

### **Tips:**

- Meet with newly elected DIS Chairpersons to provide position guidelines and service information
- Continues to voice that DIS Chairpersons are not expected to work alone, but are encouraged to form committees
- Works with DIS Chairpersons by providing assistance, offering suggestions for improvement and problem-solving techniques

### **Who is Eligible?**

- All outgoing and active past Group Representatives (GRs) who have or will have completed three years of service in that position, who are not members of AA and who have not previously served a full three-year term as DISL. Prior chairperson experience is beneficial. The DISL is elected by the GRs for a three-year term.

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## ALATEEN CHAIRPERSON

Provides a vital link of communication between Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS), the District and the Area Alateen Coordinator on matters relating to Alateen.

### Duties:

- Regularly meets with AMIAS to exchange ideas, discuss problems, and provide encouragement
- Becomes familiar with all Alateen literature
- Becomes a resource within the District to encourage Al-Anon members to become active in Alateen service
- Reaches out to the community to find locations for new Alateen meetings
- Cooperates with the Public Outreach Information Chairperson to provide Alateen information to schools, churches, special events, etc.
- Sponsors Alateen meetings within the District, when needed
- Works closely with the Area Alateen Process Person (AAPP)

### Service Responsibilities:

- Attends District meetings, Alateen conferences and Round-ups
- Provides an electronic report to DISL prior to District meetings and shares results
- Presents oral reports at District meetings
- Encourages Alateen groups to be informed by reading “Alateen Talk” and “The Forum”
- Enlightens members of service opportunities
- Keeps all receipts for District expenses and promptly submits to Treasurer for reimbursement

### Tools Required:

- Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual
- Service Sponsor
- Al-Anon Guidelines [G-5](#), [G-9](#), [G-16](#), [G-19](#), [G-24](#), and [G-34](#) (Click to View)

### Tips:

- The Chairperson is not expected to work alone but is encouraged to form a committee to help
- Encourage AMIAS by providing assistance, offering suggestions for improvement and problem-solving techniques

### Who is Eligible:

- An Al-Anon/Alateen member who is also a member of AA is eligible to serve in this capacity. Being a Group Representative (GR) is not a requirement but at least three years of actively attending Al-Anon meetings is recommended. The Alateen Chairperson is elected by the GRs for a three-year term.

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## ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS LIAISONS

*Because our District is geographically large, two members are suggested: one person to represent the northern area and another to represent the southern area.*

Maintain communication between the District and Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) to provide information and cooperation for the mutual benefit of both fellowships.

### **Duties:**

- Coordinate Al-Anon scheduled activities with AA
- Cooperate with AA in Public Outreach Projects
- Provide current Al-Anon Where and Whens to intergroups

### **Service Responsibilities:**

- Provide electronic reports to DISL prior to District meetings
- Presents oral reports at District meetings
- Keep all receipts for District expenses and promptly submits to Treasurer for reimbursement

### **Tools Recommended:**

- Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual
- Service Sponsor
- Computer and word processing software/skills
- [Al-Anon Guideline G-3 \(Click to View\)](#)

### **Tips:**

- Possess a basic understanding of Tradition 6
- Focus on Al-Anon program in all service activities

### **Who is Eligible:**

- Any Al-Anon/Alateen member who is also a member of AA is eligible. Being a Group Representative (GR) is not a requirement. At least three years of actively attending Al-Anon meetings is recommended. The Alcoholics Anonymous Liaisons are elected by the GRs for a three-year term.

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## *ARCHIVES CHAIRPERSON*

Preserves Al-anon District 6 digital Meeting Minutes and Treasurer's Reports.

### **Duties:**

- Electronically receives approved Meeting Minutes and Treasurer's Reports from the DR
- Incorporates the Minutes and Treasurer's Reports into the Archival Document
- Electronically send the updated Archival Document to the Webmaster for posting in the password protected area of the Al-anon District 6 Website

### **Service Responsibilities:**

- Attends District meetings
- Presents oral report at District meetings as needed

### **Tools Recommended:**

- Service Sponsor
- Computer/scanner access and MS Word skills
- [Al-Anon Guideline G-30 \(Click to View\)](#)

### **Tips:**

- Knowledge of Power PDF helpful
- Be familiar with archival procedures

### **Who is Eligible:**

- An Al-Anon/Alateen member who is also a member of AA is eligible to serve in this capacity. Being a Group Representative (GR) is not required but at least one year of actively attending Al-Anon meetings is recommended. The Archives Chairperson is elected by the GRs for a three-year term.

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## *EVENT CHAIRPERSON*

Plans Gratitude Luncheons and Workshops as well as any other special events the District decides to present

### **Duties:**

- Coordinates with DR on each planned event
- Plans themes and agendas for events
- Organizes food, raffles, and decorations
- Procures guest speakers
- Purchases all supplies
  - Paper and plastic products, coffee, tea, and drinks
- Secures venue and audio/video for events
  - Projector is available through the Sergeant at Arms
  - HDMI cable is not provided and must be brought the day of each event
- Organizes committees to help in production of events
- Designs fliers and organizes promotion of events

### **Service Responsibilities:**

- Attends District meetings
- Submits electronic progress reports to DISL prior to District meetings
- Presents oral reports at District meetings
- Stays within the established budget
- Keeps all receipts for District expenses and promptly submits to Treasurer for reimbursement

### **Tools Recommended:**

- Service Sponsor
- Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual
- Some computer skills

### **Tips:**

- Enlist volunteers from groups and District meetings
- The Chairperson is not expected to work alone but is encouraged to form a committee to help

### **Who is Eligible:**

- Any Al-Anon member who has not previously served a full three-year term in this capacity. An Al-Anon/Alateen member who is also a member of AA is eligible. Being a Group Representative (GR) is not a requirement. At least three years of actively attending Al-Anon meetings is recommended. The Event Chair is elected by the GRs for a three-year term.

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## GROUP MEETING LIAISONS

*Because our District is geographically large, two members are suggested: one person to represent the northern area and another to represent the southern area.*

Help groups with concerns, especially those groups who may be having difficulties following the Traditions. Each group is “autonomous” but sometimes groups need to reason things out with an objective outsider who mentors, but does not interfere.

### **Duties:**

- Assist in establishing new meetings in the District
- Communicate with anyone who may want to start a new meeting

### **Service Responsibilities:**

- Attend District meetings
- Provide an electronic report to the DISL prior to each District meeting
- Present oral reports at District meetings

### **Establish New Meetings:**

- Confirm the location requests for the new meeting
- Give startup funds from the District
- Attend first group meetings and review the suggested meeting guidelines
- Work with the new group officers (Group Representative (GR), Treasurer and Secretary) to ensure that the Service Manual Guidelines are followed
- Liaise between the group and the District

### **Tools Recommended:**

- Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual
- Service Sponsor
- Knowledge of group organization, meeting formats and Al-Anon’s overall organizational structure

### **Tips:**

- “Let Go” of group when further assistance is no longer required

### **Who is Eligible:**

- An Al-Anon/Alateen member who is also a member of AA is eligible to serve in this capacity. Being a GR is not required but at least one year of actively attending Al-Anon meetings is recommended. The Group Meeting Liaison Chairpersons are elected by the GRs for a three-year term.

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## GROUP RECORDS CHAIRPERSON

Manages and maintains group records at the District level and communicates changes to North Florida Area (NFA) Group Records Coordinator.

### Duties:

- Maintains current and accurate records of group information
- Communicates any changes to the Area Group Records Coordinator
- Notifies District Representative, Where and When Chairperson, and the Information Line Chairperson of these changes
- Inform appropriate Group Liaison and Treasurer when a new Group receives its WSO registration. The Group Liaison personally delivers the new Group's startup check
- Maintains a current contact list of all group and District trusted servants
- Ensures Group Representatives (GRs), alternate GRs, and groups understand the importance of maintaining an accurate Current Mailing Address (CMA) list

### Service Responsibilities:

- Attends District meetings
- Provides electronic reports to District Information Service Liaison (DISL) prior to District meetings
- Presents oral reports at District meetings
- Participates in NFA Assemblies as Registration Chairperson as requested (possibly once per Panel)
- Enlightens members of service opportunities
- Keeps all receipts for District expenses and promptly submits to Treasurer for reimbursement

### Tools Recommended:

- Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual
- Service Sponsor
- Computer and word processing software/skills
- [Al-Anon Guideline G-36 \(Click to View\)](#)

### Tips:

- Maintain an open line of communication with District and NFA regarding current group records
- Stress the need for groups to update group records as soon as possible rather than waiting for the District meeting
- Send out the current CMA, updated with any changes, corrections, additions/deletions, to the designated Panel prior to District meetings. Use cover letter to specify the changes that have been made for easy reference
- Utilize flash drive for maintaining records

### Who is Eligible:

- An Al-Anon/Alateen member who is also a member of AA is eligible to serve in this capacity. Being a GR is not required but at least three years of actively attending Al-Anon meetings is recommended. The Group Records Chairperson is elected by the GRs for a three-year term.

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## *GROWTH ENHANCEMENT MEMBER (GEM)*

The Growth Enhancement Member (GEM) is a member of Al-Anon who is asked by the District Representative (DR) to volunteer at Area World Service Conference (AWSC) and/or North Florida Area (NFA) Assemblies in whatever capacity that is needed. This service opportunity is a growth experience for members to observe the business side of Al-Anon.

### **Duties:**

- Be willing
- Be inquisitive
- Be available

### **Service Responsibilities:**

- Attends Districts meetings
- Attends Assemblies to help with Hospitality, Light Side, Fun Shop or Registration
- Attends Area World Service Committee meetings to help with Hospitality or participate on an Action Committee
- Has a voice but no vote when attending any or all of these meetings
- Be reimbursed for meals, gas, registration, and room by District when attending
- Keeps all receipts for District expenses and promptly submits to Treasurer for reimbursement
- Prepares a brief report of experiences if requested

### **Tools Recommended:**

- Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual
- Service Sponsor

### **Tips:**

- Participation is the key element for the entire event
- Observe and enjoy the service experience

### **Who is Eligible:**

- This is a volunteer position, and the GEM should be new to that particular service event. An Al-Anon/Alateen member who is also a member of AA is eligible. Being a Group Representative (GR) is not required and at least one year of actively attending Al-Anon meetings is recommended.

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## *HOSPITALITY CHAIRPERSON*

Coordinates all aspects of providing refreshments for District meetings.

### **Duties:**

- Establishes a committee
- Shops for refreshment items
- Stores paper products, etc.
- Sets up and breaks down refreshment area

### **Service Responsibilities:**

- Attends District meetings or arranges for an alternate
- Provides reports to District Information Service Liaison (DISL) prior to District meetings
- Presents oral reports at District meetings
- Keeps all receipts for District expenses and promptly submits to Treasurer for reimbursement

### **Tools Recommended:**

- Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual
- Service Sponsor

### **Tips:**

- Provides a variety of snacks
- Assures coffee and water are available

### **Who is Eligible:**

- An Al-Anon/Alateen member who is also a member of AA is eligible to serve in this capacity. Being a Group Representative (GR) is not required but at least three years of actively attending Al-Anon meetings is recommended. The Hospitality Chairperson is elected by the GRs for a three-year term.

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## *INFORMATION LINE CHAIRPERSON*

Responds promptly to voice messages left on the District's Information Phone Line. Provides current information about Al-Anon and meeting locations.

### **Duties:**

- Handles situations that arise regarding the phone line itself. Example: deleting old messages
- Reviews copies of telephone bills (received from the Treasurer) regarding locations of calls being received. This information could indicate the need for new meetings in that area.

### **Service Responsibilities:**

- Attends District meetings
- Provides an electronic report to District Information Service Liaison (DISL) prior to District meetings
- Presents oral reports at District meetings
- Enlightens members of service opportunities

### **Tools Recommended:**

- Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual
- Service Sponsor
- Current Where and When from our District and surrounding Districts
- Computer and word processing software/skills
- [Al-Anon Guideline G-4, Paragraph How the AIS Operates \(Click to View\)](#)

### **Tips:**

- Encourage individuals or groups to volunteer
- Maintain a schedule of volunteers or groups to respond to voice messages
- Provide volunteers or groups with instructions on retrieving and returning voice message on information line
- Remind volunteers on upcoming month of service
- Contact volunteers to see if there are any issues, and/or offer suggestions for improvement

### **Who is Eligible:**

- An Al-Anon/Alateen member who is also a member of AA is eligible to serve in this capacity. Being a Group Representative (GR) is not a requirement. We recommend at least one year of actively attending Al-Anon meetings. The Information Line Chairperson is elected by the District GRs for a three-year term.

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## *LOVE GIFTS CHAIRPERSON*

Each year in April, when the World Service Conference (WSC) meets, Love Gifts, 100 small yet meaningful gifts, are provided for attending delegates. The items identify: WSC, District, State, plus the month and year of the conference.

### **Duties:**

- Prepares and sends Love Gifts to the delegates

### **Service Responsibilities:**

- Attends District meetings
- Presents oral reports at District meetings
- Asks group members who might be interested to join in making 100 craft items
- Sends Love Gifts to WSC hotel five days prior to event
- Keeps all receipts for District expenses and promptly submits to Treasurer for reimbursement

### **Tools Recommended:**

- Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual
- Service Sponsor

### **Tips:**

- Purchase materials for crafts
- The Chairperson is not expected to work alone but is encouraged to form a committee to help

### **Who is Eligible:**

- An Al-Anon/Alateen member who is also a member of AA is eligible to serve in this capacity. Being a Group Representative (GR) is not required but at least one year of actively attending Al-Anon meetings is recommended. The Love Gifts Chairperson is elected by the GRs for a three-year term.

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## *PUBLIC OUTREACH INFORMATION CHAIRPERSON*

Informs the public through all media sources and any other means of reaching the public directly (e.g., poster placement, health and community fairs) about who we are, what we do and how to get in touch with us.

### **Duties:**

- Forms a committee that encompasses: Cooperating with the Professional Community (CPC), Institutions and Alateen Chairpersons, as well as the North Florida Area Public Outreach Coordinator
- Provides speakers and Al-Anon Conference Approved Literature (CAL) for community events
- Participates and exhibits at health fairs and community events
- Invites community leaders and media contacts to attend open meetings
- Distributes Al-Anon CAL and posters stamped with local contact phone number in public places, with permission
- Contacts local radio and TV stations
- Develops a relationship with NFA Public Outreach Coordinator

### **Suggested Guidelines for COOPERATING WITH THE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY**

- Exchanges ideas and information to link WSO, North Florida Area and District in order to carry the Al-Anon message to the professional community
- Distributes information received from WSO to the District
- Receives emails from the WSO with inquiries from the professional community requesting Al-Anon information and responds to said inquiries
- Encourages groups and members to reach out to the professional community

### **Suggested Guidelines for INSTITUTIONS:**

- Provides the Al-Anon/Alateen program to the families and friends of alcoholics in treatment centers, hospitals, correctional or other residential facilities and shelters
- Learns and communicates each institution's guidelines and practices

### **Service Responsibilities:**

- Coordinates and cooperates with other Outreach Chairpersons
- Attends District meetings and submits electronic progress reports to District Information Service Liaison (DISL) prior to District meetings
- Presents oral reports at District meetings
- Enlightens members of service opportunities
- Keeps all receipts for District expenses and promptly submits to Treasurer for reimbursement

### **Tools Recommended:**

- Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual
- Service Sponsor
- Computer and word processing software/skills
- Al-Anon Guidelines [G-9](#), [G-10](#), [G-22](#), and [G-38](#) (Click to View)

### **Tips:**

- Meet periodically with committee members to review outreach activities and provide encouragement

### **Who is Eligible:**

- An Al-Anon/Alateen member who is also a member of AA is eligible. Being a Group Representatives (GR) is not required but at least three years of actively attending Al-Anon meetings is recommended. The Public Outreach Information Chairperson is elected by the GRs for a three-year term.

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## *SERGEANT AT ARMS*

Arrives half an hour prior to meeting to open doors and set up the room. Greets arriving Group Representatives (GRs) and guests, directing them to sign-in table.

### **Duties:**

- **Sets up sign-in table**
  - Provides sign-in sheets for members (voting and non-voting sheets)
  - Provides name tags, pens, and markers for members
  - Oversees sign-ins of GRs for voting purposes and sign-in of guests
  - Gives sign-in sheets and count of those voting to Secretary
- **Sets up a handouts table**

### **Service Responsibilities:**

- Attends District meetings
- Manages the condition of the meeting rooms
  - Accommodates the general comfort for the greatest number of meeting participants
- Manages the physical nature of the meeting facility
  - Sets up and tears down chairs, tables, etc., with the help of other member volunteers
  - Puts name tags on officers' table (DR, ALT DR, DISL, TREASURER and SECRETARY)
  - Ensures the kitchen is cleaned and appliances and lights are turned off
  - Confirms all doors all locked

### **Tools Recommended:**

- Al-Anon//Alateen Service Manual
- Service Sponsor

### **Tips:**

- Be flexible
- The Chairperson is not expected to work alone but is encouraged to form a committee to help, especially with heavy items
- Attendees who have a problem with the facility should communicate their concerns directly to the Sergeant at Arms for resolution. If the Sergeant at Arms cannot resolve these situations, the DR will then be involved.

### **Who is Eligible:**

- An Al-Anon/Alateen member who is also a member of AA is eligible to serve in this capacity. Being a GR is not required but at least one year of actively attending Al-Anon meetings is recommended. The Sergeant at Arms is elected by the GRs for a three-year term.

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## *SPANISH LIAISON*

This service volunteer will reach out to the Spanish community and encourage their formation.

Serves as a conduit between the District and Spanish Al-Anon groups.

### **Duties:**

- Attends Spanish meetings
- Attends District meetings
- Provides electronic reports to District Information Service Liaison (DISL) prior to District meetings
- Presents oral reports at District meetings

### **Responsibilities:**

- Encourages the formation of Spanish speaking groups in the District
- Works with and supports these groups when appropriate

### **Tools recommended:**

- Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual
- Service sponsor
- Competency in the Spanish language
- Some computer and word processing skills

### **Tips:**

- The Group Liaison could be a helpful resource in establishing new meetings

### **Who is Eligible:**

- An Al-Anon/Alateen member who is also a member of AA is eligible to serve in this capacity. Being a Group Representative (GR) is not required but at least one year of actively attending Al-Anon meetings is recommended. The Spanish Liaison is elected by the GRs for a three-year term.

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## *SPEAKERS LIST CHAIRPERSON*

Maintains a list of Al-Anon members within the District willing to carry the Al-Anon/Alateen message of recovery by sharing their experience, strength and hope at meetings and other Al-Anon events.

### **Duties:**

- Maintains an up-to-date and accurate list of speakers
- Encourages members to volunteer as speakers
- Utilizes the District meetings to spread the word about the Speakers List

### **Service Responsibilities:**

- Attends District meetings
- Provides electronic reports to District Information Service Liaison (DISL) prior to District meetings
- Enlightens members of service opportunities

### **Tools Recommended:**

- Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual
- Service Sponsor
- [Al-Anon Guideline G-1 \(Click to View\)](#)

### **Tips:**

- The Chairperson is not expected to work alone but is encouraged to form a committee to help
- Consider geographical location of speakers when managing list
- Utilize Al-Anon members who have an important message whether sharing their own personal story of recovery or sharing how a favorite Step, Tradition, slogan, Al-Anon/Alateen book or pamphlet was especially helpful

### **Who is Eligible:**

- An Al-Anon/Alateen member who is also a member of AA is eligible to serve in this capacity. Being a Group Representative (GR) is not required but at least one year of actively attending Al-Anon meetings is recommended. The Speakers List Chairperson is elected by the GRs for a three-year term.

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## WEBSITE CHAIRPERSON (WEBMASTER)

Maintains and develops the District Website and promotes it as a District communications tool.

### **Duties:**

- Maintains communications with domain provider and hosting service and troubleshoots operational issues
- Maintains administration, ownership and registration information and ensures the domain name and hosting renewals are current
- Maintains accurate and current information on website, including but not limited to, District Guidelines, meeting minutes and other documents containing information of interest to current and prospective members
- Updates meeting information when changes are received from the Where and When Chairperson
- Updates event calendar with new events and flyers
- Provides and maintains email addresses for all District service positions
- Transfers new and updated pages to the website using the File Transfer Protocol (FTP)
- Adds new links to the navigation bar when new pages are added
- Responds to all website inquiries by answering emails or forwarding them to the appropriate District Officer or Chairperson

### **Service Responsibilities:**

- Attends District meetings
- Provides electronic reports to DISL prior to District meetings
- Presents oral reports at District meetings
- Works with District Officers and Chairpersons to provide pages and services requested
- Ensures all documents posted to the website are free of personally identifiable information, in accordance with our 11<sup>th</sup> Tradition
- Keeps all receipts for District expenses and promptly submits to Treasurer for reimbursement

### **Tools Recommended:**

- Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual
- Service Sponsor
- Computer and word processing software/skills
- [Al-Anon Guideline G-40 \(Click to View\)](#)
- [F.A.Q. for Al-Anon Websites S-66](#)

### **Tips:**

- The Chairperson is not expected to work alone and is encouraged to form a committee to obtain assistance from the fellowship for technical advice as needed

### **Who is Eligible:**

- An Al-Anon/Alateen member who is also a member of AA is eligible to serve in this capacity. Being a Group Representative (GR) is not required but at least three years of actively attending Al-Anon meetings is recommended. The Web Site Chairperson is elected by the GRs for a three-year term.

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## *WHERE AND WHEN CHAIRPERSON*

Creates, publishes, and distributes a District meeting list at the District meetings.

### **Duties:**

- Maintains the document file(s) used for printing, updating, and editing meeting information as received from the District Group Records Chairperson
- Sends the updated document to the Webmaster for posting on the District Website (ASAP)
- Communicates with the Group Records Chairperson
- Uses an organized, consistent format to aid readers
- Provides a copy of Where and When to Website Chairperson for posting on District website
- Delivers copies of Where and When to District meetings

### **Service Responsibilities:**

- Attends District meetings
- Provides electronic reports to the District Information Service Liaison (DISL) prior to District meetings
- Presents oral reports at District meetings
- Keeps all receipts for District expenses and promptly submits to Treasurer for reimbursement

### **Tools Recommended:**

- Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual
- Service Sponsor
- Computer and word processing software/skills

### **Tips:**

- Bundle the Where and Whens in groups of ten for each Group Representative (GR) at District
- Monitor quantities necessary to meet District needs
- Print a nominal number on white paper to facilitate copying by others

### **Who is Eligible:**

- An Al-Anon/Alateen member who is also a member of AA is eligible to serve in this capacity. Being a GR is not required but at least one year of actively attending Al-Anon meetings is recommended. The Where and When Chairperson is elected by the GRs for a three-year term.

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## *GROUP REPRESENTATIVE (GR)*

Serves as a resource and information link between their group and the District. The GR is vital “in the continuing function, growth, and unity of worldwide Al-Anon.”

### **Duties:**

- Attends District meetings or provides an alternate
- Attends bi-annual Area World Assemblies
- Informs group of all District, Area, and World Service updates

### **Service Responsibilities:**

- The GR vote is the most critical component to the direction of Al-Anon
- This service position has a voice and a vote at District meetings

### **Tools:**

- Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual
- Service Sponsor
- Computer and word processing software/skills
- [Al-Anon Guideline and expense form G-11 \(Click to View\)](#)

### **Tips:**

- Be an active group member
- Inform group of upcoming events and motions

### **Who is Eligible:**

- Any willing Al-Anon member who has not previously completed three years of service in this capacity. An AA member is not eligible. One year of active Al-Anon attendance is recommended. The GR is elected by their group for a three-year term.

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# Al-Anon Guidelines

The Shared Experience of Al-Anon and Alateen Members.

## District Representative

G-37

The District Representative (DR) is an important link between the groups and the Area Assembly. The District is a geographical segment containing a number of groups, located relatively closely to one another. The DR represents the District at Area World Service Committee (AWSC) meetings and conveys information back to the groups. The DR chairs regular District meetings for groups in the District.

### Requirements

Any incoming, outgoing, or active past Al-Anon or Alateen Group Representative (GR) who is willing to represent the District at AWSC meetings and Area Assembly meetings, and who is not also a member of A.A., is eligible to serve as DR. A DR should have basic knowledge of Al-Anon and Alateen Traditions and the Concepts of Service, and how to apply them in the links of service. See the “World Service Handbook” section of the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27).

The GRs in the District elect the DR. The DR assists the Delegate in passing on information about World Service Office (WSO) activities and World Service Conference (WSC) decisions to the GRs in the District.

### Acronyms

- |                                |      |
|--------------------------------|------|
| • Group Representative         | GR   |
| • District Representative      | DR   |
| • Area World Service Committee | AWSC |
| • World Service Office         | WSO  |
| • World Service Conference     | WSC  |
| • Public Outreach              | PO   |

### Term of Office

DRs are elected for a three-year term, usually coinciding with those of Area officers and the Delegate. The election of the DR and Alternate DR usually takes place in the fall of the year after the election of GRs and before election of Area officers. See the “World Service Handbook” section of the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27).

### Dates to Remember

- District meeting, Area World Service Committee meeting, and Area Assembly
- Al-Anon Convention, Alateen Conference, World Service Conference

### Information the DR Needs to Know

The World Service Office (WSO) provides online resources for DRs on the Al-Anon website, as well as on a password-protected communication platform. For access, be sure to provide an email address to WSO.

You will need to know the names, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses of the:

- Group Representatives
- Area Delegate
- Area officers
- District officers and coordinators
- Local Al-Anon Information Service (AIS) Chairperson or contact
- Area Coordinators (Alateen, Archives, Group Records, Forum, Literature, Public Outreach, Web)

### DOs for District Representatives

- DO encourage members in your District to participate in service.
- DO help groups understand Al-Anon is a worldwide fellowship and help them understand the structure of their Assembly and WSO. (See “World Service Conference Structure” chart, in the “World Service Handbook” section of the *Service Manual*).
- DO encourage GRs to visit the Al-Anon website: [al-anon.org](http://al-anon.org). There are many resources for members and groups on the website, including the complete *Service Manual* and Al-Anon/Alateen Guidelines.
- DO visit and encourage new groups, making sure they are receiving proper information and help.
- DO become familiar with the WSO Online Group Records (available to DRs as “read only”), and regularly provide groups with group detail reports to verify accuracy.
- DO urge groups in your District to follow the Area process to complete and promptly return the groups’ annual update sheets sent out by the WSO.

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- DO encourage groups to provide an email address for the group, to assure delivery of news from the WSO.
- DO remind Group Representatives to update their meeting and group mailing information promptly.
- DO report discrepancies in group information to the Area Group Records Coordinator.
- DO schedule District meetings at regular intervals and keep in touch with GRs.
- DO get to know the Alateen Group Sponsors in your District and encourage the Alateen groups to send GRs to District meetings.
- DO attend Area Assemblies and Area World Service Committee meetings and report activities within your District. Remember you are the link between the groups in your District and the AWSC.
- DO help your Delegate spread information and reports from the WSC.
- DO communicate with the local Al-Anon Information Service (AIS/Intergroup).
- DO study the *Service Manual* so you are knowledgeable of Al-Anon policies when questions arise from the groups in your District.
- DO review the “World Service Handbook” section of the *Service Manual* for the duties of the DR.
- DO study the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts of Service; they are guides for group unity, growth, and service.
- DO remember to offer suggestions, not to issue orders.
- DO encourage groups to invite Area Coordinators to give reports and hold workshops.
- DO keep the Alternate DR informed and involved in the District activities.
- DO get a Service Sponsor and ask for help when feeling overwhelmed.
- DO be loving and patient with other members, as well as yourself; we are all at different stages of recovery.
- DO remember to have fun!

[See also *District Meetings* guideline (G-15)].

## Calling and Chairing District Meetings

- Regularly scheduled meetings help the Group Representatives plan ahead and to come prepared for the meeting.
- Some Districts meet monthly, others have bi-monthly, or quarterly meetings.
- Continuity is the most important factor in deciding when to schedule meetings.
- They can be held at the same location or rotated and hosted by the groups in the District.
- Fun activities and food attract members.

- Scheduling fellowship events may encourage members to take responsibilities that lead to more committed service positions. (See *Service Manual* on “District Meetings”).

## Supporting the Delegate

The Delegate’s report of the World Service Conference activities is an important message to carry to the Group Representatives at the District meeting. The Delegate may ask for feedback to take to the WSC and the District meeting is the place to collect that type of information.

## Helpful Hints

- The best District meetings have an agenda, and they follow it.
- Ask the GRs to share about their group needs, problems, and solutions based on the Traditions.
- Create and carry out District Public Outreach (PO) projects.
- Make sure the Area Group Records Coordinator and WSO have all your group addresses and updates.
- Stay connected with other DRs between AWSC and Assembly meetings; they are a valuable resource.
- Use the District Representative communication platform as a resource.

## The Alternate District Representative

- Completes the term when/if the DR resigns.
- Attends Al-Anon Information Service meetings.
- May attend all service meetings that DR attends.
- Assists in visiting District groups.
- May serve as:
  - Treasurer
  - Secretary
  - PO contact
  - Chairman of periodic meetings on the service structure, Traditions, and Concepts of Service
  - Member of the Al-Anon Information Service board

## Keeping in Touch with the GRs

A GR roster listing the name, address, phone, and email may be helpful in establishing communication and service sponsorship among the GRs. Some DRs send reports or recaps to the GRs about the Area Assembly and Delegate’s report. The DR asks the GRs for reports from their groups. These reports include problems and solutions the group may be experiencing. Email lists can provide fast communication of news and events. See “Anonymity within Al-Anon/Alateen” in the *Service Manual* for guidance on electronic communication.

## Visiting Groups

Visits may be spontaneous or scheduled. Many DRs routinely visit the groups in their District. On occasion, groups that are having problems may invite the DR to facilitate a group inventory. When visiting a group, the DR can verify that the group is receiving electronic and postal mail from the WSO and the Area. Registration/change forms can be made available during these visits. If the group does not have a Group Representative, the DR can encourage members to hold an election and be represented at District and Area meetings. *Alateen groups and newly registered groups may require the most attention.*

## Some Benefits of Becoming a DR

In addition to meeting Al-Anon members from other cities and towns in your Area, the District Representative is eligible to stand for the Area Delegate and other Area officer positions. Exact eligibility varies from Area to Area. You may read about the benefits of service in Conference Approved Literature; some of the subheadings in *When I Got Busy, I Got Better* (P-78), are:

- Replacing Isolation with Community
- Learning Trust
- Learning to Take Risks
- Increased Self-Esteem
- A Sense of Purpose
- Making a Difference
- Reaching Out to Others

## Finances

Groups may make regular contributions to the District treasury—this ensures that the District Representative’s expenses for visiting groups, creating copies, postage, attending AWSC meetings, PO activities, and other expenses are adequately met. If the DR is also a GR, the group usually pays the expenses to the Area Assembly. Districts may have fund raising events. The District Treasurer may develop an expense report for reimbursements like:

## District Representative Expense Sheet

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose/Event \_\_\_\_\_

**Expenses: (Receipts attached with explanations\* as needed)**

Item	Amount
Copies .....	\$ _____
Postage .....	\$ _____
Transportation .....	\$ _____
Meals.....	\$ _____
Miscellaneous.....	\$ _____
Hotel expenses.....	\$ _____
<b>Total Expenses.....</b>	<b>\$ _____</b>
Less Cash Advance.....	\$( _____ )
<b>Balance Due .....</b>	<b>\$ _____</b>

\*Explanation for expenses: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Serving as a District Representative can be a rewarding and challenging experience, as your circle of recovery expands outside of your own District! Remember, you are not alone—your Area World Service Committee and your groups are there to support you.

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Revised 2021. G-37

# Al-Anon Guidelines

The Shared Experience of Al-Anon and Alateen Members.

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## Reserve Fund

### INTRODUCTION

This Guideline has materialized as a result of requests from the membership for guidance on determining what an ample reserve would be for an Area, District, or group. Keeping in mind our three Legacies, the suggestions found throughout this Guideline are a result of what seems to work the best for the most. A brief history of the growth of Al-Anon Family Groups and the Reserve Fund is included, followed by some information and a financial inventory to assist Areas, Districts, and groups to achieve financial responsibility. The Reserve Fund is a fact of operating life at the WSO and in many of our service entities. This fund is an important means of ensuring the future of Al-Anon Family Groups.



### CONCEPT TWELVE

#### Warranty One

that only sufficient operating funds, including an ample reserve, be its prudent financial principle;

### HISTORY OF THE WSO RESERVE FUND

In 1970, the Board of Trustees, in accordance with Warranty One, established a Reserve Fund for Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. This fund had a twofold purpose:

1. To assure continuation of essential services in the event of a substantial decline in income
2. To cover costs of special projects which could not be financed from normal sources of revenue.

The initial transfer of \$80,000 into the fund equaled 32% of that year's operating expense of \$248,000. From 1970 to the present, the fellowship has grown from 5,500 groups to over 24,000 groups, the number of employees has nearly tripled, and annual expenditures have increased from \$248,000 to \$5,500,000. As the number of groups has grown, so too has our budget and accordingly, our Reserve Fund. In keeping with the accepted norm of not-for-profit organizations, the goal was to have one year's operating expense be the ample reserve of Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. to minimize the risk of having to impact paid staff livelihood or to default on fixed obligations.

### OVERSIGHT

The Board of Trustees, through the Finance Committee, has oversight of the Reserve Fund. In 2007 the Board reaffirmed its long-standing principle that the Reserve Fund be set at one year's operating expenses. The Finance Committee is charged with reviewing the Reserve Fund annually to ensure that it does not exceed the previous year's operating expenses. The results of this review are reported to the Board of Trustees at a quarterly Board meeting.

### AREAS, DISTRICTS, AND GROUPS

As we begin to look at our financial responsibilities, it is important to recognize Tradition Four: "Each Group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting another group or Al-Anon or AA as a whole." When an Area pays their Equalized Expense to send a Delegate to the WSC, when Districts and groups send their representatives to Area and District service functions, they are practicing the Fourth Tradition.

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## AREA RESERVE FUND

An Area's financial obligations are usually larger than that of a District or group and as a result, an Area may find it prudent to have a Reserve Fund. The amount of reserve may depend upon its budget, particularly fixed expenses such as event facility rental contracts, technology subscriptions, archives storage rental, etc. which would continue to be due in an emergency. The cost of providing essential services to the Area is what should be considered. The following suggestions are submitted as a guide to prudent planning for an ample reserve:

- Set a goal of six months' to one year's operating expenses of fixed expenses.
- Reserve Funds are increased each year, when possible, until the goal amount is reached.
- Some Areas use Reserve Funds to save money to fund future obligations (such as a Delegate's Equalized Expenses to the WSC or to send representatives to other service events).
- Excess funds from the reserve may be used to fund special projects such as a Public Outreach project that will carry the message to those suffering from the effects of living with a problem drinker.
- Some form of official approval should be needed to withdraw the funds from the reserve (Area Assembly, Area World Service Committee).

### Questions for an Area to consider

- If the Area reserve fund exceeds the predetermined amount, how will the Area disperse the funds?
- Could the Area pay the District Representatives' expense to the Area World Service Committee if the District cannot do so?
- Could the Area cover expenses for officers and/or coordinators to present workshops to Districts if the District cannot pay?
- Would the Area wish to contribute to services to the worldwide fellowship?
- What would be the approval process to withdraw funds from the reserve?

## DISTRICT RESERVE FUND

Refer to the above Area discussion and relate to District fixed expenses in the event that the groups are not able to meet or contribute.

- Three to six months' is suggested for reserve depending on the amount of fixed expenses.
- Some Districts put money in a Reserve Fund to send representatives to other service functions.
- If the reserve exceeds the predetermined amount, monies are dispersed to support Al-Anon service activities to be determined by a vote of the Group Representatives (GR).
- Excess funds from the reserve may be used to fund special projects such as a Public Outreach project or contribute to services to support worldwide Al-Anon.

### Questions for a District to consider:

- Could the District pay for the Group Representatives to attend the Assembly if the groups lack funds?
- Could the District hold workshops for members within the District?
- Could the District help new groups get started?
- What would be the approval process to withdraw funds from the reserve?

## GROUP RESERVE FUND

Inquiries to the WSO Group Services Department indicate that members are looking for guidance on how to distribute group funds. A small Reserve Fund could ensure that the group can keep going if membership drops. The amount of the reserve would be dependent on the size of

the group and the fixed expenses the group incurs.

- The average reserve is one to four months' of fixed expenses.
- Many groups pay their expenses quarterly.
- If the reserve exceeds the predetermined amount, monies can be dispersed to support Al-Anon service activities across the links of service as determined by a vote of the group members.
- Excess funds may be used to fund special projects such as a Public Outreach project.
- What would be the approval process to withdraw funds from the reserve?
- When groups don't have a reserve, the members contribute additional amounts to meet the expenses.

### Questions for a group to consider:

- Are we able to meet our rent and other expenses consistently?
- If membership dropped, how long could we meet our fixed expenses?
- If members are not attending, how long would we keep the doors open?
- Are we able to maintain a supply of Conference Approved Literature?
- Do we fund our Group Representatives and Alternate GR's expenses to attend service meetings on our behalf?
- Does the group provide babysitting during meetings?
- Are there other activities (anniversary, speaker) during the year that we need to save for?

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## AREA FINANCIAL INVENTORY

- Does a Budget or Finance Committee develop the budget?
- Do Area officers and chairs of Area committees have input in the development of the budget?
- Is there final approval of the budget by a larger body such as the Area Assembly?
- Do we compare the Area budget to actual expenses on a regular basis?
- Do we require more than one person's name/signature on the bank account?
- If incorporated or unincorporated, do we file our reporting documents on a regular basis? (Even unincorporated Areas may now be required to file paperwork with national authorities. Local experts should always be consulted.)
- Is a member identified who will ensure that the necessary legal documents are filed? Who is accountable?
- Is an explanation given to the groups at the Assembly on the importance of their financial contributions?
- Are we willing to do all that we can to be participating members of our Area?
- Does the Area have an annual appeal to the groups?

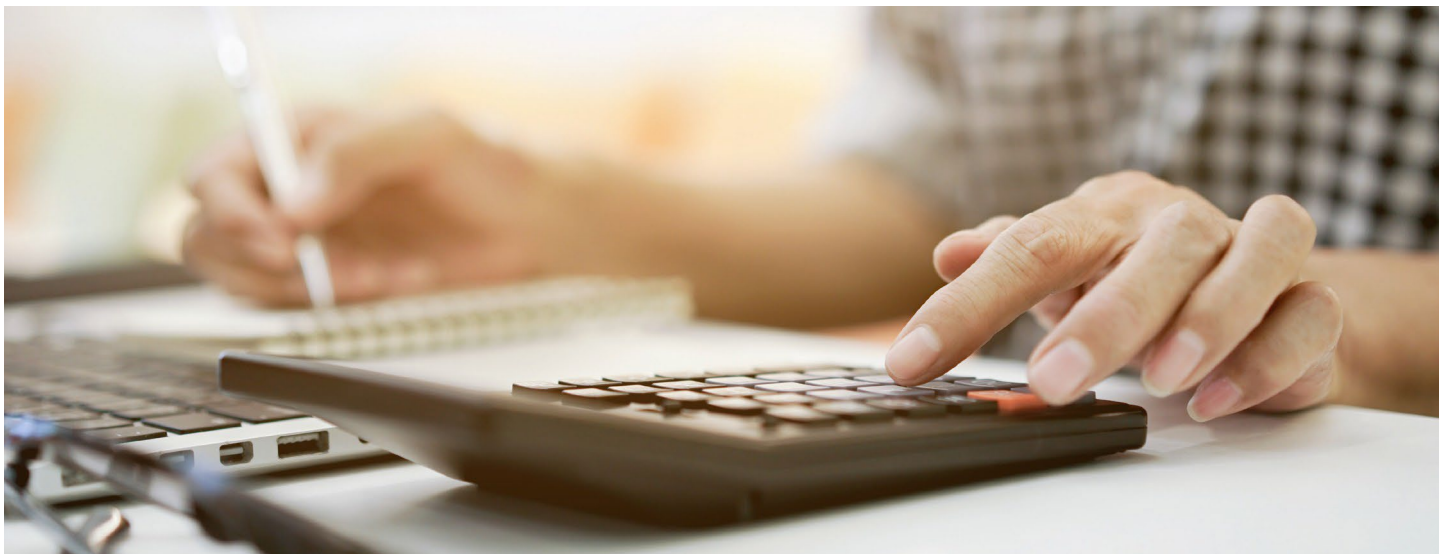
## DISTRICT FINANCIAL INVENTORY

- Do we prepare a budget based on expenses and income from the groups?
- Do we require more than one person's name/signature on the bank account?
- Do we pay our District Representative's expenses to attend Assemblies and Area World Service Committee meetings?
- Do the groups understand the District's expenses?
- Is there a guide available for use by the District Treasurer to plan expenses?
- Are we willing to do all that we can to be participating members of our District?

## GROUP FINANCIAL INVENTORY

- Are all members in our group familiar with our group, District, and Area financial needs?
- Do all members in our group understand the Quarterly Appeal and can we explain it to them?
- Does our group rotate its service positions such as Treasurer?
- Do we require more than one person's name/signature on the bank account?
- Are our members willing to do all that we can to be participating members of our group?
- Have we invited a speaker from the Area or District to talk about Tradition Seven?
- Have we consulted the "Policy Digest" in the *Service Manual* to assist in determining appropriate group expenses?
- Have we ever withheld funds because we disagreed with a decision made by a group conscience of a larger Al-Anon service body? If so, for how long? At what point do we accept that group conscience?

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## SETTING A GROUP BUDGET

The following two methods of disbursing funds are commonly used among groups.

### 1. A set amount of money is paid or set aside each month or quarter for:

- Rent
- Group Representative's and Intergroup Service Representative's (or Alternate GR's) expenses
- Al-Anon Conference Approved Literature
- Refreshments
- District, LDC, AIS contribution
- Area contribution
- WSO contribution

### 2. In some groups making donations may be budgeted in percentages. After a group's fixed expenses are met, it would be up to the group to determine the proportions. Fixed expenses may be rent, literature, GR expenses, and refreshments.

- \_\_\_\_\_ % to the District
- \_\_\_\_\_ % to District Public Information, AIS, LDC
- \_\_\_\_\_ % to the Area
- \_\_\_\_\_ % to the WSO

## General Members' Financial Inventory Questions

- Do I attend my group's/District's/Area's business meetings on a regular basis?
- Do I participate in the financial discussions so that my voice is heard?
- Do I carry any resentment that keeps me from participating? If so, how can I work through them?
- When finances are a critical issue, do I offer any suggestions for remedy?
- Am I willing to do all that I can to be a participating member of our group?
- What character defect do I still have that is keeping me from participating? What can I do to change it?
- What benefits do I receive when I participate?
- Is there financial responsibility in my personal life? How does this affect how I respond at my group/District/Area level?
- Do I consider costs and what my group needs when I contribute? Can I reconsider the amount I place in the basket?
- Do I personally contribute to the WSO Quarterly Appeal?

# Al-Anon guidelines

The Shared Experience of Al-Anon and Alateen Members.

## Al-Anon Information Services (AIS)

G-4

An Al-Anon Information Service (AIS) is a local service established by one or more groups or districts located close enough to one another for easy access and communication. Any local Al-Anon or Alateen group may participate in an information service.

An AIS exists to aid the groups it serves in the common purpose of carrying the Al-Anon message to the suffering families and friends of alcoholics.

### Things To Consider Before You Get Started:

- Research options available for phone service, postal and e-mail addresses; remember that an AIS cannot use a member's personal phone, address, or e-mail.
- Research operational costs of rent, post office box, phone service, phone listings, insurance, utilities, Internet, paid staff, and other AIS needs.
- Determine geographic boundaries and number of groups to support the proposed AIS.
- Assess volunteer support, including bilingual members if appropriate for the community.
- Determine types of services to be provided by phone, e.g. meeting information, Twelfth Step calls, etc.
- Clearly define service roles, in keeping with Concept Ten.
- Plan for training of staff and volunteers.

### What Services Does an AIS Provide to the Groups It Serves? (may include one or all of the following)

- Receives inquiries and directs them to the appropriate group. A list of group contacts, with telephone numbers and e-mail addresses, should be kept up-to-date for this purpose.
- Publishes a local meeting directory.
- Collaborates with the Area Group Records Coordinator to keep meeting information up-to-date.
- Channels local Alateen and Public Outreach inquiries to a local AIS or district committee.
- Maintains a supply of complimentary literature to give newcomers, the professional community, and the general public.
- May distribute its own newsletter of local activities and articles written by members for the groups it serves, in keeping with the Traditions. See *Guidelines for Newsletter Editors* (G-21).
- Holds periodic meetings attended by Information Service Representatives (ISRs) from the groups it serves. AIS activity reports are made and discussions held on matters relating to the AIS and the groups. Other topics may include public outreach projects and fund-raising events.
- May maintain an AIS Web site, in cooperation with the Area. See *Guideline for Al-Anon Web Sites* (G-40).

### How Does the AIS Collaborate and Communicate with Local Groups, Districts, and the Area?

- The Information Service is supported by the groups within its geographic boundaries. Contributions from Al-Anon groups and members are voluntary, and are not a condition for membership. The AIS does not seek or accept support outside the geographic area it serves.
- An AIS serves the groups in its geographic area, regardless of language or culture. Utilizing bilingual volunteers and stocking materials in languages other than English will help all newcomers to find a meeting and assure that all groups feel included in the AIS services.
- It is suggested that there be a representative from every group at Al-Anon Information Service meetings. Often the Alternate Group Representative will serve as the group's Information Service Representative (ISR).
- Often the Alternate District Representative(s) from the participating district(s) serve on the Information Service Board or Committee.
- An Al-Anon Information Service Liaison (AISL) represents the AIS at Area World Service Committee (AWSC) Meetings.
- When AIS committees are formed, they work in cooperation with the district/Area coordinator or the corresponding Area committee.
- An AIS may also serve as a Literature Distribution Center (LDC). When the two entities are functioning at the same location, the WSO will register them as an AIS/LDC, with one identification number. See the guideline *Literature Distribution Centers* (G-18), for more information.
- As stated in the "Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies" Section of the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*, under "Autonomy of Groups," "In keeping with the Traditions and Warranty Five of Concept Twelve, Area or WSO service entities have no authority to close a group or engage in other punitive actions against a group because they disapprove of the manner in which a group practices the Al-Anon program." AISs develop criteria for groups' inclusion on their meeting lists. If a group does not wish

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to comply with the criteria, it can be taken off the list, and informed of the actions needed to be re-listed. Taking a group off a meeting list does not prevent the group from participating and voting at AIS meetings and other activities.

- Participation and cooperation are the keys. The more members involved, the lighter the work. Experience shows that when the Information Service works closely with the Area and districts, it increases its formula for success!

## Process for Registration

### An AIS needs:

- A title indicative of the nature of its operation, e.g., “Al-Anon Information Service” (sometimes called “Intergroup” or “Service Center”).
- A listing in the local telephone directory. The number cannot be listed in an individual member’s name. Making “Al-Anon” the first word of the listing ensures that a newcomer or professional can find Al-Anon. Suggested listing: Al-Anon Family Groups [location] Information Service. Cross listings may include: Alateen; Alcoholism, families of; or Alcoholism, help for the family.
- A post office box or an office address. The Information Service will be listed in *Getting in Touch with Al-Anon/Alateen* (S-23), a publication for the membership and the public. In this way prospective members may be referred to Al-Anon without revealing the anonymity of members. *Getting in Touch* lists U.S. and Canadian AISs, international Al-Anon General Service Offices (GSOs), and AISs in countries without a GSO. AIS contact information is also posted on the WSO Public Outreach Web Site, [www.alanon.alateen.org](http://www.alanon.alateen.org).
- An e-mail address that is unique to the AIS. No personal e-mail addresses can be used. An AIS (or AIS/LDC) can use only one e-mail address for communication and transactions with the WSO.
- An operation that conducts activities in addition to Twelfth Step telephone calls. For example: work with local Al-Anon/Alateen service committees, publish meeting lists, and perform any other function as described in this guideline or the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27).

In the World Service Conference (WSC) structure (U.S., Canada, Bermuda, and Puerto Rico), the proposed AIS must complete an AIS Registration Form, obtain required Area and local signatures, and submit it to the WSO. Members in countries outside of the WSC structure should contact the WSO for AIS registration information.

## How the AIS Operates

- *Volunteers* - Phones can be answered by volunteers whenever possible. Finding volunteers may be the hardest part of running the Information Service. It is helpful to have committed and trained volunteers already in place before registering your Information Service, including bilingual volunteers who can respond to non-English speaking callers.
- *Professional Answering Service or Telephone Answering Machine (Voice Mail)* - Employing an answering service or using a telephone answering machine/voice mail may solve the problem of receiving calls when volunteers and/or staff are not available. When using a recording, leave a pleasant Al-Anon-related message. Include meeting information for that day, if time permits. Bilingual messages may be needed in places where languages other than English are prevalent. Call forwarding allows volunteers to respond from home, and volunteers answer the calls in an Al-Anon manner when performing this service.
- *Paid Staff* - As an AIS grows, additional help may be needed. According to Tradition Eight, paid help may be hired for the bookkeeping, correspondence, office duties, etc. A member’s personal knowledge of Al-Anon is of value in an office, but he or she is paid for office work only. Who is hired, who will do the hiring, the hours, salary and benefits are usually decided by the Information Service Board. The Twelve Concepts of Service define how paid employees fit into our service structure.

An employee of an AIS does not serve as a volunteer in a policy-making position, such as Group Representative (GR), District Representative (DR), Area Assembly officer or Coordinator, Delegate, or WSO Trustee (See “Employees in Al-Anon Service” in the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*).

## Additional Business Information

*Nonprofit, Tax-Free Status* - The U.S. non-profit and Canadian registered charity status which apply to Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. and Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters (Canada) Inc. do not cover individual segments of the fellowship. The WSO has no control over AISs’ financial affairs, nor does it have any say on how they conduct their business. Each group, district, Area, and Information Service is autonomous in its operations within the Traditions. An AIS seeking state, provincial, and/or federal tax-free status would require the help of legal counsel.

*Incorporation* - When an AIS maintains an office, it might be wise to incorporate. Individual Information Services write their own charters or bylaws in keeping with their state/provincial laws. Legal assistance may be required. The World Service Office is willing to review such documents before they are filed.

NOTE: The *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27) contains additional information about AISs, LDCs, and Information Service Representatives (ISRs). The complete *Service Manual*, public outreach ideas, and Al-Anon guidelines are available on the Members’ Web site, [www.al-anon.alateen.org/members](http://www.al-anon.alateen.org/members).

# Al-Anon guidelines

The Shared Experience of Al-Anon and Alateen Members.

## Cooperation between Al-Anon and A.A.

G-3

This guideline, and a similar guideline distributed by the Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) General Service Office, was developed through discussions between Al-Anon and A.A. staff.

The fellowships of Al-Anon (which includes Alateen for its younger members) and A.A. have a unique relationship. They were closely allied in their origins and are naturally drawn together by their family ties. Yet the Twelve Traditions emphasize that each works more effectively if it remains separate.

Tradition Six specifically states that Al-Anon and A.A. are separate entities. Therefore, in keeping with this Tradition, there can be no combining, joining, or uniting which would result in the loss of identity of either fellowship. Separateness rules out affiliation or merging, but it does not exclude cooperation with A.A. or acting together for mutual benefit. Al-Anon acknowledges with gratitude the spiritual contribution of A.A. and there can continue to be cooperation between Al-Anon and A.A. even while there are many Al-Anon members who have no contact with A.A. or A.A. members.

In order to differentiate between affiliation and cooperation, the Policy Committee of Al-Anon has prepared answers to some of the questions that frequently arise.

### Can there be a combined Al-Anon and A.A. group?

Each fellowship has a specific and separate purpose, and to remain so and abide by their respective Twelve Traditions, groups must be either A.A. or Al-Anon. The Al-Anon World Service Office (WSO) will not register a combined meeting, nor will the A.A. General Service Office (GSO) list a combined meeting.

### Can A.A. and Al-Anon exchange speakers?

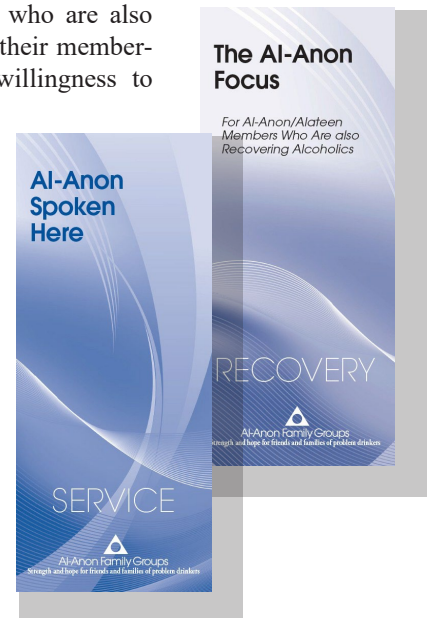
An occasional talk by an A.A. member at an open Al-Anon meeting can be interesting and helpful. When the program includes Al-Anon, Alateen, and A.A. speakers, it may help to keep the focus on Al-Anon by scheduling the Al-Anon speaker last. Likewise, if invited to do so, Al-Anon members may tell their story at an A.A. meeting. Al-Anon members tell their own stories, not the alcoholics', and emphasize how Al-Anon has helped in their recovery.

### Should Al-Anon/Alateen members participate or share at A.A. meetings?

Only A.A. members or those who have a drinking problem and have a desire to stop drinking may attend closed A.A. meetings. Open A.A. meetings welcome all those interested, including Al-Anon members, to attend and observe. Nonalcoholics should not participate in any A.A. meeting discussion unless specifically invited to do so.

### What is the role of the Al-Anon member who is also a member of A.A.?

The primary purpose of an Al-Anon group is to help families and friends of alcoholics. A.A. members are welcome to join Al-Anon if they feel their lives have been affected by someone else's drinking. At Al-Anon meetings, members should not discuss their membership in A.A. or any other anonymous fellowship. Attendance at Al-Anon or Alateen meetings by Al-Anon members who are also members of A.A. indicates their membership eligibility and their willingness to focus their attention on the help only Al-Anon can offer. See *The Al-Anon Focus* (P-45) and *Al-Anon Spoken Here* (P-53).



## What offices can Al-Anon/A.A. members hold in Al-Anon?

Al-Anon members who are also members of A.A. are, by virtue of their Al-Anon membership, eligible to hold office in their Al-Anon or Alateen group. Active Al-Anon members who also belong to A.A. may serve as Alateen Group Sponsors by virtue of their Al-Anon membership (subject to the certification requirements in their Area). Because of the separateness of the Al-Anon and A.A. fellowships as stated in Tradition Six, Al-Anon policy is that world service offices beyond the group level, such as Group Representative (GR), should not be filled by Al-Anon/A.A. members. The need to focus at all times on the Al-Anon interpretation of the program could produce a conflict of interest or erode the separate singleness of purpose of each of the fellowships at Assembly and world service levels.

## Should Al-Anon and A.A. have combined Information Services/Intergroups?

Where Al-Anon has not grown sufficiently to support its own Al-Anon Information Service or Intergroup, it may share facilities with A.A. provided that Al-Anon meets its portion of the financial obligations toward desk space, use of telephone, etc. When Al-Anon is able to support its own Information Service, facilities separate from A.A. are desirable. Though facilities may be shared, it is important that Al-Anon members be responsible for handling all Al-Anon Twelfth Step calls. It is also suggested that Al-Anon establish its own committee to oversee Al-Anon's operation within the office, publish its own bulletin and meeting schedule, and provide liaison with A.A.'s committee.

## Should Al-Anon and A.A. have combined clubhouses? Should Al-Anon groups meet at such clubhouses?

According to our Traditions, clubhouses are projects outside of the Al-Anon fellowship. Members, as individuals, may join with others to establish such facilities, but their operation is not affiliated with or financed by any Al-Anon or Alateen group. Although some Al-Anon groups use these meeting facilities, each group maintains its separate identity and is responsible for the payment of rent, purchase of literature, refreshments, and other group expenses. A group should not give all of its collection to an outside entity, such as a clubhouse, even as a condition of using the meeting room.

## What procedures can be taken to assure cooperation when both fellowships are participating in an Area or region-wide convention?

When Al-Anon invites A.A. participation, the Al-Anon/Alateen hosts can: provide ample meeting space; ask an A.A. liaison member to attend the planning sessions; request that A.A. members choose their own speakers and plan their own agenda. Al-Anon is responsible for its own agenda, its own speakers, and the overall convention plans and activities. When Al-Anon is asked to participate in an A.A. convention, members do well to remember they are present by invitation. The overall plans are A.A.'s responsibility;

G-3 page 2 however, traditionally Al-Anon is a separate entity and responsible for its own speakers and meetings, including Alateen speakers, meetings, and activities.

A.A. conventions must have Al-Anon participation in order to have Alateen participation. All conventions and events that include Alateen participation must comply with the Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements of the Al-Anon Area in which the convention/event is held. Only those Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service who are currently certified through the Area's Alateen process may serve as Alateen Group Sponsors, chaperones, or hold other positions of service that include direct responsibility and care for Alateens at the conventions/events.

## Can Al-Anon accept a portion of the proceeds from an A.A. convention in which Al-Anon/Alateen has participated?

Yes. A survey conducted by the WSO indicated that Al-Anon and Alateen participation contributes substantially to the success of A.A. conventions. In acknowledgment of Al-Anon and Alateen participation, many A.A. convention planning committees do offer a portion of the registration proceeds to Al-Anon. The World Service Conference has determined that such contributions may be accepted. The financial details should be cleared in advance by the trusted servants of both the A.A. and Al-Anon/Alateen Convention Committees in accordance with each fellowship's Seventh Tradition.

## Can A.A. members sponsor Alateen groups?

Alateen is part of Al-Anon, and Alateen meetings require at least one Alateen Group Sponsor, preferably two. All Alateen Group Sponsors must be members of Al-Anon who meet their Area's Alateen requirements and are currently certified as Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS) through their Area process. A.A. members who are also members of Al-Anon and meet the Area's certification requirements may also serve, keeping in mind that in service to Alateen, all members serve as Al-Anon members, maintain their anonymity in regards to other programs, and keep the Al-Anon focus at the Alateen meeting.

## Should Al-Anon stock and/or use A.A. literature?

No. In general, neither fellowship stocks nor uses the other's literature at meetings. When Al-Anon members use A.A. literature for their meetings, there is a tendency to concentrate on the alcoholic and his/her behavior rather than the family experience and our own recovery. There is, of course, a great deal of reading value in literature other than that which is Al-Anon Conference Approved. But it is not the purpose of Al-Anon to make its members familiar with all the approaches—only the Al-Anon approach. Those who wish to acquaint themselves with A.A. reading material can readily find it at an A.A. open meeting.

**Note:** The following resources provide additional information regarding cooperation between Al-Anon and A.A.:

- *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27), "Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies" Section
- *Al-Anon/Alateen Participation in an Area A.A. Convention* (G-7)
- *The Al-Anon Focus* (P-45)
- *Al-Anon Spoken Here* (P-53)

Revised 2016 G-3

# Al-Anon guidelines

The Shared Experience of Al-Anon and Alateen Members.

## Alateen Meetings in Schools

G-5

This guideline offers tips for Al-Anon members interested in starting an Alateen meeting in a school. In order to use the Alateen name, groups must register with the World Service Office through their Area's Alateen process prior to starting the meeting, and Group Sponsors must be certified. Please review the "Alateen Policy" section of the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27), and contact your Area Alateen Coordinator for the current Area Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements.

### Suggestions for reaching out to schools

Before meeting with the school:

- Identify willing and able Al-Anons and/or Alateens who want to participate.
- Prospective Alateen Group Sponsors must be certified as Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS) prior to starting the meeting.
- Seek guidance and suggestions from the Area Alateen and Public Outreach Coordinators.
- Review this entire Guideline and the Guideline on *Outreach to Professionals* (G-29).
- Contact school personnel (counselor, teacher, principal, nurse, etc.) who might begin the process of forming a group.
- Contact with a school usually starts with a meeting with school counselors and/or administrators.

At the first meeting with school representatives:

- Provide a brief explanation of what Al-Anon/ Alateen is; the outreach DVD *Al-Anon and Alateen's Role in Family Recovery* (AV-31) may be useful.
- Present Alateen literature during initial contact. The pamphlet *Information for Educators – Alateen Meetings in Schools* (S-64) answers many of the questions that educators ask most often about school Alateen meetings. Also have on hand the *Fact Sheet for Professionals* (S-37ES English/Spanish; S-37EF English/French, *Facts About Alateen* (P-41) and *An Open Letter To My Teacher* (OT5).
- If the school is interested in knowing more about hosting an Alateen meeting, one way to inform school personnel and students about Al-Anon and Alateen is to present a meeting on wheels. (See the *Meeting on Wheels* Guideline [G-22]).

In addition, information about Al-Anon and Alateen can be presented at:

- ◆ faculty workshops
- ◆ school assemblies

- ◆ individual health, sociology, psychology, or religion classes
- ◆ articles in school newspaper

One Alateen Group Sponsor shared: "Students are oriented to the program in groups. They are more likely to ask questions and pay attention in small, familiar groups. During the presentation, Al-Anon members, as well as Alateen members from other local groups, speak to the students and answer questions. Teachers may be asked to leave during the question/answer portion to assure confidentiality."

### Facts about Alateen for school personnel

Membership eligibility

- Any young person who feels his/her life is or has been affected by someone else's drinking is welcome in Alateen.
- A young person may attend Alateen even if the alcoholic is no longer drinking or no longer lives with the young person.
- Some young people may have their own addictions and criminal records; these do not exclude them from Alateen. However, it is important to remember that Alateen deals with the effects someone else's drinking has had on the teen. Alateen is not a program for young people seeking their own sobriety.

### Who Attends Alateen Meetings?

Alateen meetings are "closed" meetings. Generally, only Alateen members, prospective members, and the Area-certified Alateen Group Sponsors affiliated with the group may attend.

An Alateen group may hold an occasional "open" meeting for the purpose of introducing Alateen to others in the community.

"Limited Access" meetings are attended by members who meet in locations where our general membership may not be able to attend. School meetings often fall into this category.

Some schools may require a school nurse, teacher, or counselor to sit in the meeting or in an adjoining room during the meeting



time. For those schools requiring personnel in attendance, the group can be considered “open” to required personnel in a limited access setting. (See “Alateen Policy” section in the *Service Manual*.)

## School Regulations

In discussions with your school contact, ask them to explain their rules and regulations for meetings on school property. It is important that the school and the Al-Anon members understand each other’s rules and guidelines, and come to agreement on how best to accommodate both parties’ needs. Remember, you share the common goal of helping the students.

School staff is usually required by law to report certain types of abuse to the appropriate authority. If a staff member is present, making Alateen members aware of such policies at the start of each meeting will enable them to make the choice to limit specific details of certain problems and only share feelings. Alateen Group Sponsors are also required to abide by applicable laws regarding mandatory reporting. (See *Alateen Safety Guidelines*.)

If a meeting is to be held at the school, the school personnel must agree to respect the students’ confidentiality on matters shared in meetings that they are not legally bound to report. (i.e., reporting to parents or other school staff.)

The Alateen Group Sponsor may provide the school’s guidance office (or other appropriate school authority) with the names and phone numbers of the Alateen Group Sponsors, District Representative, district/AIS Alateen Coordinator, Area Alateen Coordinator, and Area Delegate.

## Scheduling Alateen meetings at schools

*After school* – Held after classroom activities. Could be open to teens inside or outside of the school.

*During lunch* – Although students may be available during this period, time limits may impose a hardship.

*Rotating during the school day* – The meeting time rotates weekly so that students don’t miss the same class each week. Students would need to follow school procedures regarding permission slips to attend the meeting. School personnel need to know where students are at all times. The school has the authority to determine who attends, and may require an attendance sheet following each meeting in order to validate absences from regular class. This type of meeting requires greater cooperation with the school personnel.

## Getting started

- Ask the school to designate up to two people who can be counted on to assure the anonymity of the students to serve as liaisons with the Alateen Group Sponsors.
- Explain our Traditions to school personnel so the group can function within their school guidelines and still maintain adherence to Al-Anon Family Groups’ principles.

## Planning ahead for school breaks

Alateen Group Sponsors of school meetings have a secondary goal of integrating the students into Alateen meetings outside of the school for one very important reason: school breaks. Continued attendance is important when school is not in session.



- Find out in advance of school breaks whether or not the meeting can be held at the school.
- Give each Alateen member an Al-Anon/Alateen meeting schedule.
- Make sure the Alateen members have the local AIS phone number, or the WSO toll-free number, for meeting location and times in case it isn’t safe for them to have a schedule at home.
- Arrange for an alternative site during school breaks, if possible.

## Self-support

While Alateen groups may need to accept help from a neighboring Al-Anon group in order to get started, their goal should be one of self-support.

- Inform the school administration about the Seventh Tradition and the need to pay rent.
- Money can be collected by passing the basket.
- If the school doesn’t accept money, literature can be donated to the library, teachers, or school counselors on a regular basis.

## Alateen Group Sponsorship

An Alateen Group Sponsor is an adult member of Al-Anon who attends Al-Anon meetings regularly, is currently certified as an Al-Anon Member Involved in Alateen Service through their Area’s Alateen process, and has made a commitment to be of service to an Alateen meeting on a regular basis. Alateen Group Sponsors encourage the Alateens to take responsibility for their own meetings and to share their experience, strength, and hope with each other. Alateen Group Sponsor(s) must be present to hold an Alateen meeting, as outlined in the Area’s Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements.

Since our program is one of mutual support, the meetings are conducted by the Alateens themselves. Alateen Group Sponsors provide guidance on the Al-Anon/Alateen interpretation of the program.

(An “Alateen Service e-Manual” is available on the Members’ Web site, [al-anon.org/members](http://al-anon.org/members). Resources for the teens in chairing meetings include the “Planning a Meeting” section in *Alateen - Hope for Children of Alcoholics* [B-3], e-Book [eB-3]. The meeting format and “Meeting Ideas” can be found in *Groups at Work* [P-24].)

It is recommended that each group have two Alateen Group Sponsors.

School personnel who are Al-Anon members and meet the criteria stated above may become Alateen Group Sponsors.

Alateen Group Sponsors should be prepared to:

- Arrive at least ten minutes early.
- Sign in and out in the main office or designated area as required.
- Have back-up meeting topics, should they be needed.
- Encourage the Alateen groups to get involved in service at the district and Assembly levels.
- Seek guidance, support, and suggestions from the District Representative, Area Alateen Coordinator, and Area Delegate.

## Anonymity

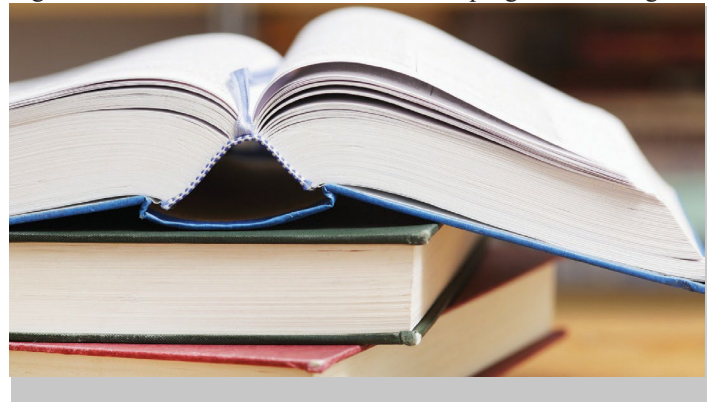
- What is said at meetings, member-to-member or member-to-Alateen Group Sponsor, must be kept confidential. Alateen Group Sponsors and AMIAS who are required by law to report cases of suspected child abuse should let the Alateens know, up front before sharing begins, that they will disclose such incidents that are discussed at the meeting or event.
- The meeting room should be physically situated so that it will protect the students’ anonymity.
- Alateens protect the anonymity of all members of Al-Anon, Alateen, and A.A. Alateen members and Alateen Group Sponsors do not divulge another member’s sharing to school personnel or others.

## Literature

As in all Alateen meetings, the use of Al-Anon/Alateen Conference Approved Literature (CAL) is encouraged.

Arrange for a storage space at the school so the literature is always available. Taking literature home for personal use could break anonymity and may create problems for some students.

One Alateen Group Sponsor shared: “We found that it is not a good idea to allow the students in the program to bring lit-



erature home. We pass out and collect what is used in the meeting, except the *Serenity Prayer* cards (M-26) and the wallet size *Do’s and Don’ts of Alateen* (M-9), cautioning the student to keep them in their wallet.” Another pocket-sized item is the *Just For Today, Alateen Wallet Card* (M-11).

## Suggested literature and materials:

- Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27)
- Alateen—Hope for Children of Alcoholics* (B-3), e-book (eB-3)
- Alateen—a day at a time* (B-10)
- How Al-Anon Works for Families & Friends of Alcoholics* (B-22), e-book (eB-22)
- Courage To Be Me—Living With Alcoholism* (B-23)
- Paths to Recovery—Al-Anon’s Steps, Traditions, and Concepts* (B-24)
- Living Today in Alateen* (B-26)
- Members Interested in Speaking* (G-1)
- Starting an Alateen Group Guideline* (G-19)
- Alateen Safety Guidelines* (G-34)

## Other suggestions

- It is a good idea for Alateen Group Sponsors and Alateens to prepare group behavior guidelines. They should be flexible and general in tone, but specific enough to inform members *what is and what is not* acceptable behavior during the group meeting.
- It is within the autonomy of the Alateen group to close in a manner the group feels is appropriate. Caution must be used since the school administration could misinterpret closing with a prayer to mean that Alateen is a religious program.

## When a school meeting cannot be arranged

If members cannot come to agreement with the school on having a meeting in the school, or if there are no AMIAS currently available, other options might be:

- Offer a “meeting on wheels” and encourage teens to attend local Alateen groups or Alateen Chat Meetings in the Alateen section of the Members’ Web site: [al-anon.org/members](http://al-anon.org/members).
- Bring a presentation, including Alateen speakers, to a school assembly or health fair. Remember that Alateen participation in such outreach projects must be in compliance with Area Safety and Behavioral Requirements.
- Provide information to teachers and/or counselors on Alateen. They are welcome to use our literature; however, they cannot use our name unless registered through the Area with certified AMIAS as Alateen Group Sponsors.

Keep the lines of communication open with school administration so that their needs and requirements are understood. We may not be able to have a meeting in the school, but we can offer something to help children affected by someone else’s drinking. Things to think about...

School meetings are a way to reach young people who are affected by the drinking of a loved one. It offers another way to be friendly with our friends—professionals in the field of education.

# Al-Anon guidelines

The Shared Experience of Al-Anon and Alateen Members.

## Al-Anon/Alateen Public Outreach Service Outreach to Institutions

G-9

Public Outreach **informs** the general public through the media, professionals, facilities, and organizations about who we are, what we do, and how to get in touch with us. Our goal is to **attract** to our program those whose lives are or have been affected by someone else's drinking, so that those who need our program can find the help and hope we offer. We also strive for name recognition and credibility as a community resource. Public Outreach includes Outreach to the Public/Media, Outreach to Professionals, and Outreach to Institutions. Your Area and/or District may choose to combine these service areas under Public Outreach, or to maintain separate coordinators and/or committees. All those in Public Outreach are encouraged to work together to avoid duplicating efforts.

### Who can do public outreach?

Any willing and active Al-Anon or Alateen member with an understanding of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. It is a way for us as individuals or as a group to grow and develop in our recovery.

### What is outreach to institutions?

It is a combination of providing information about Al-Anon and Alateen to staff and helping families of alcoholics learn about our program.

### What is an institution?

In Al-Anon terminology, an institution is generally an organization with residential or non-residential (in- or out-patient) services. It may be accessible or have limited access to the public. Such facilities for adults or juveniles include:

- Treatment or rehabilitation centers and substance abuse agencies.
- Mental health agencies and organizations, and psychiatric centers.
- Hospitals, medical centers or health care clinics.
- Prisons, jails or detention centers.
- Group homes, halfway or "sober" houses.
- Crisis/abuse centers and domestic violence shelters.
- Facilities for troubled youth (In/Out patient or residential)

### Outreach to institutions has two purposes:

**To build and maintain relationships with professionals by:**

- Informing and encouraging referrals of families and friends of alcoholics to our program.
- Offering our services, e.g., provide meeting schedules, literature, speakers or introductory meetings.
- Providing Al-Anon or Alateen information to alcoholics so

they can inform their family members and friends about our program when services are unavailable at the facility.

**To introduce Al-Anon to families and friends of alcoholics:**

- Help families and friends of alcoholics learn how to obtain local Al-Anon meeting information during or after they or the alcoholic are receiving services from the facility.
- Make information about our program available on an ongoing basis, e.g., waiting areas, resource centers and intake counselors.

### What about anonymity?

- Al-Anon members need to comply with the facility regulations regarding visitors and volunteers. Tradition Eleven is maintained because registration lists of volunteers or guests do not appear on public media.
- Members are reminded not to reveal the name of anyone receiving services at the center. Patients, clients and consumers' identities are confidential.

### Suggested activities:

**Building and maintaining a relationship with staff:**

- Is essential to receive permission to provide information to patients, clients, or consumers.
- Discuss the types of services Al-Anon can provide so that staff can determine which ones are appropriate.
- Describe the format of a workshop or introductory meeting.
- Show the literature you plan to provide to patients, clients or consumers to the staff before distributing it.
- Furnish Al-Anon and Alateen materials for professionals to use when providing their services, e.g., *Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism* magazines or *Al-Anon/Alateen's Role in Family Recovery* DVD (English AV-31, SAV-31 Spanish subtitles, FAV-31 French subtitles).



### **Introducing Al-Anon and Alateen to patients, clients, consumers, and their families:**

- Identify who is in your audience, e.g., family members of alcoholics and alcoholics receiving treatment.
- Speak plainly, i.e., non-members do not understand “program jargon.”
- Keep in mind that Al-Anon is providing information at an emotionally difficult time for family members and alcoholics receiving services from the organization.
- Provide basic information about our program in workshops or introductory meetings, e.g., no dues or fees, no appointment necessary, etc.
- Have one or two members share their recovery stories or include a “Meeting on Wheels” demonstration (See guideline G-22).
- Utilize readings from Al-Anon literature.
- Have a few items of literature for attendees to keep.

### **What is an introductory meeting?**

The purpose of an introductory meeting is to explain our program and how it helps people affected by a relative or friend’s drinking. Depending upon the facility’s regulations, these meetings are generally available only to the patients, clients, consumers or their family members. The audience is usually transient because they are in contact with the facility while they or a family member are participating in a program or receiving services from the organization.

#### **Introductory meetings are:**

- Sponsored and conducted by local Al-Anon groups, Districts and Al-Anon Information Services.
- Designed to explain our program to individuals who are unfamiliar with us.
- Led by local members.
- May meet weekly or periodically, e.g. biweekly or monthly at the request of the facility.

#### **Suggested introductory meeting topics:**

Remember, the goal of the meeting is to encourage and help attendees to attend a local Al-Anon meeting:

- Purpose of our program and recovery from alcoholism as a family disease.
- Who attends our meetings and their varied relationships to alcoholics.
- The importance of attending Al-Anon and Alateen meetings regularly whether the alcoholic is drinking or not.
- Anonymity and confidentiality of sharings.
- Groups rent meeting space at facilities such as churches but are not affiliated with outside entities.
- Contributions are voluntary.
- How we recover, e.g., tools of the program and recovery as an ongoing process.
- The benefits of attending our program.
- Our meeting format, e.g., meetings chaired by members and what we discuss.
- How to locate meetings and definitions of open and closed

meetings. Include information about Al-Anon on-line and telephone meetings for people living in communities where Al-Anon groups are unavailable.

#### **Introductory literature handouts and information table displays:**

- *Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism* magazines (available in English, Spanish, and French).
- “*Al-Anon can help*” English/Spanish or English/French pamphlet series (*What Happens after Treatment*, P-81 ES or EF; *Living in a Shelter?* P-82 ES or EF; or *Doubting Your Sanity* P-89 ES or EF).
- Meeting schedules or business cards with a local Al-Anon telephone number, the WSO’s toll-free meeting information number and website address.
- Outreach bookmark (English M-76; Spanish SM-76; and French FM-76).

### **Group meetings are also held at institutions**

(See *Starting an Al-Anon Group guideline, G-12* or *Starting an Alateen Group guideline, G-19*).

Al-Anon and Alateen groups often hold weekly meetings at treatment facilities, hospitals and other types of institutions. These meetings are usually open to the public *unless* public access is restricted by the organization, e.g., prisons, jails (see *Services in Correctional Facilities guideline, G-14*) and crisis/abuse centers. These groups are registered with their Area and the WSO. They have Group Representatives because they are self-supporting and part of the Al-Anon service structure.

Members and Al-Anon service arms may wish to consider having an introductory meeting for potential newcomers and an Al-Anon group at the same location. They can successfully hold the two meetings independently of each other.

### **How do I get started?**

Ask your Group Representative if your District has a Public Outreach or Institutions Coordinator/Chairperson, or a Public Outreach Committee. If there aren’t any, contact your Area Public Outreach or Institutions Coordinator. Your District Representative, Delegate, Area Chairperson or the WSO can provide you with the necessary contact information.

### **Why do we need to work with an Area Public Outreach or Institutions Coordinator?**

The Area Coordinator can help to get maximum results from the work of Al-Anon and Alateen members involved in local outreach projects.

### **Form an Outreach to Institutions or Public Outreach Committee**

As with any area of Al-Anon and Alateen service, “the more the merrier.” Get a group of members together to come up with a plan for reaching out to local institutions. Use *The Best of Public Outreach* available in the Members page of the WSO website for ideas at: [al-anon.org](http://al-anon.org).

**Visit the Public Outreach section of the Members' page of the WSO Website: [al-anon.org](http://al-anon.org)**



# Al-Anon guidelines

The Shared Experience of Al-Anon and Alateen Members.

## Alateen Conferences

G-16

An Alateen conference is an opportunity for Alateen members and Alateen Group Sponsors\* to increase their understanding of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions through the sharing of ideas, fun, and fellowship. Alateen conferences give attendees the increased sharing experience of a wider Alateen membership. Alateen conferences are sometimes called Alateen round-ups, Alateen conventions, or other Area-approved titles.

*\*In this Guideline, the terms "Alateen Group Sponsor" and "Al-Anon Member Involved in Alateen Service" (or "AMIAS") are used interchangeably to include all AMIAS who are serving at the conference in any capacity.*

### All Alateen conferences must be connected to the Area in which they are held.

Much of the information in this Guideline applies also to Alateen participation in Al-Anon events, and to Al-Anon/Alateen participation in A.A. events. For Alateen participation in an A.A. event, Al-Anon must be participating. All events that include Alateen participation must comply with the Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements of the Area in which the event is held. The Area has responsibility for use of the Alateen name in the Area, and must be made aware of all proposed Alateen events. (See the Guidelines *Al-Anon/Alateen Area Conventions* [G-20] and *Al-Anon/Alateen Participation in an A.A. Area Convention* [G-7].)

## Structure of Alateen conferences

### Types of Alateen conferences

**Area conference:** The conference is connected to only one Area. The Area's Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements are adhered to.

**Multi-Area and regional conference:** The conference is connected to two or more Areas that join together to form an Alateen conference. Involved Areas collaborate in determining the structure of the conference. Alateen requirements for the conference must meet or exceed the Area Alateen Requirements of the Area in which it is held, and all Areas participating in the conference collaborate in developing the processes for implementation of the Alateen requirements. Many multi-Area conferences rotate the location of the event through the participating Areas.

**All Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS) are required to have their Area's approval prior to taking Alateens to conferences or other Alateen events within or outside of their Area.**

As stated above, all Alateen conferences must be connected to the Area in which they are held. This connection is usually through the Area Alateen Coordinator, who can serve as the contact person between the event and the Area.

### Conference board or committee

Some conferences have a conference board that consists of Alateens, Alateen Group Sponsors, and one or more members of the Area World Service Committee (AWSC). This board oversees

the operation of the conference in matters pertaining to the *continuity* of the conference such as adherence to Area Requirements, conference behavior guidelines, problem resolution, insurance, site location, and other ongoing conference needs.

Conference board members for Alateen conferences that are connected to only one Area may be chosen by the Area World Service Committee (AWSC), Area Assembly, Alateen groups, Alateen Group Sponsors, and/or a combination of these resources. Conference board members for multi-Area Alateen conferences are chosen in a manner agreed upon by all of the participating Area Assemblies or Area World Service Committees (AWSCs).

Alateen conferences (with or without a board) may have a conference committee that is responsible for one specific Alateen conference. Committee membership usually rotates each year. The committee consists of Alateens and Alateen Group Sponsors who may be chosen by various methods; this includes being elected by Alateens and Alateen Group Sponsors, designated by the Area, or by a combination of methods. The Area Alateen Coordinator or another Area World Service Committee (AWSC) member often serves as a committee member, advisor, or liaison. The Alateen conference committee is usually responsible for the arrangements of the conference including the program, registration, fundraising, security, etc. The conference committee, in collaboration with the conference board, makes certain that the conference adheres to the conference guidelines as well as the Area's Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements.

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## Areas help in providing safety for Alateens and Alateen Group Sponsors, assist in problem resolution, and provide support.

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### Connection to the Area

Although some Alateen conferences are events that are conducted by the Area, some conferences are conducted by a board or committee that is not directly linked to the Area. **Establishing an official, recognized connection between the conference board or committee and the Area is required.** Areas help in providing safety for Alateens and Alateen Group Sponsors, assist in problem resolution, and provide support. Some Areas have an Alateen conference liaison position that may include a voice and/or vote at the Area Assembly or Area World Service Committee (AWSC) meetings.

Conferences may be asked to provide financial information and reports at Assembly or Area World Service Committee (AWSC) meetings and may be invited by the Area to fundraise at Area meetings or events. Conferences may have an Area standing committee comprised of Area officers that reviews contracts, offers suggestions for the conference budget, and determines the financial impact of proposed conference plans.

### Incorporation

Many conferences are incorporated as not-for-profit corporations. One of the advantages of incorporation is that not-for-profit corporations can be tax exempt. In addition, incorporation protects individual board members who could be held financially liable if the conference is not incorporated. Consult a local attorney regarding incorporation. **It is important to remember that incorporation does not affect the need for the conference to be connected with the Area. All Alateen conferences, whether incorporated or not, need to comply with Area Alateen Requirements and must be approved by the Area in which they are held.**

Area Alateen events and/or conferences that use the Area not-for-profit incorporation number so as to be tax-exempt must be financially managed either by the Area or jointly with the Area.

### Insurance

Investigate the need for personal injury insurance and liability insurance against property damage during the conference, as well as insurance during travel to and from the site. Some facilities also require insurance. When negotiating the contract for the site, ask if the facility offers liability insurance riders to groups such as Alateen.

It is important that Alateen Group Sponsors who provide transportation to the conference have auto insurance that meets or exceeds their state's/province's legal minimum requirements for insurance purposes.

## Ensuring a safe environment

### Guidelines and permission/medical forms

- Conference behavioral guidelines that comply with the Area Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements are essential.\* These guidelines for both Alateens and Alateen Group Sponsors need to be specific enough to conform to any site or scheduling requirements, yet general enough to allow flexibility. Remember—all Alateens, even those who are legally adults, are required to comply with the Alateen conference guidelines and Area Requirements when participating as an Alateen. All attendees read and understand these guidelines before leaving home. The conference behavioral guidelines would include a process for sending home anyone who will not follow the rules.
- All Alateen members are encouraged to remember that their actions reflect on their group, the conference, and Alateen as a whole.
- Alateen Group Sponsors are attending to be of service to Alateen so that Alateens can have a conference. The purpose of the conference is to encourage the growth of Alateen through the sharing of ideas, fun, and fellowship with other Alateens and Alateen Group Sponsors. Al-Anon trusted servants may be the only role models of recovery for some Alateens attending the conference.
- Most Alateen conferences are closed events for Alateens and their Alateen Group Sponsors only. **An Alateen conference with an open meeting(s) should develop a way to identify the Area-certified Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS), and a safety plan to insure that the Alateens are always in their care.** The same principle applies for individuals present to provide services needed, such as a nurse, a cook, servers, facility staff, or invited speakers. If any adults present are not Area-certified AMIAS, the safety plan insures that the Alateens will always be in the care of the AMIAS at the event.
- All conference attendees (adult and Alateen), including the conference committee, adhere to the conference behavior guidelines, and to the Area Requirements. All Alateen members, including Alateen conference committee members, must be supervised by an Alateen Group Sponsor/AMIAS at all times.
- Area processes regarding parental permission forms must be followed. All Alateens not being driven to the conference by a parent or legal guardian are required to provide signed forms. Some Areas require that the medical forms must be notarized in order to meet local legal requirements for treating a minor.
- Alateens should remain at the conference site for the entire conference. If Alateens drive their own vehicles to the conference, they may be required to give their keys to an Alateen Group Sponsor or other designated trusted servant for the duration of the conference.
- A registered nurse or certified first aid person should be in attendance at all times. This person should be made aware of Alateens and AMIAS who require medication during the conference. Some Alateen conferences have the nurse hold all medications and distribute them as necessary for both Alateens and adults in attendance.
- Possession of alcohol or any drugs (legal or illegal) is forbidden at Alateen events.

\* Useful tips for forming behavioral guidelines are contained in the [Alateen Safety Guidelines \(G-34\)](#)  
[Return to List of Positions](#)

- Likewise, sexual activity is prohibited for all in attendance while at the conference.

## Obeying state/province laws

- Conduct contrary to the law is prohibited. Review local laws on such matters as smoking by minors. If smoking is permitted at the facility, designate smoking areas for adults who smoke, in keeping with Area Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements.
- Alateens and Alateen Group Sponsors should read and become familiar with the *Alateen Safety Guidelines* (G-34). Be sure that all members know how to report problems and are familiar with the conference process for resolving problems. Tags or badges identifying the conference committee and all AMIAS may be helpful.

## Sponsor role and responsibility

- All Alateen Group Sponsors should be familiar with their role and responsibility at the conference. This information is often provided in the conference registration packet or at an Alateen Group Sponsor workshop. Some conferences require that conference Sponsors attend a training session before they are allowed to register for the conference; other conferences may conduct a Sponsor workshop at the beginning of the conference. All Alateen Group Sponsors should be familiar with the conference procedures for problem resolution and addressing concerns.
- Depending on Area/conference requirements, Alateen Group Sponsors are usually assigned responsibility for up to five Alateens. Some conferences assign a team of two or more Alateen Group Sponsors to have responsibility for a specific number of Alateens.
- Alateen Group Sponsors support meetings throughout the conference, share information with each other, respond to problems quickly, and connect as Alateen Group Sponsors.

## Additional safety tips

- While Alateen Group Sponsors are not parents, it should be remembered that they are responsible for the Alateens they bring to the conference. All AMIAS should know where their assigned Alateens are at all times.
- Everyone at the conference should be required to attend meetings, workshops, and other conference sessions.
- Alateens below the teen years are allowed to attend some conferences. **Consider the ages of attendees when planning the conference schedule.** What may be an appropriate lights out time for a 17-year-old may be inappropriate for a younger Alateen.
- Alateens and Alateen Group Sponsors abide by gender-specific dorm rules; no girls in boys' rooms; no boys in girls' rooms. Age, gender, and sexual orientation should be taken into account in assigning roommates.
- Alateen Group Sponsors provide around the clock security during the conference and specific times for Alateens to check-in with their assigned AMIAS.
- Review behavioral guidelines with Alateens and Alateen Group Sponsors and post in several places where they can be seen by all. It is also a good idea to have the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts of Service posters in main meeting rooms.
- Only those Alateen events and conferences approved by the Area are announced at Al-Anon/Alateen meetings.

## Planning the conference

### Vision

What is your vision? How can you make it happen?

An Alateen conference can be a tremendous energizer and recovery boost for everyone involved. It is a place for growth, for hope, and for an increased commitment to our younger members. It can be an event that causes parents, Al-Anon members, and the public as a whole to think favorably about Alateen. A conference can also be a sad and traumatic experience for vulnerable children and their Alateen Group Sponsors. A bad experience could tarnish the name of Al-Anon and Alateen as a whole. There are many factors to consider in planning the conference.

### Selecting a site

The conference must be connected to the Area in which it is held. Consider the following:

- The ease in traveling to and from the site.
- The financial cost per member.
- The site's safety and privacy features are very important. If the conference will be sharing the site with another group(s), what provision is being made for safety?
- A date should be chosen that does not conflict with any scheduled Area events.

### Theme/Program

- The conference theme should be based on program principles, as expressed in the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, or Twelve Concepts of Service. Keep in mind the spiritual purpose of the conference, which is to enhance recovery.
- To generate enthusiasm and new ideas, encourage Alateen members to submit suggestions for the conference theme and workshop titles.
- Local Alateen groups should be asked to serve as host groups to aid in planning and running the conference.
- Special guests may be introduced at banquets or large meetings.
- An inventory meeting should be conducted on the last day of the conference.
- If the conference committee approves the attendance of non-fellowship parents or other relatives at an open meeting(s), read aloud the Anonymity Statement at the start of each session. The conference must also have a procedure in place to limit the access to Alateens by any adults present who are not Area-certified AMIAS.
- Include a writing workshop on the agenda so members have the opportunity to perform public outreach service to potential Alateens as well as share with other Alateens. Contact the World Service Office (WSO) a few months in advance of the conference for extra copies of *Alateen Talk* and sharing sheets. Send sharings with information about the conference to the World Service Office (WSO) for publication in *Alateen Talk* and/or *The Forum*.
- When planning the schedule, keep in mind the spiritual purpose of the conference. The program should allow sufficient time for sleep. Most conferences allow a minimum of six or seven hours sleep per night, with additional time for younger conference members. Mandatory events usually end by midnight.

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- The principles of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of Service should be practiced in all aspects of the conference including meetings, dances, entertainment, and other conference-related events. In keeping with the Al-Anon/Alateen focus, techniques used by outside therapies or other 12-Step programs should not be used.
- Conference Approved Literature (CAL) should be displayed and used at the conference. Remember to order literature from your local Literature Distribution Center (LDC) or the World Service Office (WSO) well in advance.
- Speakers may be randomly selected from Alateens attending the conference, giving members an opportunity to share their experience, strength, and hope from the podium. It is a good idea to have copies of the Guideline *Members Interested in Speaking* (G-1) available.
- Some conferences include games with the focus on building unity rather than competition. Games where Alateens experience applying the Traditions while working as a team help build unity.

## Letting everyone know

- A permanent mailing address is suggested. A post office box is recommended to insure anonymity and continuity.
- Be sure the Area's districts and Al-Anon Information Services know of the event.
- Plan to mail the first announcements at least four to six months in advance. Your Area Alateen Process Person or Group Records Coordinator can be contacted for Alateen group mailing lists. A second announcement with registration forms can be mailed two to three months in advance.
- Announcements for publication in *Alateen Talk*, *The Forum*, and Area/local Al-Anon/Alateen newsletters should be sent at least four to six months in advance. (Check publication deadlines with each publication.)
- If your Area has a Web site with a calendar of events section, send announcements to the contact person at least two months in advance. Since most conferences are held in locations accessible to the general public, only the conference name, city, state, date, and an Area-certified AMIAS contact first name, conference e-mail address, and phone number should be provided. (E-mail addresses should maintain personal anonymity.) For safety reasons the address of the conference and the name of the facility (hotel, college, campsite, etc.) should NOT be listed on the Web site. Names, phone numbers, e-mail addresses, or resident addresses of Alateens are NEVER provided.
- Setting a realistic registration deadline and adhering to it will help to avoid last minute problems and increase safety. A registration deadline encourages members to plan ahead and reduces last minute stress for the registration committee.
- Send a confirmation letter after the member's registration form is received. Include a list of everything they need to bring and also advise them what is not permitted. Include a copy of the conference safety and behavioral guidelines and an agenda, if possible. Emergency contact numbers for the facility should be provided.

## Inviting trusted servants

- Consider inviting a World Service Office (WSO) representative, staff or volunteer, to speak at the conference. The earlier the invitation is sent, the better the chance he or she will be able to attend.
- The Area Delegate, Area Alateen Coordinator, Area Alateen Process Person, District Alateen Coordinators, and District Representatives should also be invited.

## Funding

- Alateens, like Al-Anon members, participate in paying for their attendance at conferences whenever possible.
- Areas, districts, groups, or conferences may have fundraising events to provide full or partial scholarships for Alateens or Alateen Group Sponsors who may not otherwise be able to attend.
- Alateen groups may raise money to attend the conference by performing services and by means of activities within the fellowship, e.g. bake sales, car washes, spaghetti suppers, or the sale of articles pertinent to the program such as the Serenity Prayer, slogans, etc. These activities should be held at reasonable intervals and with the permission of the respective Al-Anon groups. (See "Fund Raising" in the Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual [P-24/27].)
- When fundraising by means of individual activities outside of Al-Anon and Alateen, remember that use of the Al-Anon or Alateen name would violate the spirit of the Traditions. For example, members may hold a public yard sale or car wash to raise money; the Alateen name would not be used, and members would donate the proceeds as individuals.
- In keeping with the Seventh Tradition, contributions for attending the conference should be solicited only from within Al-Anon.
- Excess conference funds are distributed per the conference By-Laws or process for making contributions.

## After the conference

- The Committee Chairperson will prepare a report about the conference for the next Chairperson. Be sure to include financial, program, entertainment, and other committee reports, thereby letting the next committee know what did and did not work.
- In cooperation with the Area Alateen Coordinator(s), prepare a brief report for the Area(s). Advising members of the success of the conference, the finances, and how problems were resolved gives Al-Anon members the confidence to encourage more Alateens to attend next year.
- Thank you letters should be sent to speakers and any special guests.

### **Additional resources for Alateen conferences, Al-Anon/Alateen conventions, A.A. conventions with Al-Anon/Alateen participation, and other events with Alateen participation:**

- Your Area's Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements
- *Alateen Safety Guidelines* (G-34)
- *Al-Anon/Alateen Area Conventions* (G-20) Guideline
- *Al-Anon/Alateen Participation in an A.A. Area Convention* (G-7) Guideline
- *Members Interested in Speaking* (G-1) Guidelin

# Al-Anon guidelines

The Shared Experience of Al-Anon and Alateen Members.

## Starting an Alateen Group

G-19

Starting an Alateen group is a spiritual undertaking. It takes time, commitment, the support of one or more Al-Anon groups, and patience. In order to use the Alateen name, the group must have Alateen Group Sponsors who are certified and meet all of the Area's Requirements for service to Alateen, and the Alateen meeting must be registered through your Area's Alateen process, before the first meeting. Contact your District Representative, Alateen Coordinator, or Area Alateen Process Person (AAPP) for information on your Area's Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements and your Area's process for distribution and submission of Alateen forms. Your Group Representative (GR) can provide the contact information for these trusted servants, or contact the WSO.

### Who Can Start an Alateen Group?

Professionals, school personnel, A.A. members, Al-Anon members, or the teenagers themselves can *initiate the formation* of an Alateen group; however, Area-certified Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS) are needed in order to register an Alateen group. Each Alateen group requires one or more Alateen Group Sponsors who are currently certified to be of service to Alateen through their Area Alateen certification process. Al-Anon groups that are firmly established may want to help the younger members of Al-Anon by starting an Alateen group.

### Where Do We Begin?

The essentials needed to start an Alateen group are listed below. Your Area may have additional requirements, and the sequence of events may differ.

- Contact one or more Al-Anon groups for support of the Alateen group. Experience has shown that Alateen groups which meet at the same time and place as an Al-Anon or A.A. group are more successful, safer, and the Alateens have fewer transportation problems. Al-Anon groups can also support the Alateen group by encouraging members to become certified AMIAS in order to serve as regular or back up Alateen Group Sponsors.
- Decide on a location to hold the meeting (such as a school, recreation center, hospital, religious facility, or other public place), and a day and time.
- Select an appropriate name for the group. The name should be informative and inviting to newcomers. See section titled "What Name Should We Choose?"
- Contact your Area Alateen Coordinator or Area Alateen Process Person (AAPP) for the Alateen Group Registration/Change form (GR-3), the Al-Anon Member Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS) form, and any additional Area form(s).
- Complete the AMIAS certification and Alateen group registration process BEFORE the first meeting.
- Contact your Area Alateen Coordinator regarding Alateen Group Sponsor training.

- Follow your Area's Alateen process for being included in the district, Area, or Al-Anon Information Service meeting directories and Web sites.

### What Types of Alateen Meetings Are There?

**Closed meetings:** All Alateen meetings are closed meetings; only Alateens and the affiliated (or substitute) Alateen Group Sponsors attend. District or Area trusted servants may occasionally attend the meeting as a resource to the group per the Area's Alateen Requirements. Potential Alateen Group Sponsors may visit Alateen groups after certification as an AMIAS, with the Alateen group's authorization. Alateen groups may also have occasional open meetings to celebrate the group's anniversary or for public outreach purposes.

**Limited Access meetings:** Meet at locations where the general membership may not be able to attend (such as a school or group home). Alateen Group Sponsors in limited access meetings must also be certified through their Area Alateen process in addition to complying with any facility requirements. More information on school meetings is available in the *Alateen Meetings in Schools* guideline (G-5) and *Information for the Educator: Alateen Meetings in Schools* leaflet (S-64).

### What Name Should We Choose?

Most groups use a name that is either descriptive of its location, time or day of meeting, meeting purpose, or a program phrase, plus the word "Alateen." A group's name should not imply affiliation with any other twelve step group, self-help group, commercial venture, religious group, or other outside enterprise. Your group name should be inviting or informative and an attraction to potential newcomers. All Alateen groups, including those that lower the age limit, are registered as "Alateen."

Examples of Alateen group names are:

- Friday Night Alateen
- Be Excited About Recovery Alateen
- Courage To Be Me Alateen
- Woodland Hills Alateen

## Who Can Sponsor an Alateen Group?

Alateen groups require Alateen Group Sponsors who are currently certified as Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS) through their Area's Alateen process.

Al-Anon members who are also members of A.A. and meet their Area's certification and Alateen group registration requirements may sponsor an Alateen group by virtue of their Al-Anon membership. Check your Alateen Area Requirements for additional information. Anonymity regarding disclosing membership in other programs would be maintained in the Alateen meeting just as it would be in any Al-Anon meeting.

Parents who are currently certified through their Area Alateen process may serve as Alateen Group Sponsors; however, whenever possible, it is preferred that the relatives of any of the Alateen members attending the group not sponsor the group.

## How Do We Find Alateen Group Sponsors?

Ask nearby Al-Anon groups if they would be willing to support the group by providing Alateen Group Sponsors. Contact your District Representative and Area Alateen Coordinator for assistance and information about the Area Alateen Requirements and Alateen Group Sponsor training. If there are other Alateen groups nearby, ask if Alateen Group Sponsors and Alateens from that group would be willing to share about Alateen and Alateen group sponsorship at Al-Anon meetings or events.

## How Do We Register our Group?

Contact your District Representative, Area Alateen Coordinator, or AAPP to obtain the Alateen Group Registration/Change form. Complete the form and submit through your Area process. All service positions listed on the form (Current Mailing Address [CMA], Contacts, and Alateen Group Sponsors) must be currently certified AMIAS in the Area(s) in which they reside and serve.

## What Can We Expect from our District, Al-Anon Information Service (AIS), and Area?

- The district, AIS, and Area can help identify eligible Alateen Group Sponsors.
- Districts may be able to help locate Area-certified AMIAS to serve as backup Alateen Group Sponsors when the regular Group Sponsor(s) is not available.
- Districts may provide assistance in getting start-up literature for the meeting.
- District Representatives and/or Area Alateen Coordinators can be called for help if a problem arises. It is also a good idea to invite these trusted servants to your meeting once or twice a year to keep in contact.
- Areas provide information about workshops and training for AMIAS.
- Districts, AISs, and Areas may publish a meeting directory and/or list meetings on a Web site.

## What Can We Expect from the World Service Office (WSO)?

Registration with the WSO insures a connection with Al-Anon Family Groups worldwide. Only groups registered with the WSO can use the Alateen name. The WSO toll-free meeting line refers callers to your meeting.

## Alateen groups receive\*:

- New groups receive a series of three packets filled with a variety of information, suggestions for meeting topics, meeting format, information for Alateen Group Sponsors, sample Alateen literature, and service materials, including *Al-Anon Alateen Groups at Work* (P-24)
- A free copy of the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27) and other service tools
- The quarterly Alateen publication *Alateen Talk*, and forms for sending in sharings
- All mailings sent to Al-Anon groups, including the monthly *Forum* magazine, the *Group e-News* newsletter, and the Quarterly Appeal Letter
- An annual group update form sent to help keep your group information current
- Access to information and publications on the Al-Anon/Alateen Members' Web Site

\*Mailings are sent to the Current Mailing Address (CMA) listed on the Alateen Group Registration/Change form. The *Group e-News* is sent via e-mail to the CMA. New group packets are sent at initial registration, six months later and around the one-year anniversary.

## How Can We Attract New Members?

- Use the service structure (Area/district/AIS) as much as you can. Announce the meeting at local district and AIS meetings, and at local events, such as anniversaries.
- Ask nearby Al-Anon and A.A. groups to announce your meeting and to bring their children. It helps if the Alateen group has a flyer with the name, location, day and time, and an Alateen Group Sponsor's first name and number as a contact for information.
- Ask your Area/district/AIS Public Outreach Coordinators for assistance.
- List the meeting in the local paper. Many papers list the meetings for free in the local events column.
- Provide information about the meeting to local schools. Ask for help from an Al-Anon group to contact the school's special assistance counselors.

**Remember - Alateen behavior at meetings, conventions, round-ups, Assemblies, etc. can attract or turn away potential members or their families.**

## Additional Guidelines for Alateen groups

*Alateen Safety Guideline* (G-34)  
*Members Interested In Speaking* (G-1)  
*Taking a Group Inventory* (G-8a & G-8b)  
*Alateen Meetings in Schools* (G-5)

**The Alateen Group is the heart of the Alateen program !**

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Revised 2013 G-19

# Al-Anon Guidelines

The Shared Experience of Al-Anon and Alateen Members.

## Area Alateen Coordinators

G-24

**Congratulations!** You have accepted an exciting, gratifying, and challenging area of service. As an Area Alateen Coordinator, you play a vital role in the well-being of Al-Anon/Alateen as a whole.

The Area Alateen Coordinator is the vital link of communication between the WSO and the Area on matters relating to Alateen. You are a resource for Alateen and Al-Anon members at all levels of service. We appreciate that you are a current certified Al-Anon Member Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS) and have decided to serve at the Area level. Welcome!

**Area Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements:** Since 2004, Areas serving Alateen have requirements that meet, or exceed, the minimums established by the 2003 Alateen Motion from the Board of Trustees\* for Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. In order to use the Alateen name, Areas have to develop a process to certify AMIAS, register Alateen groups, and implement the Safety and Behavioral Requirements at all events in the Area that have Alateen participation.

The Alateen Coordinator is encouraged to work closely with the **Area Alateen Process Person (AAPP)**, the Area's designated contact with the WSO, who maintains the current list of certified AMIAS and communicates with the WSO and Area trusted servants as described in the Area Requirements. Some Areas designate additional responsibilities to the AAPP. For example, the Alateen Coordinator may be responsible for the training and certification of AMIAS, and the AAPP for processing Alateen group registration and changes, recertification of AMIAS, or verifying certification of members serving Alateen for Al-Anon conventions and other events with Alateen participation. In some Areas, the Area Alateen Coordinator may also serve as the AAPP; in others another member serves as the AAPP.

\*Available in the Appendix of the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27) on [al-anon.org](http://al-anon.org) and in the Area Alateen Coordinator community on AFG Connects.

### Relationship between the Area Alateen Coordinator, Area Alateen Process, and the AAPP

Alateen is the responsibility of the entire Area, not just the Alateen Coordinator. Evaluate your Area process annually and be sure to include in it:

- The duties and responsibilities for the Area Alateen Coordinator, AAPP, and other Area trusted servants in Alateen-related matters.
- The Area procedures to submit paperwork to certify Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS) and to register Alateen groups.
- The Area procedures to meet the WSO June 15<sup>th</sup> deadline for the Annual Area Alateen Recertification
- The procedures to protect the personal information necessary for certification/recertification, and a timetable for record retention. Remember, it is the Area's responsibility to safeguard personal information and dispose of members' personal information properly. After certification, the individual AMIAS contact information (name, address, phone numbers, and e-mail) and current certification status is available in the Online Group Records application to the Area Alateen Coordinator, the AAPP, District Representatives (for their District only), and Area Delegate. Only the AAPP has access to edit AMIAS information in the Online Group Records application. Any lists of AMIAS generated are dated and treated confidentially. If a list is used to verify certification (for an Alateen event, for example), remember that certification can change at any time—a list is only accurate as of the time it is printed.
- A procedure for Area distribution and review of reports listing all registered Alateen groups in your Area. These are available "on demand" via the WSO Online Group Records. Work cooperatively with the AAPP and District Representative or designated trusted servants to check the list for accuracy and submit changes. **Only registered Alateen groups are able to use the Alateen name and can be listed in meeting directories and on websites.**

**Communicate!**  
**Facilitate! Educate!**  
**Coordinate!**

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- A process to ensure that all events using the Alateen name in your Area have a formal connection to the Area and comply with the Area's Requirements. If they do not meet these conditions, they cannot use the Alateen name. Area Coordinators often serve as the liaison between Alateen conferences and the Area Assembly. See the Guideline *Alateen Conferences* (G-16) for more details.
- An Area process to deal with Alateen problems when concerns arise involving Alateens or AMIAS. Some Areas have a committee that includes Area World Service Committee members, Alateen Group Sponsors, and other AMIAS.

## It is vital that the Area Alateen Coordinator and AAPP work together as a team!

Remember: The Area certifies and determines the status of AMIAS and ensures that only current certified AMIAS are connected to registered Alateen groups; an AMIAS having a WSO ID number does *not* prove certification.

## Relationship with the World Service Office (WSO)

- Area Alateen Coordinators receive communications from the WSO via the private AFG Connects community, e-mail, and occasionally postal mail. Some information is for Coordinators only; some is to be shared with the Area. Develop a process for sharing Alateen information in a timely manner.
- The WSO refers inquiries about Alateen in your Area to you. Inquiries may include assistance to start an Alateen meeting, requests for Alateen literature, or how to find Alateen speakers. Develop a process to handle these requests—you cannot do it alone! Build a team of trusted servants throughout the Area to assist you; remember to use your abundant resources.
- Area Alateen Coordinators will be sent notice by WSO of special materials and conference calls for additional support.
- The WSO is a resource for you. You are encouraged to call or email your questions and concerns to WSO Staff—share your successes and challenges.
- Please consider posting Area-sponsored Alateen events to the calendar on [al-anon.org](http://al-anon.org)
- Online resources for Area Alateen Coordinators:
  - **AFG Connects** is a private, password-protected website where information is posted for Area trusted servants.
    - ✧ The Area Alateen Coordinator community provides information on training, timely news, and discussion boards to share with other Coordinators.
    - ✧ Customizable PowerPoint training modules are found in the library and are available for your use.

- You are encouraged to explore the Alateen service resources available under the Members menu on [al-anon.org](http://al-anon.org) that can be shared with all Al-Anon members, including:
  - ✧ An “Alateen Service e-Manual,” which is compatible with WSO training modules.
  - ✧ Information on starting an Alateen group, directing members to contact their Area Alateen Coordinator for more information, and the required process to follow.
  - ✧ The current *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27)
  - ✧ All WSO Al-Anon/Alateen Guidelines. The following provide additional supportive Alateen information:
    - ✧ *Alateen Safety Guidelines* (G-34)
    - ✧ *Starting an Alateen Group* (G-19)
    - ✧ *Alateen Conferences* (G-16)
    - ✧ *Alateen Meetings in Schools* (G-5)
    - ✧ *Al-Anon/Alateen Area Conventions* (G-20)
    - ✧ *Cooperation between Al-Anon and A.A.* (G-3)
    - ✧ *Al-Anon/Alateen Participation in an A.A. Convention* (G-7)

## Relationship with the Area Assembly and Area trusted servants

- Give creative reports at Assemblies and Area World Service Committee (AWSC) meetings. Be visible and available at Area meetings and events. Offer time to answer questions. Educating members is an ongoing effort!
- Encourage Alateen participation at Area and District meetings; acknowledge Alateen Group Representatives (GRs) who attend Assemblies.
- Encourage Al-Anon members to become certified; have information available at Al-Anon/Alateen events. Educate members about the certification process, who must be certified, and the various ways to serve Alateen in addition to serving as an Alateen Group Sponsor, as defined by the Area. Alateen service roles may include providing transportation, serving as a substitute Group Sponsor, or chaperoning at an Al-Anon event that includes Alateen participation. Identify service opportunities for members who are not certified—such as helping with an Alateen newsletter, finding workshop locations, distributing flyers, etc.
- At Area events, find creative ways to identify the AMIAS who have responsibility for the Alateens.
- Include your Area officers, AAPP, and other Area coordinators on your mailing list, to keep them informed.

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## Relationship with Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS)

- Communicate with all certified members by newsletter or regular e-mails. Let them know you are available as a resource; offer encouragement and support.
- Facilitate AMIAS meetings at Area events. Include all certified members whether or not they are serving as an Alateen Group Sponsor.
- Develop an Alateen training workshop, and train AMIAS to facilitate it. Many Areas try to “train a trainer” for each District. Schedule workshops throughout the Area.
- Suggest a getaway weekend or day long event and invite all certified members, especially those who are new or are considering Alateen service. Plan workshops, sharing time, and fun activities.

## Relationship with Districts and Al-Anon Information Services (AISs)

- Encourage Districts and AISs to have an AMIAS serve as a District contact (note that Districts or AISs may call this position a coordinator, chairperson, liaison, or other title). Stay in touch with District Alateen contacts and District Representatives (DRs) and make them a part of the Area Alateen team.
- Encourage DRs to visit local Alateen groups annually, letting groups know in advance; invite Alateen groups to participate in District/AIS activities.
- Suggest that Districts host Alateen service awareness/training workshops, or to collaborate with another District to host one.
- Include DRs and District Alateen contacts on your mailing list.

## Relationship with Alateen and Al-Anon groups

- Foster awareness that Alateen is part of Al-Anon and that whether or not an Alateen meeting is available, young people are welcome to attend Al-Anon meetings.
- Communicate with Alateen groups by newsletter or regular e-mails. Let them know that you are a resource; encourage participation in District meetings and connections with local Al-Anon groups.
- Communicate with the Alateen groups in your Area, asking in advance for a group conscience if you plan on visiting.
- Encourage groups to be informed by reading *Alateen Talk* and *The Forum*. Encourage Alateens to submit sharings and acknowledge their sharings.

## Remember: Together we can make it

- Your role is to share information provided from WSO and communicate with District Alateen contacts, the Area World Service Committee, Alateen Group Sponsors, certified AMIAS, Alateen groups, and Al-Anon members in your Area.
- Your Area supports Alateen—don’t be afraid to ask for help! Alateen safety is the responsibility of the *entire* Area, not just the Coordinator. When situations arise, reason them out with other Area trusted servants. Encourage an annual review of the Area Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements and processes.

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**All Al-Anon/Alateen  
Guidelines are available  
on [al-anon.org](http://al-anon.org)**

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# Al-Anon guidelines

The Shared Experience of Al-Anon and Alateen Members.

## Alateen Safety Guidelines

G-34

Alateens are members of the Al-Anon Family Groups who have suffered because of the alcoholism of a loved one. They have come to Alateen seeking recovery. Before recovery can take place, an environment of trust and safety must exist. It is the responsibility of Al-Anon and Alateen as a whole to work together to maintain a healthy, loving, and supportive environment.

These guidelines offer procedures for insuring the safety of Alateen members, their Alateen Group Sponsors, and Al-Anon /Alateen as a whole. All guidelines, including the *Alateen Safety Guidelines*, offer the shared experience of Al-Anon /Alateen members. Following these guidelines is not a substitute for knowing and obeying the law of your Area as it relates to minors. Each state and province has its own way of regulating these issues, and it is important that each person involved with Alateen is aware of and follows local legal requirements.

### Keeping It Safe

#### *What Can Alateen Members Do?*

- **Familiarize yourselves with your Area's Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements.**
- **Remember, you are responsible for your own safety and well-being.** You do not have to accept unacceptable behavior! If you or anyone else in your group is uncomfortable with the actions of your Alateen Group Sponsor(s), the Sponsor(s) can be replaced with another Area-certified AMIAS. First, start with an informed group conscience. Involve the District Representative and/or Area/District/Al-Anon Information Service Alateen Coordinator. These trusted servants will work with you. They are committed to your well-being.
- **Invite your District Representative to your group on a regular basis.** Then, if a problem should occur, you have another familiar source of help at hand. Staying connected with a District Representative, or having an Al-Anon group contact person, may prevent unacceptable behavior by an Alateen Group Sponsor or other Alateen members.
- **Conduct exchange meetings with other Alateen groups and their Alateen Group Sponsors.** You may want to call upon them for help in solving Sponsor or group problems. An ongoing interchange between other Alateen Group Sponsors and Alateens brings a new perspective to problem solving. *There is safety in numbers.*
- **Take responsibility for your own behavior and the behavior**

**of the other members of the group.** You could lose your meeting space by engaging in any inappropriate activity. Engaging in roughhousing, fighting, overt and covert sexual behavior or any other inappropriate activities before, during, and after an Alateen meeting or event can put you or your group in a dangerous position and prevents you from receiving the help that Alateen offers. These inappropriate actions can affect Al-Anon and Alateen as a whole and

place the adults who are trying to help Alateen in a legally vulnerable position. Even if *your* actions are blameless, you can be adversely affected by the actions of others.

- **It is suggested that Alateen groups create behavior guidelines** so that everyone knows what is expected before, during, and after the meeting. Then, if you or anyone else in your group is uncomfortable with the actions of another Alateen member, a discussion regarding the group's behavior guidelines is appropriate. If the offensive conduct persists, that member can be asked not to return to the meeting. Before taking such action, start with an informed group conscience, referring back to your group's behavior guidelines and the application of the Twelve Traditions.
- **Alateen members who are legally adults must adhere to the same requirements as Alateen members who are minors when they are participating as Alateens.**
- **Take regular group inventory;** the guideline *Taking a Group Inventory* (G-8a & G-8b) may be helpful.
- **Support the actions of your Alateen Group Sponsors** who are responsible for the Alateens in the meeting room. To the best of their ability, Alateen Group Sponsors must maintain a sense of safety and trust in order for recovery to take place and to protect the Alateen members from physical and emotional harm. Whenever appropriate, Alateen Group Sponsors have the right to ask a member who is displaying inappropriate behavior to leave the meeting.

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**Just a Note:** Each group has the autonomy to enact and enforce its own standards, rules of conduct, and procedures, provided it does not violate local law or the Area Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements. The acts of each individual, Al-Anon / Alateen group, and Alateen Group Sponsor(s) are solely the acts of that group/individual(s) and not those of AFG, Inc.

## Keeping It Safe

### What Can Alateen Group Sponsors Do?

- **It is recommended to have two Alateen Group Sponsors at each meeting.** If one Alateen Group Sponsor cannot be there, call a Sponsor from another group or invite another certified Al-Anon Member Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS) to serve as a substitute Sponsor. This is a good reason to hold an Alateen meeting concurrently with an Al-Anon meeting. An eligible Al-Anon member who has agreed to serve as a contact between the Al-Anon and Alateen group and has been certified by the group's Area can be called upon to serve as a substitute when a Sponsor cannot attend.
- **In addition to regularly attending Al-Anon meetings, participate in district and Area Alateen Group Sponsor Workshops.** Connect with other Alateen Group Sponsors and the Area Alateen Coordinator on a regular basis. Take an annual Alateen Group Sponsor inventory. Choose a

Service Sponsor who is familiar with Alateen sponsorship. Become familiar with Alateen literature and guidelines.

Know how to contact emergency services should an Alateen member become ill or be hurt on site. Since phones are not always available after hours at some meeting locations, emergency procedures should be worked out in advance.

- **Keep on hand a list of community resources where Alateen members can seek help** for physical violence, abuse, suicide prevention, etc., and share how the members can get in touch with the resources.
- **Set boundaries.** Alateen Group Sponsors share *experience* in living with the disease of alcoholism, *strength* gained from working the Twelve Steps, knowledge of the Twelve Traditions and *hope* for the future. An Alateen Group Sponsor is not a counselor, nor the peer of an Alateen member. When an Alateen Group Sponsor gives advice or attempts to solve the problems of the Alateen member, it could lead to unhealthy dependencies. Overt and covert sexual interaction between an Alateen member and any adult is prohibited. It leaves the adult subject to liability, including charges of statutory rape, and diminishes any possibility of recovery for the Alateen member. Such involvement is illegal and brings Al-Anon and Alateen to the forefront of public controversy. For this reason, no AMIAS is permitted to serve as an Alateen Group Sponsor if there is any romantic involvement with any Alateen member. Alateen members who are legally adults must adhere to the same requirements as Alateen members who are minors when they are participating as Alateens.
- **Avoid infringing upon parental authority.** Parents are responsible for the behavior of their children before and after a meeting. If an Alateen member must be removed from the meeting, it is up to the parent to discipline his/her child. It is not the Alateen Group Sponsor's job to question or agree with how the parents exercise their authority. The Alateen Group Sponsor's job is to help the Alateen member cope, using the tools of the program.
- **Help the Alateen member to establish limits.** Protect the Alateens whenever behavior gets out of hand. Inappropriate behavior includes physical threats; sexual conduct; rough

## Working Together

**Let's keep Alateen going, growing, and glowing.**

**Alateen and Al-Anon : Together We Can Make It fun, healthy and safe.**

play; etc. Helping the Alateens identify inappropriate behaviors themselves through a group inventory provides them with an opportunity to design group behavior guidelines. The *Taking a Group Inventory* guideline (G-8a and G-8b) may be helpful.

- **Know when to step down as an Alateen Group Sponsor.** Whenever anything interferes with the need to protect yourself, i.e., accusations, controversy, threats of personal harm, etc., discontinue serving as an Alateen Group Sponsor. Even if you are totally blameless, stepping aside will not only protect both the Alateen members and you, it will preserve the unity of the fellowship as well.

## Keeping It Safe

### What Can Areas Do?

- **In addition to establishing Area Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements, Areas should establish behavioral requirements specific to the type of function;** e.g., Alateen meeting, Area Assembly, Alateen conference, Alateen fundraising event, etc. The requirements should be general in tone to allow for some flexibility, but specific enough to conform with site or schedule requirements. While Alateen Group Sponsors are not parents, they are responsible for the Alateens they escort to functions outside of the meeting. They have the right to refuse to bring an Alateen member who will not abide by the safety and behavioral requirements. The requirements should be read and understood by all before leaving the home group when attending a conference, Assembly, or other event.
- **Support Alateen conferences!** To ensure the safety of Al-Anon and Alateen as a whole, an Alateen conference within the Area or region is connected to the Area structure. The role of Al-Anon is to *guide* rather than *direct* the young people toward recovery. Alateens are more responsive when they are treated with the same respect as any other Al-Anon member. Allowing the freedom for the members involved to make their own decisions within the

boundaries of safety and the Area's minimum requirements

insures integrity to Al-Anon /Alateen principles and fulfills the purpose of an Alateen conference: to encourage the growth of Alateen and to increase understanding of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions through the sharing of ideas, fun, and fellowship with other Alateens and Alateen Group Sponsors (See *Alateen Conferences* guideline [G-16]).

- **Support your Area Alateen Coordinator's training and education efforts.** Provide time and resources for training workshops.
- Support your Area Alateen Process Person (AAPP) with the AMIAS certification, group registration, and annual recertification process.

## Keeping It Safe

### *What Can Al-Anon as a Whole Do?*

- **Form an Alateen meeting at the same location where there is an Al-Anon meeting.** Experience shows that forming a new Alateen group that meets concurrently with an Al-Anon group increases safety for Alateen members and Alateen Group Sponsors. The Al-Anon group can be a source of additional certified AMIAS to serve as backup Alateen Group Sponsors. The Al-Anon presence affords the Alateens additional adults to turn to should problems arise. Also, because Alateen is a part of Al-Anon, Alateens may go to the Al-Anon meeting if a substitute Alateen Group Sponsor is not available when the regular Alateen Group Sponsor(s) is not present.
- **Find a way to serve Alateen.** Many Al-Anon members cannot become full-time Alateen Group Sponsors for many reasons. Yet, everyone can serve Alateen in some capacity. Encourage eligible members to become certified through their Area/s process as Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS) so that they can serve Alateen by providing transportation to meetings, district/Area meetings/functions, and Alateen conferences. Another way these members can be of service is to be a backup Alateen Group Sponsor or chaperone at the Area Assemblies or conventions. Any Al-Anon member can be of service to Alateen by encouraging other members to bring their children to Alateen, providing information to schools, or other Public Outreach projects.

## Additional Safety Procedures

Alateen members come from homes where the disease of alcoholism may have created distorted impressions of acceptable behavior. Just as we in Al-Anon had to learn what appropriate boundaries are, so do Alateens. When an Al-Anon Member Involved in Alateen Service chooses to interact with Alateens in some capacity, it is well to keep the following in mind:

- **Transport Alateens in groups and with another adult whenever possible.**
- **Make sure a custodial parent/legal guardian signs a permission form which you are transporting his/her child to a meeting or other function.** Have the responsible party sign the permission form in your presence. This is a legal requirement in most states/provinces.
- **Have a notarized "Authorization to Obtain Medical Care Form" (FORM B – MEDICAL FORM; see sample enclosed).** This form is necessary when escorting an Alateen member to a function that takes him or her away from the custodial parent/guardian. In the event of an emergency, timely medical care can then be obtained.
- **Be gender and number conscious!** It is always a good idea to work in teams if you are involved with several Alateen members at a time. Whenever transporting or meeting with Alateen members, inform another Alateen Group Sponsor or Al-Anon member of your whereabouts and avoid meeting in isolated places. Whenever possible, it is best to avoid one-on-one interactions with Alateen members.

### Shared experience to consider when drafting behavior guidelines:

- All Alateen members are responsible for themselves, remembering that what they do reflects on their group, the conference/Assembly, and the name of Alateen.
- Alateen Group Sponsors should have knowledge of their group members' whereabouts at all times.
- Everyone is expected to attend the conference/Assembly sessions, i.e., workshops, meetings, etc.
- No girls or female Alateen Group Sponsors in boys' or male Alateen Group Sponsors' rooms; no boys or male Alateen Group Sponsors in girls' or female Alateen Group Sponsors' rooms.
- Possession of alcohol, drugs, or any substance prohibited by local law is strictly forbidden. All Alateens under medication must report to their Alateen Group Sponsors and the designated nurse upon arrival at the conference/Assembly.
- AMIAS responsible for each Alateen group/member should be aware of their special responsibility as adult escorts of their Alateen group/member.

It's important for the Alateen group/member to understand that because the Alateen Group Sponsors/AMIAS are responsible for the Alateens they bring, they have the right to refuse to bring a member whom they do not think will abide by these guidelines, always remembering to place principles above personalities.

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# Responsibility Statement

This statement offers clarification to the Al-Anon /Alateen fellowship regarding the role of Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS).

## Requirements for Service to Alateen:

An Alateen Group Sponsor is a responsible, adult member of Al-Anon who attends Al-Anon meetings regularly, is currently certified as an Al-Anon Member Involved In Alateen Service (AMIAS) through their Area's Alateen process, and who shares his/her experience in living with the disease of alcoholism, strength gained from the Twelve Steps, knowledge of the Twelve Traditions, and hope for the future. He/she helps the Alateens keep the focus on the Al-Anon program.

No person may be certified as an AMIAS, including Alateen Group Sponsors, who has ever been convicted of a felony, or charged with child abuse or any other inappropriate sexual behavior, or has demonstrated emotional problems which could result in harm to the Alateen members. For the complete list of requirements in your Area please contact your Area Alateen Coordinator.

## Role of AMIAS, including Alateen Group Sponsors:

AMIAS are to provide direction to assure that emphasis is placed on the Al-Anon /Alateen program of recovery and, to the best of their ability, maintain an atmosphere that will protect the Alateen members from physical and emotional harm. An AMIAS is familiar with and complies with the Area's Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements.

AMIAS are expected to maintain appropriate adult behavior by exercising good taste and integrity in conduct. AMIAS are never to belittle a parent or place themselves above the authority of a parent or guardian. AMIAS also agree to abide by their Area's Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements, and to step down should their behavior come into question.

## Legal and Traditional Responsibility of AMIAS, including Alateen Group Sponsors:

Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS) may become aware of instances of child abuse. A dilemma then arises on how to deal with the problem. If in an effort to protect the Alateen member from further harm, an incident is reported, is the Tradition of anonymity or confidentiality violated?

The first action is to seek legal advice regarding Area requirements and existing state/provincial laws. Child abuse laws relating to mandatory disclosure usually refer to individuals performing in a professional capacity, and not as volunteers. It is advisable that the laws in each state/province/country be investigated because they do vary from place to place. Where reporting is required, there is no choice but to comply with the law. In most localities, an Alateen Group Sponsor is not legally required to report instances of suspected child abuse. Yet, as a Sponsor, we may question what is truly right for the Alateen member in the long run. Alateen Group Sponsors and AMIAS who are required by law to report cases of suspected child abuse should let the Alateens know, up front before sharing begins, that they will disclose such incidents that are discussed at the meeting or event.

Alateen Group Sponsors and Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service who feel a moral responsibility or are compelled by law to report cases of suspected child abuse to the authori-

## Suggestions for AMIAS, including Alateen Group Sponsors:

### *At Alateen meetings*

1. Encourage the Alateen members to keep reasonably good order among themselves, and establish behavior guidelines with them. Rough housing, fighting, inappropriate sexual behavior and/or the use of alcohol, drugs, or other prohibited substances on the meeting premises are forbidden.
2. Alateen members are made aware that they bear responsibility for their own actions, and that through their actions, they set an example for Alateen and Al-Anon as a whole.

### *At Alateen/Al-Anon activities away from meetings*

1. Have guidelines for acceptable behavior. Before attending a function or event, the Alateen Group Sponsor reads and discusses the guidelines thoroughly with the Alateen group.
2. Obtain a signed permission slip from a parent or legal guardian for Alateens to attend Alateen/Al-Anon functions other than regular meetings. A signed permission slip, however, does not necessarily eliminate potential liability for accidents or injuries that result from certain activities (i.e., swimming, horseback riding, etc.)
3. Alateen Group Sponsors need to always be aware of the specific whereabouts of individual Alateen members during Alateen activities.

ties should contact their Area Alateen Coordinator, District Representative, or other Area-designated trusted servant prior to reporting. It is important to reason things out through the Area process before disclosure, keeping in mind the Traditions and the Alateen member's anonymity.

Prior to reporting to the authorities, the Alateen Group Sponsor or Al-Anon Member Involved in Alateen Service should also discuss their intentions with the Alateen member to avoid placing the member in danger and to maintain confidence and trust in the Alateen Group Sponsor/AMIAS and the Alateen program. It is important to follow the advice of your local legal counsel, as keeping the identity of the alleged abuser anonymous is important, since accusations of child abuse are defamatory and could lead to claims of libel and slander. In order to keep the Alateen fellowship from public controversy, any reporting is done on a personal basis rather than as an Alateen Group Sponsor or Al-Anon Member Involved in Alateen Service.

# FORM A: INFORMATION AND PERMISSION FORM

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*Since laws vary from Area to Area, it is suggested that this form be reviewed for compliance with local laws.*

## THIS FORM MUST BE FILLED OUT ENTIRELY IN ORDER FOR THE ALATEEN MEMBER TO PARTICIPATE

PARENTS: Please read, complete, sign this form and keep a copy for your records.

ALATEENS: Please return this completed form to your Alateen Group Sponsor or accompanying AMIAS.

SPONSOR/AMAIS ESCORT: Keep the original copy of this form in your possession for the duration of time the Alateen member is in your charge.

### ALATEEN MEMBER'S INFORMATION

First and Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State/Province: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip/Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: (    ) \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

### SPONSOR/ADULT ESCORT INFORMATION

First and Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State/Province: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip/Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: (    ) \_\_\_\_\_

### EVENT INFORMATION

Name of Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number of Location: (    ) \_\_\_\_\_

Date & Time & Place of Departure: \_\_\_\_\_

Date & Time & Place of Return: \_\_\_\_\_

Mode of Transportation : \_\_\_\_\_

(include make, model, year of vehicle & license plate number)

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# FORM A: INFORMATION AND PERMISSION FORM

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Since laws vary from Area to Area, it is suggested that this form be reviewed for compliance with local laws.

## CUSTODIAL PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMATION

First and Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State/Province: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip/Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: Home ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Work ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

During this event, I can be reached at: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

## NEAREST RELATIVE NOT LIVING WITH THE ALATEEN MEMBER OR PARENT/GUARDIAN

First, Last Name & Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State/Province: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip/Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: Home ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Work ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

## HOLD HARMLESS STATEMENT

As the parent/guardian of aforementioned Alateen member, I am responsible for payment of any medical services required and obtained on said member's behalf. I further hold harmless the event attended by my child and

\_\_\_\_\_  
 (insert name and WSO registration number (if known) of group, district, Al-Anon Information Service office, and/or Area)  
 or authorized representative thereof, should any harm come to my child as a result of his/her participation in this activity or procurement of medical treatment.

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## PARENTAL PERMISSION (to be signed in the presence of the Sponsor/AMIAS escort)

I, \_\_\_\_\_ hereby grant permission to \_\_\_\_\_ to travel to and  
 (Parent/Guardian Name) (Alateen member name)

from and to participate in \_\_\_\_\_ under the supervision of  
 (Event Name)

\_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Sponsor/AMIAS escort Name) (Dates of Event including Travel Time)

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# FORM b: MEDICAL FORM

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Since laws vary from Area to Area, it is suggested that this form be reviewed for compliance with local laws.

## AUTHORIZATION TO OBTAIN MEDICAL CARE

In order for anyone to obtain medical care for another person who is not a family member, this form must be filled out entirely and bear the original notary seal.

When distance and time may compromise acquisition of timely medical attention, attendance to a fellowship event can be prohibited if this form is not properly filled out and notarized.

## DISEASES/MEDICAL CONDITIONS

(Alateen member or Sponsor/AMIAS escort name) \_\_\_\_\_ has (had) the following diseases or problems:

- Heart Trouble \_\_\_\_\_
- Tuberculosis \_\_\_\_\_
- Stomach Ulcers \_\_\_\_\_
- Asthma \_\_\_\_\_
- High Blood Pressure \_\_\_\_\_
- Low Blood Pressure \_\_\_\_\_
- Epilepsy \_\_\_\_\_
- Liver Trouble (Hepatitis) \_\_\_\_\_
- Fainting spells or Seizures \_\_\_\_\_
- Diabetes \_\_\_\_\_
- Hives \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (Please describe) \_\_\_\_\_

## ALLERGIES

(Alateen member or Sponsor/AMIAS escort name) \_\_\_\_\_ has had allergic reaction from the following:

- (please check):
- Penicillin \_\_\_\_\_
  - Local Anesthetics \_\_\_\_\_
  - Aspirin \_\_\_\_\_
  - Sulphur Drugs \_\_\_\_\_
  - Sedatives \_\_\_\_\_
  - Bee Stings/Insect Bites \_\_\_\_\_
  - Pollens \_\_\_\_\_
  - Foods (please list) \_\_\_\_\_
  - Other (Please Describe) \_\_\_\_\_

## CURRENT MEDICATIONS

Please list all prescriptions & over-the-counter drugs. These medications MUST be in their original container(s) with labels firmly in place.

(Alateen member or Sponsor/AMIAS escort name) \_\_\_\_\_ is currently using the following medications:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## OTHER CONDITIONS OR PROBLEMS

(Alateen member or Sponsor/AMIAS escort name) \_\_\_\_\_ has the following condition or problems not listed above that you should know about: (please explain)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# FORM b: MEDICAL FORM

page 2 of 2

Since laws vary from Area to Area, it is suggested that this form be reviewed for compliance with local laws.

## MEDICAL INSURANCE INFORMATION

You must provide medical insurance information in the space below.

### For the uS:

Name of Insurance Co. \_\_\_\_\_

Employer Name \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Name and Social Security Number \_\_\_\_\_

Group ID Number \_\_\_\_\_

(or attach a medical coupon if covered by Medicaid)

### For Canada:

Health Card or Medi-Number \_\_\_\_\_

## NOTARY STATEMENT

Form B, Authorization to Obtain Medical Care, is not valid without a signed and sealed Notary Statement.

State/Province of \_\_\_\_\_

County of \_\_\_\_\_

(Sponsor/Escort/Responsible Party Name) \_\_\_\_\_ is authorized upon my signature below to obtain any medical care necessary for the duration of the above stated function on behalf of (Participant's Name) \_\_\_\_\_ who is (state relationship - self, son, daughter) my \_\_\_\_\_.

Dated this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature - if 18 or over)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Parent or Guardian, if under 18)

Before me, the above signed authority, on this day personally appeared \_\_\_\_\_, to me known and known by me to be the person who signed the above authorization, and acknowledged to me that (s)he executed the same for the purpose therein stated.

WITNESS my hand and seal this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_

## NOTARY PUBLIC

My Commission Expires:

Seal:

# Al-Anon guidelines

The Shared Experience of Al-Anon and Alateen Members.

## Area Archives

G-30

One of the best ways to protect the future of the Al-Anon fellowship in an Area is to look to the past. Of course, our primary purpose remains—to carry the message of hope to the families and friends of alcoholics. The collection and preservation of our past renews our sense of purpose and serves as the thread that links the generation of stories that are to follow.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of an Area Archives is to preserve the experience, history, and memorabilia of the Al-Anon fellowship from the beginning of the family movement in that locale. This history should be preserved so as to be available to the membership and the serious researcher, within the framework of our Traditions, for the good of Al-Anon as a whole.

### Archives Coordinator Archivist and Archives Committee

In cooperation with the Area, the Archives Coordinator or Archivist serves as the link between the World Service Office and the local trusted servants. This position, along with the Archives Committee, is responsible for the preservation and maintenance of the local Area Archives.

In most Areas, the Archives Coordinator is elected or selected for a three-year term; this member may choose to establish a committee to help with long or labor-intensive projects. Members who are selected are usually familiar with the Area history and interested in the preservation.

In other Areas, the Archives Committee is appointed by the Assembly for a three-year term. The new Committee then chooses an Archivist, who oversees the Archives collection and assists the Archives Coordinator.

The Archives Committee is responsible for establishing policies and procedures, as well as budget requirements which are approved by the Area World Service Committee (AWSC). The Archives Committee maintains final responsibility and authority for the use of the archives in compliance with all matters of general policy of the AWSC.

### Location

An Area Archives might start in the home of the person interested in assuming the responsibility of collecting the material. Some Areas house the Archives at a location such as an Al-Anon Information Service (AIS) or Literature Distribution Center (LDC) nearest the Archives Coordinator. Later, the Archives might be placed in a centrally located Al-Anon office.

Wherever the Area chooses to keep the material, remember the following:

- move items into acid-free folders, boxes, and photo sleeves
- store in a cool, dry place
- protect the anonymity of all members

### What to Keep and What to Build on

Possible categories are:

- Minutes of the Assembly and district meetings (List the motions separately for quick reference)
- Reports - Committees, Coordinators, and Delegates
- Group histories
- Longtime member interviews or recordings
- Directories—world, Area, and local
- Editions of Area and local newsletters
- Group, Assembly, convention, or event flyers
- Public information literature produced locally for presentation or educational purposes with distribution within or outside of Al-Anon
- Programs of conventions or conferences
- Photographs of important events
- Book of remembrances of deceased pioneers
- Relevant correspondence with discussion on policy concerns during the Conference or workshops inside or outside of the Area
- Papers, notes, etc., from trusted servants
- Area articles that are selected for use in WSO publications such as *The Forum* or *Area Highlights* with content specific to the locale
- Scrapbooks of newspaper clippings
- Memorabilia, gifts, or souvenirs
- Conference Approved Literature with pioneer autographs that commemorate local events or celebrations

The extent of archival holdings depends largely on space. Common sense is a key factor in determining what history is, what will be history in the future, and what can be discarded.

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## How to Identify Material

The importance of clearly identifying all material: people, places, events, dates, etc., cannot be stressed enough. Many items will be identified with the date of origin (minutes, etc). However, photographs should have the name(s) of subject(s) and the date written on the back. Undated material can add hours of time to the work of future researchers and may sometimes make the document less valuable. *Please be sure to date everything!*

## Interviews

Interviews with Area pioneers are a valuable and interesting section of any Archives. Longtime members are asked to recall early experiences. They may be invited to participate in a recorded interview. Whether written or recorded, the topics vary but often include recollections of early group development and their personal recovery stories.

## Document Search

After the Archives are organized, a search system is necessary to locate material in the collection. With electronic documents, a simple word search can replace the need for a card catalog. Utilize resources from a local library or state, provincial, or national archives to help establish a system.

Additions to Archives require changes to the document that is used to search. To avoid any confusion, post and date the master document log in a central location and update the backup on a regular basis.

## Anonymity

Al-Anon's tradition of anonymity regarding members, regardless of whether they are living or deceased, should always be kept in mind when making material available.

Note: The *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27) provides guidance on the topic of anonymity and is available in printed version or can be found on the Al-Anon Members' Web site.

## Supplies and Equipment as needed and when feasible:

- Acid-free storage boxes and file folders
- Shelves for storage containers
- Scrapbooks for photos, newspaper clippings, etc., acid free scrapbooks, and archival photo sleeves are preferred
- Card catalog, index in binder, or other kind of finding aid
- Display cabinet for memorabilia
- Framed photos of places and events for wall hangings
- Audio recorder
- Supply of blank CDs, DVDs, thumb drives, or tapes
- Archival plastic paper clips
- Stainless steel staples and a stapler
- White cotton gloves (for handling photos, slides, and negatives)

Good sources for supplies are archival supply houses. For additional resources, search the Internet, or check your local stationery store, library, or the telephone directory.

## Suggested Uses for Archival Material

Archival material can be used for workshops at Assemblies, anniversary meetings, public information displays, and anywhere that you would like to share your Al-Anon history.

## Educational Opportunities

Check local libraries, colleges and/or universities, and the Internet for applicable courses, workshops, seminars, etc.

## Suggestions

One way to avoid the duplication of WSO publications is to retain materials that specifically commemorate local Area events or were produced by the community served.

Delicate or especially large collections often need the guidance of members educated in library science or archival procedures. Ongoing projects are best served when the incoming and outgoing Coordinators discuss the goals for suggested completion.

To help with research, add Area historical documentation on the local Al-Anon Web site. Make every effort to create a secure, password-protected process to view the holdings with overview by the Area. Some Areas use off-site storage or purchase secured cloud settings to backup the Archives.

Members are encouraged to become familiar with the current interpretations of copyright regulations pertaining to fair use and privacy concerns.

## Where to Find Help

Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.  
Attention: Archives  
1600 Corporate Landing Parkway  
Virginia Beach, VA 23454

**Phone:**  
757-563-1600

**Fax:**  
757-563-1655

**E-mail:**  
[wso@al-anon.org](mailto:wso@al-anon.org)

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# Al-Anon guidelines

The Shared Experience of Al-Anon and Alateen Members.

## Area Group Records Coordinator

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The Area Group Records Coordinator serves as the nuts and bolts of the communication connection among the Al-Anon member, the group, district, Al-Anon Information Service (AIS), Area, the entire service structure, and the World Service Office (WSO).

### What does the vital role of the Area Group Records Coordinator consist of at the Area level?

The Area Group Records Coordinator is the “keeper” of Al-Anon group information. It is essential that the Area Delegate be kept informed of group records matters, since the Area Delegate communicates with the WSO.

Note that Alateen group information is handled via the Area Alateen process. The Area Group Records Coordinator communicates with the Area Delegate, Area Alateen Process Person (AAPP), and Area Alateen Coordinator to become familiar with the Area Alateen process.

#### Generally...

- Serves as primary contact between the Area and the WSO regarding Al-Anon group records.
- Uses the WSO On-line Group Records application to:
  - Register new groups.
  - Make group changes.
  - Generate reports as needed.
- Informs groups in the Area that mail from the WSO goes to the Current Mailing Address (CMA) and not to the Group Representative (GR), unless the GR is the CMA.
- Reports about record-keeping at the Area level.
- Encourages members and groups to use their WSO identification number.
- Encourages DRs to use the WSO On-line Group Records application, and assists them in how to access it.
- Communicates with the Al-Anon Information Services in the Area.
- Updates the Area’s records with all changes received from the groups or the WSO.
- Works with other Area coordinators to strengthen the Area’s groups.

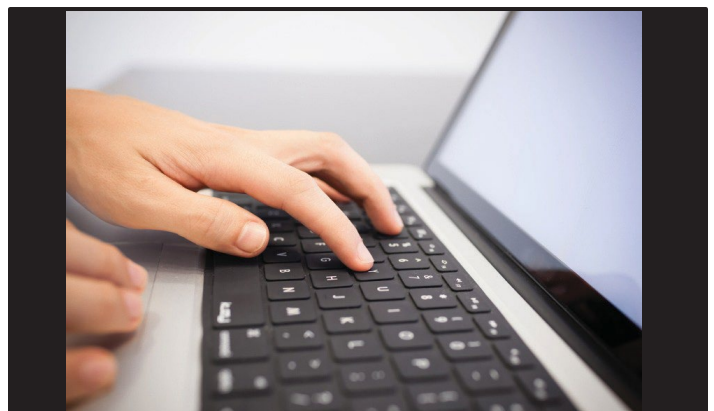
#### Sometimes...

- Maintains lists of Area trusted servants.
- Provides labels to the Area or Newsletter Editor(s) for group mailings.
- Submits lists (or labels) to the Area Alateen or Institutions Coordinators.
- Assists the registration committee at Assembly.
- Sends new groups a welcome letter.
- Informs groups which districts they are located in and provides the name and contact information of their District Representatives.
- Provides training for new DRs in how to access e-Communities, if assigned by the Area.
- Keeps the Area Archivist informed about new and inactivated groups.

**Note that Alateen group information is handled via the Area Alateen process.**

### What skills are recommended for Area Group Records Coordinators?

- Good organizational skills and the ability to pay attention to detail.
- Experience working with computer databases.
- Strong general computer and Internet skills.
- Ability to communicate via e-mail.
- Availability to attend Area World Service Committee meetings and Assemblies.
- Understanding of the Area and world service structure.



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## How does the WSO communicate with Area Group Records Coordinators?

Most of the information will be posted on e-Communities, a password-protected Web site where WSO staff posts news and information that is helpful to the Area Group Records Coordinator. Documents can be viewed and saved. A computer-generated e-mail notification is sent to the Area Group Records Coordinators when a new document is posted.

E-Communities also features discussion boards for the Area Group Records Coordinators to connect and communicate with each other, share their experience Area-to-Area, and ask for shared experience from other Areas. The discussion boards help Area Group Records Coordinators to enhance and enrich their service experience.

**Registrations coming directly to WSO** – When a new group registers with the WSO, the registration information is entered into the WSO database. The information is available to the Area Group Records Coordinator on the WSO On-line Group Records application. An e-mail notification of newly registered groups is sent weekly to the Area Group Records Coordinators.

**No mail notifications** – When the WSO sends a mailing to a group and the envelope is returned as undeliverable, the group is placed in “No Mail” status. Callers who are seeking meeting information on the WSO toll-free meeting line are still referred to the group. Since the CMA is the direct communication link with the group, a report listing the groups in “No Mail” status is available to the Area Group Records Coordinator and the DR on the WSO On-line Group Records application. If the WSO is not notified of a new CMA after two years of being in “No Mail,” the group will be considered “inactive” and callers on the toll-free meeting line will no longer be referred to that group. In time, the group will be purged from the WSO database.

**Inactivation of a group** – One of the following criteria must be met to inactivate a group:

- The group has notified the Area or WSO that it is no longer meeting.
- A trusted servant has verified that the group is no longer meeting.
- The group has notified the Area or WSO that it is no longer an AI-Anon group.

When WSO receives verification of the criteria and inactivates a group, the information will be available to the Group Records Coordinator on the On-Line Group Records application.

**Proposed Group Notification** – When the WSO receives a call, e-mail, or letter inquiry about starting a new AI-Anon group, members who have access to the Internet are directed to the AI-Anon Members’ Web site where new group registration information is available; otherwise, the information is sent via postal mail. The DR or Area Group Records Coordinator contact information is provided so members can inquire about the Area process for submitting a new AI-Anon group registration. A proposal packet is sent to professionals and non-members,

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## Conduct a workshop at the district and/or Area on the best way to update the records.

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which includes the Area Delegate contact information. Once the group is registered, an e-mail notification is sent to the Area Group Records Coordinator. It is suggested that the Area Group Records Coordinator contact the individual (or pass the notice on to another Area trusted servant for follow up) to guide them and to provide them with information regarding the district or Area.

**Other Communication** – The WSO Group Records staff may also contact the Coordinator when:

- There is a report that a group in the Area is no longer meeting.
- There is an inquiry about the group’s location, contacts, or CMA.
- The status of the group needs to be verified.

### On-line Group Records

The user-friendly, Web-based WSO On-line Group Records application requires a broadband Internet connection. It allows Area Group Records Coordinators to:

- View the Area group records information.
- Register new AI-Anon groups and view the status of the registration.
- Process AI-Anon group changes directly into the WSO database.
- Compare Area records with the WSO records.
- Check when a new group has been registered or a change has been processed by WSO staff.
- Run reports on demand.

The Area can have one additional Group Records person access the WSO On-line Group Records application. The applicant must be a current AWSC member; access is concurrent with the Area Group Records Coordinator’s term. The Area Group Records Coordinator oversees the WSO On-line Group Records application training, provides instructions, and updates the Area Group Records process.

The Area Delegate and DRs have read-only access to the application. The DRs can view the AI-Anon groups in their own district.



## How are group records updated in the WSO database?

- Area Group Records Coordinators update Al-Anon group records directly into the WSO Database using the WSO On-line Group Records application.
- Once a year, an Al-Anon Family Groups Annual Update Sheet is sent to each group.
- Members send updates directly to the WSO.
- Mail is returned indicating the CMA address is changed.
- Information is taken from group contribution and *Forum* subscription records.

Area Group Records Coordinators can help facilitate correct record keeping at the WSO by encouraging DRs to access the WSO On-line Group Records application to verify the group information in their district, and notify the Area Group Records Coordinator of any discrepancies.

The WSO would prefer to only update its records based on information received from the Area. Past experience has shown this to be impractical. One reason is there may not be an Area Group Records Coordinator. The Area Coordinator may resign and not be replaced for a period of time. Also there have been Area Coordinators who have been unable to keep up with recording changes, and groups then complain to the WSO.

Another reason why the WSO cannot take information from the Area only is that the WSO registers all groups as outlined in the “Digest of Al-Anon/Alateen Policies” in the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (see below) and the Area may have different criteria. For instance, some Areas only register groups that have been in existence for several months, while the WSO registers new groups immediately.

“The WSO will register any group designating itself as an Al-Anon Family Group with the understanding that it will abide by the Traditions and that meetings will be open to any Al-Anon member.” (See “Alateen Policy” section for information on registering an Alateen group.)

## Something to think about

**Concept Ten states:** *Service responsibility is balanced by carefully defined service authority and double-headed management is avoided.*

In some Areas, there is an Area database of the groups; the Information Services keep another database; and the Newsletter Editor(s) yet another. Experience shows that communication works best when there is one primary guardian of the records, usually the Area Group Records Coordinator.

The timeliness of the Area Group Records Coordinators keeping the Al-Anon group records up-to-date is essential, as meeting information is provided daily on the WSO toll-free meeting information line, by Al-Anon Information Services locally, and is also available on Area Web sites and meeting schedules. The goal is to provide anyone seeking Al-Anon meetings with current information and the cooperation between the WSO and the Area Group Records Coordinator is a vital component.

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## Tips Coordinators Share

- Conduct a workshop at the district and/or Area on the best way to update the records.
  - Communicate with the Al-Anon Information Service (AIS) if there is one. Groups may send updates to the AIS because they publish the meeting list. (Talk to each other; let the AIS know you can provide up-to-date group listings to them, and ask that they inform you of all group changes they receive.)
  - Keep one database whenever possible—if everyone sends changes to the Area Group Records Coordinator, the Coordinator can keep the Newsletter Editors, the districts, and the Al-Anon Information Services informed.
  - Some Areas list groups only if they have a WSO ID number.
  - Become a Service Sponsor to the new Area Group Records Coordinator when you rotate.
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# Al-Anon guidelines

The Shared Experience of Al-Anon and Alateen Members.

## Al-Anon Information Services (AIS)

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An Al-Anon Information Service (AIS) is a local service established by one or more groups or districts located close enough to one another for easy access and communication. Any local Al-Anon or Alateen group may participate in an information service.

An AIS exists to aid the groups it serves in the common purpose of carrying the Al-Anon message to the suffering families and friends of alcoholics.

### Things To Consider Before You Get Started:

- Research options available for phone service, postal and e-mail addresses; remember that an AIS cannot use a member's personal phone, address, or e-mail.
- Research operational costs of rent, post office box, phone service, phone listings, insurance, utilities, Internet, paid staff, and other AIS needs.
- Determine geographic boundaries and number of groups to support the proposed AIS.
- Assess volunteer support, including bilingual members if appropriate for the community.
- Determine types of services to be provided by phone, e.g. meeting information, Twelfth Step calls, etc.
- Clearly define service roles, in keeping with Concept Ten.
- Plan for training of staff and volunteers.

### What Services Does an AIS Provide to the Groups It Serves? (may include one or all of the following)

- Receives inquiries and directs them to the appropriate group. A list of group contacts, with telephone numbers and e-mail addresses, should be kept up-to-date for this purpose.
- Publishes a local meeting directory.
- Collaborates with the Area Group Records Coordinator to keep meeting information up-to-date.
- Channels local Alateen and Public Outreach inquiries to a local AIS or district committee.
- Maintains a supply of complimentary literature to give newcomers, the professional community, and the general public.
- May distribute its own newsletter of local activities and articles written by members for the groups it serves, in keeping with the Traditions. See *Guidelines for Newsletter Editors* (G-21).
- Holds periodic meetings attended by Information Service Representatives (ISRs) from the groups it serves. AIS activity reports are made and discussions held on matters relating to the AIS and the groups. Other topics may include public outreach projects and fund-raising events.
- May maintain an AIS Web site, in cooperation with the Area. See *Guideline for Al-Anon Web Sites* (G-40).

### How Does the AIS Collaborate and Communicate with Local Groups, Districts, and the Area?

- The Information Service is supported by the groups within its geographic boundaries. Contributions from Al-Anon groups and members are voluntary, and are not a condition for membership. The AIS does not seek or accept support outside the geographic area it serves.
- An AIS serves the groups in its geographic area, regardless of language or culture. Utilizing bilingual volunteers and stocking materials in languages other than English will help all newcomers to find a meeting and assure that all groups feel included in the AIS services.
- It is suggested that there be a representative from every group at Al-Anon Information Service meetings. Often the Alternate Group Representative will serve as the group's Information Service Representative (ISR).
- Often the Alternate District Representative(s) from the participating district(s) serve on the Information Service Board or Committee.
- An Al-Anon Information Service Liaison (AISL) represents the AIS at Area World Service Committee (AWSC) Meetings.
- When AIS committees are formed, they work in cooperation with the district/Area coordinator or the corresponding Area committee.
- An AIS may also serve as a Literature Distribution Center (LDC). When the two entities are functioning at the same location, the WSO will register them as an AIS/LDC, with one identification number. See the guideline *Literature Distribution Centers* (G-18), for more information.
- As stated in the "Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies" Section of the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*, under "Autonomy of Groups," "In keeping with the Traditions and Warranty Five of Concept Twelve, Area or WSO service entities have no authority to close a group or engage in other punitive actions against a group because they disapprove of the manner in which a group practices the Al-Anon program." AISs develop criteria for groups' inclusion on their meeting lists. If a group does not wish

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to comply with the criteria, it can be taken off the list, and informed of the actions needed to be re-listed. Taking a group off a meeting list does not prevent the group from participating and voting at AIS meetings and other activities.

- Participation and cooperation are the keys. The more members involved, the lighter the work. Experience shows that when the Information Service works closely with the Area and districts, it increases its formula for success!

## Process for Registration

### An AIS needs:

- *A title indicative of the nature of its operation*, e.g., “Al-Anon Information Service” (sometimes called “Intergroup” or “Service Center”).
- *A listing in the local telephone directory*. The number cannot be listed in an individual member’s name. Making “Al-Anon” the first word of the listing ensures that a newcomer or professional can find Al-Anon. Suggested listing: Al-Anon Family Groups [location] Information Service. Cross listings may include: Alateen; Alcoholism, families of; or Alcoholism, help for the family.
- *A post office box or an office address*. The Information Service will be listed in *Getting in Touch with Al-Anon/Alateen* (S-23), a publication for the membership and the public. In this way prospective members may be referred to Al-Anon without revealing the anonymity of members. *Getting in Touch* lists U.S. and Canadian AISs, international Al-Anon General Service Offices (GSOs), and AISs in countries without a GSO. AIS contact information is also posted on the WSO Public Outreach Web Site, [www.alanon.alateen.org](http://www.alanon.alateen.org).
- *An e-mail address that is unique to the AIS*. No personal e-mail addresses can be used. An AIS (or AIS/LDC) can use only one e-mail address for communication and transactions with the WSO.
- *An operation that conducts activities in addition to Twelfth Step telephone calls*. For example: work with local Al-Anon/Alateen service committees, publish meeting lists, and perform any other function as described in this guideline or the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27).

In the World Service Conference (WSC) structure (U.S., Canada, Bermuda, and Puerto Rico), the proposed AIS must complete an AIS Registration Form, obtain required Area and local signatures, and submit it to the WSO. Members in countries outside of the WSC structure should contact the WSO for AIS registration information.

## How the AIS Operates

- *Volunteers* - Phones can be answered by volunteers whenever possible. Finding volunteers may be the hardest part of running the Information Service. It is helpful to have committed and trained volunteers already in place before registering your Information Service, including bilingual volunteers who can respond to non-English speaking callers.
- *Professional Answering Service or Telephone Answering Machine (Voice Mail)* - Employing an answering service or using a telephone answering machine/voice mail may solve the problem of receiving calls when volunteers and/or staff are not available. When using a recording, leave a pleasant Al-Anon-related message. Include meeting information for that day, if time permits. Bilingual messages may be needed in places where languages other than English are prevalent. Call forwarding allows volunteers to respond from home, and volunteers answer the calls in an Al-Anon manner when performing this service.
- *Paid Staff* - As an AIS grows, additional help may be needed. According to Tradition Eight, paid help may be hired for the bookkeeping, correspondence, office duties, etc. A member’s personal knowledge of Al-Anon is of value in an office, but he or she is paid for office work only. Who is hired, who will do the hiring, the hours, salary and benefits are usually decided by the Information Service Board. The Twelve Concepts of Service define how paid employees fit into our service structure.

An employee of an AIS does not serve as a volunteer in a policy-making position, such as Group Representative (GR), District Representative (DR), Area Assembly officer or Coordinator, Delegate, or WSO Trustee (See “Employees in Al-Anon Service” in the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*).

## Additional Business Information

*Nonprofit, Tax-Free Status* - The U.S. non-profit and Canadian registered charity status which apply to Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. and Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters (Canada) Inc. do not cover individual segments of the fellowship. The WSO has no control over AISs’ financial affairs, nor does it have any say on how they conduct their business. Each group, district, Area, and Information Service is autonomous in its operations within the Traditions. An AIS seeking state, provincial, and/or federal tax-free status would require the help of legal counsel.

*Incorporation* - When an AIS maintains an office, it might be wise to incorporate. Individual Information Services write their own charters or bylaws in keeping with their state/provincial laws. Legal assistance may be required. The World Service Office is willing to review such documents before they are filed.

NOTE: The *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27) contains additional information about AISs, LDCs, and Information Service Representatives (ISRs). The complete *Service Manual*, public outreach ideas, and Al-Anon guidelines are available on the Members’ Web site, [www.al-anon.alateen.org/members](http://www.al-anon.alateen.org/members).

# Al-Anon guidelines

The Shared Experience of Al-Anon and Alateen Members.

## Al-Anon/Alateen Public Outreach Service G-10

### Outreach to the Public/Media

Public Outreach **informs** the general public through the media, professionals, facilities, and organizations about who we are, what we do, and how to get in touch with us. Our goal is to **attract** to our program those whose lives are or have been affected by someone else's drinking, so that those who need our program can find the help and hope we offer. We also strive for name recognition and credibility as a community resource. Public Outreach includes Outreach to the Public/Media, Outreach to Professionals, and Outreach to Institutions. Your Area/district may combine these service areas under Public Outreach, or may maintain separate coordinators and/or committees. All those in Public Outreach are encouraged to work together to avoid duplicating efforts.

#### Who Can Do Public Outreach?

A willing and active Al-Anon/Alateen member with an understanding of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of Service. It is a way for us, as individuals or as a group, to grow and develop in our recovery.

#### What Is Outreach to the Public/Media?

Outreach through the media (newspapers, TV, radio, magazines, and the Internet) and other means of reaching the public directly (poster placement, health and community fairs, etc.) are the areas of Public Outreach known as Outreach to the Public/Media (public information or PI) service. The "Public" is the general public who may be families and friends of alcoholics, or know someone who is. Professionals are also members of the public who may see our posters, media efforts, etc.

#### What Is the Purpose of Outreach to the Public/Media?

- To get information directly to the public about Al-Anon/Alateen as a resource.
- To build awareness in the community of what Al-Anon/Alateen is.
- To inform the media of how Al-Anon/Alateen can help families and friends of alcoholics.
- To obtain media coverage of Al-Anon/Alateen through our public service announcements (PSAs), press releases, community calendar listings, and personal interviews.
- To make sure that the public can find Al-Anon easily—through phone listings, community calendar listings, and other local public directories.

#### Suggested Activities:

- If your district or Area doesn't already have a Public Outreach Committee, consider starting one! Use suggestions in *The Best of Public Outreach* on the Members' Web site ([www.al-anon.alateen.org/members](http://www.al-anon.alateen.org/members)) as a foundation. Concentrate efforts on one or two projects at a time!
- Provide speakers and literature for community events.
- Participate/exhibit at health fairs. Use the Al-Anon/Alateen DVD *Al-Anon and Alateen's Role in Family Recovery* (AV-31dvd).
- Plan a poster campaign. Posters can be placed in public places, such as community centers, libraries, laundromats, store windows, supermarkets, schools, etc. (with permission of the facility).
- Distribute supplies of *Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism* and other literature with meeting lists to public places (with permission of the facility).
- Make sure a local Al-Anon number is listed in every local phone book and resource directory in the community, both printed and on-line.
- Establish a local district/AIS Web site.
- Stamp literature with a local contact phone number and/or meeting time and place.
- Invite community leaders and media contacts to open meetings.
- Include a Web address or telephone number in all stories and announcements.
- Use television and radio public service announcements (PSAs), available from the WSO with suggestions for using the media to carry the message. Work with your

District Representative, local Al-Anon Information Service, and Area Public Outreach/Public Information Coordinator on this.

- Send *Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism* to all local media. Include your local contact information and offer interviews with local members (maintaining anonymity) or professionals who recommend Al-Anon and Alateen.
- Contact all local talk shows on radio and television and offer to be interviewed, or to arrange for interviews with alcoholism professionals who recommend Al-Anon and Alateen.

## How Do I Get Started?

Ask your Group Representative if your district has a Public Outreach or Public Information (PI) Coordinator/Chairperson, or a Public Outreach Committee. If there aren't any, contact your Area Public Outreach/PI Coordinator. Your District Representative, Delegate, Area Chairperson, or the WSO can tell you who the Area Coordinator(s) are. We encourage districts and Areas to form Public Outreach Committees and to work with their Area Coordinators.

## Why Do We Need To Work with an Area Public Outreach Coordinator?

The Area Coordinator can help to get maximum results from the work of Al-Anon and Alateen members involved in outreach projects in the Area. By sharing projects implemented nationally by the WSO, the Area Coordinator can provide "how to" information that will help local members avoid duplication of effort. Contact with the Area Coordinator also gives them the opportunity to share your efforts with other members in your Area.

## Form an Outreach to the Public/Media Committee

As with any area of Al-Anon/Alateen service, the more the merrier. Get a group of members together to come up with a plan for reaching out to the general public and the media. Use *The Best of Public Outreach* available on the Members' Web Site for ideas.

## Resources and Service Tools for You To Use:

- Your Area Public Outreach or Public Information Coordinator(s)
- *Area Public Outreach Coordinator* guideline (G-38)
- *The Best of Public Outreach* on the Members' Web Site, [www.al-anon.alateen.org/members](http://www.al-anon.alateen.org/members)
- *Members Interested in Speaking* (G-1)
- *Attracting and Cooperating* (S-40)
- *Al-Anon and Alateen's Role in Family Recovery* DVD (AV-31dvd)
- Al-Anon/Alateen TV and radio PSAs (in broadcast formats, AV-30/A-30)
- Media Center on the Public Outreach Web site, [www.al-anon.alateen.org](http://www.al-anon.alateen.org)
- Local meeting schedules
- Create cards with local and WSO Web site addresses
- S-15 Catalog for a full list of carrying the message materials
- Read the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27), "Digest of Al-Anon/Alateen Policies" section on "Public Outreach"

**REMEMBER:** Reaching out to the media in your community need not be complicated or time consuming. Work with other members, your district or Area Public Outreach Coordinators, or a local PO committee. We need never do anything alone in Al-Anon!

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# Al-Anon guidelines

The Shared Experience of Al-Anon and Alateen Members.

## A Meeting on Wheels

G-22

A meeting on wheels is an opportunity for Al-Anon and Alateen members to demonstrate what a meeting is like to potential members, students, professionals, and others interested in learning about the help and hope available in our fellowship. It is usually conducted by three to five members, depending on the time available. One is selected to introduce our program. This member or another can serve as the Chairperson to lead the meeting. The program should allow each of the members to participate equally on a given topic (see meeting format below). This usually takes about 15-20 minutes. This is followed by a question-and-answer period that can be conducted by the chairperson or another member. The outreach DVD, *Al-Anon and Alateen's Role in Family Recovery* (AV-31 DVD), may be shown as part of the program.

### Tips

- Remember—you don't have to be perfect.
- Keep in mind that the purpose is to introduce our program and to demonstrate what our meetings are like to the audience.
- Read guideline for *Members Interested in Speaking* (G-1).
- Share briefly and speak plainly.
- Keep the focus on your own recovery.
- Display the *Table Anonymity Card* (S-9), literature, and Al-Anon/Alateen books, when possible.
- Provide appropriate Al-Anon/Alateen literature, for example:
  - Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism* magazine
  - Information for the Newcomer* (S-4)
  - Outreach Bookmark* (M-76)
  - Understanding Ourselves and Alcoholism* (P-48)
- Hand out meeting lists with local/Area and WSO contact information (e.g., phone numbers, e-mail and Web site addresses).
- Distribute material for professionals in attendance, i.e., *Getting in Touch with Al-Anon/Alateen* (S-23), and the *Fact Sheet for Professionals* (S-37ES/S-37EF).

### Do Not:

- Argue or challenge doctors, social workers, counselors, or any other person.
- Use Al-Anon sayings, e.g. "Take what you liked and leave the rest," when speaking.
- Offer opinions on alcoholism, its treatment, counseling, therapy, or the A.A. program.
- Give advice to individuals, students, or professionals.
- Speak for Al-Anon as a whole.

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**Keep the focus  
on your own  
recovery.**

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### Suggested Meeting Format

Leader: My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am the leader of tonight's (today's) meeting. *Have other members introduce themselves by first name only in the spirit of anonymity, as they would at a meeting. Mention that Al-Anon is a spiritual rather than religious program, and that we are not professionals. Refer to the Al-Anon Is/Is Not bookmark (M-44) or the Fact Sheet for Professionals pamphlet (S-37ES/S-37EF) for a summary of important points about Al-Anon/Alateen.*

### Suggested Al-Anon/Alateen Welcome

We welcome you to the \_\_\_\_\_ Al-Anon/Alateen Family Group and hope you will find in this fellowship the help and friendship we have been privileged to enjoy.

We who live or have lived with the problem of alcoholism understand as perhaps few others can. We, too, were lonely and frustrated, but in Al-Anon/Alateen we discover that no situation is really hopeless and that it is possible for us to find contentment, and even happiness, whether the alcoholic is still drinking or not.

We urge you to try our program. It has helped many of us find solutions that lead to serenity. So much depends on our own attitudes, and as we learn to place our problem in its true perspective, we find it loses its power to dominate our thoughts and our lives.

The family situation is bound to improve as we apply the Al-Anon/Alateen ideas. Without such spiritual help, living with an alcoholic is too much for most of us. Our thinking becomes distorted by trying to force solutions, and we become irritable and unreasonable without knowing it.

The Al-Anon/Alateen program is based on the Twelve Steps (adapted from Alcoholics Anonymous), which we try, little by little, one day at a time, to apply to our lives, along with our slogans and the Serenity Prayer. The loving interchange of help among members and daily reading of Al-Anon/Alateen literature thus make us ready to receive the priceless gift of serenity. Anonymity is an important principle of the Al-Anon/Alateen program. Everything that is said here, in the group meeting and member-to-member, must be held in confidence. Only in this way can we feel



free to say what is in our minds and hearts, for this is how we help one another in Al-Anon/Alateen.

## Suggested Preamble to the Twelve Steps

The Al-Anon Family Groups are a fellowship of relatives and friends of alcoholics who share their experience, strength, and hope in order to solve their common problems. We believe alcoholism is a family illness and that changed attitudes can aid recovery. Al-Anon is not allied with any sect, denomination, political entity, organization, or institution; does not engage in any controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any cause. There are no dues for membership. Al-Anon is self-supporting through its own voluntary contributions. Al-Anon has but one purpose: to help families of alcoholics. We do this by practicing the Twelve Steps, by welcoming and giving comfort to families of alcoholics, and by giving understanding and encouragement to the alcoholic.

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**Al-Anon has but**  
**one purpose:**  
**to help families of alcoholics.**

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## The Twelve Steps

Because of their proven power and worth, AA's Twelve Steps have been adopted almost word for word by Al-Anon. They represent a way of life appealing to all people of goodwill, of any religious faith or of none. Note the power of the very words!

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

## The Twelve Traditions

*The leader can explain the purpose of the Traditions and/or read the introduction, the Tradition corresponding to the month (i.e., February - Tradition Two) or the entire Twelve Traditions. The Traditions that follow bind us together in unity. They guide the groups in their relations with other groups, with AA and the outside world. They recommend group attitudes toward leadership, membership, money, property, public relations, and anonymity. The Traditions evolved from the experience of AA groups in trying to solve their problems of living and working together. Al-Anon adopted these group guidelines and over the years has found them sound and wise. Although they are only suggestions, Al-Anon's unity and perhaps even its survival are dependent on adherence to these principles.*

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal progress for the greatest number depends upon unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one 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 relatives of alcoholics, when gathered together for mutual aid, may call themselves an Al-Anon Family Group, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation. The only requirement for membership is that there be a problem of alcoholism in a relative or friend.
4. Each group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting another group or Al-Anon or AA as a whole.
5. Each Al-Anon Family Group has but one purpose: to help families of alcoholics. We do this by practicing the Twelve Steps of AA *ourselves*, by encouraging and understanding our alcoholic relatives, and by welcoming and giving comfort to families of alcoholics.
6. Our Family Groups ought never endorse, finance or lend our name to any outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary spiritual aim. Although a separate entity, we should always co-operate with Alcoholics Anonymous.
7. Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Al-Anon Twelfth Step work should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. Our groups, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. The Al-Anon Family Groups have no opinion on outside issues; hence our 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, films, and TV. We need guard with special care the anonymity of all AA members.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles above personalities.

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## Program

*Suggested topics for discussion include: the First Step, slogans, accepting alcoholism as a family disease, etc. Members share as if at a regular meeting.*

### Suggested Al-Anon/Alateen Closing

In closing, I would like to say that the opinions expressed here were strictly those of the person who gave them. Take what you liked and leave the rest.

The things you heard were spoken in confidence and should be treated as confidential. Keep them within the walls of this room and the confines of your mind.

A few special words to those of you who haven't been with us long: Whatever your problems, there are those among us who have had them, too. If you try to keep an open mind, you will find help. You will come to realize that there is no situation too difficult to be bettered and no unhappiness too great to be lessened.

We aren't perfect. The welcome we give you may not show the warmth we have in our hearts for you. After a while, you'll discover that though you may not like all of us, you'll love us in a very special way—the same way we already love you.

Talk to each other, reason things out with someone else, but let there be no gossip or criticism of one another. Instead, let the understanding, love, and peace of the program grow in you one day at a time.

*Note: for demonstration purposes, it may be best not to close with a prayer. Some groups use the Al-Anon Declaration as an alternative closing.*

# What's In It for You?

Members tell us that as participants a meeting on wheels is often **three meetings in one:**  
**a meeting on the way to the meeting;**  
**the meeting itself;**  
**and the meeting you'll have on the return trip.**

A meeting on wheels can be a **service "high."**  
 It's a way to **carry the message** and have **fun** and **fulfillment** at the same time.

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# AL-ANON guidelines

The Shared Experience of Al-Anon and Alateen Members.

## Area Public Outreach Coordinator

G-38

### Outreach to the Public/Media, Outreach to Professionals, and Outreach to Institutions

#### WHAT IS PUBLIC OUTREACH?

From *Lois Remembers...*

“If...Al-Anon groups do not let the public know of our presence, perhaps by announcing the time and place of meetings in local newspapers or by some other means, we block ourselves off from those in need.” (page 194)

Public Outreach **informs** the general public through the media, professionals, facilities, and organizations about who we are, what we do, and how to get in touch with us. Our goal is to **attract** to our program those whose lives are or have been affected by someone else’s drinking, so that those who need our program can find the help and hope we offer. We also strive for name recognition and credibility as a community resource.

The ways in which the potential newcomer can be reached can be broken down into three main categories.



#### Outreach to the Public/Media (Public Information or PI)

The *potential* to reach the **largest** number of people comes in the form of the written word (newspapers, magazine articles, etc.), television, radio, and the Internet. We distribute public service announcements annually to TV and radio, list our meetings in newspapers, and use the Internet and our World Wide Web sites to carry the Al-Anon/Alateen message. We may also implement poster campaigns, hold public meetings, and participate in health fairs.

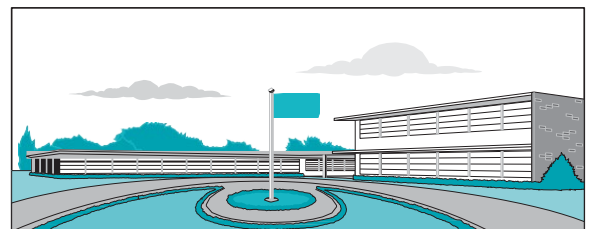


#### Outreach to Professionals (Cooperating with the Professional Community or CPC)

Our Membership Survey indicates that over half of Al-Anon and 22 percent of Alateen members attended their first meeting because of a professional referral. Counselors/therapists, clergy, mental health professionals, employee assistance programs, medical and judicial professionals, and others who work with the public are all in the position to identify and refer potential newcomers to Al-Anon and Alateen. Remember, outreach via the media also reaches professionals and lends credibility to our program.

#### Outreach to Institutions

We strive to bring the Al-Anon/Alateen program to the families and friends of alcoholics in facilities such as addiction treatment/rehabilitation centers, mental health facilities and agencies, crisis/abuse centers, and correctional facilities. We have the opportunity to carry our message of hope directly to potential newcomers by establishing Al-Anon/Alateen meetings at these facilities.



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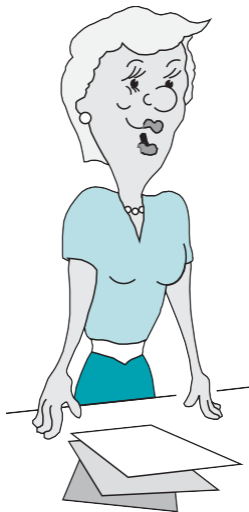
## WHO CAN BE AN AREA PUBLIC OUTREACH COORDINATOR?

A willing, active member with an understanding of the Al-Anon program and the Twelve Traditions can serve.

Each area sets its own specific criteria and method for selection.

## YOUR ROLE AS AN AREA PUBLIC OUTREACH COORDINATOR

- to serve as a communication link between the WSO and your area
- to communicate and work cooperatively in a team effort with other area coordinators, your Area Chairperson, and your Delegate
- to motivate districts and Al-Anon information services (AISs) to form outreach committees
- to work with local and area action committees
- to make presentations or hold workshops at area assemblies or district meetings



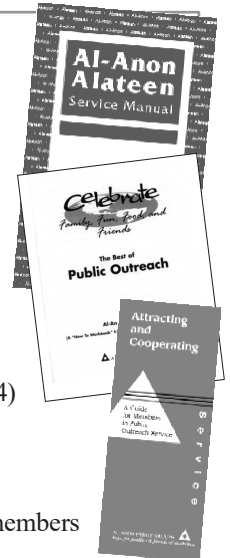
- to distribute service projects and information from the WSO to area assemblies, districts, and AISs
- to encourage your area, districts, AISs, and GRs to carry projects and information to the groups
- to continually educate the fellowship about the need to attract those who are still suffering to our program
- to request reports of public outreach activities from the districts and AISs to share with the assembly and the WSO

## AREA STRUCTURE

Areas, like individual groups, are autonomous and thereby can set up their own service structures. Some areas select three separate Public Outreach Coordinators (Public Information or PI, Cooperating With the Professional Community or CPC, and Institutions). Some areas have chosen to have one Public Outreach Coordinator and/or a Public Outreach Committee. Some elect a Coordinator and a Co-Coordinator. Still others have a Public Information Coordinator and a combined CPC and Institutions position. However your area structure is organized, we encourage all areas to have Public Outreach or “action” committees. Many areas have incorporated such committees into their structure and have found a new level of enthusiasm and dedication to Public Outreach service.

### RESOURCE TOOLS TO USE:

- ☛ Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual (P-24/27)
- ☛ The Best Of Public Outreach (P-90)
- ☛ Attracting and Cooperating (S-40)
- ☛ Public Outreach Service Guidelines:
  - Outreach to the Public/Media (G-10)
  - Outreach to Professionals (G-29)
  - Outreach to Institutions (G-9)
  - Service in Correctional Facilities (G-14)
- ☛ Coordinator mailings from the WSO
- ☛ WSO Web site: [www.al-anon.alateen.org](http://www.al-anon.alateen.org)
- ☛ WSO Members’ site: [www.al-anon.org/members](http://www.al-anon.org/members)



## COORDINATOR MAILINGS

The WSO Public Outreach Department sends regular Area Coordinator mailings three times per year, and timely updates as needed. The regular mailings contain suggested projects for Outreach to Professionals, Outreach to the Public/Media, and Outreach to Institutions. All Public Outreach, PI, CPC, and Institutions Coordinators receive all regular mailings. This keeps each Coordinator informed of all Public Outreach projects, information, and suggested activities.



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# Al-Anon Guidelines

The Shared Experience of Al-Anon and Alateen Members.

## Members Interested in Speaking

G-1

When you are asked as a member of Al-Anon or Alateen, to share your recovery story at a meeting, convention, or other event for the first time, you may experience a momentary sensation of panic. This is a perfectly normal reaction, but after it passes, and you have heard yourself saying, “yes,” you will find that a wonderfully enlightening adventure is in store for you. With a little encouragement, everyone can tell their story. The only ingredients needed are the willingness to try and a reliance on a Higher Power. Sharing your story is an opportunity to discover a new side of yourself, one you may not have realized existed. Members report that speaking before a group adds another dimension of growth to their Al-Anon experience.

### When Asked to Speak, Find Out:

- If you are expected to tell your personal recovery story or to discuss a particular topic of the Al-Anon program.
- If your audience is only Al-Anon members, or if it will include others who are not members of Al-Anon Family Groups (such as professionals or students). This will help you decide in advance how best to direct your talk.
- If there is a suggested time limit.
- If you will be expected to participate in a question and answer or open discussion session after your talk is concluded.
- If you are expected to explain some of Al-Anon/Alateen’s history.

### Plan What to Say

- Bear in mind that the purpose of your talk is to carry the Al-Anon/Alateen message of recovery by sharing your experience, strength, and hope.
- Give a brief description of yourself before you came to Al-Anon/Alateen, concentrating on your behavior and not that of the alcoholic or others.
- Describe how you have changed your life by using the tools of the program.
- Share on a particular Step, slogan, or Al-Anon/Alateen book or pamphlet that was especially helpful.
- Tell what Al-Anon/Alateen means to you.
- Share how you are applying the Al-Anon/Alateen program to your life and attitudes.
- Focus on your recovery from living with the effects of someone else’s drinking in your life today or in the past.
- Avoid using professional or other outside terminology when speaking as an Al-Anon/Alateen member.
- Express your views on the topic as it relates to your own experience, if asked to speak about a particular subject such as a Step, a slogan, or a topic from Al-Anon or Alateen Conference Approved Literature.

- Use resources [such as the guideline *Suggested Programs for Meetings* (G-13)] if you are asked to choose a subject.
- Stress the need for, and role of, Alateen Group Sponsors, particularly when an Alateen is asked to speak at an Al-Anon group.

### Audio Recordings

During open Al-Anon functions, the speakers are often recorded. Therefore, it is up to members who consent to having their talk recorded, to protect their anonymity by using first name only or a pseudonym, as they see fit, and to maintain the anonymity of other Al-Anon and A.A. members in their talk. These recordings become the property of the recording company and may be distributed via multimedia outlets, including the internet, and sold on the recording company’s website, unless the speaker specifically prohibits this when signing the release.

### Tips on Talking in General

- Some members find that preparing a brief outline helps.
- Others use an index card with an opening sentence, some key phrases they can call upon in case they get lost somewhere in the middle, and a closing statement for a graceful conclusion.
- Try using the technique of looking at a few individuals in different parts of the room, if facing an audience is a problem.
- Speak so you can be heard in the back of the room.

### Speaking Before a Non-Al-Anon Audience

- Make it clear that you are expressing your *own* views and not necessarily those of Al-Anon and Alateen as a whole.
- Keep in mind the public image of Al-Anon/Alateen is gained in part from your appearance.
- Try to give a good account of what Al-Anon and Alateen are, what they do, and the services they offer to the community.

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- Remember to mention Alateen.
- Preserve anonymity by protecting the identity of all Al-Anon, Alateen, and A.A. members.
- Tell the inviting organization and the press that only first names should be used in public and from the platform.
- Emphasize the importance of attending Al-Anon and Alateen meetings regularly.

## Keep in Mind

- You are interesting—so be yourself and speak from the heart; don't be afraid to let others know you.
- You have an important message. Al-Anon Family Groups has brought you some peace of mind; let everyone know it.
- You will be successful if your talk helps just one person. Remember, wherever you go, most people are friendly and receptive.
- You're there to carry the message that Al-Anon Family Groups offer a new way of life to those suffering from the effects of someone's drinking.

## For Members with Other Affiliations

There are no separate instructions for Al-Anon and Alateen members who belong to other anonymous groups (e.g., Alcoholics Anonymous, Overeaters Anonymous, etc.) or who are professionals in the alcoholism field.

When you speak as an Al-Anon/Alateen member, whether before a fellowship or professional audience, keep the focus of your talk on:

- Al-Anon/Alateen
- Yourself
- Your interpretation of the Al-Anon/Alateen Twelve Steps

It is confusing both to potential Al-Anon or Alateen members and professionals to hear our message diluted by referring to other programs.

## Share Joyfully

- Describe the effect Al-Anon or Alateen has had on your life. Concentrate on your growth and not that of the alcoholic or others.
- Take some literature along for reference and perhaps some extra pieces to hand out.
- Take the time to talk to potential newcomers on a one-to-one basis. Be sure to have names and phone numbers for referrals.

For further ideas and suggestions on speaking, see our Al-Anon/Alateen Conference Approved Literature.

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# Al-Anon Guidelines

The Shared Experience of Al-Anon and Alateen Members.

## Al-Anon Service Arm Websites

G-40

The internet can be a way for Al-Anon Family Groups' service arms to reach potential newcomers, professionals, and the general public. Given the potential worldwide reach, it is imperative to consider the impact on Al-Anon as a whole, by adhering to Al-Anon principles when creating content for your website.

The World Service Office (WSO) manages [al-anon.org](https://al-anon.org), which is designed with a broad approach for national and international appeal to members, newcomers, professionals, and the general public. Al-Anon service arms—Districts, Areas, and Al-Anon Information Services (AIS)—may create websites to meet the specific needs of local members and potential newcomers.

### Planning A Website

Experience has shown the best results are achieved when a committee or work group works together in planning, creating, and managing a website. The website work group can be an existing board of the service arm, another service committee, or it can be a new work group specifically formed for this project. Having team members who are knowledgeable in current web technology is helpful. It may be necessary to establish a line of communication with the Area Web Coordinator and other service arm websites to determine the best way for these websites to complement one another.

### Your Website Audience

Given the worldwide nature of the internet and the various types of people who could find and visit your website, it is important to ensure content is relevant and meets the need of your audiences, which may include:

- Potential newcomers looking to learn more about Al-Anon and how to find a meeting.
- Members or groups who may be looking for District, AISs or Area information, literature, resources, or local events.
- Professionals who may be seeking information for their client or patient.
- Members of the local media who may be interested in Al-Anon information.
- Service arms looking for other Area or group resources.

### Website Content Strategy

The information on your website should be pertinent to your service arm and should be understandable by anyone who reads it—regardless of their understanding of Al-Anon principles. With the potential newcomer being the primary audience for this content, it is suggested to limit the use of Al-Anon terminology so that content conveys the proper meaning to the reader. Develop a regular process for updating website content. Ensure that meeting information is as accurate as possible. Content may include any of the following:

- A warm localized welcome.
- Service arm websites are encouraged to link to the meeting search on [al-anon.org](https://al-anon.org/al-anon-meetings/) (<https://al-anon.org/al-anon-meetings/>) to ensure the most current information. Groups information on [al-anon.org](https://al-anon.org) is automatically updated in real-time as group record changes are entered into the WSO database.
- Local meeting information, if linking to [al-anon.org](https://al-anon.org) does not address unique local details, such as temporary closures. (Consider organizing your meeting list by cities rather than Districts.)
- Website navigation is important so users can quickly and easily find the content most likely to fit their needs.
- Newcomer-friendly terms (avoid using acronyms or Al-Anon terminology i.e., Districts, intergroup, and closed meeting). If there are no alternatives to the Al-Anon terminology, consider adding details to define the meaning of the word(s) to ensure it can be easily understood by website visitors.
- Calendar of local Al-Anon events and A.A. events with Al-Anon participation, including links to the event website.
- Al-Anon service arm newsletters.
- Service arm contact information.
- Articles from *The Forum* with the “Feel free to reprint...” disclaimer may be posted on service arm websites with the appropriate attribution.
- Images from various sources, being careful to adhere to image licensing rights. (Some image providers offer royalty-free images which could be used.) Images on [al-anon.org](https://al-anon.org) are single-use licensed images and cannot be duplicated or used by service arm websites.
- Al-Anon's Legacies are available in their entirety, as approved by the World Service Conference, on [al-anon.org](https://al-anon.org); and Service arm websites are encouraged to link directly to them because the Legacies are copy-

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## Website Considerations

righted. Service arms wishing to post the Legacies on their own website are required to apply for a license by visiting [al-anon.org/legacies-license](http://al-anon.org/legacies-license).

- Take special care in protecting Alateen member information.
- Additional materials, a list of those service tools which may be posted online without written permission is available at [al-anon.org/website-content](http://al-anon.org/website-content).

Some content is not suitable for posting on service arm websites:

- It is important for all Al-Anon members to protect our copyrights, and therefore it is not appropriate to post Conference Approved Literature (CAL) on any public internet site or social platform.
- Avoid posting content from, or linking to, any outside enterprise which would violate Tradition Six.
- Avoid posting content which could be considered an official opinion or could be controversial to ensure Al-Anon's name is not drawn into controversy as suggested by Tradition Ten.
- Avoid posting content which would violate Tradition Twelve by breaking a member's anonymity.

### Choosing A Web Address

Your website address should be easy to remember and accurately describes the service arm it represents. Some tips:

- Avoid using District or Area numbers or Al-Anon acronyms such as AFG.
- It is suggested service arm websites use a geographic identifier and the full name "Al-Anon" (with the hyphen) to provide an accurate description of the website and location it serves. Some examples are:
  - [www.stateal-anon.org](http://www.stateal-anon.org) or [www.provinceal-anon.ca](http://www.provinceal-anon.ca)
  - [www.cityal-anon.org](http://www.cityal-anon.org) or [www.location-al-anoncenter.org](http://www.location-al-anoncenter.org)

### Website Financial Matters

In keeping with the Seventh Tradition, Al-Anon service arms that create websites pay the expenses associated with it. Some expenses could include the registration of the website address, website hosting, and security certificates. Some service providers offer free services in exchange for a mention, by way of a logo or "powered by..." statement on your website. This would violate Tradition Six; therefore, it may be necessary to purchase your web services rather than risk the appearance of affiliation. Al-Anon service arms, which are registered 501(c)3 non-profit corporations, can avail themselves of discounts provided to all non-profits if no affiliation is required.

As the website is created, members of the Website work group should consider reviewing and approving content with the Al-Anon Traditions and spiritual principles in mind. Website work group members should consider rotation of service when choosing a developer, taking care to ensure the website is accessible to future trusted servants.

When developing content for the website keep in mind the following considerations:

- Double check spelling and ensure the proper use of grammar.
- Consider writing your website content at the eighth grade level to improve accessibility.
- Ensure our names, Al-Anon and Alateen, are spelled properly with appropriate punctuation.
- Implement a website site map on your site. They have two primary purposes:
  - A site map page provides an easy way for visitors to navigate your website.
  - A hidden site map, which contains a complete list of all the pages on your site, is used by search engines for Search Engine Optimization (SEO).
- Use web safe fonts so that they are easy to read, such as:
  - Arial
  - Verdana
  - Helvetica
  - Times New Roman
- Create a "Contact Us" page or form so that site visitors can get in touch if they have any questions or concerns.
- Web Accessibility
  - According to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) websites must be accessible to people with disabilities. Some components of compliance include:
    - ⌘ Alternative Text for Images—Images should include equivalent alternative text (alt text) in the markup/code.
    - ⌘ Transcripts for Audio—Providing a text transcript makes the audio information accessible to people who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- When in doubt whether something should be posted or not; check with your Area Delegate, web coordinator, or website work group prior to posting.

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## Safety, Security, And Anonymity

The Eleventh Tradition states that members should “always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, and TV.” The Internet is considered a form of media and members should not be identified by full name or picture. Review all documents thoroughly before posting. Ensure you have permission from a member before posting a contact phone number, first name, or personal sharings. For safety reasons, never post identifying Alateen information.

- Care is needed to protect member’s anonymity; this can be done by ensuring documents posted to the web server do not contain a member’s full name, email address, phone number, address, or other personally identifiable information (PII).
  - Websites can and do have their servers hacked and should not be considered a completely safe place to store sensitive documents.
  - Password protected pages provide some additional protection; however, care should still be taken to avoid posting any PII on these pages.
- Backups prevent website content loss if anything unfortunate occurs. It is suggested to have a periodic backup plan for your website content which includes how to restore the data from a backup when needed.
- Periodic maintenance and updates are integral to ensuring availability of your website. Technology is continually changing, and your website should be updated accordingly to avoid risks associated with outdated functions.

## Linking to Other Sites

- Linking to sites other than Al-Anon is discouraged, as we always endeavor to avoid the appearance of affiliation.
- To build a strong digital network, it is recommended service arm websites within an Area link to each other as well as linking to [al-anon.org](http://al-anon.org).
- [al-anon.org](http://al-anon.org) provides links to Area and AIS websites so visitors can find local information.

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# Al-Anon guidelines

The Shared Experience of Al-Anon and Alateen Members.

## Group Representatives

G-11

The Group Representative (GR) is a vital link in the continuing function, growth, and unity of worldwide Al-Anon. GRs should be members with experience, stability, and an understanding of the Traditions and how they work as applied in the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27).

### Requirements

Any Al-Anon or Alateen member with a willingness to represent the group at the district meeting and Area Assembly in order to carry the message of Al-Anon's/Alateen's group conscience, and who is not also a member of A.A., is eligible to serve as GR. A GR should have a basic knowledge of Al-Anon and Alateen Traditions and Concepts of Service and how they are applied in our groups.

### Term of office

GRs are elected by the group, generally for a three-year term. (See the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* [P-24/27] for information about electing Group Representatives.)

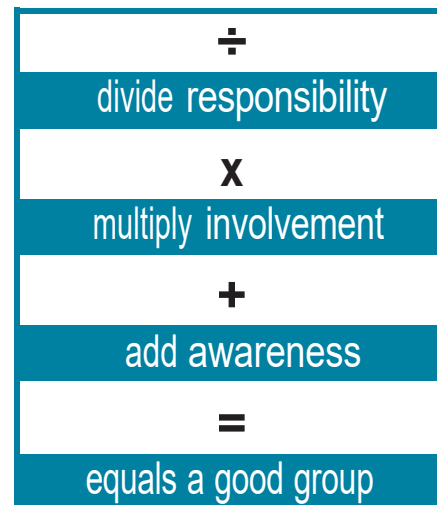
### Duties

- Attends district meetings and Area Assemblies and reports back to the group; votes on behalf of the group.
- Can bring the group's viewpoint on any situation or problem to the attention of the District Representative (DR).
- Keeps members informed about information from the district, Assembly, Area Delegate, World Service Conference (WSC), and the World Service Office (WSO).
- Works with the group Current Mailing Address (CMA) to share the monthly *Group e-News* (electronic newsletter for groups) with group members.
- Encourages members to subscribe to and submit articles for *The Forum*, Al-Anon's monthly magazine.
- Suggests participation in Public Outreach and Alateen service projects.
- Informs members of the need for Alateen Group Sponsors. Becomes familiar with the Area process for certification of Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS).
- Keeps the Alternate GR informed to ensure the group is represented if unable to attend district and Area Assembly meetings.
- Assists the Alternate GR in serving as the Al-Anon Information Service Representative (ISR).
- Explains the need for self-support in the group, district, Area, Al-Anon Information Service (AIS), and World Service Office.
- Encourages group contributions to our service arms in keeping with Tradition Seven.
- Consults with a Service Sponsor or other trusted servants.

### As a Group Representative

- You are the first link in the chain that leads to our World Service Conference.
- You elect a District Representative from among all the Group Representatives in your district.
- You elect a new Area Delegate to our World Service Conference at the Area Assembly from among the District Representatives and eligible officers once every three years.

### Links of Service



Member + Member = **Group**  
**Group** + **Group** = **District**  
**District** + **District** = **Assembly**  
**Assembly** + **Assembly** =  
World Service Conference

## Need-to-know information

You will need to know the names, addresses, e-mail addresses, and phone numbers of the:

- District Representative
- District officers (Secretary, Treasurer, etc.)
- District contacts/chairs (Public Outreach, Alateen, etc.)
- Area Delegate and officers
- Area Coordinators (Alateen, Public Outreach, Archives, Literature, Group Records, *Forum*, etc.)

## Meeting dates to remember

- Group business meeting
- District meeting
- Area Assembly

## Tips on reporting back to your group

- Take notes at district and Assembly meetings.
- Contact the DR or Delegate if you need clarity about a topic.
- Request time from your group to offer a report.
- Be brief.
- Be enthusiastic.
- Focus on group needs.

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**You don't have to have  
all the answers,  
but you can help the group look at  
the Traditions, the Concepts  
of Service, and the *Al-Anon/  
Alateen Service Manual*  
for guidance.**

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## Reminders

- You are not “in charge” of your group and you are not alone. The Second Tradition tells us, “Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.”
- You don't have to have all the answers, but you can help the group look at the Traditions, the Concepts of Service, and the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* for guidance.
- Holding a business meeting is an opportunity to arrive at a group conscience, and to experience fun and fellowship as well. (See the “Groups at Work” section of the *Service Manual* for additional information about Group Business Meetings.)
- Your group may ask you to chair the business meeting (see sample agenda).
- Your DR is a local resource.

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## Helpful tools for a Group Representative

Each group receives a copy of the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*. You will find it to be a valuable tool in answering your questions and those of your group. The complete *Service Manual* and many other service tools are available on-line. You can also expect help and support from your District Representative (DR) and the Area Delegate.

Some of the materials available on the Al-Anon Members' Web site, [www.al-anon.alateen.org/members](http://www.al-anon.alateen.org/members), are:

- The complete *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*
- Al-Anon/Alateen Guidelines for many areas of service
- Group Services podcasts
- The *Best of Public Outreach* (a “how to do it” service tool)
- *World Service Conference Summaries*
- *Seventh Tradition* leaflet (S-21)

## Benefits of becoming a Group Representative

Individuals who wish to gain self-confidence, spiritual growth, and improved self-esteem are encouraged to be willing to serve. Service activity connects you with people who have experienced recovery at another level. Your fears will diminish, you will reap the benefits of giving to others, and you will learn that by placing our common welfare first, you will receive much more than you give.

In addition to meeting Al-Anon members from other cities and towns in your district, the Group Representative is eligible to stand for District Representative and other district offices when the district holds its elections.

### Sample Agenda for Group Business Meeting\*

#### Treasurer's Report

- Income and expenses since last report
- Balance

#### Literature Report

- Present inventory
- Discuss group's literature needs

#### Public Outreach Report

- Explain public outreach activities of group members since last report

#### Group Representative Report

- Report highlights of previous district and Assembly meetings
- Have multiple copies of full Assembly reports available

#### Al-Anon Information Service (AIS) Report

- Discuss highlight of previous AIS meeting

#### Old Business

- Status of previous group issues

#### New Business

- Discussion of group concerns
- Group conscience decisions/vote on issues

#### General

#### Questions/Comments/Announcements/Suggestions

#### Date for Next Meeting

*Each individual group's autonomy can and will decide business meeting format and content.*

*\*Adapted from Alberta/NWT GR Survival Kit*

## Group Representative expenses

As part of our principle of self-support, group budgets include payment of GR expenses to attend business meetings, such as district meetings and the Area Assembly. GRs are encouraged to car-pool with others, share hotel rooms, etc., to help keep expenses reasonable. The group conscience determines the methods of calculating expenses, such as transportation.

# Group Representative Expense Sheet\*

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose \_\_\_\_\_  
(District meeting, AIS meeting, or Area Assembly)

## Expenses

(Attach receipts and explanations as needed)

Item	Amount
Hotel _____	\$ _____
Transportation _____	\$ _____
Meals _____	\$ _____
Miscellaneous _____	\$ _____
Miscellaneous _____	\$ _____
Miscellaneous _____	\$ _____
<b>Total expenses</b>	\$ _____
Less cash advance	\$ _____
<b>Balance due</b>	\$ _____

Submitted By \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Adapted from Alberta/NWT GR Survival Kit*

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*Frequently  
Asked  
Questions  
about Creating and Maintaining*

**AL-ANON/ALATEEN  
WEB SITES**

1. Q. How do we start to set up a local Al-Anon Web site?

A. Decisions in Al-Anon are usually made through an informed group conscience and the decision to post a Web page is no different. Whether group, district, information service, or Area, Al-Anon experience suggests forming a committee to discuss all aspects of setting up a Web site, including all possible concerns about the Traditions.



2

Early on, it is important to agree upon a method for gathering the group conscience of the local Al-Anon community, and to inform local groups, districts, information services, and the Area about the committee's progress. When the committee has reached a consensus, its findings are shared with the whole group (district, Area, etc.) and a decision is made through an informed group conscience vote. It is then that the actual work on the Web site can begin. It is helpful to remember that there is no need to let the speed of this technology dictate the speed of our actions. Technical questions regarding this communication method will need to be answered by experts in that field.

2. Q. How do we select a domain name for our Web site?

A. There are a number of domain name registration companies on the Internet. Check with an Internet Service Provider (ISP) for ideas on how to register the domain name. The WSO has registered the [www.al-anon.alateen.org](http://www.al-anon.alateen.org), [www.al-anon.org](http://www.al-anon.org), [www.Al-anon.ca](http://www.Al-anon.ca), [www.alateen.org](http://www.alateen.org), and [www.al-anon-alateen.ca](http://www.al-anon-alateen.ca) domain names. As a non-profit organization, the WSO uses the ".org" designation.

3

To preserve Al-Anon's trademarks, individuals may not use the *Al-Anon*, *Alateen*, and *AFG* names in their Web site domain names. The Al-Anon service arms (groups, districts, Areas, AISs, GSOs) may use the *Al-Anon*, *Alateen*, and *AFG* names in their domain names without permission.

3. Q. Who is responsible for a Web site?

A. A thoughtful and informed group conscience of the Al-Anon entity creating the site is responsible for deciding the contents, policies, and procedures involved in setting up and maintaining the Web site. It has been suggested that a "Web master" (chairperson/ coordinator) be appointed or elected to serve as a trusted servant, responsible to the committee/groups they serve. As our Fourth Concept of Service suggests, it can be helpful to have a committee of people to create the content and maintain the Web site.



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4. Q. What Al-Anon information is appropriate for a Web site?


A. Again, the group conscience will determine the contents. All Al-Anon literature is protected by copyright. There are restrictions on use that apply to Al-Anon material displayed on the Web site.

To include items on a Web site that now appear on the WSO's site, it is suggested to hyperlink to the appropriate page of the WSO site.

The Al-Anon Web site has lists of materials that can be posted on Web sites without getting express written permission from the WSO. The most recent versions of this material may be posted. These lists may be found on the Members Web site at:

- [www.al-anon.alateen.org/members/outreachpost.php](http://www.al-anon.alateen.org/members/outreachpost.php)
- [www.al-anon.alateen.org/members/download.php](http://www.al-anon.alateen.org/members/download.php)
- [www.al-anon.alateen.org/members/forum.php](http://www.al-anon.alateen.org/members/forum.php)

Postings of this material need to acknowledge a credit line as follows: "Reprinted with permission of Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc., Virginia Beach, VA." Compliance with Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.'s copyrights and trademarks is required.

Groups, districts, Areas, AISs, and GSOs may use, without permission from the WSO, the Al-Anon logo  and the material listed on the WSO Web site.

5

Written permission must be obtained before using the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts of Service on Web sites. At this time, permission to use the Legacies is given one year at a time.

**Note:** Individuals may not use the three trademarked Al-Anon logos (shown in the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*), the Steps, the Traditions, or the Concepts of Service on their Web sites. Individuals may use the materials that can be posted on Web sites without express written permission, but they must use the proper credit line given above. Individuals wishing to use other Al-Anon material not listed for posting on the WSO Web site have to request written permission from the WSO before posting it.

5. Q. Who pays for the site?

A. In keeping with our Seventh Tradition, the Al-Anon service arm creating the site pays the expenses for developing and maintaining the site.

6. Q. Should we link to other sites?

A. Linking to other Al-Anon Web sites will often have the positive effect of significantly broadening the scope of your site. Information contained on these sites becomes instantly available to those visiting your site. However, since each Al-Anon service arm is

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autonomous and has its own group conscience, a site to which you have linked may start to display information which your group conscience finds objectionable; and there is no way to know when this might occur or to prevent it from happening.

Linking to sites other than Al-Anon is problematic, as it may imply endorsement, if not affiliation, regardless of the contents. In the final analysis, experience strongly suggests that when considering linking to another site, one must proceed with caution.



7. Q. What about anonymity?

A. Please observe all Al-Anon's principles and Traditions on Web sites. As "anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions," personal anonymity is maintained on Al-Anon Web sites at all times. An Al-Anon Web site is a public medium that has the potential for reaching the broadest possible audience, and therefore, requires the same safeguards

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that are used at the level of press, radio, films, and TV. A review of the Anonymity section in the Policy Digest part of the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* is also advised.



Information on our Web sites is to let people know how to get in touch with us. At the same time, in order to preserve personal anonymity, full names are not given. The WSO phone number, address, e-mail address, and Web site address may be posted as a source of additional information.

**8. Q. Will Al-Anon's World Service Office approve local Web sites?**

A. There is no central authority in Al-Anon. The WSO is available to share collected experience on any subject, including Web sites. The WSO hyperlinks to GSO and Area Web sites and includes a disclaimer when a visitor is leaving the WSO site. The WSO reviews any AIS Web sites that ask to be listed in *Getting in Touch* on the WSO Web site. These are only checked for copyright and trademark adherence.

**9. Q. What can be found on the WSO's Web site, <http://www.al-anon.alateen.org>?**

A. In keeping with our Twelve Traditions and viewing the Internet as a form of public and electronic media, the WSO's Web site is currently set up as a Public Information tool. Available in English, French, and Spanish, it provides accurate and consistent information about Al-Anon and Alateen for the general public, media, and professionals and includes:

- *Getting in Touch with Al-Anon/Alateen* (S-23)
- Professional resources
- Al-Anon's Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of Service
- *Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism* magazine
- Alateen information
- Catalog of Al-Anon Conference Approved Literature and ordering instructions
- Al-Anon's Statement of Purpose
- Media Center

**10. Q. Where can we find existing Al-Anon/Alateen Web sites?**

A. The Meeting Info (*Getting in Touch*) section of the WSO Web site,

<http://al-anon.org/local-meetings>

gives Web site addresses of Al-Anon information services in the United States, Canada, and around the world. You can also use one of the many search engines on the Web for references to Al-Anon and Alateen.



**11. Q. Is having an Al-Anon/Alateen Web site considered promotion rather than attraction?**

A. No, our 2010-2013 *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* says on page 107:

"Al-Anon is *attracting* when it tells people why we are, what we are, what we do and how; we let them know that we are available *if and when* help is needed. We state the facts, which are communicated via the press, radio, films, and TV, always stressing anonymity at the public level.

Al-Anon is *cooperating* when it works with others, rather than alone. In working with others, our scope and contacts are broadened and we reach many more of those in need."

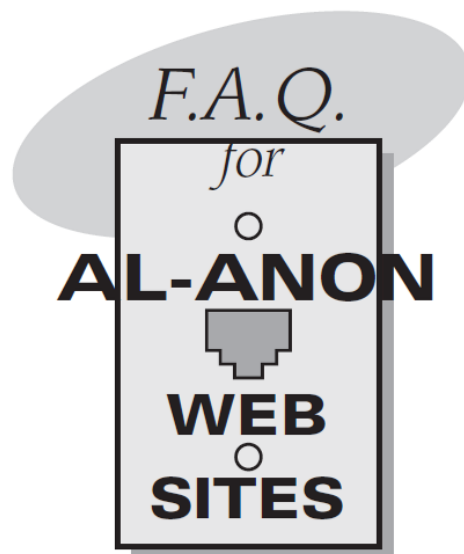
**Remember:** All decisions will reflect the needs and experiences of members in each area, large or small, urban or rural. If there are further questions, please contact the WSO.

Al-Anon's Frequently Asked Questions are adapted from Alcoholics Anonymous' Web site with permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc.



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Al-Anon/Alateen is supported by members' voluntary contributions and from the sale of our Conference Approved Literature.



**AL-ANON FAMILY GROUPS**  
*Strength and hope for friends and families of problem drinkers*

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