

# **Our Primary Purpose Area Service Committee Policy Manual**

**Version date: August 17, 2014**

## **Preamble**

This Policy Manual contains the framework of procedures and guidelines used by the Area Service Committee (ASC) to conduct business. Each policy has been approved by the home groups that belong to this ASC. Policies are based on the 12 Traditions and 12 Concepts of Narcotics Anonymous (NA), the NA Guide to Local Services, as well as experience, strength and wisdom of the members of the ASC, for the sole purpose of better serving home groups in the area and NA fellowship. Policies may be changed only by the ASC.

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## **1. Area Service Committee**

### **a. Purpose.**

The purpose of the Our Primary Purpose ASC is to serve NA groups within the Orange and North Chatham County area of North Carolina so that they can better carry the message of recovery. The NA groups in this geographic region have banded together to create a committee to provide services that these groups cannot provide by themselves.

### **b. Description.**

The Our Primary Purpose ASC consists of the group service representatives (GSRs) from home groups in the area, the ASC officers, and the ASC subcommittee chairs. The ASC officers are: Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Vice-Secretary, Treasurer, Vice-Treasurer, Regional Committee Member (RCM), and Alternate RCM. The standing subcommittees of the ASC are: Hospitals and Institutions (H & I), Public Relations, Policy, and Outreach. The ASC may create ad hoc subcommittees if needed to conduct business.

The ASC meets on a monthly basis. Subcommittee meetings take place on the same day and same place as the ASC, before the ASC meeting. The ASC officers will meet prior to the ASC meeting to review the agenda and discuss potential problems or concerns. The ASC Chair will arrange and announce a meeting schedule. The Chair may schedule an emergency meeting of the ASC, if necessary to conduct important business that cannot wait until the next ASC meeting. ASC meetings are open to any NA member. Emergency meetings of the ASC can be conducted by phone or email if necessary.

The ASC is directly responsible to the home groups. Any NA home group in the Orange-North Chatham area that follows the 12 traditions and 12 concepts of NA is welcome to join the ASC. Home groups must submit a request in writing to be admitted in which they provide information about their meeting times, places, and formats. They must have met at least four times and be self-supporting to qualify for admission. The GSR of a home group requesting admission must come to a meeting of the ASC to answer questions. Home groups will be admitted by a majority vote of the ASC.

## **2. Group Service Representatives**

Each home group elects one GSR. Home groups decide the date of GSR elections. Only one GSR per group (or alternate as appropriate) may vote at any ASC meeting. GSRs are responsible for 1) representing their groups at ASC meetings, 2) participating in ASC discussions and business, 3) lending their insight and experience to the ASC, and 4) providing their home groups with information about the business conducted at ASC meetings. Though GSRs represent the interests of their home groups, they should

also keep in mind the interests of the area and NA as a whole when participating in discussions and voting.

### **3. ASC Officers**

#### **a. General**

The term of office for all ASC officers is one year. Elections are held during the December ASC meeting, unless there is a need to fill a vacancy. Terms of office run from January 1 to December 31. Nominations may be taken for two months prior to elections. Home groups elect officers. To be nominated, a candidate for ASC officer must provide information in writing to the ASC, including their NA service record. Nominations must be made in writing and circulated to the home groups prior to vote. Candidates must attend an ASC meeting (when they have been nominated) prior to the elections and answer questions concerning their interest in holding the position and their qualifications. It is strongly suggested that nominees be present at the elections. Vice-Chair, Vice-Treasurer, Vice-Secretary, and Alternate RCM move up automatically, unless they decline the new position or there is a no-confidence vote. If there is a no-confidence vote, another individual may be nominated to fill the position and voted upon. Confidence/no-confidence votes will be held in October. For all ASC elections, the Vice Chair will provide each home group with a form identified by a code (such as letters or numbers). Groups will use the form to return their vote. The Vice Chair will tally the votes and keep a copy of the code to identify home group votes if necessary. The nominee with the most votes wins the election, unless there is a tie, in which case groups will vote again until the tie is broken.

### **3. ASC Officers**

ASC Officers are required to attend all ASC meetings and must inform the Chair if they expect that will not be able to attend an ASC meeting. The ASC may excuse an absence. A person may only hold one officer position at the same time, and may not serve as a subcommittee chair and officer at the same time. An ASC officer must be a member of a home group that belongs to the Our Primary Purpose area.

The ASC may vote to remove an officer for 1) not attending two consecutive ASC meetings or not attending more than half of ASC meetings during a particular period, e.g. absence from two meetings during a three-month period; 2) drug relapse; 3) misconduct, such as misappropriation or embezzlement of ASC funds; or 4) failure to perform duties. The RCM may be removed for failing to attend two consecutive regional meetings. Charges against an officer must be confirmed prior to voting for removal. When an officer is removed or resigns during his/her term, the ASC may appoint a person to temporarily perform his/her duties until another person can be elected to take his/her place, unless there is a Vice or Alternate officer willing and able to take his/her place, in which case the Vice or Alternate moves up automatically. A person who is elected to complete a term is only elected for the rest of that term. They may be elected to serve in the position after they complete the term.

The ASC officers do not vote, except the Chair, who may vote only to break a tie. The same individual may not serve as an ASC officer and GSR or Alternate GSR at the same time. Anyone who is elected to be an ASC officer, and is also a GSR or Alternate GSR, must resign their GSR or Alternative GSR position to avoid conflict.

#### **b. Chair**

The Chair is responsible for: 1) presiding over ASC meetings; 2) setting an agenda for ASC meetings; 3) maintaining order and decorum at ASC meetings; 4) facilitating open, respectful, and well-balanced dialogue at ASC meetings; 5) considering alternative viewpoints at ASC meetings; 6) redressing grievances; and 7) arranging and announcing a schedule of ASC meetings. The Chair must have a minimum of two years continuous abstinence from all drugs. As noted above, the Chair may only vote to break a tie.

Succession order for chairing the ASC meeting: If the Chair is not available to chair the meeting and the Vice-Chair is also unavailable, the RCM will chair the ASC meeting, followed by the Alternative RCM if the RCM is unavailable, followed by the Policy Chair if the Alternate RCM is unavailable.

#### **c. Vice-Chair**

The Vice-Chair is responsible for 1) taking over the Chair's duties in his/her absence; 2) conducting ASC elections; and 3) coordinating all subcommittee functions, including temporarily taking over the duties of a subcommittee chair if he/she is not available, has been voted out, or has resigned, until a new person is elected. The Vice-Chair must have a minimum of two years continuous abstinence from all drugs.

#### **d. Secretary**

The secretary is responsible for 1) keeping accurate minutes of each ASC business meeting; 2) sending copies of the minutes (and other relevant information, such as the Treasurer's report or announcements) to all officers, subcommittee chairs, and GSRs within 2 weeks of the ASC meeting; 3) taking attendance at ASC meetings, 4) keeping contact information for all officers, subcommittee chairs, and GSRs; 5) reviewing and distributing (if necessary) minutes of the previous ASC business meeting and making corrections; and 6) archiving ASC minutes for future use. The minutes shall include a brief summary of all business conducted at the ASC meeting, including attendance by home groups, officers, and subcommittee chairs; officer and subcommittee chair reports; and motions. The secretary shall distribute copies of written motions and resumes along with the minutes. Because GSRs are responsible for providing their home groups with information about ASC meetings, problems with distribution of minutes or copies of motions or resumes shall not prevent the ASC from conducting business on matters covered by the minutes, written motions or resumes. A home group may still make a motion to table business if it did not receive minutes, written motions or resumes pertaining to the business. The Secretary must have a minimum of one year of continuous abstinence from all drugs.

**e. Vice-Secretary**

The Vice-Secretary is responsible for 1) performing the duties of the Secretary in his/her absence; 2) assisting the Secretary. Vice-Secretary must have a minimum of one year of continuous abstinence from all drugs.

**f. Treasurer**

The Treasurer is responsible for: 1) submitting a report of contributions, expenditures, and bank statements at every regular ASC meeting; 2) paying all ASC bills; 3) making a monthly donation to the ASC meeting facility; 4) sending all funds in excess of prudent reserve to the Carolina Region; 5) providing copies of all financial reports to the Secretary for distribution; 6) balancing the checkbook and correcting any errors; and 7) advising the ASC on financial matters, such as budgets and expected contributions or expenditures. The Treasurer must have a minimum of three years of continuous abstinence from all drugs and be financially self-supporting.

**g. Vice-Treasurer**

The Vice-Treasurer is responsible for 1) performing the duties of the Treasurer in his/her absence; 2) assisting the Treasurer. Vice-Treasurer must have a minimum of three years of continuous abstinence from all drugs and be financially self-supporting.

**h. Regional Committee Member**

The RCM is responsible for: 1) attending meetings of the Carolina Region of NA; 2) providing the ASC with information about business conducted at Carolina Region meetings, which includes submitting a written report; 3) representing the ASC at Carolina Region meetings; 4) informing the ASC about other matters that affect NA as a whole, such as the Conference Agenda Report (CAR); and 5) keeping accurate records of travel expenses for Carolina Region meetings for reimbursement from the ASC with receipts (or if necessary, receiving money up front and providing receipts). The RCM must have a minimum of two years of continuous abstinence from all drugs.

**i. Alternate Regional Committer Member**

The Alternate RCM is responsible for 1) performing the duties of the RCM in his/her absence; 2) assisting the RCM. Alternate RCM must have a minimum of two years of continuous abstinence from all drugs.

**4. ASC Subcommittees****a. General**

The term of office for all ASC subcommittee chairs is one year. Elections are held during the December ASC meeting, unless there is a need to fill a vacancy. Terms of office run from January 1 to December 31. Nominations may be taken for two months prior to elections. Home groups elect subcommittee chairs. To be nominated, a candidate for ASC subcommittee chair must provide information in writing to the ASC, including their NA service record. Nominations must be made in writing and circulated to the home groups prior to vote. Candidates must attend an ASC meeting (when they

have been nominated) prior to the elections and answer questions concerning their interest in holding the position and their qualifications. It is strongly suggested that nominees be present at the elections. Subcommittee chairs must have one year of continuous abstinence from all drugs. Subcommittees may elect vice-chairs. Since vice-chairs have not been elected by home groups, they do not automatically move up when a subcommittee chair steps down or is removed. Subcommittee vice-chairs must have at least six months continuous abstinence from all drugs. Subcommittee chairs are required to attend all ASC meetings and must inform the ASC Chair if they expect that will not be able to attend an ASC meeting. The ASC may excuse an absence. A person may serve as only one subcommittee chair at the same time, and may not serve as a subcommittee chair and an officer, unless the Vice-Chair temporarily takes over a subcommittee position. A subcommittee chair or vice-chair must be a member of a home group in the Our Primary Purpose Area.

The ASC may vote to remove a subcommittee chair for 1) not attending two consecutive ASC meetings or not attending more than half of ASC meetings during a particular period, e.g. absence from two meetings during a three-month period; 2) drug relapse; 3) misconduct, such as misappropriation or embezzlement of ASC funds, or 4) failure to perform duties. Charges against a subcommittee chair must be confirmed by the ASC prior to voting for removal. When a subcommittee chair is removed or resigns during his/her term, the Vice-Chair may temporarily perform his/her duties until another person can be elected to take his/her place. A person who is elected to complete a term is only elected for the rest of that term. They may be elected to serve in the position after they complete the term.

As noted above, subcommittee meetings shall occur at the same place and day as regular ASC meetings. All subcommittee meetings are open to any member of NA. Subcommittee chairs are responsible for presiding over their respective meetings and submitting written reports to the ASC concerning activities of their committees. Subcommittee chairs do not vote at ASC meetings. All subcommittee chairs are required to attend their respective subcommittee meetings.

The H & I and PR subcommittee chairs should attend the regional subcommittee meetings on a quarterly basis. The ASC will provide funds for one vehicle for attendance at the regional subcommittee meetings (added December 16, 2012).

#### **b. Hospitals and Institutions**

The function of the H & I Subcommittee is to carry the NA message of recovery to addicts in institutions (e.g. hospitals, treatment centers, jails and prisons) who usually cannot attend regular NA meetings. The H & I Subcommittee follows the guidelines established by the NA Guide to Local Services published by NA World Services Organization (WSO). An H & I meeting is not a regular NA meeting. An H & I meeting is a presentation about NA (including questions and answers) to institutionalized individuals. 90 days continuous abstinence from drugs is required to sit on an H & I panel; six months clean time is required to speak. There is no clean time requirement

to participate in the H & I subcommittee. The H & I Subcommittee may establish its own policies consistent NA 12 traditions put forth by the WSO.

### **c. Public Relations**

The function of the PR Subcommittee is to coordinate and publicize information about NA meetings and activities in the Our Primary Purpose area. The PR Subcommittee shall publish and print a meeting directory as needed. The PR Subcommittee is also responsible for distributing meeting information to the public, such as placing meeting directories in libraries, announcing meetings in local newspapers, or publicizing meetings on the internet. The PR Chair may delete meetings from the directory only 1) if instructed to do so by a vote of the ASC; 2) by confirmation from the Outreach Subcommittee that the meeting no longer exists. The PR Subcommittee follows the guidelines found in the NA Guide to Local Services published by WSO.

### **d. Policy**

The function of the Policy Subcommittee is to help the ASC conduct business by maintaining and organizing policies, and locating parts of the policy manual that apply to ASC discussions or concerns. The Policy Subcommittee does not interpret policy. The Policy Subcommittee shall update the policy manual and incorporate changes in policy voted on by the ASC, and correct typographical, grammatical, or spelling errors. The Policy Subcommittee shall make copies of the Policy Manual available at ASC meetings and shall distribute copies to GSRs, officers, subcommittee chairs, and other NA members (upon request). The Policy Subcommittee follows the guidelines in the Guide to NA Local Services as published by WSO.

### **e. Outreach**

The function of the Outreach Subcommittee is to promote unity among the home groups in the Our Primary Purpose area by helping to support struggling groups and maintaining lines of communication between the ASC and home groups. Members of the Outreach Subcommittee shall attend all of the different home group meetings in the area at least once a year. If a home group has missed four consecutive ASC meetings, members of the Outreach Subcommittee will attend a meeting of that home group, bring a copy of the latest ASC meeting minutes, encourage them to participate in the ASC, and ask if they have any concerns that have led to their absence at ASC meetings. If a home group is no longer meeting, or has changed its meeting time or location, the Outreach Subcommittee will report this to the PR Subcommittee Chair. The Outreach Subcommittee also orientates new GSRs.

### **f. Activities Subcommittee**

The function of the Activities Subcommittee is to organize and conduct activities, such as workshops, dances, and games and contests, to promote area unity and carry the message of recovery. All activities shall be open to all NA members and must be approved by the ASC. Funds raised during activities will be kept in the same bank account as the ASC's funds but will be treated as separate from the rest of the ASC budget. Funds raised by the activities committee shall be used as seed money for

future activities or contributed to the ASC. Activities committee seed money shall not exceed 1/3 of the ASC's prudent reserve. The Activities Subcommittee follows the guidelines found in the NA Guide to Local Services published by WSO. This policy applies retroactively to fundraising money held by the ASC and becomes effective January 1, 2014.

## 5. ASC Financial Policies.

### **a. Banking**

The ASC shall place all funds in a bank with branches conveniently located near different home groups in the area. Two different signatures are required on all checks. Only the Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Vice-Secretary, RCM or Alternate RCM may sign checks. Reimbursements shall be made by check.

### **b. Reimbursement**

Anyone seeking payment must fill out a check request form. The preferred method of payment to NA members is reimbursement for approved expenses with a receipt. The Treasurer may advance funds to an NA member for ASC approved expenses if the individual cannot afford to spend his/her own funds and be reimbursed. When funds are advanced, the person receiving the funds must provide receipts to the Treasurer and return all unspent funds by the next business meeting. Failure to return unspent advances or provide receipts shall constitute misappropriation of funds and could be grounds for removal from an ASC position. Whenever an advance is made, the Treasurer will not advance any further funds until appropriate receipts are received. Approved expenses include: 1) expenses in officer or subcommittee budgets; 2) non-budgeted expenses approved by the ASC.

### **c. Budgets**

The treasurer will set Officer and Subcommittee budgets in consultation with officers and subcommittees chairs and the ASC. Budgets will be voted on annually by the ASC. Budgets may not accrue from month-to-month; monthly expenses beyond the budget must be approved by the ASC. The ASC fiscal year shall run from January 1 to December 31.

### **d. Prudent Reserve**

The ASC shall maintain a prudent reserve of 3 months budgeted expenses (such as rent, officer and subcommittee budgets, supplies, PO box, phone line). The ASC Treasurer is authorized to reduce or limit pre-authorized budget expenses if such expenses would bring ASC funds below prudent reserve. In the event of a financial emergency (when ASC funds are below prudent reserve), the Treasurer should attempt to provide funds for critical ASC services (such as meeting directories, H & I, and the phone line). The Treasurer shall use good judgment if limitation in funds is required and is encouraged to consult with the ASC in such matters. A 2/3 majority vote is needed to approve a motion that would reduce ASC funds below prudent reserve.



### **e. Donation to Region**

Each quarter, the Our Primary Purpose Area will send no less than 50 percent of funds above prudent reserve, excluding Activities Subcommittee seed money and other monies held in reserve, to the NA region that the area belongs to. This policy becomes effective January 1, 2014.

### **f. Financial Assistance to Home Groups**

Home groups seeking financial assistance from the area must provide the area with the last three months of their financial records. A motion to provide financial assistance to a home group must be referred to home groups for further discussion and vote. A home group may receive financial assistance from the area no more than once during a 12-month period. Home groups seeking financial assistance are strongly encouraged to seek other means of support from the area prior to asking for financial assistance.

## **6. Conducting ASC Business**

### **a. Order of Business\*:**

Opening prayer  
 Reading of the Twelve Traditions and the Twelve Concepts  
 Reading of decorum rules (below)  
 Roll call  
 Review minutes of last business meeting  
 Group Concerns (signup sheet at beginning of meeting)  
 Old Business  
 Treasurer's Report  
 New Business  
 RCM Report  
 Subcommittee Reports  
 Closing Prayer

\*At Chair's discretion; can be modified.

### **b. Decorum**

Only individuals recognized by the ASC Chair may speak at meetings. Individuals who are recognized must introduce themselves. Individuals who are disruptive may be asked to leave the room until they can be respectful. To be recognized by the Chair, an individual must raise his/her hand.

### **c. Procedures and Voting**

(1) Motions are an important part of area business. There are two kinds of motions: 1) substantive motions, and 2) non-substantive motions. Non-substantive motions (such as a motion to approve the Treasurer's report, a motion to vote, or to adjourn) do not need to be made in writing and can come from the floor. Substantive motions (such as

a motion to change ASC policy or a motion to expend ASC funds) must be made in writing and clearly state the intent or purpose of the motion and clearly indicate if the motion would change policy. Only GSRs (or alternate GSRs as appropriate) or Subcommittee chairs may make a motion. Motions can only be seconded by GSRs (or alternative GSRs are appropriate). Motions made by subcommittee chairs must be pertinent to the subcommittee's business. Other NA members (including ASC officers or subcommittee chairs) who want to make a motion must do so via a GSR.

(2) A seconded motion may be thrown out, discussed, amended, passed, defeated, reconsidered, tabled, or referred to subcommittees or home groups. If a motion is not seconded, it is a dead motion. The motion may be reconsidered at a later time.

(3) The Chair may throw out a motion as "invalid" if it would violate ASC policies or the 12 Traditions or Concepts of NA. The Chair will consult with the Policy Subcommittee Chair before deciding to throw out a motion.

(4) Once a valid motion has been properly proposed and seconded, it will be discussed. The Chair will read the motion aloud (if it is written) and ensure that different viewpoints (e.g. pro and con) are discussed. At any time during the discussion, a GSR may call for a vote on the motion (through a motion from the floor). The Chair will determine if there has been adequate discussion, and if so, we call for a vote on the motion to vote. The Chair may also close discussion in the interests of time and call for a vote.

(5) During the discussion, a motion may be amended. A motion to amend is a separate motion and requires a second. The amendment will be voted on before the original motion. If the amendment passes, it becomes part of the motion, and discussion on the original motion continues.

(6) A simple majority of the home groups represented by GSRs (or alternates as appropriate) at the ASC meeting (and who are not abstaining from the vote) is needed to pass a motion. For example, if there are 15 home groups represented, 4 groups abstain from the vote, 6 support it, and 5 oppose, the motion would pass. There are two exceptions to majority rule: 1) a motion to disburse monies that would bring ASC funds below prudent reserve (mentioned in Financial Policies), or 2) a motion to temporarily suspend policy (discussion below), each of which requires a 2/3 majority. Voting may be by voice or show of hands (if requested).

(7). If a motion does not pass (i.e. it is defeated), it may be reconsidered later in the meeting, if someone proposes the motion again and it is seconded. In the interests of time, the Chair may limit the reconsideration of motions at a particular ASC meeting.

(8). A motion may be tabled if it is not written clearly or there is not enough information to intelligently discuss the motion at the ASC meeting. At the Chair's discretion, a tabled motion may be reconsidered later during the discussion of new business. During

the discussion of a motion, a member of the ASC may make a motion from the floor to table a motion that is being considered. The motion to table precedes a motion vote.

(9). A motion may be referred if it would be prudent to obtain additional information or discussion from ASC subcommittees or home groups. If a motion is referred to subcommittees or home groups, it will be returned to the ASC at a subsequent meeting for discussion and possible vote. Motions that would change ASC policy are automatically referred to the Policy Subcommittee to determine if they are clearly written and consistent with ASC policy and the 12 Traditions and 12 Concepts. The Policy Subcommittee may recommend changes to a motion to make it clear and consistent. Motions to change policy that have been cleared by the Policy Subcommittee will be sent to home groups at the next ASC meeting. A GSR may make a motion to refer a motion.

(10). A GSR may make a motion to temporarily suspend policy in order to conduct emergency business that is vital to the ASC (e.g. a financial or legal matter). A motion to temporarily suspend policy requires a 2/3 majority vote.

## **7. Appendices**

### A. Clean Time Requirements for ASC positions (summary from above)

Treasurer: 3 years

Vice-Treasure: 3 years

Chair 2 years

Vice-Chair 2 years

RCM: 2 years

Alternate-RCM: 2 years

Secretary: 1 year

Vice-Secretary: 1 year

Subcommittee Chair: 1 year

Subcommittee Vice-Chair: 6 months