

Motion to provide for Spanish translation of all Area documents and to provide a Spanish interpreter at all Area functions

Motion

The Area Registrar, along with the D.C.M.s for the Spanish linguistic Districts, moves to amend the Northern Illinois Service Manual in the following ways, to provide for Spanish translation of all documents in N.I.A. and to provide a Spanish interpreter at all Area functions:

**all page numbers reference the "NIA 20 Service Manual, web version 09/2022."*

1. The following paragraph shall be added to Northern Illinois Service Manual, at the end of the *Introduction* paragraph of SERVICE GUIDELINES, before *The Area Assembly* on page 17 :

All agendas, motions, minutes, presentations, reports, and other documents produced at the Area level in N.I.A. are to be translated into Spanish by a third party vendor and made available concurrently and in the same format as English documents; whether printed and provided at an Area function, emailed to the Area or its various committees, posted on the website, or made available in other ways. All such documents should be written and provided to the Area Chairperson, or their designate, with sufficient time to translate and distribute the documents before Area functions. The timeframe shall be determined by the Area Chairperson with the third party vendor. Area trusted servants are strongly encouraged to use web-based translation or another translation method to translate their email communications into Spanish before sending them out.

A Spanish interpreter shall be provided at all Area functions, such as Assemblies, Committee Meetings, conferences, and the Pre-General Service Conference Workshop.

2. The following bullet point in the responsibilities of *All Officers* on page 30 , "Reporting Officers or their Alternates must submit a written report at Assemblies and Committee meetings," shall be replaced with this new bullet point:

Submit a written report at Assemblies and Committee Meetings. Reports should be written and sent to the Area Chairperson, or their designate, with enough time to be translated into Spanish according to the SERVICE GUIDELINES section of this document.

3. That same new bullet point from change #2 shall be added to the list of responsibilities of *Alternate Officers* on page 30.
4. At the end of the bullet point in the *Responsibilities* of Service Committee Chairs on page 40, "Report on Area Service Committee activities at Area Committee Meetings. Committee Chairs or their Alternates must submit a written report at Assemblies and committee meetings," add the following sentence:

Reports should be written and sent to the Area Chairperson, or their designate, with enough time to be translated into Spanish according to the SERVICE GUIDELINES section of this document.

5. That same new bullet point from change #2 shall be added to the list of *Responsibilities* of Appointees on page 45.

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6. That same new bullet point from change #2 shall be added to the end of the paragraph beginning the section of *Responsibilities of Administrative Committees* before the *Operating Committee Responsibilities* on page 46.
7. The bullet point “Report on recent activities at Area Committee Meetings. Submit a written report at Assemblies and,” which is erroneously placed at the bottom of page 44 in the list of appointed positions, shall be removed.
8. The following bullet point in the *Responsibilities* of Area Alternate Chairperson on page 32, “Assist in obtaining Spanish interpreter for Assemblies and Pre-General Conference Service Workshop,” shall be replaced with this new bullet point:

Assist in obtaining a Spanish interpreter for all Area functions, such as Assemblies, Committee Meetings, conferences, and the Pre-General Service Conference Workshop.

Background

The current practices of N.I.A. fall short of adequately addressing the language barrier to full participation in the Area. How can Spanish speaking trusted servants participate in discussion and vote on motions if they don't have the materials available in Spanish?

We do not provide a Spanish interpreter at Area Committee Meetings. These are the meetings where motions that will go before the Assembly are explained, questions can be asked, and information can be gathered to take back to the Districts to share with the G.S.R.s, so that they can in turn take it to their groups to get an informed group decision. The D.C.M.S from the Spanish linguistic Districts have been attending Area Committee Meetings without an interpreter present to translate. The motions and background materials are only available in English. Reports from officers and committee chairs are not translated. The Northern Illinois Service Manual has not been printed in Spanish since 2020.

Steps have been taken in the right direction by some officers voluntarily, translating their reports and emails. Spanish agendas for Assemblies and Area Committee Meetings have been produced, but only available in print at the meetings. Because translation is not being done by all Area trusted servants, voluntarily or completely, it needs to be required now.

Access to the service structure of Alcoholics Anonymous should not be hindered. The path to service should be as easy as possible, and it is up to us to make that path better for *all* members.

References

<http://aa-nia.org/wp-content/uploads/NIA-20-Service-Manual-web-202012.pdf>

Respectfully submitted

Chris E
N.I.A. 20 Registrar
registrar@aa-nia.org