

NORTHERN ILLINOIS PLANNING PROCEDURES

AREA 20

Procedures for Planning the Spring Assembly Conference

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PROCEDURES FOR PLANNING THE SPRING ASSEMBLY CONFERENCE

Introduction

The purpose of this guide is to set expectations and to provide shared experience for activities that occur while planning and producing a Northern Illinois Area (N.I.A.) Spring Assembly Conference. For additional information see A.A. Guidelines on Conferences and Conventions which can be found at www.aa.org.

Purpose and Guiding Principles

The annual N.I.A. Spring Assembly Conference is an Area sponsored conference that is hosted by one or more Districts from within the Area, selected through a bidding process. As the sponsor of the Spring Assembly Conference, N.I.A. has established that the Spring Assembly Conference will be a service conference which will provide an opportunity for members of Alcoholics Anonymous to become acquainted with and learn more about the various service activities being conducted in the Area, ways in which these are being improved, and developments within A.A. as a whole in the area of service.

N.I.A. has agreed upon the following guidelines for the Conference:

- The Conference is considered an open A.A. event and as such is open to all.
- The Assembly is a business meeting of the Area and open to A.A. members only unless approved by the Assembly.
- For those AA members solely attending the Spring Assembly and corresponding committee breakout sessions Saturday, the Conference registration fee is not required.
- AA members who wish to attend any non-business portion of the Conference are required to pay the registration fee.
- One of the open meeting speakers should be from the General Service Office or be a member of the General Service Board.
- Invite Al-Anon and Alateen to participate.
- Saturday should include Area Officers' reports, Assembly business meeting, and Area Service Committee reports (if time permits). This meeting generally lasts 3-4 hours.
- Open Service Committee Workshop/Panels could include: Answering Service, Corrections, Cooperation with the Professional Community, Newsletter N.I.A. Concepts, Public Information, Treatment Facilities, Special Needs, Grapevine, Literature, Archives, Secretaries & Treasurers. Workshops/Panels may be combined as needed.
- Service Committee Chairs should participate in Workshop/Panels.
- Other panels may include the Twelve Steps, the Twelve Traditions, and the Twelve Concepts.
- District Committee Members (D.C.M.s) could participate in programming.
- Time on Sunday should be allotted for a Trustee's or G.S.O. staff member's report, if present.
- There should be areas for Archives, Grapevine, Literature display and sale.
- Only Conference-approved literature, A.A. Service Material or Grapevine literature may be displayed or sold.
- The Host Committee shall not participate in any type of scholarship program to provide registration costs to any attendee.

By bidding to host the Spring Assembly Conference, a District(s) is indicating its desire and commitment to be the instrument through which the Area's intentions for the Conference will be realized. The District(s) interested in hosting the Spring Assembly Conference will offer a bid in accordance with these guidelines. The hosting District(s) will:

- Secure a location for the Conference and make all necessary arrangements with the facility staff.
- Prepare and disseminate promotional materials.
- Organize and print the Conference program and secure the Open Meeting speakers and panel and event chairpersons/presenters.
- Arrange for taping of Open Meeting speakers and panels, along with Spanish translation and signers for the hearing-impaired at the Open Meetings.
- Conduct registration of all Conference participants.
- Establish, collect and account for all registration fees and other income generated by the Conference.
- Serve as the liaison with facility staff and see to all operations of the Conference.
- Provide a Conference Report at all N.I.A. Committee meetings and Assemblies leading up to the Conference and a final report to the Assembly.
- Select a Conference theme.
- Prepare a detailed final report that includes reports from all Conference committees. Provide a copy for the next year's Conference committee, the Area Alternate Chair, and the N.I.A. Archivist.

The hosting District(s) may, at its own discretion and in the spirit of carrying the message, add topics and meetings to the program (such as Newcomer's Room, Big Book Study, Twelve Step Study, etc.) and is encouraged to experiment with format, using games, skits or other means to encourage participation by Conference participants. However, the Alternate Area Chairperson must approve all proposed changes and those changes must be reported to the Area Committee before they are finalized. In the event that the Alternate Area Chairperson does not approve a change the hosting District(s) may request approval directly from the Area Committee. The hosting District(s) may also select the banquet menu, conduct dances, and organize hospitality areas as it wishes in cooperation with the facility.

Al-Anon and Alateen will establish their own committees, organize and conduct their own programs. Their programs and events will be included in the Conference program. Al-Anon and Alateen expenses will be included in the

Conference budget; and, in the event that the Conference realizes income in excess of expenses, a portion of this excess will be contributed to Al-Anon equal to the proportion of Al-Anons and Alateens who registered for the Conference.

Formal Preparation & Presentation of Conference Bid

N.I.A. has experienced personnel who are very conversant in contract negotiations for conferences. Assistance with contract negotiations is available on request; notify the Alternate Area Chair. If assistance is needed it is suggested that the request is made before proposals are sought.

All contracts with hotel facilities, catering, etc. must be reviewed by at least three Area Officers prior to signing.

Any conference bid should include the following:

- Location

- Date to be coordinated with Southern Illinois Area, Chicago Area and G.S.O. event dates.
- Written proposals from the hotel or facilities including:
 - Room availability and room rates at the facility as well as room rates and availability in the immediate Area.
 - Costs for hotel meeting rooms
 - Coffee charges (including gratuities and any special charges) and banquet meals.
- Budget shall be based on the minimum number of registrations anticipated at the proposed registration fee.
 - A minimum-maximum range of registrations should be established based on past Conference experience.
 - Banquet numbers should not be considered in the budget formation. The banquet should be entirely self-supporting.
 - The Conference is expected to be self-supporting which includes returning the \$3,000 seed money to the Area.
- Facility Requirements
 - Hotel brochures
 - Handicap accessibility for all activities.
 - Banquet dining space for a minimum of 300 people.
 - Break-out & Meeting rooms: Literature (1), Archives (1), Alcathon (1), Hospitality (1), Panel Rooms (minimum of 4), Al-Anon(1). You may choose to have an Alateen room and/or a Spanish Alcathon room.
 - Assembly room with seating and tables for 300 people.
 - Main Speaker space for 600 people.
 - Conference Planning Committee meeting space in the facility free of charge.
 - The following confidentiality statement shall be part of agreement with facility.
 - The Hotel/Facility acknowledges that all personal information about members of Alcoholics Anonymous must be considered confidential and ought to be used for A.A. purposes only. The Hotel/Facility will not use any such personal information, including, but not limited to, any Planning Committee membership lists, participant registration lists, and room registration and billing information, for any form of solicitation or commercial venture. The Hotel/Facility will not record the image of any of the participants in or the attendees to the Conference for any purpose other than normal security purposes. The Hotel/Facility will not use any signage in connection with the N.I.A. Conference that uses the terms “Alcoholics Anonymous” or “A.A.”. Reference to the “Northern Illinois Area” or “N.I.A.” is preferred.

Hosting Districts will not bid for 3 years following an award; joint efforts of Districts are encouraged based on capability. All bid presentations will be limited to a period of 10 minutes and shall include all pertinent written confirmations. Bid presentations shall be submitted at the Fall Assembly in September.

Establishment of Committees

Before the initial meeting to elect members of the Conference Planning Committee, a supply of the Procedures for Planning the Spring Assembly Conference should be acquired from the Alternate Area Chairperson or from the N.I.A. website at aa-nia.org. Those who wish to stand for a position on the Committee should review this document.

The N.I.A. liaison may not be able to attend Committee meetings prior to May 1st due to prior conference commitments; the Area Chairperson may appoint a temporary liaison.

- At the first Conference planning meeting the following positions should be filled with Chairpersons and Alternates or Co-Chairpersons:
 - Conference Chairperson
 - Secretary
 - Treasurer
 - Program
- Other positions that should be filled as soon as possible:
 - Registration
 - Alcahthon
 - Archives (suggest using Area Committee)
 - Printing
 - Coffee
 - Public Information
 - Decorations
 - Entertainment
 - Hospitality
 - Banquet
 - Grapevine (suggest using Area Committee)
 - Greeters
 - Literature
 - Language Translation & Special Needs
 - And the Alternates or Co-Chairpersons for each of these positions.
- Under no circumstances should the N.I.A. Spring Assembly Conference Committee be involved in any way with or give the appearance of being involved with the sale of any trinkets or memorabilia.
- It is suggested that the previous Conference Committee Chairpersons be invited to your first meeting as these people can share their experiences with you pertaining to the committees they represented. Information from the previous Conference will be made available in a final report from the preceding Conference.
- It is recommended that the N.I.A. Spring Assembly Conference Planning Committee meetings be held on Sundays to facilitate attendance by the N.I.A. liaison; who has the primary responsibility to represent the Area.

Suggested Target Dates for Committee Functions

- Finalize all contracts with the hotel and banquet facility as soon as possible after being awarded the bid for the N.I.A. Spring Assembly Conference. Experience shows that successful conferences finalize contracts at least one year in advance.
- Since bids for the N.I.A. Spring Assembly Conference are now awarded approximately one and one-half years preceding the event, the following dates are for the calendar year before the Conference:
 - January 1st: Establish structure of the Conference Planning Committee.
 - February 1st: Open bank account and Post Office box established; begin work on the registration flyer so distribution can be made by the Illinois State Conference, or earlier.
 - March 1st: Contact with and confirmation of main Conference speakers.
 - August 1st: Be sure to have final registration flyers available for the fall issue of Concepts and for distribution at Illinois State Conference and at the Summer

- Committee meeting. (See P.I. responsibilities for suggestions of distribution of registration flyers.)
- October 1st: Meet and tour the facility where the Conference will be held. This will give all committee members an opportunity to see where each of their roles will be executed.
 - The following dates are for the year of the Conference.
 - January:
 - All Alcatraz session and panel chairpersons should be assigned.
 - February 1st
 - Begin checking on hotel room reservations and ensure that commitments are going to be met.
 - March 1st
 - Print the Conference program.
 - Week preceding conference.
 - Meet at the facility with the facility staff for a walk through and final preparations.

Conference Committee Personnel/Area of Responsibility

The following job descriptions are simply general suggestions based on previous conference experience; situations will vary, naturally. Implicit are cooperation and communication with others!

Chairperson & Co-Chairpersons

- Coordinates the election of members to chair the various committees.
- Calls Committee meetings (time and place) and prepares meeting agendas.
- Prepares the budget
- Obtains information on alternate housing, rates, phone numbers, etc.
- Invites AI-Anon and Alateen participation.
- Keeps close check on all phases of planning and progress. Participates in individual Committee meetings as required.
- Prepares and presents all reports at Area Committee meetings and Assemblies.
- Be sure to emphasize, both to the Committee and the facility staff that the Chairperson and Co-Chairperson (if there is one) are to be the only ones to communicate or negotiate with the facility. Keep in mind that the Area offers experienced negotiators to help with this process.
- Coordinates with Area Chair and Alternate Area Chair to address the needs of the Assembly portion of the conference.
- Prepare and deliver final report to Summer Assembly. Use the Suggested Budget Format included near the end of this document as part of your final report. It includes information essential for future Conference bids.

Secretary

- Prepares and maintains the committee roster including names, addresses, e-mail addresses, phone numbers and committee positions. Also include all AI-Anon Committee members' information
- Send meeting minutes, notices, and agendas to committee members, together with updated committee rosters.
- Send minutes to the Area Chairperson, Alternate Area Chairperson or Area Liaison, and Hosting D.C.M.(s) (if not on Committee).

Treasurer

- Obtains Post Office box.
- Opens Conference checking account, with two signatures required for each check (Treasurer and Chairperson or Co-Chairperson).
- Obtain necessary financial/tax information from the Area Treasurer.
- Coordinates with registration to pick up mail, extracting checks and making deposits.
- Pays bills.
- Presents financial report to each meeting and after the Conference is over. Always compare the actual with the budget.
- Final disposition of all funds should be made prior to the Summer Assembly.
- See that expenditures are kept within allotted budgets.

Program Chairperson

- Plans program format in consultation with other committee members, Area Liaison, and Al-Anon and Alateen Chairperson(s). Keep in mind that the first priority is for the Area Assembly.
- Program to include open Service Committee meetings, workshops, panels etc. using Area Committee members.
- It is expected that the Area Chairperson be used in opening the Conference at the Friday Night Kickoff Meeting with the Area Delegate being utilized at the Trustees report or G.S.O. Staff report on Sunday morning.
- Arranges for a maximum of 3 A.A. conference speakers, one of which is a General Service Office representative or member of the General Service Board.
 - Arrange for a host to pick-up and return speakers to airport.
 - Conveys information regarding how meals and expense will be paid for.
 - Ensures that speakers are introduced to people and made feel welcome.
- Arranges to pay for 3 A.A. and 1 Al-Anon speakers' transportation to and from Conference site, conference registration fee, meals and room reservations. (This does not include paying for the speakers' spouses, families or significant other unless those individuals are on the Conference program.)
- No A.A. or Al-Anon speaker may be scheduled during the Assembly
- Other program events may be scheduled during the assembly but
 - Must be limited to one event or activity at a time
 - Must be designed specifically not to attract those who would normally attend the Assembly
 - Scheduled presenters or participants may not be individuals who would normally attend the Assembly
- Writes notes of appreciation to speakers before and after Conference.
- Arranges for recording of main event(s) (excluding Assembly and Service Committee meetings).
- Obtains names and cities of those participating for possible inclusion in the printed program.
- Supplies the Printing Chairperson with information for flyers, registration forms, the program and any other printing needs.
- Refer to appendix for Anonymity Statement, A.A. Preamble, the Twelve Traditions, and the Twelve Concepts.
- Definition of program options:
 - Workshop – A moderated group discussion with a specific purpose.

- Panel – Presentation by one or more people that may include opportunity for questions.
- Breakout – Sharing session of a single service committee with the intent of discussing current activities.

Language Translation & Special Needs

- Arranges for interpreter for the hearing-impaired.
- Coordinates seating of hearing impaired with the interpreter.
- Arranges for Spanish translator and use of Area translation equipment.

Printing Chairperson

- Coordinates with Program Chairperson.
- Plans layout for flyers, registration forms and printed program.
- Printed materials should be proofed by several people and reviewed by Conference Committee before printing.
- Gets comparison pricing, lead times and places orders.
- Has program layout ready but holds as long as possible for changes, ask printer for last possible deadline.
- Provides the N.I.A. Secretary and N.I.A. Concepts Editor with registration form for their printing. Must be black print on white background for printing in their publications.
- Provides the N.I.A. Web Administrator a copy of the conference flyer and registration form to be placed on the N.I.A. website.
- Registration flyer should be translated and printed for Spanish Districts.
- Suggestions for Flyer Form Content
 - Include Registration Form Content listed under Registration Chairperson
 - Be very clear about how to make room reservations and exactly what number to call.
 - Offer alternate housing - names, location, phone.
 - Provide A.A. and Al-Anon contacts, listing contact names, telephone numbers and perhaps an address.
 - Include abbreviated Conference Schedule with speaker names and home cities if possible.

Registration Chairperson

- Keeps a running record of registration by category: A.A., Al-Anon and Alateen
- Keeps a running record of meals ordered:
 - For banquets
 - For food packages, if offered
- Provides Banquet and Conference Chairpersons with running tally until Banquet cutoff time.
- Recommend that dance participation require Conference registration.
- If on-line registration is provided, registrant must pay on-line convenience fees.
- Prepares registration packages - name badges, banquet status, program and other special Conference items.
- Staffs registration table at conference.
- Coordinate with Area Registrar for registration needs of Assembly.
- Coordinate with Banquet to assign tables for all attendees at banquet.
- Some Conference committees have reported a need for large amounts of change depending on the registration cost.

- Suggestions for Registration Form Content
 - Provide two blank lines for names so couples can use one form. For each line, provide a means for the individual to indicate whether they are: A.A./Al-Anon/Alateen/Other.
 - Add line to flyer “Groups that wish to sit together must register together (# per table).”
 - Allow a space where special needs can be indicated: wheelchair, hearing-impaired, dietary, other.
 - Indicate that cashed check is receipt of registration.
 - Provide place for e-mail, address, city, state, zip and telephone just in case.
 - If they must be registered for the Conference to attend the dance(s), say so.
 - Indicate cutoff dates: for mailing registrations, for banquet, for rooms, etc.
 - If parental permission slips are required, say so on form.

Coffee Chairperson

- Maintains contact with facility staff, supplying coffee stations throughout the Conference
- Coffee is one of the largest expenses for the conference. Care should be taken to ensure prudent management of this resource.
- Must identify authority to sign tab for coffee refills, and control timing and amount of coffee delivered to each station.

Alcathon Chairperson

- Provides topics for the Alcathon.
- Contacts D.C.M.s for volunteers from each District. Outlying Districts should be given first choice of Alcathon timeslots.
- The hosting District may expect to provide local people for the Alcathons between midnight and 6:00AM.
- Historically Alcathons begin on Friday shortly after registration opens, and ends on Sunday before the final speaker.
- Alcathon may run at the same time as the Assembly.

Hospitality Chairperson

- Contact D.C.M.s for volunteers from each District to staff the hospitality room.
- Ask for donations of cakes, candies, cookies, soda, snacks, coffee, etc.
- Keep the hospitality area neat and clean.
- No gambling to take place at the Conference.
- Insures final cleanup will happen and that left over food is taken care of.

Decorations Chairperson

- Ensure that banner is in place prior to the Kickoff Meeting Friday night.
- Arranges for all decorations including Saturday banquet table decorations.

Entertainment Chairperson

- Plans entertainment with consideration of age range.
- Limits admission to the dance to registered attendees only.

Banquet Chairperson

- Selects menu for banquet.

- Arranges for any other meal options, if required, such as an optional box lunch on Saturday.
- Communicates with Decorations Committee regarding the number of tables.
- Coordinates with Registration to assign tables for all attendees at banquet.

Greeters Chairperson

- Arranges for volunteers for greeting.
- Posts greeters near registration table, at entranceways, and throughout hotel.
- Greeters should be knowledgeable of hotel layout, Conference schedule, Assembly location, etc.
- Sees that each greeter has a ribbon, t-shirt, or funny hat indicating that they are greeters and are able to help participants.
- The greeters can often help the Entertainment Committee with security at the dance.

Grapevine Chairperson

- Have a display of all available Grapevine items at the Conference where the items can be purchased.
- Coordinate with the Area Grapevine Committee and the Conference Literature Committee.
- Make sure that members and participants are aware of the Fellowship's international journal and the enhancements to sobriety it can offer. Grapevine special items, ranging from anthologies of cartoons and articles to a wall calendar featuring member-submitted photographs, are spin-offs of the A.A. Grapevine.

Archives Chairperson

- Staffs an Archives Room with displays from G.S.O. and N.I.A..
- Coordinate with the Area Archives Committee.

Public Information Chairperson

- See A.A. Guidelines on Conferences and Conventions for more information.
- Bear in mind the 11th Tradition and A.A.'s principle that: "Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films."
- Responsible for arranging communication to all Area Districts, surrounding Areas, neighboring states, Alano Clubs and Intergroup/Central offices.
- Flyers should be placed on A.A. websites wherever possible.
- Press releases may be placed in local newspapers or notices may appear on community calendars.

Literature Chairperson

- Staff a literature room.
- Only Conference-approved literature, A.A. Service Material or Grapevine literature may be displayed or sold.
- Coordinate with the Area Literature Committee and the Conference Grapevine Committee.
- Consignment literature is available from the Chicago Area Service Office or the Rockford Intergroup.

AI-Anon and Alateen

- Will determine their level of participation on the Conference Planning Committee.

- Establishes their own committees, organizes and conducts their own program.
- Provides Conference program Chairperson with space requirements and information to be included in Conference program.
- Arranges for an Al-Anon conference speaker.
 - The Spring Assembly Conference pays for one Al-Anon speaker. Should Al-Anon wish to have additional speakers, it would be at their own expense.
- No Al-Anon speaker may be scheduled during the Assembly
- Conference to provide space for Al-Anon Literature - operation and expenses associated with the literature display are Al-Anon's responsibility.
- Provides Alateen with its own meeting space.
- In the event the Conference has income in excess of expenses after all expenses have been paid and the seed monies returned to the Area, a portion of this excess will be contributed to Al-Anon equal to the proportion of Al-Anons and Alateens who registered for the Conference.

Helpful Reminder

- Communication and coordination between everyone on the Conference Planning Committee and the facility staff are essential ingredients for a successful Conference.

Suggested Budget Format

This form is available on the N.IA. website in an Excel format.

yyyy N.I.A. SPRING CONFERENCE		DATE: mm/dd/yyyy		
FINANCIAL REPORT				
	Budget		Actual	
INCOME	#	\$	#	\$
REGISTRATIONS (@ \$x)				
A.A. REGISTRATIONS (@ \$x)	x	\$0.00	x	\$0.00
AL-ANON REGISTRATIONS (@ \$x)	x	\$0.00	x	\$0.00
ALATEEN REGISTRATION (@ \$x)	x	\$0.00	x	\$0.00
BANQUET (@ \$x)	x	\$0.00	x	\$0.00
HOSPITALITY CONTRIBUTIONS		\$0.00		\$0.00
N.I.A. SEED MONEY		\$3,000.00		\$3,000.00
TOTAL INCOME		\$3,000.00		\$3,000.00
EXPENSES	#	\$	#	\$
CONFERENCE CO-CHAIRPERSONS		\$0.00		\$0.00
SECRETARY		\$0.00		\$0.00
TREASURER		\$0.00		\$0.00
COMMITTEE MEETING RENT		\$0.00		\$0.00
BANQUET, WITH TAX & GRATUITY (@ \$x)	x	\$0.00		\$0.00
COFFEE, WITH TAX & GRATUITY (@ \$x/GAL.)	x	\$0.00		\$0.00
HOTEL				
DEPOSIT		\$0.00		\$0.00
MEETING SPACE		\$0.00		\$0.00
AUDIO-VISUAL		\$0.00		\$0.00
SET-UP AND SERVICE		\$0.00		\$0.00
PROGRAM		\$0.00		\$0.00
SPEAKERS (AIRFARE, TRANSPORTATION, ROOM, MEALS) (4 SPEAKERS @ \$x EA.)		\$0.00		\$0.00
ALCATHON		\$0.00		\$0.00
DECORATIONS		\$0.00		\$0.00
ENTERTAINMENT		\$0.00		\$0.00
HOSPITALITY		\$0.00		\$0.00
LITERATURE		\$0.00		\$0.00
PRINTING				
FLYERS		\$0.00		\$0.00
PROGRAMS		\$0.00		\$0.00
SIGNAGE		\$0.00		\$0.00
PUBLIC INFORMATION		\$0.00		\$0.00
REGISTRATION		\$0.00		\$0.00
SPANISH TRANSLATION		\$0.00		\$0.00
SPECIAL NEEDS / SIGNERS (2)		\$0.00		\$0.00
GREETERS		\$0.00		\$0.00
GRAPEVINE		\$0.00		\$0.00
ARCHIVES		\$0.00		\$0.00
MISCELLANEOUS		\$0.00		\$0.00
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$0.00		\$0.00
TOTAL INCOME LESS EXPENSES		\$3,000.00		\$3,000.00
LESS N.I.A. SEED MONEY		(\$3,000.00)		\$0.00
PROFIT/LOSS		\$0.00		

Confidentiality Statement

The Eleventh and Twelfth Traditions emphasize the importance of anonymity and that the principle of anonymity has an immense spiritual significance, reminding us to place principles before personalities thereby practicing genuine humility.

While it is important that we all maintain our anonymity at the level of press, radio, film and the internet we must also realize that as trusted servants we cannot be so anonymous that we are unable to find each other when we need help in accomplishing our primary purpose of carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. Thus, first and last names should be included in committee addresses lists, minutes and other documents internal to the committee and the Area.

In addition, we have a responsibility to maintain each other's confidentiality. Full names, addresses, telephone numbers and other personal information of committee members, other A.A., Al-Anon or Alateen members are not to be shared with anyone without the permission of the persons involved. Committee member lists, registration lists, and facility room registration lists are all to be kept confidential and used only for purposes directly related to the Assembly Conference.

No personal information is to be used for any outside mailing list or any form of solicitation or commercial venture.

Sample Agenda

Friday

- Conference Assembly registration and hospitality to open at 3pm
- Alcahons to begin at 5pm
- Kick-off meeting to begin at 7pm
 - Announcements
 - Opening Remarks - Area Chairperson
 - Introduce Committee - have them stand, introduce Al-Anon Chairperson
 - Quiet Time & Serenity Prayer
 - Anonymity Statement, A.A. Preamble, How It Works, Twelve Traditions of A.A. (Short Form)
 - Al-Anon speaker, at the discretion of Al-Anon
 - A.A. speaker
 - Announcements
 - Close
- Optional D.C.M. break-out

Saturday

- Conference Assembly registration to open at 8am
- Assembly check-in to open at 8am
- Assembly to begin at 9am and should end at noon
- Other program events to be scheduled during Assembly. See Program Chairperson guidelines for requirements.
- Al-Anon speaker, at the discretion of Al-Anon at 1pm
- Service panels/workshops/break-outs with at least 4 rooms in the afternoon. See Program Chairperson guidelines for requirements and see sample agenda below.
 - Introduction to A.A. General Service Workshop should be two hours
 - Priority for the late afternoon sessions should be given the Area Service Committee Chairs
- Banquet to begin 6pm

- Announcements
- Quiet Time & Serenity Prayer
- Invocation
- Dinner
- Anonymity Statement, A.A. Preamble, How It Works, Twelve Traditions of A.A.
- Sobriety Countdown
- A.A. Speaker
- Announcements
- Close

Sunday

- Trustees report or G.S.O. Staff report at 9am
 - Introduction by current Delegate
- Speaker meeting at 10am
 - Announcements
 - Quiet Time & Serenity Prayer
 - Anonymity Statement, A.A. Preamble, How It Works, Twelve Traditions of A.A.
 - A.A. speaker
 - Closing Announcements
 - Close

Final Conference Committee meeting Sample Agenda

- Introduce next year's Chair and Co-chair
- Return Banner to Alternate Chair.
- Set date, time and place for final wrap-up meeting, with final committee report completed at that time.
- Congratulate everyone, again!!

Sample Conference Schedule

	Friday		Saturday							Sunday						
	Assembly/B anquet Room	Panel Room 1	Assembly/B anquet Room	Assembly/B anquet Room	Panel Room 1	Panel Room 2	Panel Room 3	Panel Room 4	Assembly/B anquet Room							
9:00 AM				Assembly	Program element(s)	Empty (only one program element opposing Assembly)			Trustee report							
10:00 AM										Speaker						
11:00 AM																
12:00 PM											Optional breakouts					
1:00 PM											Al-Anon speaker	General Service Orientation	Program element(s)	Program element(s) workshops or panels	Program element(s)	Program element(s)
1:30 PM																
2:00 PM											Program element(s)	Service committee workshops or panels	Program element(s)	Program element(s)		
2:30 PM																
3:00 PM											Program element(s)	Service committee workshops or panels	Program element(s)	Program element(s)		
3:30 PM																
4:00 PM	Program element(s)	Service committee workshops or panels	Program element(s)	Program element(s)												
4:30 PM																
5:00 PM	Banquet prep, banquet	Banquet prep, banquet														
6:00 PM																
7:00 PM	Open speaker meeting (AA/Al- Anon)	Optional DCM mtg														
8:00 PM																
9:00 PM																
10:00 PM																

Section Revisions

Revision Guidelines

Revisions to this section are approved by a substantially unanimous vote of the Area Committee. All approved revisions must be reported to the Assembly when it next meets, discussed if necessary, and accepted or rejected by a “sense of the Assembly.”

Revision History

- Originally adopted by the Winter Assembly, December, 1995
- Updated version approved by assembly, 6/12/2004
- Renamed “Procedures for Planning...,” reformatted to standardized document style, and added standardized Section Revisions section. Text changes only as needed to support style. Report and Charter Committee, 5/17/2009, 6/13/2009, 9/28/2009, 10/11/2009
- Approved by Assembly, 12/12/2009
- Moved Anonymity Statement, Preamble, and the Twelve Traditions to an appendix. Approved by Assembly, 12/10/11
- Approved by the Area Committee, 05/11/2013
- Added clarifying bullet points to guiding principles section regarding conference registration fee requirements. Approved by Area Committee, 10/19/2013 and by Area Assembly, 12/14/2013.
- Format change on page 111: “Language Translation and Special Needs” changed to Heading 3 format, changed footer to “.a”, and updated TOC page numbers (no changes) 10/29/2014.
- Removed from the unabridged version of the Northern Illinois Area 20 Service Handbook. Approved by Assembly, December 9, 2017
- Updated to address accessibilities in font size and style, 10/2024

APPENDIX FOR CONFERENCES

Anonymity Statement

There may be some here who are not familiar with our tradition of anonymity at the public level:

"Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always to maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio (TV) and films."

Thus we respectfully ask that no A.A. Speaker - or, indeed, any A.A. Member - be identified by full name in published or broadcast reports of our meetings.

The assurance of anonymity is essential in our effort to help other problem drinkers who may wish to share our recovery program with us, and our tradition of anonymity reminds us that A.A. Principles come before personalities.

The long form of A.A.'s Eleventh Tradition says "Our names and pictures as A.A. members ought not be broadcast, filmed, or publicly printed." In keeping with this principle, please do not post recognizable photos of identifiable A.A. members on websites accessible to the public, including unrestricted pages on social networking sites.

A.A. Preamble

Alcoholics anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for A.A. Membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. A.A. Is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy, neither endorses or opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

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The Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.

2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority – a loving god as he may express himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.

3. The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.

4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole.

5. Each group has but one primary purpose – to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

6. An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.

7. Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

9. A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

10. Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films.

12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

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The Twelve Concepts

I. Final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.

II. The General Service Conference of A.A. has become, for nearly every practical purpose, the active voice and the effective consciences of our whole Society in its world affairs.

III. To insure effective leadership, we should endow each element of A.A. – the Conference, the General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives – with a traditional “Right of Decision”.

IV. At all responsible levels, we ought to maintain a traditional “Right of Participation,” allowing a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.

V. Throughout our structure, a traditional “Right of Appeal” ought to prevail, so that minority opinion will be heard and personal grievances receive careful consideration.

VI. The Conference recognizes that the chief initiative and active responsibility in most world service matters should be exercised by the trustee members of the Conference acting as the General Service Board.

VII. The Charter and Bylaws of the General Service Board are legal instruments, empowering the trustees to manage and conduct world service affairs. The Conference Charter is no a legal document; it relies upon tradition and the A.A. purse for final effectiveness.

VIII. The trustees are the principle planners and administrators of overall policy and finance. They have custodial oversight of the separately incorporated and constantly active services, exercising this through their ability to elect all the directors of these entities.

IX. Good service leadership at all levels is indispensable for our future functioning and safety. Primary world service leadership, once exercised by the founders, must necessarily be assumed by the trustees.

X. Every service responsibility should be matched by equal service authority, with the scope of such authority well defined.

XI. The trustees should always have the best possible committees, corporate service directors, executives, staffs, and consultants. Composition, qualifications, induction procedures, and rights and duties will always be matters of serious concern.

XII. The Conference shall observe the spirit of A.A. tradition, taking care that it never become the sear of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds and reserve be its prudent financial principles; that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others; that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote,

and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; that it never perform acts of government, and that, like the Society it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action. .

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