

Motion: The Area 20 Registrar and Alternate Registrar motion to request that the Area Delegate forward a letter to the Conference Coordinator at the General Service Office prior to the December 15, 2020 deadline, with a request to allow Online Groups to register under their respective district and area instead of the Online Intergroup "<https://aa-intergroup.org/>".

Background Material:

The Area 20 Registrar contacted the Records Department at the General Service Office to determine what process is used to register virtual meetings. The following response was received:

"As you are aware, our structure encompasses the U.S. and Canada. Because online groups and meetings are by nature international, they are not listed as regular groups in G.S.O.s records. Whether an bunch of alcoholics meeting online consider themselves a group is up to them, as laid out in the Third Tradition (any two or three alcoholics...).

In keeping with a 2006 General Service Conference Advisory Action, G.S.O. provides contact information for online groups and meetings that request us to have this information:

Online meetings listed in A.A. directories under "ONLINE MEETINGS" continue to be listed with an e-mail contact address only, in keeping with the 1997 General Service Conference recommendation that: On-line A.A. meetings that request to be listed in A.A. directories be added to the "International Correspondence Meetings" in A.A. directories, that each listing include the internet address of the on-line meeting, and that each on-line meeting requesting to be listed in our directories furnish G.S.O. with the name and physical address of a member willing to serve as "mail" contact."

This information is provided in the A.A. Directories in a special section titled "'Online Meetings/Online Groups.'" The Online A.A. Intergroup is also listed in our records and in the A.A. Directories.

Area 95 is sort of a catchall area in our records system. It was created for any individual or entity which has a record in our system, but that isn't part of the U.S./Canada general service structure. It includes international G.S.O.s, World Service Meeting delegates, intergroup/central offices, online and phone meetings, etc.

G.S.O.'s listing of online groups and meetings is not comprehensive. A much more complete list can be found through the Online A.A. Intergroup: www.aa-intergroup.org. An online group or meeting can be listed with either or both entities."

When a New Group Form from an online meeting in District 28 was received, it was forwarded to the records department at GSO requesting that they process the new group form and that although this group is only meeting virtually right now we would like to register it under Area 20 and not an online meeting. We received the following response from the Group Services coordinator.

"The Records Department forwarded your email to me. It would be helpful for us to know more about this. First off, has District 28 discussed this and approved having this group participate in the district? And likewise, has Area 20 discussed this and approved having this group participate in the area?"

As many groups were forced to go virtual, new online groups were formed. We feel that each group should have the option of continuing to be a part of the service structure in the district and area that they reside.

The AA Group:

1. The AA Group registers with the General Service Office (GSO) and assigned a group number.
2. The AA Group receives a complimentary handbook and a small supply of literature at no charge when it registers with the GSO.
3. The AA Group provides a strong bond between the AA member and the Fellowship.
4. The AA Group has a General Service Representative (GSR) and Alternate that is the group's link with the General Service Conference via the district and area.
5. The AA Group is the shared experience and voice of AA's collective conscience.

The Online Intergroup:

1. The Online Intergroup is a service entity.
2. The Online Intergroup operates outside of the service structure and does not have representation at the General Service Conference.
3. The online Intergroup maintains their own online meeting information.
4. The Online Intergroup identify members as voting or non-voting members of the online intergroup.
5. The Online Intergroup is self-supporting through voluntary contributions of its members.

As it says in Concept I:

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

The A.A. Group — the Final Voice of the Fellowship

"Alcoholics Anonymous has been called an upside down organization because "the ultimate responsibility and final authority for world services resides with the groups — rather than with the trustees, the General Service Board or the General Service Office in New York."

"Twelve Concepts For World Service Illustrated"

Advisory Actions relating to Online Groups

2005 Advisory Action recommended that:

Online meetings in languages in addition to English, French and Spanish be listed in A.A. directories under "ONLINE MEETINGS" with the meeting language indicated next to the listing and in accordance with the 1997 Conference Advisory Action that:

On-line A.A. meetings that request to be listed in A.A. directories be added to the "International Correspondence Meetings" in A.A. directories, that each listing include the internet address of the on-line meeting, and that each on-line meeting requesting to be listed in our directories furnish G.S.O. with the name and physical address of a member willing to serve as "mail" contact.

Online meetings listed in A.A. directories under "ONLINE MEETINGS" continue to be listed with an e-mail contact address only, in keeping with the 1997 General Service Conference recommendation that:

On-line A.A. meetings that request to be listed in A.A. directories be added to the "International Correspondence Meetings" in A.A. directories, that each listing include the internet address of the on-line meeting, and that each on-line meeting requesting to be listed in our directories furnish G.S.O. with the name and physical address of a member willing to serve as "mail" contact.

2008 Advisory Action recommended that:

The Online Intergroup of A.A. (OIAA) be listed in a new section titled "Online Intergroups" under the section "International Correspondence Meetings" in the A.A. Directories above where "Online Meetings" appear; the listing will include the online intergroup Web site and e-mail addresses.

The statement "This Directory is not to be used as a mailing list or for any form of solicitation or commercial venture" that appears on the cover of A.A. Directories be made significantly more prominent, e.g. use borders, larger type face, etc. (Rescinded by Floor Action)

The Advisory Action of the Conference Committee on Report and Charter, Item B2, which recommended that the statement: "This directory is not to be used as a mailing list or for any form of solicitation or commercial venture" that appears on the cover of A.A. Directories be made significantly more prominent, e.g. use borders, larger type face, etc., be rescinded. (Floor Action)

2016 Advisory Action recommended that:

The category title "Online Meetings" be changed to "Online Meetings/Online Groups" on page vi and vii in the A.A. Directories.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol H.
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