

# MID-SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA AREA 09 COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

Service to the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous shall be the primary purpose of General Service in the Communications Committee. In all our proceedings we shall observe the spirit of the A.A. Twelve Traditions, mindful of the ideals expressed in *The A.A. Service Manual and the Twelve Concepts for World Service*. The Right of Participation and the Right of Appeal and Dissent shall always be observed. In the absence of specific indications in these Guidelines or of direct Assembly action, the latest edition of *The A.A. Service Manual* may be relied upon.

**A. PURPOSE:** The Mid-Southern California Area 09 (herein “M.S.C.A.” and “Area 09”) Communications Committee (herein “Committee”) has the purpose of facilitating communication within M.S.C.A and the fellowship at large. The result is that the Communications Committee is interconnected, with mutual resources and a common voice with other Area 09 service entities.

**B. SCOPE:** All actions of the Communications Committee are governed by the Twelve Traditions of AA, the Twelve Concepts for World Service, and the Guidelines of M.S.C.A. These Communications Committee Guidelines revise the latest version dated January 11, 2009 in a significant manner, eliminating four previous subcommittees as their primary functions are fulfilled by other Standing Committees (particularly the new, 2022 Technologies Committee).

**C. COMMITTEE STRUCTURE/OFFICERS:** All members of Area 09 are welcome to serve, either in a formal or informal capacity, on the Area Communications Committee. Identified officers have specified responsibilities as defined herein in Subsections C.1. through C.5. All Area 09 members have the right of participation during Area Service Committee meetings, Area Service Assemblies, and announced meetings of the Committee.

1. **COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON (Chairperson):** The term of office is two (2) years beginning January 1 of even-numbered years. The Chairperson is elected biannually in October of odd-numbered years, from a list of members willing to stand, in conformance with our Third Legacy Voting Procedure<sup>1</sup>, at the Area Elections Assembly. The Chairperson serves one two-year term, with the exception that they may complete the remainder of a vacant two-year term. In case the office of Chairperson is unfilled or vacated during the term, the M.S.C.A. Chairperson may appoint someone to fill the position, which shall be confirmed (or not) at the next Area meeting. This person may be bilingual, but must be proficient in the English language.

The Committee Chairperson prepares an agenda and presides over Committee meetings; reports to Area 09 at Area Service Assemblies and Area Service Committee meetings; coordinates committee activities; and uses all available resources to assure Committee responsibilities are fulfilled. The Chairperson has a vote on all matters brought before the

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.dropbox.com/s/817de31cgwr7sew/Third%20Legacy%20flow%20chart.pdf?dl=0>

Committee and is a voting member of the Area Service Committee meetings and Area Service Assemblies.

2. ALTERNATE CHAIR: An Alternate Chairperson shall be elected internally by the Committee by simple majority in January of even years after the October Area Elections Assembly. They assume the duties and responsibilities of the Chairperson in their absence, and will only have a vote at Area Service Assemblies and Area Service Committee meetings in the absence of the Chairperson. Like other Communications Committee officers, they serve a two-year term or as provided for above in Section C.1.

3. SECRETARY: The Secretary shall be elected internally by the Committee by simple majority in January of even years after the October Area Elections Assembly. The Secretary takes attendance at Committee meetings, keeps a roster, records and archives minutes of Committee meetings, and makes them available as requested by the Chairperson and other Committee members. In addition, the Secretary records and archives minutes of email or conference call meetings, particularly where votes are taken. Like other Communications Committee officers, they serve a two-year term or as provided for above in Section C.1.

4. NEWSLETTER EDITOR: This elected position is described in detail in Section F.1., below. Like other Communications Committee officers, they serve a two-year term or as provided for above in Section C.1.

5. LEAD TRANSLATOR: This appointed position is described in detail in Section F.2.C., below. Like other Communications Committee officers, they serve a two-year term or as provided for above in Section C.1.

#### **D. MEETINGS AND VOTING PROCEDURES:**

1. The Committee shall meet at all Area Service Committee meetings and Area Service Assemblies, and may meet at other times and places with timely notice. Typically, the Committee will not meet at the Area Elections Assembly, FORO, or Servathon, unless asked to participate as part of the program.

2. A quorum shall be the number of voting members present.

3. All Committee business shall be passed by a simple majority vote.

#### **E. FUNDING:**

1. The sole financial support for the Communications Committee shall be M.S.C.A.

2. The Communications Committee shall not promote nor conduct any fund-raising activities of any description.

3. Activities performed in support of the Committee's function by the Chairperson, Alternate Chairperson (only when functioning on behalf of the Committee in the Chairperson's absence),

Newsletter Editor, and Lead Translator shall be compensated by budgeted funds approved each year for the Committee.

4. By September of each year, the Communications Committee Chairperson with input from the Newsletter Editor and Committee members shall produce a budget for the following year.

**F. PRIMARY FUNCTIONS OF THE COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE:** The two primary functions of the Communications Committee are to produce an Area 09 Newsletter and facilitate translation of *written* materials between English and Spanish. Most of the duties and responsibilities of the previous Electronics Media Subcommittee and Communications Equipment Subcommittee have been transferred to the newly created (e.g., approved January 2022) Technologies Committee, which is now responsible for overseeing the Area 09 website; providing for *auditory* translation between English and Spanish at official Area 09 meetings; for maintaining an inventory of equipment owned by M.S.C.A. (e.g., audio/visual equipment, translation equipment, software, computers, and printers, etc.); and replacing equipment as necessary.

1. NEWSLETTER:

A. Area 09 Newsletter Editor: The Communications Committee, by means of an internally-elected Newsletter Editor, is responsible for producing the Area 09 Newsletter. Although not a hard-and-fast rule, historically the Past Delegate is invited to serve as the Editor. If after inviting the Past Delegate to serve as the Editor, they decline, then the Committee will internally elect a Newsletter Editor by simple majority. The Editor shall serve a two-year term within a given Panel, may serve an additional term if filling a vacancy (see Section C.1.), and is a voting member of Area Service Committee and Area Service Assembly.

Given the function of the Editor, they are expected to attend all Area Service Committee meetings and Area Service Assemblies. They are also encouraged to attend all Area-related events, such as Servathons, FOROs, Pre-Conference Boot Camps and Workshops, and other gatherings so that they may write editorial pieces about those events.

B. Content: The monthly Newsletter shall be published for the benefit of Area 09 members and may include but is not limited to the following, with a preference that the contents are provided by Area 09 members and pertain to service in our Area:

1. Local A.A. news and information about groups and committees;
2. Reprinted material from A.A. literature;
3. Sharing of experience in recovery, unity, and service;
4. Information pertaining to Area actions, finances, and meetings; and
5. Information regarding A.A. service, events, and announcements.

In keeping with A.A.'s tradition of cooperation without affiliation, no events exclusively planned as fund-raising events will be listed in the Newsletter.

All content of the Newsletter shall be governed by the Twelve Traditions of A.A., the Twelve Concepts for World Service, M.S.C.A. Guidelines, and these Communications Committee Guidelines.

C. Timing and Distribution: It is the responsibility of the Editor, and ultimately the Chairperson, to ensure the Newsletter is delivered in a timely manner. Given the time-sensitive nature of the Newsletter, it is desirable that the Newsletter is published monthly, allowing for flexibility when, for unforeseeable reasons, the Newsletter Editor is unable to produce it. If it becomes obvious that a monthly Newsletter is unnecessary and that a bimonthly or even quarterly Newsletter will effectively serve Area 09 members, the Communications Committee may internally decide to produce Newsletters at other intervals, following the simple majority vote outlined herein in Section D.3. Also by a simple majority vote, the Committee may decide to return to monthly volumes.

If more than two consecutive Newsletters are missed, the Chairperson will contact the Newsletter Editor for an explanation, and if a third consecutive Newsletter is missed, the Committee may choose to seek a new Editor.

A draft Newsletter shall be produced by the Editor approximately mid-month prior to the month of distribution (e.g., on October 15 for the November newsletter). The Editor will distribute the draft to the Committee Chairperson, Secretary, and all other interested/active Committee members on the Secretary's roster. Reviewers will have approximately one week to make recommendations, after which time the Editor will finalize the draft document based on feedback received to produce the final version.

The Editor will use Google Translator or similar application(s) to translate the Newsletter from English to Spanish, or from Spanish to English if Spanish is the primary language of the Editor. The preliminary translated version of the final Newsletter will then be provided to the Lead Translator (see Section F.2. below). By means of the Lead Translator and other Committee members, the Editor will ensure that both English and Spanish versions of the Newsletter are simultaneously distributed each month or agreed-upon intervals.

An appropriate number of hard copy English and Spanish versions shall be provided at Area events, such as Area Service Committee meetings and Area Service Assemblies, which shall be determined by the Editor and/or Chairperson based on how many copies are left over after each event. Hard copy versions may differ from electronic versions by minimizing the number of embedded links, which are not functional in hard copies.

The primary distribution of the Newsletter shall be via email and the Area 09 website (msca09aa.org). It is desirable that final versions of the Newsletter, in both English and Spanish, be delivered to the Area Secretary near the end of the month prior to the monthly volume (e.g., by about October 31 for the November Newsletter), which will allow the Area Secretary to electronically distribute the Newsletter to all Area 09 members on the email distribution list. Also, at the end of each month, the Editor will provide both English and Spanish versions to the webmaster, and afterwards monitor the website and contact the webmaster if the Newsletters are not posted in a timely manner.

## 2. TRANSLATIONS:

A. Materials to be Translated: Keeping in mind that auditory translations are covered by the Technologies Committee, the Communications Committee is charged with the translation of all *written* documents received from the following sources:

1. Any Area Officer;
2. The Chair or Cochair of any Area Standing Committee or Subcommittee;
3. Any Area 09 member providing materials to be included in the Newsletter; and,
4. When identified by an Area 09 member, the Committee would facilitate translation of any historical, archived documents that occur only in English that need to be translated into Spanish to ensure equity within our Hispanic community.

Specific identifiable materials that will require regular translations include:

1. Draft and final minutes of monthly Area Service Committee meetings and Area Service Assemblies prepared by the Area Secretary;
2. Draft and final minutes of monthly Board meetings, noting that final minutes are distributed to District Committee Members and District Committee Member Chairs by the Area Secretary;
3. Flyers and announcements of Area-sponsored events, such as the FORO and Pre-Conference Boot Camp; and,
4. Monthly Newsletter.

B. Submittal of materials: For continuity and to avoid confusion, all requests for translation shall be presented to the Communications Chair, with the exception that materials intended for the Newsletter may be given directly to the Newsletter Editor. The Communications Chair is responsible to provide materials for translation to the Lead Translator.

C. Translation Personnel: The Committee Chairperson, with assistance from all Committee members, shall identify as many people as possible from the Spanish-speaking community (assuming the Chairperson's primary language is English) to ensure that all pertinent materials are translated in a timely manner. One appointed person within this community, referred to as the "Lead Translator," shall be assigned the responsibility of translating all materials, working in close association with the Committee Chairperson and for Newsletter materials, with the Editor. The Lead Translator's travel to and from each Area Service Committee meeting and Area Service Assembly (i.e., where minutes are to be recorded) shall be reimbursed. Any other reasonable costs incurred by the Lead Translator in fulfilling their translation duties shall be reimbursed from the Communications Committee budget.

D. Professional Translation Services: When no other avenue of timely translation is available, or the document being translated requires professional translation, the Communications Committee may retain professional translation services to ensure that all translations are completed in a timely manner. It is prudent that three competitive cost estimates for consigned work are obtained prior to hiring the professional translation

service. The decision to select a translator shall be decided by Committee members by a simple majority vote. These types of outside professional services should have a suitable amount entered as a budget item each fiscal year.

#### **F. RATIFICATION, AMENDMENT AND SUSPENSION OF THESE GUIDELINES:**

1. **RATIFICATION**: This document becomes effective upon acceptance by a two-thirds vote of the M.S.C.A. Service Assembly.

2. **AMENDMENT**: These Guidelines, except as otherwise noted herein, may be amended as follows:

a) All proposed amendments are to be submitted to the Guidelines and Policy (GAP) Committee for review and recommendations;

b) Following GAP review and any necessary revisions, the revised Guidelines are to be submitted to Area 09 members at an Area Service Committee meeting for questions and a vote to forward to a second Area Service Committee meeting where discussion will ensue if the vote is favorable, to be voted on at the next Area Service Assembly as is or with agreed-upon modifications;

c) Prior to submission to the Area Service Assembly, the Chairperson shall provide opportunity for General Service Representatives (G.S.R.s) and other interested Area 09 members to become fully informed on the amendment(s) by disseminating them by email through the Area Secretary and by posting them on the website; and

d) Upon acceptance by two thirds of the voting members at an Area Service Assembly, the proposed amendments become part of these Guidelines.

3. **SUSPENSION**: Suspension may occur following the procedures for Amendments, with the exceptions that (a) there is no need to consult the G.A.P. Committee and (b) suspension requires a three-fourths majority vote of the members of the Area Service Assembly, whereupon this document or any part thereof may be suspended temporarily.