

MID-SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA AREA 09

COOPERATION WITH THE ELDER COMMUNITY (CEC)

Service to the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous shall be the primary purpose of general service in the Cooperation with the Elder Community 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.

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Approved by the MSCA Assembly on September 12, 2021

COOPERATION WITH THE ELDER COMMUNITY COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

- A. **PURPOSE:** To carry the message to the older alcoholic through a committee on Cooperation with the Elder Community (CEC). The elder alcoholic (AA members and potential members) are in a universal phase of life with its own blessings and challenges and are an ever-increasing segment of our A.A. membership. We hope to assist Area 9 groups and districts to lessen the barriers, physical and technological, that contribute to elder isolation in Alcoholic Anonymous.
- B. **SCOPE:** All actions of the CEC are governed by the Twelve Traditions of AA, the Twelve Concepts for World Service, and the Guidelines of the Mid-Southern California Area.
- C. **MEMBERSHIP:** The objective is to have at least one representative from each Area 9 District. It is suggested that the representative have at least two years of sobriety.
 - a. Membership may include the currently serving Chairpersons and Alternate Chairpersons, all available past CEC Chairpersons and Alternate Chairpersons, and all members of Area 09 interested in the activities of the committee.
- D. **COMMITTEE STRUCTURE:** The CEC Committee may have a Chairperson, Alternate Chairperson, and a Secretary.
- E. **OFFICERS:**
 - a. **CHAIRPERSON:** Shall be elected by the Area Assembly biannually. The term of office is two (2) years beginning January 1 of even numbered years. The Chairperson only serves one full two-year term, but in addition, may complete the remainder of an unfilled two-year term.
 - i. In case the office of Chairperson is unfilled or vacated during the term, the members of the CEC shall appoint a new Chairperson of the committee and announce a new Chairperson to the members of the Area Assembly.
 - ii. **Duties:**
 - 1. Shall preside over CEC meetings; prepare an agenda to be used at the meeting.
 - 2. Report to the Area Service Committee and/or Area Assembly when requested.
 - 3. At the conclusion of the term of office, the Chairperson shall submit a historical report describing accomplishments made during the term.

- b. ALTERNATE CHAIRPERSON: An Alternate Chairperson shall be appointed by the Committee and will assume the duties and responsibilities of the Chairperson in his/her absence. The Alternate Chairperson will only have a vote at the ASC or Assembly in the absence of the Chairperson.
- c. SECRETARY: Shall be elected by the committee. Take attendance at committee meetings; transcribe the minutes of committee meetings and make them available to the Chairperson.

F. COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES:

- a. Communicate, cooperate, and collaborate as indicated with all District and Area Hispanic and English committees: Literature Committee, Accessibilities Committee, Grapevine/La Vina Committee, Communication/Technology Committee, Public Information Committee and Cooperation with the Professional Community Committee to hold workshops and presentations, distribute literature (digital and hardcopy) and information in English and Spanish to carry the AA message to elders.
- b. Utilize the internet and new uses for computer and telephonic technology to lessen barriers that contribute to elder isolation.
- c. Make presentations to physicians, professionals who work with elder community, residential facility staff, health care providers.
- d. Make presentations to the A.A. community at non-A.A. events, assemblies, conventions.
- e. Work with Intergroups to identify and label A.A. meetings in meeting directories, virtual and in person, that follow accessibility guidelines as “suggested” in A.A.® Service Material from the General Service Office (G.S.O.). (see Appendix A)
- f. Distribute literature (digital and hardcopy) at locations where the elder communities congregate such as senior citizen centers, AARP events, geriatric conventions, and health care facilities.
- g. Contact retirement center managers to place literature (digital and hardcopy) into their public areas.
- h. Contact geriatric physicians to place literature in their waiting rooms.

G. MEETINGS: The committee will meet at each Area Service Committee meeting and Area Assembly and other times as necessary, except for the May Assembly, which is for delegates.

H. FUNDING: The committee will submit a budget for the upcoming year to the Finance Committee each September.

- I. CEC GUIDELINES: RATIFICATION, AMENDMENT AND SUSPENSION:
 - a. RATIFICATION: This document becomes effective upon acceptance by two thirds of the MSCA Assembly present and voting thereon.
 - b. AMENDMENT: This document, except as otherwise noted herein, may be amended as follows: a) All proposed amendments may be submitted to the Area Officers for review and recommendations, b) Not later than 4 months from its submission, the proposed amendment(s) will be submitted to the Assembly with or without any Area Officers recommendations, c) Prior to submission to the Assembly, the Chairperson shall provide opportunity for the G.S.R.s to become fully informed on the amendment(s) by making them available in writing, and d) Upon acceptance by two thirds of the Assembly present voting thereon, the proposed amendment(s) becomes part of this document.
 - c. SUSPENSION: Upon agreement by a three-fourths majority of the Area Assembly present voting thereof, this document or any part thereof may be suspended temporarily for necessity.

Appendix A

Suggested Guidelines For “Accessible/Senior Friendly” In Person Meetings:

- Follow Center for Disease Control (CDC) and State health and safety guidelines.
 - Follow Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines and A.A. World Services, Inc. publication SMF-208 (rev 03/18) *Accessibilities Checklist for Meetings and Groups*.
 - Have a volunteer program to keep in contact with elder alcoholics and help get to meetings.
 - Provide a suggestion box for elders to communicate their concerns and requests.
 - Provide Grapevine and La Viña subscriptions to isolated elders.
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Suggested Guidelines For “Accessible/Senior Friendly” Virtual Meetings:

- Have a volunteer program to help elders get online with clear instructions for meeting access on the internet or from a landline.
- Meetings that provide closed captioning for the hearing impaired.
- *Most important - Senior Friendly meetings are clearly designated in Meeting Directories.*

ACCESSIBILITIES CHECKLIST FOR MEETINGS AND GROUPS *Reprinted from SMF-208 (rev 03/18) with permission of A.A. World Services, Inc.*

How accessible is your meeting? This is a guide to help reduce the physically based access barriers that a person may encounter when attending meetings in your location.

Introduction:

The meeting location should be physically accessible so that anyone may arrive on site, approach the building, and enter the meeting without barriers. Following are some questions your group can answer to determine the overall accessibility of your meeting space.

PARKING:

- Are an adequate number of accessible parking spaces available? (9 feet wide for car, plus 5-foot-wide access aisle)
- Are spaces close to accessible entrances?
- Are spaces marked with identification signs?
- Is the parking area or street clear of snow, ice, or other debris?
- Is a delineated path of travel by wheelchair accessible from the street or parking area?
- Are the sidewalks even and in good repair?
- Are there curb cut-outs to facilitate access to the sidewalk?

ROUTE OF TRAVEL:

- Is the meeting place accessible to public transportation?

- Is there a clear route of travel that does not require the use of stairs?
- Can any potential obstacles along pathways — including hanging objects — be detected by a person using a cane or other mobility device?
- If the meeting is at night, is the pathway well lit?

ENTRANCE:

- Does the entrance have steps, a threshold, or other physical barriers?
 - If so, is there a ramp, lift, or an alternate entrance that is accessible?
- Is the ramp excessively steep? Does it have railings?
- Is the lift in good working order? If the lift is operated by a key, does someone on location have possession of the key or know where the key is kept?
- Is there signage indicating the location of the alternate accessible entrance?
- Does the entrance door have adequate width (36") and clearance to accommodate a wheelchair?
- Can the doors be opened by someone in a wheelchair or would he or she need assistance?

INSIDE THE BUILDING:

- Is there level access from the wheelchair accessible entrance to the meeting area?
 - If not, are there ramps to enable someone in a wheelchair to reach the meeting? (Lifting someone over steps or stairs is not an acceptable solution for access.)
- If there is an elevator or a lift, is it in good working order? If the elevator or lift is operated by a key, does someone on location have possession of the key or know where the key is kept?
- Are corridors and door widths (36") adequate for passage of a wheelchair?
- Are corridors reasonably clear to allow safe passage for everyone?

RESTROOMS:

- Is at least one fully accessible restroom available?
- Are the stall doors operable?
- Is there adequate space for a person in a wheelchair to maneuver within the stall? (60" for forward movement and a five-foot diameter or T-shape of clear space to make turns.)
- Are there grab bars on the walls behind and to the side nearest the toilet?
- Can the faucet be operated without grasping, twisting, or turning?

THE MEETING ROOM:

- Are chairs set up with adequate aisle space for a wheelchair?
- Is the lighting adequate?
- Is there a designated section for members who are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing?
 - If so, is there adequate space for a sign language interpreter to sit with easy access to that group?
- Is someone available to welcome people and orient them to the meeting space as needed.

- Is the coffee service accessible to a person in a wheelchair or with another type of mobility device?
- Is A.A. literature available that addresses the needs of individuals with diverse abilities?
- *Does the local intergroup/central office know that the meeting space is available to people with diverse accessibility needs?*

Additional information about Accessibilities and setting up your meeting space may be available from your district or area C.E.C. and Accessibilities Committees or your local intergroup/central office. You may also want to search the internet for a variety of Accessibilities Guides and information.

In addition, the following accessibilities service materials are available on our A.A. website at www.aa.org.

- **MG-16 (rev 6/19) A.A.® Guidelines — Accessibility for All Alcoholics**
- **MG-13 (rev 6/19) A.A.® Guidelines — Sharing the A.A. Message with the Alcoholic Who Is Deaf**
- **F-107® Serving All Alcoholics**

MG-02 (rev 9/17) A.A.® GUIDELINES CENTRAL OR INTERGROUP OFFICES

Reprinted from A.A.® Guidelines Central or Intergroup Offices with permission of A.A. World Services Inc.

Section: FUNCTIONS OF A CENTRAL/ INTERGROUP OFFICE

- Subsection (9): **ACCESSIBILITIES** — Many central/intergroup offices carry information on groups that are wheelchair accessible, or which may provide American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation for members who are Deaf. Some offices have equipment or materials for communicating with alcoholics who have visual and auditory challenges, those who are housebound or chronically ill, those who are living with the effects of brain damage or stroke, and others who may have less visible challenges.