

# COASTAL BEND AREA OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

## Policy and Procedures



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# I. Area Service Committee

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## A. Introduction

The Coastal Bend Area of Narcotics Anonymous (CBANA) is a loosely knit network of groups bound together by common principles guided by The Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous, The Twelve Concepts for NA Service, A Guide to Local Services and other NA approved service literature. The common goal of the Area Service Committee (ASC) and the groups within CBANA is to carry the NA message of recovery to the addict who still suffers (Tradition 5). The primary resolve of the Area Service Committee is to provide services and support to groups composing CBANA to achieve this shared common goal. The ASC is responsible to the groups they serve. Our program of recovery provides for any individual member to bring forward area group concerns to the ASC in the appropriate forum without fears of retaliation. “The final responsibility and authority for NA services rests with the NA groups” (2nd Concept).

## B. Purpose

Services provided by the ASC require a degree of organization which could easily divert area groups from fulfilling their primary purpose at meetings. Most services require money and manpower beyond the capabilities of a single group. The ASC is a group of trusted servants and group representatives voted in by members of CBANA into various positions of service. Sufficient authority is entrusted to these servants and group representatives to ensure that the business affairs and activities of the ASC are completed in a responsible manner. The Seventh Concept for NA Service states that, “All members of a service body bear substantial responsibility for that body’s decisions and should be allowed to fully participate in its decision-making processes.” It is entrusted that the group has delegated sufficient authority to each Group Service Representative (GSR) or alternate to conduct the necessary work within the ASC.

The ASC is established by the groups to provide a forum to receive and provide information. The GSR or alternate (GSRa) communicate the group’s conscience, experience, and information relating to issues that affect their group, other groups, or CBANA as a whole.

- The name of this body shall be called The Coastal Bend Area Service Committee of Narcotics Anonymous, herein referred to as the ASC.
- The ASC receives direction from the groups within CBANA and shall be directly responsible to these groups in all ASC actions.
- The ASC shall administer and coordinate the activities common to the welfare of the groups within the boundaries of CBANA.
- The ASC will serve as a link between groups within CBANA, Region, and World Services.
- The ASC shall always foster an environment of unity within CBANA.

## C. Collective Group Conscience

The Basic Text of Narcotics Anonymous is described as a “synthesis of the collective group conscience of the Fellowship.” Group conscience is the means by which we collectively invite the guidance of a Higher Power into our decision-making process. Developing a collective conscience provides us with the spiritual guidance we need

for making service related decisions. This conscience is demonstrated when group members listen to one another and make compromises. Calm discussion, mutual respect, and a reliance on the group's conscience helps groups fulfill their primary purpose.

One of the best ways a group can address the various issues that may arise is to remain focused on our primary purpose. Applying the spiritual principles within the Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions can solve most groups' problems. In other cases, the group may seek suggestions from neighboring groups or through trusted servants at the ASC. In addition, the 12 Concepts of NA provides guidance to actions and decisions within the ASC. Group conscience is a vital tool used to provide the collective voice of the group to the ASC. Just as the groups' primary purpose is to provide the message to the addict that still suffers, it is the ASC's primary purpose to provide collective experience, strength, and resources to the groups they serve.

## D. Area General Provisions

1. The ASC uses the consensus based decision making (CBDM) process in a majority of the business activities. Roberts Rules of Order has been agreed upon for the voting process in selecting trusted servants.
2. Any member of NA or interested person(s) may attend the ASC meetings; however, the voting voice is entrusted to the GSR or GSRA and ASC voting members.
3. The collective conscience of the ASC provides a resource for groups seeking information on a variety of issues. The group reports section of the agenda provides for sharing ideas for problem solving, support, and ASC assistance.
4. The ASC shall provide a Group Service Representative orientation as needed by a Regional Committee Member (RCM)-1 or RCM-2).
5. The ASC will supply a new group starter kit to all groups new to CBANA as a welcoming gift.
6. All GSR's and GSRA's have a responsibility to share information from the ASC with their home group members and provide the ASC with their collective group conscience.
7. Special meetings may be called by the Facilitator at least 1 week prior to the meeting date. The purpose of the meeting shall be stated in the communication provided to each ASC member.
8. A schedule will be provided listing all group meeting details and other relevant information.

## II. General Format

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### A. ASC General Meeting Format

The regular ASC meeting will be held the 3rd Sunday of each month at 1400, unless the date is changed through consensus. The meeting Minutes (ASC Secretary/Recorder) and Treasurers Report (ASC Treasurer) will be supplied to all group representatives and elected trusted servants for review prior to the start of the meeting.

#### **ASC Format**

1. Facilitator calls meeting to order followed by the Serenity Prayer.

“God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,  
the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.”

2. Reading of the monthly Tradition (Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous)
3. Reading of the monthly Concept (Twelve Concepts of Service in Narcotics Anonymous)
4. Roll call taken by Secretary
5. New groups are recognized (New group starter kit provided)
6. Reading of Service Prayer

“God grant us the knowledge that we may work according to your divine precepts. Instill in us a sense of your purpose. Make us servants of your will and grant us a bond of selflessness, that this truly be your work, not ours: and that no addict anywhere need die from the horrors of addiction.”

7. Secretary’s report of the minutes (Previous months reviewed for corrections)
8. Treasurers current monthly report (Reviewed for corrections)
9. Regional Committee Member reports
10. Subcommittee Reports:
  - a. Hospital & Institutions
  - b. Public Relations
  - c. Phone Line
  - d. Activities
  - e. Literature Bank
  - f. Recovery by the Sea (RBS)
  - g. Fellowship development (Revised February 2025)
  - h. Policy
  - i. Other Subcommittee / Ad Hoc (when applicable)
  - j. Area Inventory Ad Hoc
11. Group reports
12. Open forum
13. Old Business – Tabled agenda items
14. New Proposals/Business (Elections/nominations at the end)
15. Other financial Business (Regional Donation)
16. Seventh Tradition
17. Other announcements and actions needed for the next meeting
18. Close meeting - announce next meeting date

### III. Voting Procedures

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#### A. Voting Privilege

- The GSR or GSRa and all elected trusted servants will be provided a voting voice at the ASC.
- ASC members may be involved with service to their home groups; however, the voice of their home group should always take precedence when voting or providing consensus. (One person – One vote)
- CBANA members may not hold more than a single elected ASC position at any given time.

## B. Establishing Quorum

The ASC will utilize Consensus-Based Decision Making (CBDM) as a common platform for most business conducted at meetings. Roberts Rules of Order will be utilized for election of trusted servants. In order to conduct business at the ASC, the body utilizes these guidelines:

- It is the responsibility of all ASC members to be present for business and proposals for the duration of the ASC.
- Quorum is defined as the minimum number of voting members needed to conduct business. It will be established at the beginning of new business by the Facilitator. The total number of voting members present at that time will establish 100% quorum.
- The voice of the groups should always take precedence in the ASC decision making process. The voting GSRs/GSRa members should always be equal or greater to the voting ASC officers. If there are fewer voting GSRs/GSRa's than voting ASC officers, then quorum is broken – all business and new proposals are tabled until a time that quorum is re-established.
- Quorum is broken when participation falls below 80%. For example – There are 10 active voting members present at the beginning of new business. During business 2 members leave the meeting. Quorum is still established. If another voting member leaves then quorum will be broken.

## C. Consensus-Based Decision-Making (CBDM) Format

Consensus decision making is a resourceful means of reaching agreement between members of the ASC. A consensus based approach is utilized to find solutions that each member actively supports - or at least in purpose or concept. This ensures that all opinions, ideas, and concerns are considered in the decision making process. When CBDM is applied effectively, the decision making process becomes more efficient. Listening is a crucial principle for CBDM success and is the responsibility of all ASC members. "Group conscience is the spiritual means by which we invite a loving God to influence our decisions" (6th Concept).

### **CBDM General Format**

1. Proposal Submitted – New proposals may be presented to the ASC in the new business forum. Changes to existing ASC protocol may require proposals to be made in the old business forum. Changes in policy may be made quarterly (January, April, July, & October) for approval in new business or tabled for old business at a later date.

Proposals for discussion may be presented by:

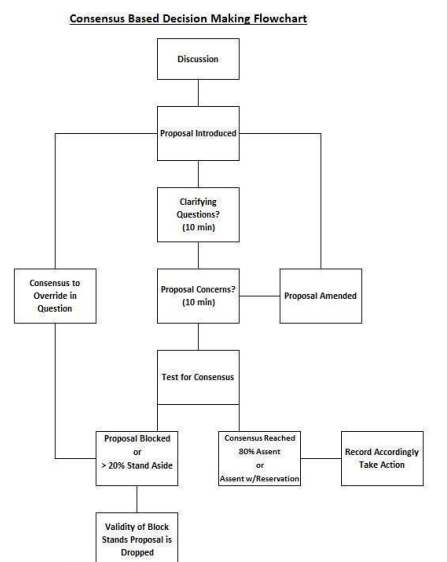
- A GSR or Alternate GSR,
- ASC Facilitator or Co-facilitator,
- Subcommittee Facilitator or Alternate,
- RCM-1 or RCM-2

All proposals are to be written on the approved proposal form. It must contain the intent, a notation of policy affected (if any), and financial impact (if any) prior to consideration on the floor. Information from the form is to provide clarity of the proposal being discussed. All proposals should be presented by the author of the proposal or topic whenever possible for clarification. The author of the proposal may use the form to make addendums agreed upon in discussion of the proposal.

2. Clarification of Proposal – This segment of CBDM is intended for clarifying the topic prior to discussion. It ensures that each member fully understands the proposal. All CBANA members in attendance are welcomed to participate. Once the ASC body understands the proposal and intent, the proposal proceeds to discussion.
3. Discussion, Reservation(s), and Amendment(s) – The facilitator will ask for discussion of the proposal. Reservations or concerns are open to all CBANA members. Productive discussions are required to mold the proposal. If the discussion loses focus the Facilitator may ask each voting member to list 3 pro and 3 con statements concerning the proposal.

- The proposal may be amended at this point to obtain consensus. Agreeable amendments are written on the proposal form by the author. The facilitator should refer back to sections 2 and 3 of this format if amendments are made.
- A time limit of 15-20 minutes will be imposed on the discussion and clarification of the proposals. In order for all interested parties to participate, it is important each member adds to the discussion and not restate what has already been presented.
- During the discussion process it would be an opportunity for GSR’s or GSRa’s to review the 4 different motions to select from in section 4 below.
- New trusted servants may require help in CBDM procedure from other GSR’s, RCM-1, or RCM-2.

4. Consensus – Once reservations have been heard and concerns addressed, the facilitator will call, “Do we have consensus?” Voting members may respond quickly in one of four ways:



- a. Assent – This means that the voter can support the proposal and all things have been considered. It may not mean that agreement is in all aspects of the proposal. It recognizes that the voter has heard the discussion and participated in the process of the final proposal and is v. willing to support the outcome. Assent is signified by the voter remaining silent during consensus.
  - b. Assent with Reservation – This means that the voter can support the proposal but still has strong reservations about the proposal or the outcome. It recognizes that the voter has heard the discussion, has participated in the process of the final proposal and is willing to support the outcome. The voter will raise their hand and vocalize “Assent with reservation” when recognized by the facilitator. The facilitator will note the reservation and record.
  - c. Stand Aside – This is not a vote of abstention but rather similar to a “no” vote. It is a statement that the voter does not support the proposal, but by the nature or severity of the objection chooses not to block the proposal. The voter will raise their hand and vocalize “stand aside” when called on by the facilitator. The facilitator will note their position on the proposal and record.
  - d. Block – The voter strongly believes that the proposal is in direct conflict with NA Traditions, NA Concepts, or fundamental moral positions (spiritual principles) of the voting participant. The block response should be used only in very rare circumstances. The participant blocking should be able to cite the tradition, concept, or moral position with which the proposal is in conflict. A block will in effect stop the process for the proposal from further motion unless the validity of the block is overturned through consensus by the voting body. (see below)
- Consensus is reached with at least 80% of authorized quorum participants motioning as Assent or Assent with Reservations. All Stand Aside motions are effectively voting “no” to the proposal. A Block by any quorum participant stops the CBDM process.
  - The quorum participants may override a Block motion through consensus on whether the block should stand. The same CBDM process is used for overturning a blocked motion. If the validity of the block is not questioned or consensus is not reached to overturn the block, the original proposal or motion is dropped.

## IV. Election of Trusted Servants

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### A. Election of ASC Trusted Servants

“Effective leadership is highly valued in Narcotics Anonymous. Leadership qualities should be carefully considered when selecting trusted servants” (4th Concept). Trusted servants should demonstrate the stability and personal sense of direction that serve as an example to others. They should be capable of serving without attempting to govern. The specific amount of clean time required will vary by position and responsibilities.

- Any CBANA member may nominate an individual for an ASC position that meets the position qualifications.



- Nominations for ASC positions shall take place as the last order of new business. This should be during the September ASC meeting or as needed to fill vacated positions.
- Members must be present to accept the nomination unless written means from the candidate are available. Each candidate should provide their recovery and service qualifications for the voting members to consider. Questions to the candidates may be used to clarify qualifications or concerns during this time.
- It is encouraged that all GSRs or alternates take back the nominations and qualifications to their home groups to establish group conscience for elections.
- Elections and voting will be in the last order of old business during the October ASC meeting or as needed. Members must be physically present if the nomination is accepted. Follow up questions or concerns may be presented to the candidates prior to the election process.
- Newly elected trusted servants to the ASC are encouraged to shadow the outgoing predecessor to gain knowledge and provide seamless service to the area.
- Roberts Rules of Order shall be used to elect ASC trusted servants by show of hands or by private ballot. Elected members of the ASC, GSR's or alternates may vote for candidates. Each voting member casts one vote. (see voting privileges) All votes should be kept in confidence.
- A two-thirds majority vote of authorized ASC members is required to elect ASC Officers and trusted servants. In the event with only one nomination, a vote is taken. If a two-thirds vote is not achieved, the position remains open and the nomination procedure continues. In the event of two or more nominees where a two-thirds majority is not reached, the election is tabled.
- Trusted servants newly elected will take positions on January 1st of the following year. For vacancies being filled, the elected servant will take office after the end of the ASC meeting unless other considerations have been approved by the ASC. Vacated positions filled will serve for the remainder of the term being filled.
- No ASC member shall hold more than one ASC trusted servant position in a single period – simultaneously. ASC members may hold positions (GSR or GSRa) at the group level but will only be allowed a single vote reflecting his/her group conscience decision.
- In the spirit of rotation, it is suggested that members periodically move from one area of service to another. Mentorship is highly valued in the fellowship and helps to provide fresh insight and ideas to the area. No ASC officer shall serve more than two consecutive terms in the same position.
- Members voted into service positions must have the clean time requirement at the time they actively go into service for that position. In certain situations the clean time requirement may be waived. It is the responsibility of the ASC body to measure maturity in recovery as well as clean time when filling trusted servant positions. Various positions of service have clean time requirements that cannot be waived.

## Administrative Officers

These individuals are responsible for administering the general affairs of the area committee. These servants should demonstrate a stable and personal sense of direction that serves as an example to others. The specific amount of clean time required will vary for each service position. All administrative officers should have a working knowledge of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts, as well as a familiarity to area policies

and A Guide to Local Services in Narcotics Anonymous. “In keeping with the spiritual nature of Narcotics Anonymous, our structure should always be one of service, never of government” (12th Concept).

#### 1. CBANA Facilitator

The area committee facilitator is responsible for conducting the ASC meeting, preparing the agenda, and various other administrative duties. The facilitator conducts the ASC meeting with a firm hand, a calm spirit, and a clear mind.

##### Qualifications:

- Minimum of five years continuous clean time.
- Working knowledge of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of NA.
- Thorough knowledge of A Guide to Local Services in Narcotics Anonymous and CBANA policies and procedures.
- Demonstrates working knowledge and ability to apply CBDM and Roberts Rules of Order while maintaining equality between groups.
- Strong leadership skills as presented from prior NA service and/or other work experiences.
- Willingness to give time and resources necessary for the position.

##### Responsibilities:

- Serves a one year term.
- Capable of conducting the ASC with a firm yet understanding manner.
- Arrange the ASC agenda and preside over the monthly ASC meeting.
- Participates as a liaison between ASC subcommittees and groups. Helps to coordinate and communicate subcommittee services to the groups they serve. Acts as a contact point for ASC responsibility.
- Guides the CBANA fellowship in making timely and responsible decisions in utilizing the budget while protecting the ASC from frivolous motions.
- Refrains from discussions over motion(s) while presiding over the ASC, unless requested to do so by a voting member of the ASC to provide clarity and direction. If the Facilitator feels strongly over a motion/topic, the Facilitator may choose to step aside until the action over the motion/topic has passed. The Co-Facilitator will act on their behalf.
- Compile, provide, and discuss the annual report of affairs and resolutions to the ASC body in December.
- Serves as one of the signing members of the ASC bank account

#### 2. CBANA Co-Facilitator

The primary responsibility of the Co-Facilitator is the coordination of the area subcommittees. The Co-Facilitator is in regular contact with the chairpersons of each subcommittee to stay informed of their projects, actions, and concerns. They provide an experienced voice for solutions within and between subcommittees. The Co-Facilitator is also responsible to assist the Facilitator in conducting the ASC meetings and move into the Facilitator position in their absence. The Co-Facilitator is a 2 year

commitment. The first year is to provide experience and training for movement into the Facilitator role the following year.

Qualifications:

- Minimum of five years continuous clean time.
- Working knowledge of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of NA.
- Thorough knowledge of A Guide to Local Services in Narcotics Anonymous and CBANA policies and procedures.
- Demonstrates working knowledge and ability to apply CBDM and Roberts Rules of Order while maintaining equality between groups.
- Strong leadership skills as presented from prior NA service and/or other work experiences.
- Willingness to give time and resources necessary for the position.

Responsibilities:

- Serves a two year term.
- Capable of conducting the ASC with a firm yet understanding manner.
- Performs all the responsibilities of the Facilitator in their absence.
- Participates as a liaison between ASC subcommittees and groups. Helps to coordinate and communicate subcommittee services to the groups they serve. Acts as a contact point for ASC responsibility.
- Acts as Pro Tem chairperson of subcommittees when vacant.
- Acts as Pro Tem Treasure and/or Secretary/Recorder when vacant.
- Serves as one of the signing members of the ASC bank account.

3. CBANA Treasurer

The Treasurer is responsible for receiving, planning, and executing the flow of money within the CBANA bank account. It is recommended that the ASC elect a member into the position that is financially secure and good in the nature of maintaining personal financial accountability. Experience in business, accounting, bookkeeping, or similar experiences are helpful. The Treasurer receives contributions from the groups, pays rent and bills, reimburses officers and subcommittee chairs for budgeted expenses while maintaining and reporting the current financial condition of the CBANA fellowship.

Qualifications:

- Minimum of five years continuous clean time. (Cannot be waived).
- Working knowledge of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of NA.
- Thorough knowledge of A Guide to Local Services in Narcotics Anonymous, CBANA policies and procedures, and the NA Treasurer's Handbook.
- Strong leadership skills as presented from prior NA service and/or other work experiences.
- Skills in bookkeeping, accounting or similar skill set identified to maintain the position.
- Demonstrates an ongoing history of financial stability (Cannot be waived).
- Willingness to give time and resources necessary for the position.

Requirements:

- Serves a 2 year term
- Custodian of the CBANA ASC bank account.
- Ensures that all approved expenses are paid in a timely manner following the Financial Policy General Guidelines.
- Maintains a working perpetual report of contributions, expenditures, and account balances at each ASC meeting.
- Deposits funds into the CBANA ASC bank account within five banking days after receipts of funds.
- Prepares annual report of CBANA financial condition during the regular December ASC meeting (*policy change adopted July 2022*)
- Turns over all records and documents to the successor in order to preserve a continuity of financial history.
- Issues receipts for all money transactions received.
- Serve as one of the signing members of the ASC bank account. Co-signer of the CBANA Literature Bank and RBS bank accounts.
- In the absence of the Facilitator, Co-Facilitator, RCM-1, and RCM-2 – shall preside over the monthly ASC meeting.
- Adheres to established Financial Guidelines outlined. (Section V)
- Regularly (at least monthly) collects and distributes ASC mail.
- Maintains monthly spreadsheet to reflect incoming & outgoing money (*policy change adopted July 2022*)

#### 4. CBANA Recorder/Secretary

The Recorder/Secretary maintains all ASC communications. They are responsible for maintaining and distribution of all minutes during ASC meetings. A chronological log listing of motion activity (elections, proposals, etc.) is maintained and available for review by participants at the ASC.

##### Qualifications:

- Minimum of one year continuous clean time.
- Working knowledge of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of NA.
- Thorough knowledge of A Guide to Local Services in Narcotics Anonymous and CBANA policies and procedures.
- Skill set for maintaining and distributing the ASC meeting information. Ability to listen, record, and provide information for members to read and clearly understand.
- Willingness to give time and resources necessary for the position.

##### Requirements:

- Serves a one year term.
- Ability to produce accurate and legible minutes.
- Records and maintains minutes of each ASC meeting. Distributes copies of the minutes for all ASC participants ahead of the upcoming ASC meeting.
- Maintains an up to date information list of each ASC member which shall include email addresses and telephone numbers.

- Maintains the area archive of information. Copies of the recorded minutes are sent to the Web-Servant for posting on the CBANA website.
- Maintains the ASC registration of active groups and their status within the ASC.
- Performs and maintains roll call for ASC attendance and voting privileges.
- In the absence of the Facilitator, Co-Facilitator, RCM-1, RCM-2, and Treasurer - shall preside over the monthly ASC meeting.

#### 5. Regional Committee Members (RCM-1 and RCM-2)

Regional Service Committee (RSC) exists to pool the experience and resources of the areas and groups it serves. The RSC is composed of RCMs which are elected by the various areas the region serves. The RCMs share with members of the RSC, information about CBANA and provide information back to the ASC. The RCM reports provide world services information to best serve the area, groups, and area members. The RCM-1 position is voted in on even numbered years and the RCM-2 position is voted in on odd numbered years.

#### Qualifications:

- Minimum of 3 years continuous clean time. (Cannot be waived)
- Working knowledge of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of NA.
- Multiple levels of area service expertise.
- Willingness to give time and resources necessary for the position.
- All duties outlined in A Guide to Local Services in Narcotics Anonymous.

#### Requirements:

- Serves a 2 year term.
- Provides educational in-services to new group representatives to the ASC.
- Represents and carries the CBANA conscience at all RSC meetings.
- Provides the ASC with Region and World communications requiring input and/or support.
- Makes a report to the ASC concerning business related to the Region and World.
- Works closely with ASC officers as a source for information and guidance in matters concerning the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts of NA.
- In the absence of the Facilitator and Co-Facilitator, will preside over the ASC meeting.
- Serves as one of the signing members on the ASC bank account.
- Attends monthly ASC meetings, quarterly RSC meetings, and Conference Agenda Report (CAR) workshop. Compile and report CBANA conscience involving CAR motions to the RSC.

#### 6. Web Servant

This individual maintains internet access to the CBANA website while updating all documents, activities, events, and actions within the area. They also maintain and update the current groups, meetings, and events list with NAWS. They are responsible for set up and maintenance of electronic web based payment services required for event registration and other fund raising activities. This position is commonly a hired out service.

#### Qualifications & Responsibilities:

- Serves a 2 year term.
- Previous experience as website servant.
- Proficiencies in other technologies required for the position. (PayPal).
- General knowledge of website management and familiarity with technologies/software required to maintain the CBANA.org website.
- Works closely with area subcommittee's chairpersons to keep website information up to date and relevant.
- Maintains updated CBANA group registration with NAWS.
- Maintains a current visible and printable CBANA meeting schedule on the website.
- Keeps and maintains a current visible and printable copy of the area policy and procedures on the website.

### Subcommittee Chair Positions

All permanent subcommittee meetings (Hospitals & Institutions, Public Relations, Literature, Activities, and Fellowship Development (revised February 2025) shall meet each month with the time and date available for all interested CBANA members.

#### 7. Hospitals & Institutions (H&I)

The H&I Subcommittee conducts panels that carry the NA message to addicts whom often have no other way of hearing our message. Treatment panels are conducted for patients at addiction treatment centers and mental health facilities. Correctional panels are held for inmates at jails, prisons, and other institutions. More information may be found in the Hospitals and Institutions Handbook.

#### Qualifications:

- Minimum of 2 years continuous clean time. (Cannot be waived)
- Working knowledge of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of NA.
- Willingness to give time and resources necessary for the position.
- Previous H&I involvement.
- Available to service H&I within the guidelines of local treatment centers and correctional facilities.
- All other duties stated in A Guide to Local Service in Narcotics Anonymous.

#### Requirements:

- Serves a 2 year term.
- Shall attend all ASC and RSC meetings and provide written report of subcommittee activities.
- Facilitates H&I Subcommittee meetings.
- Works with RSC to ensure coverage of outlier facilities within the region without duplication of services.
- Each subcommittee is responsible to CBANA and the groups they serve. Actions by the subcommittee are communicated through its corresponding chairperson to the ASC.

## 8. Phonline

The Phonline Subcommittee provides recovery and area meeting information to addicts in need on a 24/7 basis. Volunteers often serve as the first point of contact of a newcomer to the NA fellowship. Their voice provides a message of hope to the still suffering addict.

### Qualifications:

- Minimum of 1 year continuous clean time.
- Working knowledge of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of NA.
- Knowledge and understanding of A Guidelines to Phonline Services.
- Willingness to give time and resources necessary for the position.
- Previous phonline involvement.
- All other duties stated in A Guide to Local Service in Narcotics Anonymous.

### Requirements:

- Serves a one year term
- Shall have working knowledge of the adopted phonline system and provide feedback and solutions for system operations.
- Shall attend all ASC meetings and provide written report updating the services of the phonline to the committee.
- Facilitate all Phonline Subcommittee meetings.
- Each subcommittee is responsible to CBANA and the groups they serve. Actions by the subcommittee are communicated through its corresponding chairperson to the ASC.

## 9. Public Relations

The purpose of the PR Subcommittee is to inform addicts and others within the CBANA area of the availability of recovery in Narcotics Anonymous. A wide range and variety of projects are designed to increase the community awareness of Narcotics Anonymous. A Guide to Public Information is available for more information.

### Qualifications:

- Minimum of 2 years continuous clean time.
- Working knowledge of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of NA.
- Willingness to give time and resources necessary for the position.
- Previous experience with public relations involvement.
- All other duties stated in A Guide to Local Service in Narcotics Anonymous.

### Requirements:

- Serves a 2 year term.
- Shall have working knowledge of computer software required to provide information. Working knowledge of social media websites.
- Updates CBANA meetings on the NAWS website quarterly.
- Shall attend all ASC meetings and provide written report updating the services of the PR Subcommittee to the ASC.

- Facilitate all Public Relations Subcommittee meetings.
- Each subcommittee is responsible to CBANA and the groups they serve. Actions by the subcommittee are communicated through its corresponding chairperson to the ASC.

## 10. Literature Bank

The Literature Bank maintains a working stock of NA books, pamphlets, guides, key tags, medallions, and other supplies that can be purchased by CBANA groups and individuals at ASC meetings. The subcommittee consists of the Chair and Co-Chair persons. Eligible members are elected into the Co-Chair position and mentored under the Chairperson for the first year. The second year the Co-Chairperson moves into the role of Chair. The Literature Bank is maintained under the CBANA Literature bank account. Either the Chairperson or Co-Chair may sign off on CBANA Literature account with the CBANA Treasurer to process orders generated.

### Qualifications:

- Minimum of 5 years continuous clean time. (Cannot be waived)
- Working knowledge of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of NA
- Willingness to give time and resources necessary for the position.
- All other duties stated in A Guide to Local Service in Narcotics Anonymous.

### Requirements:

- Serves a 2 year term (elected in as Literature Co-Chairperson the first year transitioning into Chairperson the second year).
- Ability to order and maintain inventory in a responsible manner. Fill group orders and provide receipt for all transactions. Individual orders may be supplied at monthly ASC meetings.
- Ability to maintain and track literature sales for accounting purposes.
- Ability to provide audit information of the CBANA Literature bank account and all merchandise upon request in a time frame provided by the ASC.
- Maintain up to date pricing list for available merchandise that takes into account all delivery and service fees.
- Shall attend each ASC meeting. Provide literature to area groups/individuals upon request using standard accounting practices.
- Shall provide a written report accounting for all credits, debits, and current inventory at each ASC meeting.

## 11. Activities

Events such as dances, picnics, campouts, ASC requested speaker meetings are planned and organized by the Activities Subcommittee. Activities help provide a sense of unity and help the newcomer feel a part of the fellowship. Activities may be planned to generate funds or just to gather unity within CBANA using 7th Tradition funds. Information about events is provided through fliers, member announcements, and social media.

### Qualifications:



- Minimum of 5 years (*revised February 2025*) continuous clean time.
- Working knowledge of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of NA.
- Willingness to give time and resources necessary for the position.
- All other duties stated in A Guide to Local Service in Narcotics Anonymous.

Requirements:

- Serves a 1 year term.
- Shall have working knowledge of computer software for flier and event information. Working knowledge of social media websites.
- Shall attend all ASC meetings and provide written report updating the services of the Activities subcommittee to the ASC.
- Facilitate all Activities Subcommittee meetings.
- Each subcommittee is responsible to CBANA and the groups they serve. Actions by the subcommittee are communicated through its corresponding chairperson to the ASC.
- Activities approved by the ASC shall be funded through the CBANA checking account. Receipts for reimbursement must be available for refund. Receipts must be from the merchant or using the approved CBANA receipt form. All receipts must be presented to the ASC no greater than 60 days from the date on the receipt to be considered for reimbursement.
- ASC to provide chronological list of expected activities.

## 12. Fellowship Development (*revised February 2025*)

The Fellowship Development (*revised February 2025*) Subcommittee serves an outstretched hand of ASC to outlier groups and addicts. The subcommittee helps to keep isolated groups and addicts in touch with CBANA and the NA fellowship. Area Service and Fellowship Development need to do whatever they can to ensure that recovery is available to any addict who seeks it.

Qualifications:

- Minimum of 6 months continuous clean time.
- Working knowledge of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of NA.
- Willingness to give time and resources necessary for the position.

Requirements:

- Serves a 1 year term
- Shall attend and give a written report at all ASC meetings.
- Visits CBANA groups that do not attend the area service committee meeting.
- Visits CBANA groups that request ASC support.
- Receipts for reimbursement must be available for refund. Receipts must be from the merchant or using the approved CBANA receipt form.
- Each subcommittee is responsible to CBANA and the groups they serve. Actions by the subcommittee are communicated through its corresponding chairperson to the ASC.

## 13. Policy

Policy maintains a working and updated copy of current CBANA policy and procedures. All changes in policy approved by the ASC will be made by the Policy Chairperson. All revisions made will be provided to the ASC to ensure clarity prior to updating the existing policy and procedures. Updated policies are provided to the Web Servant for CBANA members to read and review. Changes in policy may be made quarterly (January, April, July, & October) for approval in new business or tabled for old business at a later date.

Qualifications:

- Minimum of 6 months continuous clean time
- Working knowledge of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of NA
- Willingness to give time and resources necessary for the position.

Requirements:

- Serves a 1 year term.
- Shall have working knowledge of computer software required to provide and update policy information.
- Shall attend all ASC meetings and provide written report updating the policy and procedures to the committee.
- Shall provide and maintain a current digital and paper copy for the ASC Facilitator, Co-Facilitator, and Web Servant.
- Maintain a working knowledge of the current policies and answer relevant questions as they arise at the ASC.
- Shall make changes to the current policy and procedures at the direction of the ASC. All changes made will be reviewed by the ASC prior to entry into the current/working policy and procedures. Each change into the current/working policy and procedures will be chronologically dated to indicate the month/year of approval.

#### 14. Ad-Hoc Subcommittees

Ad Hoc Subcommittees are established to gather information and provide guidelines in special situations approved by the ASC. They are set up for specific purposes and have a limited life of service. The ASC should clearly specify what the Ad Hoc purpose will be and what authority and resources it will be given. Once the purpose of the committee's work is completed, the Ad Hoc is dissolved. An Ad-Hoc Chairperson is elected using Robert's Rules of Order and a subcommittee developed to fulfill the purpose of the Ad Hoc. Written reports are prepared and provided to the ASC concerning activities of the subcommittee by the chairperson.

#### 15. Area Inventory Ad Hoc

An area inventory is used in much of the same way the 4<sup>th</sup> Step is used for an addict working the NA program. A fearless and searching inventory is used to identify strengths and weaknesses within the ASC. Information gathered by group members helps to provide valuable information for the area inventory. Change and action helps to promote unity within CBANA members and group participation at the area level. Information for conducting the area inventory may be found in A Guide to Local

Services in Narcotics Anonymous and the NAWS website. It is important that action be a product of the changes identified within the area inventory. The ASC must become consistent in these new identified behaviors for a successful inventory to occur. For this reason the Area Inventory Ad Hoc will be an ongoing activity created each January.

- Even numbered years: Data will be collected and provide feedback to the ASC when it comes available.
- Odd numbered years: Actions will be made to make consistent changes within the ASC from the inventory.

## Removal of Trusted Officers and Servants

Any trusted servant elected into a position by the ASC may be removed by two-thirds majority vote using a paper ballot method for confidentiality. If present, the trusted servant will be given an opportunity to address all concerns presented. Trusted servants may be dismissed from their position for non-compliance, which includes, but not limited to:

- a. Relapse is an automatic removal from a trusted servant position.
- b. Missing 2 consecutive ASC meetings without notifying the Facilitator or Co-Facilitator (without report).
- c. Not being capable or willing to fulfill the duties of the position being held.
- d. Misappropriation of any NA funds or assets. Members who have misappropriated NA funds shall not be eligible to hold an ASC trusted position until one year after the financial amends or restitution has been made.

## Resignation from Trusted Position

- An ASC trusted servant may resign their position at any time. In order to maintain a continuity of service and reasonable transition, it is suggested that the resignation be submitted in writing to the ASC at least one month prior.
- Nominations and elections for the vacated position will occur immediately following resignation to provide service transition. The ASC Co-Facilitator will assume the position until the vacancy is filled. All ASC officers are responsible for helping during this period.
- In the event the Co-Facilitator is unable to assume the position then a member shall be appointed to the vacated position by a two-thirds majority vote, until a permanent trusted servant is elected.
- Following resignation from a service position, the outgoing member should provide all relevant information to the incoming candidate or to the ASC Co-Facilitator.

## V. Financial Provisions

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## A. Financial Policy General Guidelines

The 11th Concept states “NA funds are used to further our primary purpose, and must be managed responsibly.” Safeguards and financial controls have been put into place to ensure that the funds entrusted are used to further our primary purpose. We also recognize that it is unrealistic to protect all money and assets in every circumstance. Trust must be placed into the people that have been carefully selected by CBANA to handle area money in an appropriate and responsible manner.

1. CBANA will use a calendar year (January through December) for its fiscal year.
2. The ASC should be fully self-supporting through NA donations, group contributions, and/or fundraising activities, in accordance with the Twelve Traditions of NA.
3. CBANA will have two accounts: a savings for prudent reserve and checking for Area operations (current expenditures). It is suggested that both the prudent (savings) as well as the operating (checking) maintain balances of \$2100. Seventh tradition donations from groups will be maintained in the checking/operating account. Funds over \$2100 in the checking account will be voted on to send to Tejas Bluebonnet Region of NA (commonly referred to as region and/or TBRNA). It is suggested that at least 50% of the amount over \$2100 be donated to region. This amount may be raised or lowered depending on the financial status of CBANA (*policy change adopted October 2021*). A separate account will be established for RBS and Literature. All checks written from the CBANA general fund require a minimum of 2 signatures from trusted servants with check writing authority. Those with authorization are the CBANA Treasurer, CBANA Facilitator, CBANA Co-Facilitator, RCM-1, and RCM-2.
4. A separate RBS bank account will be maintained by the Recovery by the Sea (RBS) Subcommittee. This is to be used for funding seed money and other transactions to host the event in an efficient manner. The amount of the initial seed money is to be determined by the ASC on an annual basis. The RBS Subcommittee is expected to provide full accountability to the ASC. Those with authorization are the RBS Facilitator, RBS Co-Facilitator, and ASC Treasurer.
5. A separate bank account will be maintained by the CBANA Literature Bank. This is used for order transactions to maintain NA related supplies such as literature, key tags, and information pamphlets in an efficient manner. Moneys in the account are regenerated through sales. It is important to limit stock to those items that have a history of regular sales. Specialty items purchased will effectively freeze the cash flow and should be ordered with a degree of discretion. Those with authorization are the Literature Chairperson, Literature Co-Chairperson, and the ASC Treasurer.
6. All CBANA checking accounts shall require a minimum of 2 signatures on any check.
7. The bank statement for all CBANA accounts is to be mailed to the ASC P.O. Box. The statement is to be reviewed monthly. Copies shall be provided to the RBS Facilitator and Literature Bank Chairperson. All transactions are to be reconciled and records maintained for all accounts. These records will be available to members of CBANA upon request.
8. All trusted members handling money or assets for CBANA shall have a minimum of 5 years clean time. Individuals may handle money with under 5 years under the supervision of an ASC trusted servant.
9. Whenever area funds are expected to be received or generated (such as a dance or banquet), one area trusted servant (5 years clean time) and one elected trusted servant should be present at the event to

receive the monies to provide to the treasurer. It is recommended that all handling money at events fill out a Statement of Responsibility Form

10. All funds received by the ASC from any source shall be delivered to the treasurer immediately. A receipt shall be generated by the treasurer for documentation of the transaction provided. The Treasurer is responsible for depositing all funds within 5 business days. All funds will be registered or deposited into the CBANA ASC checking account prior to redistribution.
11. CBANA Treasurer shall submit a monthly report reflecting all income and expenses of the area which shall include the following:
  - a) Donations/Deposits into the CBANA account with all relevant information.
  - b) Expenditures from the CBANA account with all relevant information (to whom, what for, amount, check number, date).
  - c) Copies of CBANA bank statements with up to date working balance with prudent reserve separate.
  - d) Perpetual balances received from each group through donations and fundraising activities.
  - e) Balances of all authorized Trusted Servants and subcommittee's budgets.
  - f) Current copies of checks cleared and/or canceled that month with all relevant sensitive information redacted.
  - g) Listing of outstanding checks and balances that have not posted to the CBANA account.
  - h) Upcoming projected expenditures may include, but not limited to:
    - Storage
    - P.O. Box
    - Web Page
    - Phone Line
    - Banking Fees
    - Rent
12. The Treasurer shall submit an annual financial statement for the preceding year at the December ASC meeting summarizing all income and expenses from the previous fiscal year (*policy change adopted July 2022*). A copy of the bank statement should be submitted and reconciled to the annual report. Any adjustments to the prudent reserve should be reflections from this report. All materials are reviewed by the ASC and placed into archive pending approval.
13. Following each annual RBS event, all funds generated with the exception of the RBS determined seed money is to be moved to the CBANA general account. From this sum deposit from the RBS account, 25% will be donated to the TBRNA. The remainder will be used to maintain area projected budgets. All moneys left from this sum will be voted on by ASC after 90 days following the initial deposit (*policy change adopted January 2022*).

## B. Area Budgets

1. The ASC budget shall be determined each quarter (March, June, September, and December) by reviewing the previous quarter's historical data taking the needs of the committee and ASC into consideration. Historical data expenses shall include RSC travel, Regional Assembly travel, ASC Officers, area subcommittees, and Ad-Hoc Committees outstanding. The Literature Bank and RBS will be defined as self-supporting and not be included in the ASC Budget. This budget is approved through CBDM.

2. The ASC Officers are defined as the ASC Facilitator, ASC Co-Facilitator, Recorder, Treasurer, Web Servant, and RCM-1 & RCM-2. For budgeting purposes, this will include rent, storage, bank charges, post office box, web maintenance charges, toner, paper, phone line and other miscellaneous expenses (*policy change adopted July 2022*). The ASC Officers budget must be approved by CBDM. The ASC/admin expenses shall be paid annually in October (*policy change adopted July 2022*).
3. CBANA subcommittees shall submit their quarterly budgets in March, June, September, and December for approval by CBDM.
4. The RSC Travel Budget will include allocations for each subcommittee chairperson and RCM's to attend the Tejas Bluebonnet Regional Service Committee and Regional subcommittee meetings. A "per instance" monetary cap will be established assuming each member above will attend one meeting each quarter.
5. A Regional Assembly Travel Budget will be determined to include allocations for group representatives and RCM's to attend scheduled Tejas Bluebonnet Regional Assemblies. A "per instance" monetary cap will be established.
6. A prudent reserve will be maintained as equal to the quarterly budget. All budgets of area officers, subcommittees, and recurrent expenditures should be taken into account when approving the prudent reserve.
7. Proposals can be made and approved for non-recurring expenses and should be included in the quarterly budget.

### C. Expenses and Reimbursements

1. No reimbursement for any expenditure should be made without a receipt of payment. All recurring expenditures shall be paid by check except when auto-drafts are required to sustain the service, such as phone line service (*policy change adopted July 2022*). Expenses may be advanced with receipts presented at the following ASC scheduled meeting. Funds not used shall be returned to the ASC Treasurer for redeposit into the applicable account. All receipts for reimbursement should be submitted within 60 days. The ASC will approve pre-payment of expenditures when appropriate.
2. All receipts must have a minimum of name of business providing the service, business address, telephone number, and date of service. A standardized receipt form may be used from CBANA forms section.
3. Each ASC officer's budget will be used for reimbursement of expenses relating to the position of service being held.
4. All subcommittee budgets will be used to cover expenses necessary for the fulfillment of its primary purpose.
5. The RSC Travel budget will be used for the reimbursement of expenses related to the Regional Service Committee and will be limited to transportation, lodging, and necessary copies. Each RCM, H&I Chairperson, and PR Chairperson will be allowed up to 25% of the quarterly budget (individually) for each RSC or Regional Subcommittee meeting. For this purpose it is assumed that each member will attend one regional meeting each quarter.
6. The Regional Assembly Travel budget will be used for reimbursement of expenses related to Regional Assembly business. Expenses will be limited to transportation, lodging, and necessary copies. Each group is allowed to send a representative to the assembly. The budget shall be divided equally among all parties attending each assembly.

## The Twelve Traditions of NA

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on NA 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 membership is a desire to stop using.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or NA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.
6. An NA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the NA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, or prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every NA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Narcotics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. NA, as such, ought never be organized, but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve. 10.
10. Narcotics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the NA 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.



# The 12 Concepts of NA Service

1. To fulfill our fellowship's primary purpose, the NA groups have joined together to create a structure which develops, coordinates, and maintains services on behalf of NA as a whole.
2. The final responsibility and authority for NA services rests with the NA groups.
3. The NA groups delegate to the service structure the authority necessary to fulfill the responsibilities assigned to it.
4. Effective leadership is highly valued in Narcotics Anonymous. Leadership qualities should be carefully considered when selecting trusted servants.
5. For each responsibility assigned to the service structure, a single point of decision and accountability should be clearly defined.
6. Group conscience is the spiritual means by which we invite a loving God to influence our decisions.
7. All members of a service body bear substantial responsibility for that body's decisions and should be allowed to fully participate in its decision-making processes.
8. Our service structure depends on the integrity and effectiveness of our communications.
9. All elements of our service structure have the responsibility to carefully consider all viewpoints in their decision-making processes.
10. Any member of a service body can petition that body for the redress of a personal grievance, without fear of reprisal.
11. NA funds are to be used to further our primary purpose, and must be managed responsibly.
12. In keeping with the spiritual nature of Narcotics Anonymous, our structure should always be one of service, never of government.

# Theft of NA Funds



## **#30 theft of na funds**

The following paper was written in 1996 and revised in 2002 in response to a number of letters indicating that theft of NA funds is a recurring issue in our fellowship. In preparing this paper, we have relied on the experience of many groups, area and regional service committees, convention corporations, and service offices as shared with us in correspondence and at workshops on the issue. We encourage you to make use of this valuable and often painfully learned experience in your management of NA funds.

Substantial donations are contributed by the NA Fellowship every year. These funds are given by NA members who trust that they will somehow help other addicts get clean.

While this money is precious, the member's trust is even more so. We need to keep the image of that one member and that one donation in mind whenever we make decisions about handling NA's money.

Most of NA's money gets where it is supposed to go. NA members serving in positions of financial responsibility for the fellowship volunteer countless hours to make sure everything adds up. Services such as local phonelines are paid for; literature is purchased and available to members at meetings; tens of thousands of meetings take place every week in rooms for which NA pays rent. Many individual trusted servants follow guidelines and pass on funds that are used to further our primary purpose. All of these things happen because NA communities utilize responsible accounting practices.

### **SAFEGUARDING FUNDS**

Theft can be avoided by consistently and diligently following responsible financial principles and practices. The pain and conflict caused when one of our members steals from us, as well as the loss of funds that might have gone to help the still-suffering addict, point to our responsibility to prevent theft from happening in the first place.

Most theft of fellowship funds occurs when precautionary measures are not in place or are in place but not used. Some of us have hesitated to either institute or use these measures because they make us uncomfortable--we believe that they are somehow insulting to the people we ask to serve, or they seem too troublesome to follow. However, the very best safeguard against theft is to remove the opportunity to steal. It is far more uncomfortable and troublesome to deal with a theft after it has taken place than to take measures to prevent it from happening in the first place.

### **SELECTING TRUSTED SERVANTS**

Our Fourth Concept tells us how to select our trusted servants: "Effective leadership is highly valued in Narcotics Anonymous. Leadership qualities should be carefully considered when selecting trusted servants."

So what exactly are these "leadership qualities" the Fourth Concept tells us to look for? Honesty, integrity, maturity, and stability, both in recovery and in personal finances, are but a few. We often avoid asking questions regarding the financial stability of those we are considering for these types of positions, because those questions may be uncomfortable for us or we somehow feel they are inappropriate, given the spiritual nature of our program. We sometimes ignore evidence that a person is having a difficult time with his or her personal finances and should not have the additional burden of responsibility for NA's money. Not only is it okay to ask members standing for election about their qualifications in these areas, it is irresponsible not to.

Substantial clean time and financial stability should be required for positions where money is handled. Many NA communities have found it helpful to develop a list of questions

regarding employment, service experience, experience with handling funds, and financial stability. These questions are then asked of all nominees as a matter of course, so that people do not feel singled out based on personalities.

### **RESPONSIBLE MANAGEMENT**

"NA funds are to be used to further our primary purpose, and must be managed responsibly." Our Eleventh Concept points out how very important NA funds are. In keeping with the spiritual principles of this concept, guidelines regarding the handling of funds should be developed and adhered to. The guidelines should include both recognized accounting practices and procedures that ensure the accountability of our trusted servants.

The Treasurer's Handbook is an excellent resource for groups and service committees to use in instituting accounting procedures. All guidelines should include appropriate safeguards, such as monthly reporting, regular audits, two-signature checking accounts, and monthly reconciliation of original bank statements. For groups without checking accounts, many of these practices can still be incorporated into the handling of NA funds. To paraphrase one of our sayings, an addict alone with NA money is in bad company. It is critically important that all processes be monitored by another person: two people count receipts; two people make the bank deposit (and this should be done immediately, not the following day); two people reconcile the original bank statements; and most importantly, two people are always present when any funds are disbursed. Financial records should be readily available to other trusted servants. It is important to note that other assets, such as convention merchandise, literature, and office equipment, should be treated as carefully as money.

Financial procedures need to be written into guidelines to require a review and signature of those responsible for handling funds before they are put into positions of responsibility. Members who know they will be held to standardized accounting and auditing procedures will most likely behave in a responsible manner. Include a statement that theft will not be tolerated, and outline the process that will be followed if a theft occurs. If you are unsure about how to write adequate financial guidelines, please contact the World Service Office for assistance.

### **WHEN SAFEGUARDS FAIL**

If we develop and follow these procedures, we will make it almost impossible for anyone to misappropriate or steal NA funds. If someone does steal from us, the first question we should ask is one of ourselves: Did we adhere to all of our accounting procedures and safeguards? If the answer is no, we as a service committee also bear substantial responsibility for the theft. We will want to review our procedures to ensure that they are complete and resolve to adhere to them in the future.

But suppose the answer is yes, we followed our guidelines to the letter. We did everything in our power to prevent a theft, and someone stole from us anyway. When this happens, there is often a mixture of reactions, ranging from, "Let's forgive and forget; after all, we're addicts who are prone to acting out on our disease. We don't want to run the individual out of meetings and into a possible relapse," to "Let's throw the thief in jail!" But whatever it is, we don't want our initial emotional reaction to dictate the outcome of the situation.

Our program of recovery provides every member with an opportunity to behave responsibly in difficult situations and make amends. We are closest to the spiritual principles of our program when we begin to deal with a theft by encouraging the member who has stolen funds to make amends, which can then provide healing for all involved.

This is not to say that the disappearance of NA funds should be taken lightly or that a service committee should sit and passively wait for a member who has stolen funds to be moved to make amends. We instead encourage a process that is both responsible and spiritual, taking steps of increasing severity should they prove necessary.

First of all, a thorough review of all books and financial records should be conducted to make sure the funds were actually misappropriated. How much? By whom? What failing in the accounting procedures and safeguards allowed this to happen?

If it becomes clear that money has indeed been taken, the group or service committee should then schedule a meeting, making absolutely sure the individual(s) who took the money is informed of the meeting and given the opportunity to present his or her point of view. At this meeting, there should be a format that allows time for everyone involved to express their feelings and concerns. This allows everyone to give their input and may also allow a "defusing process" to occur. After all sides have been heard, a break in the meeting format is encouraged to allow all present enough time to get in touch with their own Higher Power and focus on spiritual principles, before coming back to decide the best course of action.

If the individual admits to the theft and agrees to pay back the missing funds, a restitution agreement can be developed. Such an agreement can include regular payments at any interval acceptable to all involved, though it is best not to drag out the process unnecessarily. Most agreements specify regular weekly or monthly payments until the full amount is repaid. We strongly suggest drafting a legally binding document, utilizing legal advice if possible, and having it signed and witnessed. Let the individual know that if the restitution agreement is not adhered to, you intend to take legal action based on the signed and witnessed restitution agreement.

A report about the situation should be published, and regular reports on the status of the restitution agreement should be published until the agreement is satisfied. Protecting the identity of the person involved is secondary to being accountable to the fellowship for its funds and ensuring that the person is not put in a position where he or she may do further harm.

Again balancing spirituality with responsibility, we have found that it is best to remove the individual from his or her service position and not consider the person for another position until he or she has dealt with the issue through the process of the steps.

If the individual does not appear at the special meeting, you will need to ensure that every effort to contact the person has been made. Use registered mail to send a letter explaining that an audit of financial records has been performed, that facts show the individual is responsible for missing money, that repayment is expected, and what the consequences will be if the individual does not respond to the letter. Copies of the letter should be put in a safe place for further reference. This may seem severe, but if the previous steps have been taken without result, sometimes something this harsh is the impetus that encourages the individual to make restitution.

If the individual refuses to repay the money, or agrees to a plan but does not follow through with the agreement, or if the person has disappeared, it may be appropriate to take legal action. The decision to take legal action is an option that does not compromise traditions or spiritual principles, but it should be our last resort, opted for only when everything else has been tried. We strongly suggest that the decision to prosecute be thoroughly explored before going ahead, using area and regional service committees and world services as resources.

## **RESOLUTION AND RECOVERY**

Even if a successful resolution is reached, many of us will still be angry and hurt and may want to shun the person involved. Although this is understandable, we have to remind ourselves that NA's primary purpose is to carry the message to the addict who still suffers. We also need to remember that our disease will surface if we are not diligently working a program of recovery. As NA members practicing spiritual principles, we should all support the individual in continuing his or her recovery, utilizing meetings, a sponsor, and the Twelve Steps. We should offer the same love and support we would to someone who has relapsed by using drugs.

The misappropriation of NA funds affects groups, service committees, and world services in their efforts to carry the message to the still-suffering addict. The process necessary to deal with such incidents typically has long-term effects--conflict between members, disunity, disillusioned members--on any NA community, directly affecting the newcomer. The safeguards recommended in this bulletin not only protect our funds, but protect us from our disease. We implore NA communities worldwide to develop and follow procedures that protect NA funds; doing so will keep our future secure.

