

## **Scope and Procedures**

(3/19/2015)

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the Central Office:

The Central Office follows the principles of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts of Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.), always keeping in mind that our common welfare comes first while carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

- 1) To establish and maintain a central Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) service office and telephone answering service to carry the message of A.A. to those who suffer from alcoholism.
- 2) To act as a central clearing house for providing information and literature to A.A. groups and to the community, in accordance with the "Twelve Traditions" of A.A. and Guidelines issued by the General Service office (GSO) of A.A.
- 3) To promote unity through service among member groups and to aid the groups in their common purpose of carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
- 4) To purchase and sell General Service Conference approved literature and non-conference approved books and pamphlets and other recovery materials, ensuring they are displayed separately.
- 5) To publish and distribute a monthly newsletter and quarterly directory of meeting places and times for area A.A. groups.
- 6) Lake-Sumter Central Office, Inc. is organized exclusively for charitable purposes as dictated by federal, state and local laws.

### **Membership**

Membership at the Central Office shall be by groups. Any group may become a member by filing with the Central Office Secretary the Group's name, contact information which includes the Group Representatives name and a contact number. Members of established groups are eligible to vote on all matters of business provided they are in attendance at the regularly scheduled meeting. Member groups shall remain traditionally autonomous and in no way be governed by the Central Office. To be a member of the Central Office the group must conform to the guidelines for an A.A group as set forth in The AA Group pamphlet.

### **The Central Office Representatives**

It is suggested that each group choose one primary representative and one alternate representative to serve in this the Central Office. An alternate Central Office Representative shall vote at the Central Office Representatives meeting only in the absence of the primary the Central Office Representative.

### **Steering Committee**

The Steering Committee Members shall oversee the business affairs of the Central Office; however this "Right of Decision" should never be made an excuse for failure to render proper reports of all significant actions taken. No elected officer of the Central Office shall hold a salaried position with the Central Office nor receive any monetary or gratuity compensation for services as the Central Office officer. Reimbursement of expenses necessary for the fulfillment of their duties for the Central Office business will be made with proper documentation and approval by the Chairperson following submission to the Treasurer. All decisions of the Steering Committee shall be reflected in the minutes which shall be presented at the next the Central Office Representatives meeting for review.

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The establishment and conduct of the Steering Committee is subject to the Articles of Incorporation of Lake-Sumter Central Office, Inc., in accordance with the federal, state and local laws.

The Steering Committee will consist of the following members: chairperson, vice-chairperson, treasurer, secretary, two-at-large group representatives, a past officer, and the office coordinator.

In order to render unto the law that which the law requires, the chairman shall be president, the vice-chairman shall be vice-president, the secretary shall be secretary, the treasurer shall be treasurer, and the two (2) group reps and a past chairman along with the office coordinator shall be directors at large, but they shall at no time employ such titles, except for the Secretary and Treasurer as may be required for the execution of legal documents or by reason of other provisions of the law. These eight (8) comprise the voting directors of Lake-Sumter Central Office Inc.

At least 5 of the 8 voting members must be in support of any decision made by the Steering Committee and that any decision made will be considered a substantial majority.

### **Meetings**

Robert's rules of order, revised, are to be used as a guide. the Central Office Representative Meetings shall be scheduled each month at a time and place to be determined by a majority of Group Representatives. Representative(s) shall be notified (7) days in advance of any special meeting. Steering Committee meetings shall be held a minimum of once per month prior to regular the Central Office Monthly Meetings. In order to conduct business the Steering Committee must have a majority of voting members in attendance; meaning at least 5.

### **Qualifications and Terms of Office**

A minimum of 5 years of continuous sobriety is required in order to be elected as Chairman, Vice Chairman and Treasurer of the Central Office. A minimum of 4 years of sobriety is required in order to be elected as Secretary of the Central Office. All other Steering Committee members must have a minimum of 2 years sobriety.

The terms of all offices are for two years and no officer may succeed him/herself in office, unless said officer is fulfilling the vacated term of less than one year of a predecessor.

### **Nominations**

At the July meeting, the Chairperson will inform the body at large of the upcoming elections and the need for volunteers. At the September meeting the group at large will be presented with the final slate of candidates. Before the slate is finalized for each position, the chair shall ask all group members at large to stand; the chair will then ask that of these members with the time and energy available and willingness to serve to please remain standing. The AA members still standing will be on the ballot for the election. Each individual's name and Home Group shall be read aloud and written on the board. Nominations will not be accepted from the floor at this

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time. Elections for office will be held at the September meeting following AA's Third Legacy procedure as defined in the AA Service Manual. Order of elections will be; Chairman, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, and the two At-Large Members. Anyone standing for a position that was not elected is eligible to stand for any other position in September.

### **Election**

Each group shall be entitled to one (1) vote. There shall be no voting by proxy. The Election at the September meeting shall be by written ballot, coordinated and handled by the Secretary following AA's 3<sup>rd</sup> Legacy procedure as outlined in the latest edition of the AA Service Manual. Election for each office shall be held separately.

Reference to Article VI; if a past chairman cannot serve on the Steering Committee, an additional election will be held for that position and any qualified past Steering Committee Member is eligible to stand for election.

### **Office Coordinator**

The Central Office shall be operated by a paid employee whose title shall be Office Coordinator. Said Coordinator will be hired by the Steering Committee. The Coordinator shall be responsible for the performance of but not limited to the following duties: receive all funds and contributions and deposit them in an authorized bank, keep vouchers of all receipts and present them to the treasurer. The Coordinator shall conduct the daily business affairs of the Central Office. However, this "Right of Decision" should never be made an excuse for failure to render proper reports of all significant actions taken. The Office Coordinator's employment shall be administered through the duly elected Steering Committee in accordance with the job description - defined by said Steering Committee. Part-time paid employees and volunteers shall be administered by the Office Coordinator subject to the approval of the Steering Committee. All paid employees' work and salaries are to be reviewed and assessed once a year in April by the Steering Committee. As a paid employee, the office coordinator cannot serve as a Central Office Representative.

### **Duties of Officers**

1. The chairperson shall preside at all the Central Office meetings, shall perform such duties and acts as are customary to the office of Chairperson, and shall be an ex-officio member without vote on all committees. A former Chairperson will sit on the Steering Committee for one term.
2. Vice Chairperson shall preside in the absence of the Chairperson and perform the duties of the office of Chairperson. In the absence of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, the Secretary or Treasurer shall preside.
3. Secretary shall record and prepare minutes of all meetings and carry out duties assigned to that position.
4. Treasurer is responsible for the finances of the Central Office and shall present a current financial report at the monthly Steering Committee and the Central Office Representative meeting.
5. The Treasurer will present an annual financial report in February to the Central Office Body. This report is subject to approval by two thirds (2/3) of the group representatives present at the regular the Central Office meeting.

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### Monies

Funds required to operate the Central Office are generated from AA groups, individual AA members, the sale of approved merchandise and scheduled fundraisers. Individual contributions shall not exceed AA General Service Conference guidelines. The Steering Committee shall appoint an Accountant, when necessary, who will oversee the accounting functions of the Central Office, make quarterly reports and a year-end report showing the net worth of the Central Office to the Steering Committee. The operating account shall have a maximum balance to be set by the Steering Committee before April 1 annually. All monies over the maximum set by the Steering Committee in the operating account will be transferred to an interest bearing account. Withdrawal from the interest bearing account shall be only after such withdrawal is authorized by a regular or special meeting of the Central Office Representatives. The Office Coordinator shall administer a petty cash account not to exceed fifty (\$50.00) dollars and cash sales account with a daily bank of \$50. A prudent reserve will be maintained to cover three months of operating expenses (averaged over the previous 12 months).

### Committees

All members of any group shall be eligible to serve as Chairperson of a Committee (Steering Committee members excluded). Standing Committee membership may consist of representatives, alternates or from any A.A. membership at large, at the discretion of each Committee Chairperson. In October the incoming Central Office Chairperson shall seek volunteers for the following Committees and shall outline their fields of responsibility: 12 Step and Relay Committee, Service Committee, Website Committee, Unity Committee, Newsletter Committee and Merchandise Committee, which all will be appointed according to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Legacy. The Steering Committee may appoint ad hoc Committees as it may deem necessary. Any Committee Chairperson who fails to report for three (3) consecutive regular meetings of the Central Office will automatically be replaced except in extenuating circumstances. All committees will have a job description per the Steering Committee.

<b>SERVICE COMMITTEE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organize activities such as round-ups, workshops and other social affairs that are not a part of any other committee program</li> <li>• Organize fundraisers</li> </ul>
<b>12-STEP COMMITTEE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Along with the Office Coordinator, perform all duties necessary to ensure the hotline is answered</li> <li>• Provide the same meeting guide information for inclusion on the Central Office website</li> <li>• Maintain &amp; update a list of 12-Step volunteers</li> <li>• Along with the Office Coordinator, record and maintain a schedule of meeting changes throughout the service area</li> </ul>
<b>MERCHANDISE COMMITTEE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Along with the Office Coordinator, select and order literature for sale at the Central Office</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create and maintain a traveling literature display for use at area functions</li> <li>• Encourage member groups and members to purchase Conference approved literature</li> <li>• Insure that non-Conference approved literature is displayed separately from conference approved literature and is marked as such</li> </ul>
<b>NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepares monthly publication of the Serenity News for the Lake- Sumter district</li> <li>• All office reports such as: Secretary's report (this includes the Steering Committee and Representative meeting minutes), Treasurer Report, Office Activities, Representative attendance, all committee reports and all finance reports (and not limited to this) will be published throughout the monthly newsletter</li> <li>• Report Newsletter to Website Committee</li> </ul>
<b>WEBSITE COMMITTEE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintains the Central Office Website according to the policies developed by the Central Office body</li> <li>• Works with all the Central Office Committees to keep announcements and meeting information current.</li> </ul>
<b>UNITY COMMITTEE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serve as a liaison to the members and their groups</li> <li>• Meet with the groups to encourage broader participation in the workings of the Central Office</li> <li>• All Central Office Representatives will be ex-offiio members of the Unity Committee.</li> </ul>

### Amendments to Scope and Procedures

These Scope and Procedures may be amended via a proposition to amend in writing signed by not less than three Group Representatives at an the Central Office Representative Meeting except where they would conflict with federal, state and local laws. The Secretary of the Central Office shall enter the proposition into the minutes for action by the Representatives at the next Central Office Representative Meeting following submission of the proposition. A two thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of Representatives present shall be required for passage.

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### **How the Central Office Meeting Operates - Modified Robert's Rules of Order**

(Adapted from HOW THE CONFERENCE OPERATES)

Generally speaking we adhere to Robert's Rules of Order and, with any luck, the whole Meeting proceeds on as informal a basis as possible, consistent with the rights of all concerned.

**A Meeting Quorum: that is, all registered members (those signed-in in attendance) - is required to conduct business.**

#### **General Rules of Debate:**

- People who wish to speak will raise their hands and are called on in order.
- Each person may speak for two minutes.
- No speaker may speak for a second time on a topic until all who wish to speak have spoken for the first time.
- Voting is by a show of hands for or against a motion.

#### **Substantial Unanimity**

- All matters of policy (Advisory Actions) require substantial unanimity - or a two-thirds vote. Additionally, any actions that affect an Advisory Action, or a motion that might result in such an action, also require a two-thirds majority.
- Because the number of members present in the room during the Central Office meeting varies from time to time, the phrase "two-thirds vote" is taken to mean two-thirds of the members in attendance.
- After the establishment or rejection of any matter of policy by a two-thirds vote, the minority will always be given the opportunity to speak to its opposition.

#### **Calling the Question**

- Motion to 'Call the Question' must be made in turn and be the only comment of the speaker.
- Requires a second.
- Is not debatable.
- Requires a two-thirds vote.
- If passed, debate on the issue before the Meeting ceases, and the members immediately vote. If not passed, the debate continues.

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### **To Table a Discussion: (Postpone to a later time during the same session)**

- Requires a motion and a second. Requires only a simple majority vote (51%).

### **Request to Reconsider:**

- Must be made in the form of a motion by someone who had voted with the winning side and now, after further consideration, wishes to change his/her vote.
- It requires only a simple majority to cause reconsideration. No action may be reconsidered twice.

### **Departure from the Agenda:**

- It requires a two-thirds vote of the members in attendance to depart in a significant way from the agenda during the meeting.

### **Motions from the Steering Committee:**

The Steering Committee, being closer to the daily operation of the Central Office, may see situations that require action of the General Membership. The Steering Committee may vote by substantial unanimity (2/3 majority) to bring the issue to the General Membership at its next regular meeting. Motions brought to the General Meeting floor from the Steering Committee will be as Motions made and seconded.

### **Motions from the voting the Central Office Representatives**

Motions may be made by any voting member of the Central Office Meeting. The motion must be seconded by a voting member other than the one making the motion. After a second is made the motion is open for discussion by the “**General Rules of Debate**”

### **Minority Opinion**

After any non unanimous vote, the Chairman will ask if the minority wishes to speak. Any persons who voted on the minority side may speak to the issue voted on. This ensures fairness and proper consideration of all opinions. If a minority opinion provides information that causes a person voting on the prevailing side to change their mind, “Reconsideration” may occur.

### **Reconsideration**

When a person who voted on the prevailing side of a decision decides to change their vote, the procedure for “Request to Reconsider” takes place. If passed, the decision is put aside and debate begins again on the motion. The decision on the reconsidered motion is final.

### **Third Legacy Procedure (Elections)**

Third Legacy Procedure is a special type of electoral procedure that appears to be unique to AA. In practice, it has proved highly successful in removing the political influence. Third Legacy Procedure is as follows for each position:

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1. All eligible candidates are polled. The names of all willing to stand are posted on a board. All voting members cast written ballots, one choice to a ballot. The tally for each candidate is posted on the board.
2. The first candidate to receive two-thirds of the total vote is elected.
3. Withdrawals start after the second ballot. If any candidate has less than one-fifth of the total vote, his or her name is automatically withdrawn - except that the top two candidates must remain. (In the case of a tie for second place, the top candidate and all tied runners-up remain as candidates.)
4. After the third ballot, candidates with less than one-third of the total vote will be automatically withdrawn - except that the top two candidates must remain. (In the case of a tie for second place, the top candidate and all tied runners-up remain as candidates.)
5. After the fourth ballot, if no candidate has two-thirds of the total vote, the candidate with the smallest total is automatically withdrawn - except that the top two candidates must remain. In the case of a tie for second place, the top candidate and all tied second place candidates remain. At this point, the chairman asks for a motion, second, and a simple majority of hands on conducting a fifth ballot. If this motion is defeated, balloting is over and the choice is made by lot - "going to the hat" - immediately. If the motion carries, a fifth ballot is conducted.
6. If after the fifth ballot no election occurs, the chairperson announces that the choice will be made by lot (from the hat). At this point, the two top candidates remain. In case there are ties for first place, all tied first place candidates remain. In case there are no ties for first place, the top candidate and all tied second place candidates remain.

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7. Lots are then drawn, and the first one “out of the hat” is the elected person.

