



PhoneLines Committee
San Fernando Valley Area of Narcotics Anonymous

Red Book

Manual for PhoneLines Service

April, 2024

San Fernando Valley Approved Referral Numbers*

April 7, 2024

Alcoholics Anonymous	818.988.3001	www.aasfv.org
Alcoholics Anonymous (Spanish)	818.786.8011	www.asfv.org
Adult Children of Alcoholics	562.595.7831	www.adultchildren.org
Al-Anon	888.684.6444	www.alanonla.org
Battered Women/Children Crisis Hotline	818.887.6589	----
Co-Anon (families of cocaine addicts)	800.898.9985	www.co-anon.org
Cocaine Anonymous	818.760.8402	www.sfvca.org
Co-Dependents Anonymous	424.256.5151	www.lacoda.org
Crystal Meth Anonymous	877.262.6691	www.crystalmeth.org
Marijuana Anonymous	818.465.8687	marijuana-anonymous.org
Mental Health Referral (SAMHSA Helpline)	800.662.4357	www.namisanfernandovalley.org
Nar-Anon	310.534.8188	www.naranoncalifornia.org
National Council on Alcohol & Drug Dependency	818.997.0414	www.ncadd.org
Overeaters Anonymous	818.888.4776	www.oasfvalley.org
Parents Anonymous	909.621.6184	www.parentsanonymous.org
Rape Crisis Services	310.392.8381	----
Sexaholics Anonymous	310.491.8845	www.sasocal.org
Substance Abuse Referral (SAMHSA Helpline)	800.662.4357	https://www.samhsa.gov
Suicide Prevention Hotline	877.727.4747	

NA Numbers

Hollywood	323.850.1624	www.hollywoodna.org
SFV	818.997.3822	www.nasfv.com
West End	818.787.9706	www.weana.org
SoCal Spanish	888.622.4672	www.ahhscna.org
SoCal Regional Service Office	626.359.0084	www.todayna.org
World Service Office	818.773.9999	www.na.org

*In the spirit of cooperation, not affiliation, we may give these numbers to callers.

E. Do's and Don'ts— Phoneline and Twelfth-Step Volunteers

Do's

- Do always identify yourself with your first name only and state that you are an addict.
- Do always have the necessary materials (e.g., *White Booklet*, meeting list, NA pamphlets, Twelfth-Step list, and Phoneline Log) close to the telephone, in order to avoid delay and confusion.
- Do find out what the caller needs. Ask questions.
- Do, if you are returning a call, be certain that the person requesting help is on the line before identifying yourself as an addict or mentioning Narcotics Anonymous.
- Do remember to be helpful and polite to all callers.
- Do make appropriate referrals when necessary.
- Do keep a log of all the calls you answer.
- Do contact the phoneline chairperson if problems arise.
- Do use the Twelfth-Step list.

Don'ts

- Don't argue with people whose views of addiction differ from yours or NA's. If the caller does not want to stop using, do not try to persuade him/her to stop.
- Don't try to handle calls that you are not qualified to answer. Don't give medical advice.
- Don't give out other people's names or telephone numbers.
- Don't answer questions about who was at an NA meeting (e.g., to police officers, probation officers, or significant others). However, general information may be given about NA's make-up (variance in size of meeting, NA open to all age groups, etc.).
- Don't glorify active addiction by telling war stories.

The Twelve Traditions of NA

We keep what we have only with vigilance, and just as freedom for the individual comes from the Twelve Steps, so freedom for the group springs from our Traditions.

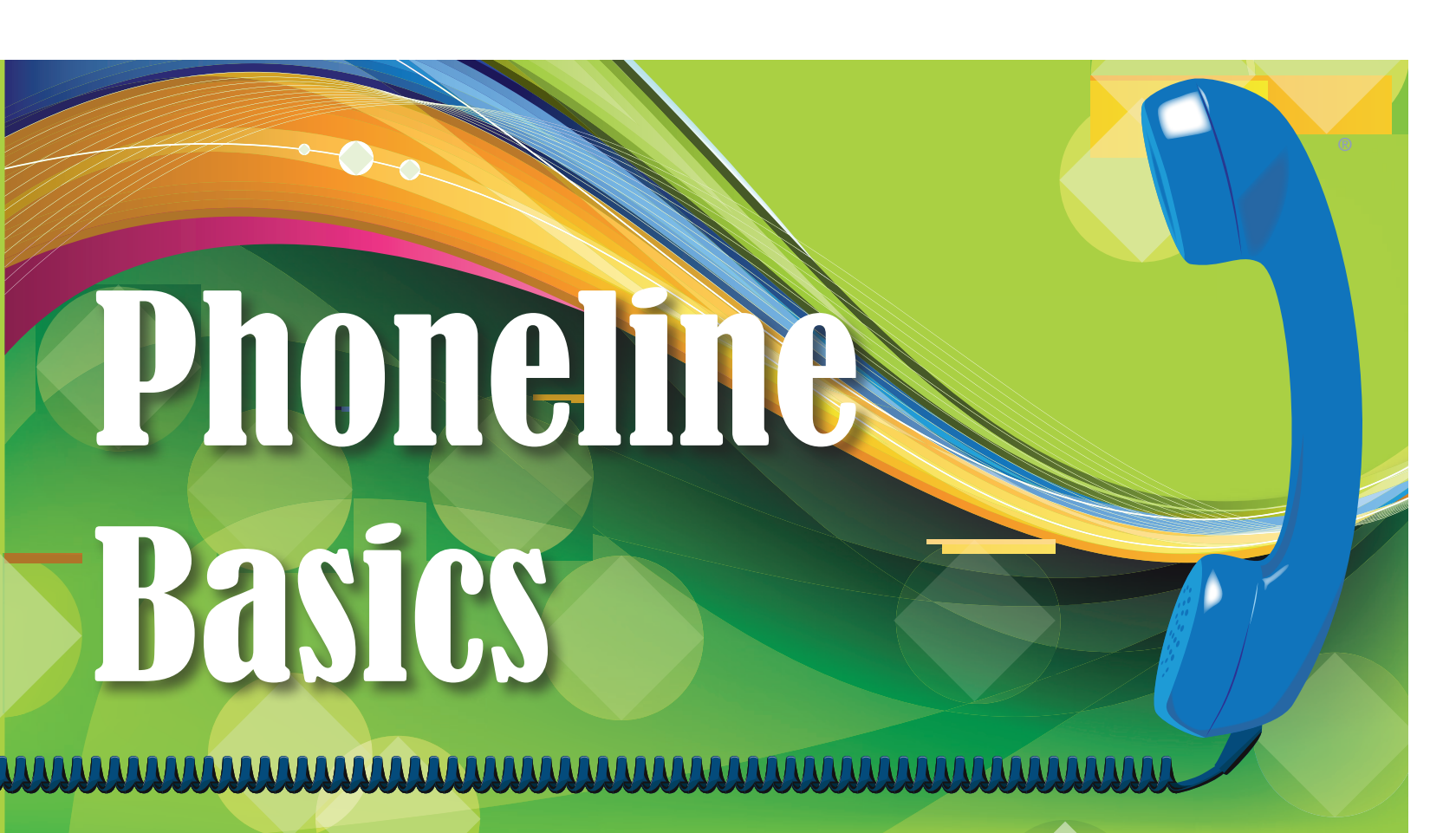
As long as the ties that bind us together are stronger than those that would tear us apart, all will be well.

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. 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.



Twelve Concepts for 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.



Phoneline Basics

A call to an NA phoneline, also known as a helpline, may be someone's first interaction with Narcotics Anonymous. These calls are vital; a phoneline call can make a major difference in whether or not an addict makes it to an NA meeting. We need to respond to callers in a way that makes them feel like they matter. We can encourage volunteers to bring their experience and their public relations awareness to this important service opportunity.

This resource outlines ways a service body can evaluate its resources, choose a helpline provider, train and prepare helpline volunteers, and coordinate services in a way that makes local helplines more successful.

Key topics

- Phonelines & Core PR Principles
- Planning and Preparation for Service Bodies
- Discussing and Addressing Known Challenges
- Putting Your Plan into Action
- Resources



PHONELINES & CORE PUBLIC RELATIONS PRINCIPLES

Cooperation, Not Affiliation

Helpline teams contribute to building relationships with people and organizations outside of NA. These include groups that regularly encounter addicts such as law enforcement, advocates for the homeless, and social welfare organizations that have an interest in helping addicts to live drug-free. Our cooperation with other organizations demonstrates that NA is a viable program of recovery as they raise NA's profile in the community.

We take care to align our actions with the guidance of our Traditions. By focusing on our primary purpose, we foster unity and harmony with each other and the community around us. Acting according to our principles helps instill public confidence in the effectiveness of the NA program. This makes it more likely that members of other community groups will share the local NA helpline number with potential members.

Questions to consider:

- How might cooperation with outside organizations be an asset when operating a helpline?
- What cooperative actions can committees and groups take to increase access to the helpline number?

Attraction

Our actions speak powerfully to potential members, to professionals, and to the public. When we provide reliable, responsible, and consistent phonenumber services, we demonstrate our program of recovery in action. Small but consistent actions build our reputation, so it's important that our phonenumber services operate as intended.

Offering a helpline number obliges us to make sure each call is answered, whether by an NA volunteer, an answering service, or an automated system. The important thing is that callers learn they can count on us and know that we care. We respond to messages promptly and return calls requesting help or information about NA. In all of these ways and many others, our phonenumber services provide opportunities to attract the addict who still suffers to our meetings.

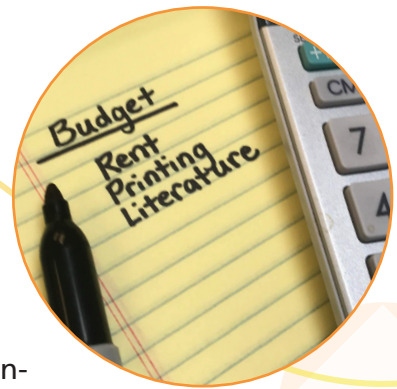
Questions to consider:

- Are phonenumber volunteers trained to carry a clear, concise message for Narcotics Anonymous?
- How can we make phonenumber service an attractive NA commitment?
- How can technology support our efforts to be reliable and consistent?



PLANNING AND PREPARATION FOR SERVICE BODIES

As with other aspects of NA service, form should follow function in phonline service. Service bodies often start by evaluating the needs of the geographic area and the resources of the local NA community. This kind of inventory will help you determine which service provider might be the best fit. The following section focuses on ways to assess the service body's resources and how to train volunteers. Ideas for how to choose a service provider are covered later in this resource.



Financial and Human Resources

Consistent and reliable phonline service helps us develop and maintain positive relationships with the public. With that in mind, service bodies often start planning for phonline services by assessing their resources, both financial and human. Understanding our resources is important in planning phonline services.

Most projects depend as much on ideas, information, conscience, and members' time and willingness as they do on money. If we have the funds needed to carry out a project but lack the time or ideas, we'd best wait until we've gathered all the needed resources before proceeding. If we don't, we will have wasted NA service funds.

*Twelve Concepts for NA Service,
Concept Eleven*

The service body will want to look at its budget to determine what they can realistically afford. Trusted servants will want to evaluate the service body's long-term financial ability before shopping for a service provider. This will allow the service body to select a phone service package that fits its budget for the long haul.

Assessing available human resources will also help to determine what kind of phonline service provider best suits your NA community. A service body that is financially healthy but lacks willing trusted servants may choose to enlist help from a professional answering service. A service body with a larger pool of trusted servants may decide that a call-forwarding option will work best for them.



In some cases, it's difficult or impossible to accomplish service tasks solely with members serving on a voluntary basis. Phonline service is a common example: We want to ensure that addicts seeking help have a chance to talk to NA members, but many communities contract with an outside company to ensure that calls are always answered and properly forwarded...We contract for those services we need to ensure that addicts seeking help can reach us.

*Guiding Principles: The Spirit of Our Traditions,
Tradition Eight*

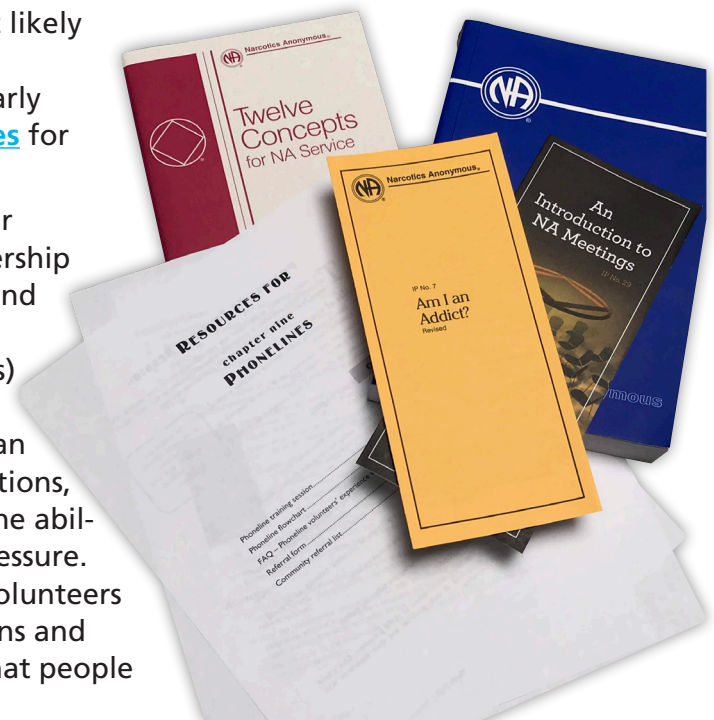
“Flexibility and creativity can help a service body to expand the pool of willing volunteers.”

We can also think about ways to make serving on the helpline more attractive to more members. Flexibility and creativity can help a service body to expand the pool of willing volunteers. Some phone service packages make it possible for members to serve on the go or from the privacy of home. Two- or three-hour time slots may be more appealing to members than longer shifts. Using the service body website to sign up for phonline slots can also encourage members to be of service. Committees may benefit from discussing these and other options as ways to attract helpline volunteers.

Training and Preparing Trusted Servants

When considering how to train and prepare phonline volunteers, it’s helpful to look at who calls our phonline: addicts (both potential members and current NA members), nonaddicts, family members and loved ones, and professionals. Our training and preparation can work to address the opportunities and challenges that arise with each of the above audiences. The following checklist can help a service body develop training that inspires phonline volunteers to help addicts find an NA meeting and to provide information about NA:

- Responsiveness is a key principle for phonline service. This means that trusted servants are trained to engage with callers in a sensitive, appropriate, and helpful manner.
- Training for phonline service will include all those who represent NA on the helpline: trusted servants, special workers (if there is a service body office), and employees of an answering service (if one is used). The service body can schedule continual and ongoing training.
- The service body can require that volunteers attend an initial hands-on training. This training can be supported by a written document of the service body’s expectations of phonline volunteers.
- An ongoing training program might provide NA literature (such as the *Am I an Addict?* pamphlet), discuss NA principles, practice mock phone calls, and offer presentations to new volunteers by more experienced members. Once trained, volunteers can be provided with basic materials such as a brief description of NA, updated meeting lists, and community referral phone numbers (see Referral section).
- Employees of an answering service would most likely benefit from a current meeting schedule and a short, one-page training handout that is regularly updated. (Visit www.na.org/phonlineresources for an example.)
- The service body may want to identify particular qualities of an ideal phonline volunteer. Leadership qualities such as integrity, the ability to listen, and sound judgment (see the Concept Four essay in *Twelve Concepts for NA Service* for more details) are essential in providing phonline service. Other qualities relevant to helpline service are an understanding of the importance of public relations, the ability to relate well to other people, and the abilities to communicate and to stay calm under pressure. These traits are important because phonline volunteers often have to perform in high-pressure situations and because they are likely to be the first contact that people have with NA.



- Volunteer guidelines that address issues such as avoiding or explaining NA jargon (such as “it works when you work it,” “home group,” “get a sponsor”), how to get volunteer time slots covered, and how to respond reliably to requests from the public will help support trusted servants in their commitment.
- Volunteers can be trained to use NA literature to present an accurate and positive message of recovery as well as to clarify that the NA program is separate from treatment centers or other twelve-step programs.
- Volunteers could offer website information to callers in an effort to provide the caller with literature to read about NA recovery. Additionally, callers seeking meeting information may be offered the mobile meeting app.
- Committees will want to establish a cleantime requirement for volunteers in light of available human resources. A strong training program will prepare members for this kind of service, even those who haven’t been clean for long.
- Phonline volunteers need to be instructed to make no commitments on behalf of service bodies or the NA Fellowship as a whole. If a professional or member of the public contacts an NA helpline, volunteers should provide as much information about NA as they can, solicit information from the public contact, and follow up with the appropriate trusted servant such as a committee chairperson or the service body’s media contact person.
- The committee needs to train phonline volunteers on how to handle difficult calls, such as calls from addicts who are under the influence of drugs, prank calls, and calls from those who suffer from mental illness. One strategy is to continually bring the conversation back to how the caller can get to an NA meeting and end a problem call before the situation escalates.
- The committee can be prepared to quickly respond to a variety of phonline calls made by the public, including simple requests for information or calls made about problems created by the behavior of NA members.
- If phonline volunteers receive a call from a person in crisis, they should be very clear about their limitations; phonline volunteers are not counselors or crisis workers. Threats to commit suicide, a drug overdose, or talk about being a victim of violence are all examples of crisis calls. Refusing to refer such callers to qualified outside crisis agencies or police could have legal implications, depending on local laws. In any case, individuals in crisis should contact someone better positioned to help. See the referral section below for more information about referring callers to outside organizations.



The purpose of our services is to help the fellowship fulfill its primary purpose: to carry the message to the addict who still suffers. Honest, open, straightforward communication is essential to both the integrity and effectiveness of the NA service structure.

Twelve Concepts for NA Service, Concept Eight

DISCUSSING AND ADDRESSING KNOWN CHALLENGES

Meeting Recommendations

NA is frequently contacted by potential members and professionals looking for meetings they believe will allow for identification. Many volunteers have been faced with the question: Do you know a meeting that would help this person? We know that our Traditions encourage a spirit of anonymity and that anonymity allows us to meet equally as addicts. Yet we also know that first impressions count and that the principle of attraction is important to an addict's ability to hear the NA message, we can stop using, lose the desire to use, and find a new way to live. Trusted servants can respect callers' requests and recommend meetings where they are likely to find addicts with whom they may identify. We do not, however, automatically assume that because someone is of a certain age, gender, ethnicity, or sexual identity, they will want a meeting recommendation.

Service bodies will probably want to discuss this issue and implement guidelines for how to recommend NA meetings to callers. Some service bodies have common needs meetings in which the group serves the needs of a specific population in that service body, such as young people's meetings, women's and men's meetings, and so forth. These groups make it easier for a service body to make meeting recommendations.

“. . . we also know that first impressions count and that the principle of attraction is important to an addict's ability to hear the NA message.”

If there are no common needs meetings in a service body but there are meetings where, for example, a larger population of young people regularly attends, then phonline volunteers can suggest these meetings to a caller asking for a recommendation. This may allow potential members to more easily identify and connect with NA. In making these recommendations, phonline volunteers can explain that many NA members feel a sense of unity within a very diverse fellowship,

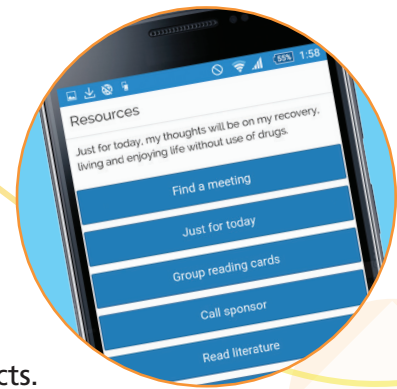
making it clear at the same time that any addict can attend any meeting regardless of how it is listed in the schedule; for example, in a young people's meeting, there may be older members there.

Twelfth Step Calls

Step Twelve's call for us to "carry this message to addicts" is at the heart of phonline service. Phonline volunteers emphasize getting potential members to meetings because, as the Basic Text states, "The group is the most powerful vehicle we have for carrying the message." On occasion, a caller may require an extended conversation; that, too, is a chance to practice the Twelfth Step.

Another way we might practice the Twelfth Step involves making arrangements for members to pick up a caller and take him or her to a meeting. We carry NA's message through these Twelfth Step calls. These can be a very rewarding service experience that gives members the opportunity to make a newcomer feel welcome.

The service body has the responsibility to ensure that volunteers are willing and trained to do Twelfth Step calls. The most important concern is that NA members remain safe. Before training volunteers to respond to Twelfth Step calls, the service body should discuss and determine its policy on these calls. For example, in some urban locations it might be more convenient to use public transport instead of a car, so instead of giving a ride a helpline trusted servant might provide clear



directions on how to get to the nearest subway station and then another volunteer could meet the newcomer there. The following points can help service bodies consider how to create guidelines for responding to Twelfth Step calls:

- A Twelfth Step call can mean that two or more addicts provide a ride to an NA meeting or that volunteers simply talk with the caller, helping the potential member get to a meeting on their own.
- Trusted servants need to understand that any romantic or sexual overtures are inappropriate when performing Twelfth Step calls or when representing NA in any fashion including on the phonline.
- When possible, members should meet those requesting a ride to a meeting in a public place.
- In some service bodies, phonline volunteers do not perform Twelfth Step calls. Instead, there is a Twelfth Step call list containing the contact information of members who have volunteered to respond to Twelfth Step requests.
- Due to the likelihood of being exposed to drugs and addicts who are under the influence of drugs, some service bodies require those who make Twelfth Step calls to have a minimum of five years clean.
- The service body will need to discuss what is appropriate for trusted servants performing Twelfth Step calls. A service body may decide to create guidelines for the variety of requests often received during Twelfth Step calls (such as a ride to a meeting or to a detoxification center after attending an NA meeting).
- The service body may want to choose volunteers who have service experience and who have gained the ability to be productive members of society. This may reduce the likelihood of incurring legal problems. Those members under legal constraints (such as parole or probation) are usually not appropriate for making Twelfth Step calls. A guideline that requires trusted servants to have current auto insurance may be another way to prevent legal problems.

Our identity as a fellowship is founded in anonymity and selfless service, carrying the message one addict to another.

*It Works: How and Why,
Tradition Six*

Referrals

Many phonline calls are from nonaddicts or potential members looking for services other than what NA provides. There may be liability issues, which vary from place to place, that make it important for us to offer emergency numbers at a minimum. Volunteers should keep a list of numbers to provide to callers in crisis, including numbers for those facing medical emergencies or contemplating suicide.

When asked about drug detoxification or treatment center referrals, we can provide a list of any and all locally available services. We don't give referrals to one specific treatment center or detox unit; that would cross the boundary of cooperation into an endorsement. In order to avoid any appearance of affiliation, we might provide a list of numbers of all local nonaffiliated referral agencies. In the United States, for example, the federal government's Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) operates a national helpline.

“Committees may choose to build relationships with other community organizations since we often share the goal of helping addicts live without the use of drugs.”

Service bodies may want to research what independent referral agencies serve their NA community, taking time to verify that the phone numbers are valid. Committees may choose to build relationships with other community organizations since we often share the goal of helping addicts live without the use of drugs.

Family members and loved ones of addicts frequently call our helplines. The service body can decide to provide numbers for Nar-Anon and Families Anonymous or other similar information. We don't recommend one program over another or offer our opinions about any of these programs; we simply provide contact information. Not providing this information can be harmful to our public relations and may spoil a chance for an addict to find NA. The service committee may want to create a document for trusted servants that describes why NA does not endorse or affiliate itself with outside organizations (see the sample at www.na.org/phonelineresources). We provide contact information for other organizations in a spirit of cooperation.

Coordinating Services

When thinking about how we coordinate phonelines, we can look at how best to structure and support these services. The service body may decide to delegate the responsibility of the phonenumber to a coordinator, who is accountable to the service body. A phonenumber coordinator could be responsible for gathering and training volunteers and planning guidelines for following up on any NA requests made through the phonenumber.

Collaboration with other committees and service bodies can also help in the coordinating of phonenumber services. Service bodies often work collaboratively with each other for support. In an effort to strengthen services, some service bodies organize multiple efforts into a single public relations committee. PR committees often include the helpline coordinator and volunteers, along with trusted servants focused on complementary efforts like the meeting directory and other public information work. These complementary efforts sometimes include H&I under what we refer to as the "PR umbrella."

Service bodies can share their best helpline practices with other service bodies. Committees from neighboring service bodies can share what is working—and what mistakes they've made—with their phonelines. A trusted servant who regularly checks the phonenumber can report if the phonenumber service is functioning properly. Malfunctions may have to do with the answering service, training methods, or a shortage of volunteers. Working cooperatively within the service body and/or with neighboring service bodies can help to strengthen the way the phonenumber functions.

Cooperative Phonenumber Services

Some service bodies have created a single phonenumber service to serve multiple NA communities on behalf of two or more service bodies. Such cooperative phonenumber services allow neighboring service bodies to combine their resources and share the responsibility of providing helpline services. This usually eases the burden on the financial resources of the individual service bodies, since costs will be shared. This approach also offers the opportunity to recruit members from several NA communities, another benefit of the cooperative model.

There are some challenges with coordinating a single helpline for multiple NA service bodies. One of the biggest challenges is establishing a single point of accountability. It is important to decide issues such as who will pay the phone bill and who will coordinate volunteers. Training volunteers also can become slightly more challenging since members from multiple communities will need to be prepared to identify meetings and services in neighboring service bodies. To support this effort, some NA communities have elected to publish a cooperative meeting schedule that lists all meetings served by a shared phonenumber. How callers experience multiple city or area telephone codes may also be a consideration.

PUTTING YOUR PLAN INTO ACTION

Choosing a Phoneline Service Provider

Choosing a phoneline service provider depends on the needs of the service body. Chapter Three of the *Public Relations Handbook*, "Effective Services," offers detailed information about assessing the needs of the service body. A service body may be financially healthy but lack human resources. Where that's the case, it may make sense to spend a little more on a phoneline system in order to offset a shortage in human resources.

As always, a service body will want to make a smart business decision when spending NA funds. One way to make an informed decision is to research the cost of various providers and evaluate how they might meet the service body's needs. For example, a service body might decide to accept collect calls, which may or may not be accepted by a service provider. A service body can list the costs with the various advantages, disadvantages, and total monthly cost in order to get a picture of their choices.

Because of the ever-changing nature of technology, the following list is not exhaustive but contains some examples of the types of phoneline services a service body may consider:

- NA members answering calls
- Call-forwarding services
- Answering machine or voice mail
- Customized caller response with live transfer option
- Professional answering services
- Voice over internet protocol (VOIP) providers that allow you to manage calls online
- Calls placed directly from the service body's website
- Toll-free and/or custom number
- Telecommunication Device for the Deaf (TDD) or Text Telephone (TTY)

Each of the options listed has various advantages and disadvantages, depending on a service body's human and financial resources. As technology changes, so will our phoneline options. What's important is for the service body to base its choice on a realistic assessment of its own abilities and needs. The following is an example of how a service body might determine the pros and cons of various phoneline options. This same process can be used for any type of phoneline service being considered by the service body.

*When we work to ensure the vitality of NA, we're not working just for ourselves
but for those yet to join us.*

*It Works: How and Why,
Tradition One*





NA Members Answering Calls

Advantages

1. Excellent ability to communicate with addict
2. Accurate information
3. Trained members handle calls

Disadvantages

1. Requires major effort on part of ASC
2. Expensive
3. Reaching the majority within a geographic service body in local calling adds expense
4. Requires significant fiscal responsibility and liability for service body

Total Monthly Cost: \$_____

Answering Machine or Voice Mail

Advantages

1. Accurate information
2. Least expensive
3. Requires minimal effort on part of ASC

Disadvantages

1. No ability to communicate directly with addict
2. Requires fixed location
3. Requires fiscal responsibility and liability for service body
4. An answering machine or answering service is usually checked every two or three days. The service body needs to be sure to indicate that in the recorded announcement.

Total Monthly Cost: \$_____

Other Considerations

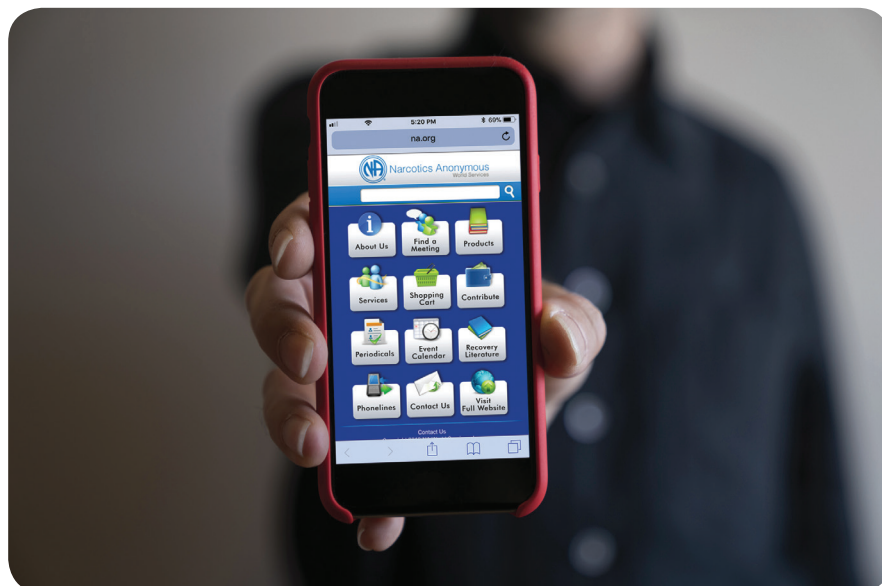
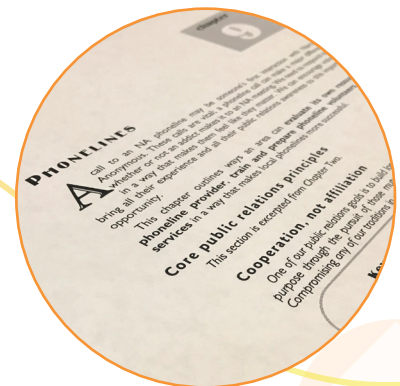
As you think about ways to get your helpline number to those who might need it, you might consider the following:

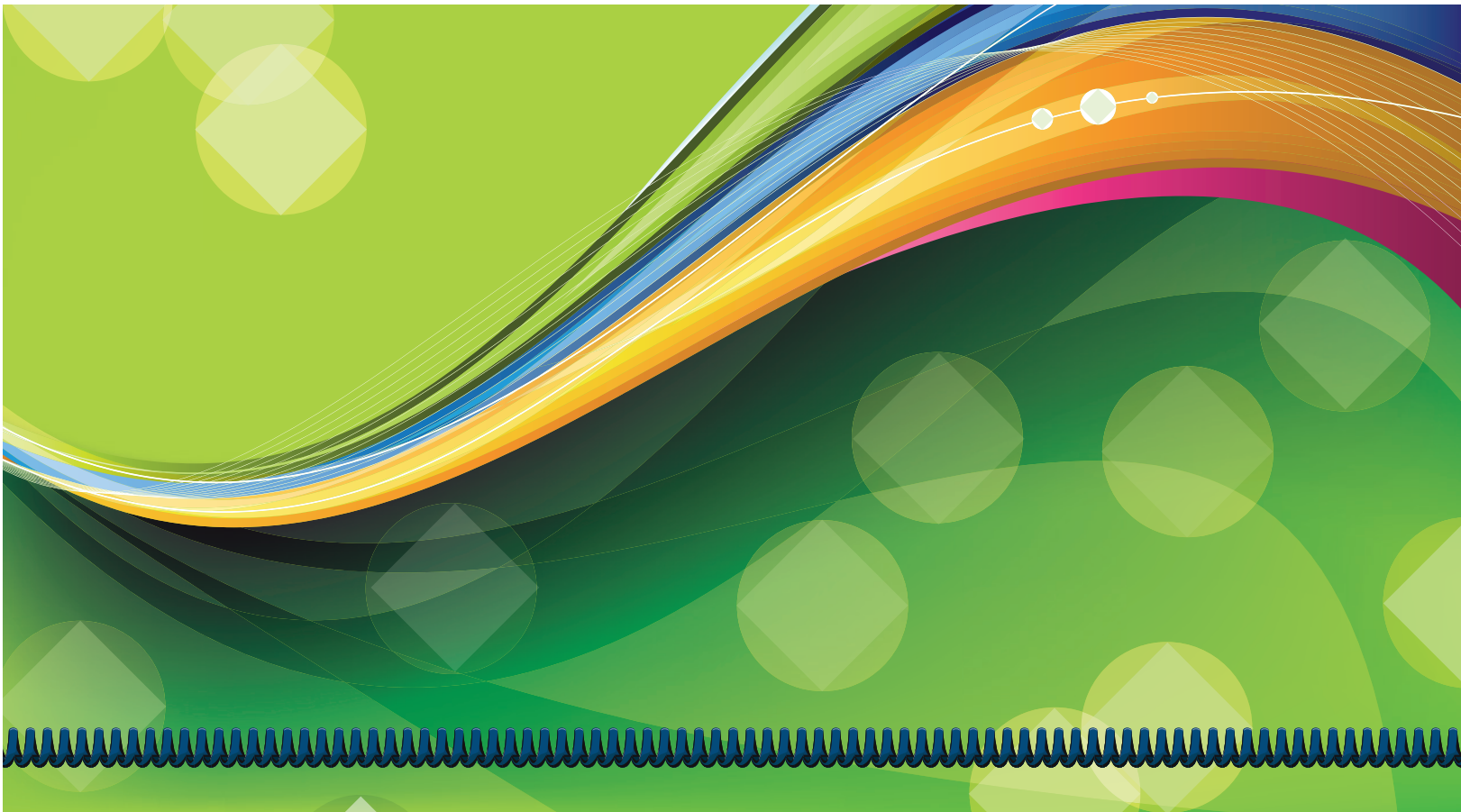
- When listing the phonenumber in a directory, be sure to use a geographical marker instead of or in addition to the service body's name. For example, instead of listing a phonenumber as "The Biggest Heart of NA Service Body," use the city or town name. The names of our service bodies don't always communicate the geographical location of meetings to those outside of the program. We want those outside of NA to be able to locate the phonenumber in their community.
- Service bodies may decide to list the NA phone number in the community resource or crisis section of a telephone directory or online reference. Listing the NA phonenumber in this section may require the service body to undergo a more extensive process, but can add credibility to NA as a community resource.

Strong phonenumber services have a positive impact on our ability to effectively carry the NA message. They help us help addicts. Our phonenumber services are an opportunity to form cooperative relationships that may benefit potential NA members. In order to keep phonenumber services strong and working, service bodies often track how many newcomers got to NA through the helpline and perform an annual inventory of the service's effectiveness, reviewing technology, costs, and feedback from NA members. Our ability to respond to callers in a sensitive, caring, and helpful way can make a real difference in whether or not an addict gets clean and finds recovery in Narcotics Anonymous.

Resources

For additional resources on phonenumber services, see Chapter Nine of the *Public Relations Handbook* and its resources, available at www.na.org/phonelineresources.





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RESOURCES FOR

chapter nine PHONELINES

contents

Phoneline training session.....	1
Phoneline flowchart	7
FAQ – Phoneline volunteers’ experience with calls	9
Referral form	13
Community referral list.....	15

PHONELINES TRAINING SESSION

The content and order of this session may vary depending on the time available. We encourage service committees to consider any individual circumstances that would require changes. Times referenced for particular segments of the session may vary.

Goals of the session

- ▶ Discuss underlying public relations principles within our phonline efforts.
- ▶ Orient and train volunteers about how to respond to various types of phonline calls.
- ▶ Introduce NA members to local phonline technologies and policies.

On tables are pens, note sheets, phonelines flowchart, and any local phonline resources.

Before the session begins

Prior to the session

- ▶ Review Chapter Nine of the *Public Relations Handbook*.
- ▶ Prepare a sign-in sheet, asking for name and contact information, to be passed around the room during the session.

Once onsite

- ▶ Consider the setup of the room:
 - Are there any sight barriers, or hearing or lighting challenges to consider?
 - Are there any other distractions that might need to be addressed?
 - Do the size of the meeting and the seating plan allow for small group discussions?
- ▶ Set up a literature table for any additional phonline handouts or resource materials.
- ▶ Be sure to be fully prepared to start the session **on time**.

Leader provides the setup of the session 5 minutes

Begin the session covering the following points:

Introductions

- ▶ The leader can introduce all of the presenters. Give a brief background of each presenter and their experience with phonelines.

Logistical issues

- ▶ Ask members to turn off ringers on their cell phones.
- ▶ Explain where the bathrooms are, when breaks will occur, what refreshments are available, etc.
- ▶ Inquire as to any special needs of any of the participants.
- ▶ Ask members to sign in with their name and contact information, and collect this list for updated information.

Setup

- ▶ Offer a brief outline of the session and what to expect, and state that any unanswered questions will be addressed at the end of the session.

Leader introduces core phonline PR principles

10 — 15 minutes

Leader identifies core public relations principles. State the principles listed below. Choose one bullet point for each principle and offer an example or personal thought.

(Inform the participants that chapter two of the Public Relations Handbook has essays on the principles of the traditions along with examples.)

Cooperation

- ☞ One of our public relations goals is to build long-lasting relationships with other organizations.
- ☞ Compromising any of our traditions in an effort to build these relationships is never beneficial to individual members or NA as a whole. We maintain a consistent focus on our primary purpose with the public.
- ☞ By creating positive relationships with those outside of NA, and with our own members, we foster unity and harmony with each other and the community around us.
- ☞ We put the common welfare of NA first, and we remember that we are only autonomous as long as our actions do not affect NA as a whole.

Attraction

- ☞ What is likely to be attractive to the public and to professionals who interact with addicts is reliable communication, responsibility, commitment, and behavior that reflects recovery.
- ☞ We can demonstrate the reliability of NA by showing up and fulfilling our obligations, whether it is to return a telephone call for information about NA or to supply meeting directories at a public library.
- ☞ We can draw on the experiences of NA members to fulfill the commitments we make to professionals.

Leader poses questions for discussion by the group

5 — 10 minutes

The following questions for discussion by the group are intended to help members consider cooperation and attraction as they apply to our phonline efforts. The group discusses one of the questions in this setting. The remaining questions may be a tool for the phonline committee to discuss at one of their meetings.

- ☞ How is our phonline used to cooperate with various outside organizations (such as the phonline service provider, an organization we may use as a referral, other public organizations in the community, etc.)?
- ☞ What cooperative actions do we, as committees and groups, take to ensure a smoothly running phonline?
- ☞ Why is it important that volunteers be consistent and reliable with their service, and how does that help NA's message of recovery remain attractive?
- ☞ How do we make phonline service an attractive NA commitment?

Preparing volunteers

5 minutes

With the previous discussion as a foundation, leader covers the following points:

- ☞ Responsiveness is a key principle for phonline service. This means that trusted servants should engage with callers in a sensitive, appropriate, and helpful manner.
- ☞ Leadership qualities such as integrity, the ability to listen, and sound judgment are essential in providing phonline service.
- ☞ Phonline volunteers often have to perform in higher-pressure situations, and they are likely to be the first contact that people have with NA.
- ☞ Avoid using NA jargon (such as "it works when you work it," "home group," "get a sponsor," etc.).
- ☞ Use NA literature to present an accurate and positive message of recovery and to clarify that the NA program is separate from treatment centers or other twelve-step programs.
- ☞ Do not make commitments on behalf of the area, region, or NA Fellowship. If a professional or member of the public contacts an NA phonline, volunteers should provide as much information about NA as they can, solicit information from the public contact log, and follow up with the appropriate trusted servant such as a committee chairperson or the area's media contact person.

Training volunteers

15 minutes

Leader asks: "Who calls our phonelines?"

Responses should include:

- ☞ Addicts (both potential members and current NA members).
- ☞ Nonaddicts.
- ☞ Family members and loved ones.
- ☞ Professionals.
- ☞ Clergy.

Leader then asks participants to identify specific types of calls

- ☞ Requests for meeting information.
- ☞ Requests for general information about NA.
- ☞ Requests for public relations efforts (PI presentations, H&I meetings, etc.)
- ☞ Difficult calls from addicts who are:
 - ▶▶ under the influence of drugs.
 - ▶▶ prank calls.
 - ▶▶ calls from those who suffer from mental illness.

One strategy is to continually bring the conversation back to how the caller can get to an NA meeting and end a problem call before the situation escalates.

- ☞ Calls made by the public, including simple requests for information or calls made about problems created by the behavior of NA members.
- ☞ Crisis calls:
 - ▶▶ Volunteers should be very clear about where their responsibility ends. Phonenumber volunteers are not counselors or crisis workers.
 - ▶▶ Threats to commit suicide, a drug overdose, or talk about being a victim of violence are all examples of crisis calls.
 - ▶▶ Refusing to refer such callers to qualified outside crisis agencies could have legal implications, depending on local laws.
- ☞ Meeting recommendations:
 - ▶▶ Volunteers can respect callers' requests and recommend a meeting where they are likely to find addicts with whom they may identify. We do not, however, automatically assume that because someone is of a certain age, gender, ethnicity, or sexual identity, they will want a meeting recommendation.
 - ▶▶ If there are no common needs meetings in an area but there are meetings where, for example, a larger population of young people regularly attends, then phonenumber volunteers can suggest these meetings to a caller who is asking for a recommendation.
- ☞ Twelfth step calls:
 - ▶▶ A twelfth step call is usually a request for assistance to get to a meeting. We carry NA's message through twelfth step calls.
 - ▶▶ A twelfth step call can mean that two or more addicts provide a ride to an NA meeting or that volunteers simply talk with the caller, helping the potential member get to a meeting on their own.
 - ▶▶ When possible, members meet those requesting a ride to a meeting in a public place.

- ☞ Referrals:
 - ▶ We don't give referrals to one specific treatment center or detoxification unit. Instead, we can provide a list of any and all local treatment centers and not align or affiliate ourselves with one in particular, or we can inform members of generic treatment referral numbers, such as the National Treatment Referral Line in the United States.
 - ▶ If a caller has a local telephone directory, we can direct them to the services listed there. The same principle is true for suicide prevention numbers and other community service numbers.
 - ▶ Family members and loved ones of addicts frequently call our phonedines. Volunteers can provide numbers for Nar-Anon and Families Anonymous or other similar information. But remember that we don't recommend one program over another or offer our opinions about any of these programs.
- ☞ Review Phonedines Flowchart considering the above examples.
- ☞ Remind the participants that these points and additional points are contained in the "Phonedines" chapter of the *Public Relations Handbook*.

**Local
phonedine
process,
technology,
and other
issues**

10 minutes

Leader discusses the details of the local phonedine system

This portion of the session will be developed by the local committee; the information presented will depend on the type of system used and local policy and procedure.

- ☞ Review local requirements (cleantime, meeting attendance, etc.).
 - ▶ Consider any forms or logs that the committee requires the volunteers to complete.
- ☞ Review current phonedine opportunities.
- ☞ Discuss the telephone system used by phonedine volunteers.

Break: 15 minutes

**Role-
playing
exercise**

**15 — 20
minutes**

Leader facilitates an exercise designed to help volunteers get practical experience. Add some of the specific calls material to this session. This will help participants to be more involved in the training.

Role-playing – Phonedine volunteers

- ☞ Set up mock telephone calls using two chairs, positioned back-to-back. Simulate common phone calls (from the list above) received by the volunteers.
 - ▶ Ask volunteers to respond to various types of calls using this process.

- ▶▶ After each scenario, allow members to offer their thoughts on how the participants responded.
- ▶▶ Using the phonenumber resources, offer your own thoughts on how the call should be handled.
- ▶▶ Once time has expired, ask participants what some of their real challenges have been. Talk about real issues and how to handle them, and then move on to questions and comments.

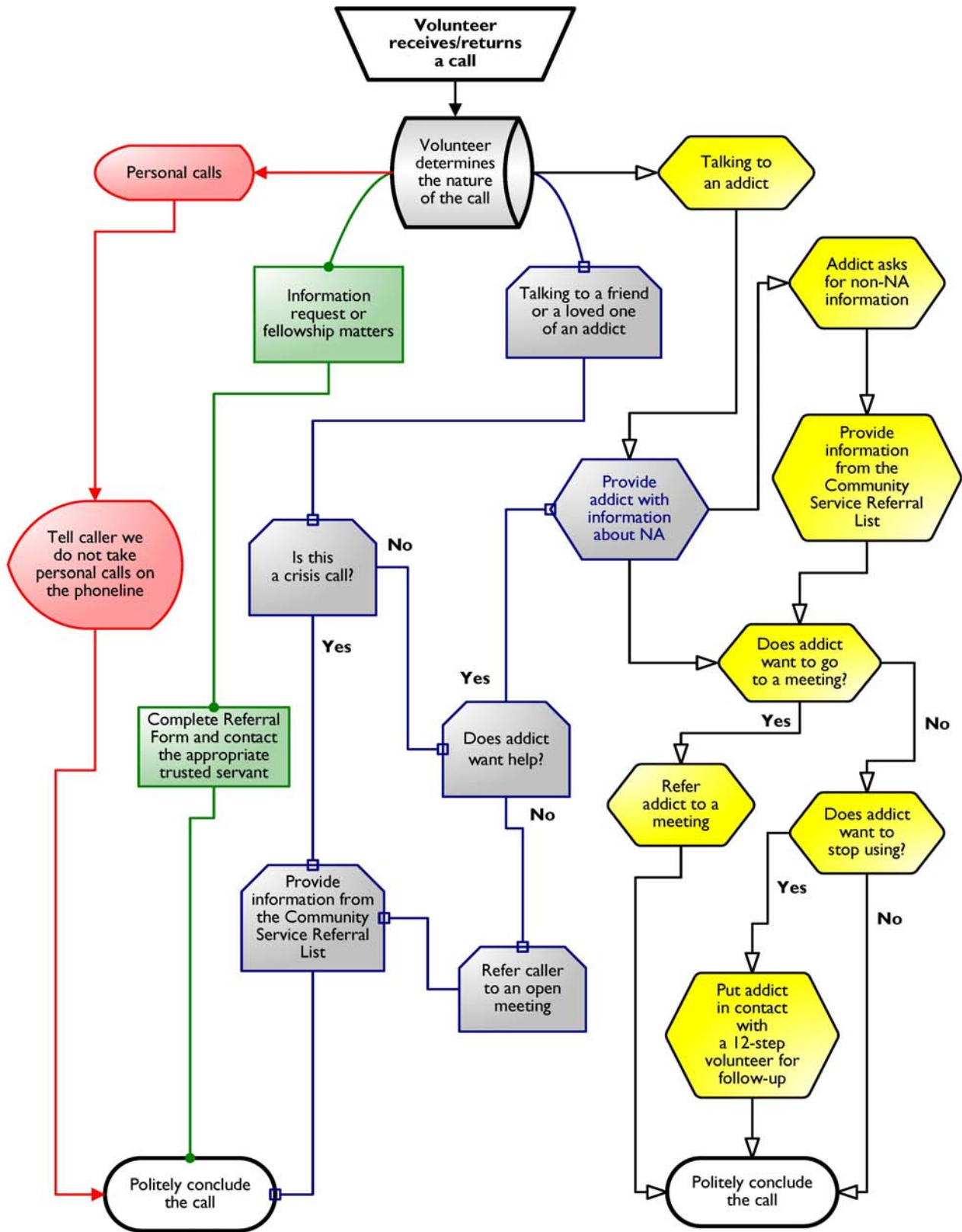
**Questions
and
comments**

10 minutes

Leader responds to questions from members

- ☞ Ask for questions or concerns.
- ☞ Remind members to complete the sign-in sheet.
- ☞ Thank everyone for attending.

Phoneline Flowchart



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS PHONELINE VOLUNTEERS' EXPERIENCE WITH CALLS

This resource can be used by volunteers answering phonenumber calls when interacting with addicts, loved ones, professionals, and the community at large. These frequently asked questions are meant to help trusted servants provide clear, consistent, and informative responses. When responding to a question using NA terminology, such as “leader”, please explain to the listener what we mean by that language. In an effort to gain an understanding of the information here, trusted servants can discuss and rehearse the questions and answers below.

What follows are possible answers to questions frequently asked by phonenumber callers.

Questions asked by potential members

Q&A

1

I’ve been using (smoking pot) for three years and I’m not sure if I am an addict. Can NA help?

We suggest attending an NA meeting and speaking with some of the members there. Because NA meetings are a safe place, newcomers are encouraged to ask questions. Also, read some of our literature, which is available at most NA meetings, and decide for yourself. The informational pamphlet *Am I an Addict?* may help you in your decision making.

Q&A

2

I am getting drug-tested by my parole officer; how long does cocaine stay in your system?

Narcotics Anonymous is a twelve-step fellowship for those who think they may have a problem with drugs. We are a self-help, recovery-oriented organization and employ no medical professionals. We do not give any medical advice or opinions, but we do help addicts find recovery through the NA program.

Q&A

3

What should I expect when I go to my first NA meeting? Do I have to talk?

Typically a leader or chairperson will conduct the meeting. There is usually time for participation in which members share about their experience, strength, and hope with staying clean. You do not have to speak during the meeting if you don’t want to. We encourage you to get there a little early so that you can speak with some of the members and pick up some literature before the meeting starts.

Q&A

4

How much does NA cost? Are you counselors?

There are no fees or dues to be a member of NA. The only requirement for membership is the desire to stop using. We are not professional counselors; we are recovering addicts who share our experience to help each other stay clean.

Q&A**5****I am a nurse by profession and I want to get clean. Where can I find a nurses' meeting?**

Some areas have common needs meetings while others do not. This area does/does not have a nurses' NA meeting. We can tell you, however, that recovering addicts from all types of professions attend our meetings.

Q&A**6****I'd like to go to an NA meeting but I don't have a car. Can you help?**

Yes, we can try. Where do you live? Let me take your number down and see if I can find a ride for you. (Refer to area Twelfth-Step list)

Note: This may not be a service offered in some areas. If your area is interested in Twelve Step lists, you may refer to the *Public Relations Handbook*, Chapter Nine.

Q&A**7****I'm suicidal and I don't want to live anymore. What should I do?**

We strongly suggest contacting the suicide prevention number, which is _____, or 911 to get immediate assistance.

Questions asked by loved ones**Q&A****1****My boyfriend is using drugs, stealing, and cheating. What can I do to help him? Will you call him?**

Because Narcotics Anonymous is a self-help program, addicts must have the desire to stop using. Once he is ready to stop using drugs, please have him call us so we can direct him to an NA meeting in his area. In the meantime, you may want to call Nar-Anon or Families Anonymous. Although we are not affiliated with these organizations, we are happy to provide their telephone numbers.

Q&A**2****My son/daughter is using drugs and wants to stop taking drugs. Can I go with him/her to their first meeting?**

You may attend an "open" NA meeting with your son/daughter. Open meetings welcome family members and the community at large. Closed meetings are for addicts only. Let me check our meeting list, so I can give you several choices of open meetings...

Q&A**3****Will you call me if my son/daughter does not show up to meetings regularly?**

No, we are not able to do this. Because this is a self-help program, it is not our position to monitor an addict's willingness to attend meetings.

Questions asked by community members

Q&A

1

I heard that my old friend, Jane Smith, is in NA. Can I have her phone number?

We are not at liberty to give out contact information for individuals who may or may not be members.

Q&A

2

Drugs are being sold in my apartment complex. Can you come and arrest them?

Narcotics Anonymous is a twelve-step fellowship for those who think they may have a problem with drugs. We are a self-help, recovery-oriented organization and employ no law enforcement professionals.

REFERRAL FORM

For referring calls to the area or region

There are times when trusted servants within the area or at the regional service committee may be more experienced with answering certain phonenumber requests. This is a sample referral form for the tracking of such calls. This form will allow us to follow the referral to ensure that the request is answered and the callers' needs are met.

Today's date _____ Time of call _____

Phonenumber Volunteer _____

Caller's name _____

Name of agency or organization _____

Caller's telephone number _____ ext _____

Alternate telephone number _____

Time & date when caller is available to be called back _____

Caller or agency's email address _____

Reason(s) for calling

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Atmosphere of recovery issue | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership issue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Predator issue | <input type="checkbox"/> Public image issue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Request from media | <input type="checkbox"/> Problem with meeting at facility |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Request for NA literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Request for NA presentation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Twelfth-Step call request | <input type="checkbox"/> Request for meeting directories |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Request for meeting at facility | <input type="checkbox"/> Request for activities schedule |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Request for NA booth | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>describe in detail</i>): _____ | |

Referred request to: Area Region

Committee member's name and position: _____

Notes: _____

COMMUNITY REFERRAL LIST

The following is a sample community referral list, to be used when the caller is asking for help that does not fall within our primary purpose and our traditions. We offer information in the spirit of cooperation. We can provide a list of numbers rather than any one specific number. We do not recommend one referral over another. We simply provide contact information as a courtesy. (In many parts of the United States and Canada, a community services helpline can be reached by dialing 211. If 211 service is available in your area, it may be the easiest and most complete referral that you can make.)

Child Abuse Hotline	_____
County/City/State Emergency Services	_____
Domestic Violence Services	_____
Drug Crisis Hotline	_____
Families Anonymous	_____
Intervention Services	_____
Local Homeless Shelter	_____
Mental Health Helpline	_____
Nar-Anon	_____
Poison Control	_____
Probation Department	_____
Rape Crisis Center	_____
Services for Runaways	_____
Suicide Prevention Hotline	_____
Additional community resources and numbers	_____



Phonelines Subcommittee Guidelines

Approved April 14, 2024

I. Mission

Our mission is to develop and maintain a telephone helpline serving the San Fernando Valley Area (SFV Area) and Southern California Region (SoCal Region) of Narcotics Anonymous. The helpline directs addicts to meetings, connects callers to other trusted servants, and provides callers information about NA.

II. San Fernando Valley Area Phonelines Subcommittee (SFV-PL) Members

- a. The SFV-PL shall consist of the following members:
 - i. [Chair](#)
 - ii. [Vice Chair](#)
 - iii. [Secretary](#)
 - iv. [Volunteer Coordinator](#)
 - v. [Technology Coordinator](#)
 - vi. [Call Catcher](#)
 - vii. [Volunteers](#)
- b. At the discretion of the SFV-PL, the duties of the Volunteer Coordinator may be assigned to the Vice Chair.

III. Chair

- a. Qualifications:
 - i. A minimum of three (3) years of continuous clean time.
 - ii. A minimum of one (1) year of service at the area level.
 - iii. Six (6) months prior involvement in the SFV-PL.
 - iv. A working knowledge of the [12 Steps](#), [12 Traditions](#), [12 Concepts for NA Service](#), [SFV-PL Guidelines](#), and [Guidelines of the SFV Area Service Committee](#) (ASC).
- b. Responsibilities:
 - i. Schedule and conduct a monthly SFV-PL meeting. The Chair may schedule additional SFV-PL meetings when necessary, and such meetings are considered regularly-scheduled meetings.
 - ii. Attend all meetings of the ASC, provide written reports to each the ASC and the SFV-PL from the other.
 - iii. Attend all Regional Service Works training days and meetings of The [SoCal Region Phonline Committee](#) (Regional-PL) and, provide reports from each the SFV-PL and Regional-PL to the other.

- iv. Work with the Vice Chair and Technology Coordinator to maintain the Volunteer Manual.
- v. Prepare and present an annual proposed budget to the ASC by on or at its December meeting each year.
- vi. Prepare the agenda for the monthly meeting of the SFV-PL.

IV. Vice-Chair:

- a. Qualifications:
 - i. A minimum of two (2) years continuous clean time.
 - ii. Six (6) months prior involvement in the SFV-PL.
 - iii. A working knowledge of the [12 Steps](#), [12 Traditions](#), [12 Concepts for NA Service](#), [SFV-PL Guidelines](#), and [Guidelines of the SFV Area Service Committee](#) (ASC).
- b. Responsibilities:
 - i. Perform the duties of the Chair in their absence.
 - ii. Attend SFV-PL Meetings.
 - iii. Assist the Volunteer Coordinator with their duties or perform those duties in place of a Volunteer Coordinator if so directed by the SFV-PL.
 - iv. Attend the Regional Service Works Meetings.
 - v. Work with the Chair and Technology Coordinator to maintain the Volunteer Manual.

V. Secretary:

- a. Qualifications:
 - i. One (1) year continuous clean time.
 - ii. A working knowledge of the [12 Steps](#), [12 Traditions](#), [12 Concepts for NA Service](#), [SFV-PL Guidelines](#), and [Guidelines of the SFV Area Service Committee](#) (ASC).
 - iii. Technological skills sufficient to create and distribute minutes of the monthly meetings of the SFV-PL.
- b. Responsibilities:
 - i. Attend all SFV-PL meetings.
 - ii. Take and maintain monthly meeting minutes and distribute them along with meeting directories and any other relevant meeting materials.
 - iii. Coordinate SFV-PL events.

VI. Volunteer Coordinator.**

- a. Qualifications:
 - i. A minimum of eighteen (18) months continuous clean time.
 - ii. Six (6) months prior involvement in the SFV-PL.
 - iii. A working knowledge of the [12 Steps](#), [12 Traditions](#), [12 Concepts for NA Service](#), [SFV-PL Guidelines](#), and [Guidelines of the SFV Area Service Committee](#) (ASC).

- b. Responsibilities:
 - i. Train Volunteers.
 - ii. Schedule Volunteers for shifts.
 - iii. Ensure Volunteers are covering their shifts.
 - iv. Assist Volunteers in finding a replacement for a shift if they are unable to find another Volunteer to cover their shift.
 - v. Troubleshoot any Volunteer problems.
 - vi. **In lieu of electing a Volunteer Coordinator, the SFV-PL may assign the responsibilities of the Volunteer Coordinator to the Vice Chair.

VII. Technology Coordinator

- a. Qualifications:
 - i. A minimum of two (2) years continuous clean time.
 - ii. Six (6) months prior involvement in the SFV-PL.
 - iii. A working knowledge of the [12 Steps](#), [12 Traditions](#), [12 Concepts for NA Service](#), [SFV-PL Guidelines](#), and [Guidelines of the SFV Area Service Committee](#) (ASC).
- b. Responsibilities:
 - i. Maintain all aspects of the SFV-PL phone service, including
 1. Assigning extensions to trusted servants and subcommittees;
 2. Maintaining the call forwarding system based on the schedule provided by the Volunteer Coordinator or Vice Chair so the appropriate volunteer receives calls on his/her shift;
 3. Ensuring that missed calls are forwarded by electronic mail to the Call Catcher.
 - ii. Provide a monthly report to the SFV-PL of call volume, missed calls, and other data as requested.
 - iii. Prepare a monthly written report of all call data (with personal phone numbers redacted) requested by the Chair, the SFV-PL or the ASC.
 - iv. Work with the Chair and Vice Chair to maintain the Volunteer Manual.

VIII. Call Catcher

- a. Qualifications:
 - i. A minimum of three (3) years of continuous clean time.
 - ii. A minimum of two (2) years of service at the area level.
 - iii. One (1) year of prior service with an NA Phonelines committee.
 - iv. A working knowledge of the [12 Steps](#), [12 Traditions](#), [12 Concepts for NA Service](#), [SFV-PL Guidelines](#), and [Guidelines of the SFV Area Service Committee](#) (ASC).

- v. Sufficient computer, internet and telephone skills to respond to electronic mail messages forwarded when calls are missed.
- b. Responsibilities:
 - i. Monitor electronic mail messages for notification of calls missed by volunteers.
 - ii. Return those calls promptly—ideally the same day they are missed.
 - iii. Report any issues to the Chair or Technology Coordinator as appropriate.

IX. Volunteers

- a. Qualifications:
 - i. A minimum of six (6) months continuous clean time.
 - ii. A working knowledge of the [12 Steps](#), [12 Traditions](#), [12 Concepts for NA Service](#), [SFV-PL Guidelines](#), and [Guidelines of the SFV Area Service Committee](#) (ASC).
 - iii. Willingness to give a minimum six (6) month commitment.
 - iv. Willingness to abide by the SFV-PL Volunteer Manual.
 - v. Attend one SFV-PL meeting prior to being trained and assigned a shift.
 - vi. Report any problems to the Chair, Vice-Chair or Volunteer Coordinator immediately.
- b. Responsibilities:
 - i. Cover assigned shift(s) regularly and promptly.
 - ii. If unable to cover a shift, find a replacement Volunteer and contact the Volunteer Coordinator well in advance of the shift to make arrangements.
 - iii. Provide N.A. Meeting and/or NA-approved information to callers seeking help.
 - iv. Be fully trained on the SFV-PL Volunteer Manual.
 - v. Be in possession of the SFV-PL Volunteer Manual with current material whenever on a shift.
 - vi. Make an honest effort to attend all SFV-PL meetings.
 - vii. Answer the phone, "Helpline, this is _____", or in another generic and courteous manner.
 - viii. Ensure that no person answers the phone during the shift except a trained Volunteer.
- c. Technical requirements:
 - i. Use of a phone with unrestricted incoming call access.
 - ii. If using a cell phone, be in a clear reception area during shift.
 - iii. Answer all calls during the shift to avoid sending a caller to the Call Catcher.
 - iv. Utilize a standard (ring) answer tone.

X. Operations

a. Voting

- i. Voting members of the SFV-PL shall be Elected Trusted Servants and existing Volunteers. The Chair votes only in the event of a tie.
- ii. A voting member becomes eligible to vote upon attending two consecutive meetings.
- iii. A quorum consists of the voting members attending each meeting.
- iv. Once a quorum is established at each meeting, it is established for the duration of the meeting.

b. Motions

- i. Any voting member of the SFV-PL, except the Chair, may make or second a motion.
- ii. The Chair will allow for up to two (2) pros and two (2) cons to speak to any motion and allow for an appropriate amount of discussion before calling for a vote.

c. Elections

- i. Elections are held one month prior to ASC nominations.
- ii. The Chair nominated by the SFV-PL shall attend the Nominations Meeting designated by the ASC.
- iii. The Vice-Chair, Secretary, Technical Coordinator and Volunteer Coordinator shall be elected by the SFV-PL and shall assume their duties immediately.
- iv. The Call Catcher shall be appointed by the Chair with the consent of the SFV-PL.
- v. SFV-PL members can elect alternate Trusted Servants if the qualifications of the position are met.
- vi. Elected Trusted Servants may serve no more than two (2) consecutive terms.
- vii. A term is one (1) year.
- viii. If a Trusted Servant is elected with eight (8) or more months remaining in any term, that term shall be considered one (1) full term.

d. Committee members shall abide by the responsibilities of their commitment. Failure to abide by these responsibilities may be grounds for removal.

e. These guidelines may be amended by the SFV-PL upon approval of the ASC.

Previously revised 3/09/2002, 7/13/2003, 03/14/2004, 07/09/2006, 8/2006, 2/2006, 6/2009, 2/2010, 2/2011, 1/13/2013, and 1/12/2014



San Fernando Valley Area Service Committee Narcotics Anonymous Guidelines for Service

Approved by SFVASCNA October 2023

I. DECORUM STATEMENT San Fernando Valley Area Service Committee meetings will be conducted according to established rules of order adapted from Robert’s Rules of Order. This time-honored system for conducting business is the clearest way yet devised for getting a maximum amount of business done in a minimum time, regardless of the degree of disagreement among the participants. These rules are meant to be used as tools to help us make orderly, collective decisions in a cooperative, respectful way in the spirit of our Twelve Concepts; please do not use them as weapons against one another. We encourage all participants to become familiar with these rules of order and conduct themselves accordingly. Once the meeting is underway, only one matter will be before the Committee at any one time and no other discussion is in order. Please respect the Chairperson’s right to be in control of the process of this meeting so that we may get the maximum results from its content.

II. NAME, DESCRIPTION, AND BOUNDARIES

- A.** This body shall be known as the San Fernando Valley Area Service Committee of Narcotics Anonymous, hereinafter called SFVASC, or ASC, and shall serve the San Fernando Valley Area of Narcotics Anonymous, hereinafter called SFVANA.
- B.** The SFVASC is a service body of Narcotics Anonymous directly responsible to the groups that have formed it. It consists of Group Service Representatives (GSRs) from NA groups of the SFVANA, along with elected officers, subcommittee chairpersons, and other participants who meet monthly in a general assembly to serve the common needs of the SFVANA groups.
- C.** The SFVASC shall serve that portion of the Southern California Region bounded on the north by the 118 Freeway, Interstate 5, 210 Freeway, and Angeles National Forest; on the south by Mulholland Drive; on the east by the Glendale (2) Freeway; and on the west by Reseda Boulevard.
- D.** We shall have the option of including meetings located in neighboring areas.

III. PURPOSE

- A.** The primary purpose of the SFVASC shall be the administration and coordination of Narcotics Anonymous activities common to the various groups comprising its membership and facilitating communication between the SFVASC and the rest of Narcotics Anonymous. These activities include furthering the NA program through the Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous and the Twelve Concepts of Service.
- B.** To ensure that our primary purpose is carried out, the SFVASC shall have subcommittees directly responsible to those they serve.
- C.** Specifically excluded from the objectives of the SFVASC is the operation of any clubs,

clubhouses, detox centers, or any such related facilities and the endorsement of any public or private projects on addiction or drug abuse as outlined in Tradition Six. The Twelve Traditions and the Twelve Concepts of Service of Narcotics Anonymous shall provide the governing rules of the SFVASC.

IV. AREA SERVICE COMMITTEE

- A.** The SFVASC shall meet on the second Sunday of each month unless it falls on a holiday, in which case it will be held on the date set at the previous ASC meeting.
 - 1.** Special meetings may be called by a majority of the Group Service Representatives or by the Chairperson or Vice Chairperson on being advised of a matter of special urgency.
 - 2.** The Chairperson must give reasonable notice of at least one week of such meetings to all Participants.
- B.** All Area Service Committee meetings shall be open to any member of NA as a non-participant observer but shall be closed to the general public.
 - 1.** The only participants shall be those listed under Section V.
 - 2.** Non-participants may be recognized at the discretion of the Chairperson.
 - 3.** An open forum may be called and can include members-at-large at the Chairperson's discretion.
- C.** The SFVASC shall remain in session until the end of business or until a motion to adjourn is approved.

V. PARTICIPANTS

- A.** The SFVASC shall be comprised of
 - 1.** Duly-elected officers:
 - a)** Chairperson
 - b)** Vice Chairperson
 - c)** Treasurer
 - d)** Vice Treasurer
 - e)** Secretary
 - f)** Alternate Secretary
 - g)** Regional Committee Member (RCM)
 - h)** Alternate Regional Committee Member (RCM Alt)
 - 2.** Group Service Representatives (GSRs) and their Alternates who have been elected or who represent their group's conscience.
 - 3.** Subcommittee and Ad hoc Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons.
- B.** GSRs or their Alternates in the GSR's absence representing a new group/meeting and attending SFVASC for the first time will be recognized as voting participants.
- C.** These participants, including subcommittee chairs or their designated subcommittee members, shall attend all Area Service Committee meetings until the close of business. Members of NA, outside the SFVASC, may attend ASC meetings as non-participant observers and may be granted the floor by the Chairperson.
- D.** Absence at two consecutive ASC meetings by both the GSR and the GSR Alternate

establishes the inactivity of that group as a voting member of the SFVASC. That group will become an active voting participant once its GSR or GSR Alternate is recognized as being present at its second consecutive ASC meeting.

- E.** Absence at two consecutive ASC meetings by any elected officer may be reason enough for removal.
- F.** The RCM, Treasurer, and all standing Subcommittees including Ad hocs shall provide written monthly reports to the Area Service Committee Google Group as well as several hard copies shall be provided at the ASC meeting for those who do not have electronic access to the reports.
- G.** Subcommittees with bank accounts shall provide a financial statement included with their monthly written report, as well as a copy of their most current bank statement to the Area Treasurer.
- H.** In addition to the requirements listed above, each elected officer shall have the following:
 - 1.** Willingness and a desire to serve.
 - 2.** Personal time and the ability to serve.
 - 3.** Knowledge of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of NA.
 - 4.** Continued abstinence during the term of office.
 - 5.** Elected officials include the following:
 - a) Chairperson**
 - (1) Requirements**
 - (a)** Seven years of clean time.
 - (b)** Service experience at the Area level of at least two years within the last five years.
 - (c)** Read and be knowledgeable of the SFVASC Guidelines.
 - (2) Duties**
 - (a)** Arrange agenda and presides over ASC.
 - (b)** Initiate necessary correspondence and provides Area Secretary with copies.
 - (c)** Initiate semi-annual audits of subcommittee bank accounts in May (the month before elections) and November (see Section V.I.6.b.6).
 - (d)** Maintain a good working relationship with all other members of the committee.
 - (e)** Cosigner on the SFVASC bank account.
 - (f)** May vote to break a tie.
 - (g)** Ensure that prescribed voting and motion procedures are upheld (Section VI).
 - (h)** Shall conduct orientation for new GSRs 15 minutes before the ASC.
 - (i)** Shall maintain an annual calendar with due dates of all Area mandatory tasks, such as budgets, audits, rent, elections, etc.,

and update it into the agenda every month.

- (j) Is responsible for checking and responding promptly to all emails sent to the Chairperson.
- (k) If necessary shall carry the conscience of the NASFVASC to the RSC in business matters in the absence of the RCM team.

b) Vice Chairperson

(1) Requirements

- (a) Seven years of clean time.
- (b) Service experience at the Area level of at least two years within the last five years.
- (c) Willingness to serve as Chairperson if elected to the following term.
- (d) Read and be knowledgeable of the SFVASC Guidelines.

(2) Duties

- (a) Perform the Chairperson's duties in the absence of the Chairperson.
- (b) Stay informed of all Subcommittees' and Ad hoc committees' activities and be available for any related problems.
- (c) Available to assume the duties as needed temporarily in the event there is no subcommittee chairperson.
- (d) Cosigner on all SFVASC bank accounts.
- (e) Shall serve as Area Parliamentarian.
- (f) Shall be available as a resource to Ad hoc committees
- (g) If necessary shall carry the conscience of the NASFVASC to the RSC in business matters in the absence of the RCM team.

c) Secretary

(1) Requirements

- (a) Three years of clean time.
- (b) Service experience at the area level of at least one year.
- (c) Working knowledge of computer word-processing applications, including receiving and sending emails.
- (d) Read and be knowledgeable of the SFVASC Guidelines.

(2) Duties

- (a) Take roll calls and accurate minutes of each regular or special SFVASC meeting.
- (b) Maintain an index of action items and motions made at each Area Service Committee meeting.
- (c) Maintain an ASC Contact list composed of email addresses and phone numbers of all ASC participants mentioned in Section V.A.
- (d) Make available copies of the minutes to each participant of the

SFVASC via hard copy and email to the Google Group.

- (e) Shall maintain the SFVASC post office box, renewing the lease annually upon the receipt of the notice, and check the box at least monthly for all Area correspondence except for inmate correspondence.
- (f) Maintain SFVASC archives and records.
- (g) The Secretary will maintain archives of one year, available for review, at the ASC. Archives past one entire year shall be maintained at the SFVASC storage facility.
- (h) Submit a copy of all correspondence to the ASC Chairperson for review, originals to archives.
- (i) Is responsible for checking and responding promptly to all emails sent to the Secretary.
- (j) Is responsible for the NASFV secretary's laptop.

d) Alternate Secretary

(1) Requirements

- (a) Two years of clean time.
- (b) Service experience at some level of at least one year.
- (c) Working knowledge of computer word-processing applications, including receiving and sending emails.
- (d) Read and be knowledgeable of the SFVASC Guidelines.

(2) Duties

- (a) Perform the Secretary's duties in the absence of the Secretary.
- (b) Assemble and make available copies of the ASC informational package, including but not limited to, the Twelve Concepts for NA Service, the Twelve Traditions of NA, and the current approved SFVASC Guidelines to all new ASC participants.

e) Treasurer

(1) Requirements

- (a) Five years of clean time.
- (b) Service experience at the Area level of at least one year within the last three years.
- (c) Accounting experience is strongly suggested.
- (d) Cosigner on the SFVASC bank account.
- (e) Cannot be a signer on any other service committee bank account.
- (f) Read and be knowledgeable of the SFVASC Guidelines.

(2) Duties

- (a) Custodian of all the SFVASC bank accounts.
- (b) Familiar with and able to follow basic accounting procedures

including proper check writing, monthly submission of financial reports, and account reconciliation, as well as the requirements in Addendum I, Money Handling Procedures.

- (c) Give a financial report at every ASC meeting.
- (d) Provide a written report to the monthly SFVASC meeting and make copies available to each participant of the SFVASC, via hard copy to the ASC Service Board and via email to the Website Subcommittee.
- (e) Make available for auditing all financial records on demand.
- (f) Provide copies of bills and/or statements to relevant subcommittees upon request
- (g) Donate to the SCRSC per Section VII Item F.
- (h) Prepare estimates and recommendations for prudent reserve requirements and reports these to the SFVASC on request.
- (i) Assist as necessary in the semi-annual audits as per Section VI.1.1.b.
- (j) Instruct the Vice Treasurer on all accounting procedures and train the vice treasurer as necessary to perform the tasks of the treasurer.
- (k) Is responsible for checking and responding promptly to all emails sent to the Treasurer.
- (l) Is responsible for SFVASC Treasurer's laptop.

f) Vice Treasurer

(1) Requirements

- (a) Five years of clean time.
- (b) Service experience at the Area level of at least two years within the last five years.
- (c) Accounting experience is strongly suggested.
- (d) Willingness to serve as Treasurer if elected to the following term.
- (e) Read and be knowledgeable of the SFVASC Guidelines.

(2) Duties

- (a) Attend all ASC meetings.
- (b) Familiar with and able to follow basic accounting procedures including proper check writing, monthly submission of financial reports, and account reconciliation, as well as the requirements found in Addendum I, Money Handling Procedures.
- (c) Perform the duties of the Treasurer's position if the Treasurer is absent, resigns, or is removed.
- (d) Assist in giving a financial report at every ASC meeting.

- (e) Assist in making available for auditing all financial records on demand.
- (f) Perform an annual audit of asc bank accounts in May and semi-annual audits of subcommittee bank accounts in May (the month before elections) and November, as directed by the ASC. If for any reason, any audit cannot be performed as scheduled, or there are any discrepancies or irregularities, which result from an audit, it shall be brought to the attention of the Executive Body before the following ASC Meeting.
- (g) Audits shall be performed as described in the Addendum
- (h) Instruct all subcommittee treasurers to ensure they are knowledgeable and can comply with Addendum 1 Accounting Guidelines.

g) Regional Committee Member (RCM)

(1) Requirements

- (a) Three years of clean time.
- (b) Service experience at the Regional level of at least one year.
- (c) Read and be knowledgeable of the SFVASC Guidelines as well as the Southern California Regional Service Conference (RSC) Guidelines.

(2) Duties

- (a) The responsibility of the RCM is to work for the good of NA by providing two-way communication between the ASC and the RSC.
- (b) Provide a written report to the monthly SFVASC meeting and make copies available to each participant of the SFVASC, via hard copy to the ASC Service Board and via email to the Website Subcommittee.
- (c) The RCM is to the ASC what the GSR is to the group. As the representative of the Area, he/she represents the group conscience of the ASC at the Regional level and takes part in any discussions that affect the Region as a whole.
- (d) The RCM attends all SCRSC (Southern California Regional Service Conference) meetings and represents the ASC at the RSC.
- (e) Participate in the SCRAW (Southern California Regional Agenda Workshop) and Info Fair occurring on non-WSC cycles.
- (f) Educate GSRs about the World Service Conference and the importance of their group's involvement in the process of understanding the issues, informing their groups, and carrying

their group's conscience back to the Area.

(g) Assist members of the ASC to understand the motions and issues of the Conference Agenda Report (CAR).

(h) Collect and tally the votes from the Area groups on CAR motions and vote the Area's conscience at the RSC.

h) Regional Committee Member Alternate (RCM Alt)

(1) Requirements

(a) Three years of clean time.

(b) Service experience at the Area level of at least one year.

(c) Willingness to serve as RCM if elected to the following term.

(d) Read and be knowledgeable of the SFVASC Guidelines as well as the Southern California Regional Service Conference (SCRSC) Guidelines.

(2) Duties

(a) Perform duties of the RCM in the absence of the RCM.

(b) Attend ASC meetings and help RCM maintain communication with SFV Area groups.

(c) Attend all SCRSC meetings and represent the ASC at the RSC in the absence of the RCM.

(d) Prepare for the RCM's duties by working closely with the RCM. 5) Participate in the SCRAW and Info Fair.

(e) Assist the RCM in the duties as described above in Sections VI.1.7.b.6; VI.1.7.b.7; VI.1.7.b.8.

i) Activities Subcommittee Chairperson

(1) Requirements

(a) Three years of clean time.

(b) Service experience at the Area level of at least two years.

(c) Activities Committee experience suggested.

(d) Read and be knowledgeable of the SFVASC Guidelines as well as their own Subcommittee Guidelines.

(2) Duties

(a) Work with committee members to arrange fellowship events such as dances, picnics, learning days, etc.

(b) Responsible for contacts and contracts with outside venues for these events.

(c) Chair monthly business meetings.

(d) Attend and provide both written and financial reports to monthly Area Service Committee meetings and via email to the Website Subcommittee.

(e) Responsible for maintaining the Subcommittee bank account.

(f) Responsible for Area Activities Subcommittee attendance at

monthly Regional Activities Committee meetings.

- (g) Is responsible for checking and responding promptly to all emails sent to the committee.

j) Convention Subcommittee Chairperson

(1) Requirements

- (a) Seven years of clean time.
- (b) Service experience on any NA Convention Subcommittee of at least three years.
- (c) Read and be knowledgeable of the SFVASC Guidelines as well as their own Subcommittee Guidelines.

(2) Duties

- (a) Arrange the annual SFV Area Convention.
- (b) Chair monthly business meetings.
- (c) Maintain contact as the primary liaison between the committee and the venue.
- (d) Responsible for all contracts and commitments made by the committee.
- (e) Responsible for maintaining the Subcommittee bank account.
- (f) Attend and provide both written and financial reports to monthly Area Service Committee meetings and via email to the Website Subcommittee.
- (g) Is responsible for checking and responding promptly to all emails sent to the committee.

k) Hospitals and Institutions Subcommittee Chairperson

(1) Requirements

- (a) Three years of clean time.
- (b) Service experience at the Area level of at least one year.
- (c) One year of H & I committee experience.
- (d) Read and be knowledgeable of the SFVASC Guidelines as well as their own Subcommittee Guidelines.

(2) Duties

- (a) Attend Regional H & I Committee meetings.
- (b) Keep and maintain the list of all Area panel commitments.
- (c) Primary liaison between the hospitals and institutions in the Area requesting or having NA panels.
- (d) Responsible for the purchase from the Regional Service Office (RSO) in Monrovia and distribution of allotted literature to Panel Chairpersons for panel meetings within our Area.
- (e) Responsible to attend and provide written reports to monthly Area Service Committee meetings and via email to the

Website Subcommittee.

- (f) This subcommittee is provided with a budget and does not handle money. The only exceptions to this may be Area checks written to cover approved expenditures. Any purchase made needs to be accounted for with an itemized receipt submitted to the ASC Treasurer. It is the Subcommittee Chairperson's responsibility to stay within the approved budget.
- (g) Provide a yearly projected budget to ASC Treasurer by December of each calendar year.
- (h) Is responsible for checking and responding promptly to all emails sent to the committee.

l) Literature Subcommittee Chairperson

(1) Requirements

- (a) Five years of clean time.
- (b) Service experience of at least one year.
- (c) Must be able to arrange transportation of literature inventory to and from storage.
- (d) Read and be knowledgeable of the SFVASC Guidelines as well as their own Subcommittee Guidelines.

(2) Duties

- (a) Arrange the purchase and pickup of NA Literature from the Regional Service Office (RSO).
- (b) Sells/distributes NA Literature and event flyers at the monthly Area Service Committee meeting and applicable ASC events.
- (c) Is responsible for leftover inventory.
- (d) Maintain a subcommittee checking account.
- (e) Maintain the Literature storage unit and be responsible for transporting literature to each ASC meeting.
- (f) Chair monthly business meetings.
- (g) Responsible for attending and providing written and financial reports to the monthly Area Service Committee meeting and via email to the Website Subcommittee.
- (h) Is responsible for checking and responding promptly to all emails sent to the committee.

m) Phonenumber Subcommittee Chairperson

(1) Requirements

- (a) Three years of clean time.
- (b) Service experience at the Area level or on a Phonenumber Committee of at least one year.
- (c) Six months minimum SFV Area Phonenumber Subcommittee

experience.

- (d) Read and be knowledgeable of the SFVASC Guidelines as well as their own Subcommittee Guidelines.

(2) Duties

- (a) Attend Regional Phonline Committee meetings.
- (b) Responsible for maintaining the Area Helpline.
- (c) Chair monthly business meetings.
- (d) Responsible for attending and providing written reports to the monthly Area Service Committee meeting and via email to the Website Subcommittee.
- (e) This subcommittee is provided with a budget and does not handle money. The only exceptions to this may be Area checks written to cover approved expenditures. Any purchase made needs to be accounted for with an itemized receipt submitted to the ASC Treasurer. It is the Subcommittee Chairperson's responsibility to stay within the approved budget.
- (f) Provide a yearly projected budget to ASC Treasurer by December of each calendar year.
- (g) Is responsible for checking and responding in a timely manner to all emails sent to the committee.

n) Public Relations Subcommittee Chairperson

(1) Requirements

- (a) Two years of clean time.
- (b) Service experience at the Area level of at least one year.
- (c) Public Relations Committee experience suggested.
- (d) Read and be knowledgeable of the SFVASC Guidelines as well as their own Subcommittee Guidelines.

(2) Duties

- (a) Responsible for providing information about Narcotics Anonymous both inside and outside the fellowship. The information about Narcotics Anonymous is meant to be general information as to the availability of NA as a community resource, its meetings, and how meetings may be attended, the history of Narcotics Anonymous, NA Literature, as well as how and why NA works.
- (b) Primary liaison between World, Region, and other Areas within the Region requesting information or disseminating information about Narcotics Anonymous.
- (c) Attend monthly Regional Public Relations Committee meetings and include the results of that committee's meeting

within the ASC report.

- (d) Chair monthly business meetings.
- (e) Responsible to attend and provide written reports to monthly Area Service Committee meetings and via email to the Website Subcommittee.
- (f) This subcommittee is provided with a budget and does not handle money. The only exceptions to this may be Area checks written to cover approved expenditures. Any purchase made needs to be accounted for with an itemized receipt submitted to the ASC Treasurer. It is the Subcommittee Chairperson's responsibility to stay within the approved budget.
- (g) Provide a yearly projected budget to ASC Treasurer by December of each calendar year.
- (h) Before any contract negotiations, the committee must obtain approval from ASC.
- (i) Is responsible for checking and promptly responding to all emails sent to the committee.

o) NeverAlone Newsletter Subcommittee Chairperson

(1) Requirements

- (a) Two years of clean time.
- (b) Service experience at the Area level of at least one year.
- (c) Six months prior involvement in the SFV Area Newsletter Subcommittee.
- (d) Access to a computer.
- (e) Read and be knowledgeable of the SFVASC Guidelines as well as their own Subcommittee Guidelines.

(2) Duties

- (a) Responsible for the gathering of information, Area/Regional/World events, and personal stories for publication in the Area's quarterly "NeverAlone SFV" Newsletter.
- (b) Schedule and conduct monthly SFVAN Subcommittee meetings.
- (c) Responsible to attend and provide Newsletter to the Area Service Committee Meeting and submit Newsletter via email to the Website Subcommittee.
- (d) This subcommittee is provided with a budget and does not handle money. The only exceptions to this may be Area checks written to cover approved expenditures. Any purchase made needs to be accounted for with an itemized receipt

submitted to the ASC Treasurer. It is the Subcommittee Chairperson's responsibility to stay within the approved budget.

- (e) Provide a yearly projected budget to ASC Treasurer by December of each calendar year.
- (f) Is responsible for checking and responding promptly to all emails sent to the committee.

p) Website Subcommittee Chairperson

(1) Requirements

- (a) Three years of clean time.
- (b) One year of SFV Area Website Subcommittee experience; at least two years of Public Information or Website Committee experience.
- (c) Have the necessary computer skills to facilitate the committee's responsibilities including Website and Internet navigational skills.
- (d) Have the necessary resources to fulfill the position, i.e., Internet access, availability to a computer, and capable of attending each committee meeting and monthly Regional Website Committee meetings.
- (e) Read and be knowledgeable of the SFVASC Guidelines as well as their own Subcommittee Guidelines.

(2) Duties

- (a) Conduct all Website Subcommittee meetings.
- (b) Provide a written Website Subcommittee report, present it at monthly ASC meetings, and send via email to the Website Committee.
- (c) Represent the Website Subcommittee at all San Fernando Valley Area Service Committee meetings. This includes representing and interacting with all other SFVASC service committees as necessary.
- (d) Attend monthly Regional Website Committee meetings.
- (e) Coordinate and accomplish with other websites The Subcommittee trusted servants and members with the necessary tasks to meet the goals of the Website Subcommittee.
- (f) Work with the ASC Chairperson to accomplish tasks and goals set by the ASC.
- (g) Be available to other Narcotics Anonymous service committees, as needed.
- (h) Communicate with members and the public as necessary. This

includes replying to all incoming emails to the Area Website and other inquiries, i.e., via U.S. Mail.

- (i) Monitor emails sent to all nasfv.com email addresses and follow up on correspondence, which has not been answered.
- (j) Maintain the ASC Google Group.
- (k) This subcommittee is provided with a budget and does not handle money. The only exceptions to this may be Area checks written to cover approved expenditures. Any purchase made needs to be accounted for with an itemized receipt submitted to the ASC Treasurer. It is the Subcommittee Chairperson's responsibility to stay within the approved budget.
- (l) Provide a yearly projected budget to ASC Treasurer by December of each calendar year.
- (m) Is responsible for checking and responding in a timely manner to all emails sent to the committee.

q) NA Freedom Behind The Walls Subcommittee Chairperson

(1) Requirements

- (a) Three years of clean time.
- (b) One year of SFV Area NAFBTW Subcommittee experience.
- (c) Read and be knowledgeable of the SFVASC Guidelines as well as their own Subcommittee Guidelines.

(2) Duties

- (a) Conduct all NAFBTW Subcommittee meetings.
- (b) Prepare an agenda and distribute it at each meeting.
- (c) Provide a written NAFBTW Subcommittee report and present it at monthly ASC meetings and send via email to the Website Committee.
- (d) Represent the NAFBTW Subcommittee at all SFVASC meetings. This includes interacting with all other SFVASC service committees as necessary.
- (e) Coordinate and accomplish with other NAFBTW Subcommittee trusted servants and members, the necessary tasks to meet the goals of the Subcommittee.
- (f) Work with the ASC Chairperson to accomplish tasks and goals set by the ASC.
- (g) Be available to other Narcotics Anonymous service committees, as needed.
- (h) Communicate with members and the public as necessary. This includes replying to all incoming emails to the Area NAFBTW and other inquiries, i.e., via U.S. Mail.

- (i) This subcommittee is provided with a budget and does not handle money. The only exceptions to this may be Area checks written to cover approved expenditures. Any purchase made needs to be accounted for with an itemized receipt submitted to the ASC Treasurer. It is the Subcommittee Chairperson's responsibility to stay within the approved budget.
 - (j) Provide a yearly projected budget to ASC Treasurer by December of each calendar year.
 - (k) Attend monthly Regional Sponsorship Behind The Walls Committee meetings and include the results of that committee's meetings within the ASC report.
- I. Each of the above participants normally serves for one year and shall not serve more than two consecutive one-year terms.
 - J. Each of these offices is open to any member of the NA Fellowship who meets the requirements as stated above and is present at the time of the nominations. Any nominee must be present to accept and qualify for the open position before he/she can be elected to that position.
 - K. No Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Subcommittee Chairperson, or Subcommittee Vice Chairperson of the SFVASC can be elected to any other Chairperson or Vice Chairperson position on any SFVASC Subcommittee.
 - L. No Chairperson or Vice Chairperson of the SFVASC shall serve as elected Chairperson or Vice Chairperson of any other Area or Region.
 - M. No GSR may hold an elected position at the SFVASC.
 - N. Based on past experience and to ensure continuity, outgoing officers are encouraged to remain active within the Area and help train newly-elected officers.
 - O. Email: The ASC Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and each Subcommittee, including Ad hocs, have an email address on nasfv.com. It is their responsibility to ensure that any email correspondence is read and followed up on regularly on a timely basis. These trusted servants may delegate this duty to another member of their committee if needed.

VI. MOTIONS AND VOTING PROCEDURES

- A. Group Conscience: SFVASC shall strive to develop a collective conscience before making specific service decisions. Developing a conscience involves all SFVASC participants in a process of
 1. Gathering information from group and committee reports;
 2. Freely discussing issues in the sharing session;
 3. Carefully listening to all viewpoints expressed;
 4. Proposing a course of action in the form of a motion;
 5. Discussing and debating the merits of the motion;
 6. Calling at all times upon a loving Higher Power and the individual and collective spiritual resources of those present. When it is finally time to translate the results of

this conscience-seeking process into a collective decision, SFVASC shall use voting as its decision-making mechanism.

- B.** Each duly elected GSR of an active SFV Area group is entitled to one vote. In the event of a GSR's absence, the GSR Alternate shall have the GSR's vote. b. Any group representative must have a prior vote of confidence from their group.
- C.** The Chairperson may have a vote to break a tie, as long as the Chairperson does not have a conflict (or the appearance of a conflict) of interest. In this case, the Chairperson must recuse themselves before all discussion, debate, and vote concerning the matter. The vice chairperson shall stand in for the Chair.
- D.** A quorum at each SFVASC meeting shall consist of more than 50% of the groups eligible to vote (active groups as defined in Sections V.B. and V.D.), as represented by their GSR or GSR Alternate. A quorum is only necessary to carry out business requiring a vote. Once a quorum is established at each SFVASC meeting, the quorum shall stand for the remainder of the meeting.
- E.** For clarity and accuracy, all motions shall be submitted in writing to the Secretary before the motion is voted on.
- F.** Each motion must have a second before it can be sent to the floor where it will be opened for debate. At this time, if the body so deems it, two pros and two cons on each motion will be heard. Discussion may be extended through a majority vote on a motion to extend the debate.
- G.** Any participant in the ASC as defined in Section V may make and/or second motions except for the chair.
- H.** GSRs are the only participants who may vote. The GSR Alternate or any group representative with their group's prior vote of confidence may vote in the absence of the GSR.

VII. FINANCES

- A.** The SFVASC shall maintain a bank account requiring two signatures for financial transactions. The SFVASC shall also maintain a Venmo account. Eligible signers for these accounts shall include the SFVASC Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Treasurer.
- B.** To ensure the monetary security of the SFVASC, no two signers on the bank accounts of the SFVASC may reside in the same household.
- C.** All bank deposits of the SFVASC, its subcommittees, and ad hocs shall be made within four business days.
- D.** The SFVASC Treasurer shall present an annual budget for approval by the SFVASC in January each year, containing line items submitted by the subcommittees without bank accounts.
- E.** Included in the ASC annual budget shall be a provision for payment of \$500 total yearly rent to the meeting facility that covers the monthly ASC meeting.
- F.** The SFVASC shall maintain a working prudent reserve equal to one-sixth of the annual expense budget rounded up to the nearest thousand. One-half of the monies above the prudent reserve shall be donated to the SCRSC every quarter starting in June unless

otherwise directed by the voting participants of the Area. In the fourth quarter, which is the March ASC meeting, the ASC will donate all monies over its prudent reserve to the SCRSC unless otherwise directed by the voting participants of the Area.

- G.** Whenever the Treasurer declares that the Area is below the prudent reserve, all money matters from that point forward require a two-thirds vote of the voting body except regularly occurring bills.
- H.** All trusted servants desiring to perform a money-handling service position shall be apprised of SFVASC Guidelines and shall have completed and signed Addendum II, the Trusted Servants Financial Services Acknowledgment, before performing such service.
- I.** Donations to the ASC must be turned in to the Treasurer by one hour after the start of the ASC meeting.
- J.** Travel Policy
 - 1.** This policy provides a basis for sending trusted servants of the San Fernando Valley Area to service-related events at the expense of the SFVASC.
 - a)** The SFVASC shall determine if there will be travel, other than what has been approved in the annual budget. This will be determined by a motion passed by a two-thirds vote or will have been approved in the current ASC annual budget.
 - b)** Those traveling must maintain all receipts and submit such receipts or expense slips at the following SFVASC.
 - c)** There should be some planning to receive maximum benefit from pre-travel arrangements.
 - d)** The SFVASC will cover all expenses incurred from travel. This may be for airfare, bus fare, train fare, cab fare, rental car, or personal car, and includes shuttle transportation from the airport/station to the lodging and back to the airport/station. If a personal car is used the SFVASC will reimburse 50 cents per mile. Reimbursement will be made with valid receipts only. There should be careful consideration of the total cost before the trip and the making of any travel arrangements.
 - e)** Meals will be reimbursed up to \$40.00 per day. Receipts must be dated and amounts listed.
 - f)** Hotel rates will be paid but should be investigated before the event. This does not include movies or excessive telephone expenses. If it is at all possible, there should be an effort made to share the room with another SFVASC-authorized person who is also attending the event. A man and a woman will be authorized in separate rooms. If it is not possible to share the room with another SFVASC-authorized person, the SFVASC will cover the full room rate. If it is not possible to share the room due to an unauthorized guest occupying one part of the room, the SFVASC will not cover any portion of that room occupied by the unauthorized guest.
 - g)** The SFVASC shall be the only body to authorize the travel of Area trusted

servants. Subcommittees shall make all travel requests through the SFVASC unless a travel budget has been approved previously by the SFVASC.

- h)** There should be careful consideration towards the use of SFVASC funds for personal activities. Trusted Servants are a valuable asset to the function of our primary purpose. There is, however, a need for vigilance when acting on behalf of the SFVASC. Any reimbursement for any personal expenses or personal services within a subcommittee must be disclosed and voted on at the ASC.
- 2. Upon return from such an event, a written report of all relevant material shall be required to be submitted no later than the 2nd following ASC meeting following the return from the event.
- 3. Committees or individuals wishing to be reimbursed for expenses incurred in the course of service to this Area must submit anticipated costs and provide receipts for funds expended.
- 4. In the spirit of unity and consideration, any group wishing to conduct an event should attend the Activities Subcommittee meeting to verify that the date of the event does not conflict with Area or Regional events.
- 5. The Area will not fund group events without Area Activities involvement. Any request for funds must be obtained through the Area Activities Subcommittee and brought to the ASC for consideration.

VIII. MISAPPROPRIATION/MISUSE OF FUNDS AND MISCONDUCT

- A.** The Eleventh Concept of NA Service establishes the sole priority for the use of
- B.** NA funds to carry the message to the addict who still suffers The Twelfth Concept of NA Service gives the SFVASC a mandate from the NA groups that call for total fiscal accountability. With this in mind, any misappropriation or misuse of funds by any Area trusted servant(s) or NA member(s) cannot and will not be tolerated. The definition of “misappropriation of funds” includes but is not limited to, theft, embezzlement, or use of NA funds for purposes not expressly authorized by an Area Committee, Subcommittee, or Ad hoc. This includes the theft of cash, check, any financial instrument (i.e., refunds, royalties, or rebates from vendors to the NA Fellowship), or assets (i.e., equipment, supplies, or physical inventory).
- C.** SFVASC Action: Removal and Replacement. Once the SFVASC’s Executive Committee’s duly-elected officers investigate and report to the SFVASC their findings of the suspected violation of this section, the SFVASC must immediately vote on a motion to remove the individual(s) from office and/or the committee "with cause," or to reinstate, or to extend the investigation. The presiding officer will notify the said member by phone and by certified mail, as well as notify the region (SCRNA) by email and/or certified mail.
 - 1. Should the SFVASC remove an officer(s) or member(s) with cause, the said individual’s participation within the SFVASC is immediately terminated.
 - a)** Any member removed from office and/or committee by the SFVASC for misappropriation may no longer represent themselves to the Fellowship or

service Boards/Committees as an officer or member of the SFVASC, its Subcommittees, or its Ad hocs for five (5) years from the date of the interim suspension.

b) Any member removed from office and/or committee by the SFVASC for misconduct may no longer represent themselves to the Fellowship or Service Boards/Committees as an officer or member of the SFVASC, its Subcommittees, or its Ad Hocs for a period of two (2) to five (5) years at the discretion of the SFVASC on a case-by-case basis. This period will be voted on and determined at the time of removal from office and/or committee. If a trusted servant resigns from office or a committee before the SFVASC has taken the aforementioned action and reached a final resolution, the SFVASC shall proceed to suspend the trusted servant. The SFVASC shall investigate the matter and follow the aforementioned process to its conclusion.

2. Upon reinstatement, by a required two-thirds vote by the SFVASC, said member's suspension will be lifted and the member will resume their role as a full participant of the SFVASC, its Subcommittee, or Ad hoc, as applicable.

D. Restitution

1. Members who have misappropriated or misused SFVASC funds might be subject to criminal and/or civil legal proceedings.
2. At the discretion of the SFVASC, instead of filing charges, members who have misappropriated or misused SFVASC funds may be asked to sign a promissory note and make restitution in full of all misappropriated or misused SFVASC funds.

IX. ELECTIONS

A. Nominations and elections for all positions listed in Section V will be held in June of each year. The newly elected officers and participants will take office in July. The ASC Chairperson will announce nominations and elections at the April and May ASC meetings. The exception to this process is the Convention Subcommittee Chairperson who is elected after the Convention closing statement, which is approximately 90 days after the Convention.

B. All nominees must be present at the time of their nomination for election to a position on the SFVASC.

C. In the event of a vacated office, special elections may be held to fill the position until the next regularly scheduled election.

D. SFVASC duly-elected alternate officers (as defined in Section V.A.1), i.e., Vice Chairperson and Vice Treasurer, and Subcommittee/Ad hoc alternates, do not automatically assume the vacated position. They must be elected by the SFVASC.

X. SUBCOMMITTEES

A. Subcommittees are directly responsible to the SFVASC. Newly proposed Subcommittees shall function as Ad hoc Committees until they are established and have approved Guidelines. It is necessary to clearly define the responsibilities of these Subcommittees so that they may fulfill the purpose for which they are created.

- B. The SFVASC shall be responsible for the approval and implementation of guidelines to be drafted by the committee officers and active members, utilizing the suggestions below and presented for approval at a regular SFVASC meeting.
- C. All Subcommittee Chairpersons or pro tem Chairpersons shall attend all SFVASC meetings
- D. Guidelines for an SFVASC Subcommittee should include but are not limited to the following:
 - 1. Name.
 - 2. Purpose.
 - 3. Function.
 - 4. Trusted servants' job requirements and duties.
 - 5. Voting procedures.
 - 6. Meetings, including time and place.
- E. Each Subcommittee shall keep a file listing contacts and procedures for the activities it performs for use by future participants.
- F. In addition to the above, it is our experience that each Subcommittee, to ensure that its primary purpose is carried out, has the following:
 - 1. A bank account and prudent reserve, where applicable.
 - 2. A Treasurer with the experience and willingness necessary to provide the SFVASC with an accurate monthly accounting of finances in written form, where applicable.
- G. Every Subcommittee shall carry out its work following the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts of NA.
- H. Subcommittees without a bank account shall submit to the SFVASC Treasurer, in December each year, their budget requests for the coming year, to be approved by the SFVASC in January.
- I. When a Subcommittee or Ad hoc Committee member has a family relationship, or potential conflict of interest with a vendor, or any person who is being considered for, or has been awarded a contract, or otherwise paid for any services provided, the disclosure must be made at the next ASC meeting following the establishment or potential establishment of a conflict of interest.
- J. Any Subcommittee or Ad hoc Committee must obtain a minimum of three (3) written bids from separate vendors/contractors before awarding a contract for services and/or products over \$500.00. This policy may be waived if three sources are not available.
- K. Subcommittees shall perform annual reviews of their guidelines and submit any changes to the SFVASC for approval.
- L. No Subcommittee guidelines shall conflict with SFVASC guidelines.

XI. CURRENT STANDING COMMITTEES/SUBCOMMITTEES

A. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- 1. The Executive Committee shall consist of all the duly elected SFVASC officers and standing Subcommittee Chairpersons.
- 2. Before submission to the Area Service Committee, elected officers shall review guidelines and proposed budgets and suggest modifications if needed.

- B. HOSPITALS AND INSTITUTIONS** The purpose of an H&I panel/meeting/presentation is to carry the message to addicts in hospitals and institutions who do not have full access to regular Narcotics Anonymous meetings. H&I panels/meetings/presentations, except for those in longer-term facilities, are intended simply to introduce those attending to some of the basics of the NA Program.
- C. LITERATURE** The purpose of the San Fernando Valley Area Literature Subcommittee is to distribute the literature of Narcotics Anonymous. All activities directed to that end shall be carried out following the Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous, the Twelve Concepts of Narcotics Anonymous, and the Handbook for Narcotics Anonymous Literature Committees.
- D. ACTIVITIES** The purpose of the San Fernando Valley Area Activities Subcommittee is to provide activities for the NA Fellowship, to promote unity within the area, and to act as a liaison between each group's entertainment functions. The Activities Subcommittee shall also be responsible for the three traditional holiday marathons occurring during the Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year Holidays. These events shall be funded by the SFVASC and may be staffed by volunteers approved either by the activities committee or by the ASC.
- E. CONVENTION** The purpose of the San Fernando Valley Area Convention Subcommittee is to coordinate and conduct an annual San Fernando Valley Area Convention within the boundaries of the San Fernando Valley Area and to assist in evaluation and input on conventions for other areas, regions, and the WSC as necessary.
- F. NEWSLETTER** The purpose of the San Fernando Valley Area NeverAlone Newsletter is to carry the message and to demonstrate to the public that NA is a viable program of recovery.
- G. PUBLIC RELATIONS** The purpose of the San Fernando Valley Area Public Relations. The subcommittee is to coordinate area public relations efforts and provide information about Narcotics Anonymous to the public within the boundaries of the San Fernando Valley Area.
- H. PHONELINES** The purpose of the San Fernando Valley Area Phonelines Subcommittee is to provide support for existing Area Phonelines and coordinate efforts toward Regional Phone lines.
- I. WEBSITE** The purpose of the San Fernando Valley Area Website Subcommittee is to support the members, groups, and subcommittees that comprise the SFVANA, and to assist them in their task of carrying the message of recovery in Narcotics Anonymous over the Internet.
- J. NEWSLETTER** The purpose of the San Fernando Valley Area Newsletter Subcommittee is to carry the message of Narcotics Anonymous through the development and publishing of a newsletter to serve the SFV Area.
- K. NA FREEDOM BEHIND THE WALLS** The purpose of NA Freedom Behind the Walls is to carry the message of recovery and sponsorship to inmates/addicts through the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous using NA Literature through anonymous correspondence

through the US Mail.

XII. AD HOC COMMITTEES

- A.** Ad hoc committees are temporary subcommittees, which are created either by the SFVASC Chairperson or by a simple majority vote of the voting body.
- B.** Ad hoc chairs are selected by the ASC, the Area Chair, or within the Ad hoc itself, at or before the first committee meeting.
- C.** Ad hoc chairs should have a working knowledge of NA's Twelve Steps and Traditions, as well as read and be knowledgeable of the current SFVASC Guidelines.
- D.** Their Chairpersons may make or second motions at the ASC regarding their Ad hoc, but cannot vote.
- E.** Ad hocs cease to exist either when their task is completed or at the discretion of the SFVASC.

XIII. GUIDELINES

- A.** Any portion of these Guidelines may be waived at any time by a two-thirds vote of the voting body.
- B.** A Guide to Local Services in Narcotics Anonymous should be used only as a reference to the SFVASC Guidelines.
- C.** Any portion of these Guidelines, or those of any Area Subcommittee, may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the SFVASC, and must then be transmitted in digital form to the Area Website Committee for archival purposes. The amended section shall be added to the Guidelines by the creation of an addendum. One month following ratification, the SFVASC Secretary will provide a contents page showing the location and title of the addendum and the addendum itself to the SFVASC participants.
- D.** An annual Guideline Review Ad hoc Subcommittee, chaired by the SFVASC Vice Chairperson, will convene in September and be slated to conclude by December, with any revisions submitted to the ASC by that time. The previous year's addendums will then be incorporated into these Guidelines. All elected officers are required to attend the annual guideline review Trusted Servants Financial Services Acknowledgement San Fernando Valley Area Service Committee.

Addendum 1

Accounting Guidelines

These guidelines were developed as an educational tool to be used by the SFVASC treasurer, vice treasurer performing audits, and subcommittee treasurers in the balancing of bank accounts.

Tools needed:

1. Checkbook / Check register
2. Bank Statement(s)
3. Returned / Canceled checks
4. Calculator
5. Pen and Pencil

Preceding steps to be taken before balancing:

Checks from the appropriate bank account that were issued and used. These checks are recorded in the check register, in check number order, in pencil, using date, check number, recipient, amount of check, and new balance. The balance is obtained by subtracting the check from the previous balance amount.

Step One

Admit we are powerless over our fear and/or our lack of math skills/numbers/addition/subtraction/calculators and that our accounts will balance.

Step Two

Using a pen, take the canceled checks and make a mark in the appropriate box in the check register signifying that those checks have cleared. Do not worry if all the checks have not cleared. Ensure that the “payee” on all returned/canceled checks matches the “payee” name in the ledger.

Step Three

Make sure that proper fees and deposits have been recorded in the register.

Step Four

Go to the check register and, starting with your ending balance, begin adding the checks that have not cleared (subtracting the deposits that have not appeared on the statement). The balance you end with should match the “new balance” on the statement.

If they do not match, here are a few things to look for:

1. Redo your math. Fingers have a habit of hitting the wrong buttons on calculators.
2. Make sure the amounts recorded in the register are correct.
3. Have you accounted for bank fees? Compare the register and the statement.
4. If all else fails, ask for help. Another pair of eyes might catch something you are not. You are not a bad person—it’s just math!

Reconciliation Procedures

These guidelines were developed as an educational tool to be used by treasurers in the reconciliation of their bank accounts.

Tools needed:

1. Pen and Pencil
2. Bank Statements and Canceled Checks
3. Checkbook registers

All the work will be done on the back of the bank statement for the month you are working on. Do not correct anything on the register. What is done is done. Accept and move on.

Step One

Begin by signifying at the top and back of the bank statement the last check cleared from the statement and the corresponding balance from the check register. (This is your month's end on the register).

Step Two

Make sure that all of the cleared checks on the statement have been recorded in the register, as well as bank fees and deposits. If not, mark this on the back of the bank statement.

Step Three

On the statement, take notice of the asterisks on the list of checks that have cleared. These are the flags for checks that are pending but are still recorded in your register. Take notice of the check numbers and amounts. Record these on the back of the bank statement.

Step Four

Add the checks that are pending to the beginning balance at the top of the bank statement. If a deposit has been recorded in the register but has not in the statement, subtract this.

This should give you a matching balance on the statement. Hold on, we are not done yet. Next, we go on to the next month.

Step Five

Repeat step four on the back of the next month's bank statement. (You will create a new one with each month you reconcile. One per bank statement—never two. However, if you run out of room, use a standard sheet of paper for your calculations and attach it to the bank statement that you are working on.)

Step Six

Have the checks that did not clear from last month cleared this month? If not, mark that on the statement. Then repeat steps two and so on.

If there are balance discrepancies at the end of the month's reconciliation and you could not reconcile it, carry it forward. Try to reconcile it first.

Always double-check:

1. Your math
2. Your recorded figures.
3. Moreover, ASK FOR HELP!!!!

Addendum-1-accounting-guidelines-sfvascna.docx

Addendum 2

Financial Agreement

I, have received and read a current copy of the Guidelines of the San Fernando Valley Area Service Committee of NA® (henceforth SFVASCNA).

I intend to accept a money-handling, volunteer position within the SFVASCNA. I understand that it is a requirement of the SFVASCNA that all Trusted Servants performing a money-handling service position sign this Acknowledgement before accepting such a position, and I do so of my own free will under no duress.

I understand that NA® funds are not to be used for any form of personal use, and that to do so constitutes misappropriation. I understand that should I be suspected of misappropriation of funds, the procedures outlined in the Guidelines of the SFVASCNA will be initiated, and adhered to through completion.

Should I be found to have misappropriated funds, I understand that the matter might be turned over to the Law Enforcement Authorities, inclusive of the Local Police and DA's office, solely at the discretion of the SFVASCNA.

Signed this day,

(Signature)

(print name)

(Witness)

Addendum 2.Trusted Servants Financial Services Acknowledgement SFVASC.docx

Addendum 3.

Definition of misconduct in section VIII (Misappropriation, Misuse, Misconduct)

Misconduct is defined as, any action contrary to the 12 Traditions of NA, the 12 Concepts of Service, SFVASC Guidelines, The guidelines of an SFVANA committee or AD-HOC committee (if applicable) as well as any violation of California State or U.S. Federal Law to the extent that such misconduct is detrimental to the NA fellowship. This includes conduct that creates a benefit to a member or outside enterprise and/or to the detriment of the NA fellowship.