

BYLAWS OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA INTERGROUP OF OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS

Revised 2024

OA's RESPONSIBILITY PLEDGE: "Always to extend the hand and heart of OA to all who share my compulsion: for this I am responsible."

Article I. NAME

The name of this organization shall be Southwest Florida Intergroup, referred to as Intergroup.

Article II. PURPOSE

Section 2.01

The primary purpose of this organization is to offer assistance to people with the problem of compulsive eating and other compulsive food behaviors, through the Twelve Steps¹ of Overeaters Anonymous, and to serve and represent the OA meeting groups of Lee, Collier and Hendry Counties, from which this Intergroup is formed.

Section 2.02 The Twelve Steps¹

The Twelve Steps¹ of Overeaters Anonymous are:

1. We admitted we were powerless over food—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God **as we understood Him.**
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God **as we understood Him**, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to compulsive overeaters, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

Section 2.03 The Twelve Traditions²

The Twelve Traditions² of Overeaters Anonymous are:

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon OA 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 OA membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or OA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers.
6. An OA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the OA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every OA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Overeaters Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

9. OA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Overeaters Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the OA 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, films, television, and other public media of communication.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all these traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

Section 2.04 The Twelve Concepts³

The Twelve Concepts³ of OA Service are:

1. The ultimate responsibility and authority for OA World Services reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.
2. The OA groups have delegated to the World Service Business Conference the active maintenance of our world services; thus, the World Service Business Conference is the voice, authority and effective conscience of OA as a whole.
3. The right of decision, based on trust, makes effective leadership possible.
4. The right of participation ensures equality of opportunity for all in the decision-making process.
5. Individuals have the right of appeal and petition in order to ensure that their opinions and personal grievances will be carefully considered.
6. The World Service Business Conference has entrusted the Board of Trustees with the primary responsibility for the administration of Overeaters Anonymous.
7. The Board of Trustees has legal rights and responsibilities accorded to them by OA Bylaws, Subpart A; the rights and responsibilities of the World Service Business Conference are accorded to it by Tradition and by OA Bylaws, Subpart B.

8. The Board of Trustees has delegated to its Executive Committee the responsibility to administer the OA World Service Office.
9. Able, trusted servants, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are indispensable for effective functioning at all service levels.
10. Service responsibility is balanced by carefully defined service authority; therefore, duplication of efforts is avoided.
11. Trustee administration of the World Service Office should always be assisted by the best standing committees, executives, staffs and consultants.
12. The spiritual foundation for OA service ensures that:
 - (a) no OA committee or service body shall ever become the seat of perilous wealth or power;
 - (b) sufficient operating funds, plus an ample reserve, shall be OA's prudent financial principle;
 - (c) no OA member shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority;
 - (d) all important decisions shall be reached by discussion, vote and whenever possible, by substantial unanimity;
 - (e) no service action shall ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; and
 - (f) no OA committee or service board shall ever perform any acts of government, and each shall always remain democratic in thought and action.

Article III. MEMBERS

Section 3.01 Membership

- (a) Executive board, consisting of:
 - (i) Chair(s), Vice Chair, Treasurer, Secretary.
- (b) Intergroup representatives (IRs),

- (i) One member, elected from each registered group within the geographic area.
- (c) Additional group members not acting as IRs; but elected or appointed as standing committee chairs.

Section 3.02 Group Meeting Qualifications

- (a) OA meeting groups within the geographic definition of Intergroup and formally registered with World Service Office may be considered members. An OA meeting group is defined as the following:
 - (i) Two or more persons meeting together (as set forth in Article V, Section 1 of Overeaters Anonymous, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B). In using the tools, by practicing the spiritual principles of the OA program, and by working all 12 steps, we will be encouraged to live better physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Along with working the steps on a daily basis, an action plan may incorporate use of the other OA tools to bring structure, balance, and manageability into our daily lives.
 - (ii) Persons meeting together to follow the Twelve Steps¹, Twelve Traditions², and Twelve Concepts of Service³ of OA.
 - (iii) Persons welcoming all who have a desire to stop eating compulsively or to stop other compulsive food behaviors.
 - (iv) A meeting group shall have no affiliation other than OA.
 - (v) No member is required to practice any actions in order to remain a member or to have a voice (e.g. share at meetings).
- (b) Each group shall be entitled to one vote through its elected IR.

- (c) No group may be registered with another Intergroup.

Section 3.03 Intergroup Representatives

(a) Intergroup representatives shall be elected by group conscience of the group they represent. IRs shall serve for a period designated by their group, always subject to recall by the group they represent. Each group shall be free to designate an alternate delegate when the necessity arises.

(b) IRs should be elected for willingness to serve and commitment to the Twelve Steps¹ and Twelve Traditions² of OA. Additionally, IRs should have an understanding of the Twelve Concepts³ of OA.

(c) The primary responsibility of IRs, or alternates is to represent their group at all Intergroup meetings, to act as liaison between Intergroup and their meeting group and to see that all communications pertaining to Intergroup are made available.

(d) An IR may represent more than one meeting group when necessary, but will have only one vote at Intergroup.

Section 3.04 Absence of Intergroup Board Members

(a) Absence of board members shall be noted in the minutes.

(b) Attendance may include in person, via phone and/or live video.

Article IV. INTERGROUP BOARD

Section 4.01 Intergroup Board

Intergroup board shall consist of an executive board (officers), Intergroup Representatives, World Service Business Conference delegate(s), and Region 8 Representatives. Special committee chairs are also part of the board. Also, the immediate past chair and/or co-chair(s) shall serve as ex-officio member(s) of Intergroup Board for one year.

- (a) Executive board includes the following officers: chair or co-chairs, vice chair, treasurer, and secretary.
 - (i) If chair or co-chairs are unable to attend Intergroup Board meeting, the vice-chair will fulfill duties of chair. If chair(s) and/or vice-chair are not available, duties fall to treasurer, then secretary.

Section 4.02 Nominations to Intergroup Board

- (a) Nominations to the board may be made from the floor at the time of election.
- (b) A nominating committee may also be formed, at the discretion of the Intergroup.

Section 4.03 Qualifications for Intergroup Board

- (a) Commitment to working the Twelve Steps¹ of OA.
- (b) Commitment to follow the Twelve Traditions² of OA.
- (c) Commitment to become familiar with the Twelve Concepts³ of OA Service.
- (d) Be abstinent for 30 days **to be eligible to vote**.
- (e) The World Service Business Conference Delegate/alternate shall have at least one (1) year of current abstinence and meet qualifications and requirements as outlined and defined in the

Overeaters Anonymous, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article X, Section 3, and as required for election to the Board by Article IV, Section 4, of these bylaws.

(f) The Region 8 Representative/Alternate shall have at least 6 months of current abstinence and meet qualifications and requirements as outlined and defined in the Region 8 Bylaws, and as required for election to the board by Article IV, Section 4.03, of these bylaws.

Section 4.04 Method of Election

(a) Annual elections to Intergroup Board in November will be at a meeting specified as an election. Notification of election must be made to all group meetings at least fourteen (14) days before election.

(b) To be eligible for election to the board, nominee must:

- (i) Meet all qualifications as defined in Article IV, Section 4.03.
- (ii) Understand responsibilities of the position as defined in Article IV, Section 4.06 and as defined in Intergroup job.

(c) In order to be elected to Intergroup Board, **nominees must accept nomination prior to election and must receive a majority vote** from eligible voters present.

(i) A minimum of six board members, including at least one executive board member, must be present, either in person, by phone or Zoom in order to vote for nominees.

Section 4.05 Term of Office

(a) Executive board members shall be elected to serve for one (1) year.

- (i) Newly elected officers shall begin service at the Intergroup meeting following their election.
- (ii) There is no limit on number of consecutive terms to be served by executive board members; however, a 2-year limit for rotation of service is recommended.
- (iii) Executive board members, excluding the chair(s), may continue to represent individual meetings as IR; still only having one vote. If executive board members choose not to represent their meeting group, new IRs will need to be chosen by their meeting group.

Section 4.06 Responsibilities of Intergroup Board

- (a) Chair(s):
 - (i) Shall conduct Intergroup business either during or between Intergroup meetings:
 - (ii) Shall preside at all regular and special meetings whenever possible.
 - (iii) Shall be responsible for establishing the agenda for all Intergroup meetings.
 - (iv) Shall vote only to break a tie.
(1) may not participate in a ballot vote.
 - (v) May attend all standing committee meetings.
 - (vi) Shall ensure that the general account of Intergroup be audited annually (refer to Webster: audit: to examine with intent to verify).
 - (vii) Shall receive all mail and communication from World Service Office and Region 8.

- (b) Vice Chair:
 - (i) Shall serve in absence of chair(s).
 - (ii) Shall contact, maintain connection or attend SWFL OA meetings as a liaison for Intergroup.
 - (iii) Shall initiate contact with Intergroup Meeting Representatives within the geographic area defined as Collier, Lee, and Hendry counties, who are not and have not been available for intergroup monthly meetings.

- (iv) Shall contact all board members prior to the next Intergroup meeting.
- (c) Treasurer:
 - (i) Shall maintain a bank account and internet payment accounts as needed, for disbursement and deposits of Intergroup funds.
 - (ii) Shall submit financial reports each month at the Intergroup meetings.
 - (iii) Shall be cosignatory with one other executive board member or an appointee of the board.
 - (iv) Shall perform all other financial duties within Intergroup.
- (d) Secretary:
 - (i) Shall maintain minutes of all Intergroup and Intergroup Board meetings and submit copies of minutes to each board member and via SWFL website.
 - (ii) Shall maintain a file of all minutes of past meetings.
 - (iii) Shall perform all other duties as described for Intergroup, e.g., informing Region regarding future retreats.
- (e) World Service Business Conference Delegate and Region 8 Representative:
 - (i) Shall write and promptly submit reports to Intergroup on information received at OA conferences and business meetings, in accordance with both WSO and Region 8 bylaws.

Section 4.07 Removals and Resignations

- (a) If a member of Intergroup Board fails to attend several consecutive meetings without prior notice, that person may be removed by a majority of those members present and voting.

Attendance may include in person, via phone and/or live video.

- (i) A minimum requirement for voting will include one (1) member of the executive board (excluding chair(s) and five (5) additional members.
- (b) Any board member may resign by giving notice to the chair(s) of Intergroup.
- (c) Any board member of this Intergroup may be removed from office for due cause by a majority vote of the board members present at a special meeting announced for that purpose.

Section 4.08 Filling of Vacancies

- (a) Vacancies shall be filled by a majority vote at that meeting in which the vacancy occurred, or at the next meeting or special meeting of Intergroup. Such persons chosen to fill said vacancies shall serve for remainder of the unexpired term.
- (b) A person chosen to fill any vacancy on the board shall meet qualifications as defined in Article IV, Section 4.03, and be aware of all responsibilities of that position as described and defined in Article IV, Section 4.06.

Article V. MEETINGS

Section 5.01 Regular Meetings

Intergroup shall meet monthly, except when cancelled by group conscience.

Section 5.02 Annual Meetings

An annual meeting shall be held in the month of November for election of officers.

Section 5.03 Special Meetings

A special meeting may be called at any time by a majority vote of the Intergroup Board, or by petition of 4 Intergroup members, by giving notice as described in Article V, Section 5.04.

Section 5.04 Method of Notification

- (a) Notification of all meetings shall consist of notices prepared by Intergroup Secretary.
- (b) Placing announcements on Intergroup website, and including at prior Intergroup meeting is also considered proper notification.

Section 5.05 Quorum

- (a) A quorum consists of six (6) board members including at least one (1) member of Executive Board.
 - (i) Minimum requirements for voting will be six (6) board members, including at least one (1) member being of Executive Board. [See: 4.07]
 - (ii) Voting members consist of Executive Board members (exclusive of chair(s), except in case of a tie) and board members.

Article VI. COMMITTEES

Section 6.01 Standing Committees

- (a) The following standing committees are:
 - (i) 12- Step Within

- (ii) Public Information/Professional Outreach
- (iii) Website
- (iv) Other committees necessary to carry on Intergroup work

Section 6.02 Special Committees

The board shall designate special committees when necessary for the welfare and operation of Intergroup.

Section 6.03 Committee Appointments

The Executive Committee shall appoint committee chairs.

Section 6.04 Committee Procedures

Each standing or special committee shall be responsible for calling and holding meetings, establishing its method of procedures, subject to approval of Intergroup Board and while following the Twelve Traditions² of OA.

Section 6.05 Committee Responsibility

Any committee policy, procedural plan for a special event, or expenditure of funds shall require approval by Intergroup prior to implementation. Each standing committee chair shall submit a written report to Intergroup during the next Intergroup meeting or in an e-mail, and at the end of any specific event coordinated by that committee. If any monies are expended, a detailed and itemized report shall be included with the committee report.

Section 6.06 Nominating Committee

- (a) Intergroup shall have a nominating committee to recommend persons to serve as officers, RRs, and WSBC delegates and persons to fill vacancies.
- (b) The committee shall consist of three (3) board members.
- (c) The chair(s) of Intergroup may provide background information and input as requested by the committee.

Section 6.07 Ex-officio Members

- (a) Past committee chairs may serve in ex-officio capacity in their respective committees.
- (b) The Intergroup chair(s) may be ex-officio member(s) of all committees except nominating committee.

Section 6.08 Committee Vacancies

Should a vacancy, resignation, or removal of a committee chair occur, all pertinent information shall be turned over to Intergroup chair(s). The chair (s) shall then appoint a new committee chair to serve the remainder of the term.

Article VII. SOURCE OF FUNDS

Section 7.01 Source of Funds

- (a) Voluntary contributions of meeting groups shall be the primary source of funds.
- (b) Secondary source of income may be such occasional projects or activities as may be authorized by Intergroup according to Tradition Six.

- (c) Intergroup may accept donations from OA members, conforming to the general practice of OA.
- (d) The maximum allowable annual donation to Intergroup by individual OA members is to be limited to an amount set by vote of the Intergroup and listed in the Intergroup Policy Manual/Bylaws. (Note: The limit for WSO is currently five thousand dollars (\$5,000), subject to change by the Board of Trustees.)
- (e) Acceptance of bequests or donations from any outside source is prohibited.
- (f) The maximum allowable bequest to Intergroup by individual OA members is to be limited to an amount set by vote of Intergroup and listed in the Intergroup Policy Manual/Bylaws. (Note: The bequest limit for WSO is currently one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000), subject to change by the Board of Trustees.)
- (g) Intergroup shall not accept the responsibility for trusteeship over, or enter into the distribution or allocation of funds set up outside of Overeaters Anonymous.

Section 7.02 Prudent Reserve

There shall be no accumulation of funds beyond current necessities, with retention of only prudent reserve for contingencies. Funds in excess shall be donated to Region 8 and World Service Office, at least quarterly, as budgeted and directed by Intergroup.

Article VIII. PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern this Intergroup in all cases to which

they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws, the Overeaters Anonymous, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B or any special rules of order this Intergroup may adopt.

Article IX. AMENDMENTS TO THESE BYLAWS

These bylaws, with the exception of Article II, Sections 2.02, 2.03, and 2.04, may be amended at any time by a 2/3rds vote of the board members present at any regular or special meeting of Intergroup, as long as the following conditions are met:

- (a) A quorum is present at the time of this vote.
- (b) A copy of the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing to the Intergroup and made available to each board member at least 14 days prior to the meeting in which action is to be taken on the amendment.

Article X. MAJOR POLICY MATTERS

Section 10.01

- (a) Matters affecting Intergroup and/or group meetings within its service area shall be referred to Intergroup.
- (b) Matters, which relate to Overeaters Anonymous as a whole which affect Subpart A, of the Bylaws of Overeaters Anonymous, Inc., shall be referred to the Board of Trustees.
- (c) Matters which affect Subpart B of the Bylaws of Overeaters Anonymous, Inc., or which relate to the Twelve Steps¹ of OA, Twelve Traditions² of OA and Twelve Concepts³ of OA shall be referred to the World Service Business Conference.

Article XI. DISSOLUTION

Section 11.01

Upon dissolution of Southwest Florida Intergroup (Group # 09231), after paying or adequately providing for debts and obligations, remaining assets shall be distributed to World Service Office of Overeaters Anonymous and/or to Region 8.

Section 11.02

No part of the net earnings of this association shall ever be used for the benefit of or be distributed to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the association shall be empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payment and distribution in furtherance of the express purposes for which it is formed.

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- 1 Permission to use and adapt the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous granted by AA World Services, Inc.**
 - 2 Permission to use and adapt the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous granted by AA World Services, Inc.**
 - 3 Permission to use and adapt the Concepts of Alcoholics Anonymous granted by AA World Services, Inc.**