

**GUIDELINES OF THE NEW ZEALAND GENERAL SERVICE  
CONFERENCE OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS**

## Contents

SECTION A .....	1
1. NAME .....	1
2. WHAT DOES IT DO.....	1
3. PRINCIPLES .....	1
4. WHAT THE CONFERENCE LOOKS LIKE.....	1
5. APPOINTMENT OF CONFERENCE MEMBERS .....	2
6. CONFERENCE MEETINGS .....	4
8. PROCEDURE .....	4
SECTION A: APPENDIX 1.....	6
Third Legacy Procedure .....	6
SECTION B .....	7
COMMITTEES OF THE CONFERENCE.....	7
1. CONFERENCE SUB-COMMITTEES (SUB-CTTE) .....	7
2. COMMITTEES.....	7
a) Agenda Committee.....	8
b) Appointments Committee.....	9
3. STANDING COMMITTEES (ST-CTTE).....	9
a) Public Information (PIC) .....	10
b) Treatment and Correctional Facilities Committee (TCFC) .....	10
c) Cooperation with the Professional Community (CPC) .....	11
d) Host Planning Committee (HPC) (National Convention) .....	11
e) International Standing Committee.....	12

## **SECTION A**

### **1. NAME**

The name of the Conference shall be the New Zealand General Service Conference (Conference) of Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.).

### **2. WHAT DOES IT DO**

- a) To serve the Fellowship of A.A. and all those seeking recovery from alcoholism through the Fellowship.
- b) To act for the Fellowship of A.A. in New Zealand (NZ) and to be the vehicle by which the Fellowship can express its views on all matters affecting A.A.
- c) To perform such functions as may be directed by the A.A. groups in NZ through the Area Assemblies (Areas).

### **3. PRINCIPLES**

In carrying out its purposes, Conference:

- a) Shall act in the service of the Fellowship of A.A. in NZ, but shall not govern
- b) Shall be guided by the Three Legacies of A.A.
- c) Shall reach its decisions by discussion and vote, and wherever possible, particularly in the case of important matters, by substantial agreement among its members. Being mindful of Concept V, minority opinion should have the opportunity to state their case and receive careful consideration.

We should be mindful of what Bill W. had to say in Concept III of the *Twelve Concepts for World Service*, the main points being:

- Excepting for its Charter Provisions to the contrary, Conference should always be able to decide which matters it will fully dispose of in its own responsibility, and which questions it will refer to the A.A. groups (or more usually, to their committee members or GSRs) for opinion or definite guidance.
- Similarly, the General Service Board (operating of course within the provisions of their own Charter and Bylaws) should be able, at all times, to decide when they will act fully on their own responsibility and when they will ask Conference for its guidance, its approval of a recommendation, or for its actual decision and direction.

### **4. WHAT CONFERENCE LOOKS LIKE**

- a) The Conference of A.A. in NZ shall consist of:
  - a. Three Elected General Service Delegates (Delegates) from each of the three Areas
  - b. A Chair elected by Conference
  - c. A Secretary elected by Conference
  - d. Two World Service Delegates (WSDs)
  - e. All NZ General Service Board (Board) Members

b) Voting Members of Conference:

As per the principle in the US/Canada Service Manual, NZ maintains the voting ratio of Delegates to the Board Members of two-thirds. As NZ has smaller numbers, it is not possible for all Conference members to have voting rights, otherwise the nine Delegates would not be a two-thirds majority.

- a. Nine Delegates
- b. Two Class A Board Members
- c. One Class B Board Member; the Chair or their nominee. If the Board Chair is a Class A Board Member, another Class B Board Member shall be nominated to exercise this vote.

## **5. APPOINTMENT OF CONFERENCE MEMBERS**

Conference requires a stand down period of 12 months between positions of service at Conference or Board level; a candidate may not apply or be considered for any Board or Conference role during the stand down period. It was also moved that this should not preclude an Alternate World Service Delegate from becoming a World Service Delegate immediately or an Area filling a position in an unforeseen situation.

### **a) Delegates**

- a. Each of the three Areas shall elect three Delegates.
  - b. Dependent upon continued sobriety, each Delegate shall hold office for a three-year term with one Delegate from each Area retiring on December 31 each year. Retirements of existing Delegates to invoke this rotation by extending or contracting their current terms, shall be decided by their Areas in each instance.
  - c. An Alternate Delegate may be elected at an Area Assembly to fill the position of an absent Delegate, or Delegate vacancy in respect of that Area, either specifically or generally. In the event of a vacancy in the position of Delegate by death or resignation, the vacancy shall be filled by such Alternate Delegate or a Delegate Elect for the remainder of the term. The Alternate or Delegate Elect, acting as Delegate, shall be a full member of the Conference while so acting.
- d. A Delegate shall not be eligible for re-election to Conference for a period of three years between vacating and resuming office as a Delegate member, but an Alternate acting as a Delegate shall be eligible for election to the Conference as a member in his or her own right.

### **b) Chair**

- a. The Chair shall be either a serving A.A. member of Conference, or a past A.A. member of Conference, or past Board Member of Conference.
- b. The Chair shall be elected preferably at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) for a period of three years. In the case of an Alcoholics Anonymous Chair, the holding of office shall be dependent on continued sobriety.

- c. The Chair shall not be eligible for re-election for a period of three years between vacating and resuming office as Chair.
- d. Should the Chair be temporarily unavailable to Chair a Conference, one of the WSDs shall step in as replacement.
- e. In the event a Conference Chair resigns or becomes unable to continue in the role, the Conference Secretary shall notify the Fellowship via the Delegates and the A.A. website, call a special meeting of the Agenda Committee, and call for nominations in line with the timeline agreed by the Agenda Committee. The Agenda Committee shall elect its interim Chair for its meetings and call a special online Conference meeting as soon as is practical after the nominations period closes.
- f. A replacement may be voted in at the next scheduled Conference meeting or by a special online Conference meeting, provided a two-thirds majority of Delegates agree to a special meeting and vote.
- g. A job description for this role is available.

**c) Secretary and other officers**

- a. Conference shall appoint a Secretary and such other officers as it thinks fit.
- b. Such appointees shall hold office for a period of three years and may be reappointed for an additional one year thereafter at the discretion of Conference.
- c. Conference shall determine the level of remuneration, if any, which should apply to these appointments.
- d. Should the Secretary be temporarily unavailable for Conference, the Chair may make such arrangements they deem appropriate.
- e. Should a Secretary resign or be unable to continue in their role, the process as outlined above for the Chair should be followed and led by the Conference Chair.
- f. A job description for this role is available.

**d) World Service Delegate (WSD) and Alternate Delegate (Alt WSD)**

- a. The election of the WSD will take place at the AGM in the year alternate to the World Service Meeting.
- b. The nominee must be a past A.A. Delegate or Board Member of the Conference.
- c. The term of office is four years, commencing on January 1 of the year following the election, and finishing on December 31 of the year of completion of their term of office.
- d. Nominations may come from members or groups but must be submitted to an Area Assembly for endorsement.
- e. The appropriate nomination form must be used and forwarded to the AGM no less than 28 days prior to the Conference.

## Guidelines of the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous in New Zealand

- f. WSDs shall not be eligible for re-election as WSD.
- g. At the same election, an Alt WSD should be appointed for a two-year term of office. Candidates unsuccessful for the WSD position will be eligible for election as Alt WSD.
- h. The Alt WSD does not automatically become the WSD. They must stand for election as in section 1.
- i. If an Alt WSD replaces the WSD for any reason at the World Service Meeting, then that Alt WSD becomes the WSD and completes the term of office.

### e) Board members

- a. The Board shall consist of at least ten members. Eighty percent alcoholic Board members (Class B), and twenty percent non-alcoholic Board members (Class A). All Board members are members of Conference.
- b. Board members all bring varying talents and backgrounds to their service responsibilities.
- c. Nominees for Class A Board members are discussed, the nominee interviewed, and the proposals brought to the Conference AGM. Conference may disapprove any nominees chosen by a nominating session.
- d. Class A Board members serve for a four-year period from their election at the Board AGM, becoming Board members when the incumbent rotates out at the end of the AGM.
- e. Class B Board members serve for a four-year period from their election at the Board AGM, becoming Board members when the incumbent rotates out at the end of the AGM.

## 6. CONFERENCE MEETINGS

Conference shall meet at such times and in such places in NZ as it shall decide, at least once a year but usually twice. One of these meetings shall be termed the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and shall be held within the last four months of each year.

## 7. PROCEDURE

- a) Conference shall regulate its own procedures within the authority of these guidelines.
- b) A quorum for Conference shall consist of two-thirds of the voting members.
- c) Resolutions shall require a two-thirds majority. Any Conference member can move or second a motion.
- d) Elections  
Conference will receive the nominations and then go 'In-Committee' to have discussions and voting. When out of 'In-Committee' the result of the vote only is

## Guidelines of the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous in New Zealand

recorded in the minutes. All discussions during the 'In-Committee' phase remain confidential to Conference members only.

### e) Voting

Voting for elections shall be as laid down in the Third Legacy Procedure (see Section A: Appendix 1).

NZ Conference has approved the following addendum to the Third Legacy Procedure in the event of an unopposed nomination.

If a sole candidate does not receive two-thirds of the vote in the first ballot, Conference:

- a. Continues 'In-Committee' to discuss the suitability of the candidate for the role
- b. Holds a second ballot

If the sole candidate does not receive two-thirds of the total votes on the second ballot that is the end of the election with no candidate being appointed.

c. Abstentions are counted as a non-vote and every effort is made to ensure they do not occur routinely. It is recommended that each voter fully inform themselves prior to the vote being taken.

Before voting, it is suggested the Chair asks, "Do you have enough information to vote?" or "Is everyone ready to vote?"

f) Recommendations to the Board from Conference discussions: In order to be classed as an Advisory Action, a recommendation must be approved by 'Substantial Unanimity', defined as a two-thirds majority. A simple majority vote of the Conference is considered as a suggestion to the Board.

g) Any proposed amendment(s) to these Guidelines must first be approved by Conference by a two-thirds majority vote as prescribed under item c) above.

The proposed amendment(s) shall then be referred to the three Areas and must be approved in each Area by 'Substantial Unanimity', defined as a two-thirds majority. If so approved, the Guidelines shall be amended accordingly.

**SECTION A: APPENDIX 1**

**Third Legacy Procedure**





## **SECTION B**

### **COMMITTEES OF CONFERENCE**

#### **1. CONFERENCE SUB-COMMITTEES (SUB-CCTE)**

Conference may set up Sub-Cttes as deemed necessary when situations arise where a Sub-Ctte is deemed to be an effective process to use. A Sub-Ctte should be formed with a specific objective and timeline for completion of the objective. Membership of Sub-Ctte will be determined by the need and skills required to meet the objective set and so may include non-Conference members. The Conference Chair is automatically an ex officio member of any Sub-Ctte formed.

#### **2. COMMITTEES**

Conference may set up Committees from its members to undertake special duties.

The membership and functions for these Committees are always under the control of, and subject to review by, Conference and the following provisions are to apply:

- a) The Committees should be constituted at the AGM in each year by consensus rather than by individual formal election, having regard to the talents of the members available and the functions of the Committees.
- b) In selecting membership of Committees some regard should be had to the three-year terms of Delegates to achieve a mixture of newer and older members on the Committees to profit from the experience of the older members.
- c) Desirably, each Committee should be composed of at least one Delegate from each Area and all members of the Conference should serve on at least one Committee. The use of online meetings is available to the Committees.
- d) Each Committee so constituted shall immediately elect its Chair to hold office until the next AGM or as decided by the Committee. The Chair may be an A.A. or non-A.A. member of Conference.
- e) A Committee may co-opt additional members, but at all times there shall be a majority of A.A. members to non-A.A. members of each Committee.
- f) A quorum shall be a majority of the Committee.
- g) Decisions should be made by substantial agreement.
- h) Where minutes are kept, they should be uploaded to SharePoint and Conference members alerted via the Conference Team email in Outlook.
- i) At each meeting of Conference, the Chair of each Committee should report on the work and functioning of the Committee.
- j) The committees shall regulate their own procedures within the authority of these provisions.

## **a) Agenda Committee**

### **Function**

To set the agenda for Conference, working through the year to ensure that agenda items meet established minimum requirements for inclusion on the agenda. To ensure the Fellowship is made aware of how to get items onto the Conference agenda and advise of the necessary stages that need to be met for inclusion. To set policy around inclusion of Floor Items raised on the day.

### **Composition**

The Agenda Committee is made up of:

- Conference Chair
- Board Chair
- Conference Secretary
- 3rd year Delegates. 2nd year Delegates become members at the conclusion of the final Conference of the year and remain members until they conclude the last Conference in their 3rd year. There shall be three Delegates on the Committee at all times.

### **Guidelines**

Items submitted from the Fellowship.

The Conference Chair is responsible for convening the Committee.

The Agenda Committee exists to ensure that the Conference time is used as efficiently as possible. To this end, the Agenda Committee is to forward all relevant items and discussion documents to all members of Conference three weeks prior to Conference.

The Agenda Committee will report to Conference any items rejected, with a brief explanation of what action was taken, and why.

Items submitted to the Agenda Committee must include the following information:

- Item originator, i.e. individual, group, District, Intergroup or Area
- Level of ratification within the service structure received at time of submission
- Brief explanation or rationale behind proposal
- Contact person if more information required

The Agenda Committee will format the item for inclusion in the agenda and provide any relevant information needed. This will be uploaded to SharePoint.

The Agenda Committee will acknowledge receipt of all items to the originator and, as soon as a decision is made, the originator will be advised with an explanation, if necessary, in writing, by the Agenda Committee.

Submissions for inclusion must be received by GSO six weeks prior to Conference.

### **Floor Items during Conference**

A Floor Item is an item not already on the agenda, raised for discussion and inclusion on the agenda by a participant at Conference during the Conference.

## Guidelines of the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous in New Zealand

When a Floor Item is to be heard, its maker will be given two minutes to state the rationale behind the Floor Item, after which the Chair shall ask if there is a motion that the Conference decline to consider the Floor Item. A motion to decline to hear a Floor Item:

- Must be made without comment
- Is not debatable

If there is no motion to decline, the Floor Item proceeds to the agenda.

If there is a motion to decline and no seconder, the Floor Item proceeds to the agenda.

If there is a motion to decline and a seconder, there is a vote. If fewer than two-thirds vote to decline, then the item proceeds to the agenda. A two-thirds vote in favour of the motion will mean the Floor Item does not proceed to the agenda.

If Conference chooses not to decline hearing the Floor Item, the Chair will determine when the item will be discussed, and it will be added to the agenda.

A Floor Item can result in an Advisory Action.

A Floor Item can be returned to the Agenda Committee.

### **b) Appointments Committee**

#### **Function**

To confirm the nominees for Board Members to be put forward to the AGM.

#### **Composition**

- Board Chair
- Board Vice-Chair
- Board Secretary
- Conference Chair
- 3rd Year Delegates from NAA, CAA and SAA

#### **Guidelines**

The Board Chair will convene the Conference Appointments Committee by online meeting by 30<sup>th</sup> September after circulating to this Committee the resumes of all nominees along with the ratings determined by the Board. This Committee will confirm those nominees to be put forward as Board Members to Conference, for disapproval if any, at the October Conference.

### **3. STANDING COMMITTEES (ST-CTTE)**

Public Information, Treatment and Correctional Facilities, Cooperation with the Professional Community, Host Planning, and International are Standing Committees of Conference. The role of the St-Cttes is to act as a national body where local groups might struggle to gain traction, for example, national media placement for Public Awareness Week, liaising with Police to get Police initiatives started, or seeking a Memo of Understanding with the Department of Corrections around access to prisons, and a national policy to assist local groups gain access to their local prison.

## Guidelines of the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous in New Zealand

A St-Ctte does not typically carry out 12th step work but exists to aid A.A. members who are looking to broaden the reach of a local initiative or need assistance financially that may not be available locally.

It is recognised that St-Cttes may have an overlap in responsibilities and will work together when specific liaison between the St-Cttes requires them to communicate effectively with the organisations and community groups who work with the still suffering alcoholic.

The Conference *Initiatives Fund* is to fund Fellowship activities on a national level. In those years where the Fellowship has accumulated funds surplus to its operational needs, the Board is able to make those funds available to the St-Cttes of Conference to meet any initiatives to reach the still suffering alcoholic.

The Conference Standing Committee *Discretionary Fund* is an allocation of funding by the Board to each St-Ctte, to be used at the discretion of the St-Ctte Chair. This fund is to allow the St-Ctte to meet any unanticipated expenditure in relation to its activities as it arises, without the need to seek approval from the Board. This funding is to be used at the discretion of the St-Ctte Chair. A written request (including invoices if appropriate) from the St-Ctte Chair to the General Service Office (GSO) to meet expenses from this fund is all that is required.

The current amount allocated is \$1,000 per committee per year subject to finances allowing.

### **Membership**

The Committees are made up of a Delegate from each Area and Board Members allocated by the Conference Chair in consultation with Board members and the Board Chair.

The Conference Chair is an ex officio member of all Conference St-Cttes.

#### **a) Public Information (PIC)**

The PIC is a Standing Committee of Conference and was formed to facilitate the requests of PI committees and groups in NZ where a national approach is required. The PIC works to coordinate and maximise the Public Awareness Week efforts, liaising with national media organisations either directly or via local PIC members to ensure A.A. gets maximum value for investment in media placements.

The PIC is always seeking input and initiatives from active PIC at local level, and suggestions for PIC initiatives that may come from Areas, groups and individual members. The initiatives are funded from the *Initiatives Fund*, which is allocated by Conference through the Conference AGM budget approval process from available funds held by the Board.

#### **b) Treatment and Correctional Facilities Committee (TCFC)**

The TCFC is a Standing Committee of Conference that facilitates the requests of members and groups who are interested in carrying our message of recovery to alcoholics in treatment centres and prisons. The purpose of the TCFC is to work at a national level to assist local initiatives and to promote and assist liaison with institutions and organisations.

The fostering of relationships with relevant organisations at a national level is desirable.

The TCFC may be able to liaise with management of prisons, institutions or organisations regarding access for A.A. members.

### **Correctional Correspondence Coordinator**

The primary function of the Correctional Correspondence Coordinator is to be a national point of contact between A.A. and prison inmates and to facilitate 'carrying the message' into correctional facilities by correspondence. This role reports to the TCFC.

### **c) Cooperation with the Professional Community (CPC)**

The CPC is a Standing Committee of Conference. The professional community includes health care professionals, educators, members of the clergy, lawyers, social workers, union leaders and industrial managers, as well as those working in the field of alcoholism.

The role of the CPC is to act as a national body where local groups might struggle to gain traction, for example, liaising with Police to get a Police initiative started, or seeking a Memo of Understanding with the Department of Justice around access to prisons and a national policy to assist local groups gain access to their local prison.

A.A. is considered by many professionals to be a valuable resource for alcoholics who want help. When there is a good working relationship between A.A. members in the community and paid alcoholism workers, the sick alcoholic is the winner because they get the help needed from both.

We are not in competition with these non-A.As; we have our separate functions. A.A. is not in the business of education, research, medicine, counselling, treatment, prevention, or funding. We simply have a message to carry about a programme of recovery for alcoholics; a programme that works for hundreds of thousands who want it.

The professional can help the alcoholic who wants it – by education, counselling, and rehabilitative treatment – and can also be of aid through making the community aware of, and care about, the millions still suffering from alcoholism.

### **d) Host Planning Committee (HPC) (National Conventions)**

National Conventions are the responsibility of the Board due to the need to authorise contracts, and financial risk oversight requirements. Refer to NZ A.A. Guideline – GL002

Conference does, however, authorise the

- Convention theme
- Flyer
- Logo

All Host Planning Committees (HPC) are the responsibility of the Board, which requests that the HPC include:

1. the Board appointed Board Member
2. the local Delegate(s) where geographically possible
3. experienced A.A. members to fill the essential portfolios

### **e) International Standing Committee**

#### **Membership**

- WSDs, first and second term
- Conference Chair

## Guidelines of the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous in New Zealand

- Conference Secretary
- Board Chair

### Objective

The objective of the International Standing Committee is to ensure that NZ participates in international A.A. affairs in an efficient, practical and ongoing manner. The International Standing Committee will review and coordinate NZ A.A. activity and make recommendations to the NZ Conference to ensure that NZ's commitments to both the World Service Meeting and the Asia Oceania Service Meeting are met in a productive, pro-active and timely manner.

### Duties

#### World Service Meeting (WSM)

- The dissemination and distribution of WSM material to the Fellowship in NZ
- Calculate required funding for anticipated travel for the following year's WSMs and advise the Board Treasurer by early September to enable accurate budgeting for the AGM
- The second term WSD will chair the International Committee, or in their absence, the first term WSD will do this.

#### Asia Oceania Service Meeting (AOSM)

- Dissemination and distribution of information from the AOSM to the Fellowship throughout NZ
- Monitor A.A. NZ's role in keeping the AOSM archives

### Budgeting requirements for both WSM, AOSM and the International Literature Fund (ILF)

- Any donations to WSM, AOSM and ILF which are requested by the International Standing Committee are to be in the form of a motion with the amounts and date for payment moved at the AGM. The approval of this motion will trigger the payment by the Board. This is an auditor requirement.

### General

The International Standing Committee should assess what assistance it needs from the Board and other Delegates in order to achieve its objectives. Correspondence should be routed through the Board where possible to ensure that the Board is kept fully informed of matters relating to both the WSM and the AOSM.

It will be the responsibility of the first term WSD to keep the Alt WSD informed.

Approved amendments	
April 2024	Incorporating changes recommended by Conference Guideline and Charter Review Committee and approved at April 2024 Conference
October 2018	Changes to wording of stand down period to clarify this relates only to positions at Board and Conference level

## Guidelines of the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous in New Zealand

April 2011	Clarification of who the Conference Chair may be
April 2015	Waiver of stand down periods where necessary
October 2014	Third Legacy addendum adopted