

***OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS, INC.***  
***BUSINESS CONFERENCE POLICY MANUAL***

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**A Summary of Continuing Effect Motions**

**1962-2023**

***Adopted by the World Service Business Conference of Overeaters Anonymous, Inc.***



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**INTRODUCTION**

It is noted that all motions appearing in this summary were adopted by the group conscience of the World Service Business Conference of Overeaters Anonymous. Furthermore, until changed, these motions set self-imposed limits on the Fellowship. According to the Bylaws of Overeaters Anonymous, Inc., Subpart B, Article VIII, Section 1a) which states:

“...The Conference shall serve as the collective conscience of the  
Fellowship of Overeaters Anonymous as a whole...”

**CONTINUING EFFECT MOTIONS**

**1962** Rescinded 2014.

**1977a** Rescinded 2001.

**1977b** It was adopted to:

Adopt a responsibility pledge: Always to extend the hand and heart of OA to all who share my compulsion; for this I am responsible.

**1978** Amended 2023. It was adopted that:

Service bodies may obtain permission to translate and/or publish or republish OA literature, including translated literature, through the established licensing process. Published translated literature shall conform to existing OA-approved literature.

**1979a** Rescinded 1989. Superseded by 1982b.

**1979b** Rescinded 1989. Superseded by 1980c and 1984e.

**1979c** Amended 1989. It was adopted that:

The treasurer’s report be prepared and sent out to delegates prior to the Business Conference to allow each person time to study, assimilate, and prepare any questions they might have for the Board of Trustees.

**1979d** Rescinded 2015.

**1979e** Amended 1989, 2001, 2012, 2016, and 2023. It was adopted:

To ensure personal anonymity be maintained, the online version of the Final World Service Business Conference Report will only include first names and last initials in minutes and reports. The contact section of the report, which includes names, phone numbers, and email addresses of delegates will be emailed to all service bodies and delegates following Conference. “For Use Within OA Only” will appear at the top of this list.

**1980a** Rescinded 2016.

**1980b** Amended 2013. An anonymity statement was adopted:

Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of our program, always ensuring principles before personalities. This means that OA itself is not anonymous, but its members are. There are no exceptions. While OA may be publicized, we do not break our individual anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, television, and all public media of communication; and the recognizable facial exposure of persons identifying as OA members at the level of press, films, television, and all public media of communication is a violation of our tradition of anonymity, even though the first name only is given or the entire name is withheld.

**1980c** Amended 2002 and 2013. It was adopted that:

All OA events sponsored by registered OA groups and service bodies referenced in Bylaws, Subpart B, provided they uphold the Twelve Traditions, be placed in the World Service Office calendar upon request of the sponsoring body.

**1980d** It was adopted that:

A Conference committee member can petition the Board of Trustees to consider by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Trustees to remove a nonfunctioning chairman of a specific Conference committee. The vice chairman will then assume the chairmanship.

**1982a** Rescinded 1999.

**1982b** Rescinded 2010.

**1982c** Amended 1989, 2018, and 2023. Group (meeting) definitions of Overeaters Anonymous are as follows:

Meeting with Visitors (Open): Open to everyone. All meetings are considered open to visitors unless otherwise indicated.

Meeting without Visitors (Closed): Open to those who desire to stop eating compulsively. (This includes newcomers, OA members, and others who think they have a problem with food.)

Specific-Focus Meeting: Designed for individuals who may feel they can more readily identify with fellow members of Overeaters Anonymous with similar attributes. For a full list, see the [oa.org](http://oa.org) Find a Meeting page. All OA members are welcome at these meetings.

Specific-Topic Meeting: Designed for a specific subject matter or format. For a full list, see the [oa.org](http://oa.org) Find a Meeting page. All OA members are welcome at these meetings.

**1982d** Rescinded 2001.

**1982e** It was adopted that:

Through announcements in *Lifeline* and *A Step Ahead* the Fellowship be invited to attend and observe the Board of Trustees' meetings held prior to the annual Business Conference and Convention. The board is to make available sufficient facilities to accommodate all who choose to attend.

**1982f** Rescinded 2012.

- 1983** Amended 1989. After a presentation/discussion on requirements other than the Twelve Steps, the following statement was adopted:  
Overeaters Anonymous respects the autonomy of each OA group. We do suggest, however, that any OA group which imposes a special purpose, task, or guideline should inform its members that this special purpose, task, or guideline does not represent OA as a whole. The only requirement for membership is the desire to stop eating compulsively. Anyone who says they are a member is a member. We of Overeaters Anonymous welcome all members with open arms.
- 1984a** Amended 1990, 2013 and 2015. Upon the recommendation of the Literature Committee, a preamble for Overeaters Anonymous was adopted to read:  
Overeaters Anonymous is a Fellowship of individuals who, through shared experience, strength, and hope, are recovering from compulsive overeating. We welcome everyone who wants to stop eating compulsively. There are no dues or fees for members; we are self-supporting through our own contributions, neither soliciting nor accepting outside donations. OA is not affiliated with any public or private organization, political movement, ideology, or religious doctrine; we take no position on outside issues. Our primary purpose is to abstain from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors and to carry the message of recovery through the Twelve Steps of OA to those who still suffer.
- 1984b** Amended 1993 and 2001. It was adopted that:  
The World Service Convention will be held at a time and place to be determined by the Board of Trustees.
- 1984c** It was adopted that:  
Business Conference committees not raise or maintain funds.
- 1984d** Amended 2013 and 2014. The following procedure for Business Conference presentations/discussions was adopted:
- 1) Items for presentations/discussions at the annual Business Conference are selected by the board from those recommended by the Conference Planning Committee. Selections for topics are made from recurring problems, topics of major interest, and topics requested by the Fellowship.
  - 2) Service bodies who propose presentation/discussion topics will be sent a letter stating how topics are chosen and that their recommendation has been referred to the Conference Planning Committee for consideration.
- 1984e** Amended 2014. After a presentation/discussion, a statement on the sale of merchandise was adopted:  
It is the will of the Business Conference that sale of merchandise, per se, is not prohibited by the Traditions. With regard to sale of merchandise, "Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or OA as a whole." If you choose to sell merchandise, the following guidelines are suggested:
- 1) All sales be made by and for OA service bodies.
  - 2) Each sale item be approved by group conscience.
  - 3) Sales at OA events and functions should be conducted in such a manner so as not to divert or distract from our primary purpose to carry the message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers.

In accordance with our Traditions, each group and OA service body may choose to sell or not sell merchandise as they determine. Overeaters Anonymous must be ever mindful of our Traditions, which warn against endorsement of outside enterprise.

**1985** Amended 1993 and 2017. Upon the recommendation of the Literature Committee, the following revised procedure for granting the Conference Seal of Approval was adopted:

The Conference-approved seal that appears on the back of our literature means that the material has broad application to the Fellowship as a whole and is intended primarily to distinguish OA literature, not to censor other literature.

The Board of Trustees oversees the production of literature at the world service level. The Conference Seal of Approval shall be granted to OA literature upon receiving a two-thirds vote from the delegates present and voting at the annual World Service Business Conference.

All refining will be processed by the Conference-Approved Literature Committee, Board-Approved Literature Committee, and the Board of Trustees, according to their procedures, prior to recommending any literature for approval of the delegates.

Prior to the Business Conference, pamphlets and books that are recommended for the Conference Seal of Approval will be posted online as downloadable files. At the Business Conference, delegates will vote either to approve or reject, rather than to edit or refine the material.

(Note: Originally adopted in 1976; revised 1980, 1985, 1993 and 2017)

**1986a** Superseded by 2019c.

**1986b** It was adopted that:

The annual World Service Business Conference Delegate Binders include a copy of the current fiscal year budget as adopted by the Board of Trustees.

**1987a** Rescinded 2000. Superseded by 2000a.

**1987b** Rescinded 2018.

**1987c** It was adopted that:

All policies adopted by the Business Conference shall be placed in a document entitled Business Conference Policy Manual which shall be distributed to world service delegates as part of pre-Conference delegate materials and also updated and included in all final World Service Business Conference reports.

**1987d** Superseded by 2005c.

**1988a** Amended 1989, 1992, 1996, 1998, 2001, 2002, 2010, 2014 and 2018. It was adopted that:

1) Functioning

Service bodies may join together in order to help carry the message of OA recovery, providing they adhere to the Traditions and the Overeaters Anonymous policies for the use of OA-approved literature and print material.

2) Business Conference Delegates

a) In addition to the requirements set out in Article VIII, Section 3c) of the Bylaws, Subpart B, it is suggested the delegates should be selected for judgment, experience, stability, willingness, and for faithful adherence to living within the concepts of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of Overeaters Anonymous. It is further suggested a world service delegate be a current or past regional representative.

- b) As participants, delegates shall not be bound by the wishes of their service bodies, but should not vote against these wishes unless situations arise at the Business Conference that make it necessary for the best interests of Overeaters Anonymous as a whole.

**1988b** Amended 2002, 2009, 2011, 2019, and 2021. The following policy statement was adopted:

The World Service Business Conference 2021 accepts the following definitions:

Abstinence is the action of refraining from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors while working towards or maintaining a healthy body weight.

Spiritual, emotional, and physical recovery is the result of living and working the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step program on a daily basis.

**1988c** Superseded by 2005c.

**1989a** It was adopted that:

In order to reaffirm the special relationship between OA and O-Anon and in keeping with the spirit of Tradition Ten—cooperation without affiliation—the following be adopted:

Overeaters Anonymous, Inc. recognizes the special relationship we enjoy with O-Anon groups, a separate but similar fellowship. OA wishes to recognize the contribution O-Anon has made and is making to friends and families of compulsive overeaters.

It is the desire of the Conference to affirm the relationship between OA and O-Anon, and it is also the desire of the Conference to acknowledge OA's appreciation for O-Anon groups.

**1989b** Rescinded 2003.

**1990** Amended 2011 and 2014. It was adopted that:

The World Service Business Conference of Overeaters Anonymous suggests that individual groups and service bodies refrain from publishing the names or non-OA titles of speakers/leaders at OA functions in any informational materials (flyers, newsletters, etc.). OA service titles (but not names) may be used when a speaker/leader is performing the service responsibility of his or her OA office.

**1991a** Amended 2003, 2013, 2015, 2017 and 2022. It was adopted that:

- 1) The Conference committees listed in Subpart B, Article IX of the Overeaters Anonymous, Inc. Bylaws should confer with the corresponding board committees.
- 2) Committee membership will be limited to a delegate cochair, a trustee cochair, and an equal percentage of the year's registered delegates (with exception listed in 1991a 6). Each committee will include delegates from across the regions, whenever possible. Additionally, a combination of up to six former trustees, current trustees, and nondelegate members may be appointed to participate in the work of the committee during the year.
- 3) Cochairs consisting of a Conference delegate (elected by committee members at World Service Business Conference) and a trustee (appointed by the chair of the Board of Trustees) will coordinate the efforts of the committee. The Conference delegate cochair will preside over the committee meetings at World Service Business Conference and throughout the following year. The trustee cochair will act as liaison between the committee and the Board of Trustees and will report to the Board of Trustees regarding committee activities.
- 4) Committee members not responding to two consecutive mailings of the committee which require answers will not receive future mailings unless the member has notified one of the cochairs of a reason for a temporary absence from committee work.

- 5) The committee meetings at World Service Business Conference will be open; however, only committee members will have a voice and vote.
- 6) Delegates should be registered by March 1 and have submitted a committee preference form by April 1. Committee assignment is made on a first come, first served basis except the Conference-Approved Literature Committee and the Reference Subcommittee (OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article IX, Sections 1 and 2). Delegates will be notified of their committee assignment at or prior to World Service Business Conference. Service on a committee is expected and the commitment is maintained until the following World Service Business Conference. It is recommended that those serving at the world service level rotate committee assignments every two years.

**1991b** Superseded by 2005c.

**1991c** Amended 2018. It was adopted that:

The terms “compulsive overeater, compulsive eater” and “compulsive eating, compulsive overeating” be used interchangeably in OA literature, as determined to be appropriate to the topic and context by the Literature Committee during the regular literature writing, editing, and approval process.

**1992a** Amended 2013, 2021, and 2023. The following policy statement was adopted:

**“Unity with Diversity” Policy**

THE FELLOWSHIP of Overeaters Anonymous encourages and promotes acceptance and inclusivity. All are welcome to join OA and are not excluded because of race, creed, nationality, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, or any other attribute. We welcome all who share our compulsion. Everyone with the desire to stop eating compulsively is welcome in Overeaters Anonymous.

THE FELLOWSHIP recognizes the existence of individual approaches and different structured concepts to working our Twelve Step program of recovery; that the Fellowship is united by our disease and our common purpose; and that individual differences in approaches to recovery within our Fellowship need not divide us.

THE FELLOWSHIP respects the rights of members, groups, and service bodies to follow a particular concept of recovery within Overeaters Anonymous and encourages each member, group, and service body to respect those rights as they extend the hand of fellowship to those who still suffer.

THE FELLOWSHIP encourages each duly registered group and service body to affirm and maintain the Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous by allowing members to share their experience, strength, and hope in meetings regardless of the individual approach or specific concept that member may follow. Duly registered is defined as being in full compliance with Bylaws, Subpart B, Article V.

**1992b** Superseded by 2019c.

**1992c** Amended 2002 and 2016. It was adopted that:

AA literature sold by the OA World Service Office shall be available for purchase at all World Service Conventions.

**1992d** Rescinded 1998.



**1992e** Rescinded 2023.

**1993a** It was adopted that:

We, the 1993 Business Conference of Overeaters Anonymous, suggest that OA meetings and events be closed with one of the following: the Serenity Prayer, the Seventh-Step Prayer, the Third-Step Prayer, or the OA Promise *I Put My Hand in Yours*.

**1993b** Amended 2010. It was adopted that:

It is the group conscience of the 1993 World Service Business Conference that the sale or display of literature other than OA-approved literature and AA conference-approved literature (as described in World Service Business Conference Policy 2010a) is an implied endorsement of outside enterprises, and therefore in violation with Tradition Six.

**1993c** Amended 1994, 2001, 2002, 2012, 2014, and 2023. It was adopted that:

The World Service Office shall contact all service bodies annually requesting contributions for the Delegate Support Fund to help delegates to attend World Service Business Conferences. Delegates selected to receive funding will be those from intergroups and service boards demonstrating need. Priority will be given to those intergroups and service boards that have not previously sent delegates to Conference.

**1993d** Rescinded 2001.

**1993e** Rescinded 1998.

**1994a** (updated 2013 due to amended 1984a) The following policy statement was adopted:

Our primary purpose in Overeaters Anonymous is to abstain from compulsive eating and to carry the message of recovery through the Twelve Steps of OA to those who still suffer. Other addictions and problems may have contributed to the intensity of our disease; however, OA is not directly concerned with recovery from these issues. They should be shared in OA meetings only as they relate to compulsive eating. It is in our best interest to concentrate on our primary purpose and not be distracted by focusing on issues such as alcoholism, codependency, abuse, or the treatment thereof. These and similar outside issues should be addressed in other programs or with professionals.

**1994b** Amended 2008 and 2023. It was adopted that:

Overeaters Anonymous recognizes the existence of specific-focus meetings comprised of persons with similar attributes. For a list of these meetings, see the [oa.org](http://oa.org) Find a Meeting page.

According to the Traditions, bylaws, and policies of OA, the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively. Therefore, we ask each person attending a meeting to respect and consider the group conscience of the whole Fellowship and welcome and give a voice to any person who has a desire to stop eating compulsively.

**1994c** Rescinded 1998.

**1995a** Rescinded 2014.

**1995b** Rescinded 2014.

- 1996a** Amended 1999 and 2014. It was adopted that:  
The 2014 World Service Business Conference of OA suggests OA's Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions be read at every meeting. In addition, we suggest all service bodies and the World Service Business Conference read the Twelve Concepts of OA Service.
- 1996b** Rescinded 2008. Superseded by 2008a.
- 1997** Rescinded 2001.
- 1998** Rescinded 2008. Superseded by 2008a.
- 1999** Rescinded 2016.
- 2000a** Amended 2005. It was adopted that:  
No OA members shall be prevented from attending, sharing, leading, and/or serving as a speaker at an OA meeting due to choice of food plan. Groups sharing food plan information must adhere to OA's policies on outside literature, as well as copyright law.
- 2000b** It was adopted that:  
Terms used in the bylaws and policies that refer to communications, including report(s), response(s), document(s), and notice(s), shall be understood to include suitable electronic transmissions. The term "postmark" includes appropriate electronic date/time stamping.
- 2001** Amended 2023. It was adopted that:  
There will continue to be a delegate registration fee adjusted as deemed necessary by the Board of Trustees. A portion of this fee is nonrefundable based on cost.
- 2002a** Rescinded 2005.
- 2002b** Rescinded 2005.
- 2003** Amended 2014. It was adopted:  
To ensure the personal anonymity of members, an encryption program will be maintained to allow for secure transmission of all meeting information submitted via the OA website.
- 2004a** Rescinded 2018.
- 2004b** Amended 2009, 2014 and 2018. It was adopted that:  
Appeals process for service bodies denied credentials at World Service Business Conference because they do not meet the requirements of OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article VIII, Section 3c – Qualifications/Selection.
- 1) The World Service Office shall notify the service body of any challenges to delegate credentials within seven days of receipt of delegate information by the World Service Office.
  - 2) The service body shall notify the World Service Office if it wishes to appeal denial of delegate credentials within fourteen days of this notification.
  - 3) The Appeals Review Committee shall be composed of two members of the Board of Trustees (the Board of Trustees chair and one other trustee), two region chairs, and two representatives of the region bringing the appeal. It will be chaired by the Board of Trustees chair.

- 4) The Appeals Review Committee, via electronic communications, will collectively decide the final disposition of each appeal with a deadline of one month prior to the first session of the upcoming World Service Business Conference.

**2005a** Amended 2016. It was adopted that:

Business Conference policies that have been completed or the purpose of which have been served and are no longer required shall be presented by the Bylaws trustee cochair to the Board of Trustees for consideration of removal at the next Business Conference.

**2005b** Rescinded 2011.

**2005c** Amended 2017. It was adopted to:

Combine World Service Business Conference Policies 1987d, 1988c, and 1999b to read: The World Service Business Conference adopts as policy the following procedures for the submission and consideration of all a) New Business Motions, b) policy motions, and c) Bylaw Amendments to Subpart B of the Overeaters Anonymous, Inc. Bylaws.

- 1) All submissions of proposed New Business Motions, policy motions, and/or amendments to Subpart B of the Overeaters Anonymous, Inc. Bylaws shall include a) a statement of intent; b) a statement of the procedures necessary for the implementation of the proposal (if necessary); c) a statement of estimated cost associated with the proposal; d) a history of related new business items or Bylaw Amendments that were voted upon by the World Service Business Conference in the past five years and the results of those votes; e) up to one page of arguments in favor of each new business item or Bylaw Amendment submitted by the maker of the motion at the time of submission; and f) an explanation of how this motion will help carry the message of recovery to those who still suffer.
- 2) The Conference Agenda Questionnaire include all proposed new business, policy motions, and Bylaw Amendments that have been submitted within the announced postmarked deadline, including those deemed out of order with the exception of those motions and Bylaw Amendments that, based upon opinions from legal counsel, are deemed to be defamatory.

Proposals included in the Agenda Questionnaire that are deemed out of order must include within the World Service Business Conference Motions Review Committee Comments an explanation of this determination, and at the end of the Proposed Wording the parenthetical comment “Deemed Out of Order: See World Service Business Conference Motions Review Committee Comments below.”

Additionally, the World Service Business Conference Motions Review Committee must also include an explanation of the general nature of the motion or Bylaw Amendment that resulted in it being deemed defamatory by legal counsel and therefore not printed in the Conference Agenda Questionnaire.

**2006** Rescinded 2014.

**2007** Rescinded 2009.

**2008a** Amended 2019. It was adopted that:

OA literature may be discontinued, removed, or changed in format for the following reasons:

- 1) Low Demand. When it is no longer cost-effective to print and maintain inventory of Conference-approved OA literature due to low demand, the Executive Committee of the Board

- of Trustees may decide to move the piece from print to digital form after the depletion of remaining stock.
- a) Pamphlets will be made available for download from the OA website.
  - b) The Executive Committee may choose other methods to make low-demand books available.
  - c) A copy marked “digital only” with the date the piece was converted to digital only will be maintained in literature archives.
- 2) Removal of Conference Seal of Approval. World Service Business Conference delegates may remove the Conference Seal of Approval by a two-thirds vote. Sales of such literature will cease immediately. A copy marked “removed” with the date the piece was removed will be maintained in literature archives.
  - 3) Non-Observance of Traditions. If any previously approved literature is found by the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees to violate our Traditions, sales of that literature will cease immediately, and it will not be distributed for any reason. Conference-approved literature determined to violate Traditions will then be submitted to the Conference for removal of the Conference Seal of Approval. A copy marked “removed” with the date the piece was removed will be maintained in literature archives.
  - 4) Discontinued Literature. A copy of literature that is discontinued for any reason other than noncompliance with Traditions will be marked “discontinued” with the date the piece was discontinued and maintained in literature archives.

Notification to the Fellowship shall be through appropriate World Service Office publications.

**2008b** Rescinded 2023.

**2008c** Rescinded 2023.

**2008d** Rescinded 2023.

**2008e** Rescinded 2023.

**2008f** Amended 2023. It was adopted that:  
The Overeaters Anonymous World Service Office sell recovery chips marked with years from 1 to 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, and 50.

**2009a** Rescinded 2023.

**2009b** Rescinded 2023. Superseded by 2019c.

**2009c** Rescinded 2012.

**2009d** Rescinded 2019.

**2010a** Amended 2012 and 2023. The following policy statement was adopted:

#### **Statement on Approved Literature**

In accordance with our Traditions, we suggest that OA groups maintain unity and honor our Traditions by using, selling, and displaying only approved books and pamphlets at their meetings. This includes OA Conference- and board-approved literature; AA Conference-approved books, booklets, and all future editions thereof, with original edition copyright 2010 or earlier; and locally produced OA literature. Although groups may choose to focus on only one piece of OA-approved

literature, individuals and groups are encouraged to use any and all OA-approved literature. Locally produced literature must be developed according to the *OA Guidelines for Locally Produced Literature*, and should be used with the greatest discretion. Local literature should be considered temporary and discontinued when OA literature approved for general use is available to cover the topic.

**2010b** Rescinded 2014.

**2010c** Amended 2015. It was adopted that:  
The World Service Business Conference Final Conference Report be made available electronically.

**2010d** Amended 2014 and 2021. It was adopted to:  
Establish an OA Young People's Conference Committee.

**2010e** Amended 2014 and 2018. It was adopted to:  
Require all groups and service bodies wishing to register with the WSO to provide at least one email address and name when submitting their registration request. The required email address is for use within the OA organization and will not be published.

**2011a** Amended 2016 and 2019. The following policy statement was adopted:

**Statement on Public and Social Media**

While Overeaters Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues, including social media, the delegates of the 2019 World Service Business Conference recommend that any OA member, group, or service body using social media for OA public information and public awareness maintain the personal anonymity of OA members.

Members of Overeaters Anonymous are anonymous. The Fellowship is not. Members of Overeaters Anonymous are responsible for maintaining their anonymity and respecting the anonymity of other OA members. When attending an OA meeting, whether face-to-face or virtual, members are encouraged to seek appropriate means to protect their own anonymity and that of fellow members.

All registered virtual meetings shall inform members that their anonymity is not fully protected when attending a virtual meeting.

Find options for protecting anonymity at *Guidelines for Anonymity in the Digital World*.

**2011b** It was adopted to:  
Include the Tools of recovery of OA in the Conference Policy Manual.

The following are the Tools of recovery of OA: A Plan of Eating, Sponsorship, Meetings, Telephone, Writing, Literature, Anonymity, Service, and Action Plan.

**2011c** It was adopted that:  
Overeaters Anonymous Fellowship bestow the title of founder to Rozanne S.

**2012a** Amended 2018. The following policy statement was adopted:

**Statement on Creating Service Centers**

Service bodies may form service centers to assist them in communicating with the groups and to help carry the message, providing that they adhere to the Traditions, as guided by the Twelve Concepts of OA Service, and adhere to Overeaters Anonymous policies for the use of OA-approved literature and print material.

**2012b** The following policy statement was adopted:

**Statement on Group Where Access is Restricted**

A group which, for compelling reasons over which it has no control, where access is restricted (i.e., national security, military security, ships, military bases, or institutional setting), cannot welcome all who have the desire to stop eating compulsively will be considered to be in compliance with the points defined in Bylaws, Subpart B, Article V, Section 1, if:

- 1) It has provided the Board of Trustees, in writing, the specific compelling reason.
- 2) The Board of Trustees specifically approves the exception.

**2012c** The following policy statement was adopted:

**Statement on Group Liability Insurance**

As per OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart A, Article III – Members, the legal structure of OA, Inc. does not allow for the provision of liability insurance for OA groups or service bodies.

**2012d** Amended 2014. It was adopted that:

The terms of World Service Business Conference delegates from service bodies shall be limited. After completing four consecutive years, service shall not exceed an additional two years. A one-year rotation out of service shall then be observed. Request for a waiver of this limitation shall be submitted to the Board of Trustees.

**2013** Amended 2023. The following policy statement was adopted:

**Statement on Individual Member Donations to the OA World Service Office**

- 1) A member may contribute up to US\$7,500 per year to the general fund, up to US\$7,500 per year to any special fund, and up to US\$7,500 per year to honor the memory of a deceased member.
- 2) OA, Inc. may accept a bequest from the will of a deceased member in cash or cash equivalent. There is no limit on the amount of such a bequest.

**2014a** Rescinded 2017.

**2014b** Amended 2023. It was adopted that:

**Meetings of Delegates**

Annual Business Conference

- 1) Oral committee and workshop reports shall be made on the final day of the Business Conference when time allows. Written reports are due in the World Service Office four weeks following the close of the Business Conference.

- 2) Special meetings of delegates or committees of delegates during the Business Conference for any purpose or purposes may be called at any time by the chair or by a majority of the trustees and/or delegates.
- 3) Communications concerning the Business Conference from the trustees and the World Service Office shall be through the registered delegates and service bodies.

**2015** It was adopted that:  
World Service display the name “Overeaters Anonymous” on all displays, banners, and other signage at its events. This does not apply to badges.

**2016** Rescinded 2019.

**2017a** Rescinded 2023.

**2017b** The following policy statement was adopted:  
Overeaters Anonymous will establish a special fund to assist in translating OA literature, forms, correspondence, website, and other materials to languages other than English. Money contributed to this fund is in addition to the International Publications/Translations Committee’s budget. The Board of Trustees will establish guidelines to allocate the funds.

**2017c** Superseded by 2019c.

**2018a** Rescinded 2023.

**2018b** The following policy statement was adopted:  
In keeping with Tradition Ten, Overeaters Anonymous has no opinion on bariatric (weight-loss) surgery. In the spirit of Tradition Three, Overeaters Anonymous welcomes anyone with a desire to stop eating compulsively, including those who have had bariatric surgery or are contemplating it.

**2019a** Amended 2021. It was adopted that:  
The term hybrid is used to describe a group composed of members attending a single meeting where all can hear and share but may be present either in the same physical location (face-to-face) or through some form of electronic device (virtual).

A hybrid group may register only once and is assigned one group number but may appear on oa.org in both the face-to-face listing and the virtual listing and will clearly indicate that they are a hybrid meeting.

**2019b** Amended 2023. It was adopted to:  
Apply for and, if approved, accept non-profit status from Google.

**2019c** Amended 2021 and 2023. The following policy statement was adopted:

The World Service Business Conference established the following annual events.

OA Birthday: The third full weekend (Friday included) of January as the annual celebration of the January 19, 1960 founding of Overeaters Anonymous.

Unity Day: The last Saturday in February in even years and the last Sunday in February in odd years at 11:30 a.m. local time.

Sponsorship Day: The third full weekend (Friday included) in August.

International Day Experiencing Abstinence (IDEA): The third full weekend (Friday included) in November.

Twelfth Step Within Day: December 12 (12/12) each year be designated as OA's International Twelfth Step Within Day, the purpose of which will be to encourage OA service bodies, meetings, and individual members to reach out to those within the Fellowship who are still suffering from compulsive eating behaviors.

**2021** Amended 2023. The following policy statement was adopted:

**Diverse Voices Policy**

When developing new and updating existing literature published by Overeaters Anonymous World Service, the Literature committees will make a concerted effort to include stories and/or quotes from members of diverse populations that are underrepresented in OA.

**2022a** It was adopted that:

The OA Responsibility Pledge be included in/on all published OA literature, social media, newsletters, and bulletins maintained by the World Service Office except where space is prohibitive in a printed document. The World Service Business Conference further suggests that all OA registered service bodies use the OA Responsibility Pledge on all OA locally produced literature.

**2022b** It was adopted to:

Create a policy that OA makes a Portable Document Format of the board-approved newcomer-oriented pamphlet, *Where Do I Start?*, available to anyone to download and print.

**2023a** It was adopted that:

All official documents and communications issued at the World Service level will avoid, wherever possible, the use of acronyms and abbreviations. The acronym for Overeaters Anonymous, "OA", and literature will be exempt from this policy.

**2023b** The following policy statement was adopted:

**Public Communications Policy**

It is proposed that Overeaters Anonymous adopt a Public Communications Policy. The purpose of the public communications policy is to assist Overeaters Anonymous to continue to grow the Fellowship and to carry its message to the compulsive eater who still suffers.

We fulfill our primary purpose most effectively by attraction and cooperation—not promotion or affiliation.

Overeaters Anonymous is attracting when it tells people why we are, what we are, what we do, and how; we let them know that we are available if and when help is needed. We state the facts, which are communicated via all available forms of public media, always stressing personal anonymity at the public level. Overeaters Anonymous is cooperating when it works with others, rather than alone. Working with others broadens our scope and contacts, and we reach more of those in need.

Overeaters Anonymous and registered service bodies may purchase ads or send press releases and public service announcements, including those in relation to special events and promotions, in all



forms of public media, provided personal anonymity is maintained for members of Overeaters Anonymous (contact names on media communication can include any special worker associated with public communications, as well as the first names of individual members).

For more information on the implementation of this policy, see Overeaters Anonymous board-approved guidelines.

**\*\*END\*\***

Note: The World Service Office shall oversee that the Business Conference minutes are researched annually in order to update this summary with any Business Conference motions which have a continuing effect. This includes new, revised, or rescinded motions adopted by the World Service Business Conference.



**OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS, INC.**  
**BUSINESS CONFERENCE POLICY MANUAL**  
**APPENDIX A – RESCISSIONS**

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- 1962** At OA’s first Business Conference, then called the National Conference, it was adopted that: We endorse as our only basic creed the only thing that OA in general subscribes to (from headquarters), the Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions. That this is the only basic program that OA (headquarters) believes as its creed. We acknowledge that these two things are the only creed that OA subscribes to, basically. *(Rescinded 2014)*
- 1977a** It was adopted that:  
The price be put back on the literature. *(Rescinded 2001)*
- 1979a** It was adopted that:  
AA-approved literature to be sold at the WS Convention with list to be submitted from the Literature Committee to the board for approval. *(Rescinded 1989)*
- 1979b** It was adopted that:  
Any activity (i.e., marathons, conventions, and retreats) not sponsored by a registered group, an intergroup, region, or OA as a whole be considered an outside enterprise not to be endorsed or promoted by OA and as such not appear in a world service publication. Any marathon, convention, or retreat that offers for sale any items that are not Conference-approved, be considered an outside enterprise and also not be publicized in OA publications. *(Rescinded 1989)*
- 1979d** It was adopted to:  
Pay founder Rozanne S.’s expenses to all future Conventions. *(Rescinded 2015)*
- 1980a** Amended 1989. It was adopted that:  
The purpose of each proposed amendment to the World Service bylaws be clearly verbalized by the proposing body. *(Rescinded 2016)*
- 1982a** After a presentation/discussion on whether OA should produce literature on anorexia nervosa or other eating disorders, the following statement was adopted:  
Overeaters Anonymous does not have any literature for specific eating disorders other than compulsive overeating. We welcome in love and fellowship all who have the desire to stop eating compulsively. *(Rescinded 1999)*
- 1982b** After a presentation/discussion on using an OA/AA-approved literature list which includes the 1976 Business Conference Statement on OA/AA-approved literature, the following was adopted that:  
The current World Service Business Conference policy on literature be a list (to be updated as necessary) which includes the amended 1976 Statement on OA-/AA-approved literature: “In accordance with our Traditions, we suggest OA groups maintain unity and protect our Traditions by selling only program books and pamphlets at their meetings. This would include AA Conference-approved literature and OA Conference- and board-approved literature. Intergroup- or group-prepared local literature should be used with the greatest discretion. Even then, we suggest that you submit it to the World Service Office for their information. This type of local literature should be considered temporary and discontinued when OA literature approved for general use is

available to cover the topic.” (The complete list which includes this statement, literature, and explanations is available from the World Service Office.) *(Rescinded 2010)*

**1982d** It was adopted that:

The Board of Trustees presents a written Business Conference report of all Board of Trustees’ policies, to be updated for each Business Conference beginning May 1983. *(Rescinded 2001)*

**1982f** It was adopted that:

Future Business Conferences begin proposed Bylaw Amendments directly following the last completely debated article of the previous year.

(Note: The intent is to apply this recommendation only in a year following a Business Conference that was unable to debate and vote on all proposed Bylaw Amendments due to a lack of time.) *(Rescinded 2012)*

**1986a** Amended 1996, 1998 and 2018. It was adopted that:

Overeaters Anonymous celebrate an annual worldwide Unity Day on the last Saturday in February in even years and the last Sunday in February in odd years at 11:30 a.m.

To designate the third weekend of January as the annual celebration of the January 19, 1960, founding of Overeaters Anonymous. *(Superseded by 2019c)*

**1987a** Amended 1997. A policy statement on food plans was adopted:

The OA 1997 World Service Business Conference, after careful consideration, believes that although many individual OA members choose to follow a plan of eating for their personal plan of recovery, offering food plans at OA meetings is a violation of Tradition Ten. While each OA member is free to choose a personal plan of eating to achieve abstinence, OA as a whole cannot print, endorse, or distribute food plan information to members.

Nutrition is a most controversial outside issue; the hiring of professionals to produce food plans for use at meetings also violates the Eighth Tradition, as we need always remain nonprofessional. Groups endorsing any food plans by distributing them at their meetings affect OA as a whole. We ask all groups, intergroups, and regions of OA to adhere to the above policy statement and discontinue the use of food plan information at meetings. We ought best concern ourselves with our suggested program of recovery—the Twelve Steps. *(Rescinded 2000)*

**1987b** It was adopted that:

One leave of absence for up to sixty days from all Board of Trustees activities and responsibilities may be claimed by any member of the Board of Trustees during each of her/his elected terms of office for any reason. *(Rescinded 2018)*

**1988a** Regions:

Regional Assemblies

Regions may meet more often for the conduct of business as necessary. *(Rescinded 2005)*

**1989b** Changes and deletions in the Business Conference Policy Manual were adopted. See sections marked Revised 1989 or Deleted 1989. *(Rescinded 2003)*

**1992b** Amended 2018. It was adopted that:

The World Service Business Conference establish an International Day Experiencing Abstinence (IDEA) to be held annually on the third weekend in November. *(Superseded by 2019c)*

- 1992d** The following policy statement adopted that:  
The World Service Business Conference resolves to welcome anorexics and bulimics in the OA Fellowship as full and equal members. (*Rescinded 1998*)
- 1992e** It was adopted that:  
The World Service Board of Trustees incorporates the job description of the general service trustee on the trustee application form. (*Rescinded 2023*)
- 1993d** It was adopted that:  
Beginning 1994 the World Service Office will charge a twenty-dollar (\$20) nonrefundable fee to register a World Service Business Conference delegate. (*Rescinded 2001*)
- 1993e** It was adopted that:  
Until such time as the World Service Business Conference adopts concepts for OA, that all OA service bodies study and utilize AA's Twelve Concepts as guidelines for their service. (*Rescinded 1998*)
- 1994c** The World Service Business Conference 1994 adopted:
- 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 World Service Business Conference the active maintenance of our world services; thus, 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 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 service committee or service board shall ever perform any acts of government, and each shall always remain democratic in thought and action. (*Adopted into OA Bylaws, Subpart B 1998*)

- 1995a** It was adopted that:  
Overeaters Anonymous designate January as “Media Awareness Month.” (*Rescinded 2014*)
- 1995b** (updated 2013 due to amended 1984a) It was adopted to:  
Remove abstinence as a Tool and replace it with a “plan of eating,” leaving abstinence as our primary purpose as outlined in the OA Preamble: “Our primary purpose is to abstain from compulsive eating and carry the message of recovery through the Twelve Steps of OA to those who still suffer.” (*Rescinded 2014*)
- 1996b** It was adopted that:  
The Board of Trustees may discontinue reprinting low-demand pamphlets that are no longer cost-effective to reprint and maintain in the OA literature inventory.
- Discontinuance of a pamphlet:  
Conference-approved pamphlets that have broad application to the Fellowship and which fall within the lowest 20 percent of ranked total pamphlet unit sales shall be considered for discontinuance.
- The World Service Office publications department will provide a quarterly report indicating the unit demand volume on each Conference-approved pamphlet for review by the Executive Committee.
- Those pamphlets that consistently fall below the designated 20 percent of total unit demand for four consecutive quarters may be chosen by the Executive Committee for recommendation to discontinue reprinting.
- The Executive Committee will submit a motion to the Board of Trustees for approval to discontinue reprinting those pamphlets.
- If the Executive Committee motion is approved by the Board of Trustees, the designated pamphlets will not be reprinted and will be removed from the OA literature catalog when the remaining inventory is depleted.
- Notification to the Fellowship shall be through appropriate WSO publications, such as *Lifeline* and *A Step Ahead*.
- A copy marked “discontinued” with the date the piece was discontinued will be maintained in the literature archives for duplication by the World Service Office for special requests. An appropriate amount will be charged for the time and cost of duplicating, mailing, etc. Unauthorized duplication of copyrighted discontinued pieces is prohibited.
- For withdrawal of any Conference-approved pamphlet that is no longer printed; that is the pamphlet shall no longer be available for distribution to the Fellowship in any language, will require approval of the World Service Business Conference. (*Rescinded 2008*)
- 1997** It was adopted:  
Effective with the World Service Business Conference 1998, there be established an additional per-delegate registration fee of forty-five dollars (\$45) (adjusted annually for inflation as deemed necessary by the BOT). (*Rescinded 2001*)

- 1998** The following policy statement was adopted to:  
Discontinue Conference-approved literature for reasons other than low sales, a two-thirds vote from the delegates present and voting at the annual World Service Business Conference is needed. *(Rescinded 2008)*
- 1999** Amended 2004 and 2005. It was adopted that:  
An online or telephone group will be registered with world service as long as the listed group meets the following criteria:  
1) Takes place in “real-time”;  
2) Is fully interactive; and  
3) Fulfills the definition of an OA group as contained in Subpart B, Article V, Section 1 of Overeaters Anonymous, Inc. Bylaws. *(Rescinded 2016)*
- 2002a** It was adopted that:  
There will be a special Conference committee consisting of four members of the Board of Trustees, four region chairmen, and up to ten delegates to develop a plan of action to either strengthen the current OA worldwide service structure or restructure it. The result will be presented to WSBC no later than 2004. The chairman of the board will choose committee members. *(Rescinded 2005)*
- 2002b** It was adopted that:  
The Board of Trustees will investigate the feasibility of establishing a toll-free line for the purpose of public information and publish its reports to all service bodies by October 1, 2002. *(Rescinded 2005)*
- 2004a** It was adopted that:  
The WSO have proposal forms available on the OA website with detailed online instructions for submitting the proposals. The forms are to include an email address for the maker of the proposal. *(Rescinded 2018)*
- 2005b** It was adopted that:  
WSBC 2005 directs the Board of Trustees (BOT) to implement a matching grant program whereby service bodies may apply for and receive funds from OA, Inc. for projects enhancing unity and the ability to carry the message both within and outside OA. Total yearly funding for grants shall not exceed 1 percent of total donations to the World Service Office (WSO) for the prior year. *(Rescinded 2011)*
- 2006** It was adopted to:  
Change the name of the HIPM (Hospitals, Institutions, Professionals, and the Military) Committee to Professional Outreach Committee. *(Rescinded 2014)*
- 2007** It was adopted that:  
Overeaters Anonymous, Inc. conduct a Public Awareness Campaign using the services of an outside agency. Expenses connected to this campaign will be supported by member contributions to a special public awareness campaign fund established by the Board of Trustees. The BOT may use up to US\$20,000 of current reserves for seed money to initiate the campaign. Such funds are to be reimbursed from the special fund established for this purpose. *(Rescinded 2009)*
- 2008b** It was adopted to:  
Create an Overeaters Anonymous media policy.

To raise public awareness, Overeaters Anonymous and associated service bodies may send press releases to or make use of special events/promotions in newspapers, magazines, television, radio, websites, billboards, and other means of public media, providing personal anonymity is maintained for members of Overeaters Anonymous. Contact names on media communication can include any special worker associated with public awareness as well as the first names of individual Overeaters Anonymous members. *(Rescinded 2023)*

**2008c** It was adopted to:  
Create an Overeaters Anonymous public relations policy.

If Overeaters Anonymous is to continue to exist, it must continue to grow in order to fulfill its primary purpose of carrying its message to the compulsive eater who still suffers and to reach those who are not yet aware of the existence of our Fellowship.

We fulfill this primary purpose most effectively by attraction and cooperation—not promotion or affiliation. For the guidance of our Fellowship, here are definitions of those terms:

To Attract: To draw by other than physical influence; to invite; to draw to; to encourage approach

To Promote: To push forward; to further advance, as in a business venture (implies “hard sell,” advancement for profit)

Cooperation: Joint operation or action (implies coming together of two or more people to work together for a common goal or benefit or on a common problem)

Affiliation: Association or close connection; a uniting (implies lending one’s name, endorsement, legal, or financial partnership)

Overeaters Anonymous is attracting when it tells people why we are, what we are, what we do, and how; we let them know that we are available if and when help is needed. We state the facts, which are communicated via the press, radio, TV, internet, and films, always stressing personal anonymity at the public level.

Overeaters Anonymous is cooperating when it works with others\*, rather than alone. Working with others broadens our scope and contacts and we reach more of those in need. Hiring outside contractors or service companies is not considered an affiliation.

*\*Examples could include, but are not limited to, hospitals, doctors, nurses, clergymen, treatment centers, educators, dieticians, nutritionists, employee assistance programs, and health spas. (Rescinded 2023)*

**2008d** It was adopted to:  
Create an Overeaters Anonymous public service announcements policy.

To raise public awareness, Overeaters Anonymous and associated service bodies may make use of public service announcements in appropriate newspapers, magazines, television, radio, websites, billboards, and other means of public media. *(Rescinded 2023)*



**2008e** It was adopted to:  
Create an Overeaters Anonymous paid ads policy.

To raise public awareness, Overeaters Anonymous and associated service bodies may purchase ads in appropriate newspapers, magazines, television, radio, websites, billboards, and other public media. *(Rescinded 2023)*

**2009a** It was adopted that:  
The World Service Office provides website templates for optional use by OA service bodies and groups in creating or revising their websites. *(Rescinded 2023)*

**2009b** Amended 2017. It was adopted that:  
December 12 (12/12) each year be designated as OA's International Twelfth Step Within Day, the purpose of which will be to encourage OA service bodies, meetings, and individual members to reach out to those within the Fellowship who are still suffering from compulsive eating behaviors. *(Rescinded 2023)*

**2009c** It was adopted to:  
Establish a special fund to assist in the translating of OA literature, forms, correspondence, website, and other materials to languages other than English. Money in this fund is in addition to the Translation Committee's budget. The BOT will establish guidelines to allocate the funds. *(Rescinded 2012)*

**2009d** It was adopted to:  
Create a Web/Technology Conference Committee starting at WSBC 2010. *(Rescinded 2019)*

**2010b** It was adopted to:  
Add a ninth Tool: "Action Plan." *(Rescinded 2014)*

**2014a** It was adopted that:  
Overeaters Anonymous email groups, commonly called loops (groups that do not meet in real time), may list their group on www.oa.org as a courtesy with the following criteria:

- 1) Email groups must comply with the definition of an Overeaters Anonymous group as per OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article V – Overeaters Anonymous Groups, Section 1 – Definition.
- 2) The topic and/or focus of the email group are consistent with those listed on oa.org for Overeaters Anonymous face-to-face and virtual groups.
- 3) New members must be informed of the loop's policies, norms, and practices.
- 4) Archives are to be deleted at least once a month unless the loop's policies dictate otherwise.
- 5) Email groups are moderated to stay on topic.
- 6) The format of the email groups is structured similarly to a registered OA group. Postings to email groups are limited to the topic, the Twelve Steps, the Twelve Traditions, or the Twelve Concepts of OA Service. Feedback, crosstalk, and advice-giving are discouraged.
- 7) Each email group will have a coordinator who registers the loop with an email service provider and a secretary who will liaise with the OA World Service Office. *(Rescinded 2017)*

**2016** It was adopted to:  
Establish an OA Virtual Services Conference Committee. The committee would focus on virtual groups and would assist in forming new virtual service boards, presenting virtual workshops, and other projects that support the virtual groups and virtual service boards (VSBs). This will help build infrastructure and support for VSBs and virtual groups. *(Rescinded 2019)*

- 2017a** The following policy statement was adopted:  
Overeaters Anonymous will establish an ad hoc committee to consider the implementation/registration of a Spanish language service board (SLSB). The Spanish-speaking Fellowship will work with the BOT in order to establish how the SLSB will fit into the OA service structure. *(Rescinded 2023)*
- 2017c** Amended 2018. It was adopted that:  
The World Service Business Conference 2017 create a Sponsorship Day to be held annually on the third weekend in August. *(Superseded by 2019b)*
- 2018a** It was adopted that:  
The World Service Business Conference 2018 direct the Board of Trustees of Overeaters Anonymous to establish an ad hoc committee to research and delineate the best means and costs of improving, upgrading, and expanding the electronic “front door” of OA for the purpose of defining a budgetary amount for a “Welcome to OA” capital campaign. OA’s “front door” includes the oa.org website data systems and could include the development of a geolocator and real-time Find a Meeting app for smartphones, or other means revealed to be useful in the research. *(Rescinded 2023)*