

AL-ANON INFORMATION SERVICE INC.
OF
GREATER ROCHESTER, NEW YORK
CHARTER AND BY-LAWS

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**AL-ANON INFORMATION SERVICE OF GREATER ROCHESTER
CHARTER**

Article 1

The name of the Association shall be Al-Anon Information Service of Greater Rochester (AIS) Inc.

Article 2

The place in this state where the principal office of the Association is to be located is in Rochester, County of Monroe, State of New York.

Article 3

Said Association is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, educational and/or scientific purposes, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to Associations that qualify as exempt Associations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Law).

Article 4

The AIS Charter and By-Laws are intended to be consistent with the Al-Anon Traditions and Concepts and the Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual, 2010-2013. Guidelines in these documents are subject to the group conscience as determined by Al-Anon in the Greater Rochester area.

Article 5

Any local registered Al-Anon or Alateen group may agree to support an Information Service, but joining is purely voluntary.

Article 6

The Information Service is supported by the groups it serves within its geographical boundaries; it should not seek support outside that area. Contributions are voluntary and are not a condition of membership.

Article 7

Officers are only trusted servants, remembering always that they do not govern. Officers are directly responsible to the AI-Anon fellowship for actions and decisions of any kind that might reflect directly or indirectly upon AI-Anon as a whole.

Article 8

No part of the net earnings of AIS shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, Officers or other private persons, except that AIS shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of purpose set forth in Article 3 hereof. No part of the activities of AIS shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and AIS shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

Article 9

Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, AIS shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by an association exempt from Federal income tax (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue law) or (b) by a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue law).

Article 10

In the future, should AIS of Greater Rochester cease to function for any reason, any money in the treasury shall be forwarded to the World Service Office AI-Anon Headquarters with a note of explanation.

Upon the dissolution of AIS, the Financial Committee shall, after paying or making provisions for the payment of all the liabilities of AIS, in such a manner, or to such association or organizations organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational or scientific purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt association or organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal revenue Law), as the Service Center Committee shall determine. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by remitting to the World Service Organization.

AL-ANON INFORMATION SERVICE OF GREATER ROCHESTER
BY-LAWS

SECTION I - DUTIES AND FUNCTIONS OF AIS

A. Entertains matters on the Intergroup level that may come before it, with the purpose of promoting the unity, fellowship and general well-being of Al-Anon in the community.

B. The information service performs the following functions:

1. Maintains a listing in the local telephone directory and a P.O. box or an office address.
2. Receives e-mail, mail and phone inquiries and provides information about meetings.
3. Monthly publishes and distributes a list of group meetings that is also available on the website.
4. Serves as an avenue for local Public Information/Cooperating with the Professional Community (PI/CPC) and Institution work which is channeled through the Districts whenever possible.
5. Maintains a stock of Conference Approved Literature (CAL) and acts as a distribution center for CAL.
6. Holds periodic meetings attended by all the Information Service Representatives (ISRs). Group problems are discussed in light of the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts of Service.
7. Distributes via e-mail or website its own newsletter of local activities. It is suggested that ISRs bring a hard copy of the newsletter to the meeting they represent.
8. Coordinates area Alateen sponsors and encourages the exchange of ideas and suggestions for the growth and unity of Alateen.
9. Maintains records of its meetings, activities and finances.

SECTION II - AIS REPRESENTATIVES

A. DISTRICTS INCLUDED IN ROCHESTER AIS AREA; 2, 14, 19, 20, 25, 27,

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B. INFORMATION SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES (ISRs) AND

ALTERNATES

1. Each Al-Anon/Alateen group in the above districts shall be represented by one ISR.

- a. Each group elects one ISR to represent it at the AIS. The Group Representative (GR) of each group may serve as the alternate ISR. Each group has only one vote.
- b. Each group exercises its own judgment as to its ISR's qualifications (length of service, experience, etc.) with suggested guidelines available in the Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual, 2010-2012 (see pp. 45-46, 78).
- c. *Except*, according to Al-Anon/Alateen policy, an Al-Anon/Alateen member who is also a member of Alcoholics Anonymous is not eligible to serve as an ISR. (Also see pp. 45, 78 Service Manual, 2010-2013)

2. Any Al-Anon/Alateen member may attend any regular AIS meeting, and may participate in discussions but does not have voting privileges.

3. District Representatives (DRs) are encouraged to attend monthly AIS meetings.

C. INTERGROUP REPRESENTATIVE

A member appointed or elected by AIS. He/She provides a link between AIS and the New York North Area, exchanging information between the two. He/She votes at the AWSC as AIS representative, but not at the Assembly unless a GR. He/She may meet with districts to encourage participation at the AIS level and help coordinate projects between NYN Area Coordinators and AIS committees. (Service Manual, 2010-2013, pp. 67, 158)

SECTION III – OFFICERS

A. OFFICERS

AIS Officers shall consist of: Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer.

B. ELIGIBILITY

An AIS Officer must have served or be serving as an ISR (Alternate GR).

C. VOTING

Any AIS Officer may vote if he/she is concurrently an ISR.

D. DUTIES OF OFFICERS

1. Chairperson of AIS

- a. Conducts all AIS meetings.
- b. Sets the agenda.
- c. Coordinates with the Vice-Chairperson and AIS Officers to call special meetings when necessary.
- d. Is the Alternate Intergroup Representative.
- e. Coordinates the Service Workshop with Vice-Chairperson.
- f. Attends AWSC meetings or finds substitute.

2. Vice-Chairperson

- a. Serves in the absence of the Chairperson and/or Secretary.
- b. Can appoint a temporary secretary.
- c. May act as welcoming liaison for new ISRs.
- d. Chairs the Nominating Committee.

3. Secretary

- a. Takes minutes of AIS meetings and posts a read-only draft of them on the website for correction.
- b. Corrections should be e-mailed to the secretary 10 days before the next meeting and posted in a timely manner for review before the meeting.
- c. Keeps accurate records that are available at the Service Center.
- d. Informs the Chairperson of the third consecutive absence of an Officer or Standing Committee Chairperson.
- e. Calls all AIS meetings and ensures that agendas are posted on the website.
- f. Reads only the section(s) of the minutes of the previous AIS meeting pertaining to a new policy decision.
- g. Reads the report of any absent Officer.

4. Treasurer

- a. Handles all financial matters and maintains appropriate accounts through recognized financial institutions.
- b. The Treasurer, as well as the Chairperson of AIS, will have the power to authorize checks.
- c. Maintains appropriate records.
- d. Gives oral financial report at monthly AIS meetings.
- e. Provides a written monthly report for the Newsletter and the AIS Office.
- f. Is responsible for preparing and filing of all necessary forms required by city, county, state or federal government.
- g. Maintains books for Annual Review.
- h. Is an ex officio member of the Finance Committee.

E. RESPONSIBILITIES OF OFFICERS

- 1. An Officer who is unable to attend the monthly AIS meeting should forward his/her report to the Secretary or Office Manager so that it can be read by the Secretary at the meeting.
- 2. Officers shall submit an oral report at the regular AIS business meeting and a written report to the Newsletter Editor before the monthly deadline.
- 3. Vacancies - See Section VI, B.

F. TERM OF OFFICE

The term of office is two years.

SECTION IV - MEETINGS

A. MEETINGS

Meetings are held for business purposes of AIS. It is suggested that participants act with decorum and mutual respect.

B. REGULAR MEETINGS

1. There shall be regular monthly meetings of AIS.
2. The SUGGESTED agenda of the regular business meeting is:
 - a. Open with a moment of silence, followed by the Serenity Prayer.
 - b. Reading of the Twelve Concepts of Service.
 - c. Reading of the expanded version of one of the Concepts
 - d. Officers' reports.
Secretary (reading only the section(s) of the minutes of the previous meeting pertaining to a new policy decision)
Treasurer (financial report)
Vice-Chairperson
Chairperson
 - e. Reports of Standing and Special Committees.
 - f. Unfinished business.
 - g. New business.
 - h. Group conscience.
 - i. Adjournment.
- 3 Meeting nights shall be rotated each year, Monday through Thursday.

C. VOTING

1. The ISR (or alternate) of each group has voice and full voting privileges.
2. Each group has one vote if there is an ISR or alternate representative of that group present at the time of voting.

D. SPECIAL MEETINGS AND GROUP CONSCIENCE

Any AI-Anon member may call for a special meeting or group conscience of AIS body by contacting the Chairperson or Office and making such request.

SECTION V - COMMITTEES

A. COMMITTEES

All business shall be delegated to Standing or Special Committees whenever possible. Chairpersons may appoint members or accept volunteers who may be ISRs or Al-Anon/Alateen members. No one may hold more than one Chair position.

B. SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Special Committees may be formed as the need arises, subject to the approval of majority of AIS voting members at the meeting.

C. STANDING COMMITTEES

1. ALATEEN COMMITTEE

Maintains up-to-date information about and coordinates Alateen activities in the AIS area. Communicates and cooperates with the New York North Alateen Coordinator. Adheres to area Alateen guidelines.

2. BOOK DEPOT COMMITTEE

- a. Maintains an adequate inventory of Al-Anon/ Alateen Conference Approved Literature (CAL) for sale at the Service Center. Fills literature orders and dispenses CAL to Al-Anon/Alateen groups and the community.
- b. Maintains accurate inventory records.
- c. Informs AIS of new CAL publications; works with committee chairs to coordinate set-ups of CAL as needed for health fairs, days of Al-Anon and conferences.

3. FINANCE COMMITTEE

- a. Reviews the financial records of AIS.
- b. Prepares and submits a written annual financial report to AIS by the end of the first quarter of each new year.
- c. Receives all Chairpersons' budget requests by September 1st.
- d. Prepares a preliminary Budget by October 1st. Provides the preliminary Budget to each Standing Committee for review.
- e. Receives the reviewed budget copy from the Standing Committees by November 1st.
- f. Presents the proposed Budget for publication in the December Newsletter.
- g. Presents and recommends the proposed budget for approval at the December AIS meeting.
- h. The committee will consist of:
 - i. Finance Committee Chairperson
 - ii. Treasurer
 - iii. Up to three Al-Anon/Alateen members appointed for 2 years.

4. NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

Compiles, publishes and distributes a Newsletter for AIS via e-mail

5. NOMINATING COMMITTEE

- a. The Nominating Committee will function throughout the year under the direction of the Vice-Chairperson and shall be active whenever a vacancy arises.
- b. The Nominating Committee shall consist of the Vice-Chairperson as Chairperson of this Committee, plus at least three active Al-Anon/Alateen members appointed by the Chairperson of this Committee.
- c. A slate of candidates should be submitted at least one month prior to the November election meeting.

6. PUBLIC OUTREACH COMMITTEE

- a. **PI/CPC (Public Information/Cooperating with the Professional Community)**
Provides Al-Anon/Alateen information to the general public via the various media, and to professionals who are in contact with persons affected by the disease of alcoholism.
Communicates and cooperates with the Districts and with New York North PI/CPC Coordinator.
- b. **INSTITUTIONS**
Coordinates all volunteers for health care centers and correctional institutions to carry the Al-Anon message to the AIS area. Communicates and cooperates with the Districts.
- c. **SPECIAL SERVICES**
Provides Al-Anon/Alateen information for special-interest groups (i.e., hearing impaired, etc.).

7. SERVICE CENTER COMMITTEE

- a. The Service Center Committee (SCC) shall consist of the following members:
 - 1. SCC Chairperson
 - 2. Book Depot representative
 - 3. Volunteer representative
 - 4. Finance representative
 - 5. Office Manager (if applicable)
 - 6. Three Al-Anon/Alateen members at large elected for a two-year term of office
- b. The Service Center Committee will:
 - 1. Oversee the operations of the Service Center.
 - 2. Employ and supervise the Service Center Office Manager (when applicable).
 - 3. Make additions, corrections or deletions to job description of Office Manager when needed.
 - 4. Be in charge of employment of additional help, after budget considerations and approval of AIS voting members.
 - 5. Be responsible for annual performance review of SCC employee(s).
 - 6. Submit equipment service contracts and purchases or changes in equipment not provided for in the approved budget to the voting membership one month prior to the next regularly scheduled monthly AIS meeting. Final approval is obtained from the AIS voting members.
 - 7. Review and negotiate the lease.
- c. A minimum of five (5) committee members must be present for the committee to vote on any issue.

8. VOLUNTEER COORDINATION COMMITTEE

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR schedules and arranges training for volunteers to answer the telephones and assist with operation of the AIS office during working hours. Has available and maintains a list of these volunteers' names and phone numbers at the service center.

9. ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

Coordinates special activities for AIS (such as the traditional spring Tureen Supper and fall Service Workshop).

WEBSITE COMMITTEE

10. WEBSITE COMMITTEE

- a. Develops guidelines for what is on website and who is responsible for making changes and updates.
- b. Maintains, monitors and updates all components of the website
- c. Responds to or forwards online requests for information and/or service

SECTION VI- ELECTION PROCEDURES AND VACANCIES

A. ELECTIONS

Officers and Committee Chairpersons are elected for a 2-year term of office. To ensure experienced leadership, all committee Chairpersons should not be elected in the same year. No committee Officer or Chairperson shall succeed himself/herself unless elected unanimously.

1. In November of the year the original charter was adopted (1989) and every odd numbered year thereafter, elections shall be for:
 - a. AIS Chairperson
 - b. Secretary
 - c. Book Depot Chairperson
 - d. Institutions Chairperson
 - e. Service Center Chairperson
 - f. Volunteer Chairperson
 - g. Finance Chairperson
 - h. Intergroup Representative
2. In November of the even numbered years, elections shall be held for:
 - a. Vice-Chairperson
 - b. Treasurer
 - c. Alateen Chairperson
 - d. Website Chairperson
 - e. Special Service Chairperson
 - f. Newsletter Chairperson
 - g. Public Information/Cooperating with the Professional Community (PI/CPC) Chairperson
 - h. Activities Chairperson
3. When the Vice-Chairperson is running for election as Chairperson, other nominations may be taken from the floor the night of the election; at the time of election; or submitted to the Secretary in writing prior to the election.
4. Election of officers will be held at the November meeting. Newly elected Officers will assume office in January of the coming year.

B. VACANCIES

1. Any office vacated during an elected term shall be filled by a special election.
2. The nominating committee should call for nominations at the AIS meeting.
3. If there are nominations for the vacancy, elections should be held at the next AIS meeting after publication in the newsletter. If there are no nominations the committee shall appoint someone. Those people elected or appointed to fill an interim vacancy shall serve until the next scheduled AIS election for that term.
4. Those filling vacancies may be elected at the regular November election of the appropriate year for one more full term in office in the same capacity or any other position.
5. A vacancy may be declared after three consecutive absences without submitting a report.
6. A vacancy shall be declared after:
 - a. Termination of Al-Anon/Alateen membership, or
 - b. Written resignation submitted to the AIS Secretary.

SECTION VII - FINANCES

- A. Sufficient operating funds, enough for a one-year operating reserve; (equal to the fixed expenses of the previous year, for example); is the financial goal of AIS.
- B. The financing of AIS activities shall be from:
 - 1. Contributions by groups or interested individuals within Al-Anon/ Alateen.
 - 2. Book Depot literature sales.
 - 3. Special projects or activities
- C. Suggested limits on contributions by individual members to Al-Anon/ Alateen are contained in the Service Manual, pp. 92-93, 2010-2013, and in the Digest of Al-Anon/Alateen Policies.
- D. All contributions and income from donations/special projects/literature sales are allocated to the General Fund. Funds cannot be earmarked for special purposes unless recommended by the World Service Conference.
- E. All checks must be signed by the Treasurer or the Chairperson.
- F. A yearly budget is to be a Balanced Budget.

SECTION VIII - SALARIED EMPLOYEES

- A. The Service Center may employ a Service Center Manager and additional employees as necessary and as financially able.
- B. The SCC shall recommend any additional employees; as it may deem necessary to the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee will submit this request to the voting members of AIS. Any employee should disqualify himself/herself from office as Group Representative (GR), District Representative (DR), Assembly Officers, Delegate or Regional Trustee (RT) candidate. This also applies equally to any member of the Area World Service Committee, such as coordinator of a special service. No paid employee may continue to serve as an Al-Anon/Alateen Officer, or as a voting member of AIS.
- C. A Service Center employee shall be compensated at a reasonable salary in accordance with the approved budget.
- D. The salary of the Service Center employees shall be recommended by the Service Center Committee, with an annual review. Salary should reflect the employee's skill as well as current salary scales in the community and must meet state minimums.
- E. The Service Center Manager is under the direct supervision of the Service Center Committee. Additional employees are under the direct supervision of the Service Center Manager.

SECTION IX - RETENTION OF AIS RECORDS

- A. All official records (the By-Laws and Charter as well as Minutes and Financial Report) of AIS shall be kept at the AIS office indefinitely on the website and in hard copy.
- B. All publications deemed of ongoing value to the local membership will have a copy on file at the AIS office. These should include:
 - 1. The Forum - 1 Year
 - 2. Northern Highlights+- 1 Year
 - 3. W.S.O. routine newsletters and pamphlet distribution - 1 Year
 - 4. The AIS Newsletter - indefinitely
 - 5. AIS minutes - indefinitely (either hard copy or electronically)

SECTION X - ADOPTION AND AMENDMENT

- A. Charter revisions shall be adopted by a majority of ISRs.
- B. The By-Laws may be amended at any regular meeting of AIS. A proposed amendment must be published in the previous month's Newsletter and must be adopted by a majority of ISRs attending the monthly AIS meeting.

APPENDIX B

World Service Office Task Force on Technology

III. E-Mail Etiquette Check List

E-mail has become a staple of our everyday lives as a means of communicating with each other. We often see it as a way of expressing ourselves casually and informally. Yet e-mail is a legitimate means of professional communication, which requires a set of rules or etiquette designed to facilitate appropriate correspondence. By the use of certain etiquette rules of e-mail, important information and discussion is shared with greater effectiveness. Though there are numerous rules of e-mail etiquette, only a few of the most essential rules will be listed.

- ***Be Concise and to the Point*** – Long messages should be avoided. If much information needs to be shared then another means of communication, such as a phone call may be indicated.
- ***Answer All Questions Thoroughly*** – The message should contain complete information so that the receiver(s) have few, if any, questions concerning the intent of the communication.
- ***Use Correct Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling*** – It is important to use correct spelling and grammar in order to convey the message appropriately and to give a good impression.
- ***Use Correct Layout and Structure*** – Using appropriate layout and structure facilitates easy reading from a screen. Some of the layout and structure should include short paragraphs and blank spaces between paragraphs. Number or bullet main points to make it easy to read. Avoid long and complicated sentences as well as very long complicated messages.
- ***Create Templates for Frequently Used Responses*** – Members may ask some questions repeatedly, such as directions to the facility where your Area Assembly is held or how to subscribe to a newsletter. A professional, newcomer, or AI-Anon member visiting your community may request a meeting schedule. You can save your text in a Word document as a response template and then paste the words into your message as needed. Special software to create e-mail templates can also be obtained as another alternative.
- ***Make the E-mail Personal*** – Make the e-mail personal instead of automatic messages; however, templates may be used for frequently used information.
- ***Reply Promptly*** – When receiving an e-mail, be sure to reply quickly. If it will take more than a day to gather the requested information, send a reply noting that the e-mail was read and a longer response will be coming within a few days.

- **Attachments** – When attaching other documents and information be sure that these attachments are pertinent to the intent of the message. Do not attach unnecessary materials.
- **Use Active Voice** – By using active, instead of passive, voice the message becomes personalized and meaningful to the reader. Use ‘I, my, we our’ instead of ‘you, your’ when creating your message.
- **Reread Your E-mail** – Review your e-mail before sending it, to check for intent, spelling, grammar, and readability. By reviewing the e-mail from the perspective of the intended reader, you may be able to eliminate potential misunderstandings and/or inappropriate material.
- **Use of Reply and Reply All** – When replying, think carefully to see if every addressee needs to receive your reply. Do not overuse the “reply to all” key.
- **Maintaining Anonymity When Using E-mail Addresses and Posting Such Addresses** – It is important to maintain Al-Anon members’ anonymity when using e-mail. One means of doing this is to have a non-identifiable specific e-mail address with a Web-based e-mail service. One way of doing this might be to use an e-mail address, which does not use a personal name, such as, **afggr@xyz.com**. By using such an address on flyers, the member’s identity is protected.
- **Service Communication** – Service communication by the use of e-mail is a very viable means of communicating with members, but it is necessary to use care when sending or forwarding messages to members. The use of blind copies will protect members’ anonymity. Members should select with care the e-mail address(s) they use to conduct Al-Anon/Alateen business. It is suggested not to use members’ full name in the addresses. The use of business addresses is discouraged as well, since this might not provide privacy and might suggest affiliation.
- **Use of Bcc and Cc** – When sending the same message to a number of recipients, use the “Bcc” field to protect the anonymity of the recipients or use mail merge for the same reasons. If using Microsoft Word, use the “help” feature for directions on mail merge.
- **Use of Abbreviations and Emoticons** – Abbreviations for phrases (such as, lol for laugh out loud) and emoticons (such as the smiley face) should not be used in professional e-mails.
- **Chain Mail Letters** – Do not forward chain letters as part of your Al-Anon service communications within the fellowship. Chain mail letters are more personal in nature and may be annoying to many recipients.
- **Permission to Copy** – Do not copy a message or attachment without permission. Not only is this a courtesy but could also be a copyright issue.

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- ***Confidential Information*** – When creating a message, be sure to keep it free of any confidential information. Be very discreet with the information you send. E-mails are very public and should be considered like postcards that can be read by anyone.
- ***Inappropriate Information*** – It is also very important not to send or forward any e-mail that might contain offensive, racist, sexist, obscene or libelous information. In addition to being a poor reflection upon Al-Anon and associating the Al-Anon name with negative messages, you could become involved in legal issues pertaining to such comments.

There are many other aspects of e-mail etiquette but the suggestions above are a good start to professional communication.

APPENDIX C

World Service Office **The KBDM Questions** **Knowledge-Based Decision Making**

How to get the information we need to have for an informed group conscience

Gather information for these questions for all of your discussion topics. Gather this information prior and during a discussion and get the information out to people before the actual discussion begins. Everyone can add to them. Use them as a basis for discussion. They provide common information so everyone can be on the same page.

Five Important Questions

Question 1:

What do we know about our members' or prospective members' needs that is relevant to this discussion?

Question 2:

What do we know about the resources and our vision for the organization that is relevant to this discussion?

Question 3:

What do we know about the current realities and evolving dynamics of the world and our fellowship that is relevant to this discussion? What are the Pros and Cons?

Question 4:

What are the ethical implications of our choices? In other words . . .

Will our decision be consistent with our spiritual principles?

Question 5:

What do we wish we knew, but don't?

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