

APPENDIX VIII

Glossary

Contra Costa Intergroup Handbook

Numbers

12-Step Call. A call made by an A.A. member to a person seeking help with a drinking problem. Contra Costa Intergroup maintains a list of members willing to respond to these calls through the 24-Hour Hotline.

12-Step Call List. The confidential list of local A.A. members who have volunteered to receive referrals and respond to people seeking help with alcoholism.

24-Hour Hotline. Contra Costa Intergroup's telephone service that answers calls at all hours from people seeking A.A., members needing meeting information, and others requesting local A.A. information.

501(c)(3). A federal tax-exempt classification for qualifying charitable organizations. The handbook's bylaws refer to transferring remaining assets to another qualifying organization serving Alcoholics Anonymous if Intergroup dissolves.

A

A.A. / Alcoholics Anonymous. A fellowship of people who share their experience, strength, and hope with one another so they may solve their common problem and help others recover from alcoholism.

A.A. Group. A local gathering of A.A. members that meets regularly and follows A.A.'s Traditions. In this handbook, a registered group may select an IGR and an Alternate to participate in Contra Costa Intergroup.

A.A. Grapevine. A.A.'s international journal and a publisher of A.A.-related books and other material. The bylaws permit the Service Center to make Grapevine publications available.

A.A. Literature. Books, pamphlets, service materials, and other publications produced or approved for use in A.A. The Service Center sells A.A. literature and publications.

A.A. Service Manual. The A.A. service reference that describes the General Service Conference structure and includes the Twelve Concepts for World Service and service procedures, including Third Legacy elections.

Abstain / Abstention. To choose not to vote either for or against a motion. Unless a governing rule says otherwise, abstentions are not counted as votes cast.

Accessibility. The practice of reducing physical, communication, technological, or other barriers so that members can participate in meetings, events, and service activities.

Accountability. The responsibility of trusted servants, officers, committees, and workers to report to and remain answerable to the people or service body they serve.

Ad Hoc Committee. A temporary committee created to complete a specific assignment, such as reviewing the bylaws, and normally dissolved when its work is finished.

Adjourn. To formally end a meeting. A motion to adjourn generally requires a second and a majority vote.

Agenda. The planned order of business for a meeting. It helps the body address its work in an orderly and time-conscious manner.

Alcoholic Who Still Suffers. A traditional A.A. phrase referring to a person who continues to experience alcoholism and has not yet found, accepted, or maintained recovery. Carrying the message to that person is A.A.'s primary purpose.

All Groups Speaker Meeting and Birthday Celebration. A recurring Contra Costa Intergroup event featuring an A.A. speaker and recognition of sobriety anniversaries. Local groups may be asked to host or support the meeting.

Alternate Intergroup Representative (ALT / Alternate IGR). The trusted servant selected to support the group's IGR, attend when the IGR is unavailable, help maintain communication, and vote in place of the IGR when eligible.

Amendment to a Motion. A proposed change to the wording of a pending motion by adding, deleting, or replacing language. The amendment is decided before the body returns to the main motion.

Anonymity. An A.A. spiritual and practical principle that protects members' identities and places principles before personalities. Public anonymity is maintained at the level of press, radio, films, and comparable public media; care is also appropriate in minutes, email, social media, and service communications.

Announcement. A brief informational item that generally does not require discussion or action, such as an event notice, meeting change, or service opportunity.

Area. A geographic division within A.A.'s General Service structure, made up of districts and represented at the General Service Conference by an elected delegate. It is distinct from Intergroup.

Attraction Rather Than Promotion. The A.A. public-relations principle that A.A. makes help and information available without sensational advertising, personal promotion, or pressure.

Audio Library / Tape Committee. The collection of recorded A.A. speakers maintained as a local service. The bylaws use the historical name "Tape Committee" for the committee responsible for this service.

Autonomy / Group Autonomy. The Tradition Four principle that each A.A. group manages its own affairs, except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole.

B

Birthday Club. A local self-support initiative through which members may contribute in recognition of their A.A. sobriety anniversary.

Bridging the Gap (BTG). An A.A. service that helps people leaving treatment or correctional settings connect with A.A. in the community. Contra Costa Intergroup may cooperate with this service.

Buck's Club. A local self-support initiative that encourages recurring individual contributions to help support Contra Costa Intergroup services.

Business Meeting. A meeting where members conduct the practical affairs of a group or service body through reports, discussion, group conscience, motions, and votes.

Bylaws. The locally adopted rules describing Contra Costa Intergroup's purpose, composition, officers, committees, finances, elections, meeting requirements, and amendment process. They take precedence over Robert's Rules when the two conflict.

C

California Northern Coastal Area (CNCA). The General Service area serving a portion of Northern California. The bylaws refer to participation in its Public Information service activities.

Central Office. A common name in some communities for a local A.A. service office. In this handbook, it is generally equivalent to Intergroup or Service Center.

Chair / Chairperson. The trusted servant who presides over a meeting, follows the agenda, recognizes speakers, states motions, applies procedure impartially, announces vote results, and helps the body conduct its work.

Charter. A foundational document establishing a service body and stating its basic purpose or authority. The handbook quotes Contra Costa Intergroup's original 1966 charter.

Clearinghouse. A central point for receiving, organizing, and sharing information. The bylaws describe Intergroup as a clearinghouse through which local groups and individuals can communicate efficiently.

Close Debate / Previous Question. A motion to end discussion and proceed to a vote on the pending matter. Under standard parliamentary procedure, it requires a second, is not debatable, and requires a two-thirds vote.

Committee. A group of trusted servants assigned to carry out a defined area of service or to study and report on a particular matter.

Committee Chair. The trusted servant responsible for coordinating a committee's work, communicating its needs and activities, and reporting to Intergroup or the Operating Committee.

Committee Report. A summary of a committee's activities, needs, finances, recommendations, or upcoming work presented during a business meeting.

Common Welfare. The shared well-being and unity of A.A. as expressed in Tradition One. It asks members to consider what best supports the fellowship and its primary purpose.

Communiqué, The. Contra Costa Intergroup's monthly newsletter containing local A.A. news, meeting information, minutes, events, service opportunities, and other material of interest to members.

Confidentiality. The careful protection of private or sensitive information learned through service. Confidentiality is related to, but broader than, A.A. anonymity.

Consensus. Broad general agreement reached through discussion. Consensus is not always the same as unanimity and, when a formal vote is required, does not replace the voting rule in the bylaws.

Contra Costa County Service Association of Alcoholics Anonymous. The formal name used in the charter and bylaws for the local service association now commonly known as Contra Costa Intergroup or the Contra Costa Service Center.

Contra Costa Intergroup (IG). The local service body created by participating A.A. groups to coordinate services that groups can provide more effectively together, including the hotline, meeting information, literature, public information, events, and the Service Center.

Contra Costa Service Center (CCSC). The local A.A. service office operated by Contra Costa Intergroup. "CCSC," "Service Center," and "Contra Costa Intergroup" are sometimes used interchangeably, although Intergroup also refers to the participating service body.

Cooperation, Not Affiliation. The A.A. principle of working constructively with professionals, agencies, facilities, and community organizations without endorsing them, becoming formally connected to them, or allowing them to use the A.A. name as an affiliation.

Cooperation with the Professional Community (CPC). A.A. service work that provides accurate information about A.A. to professionals who may encounter people with drinking problems. It is distinct from endorsement or affiliation.

Counted Vote. A vote in which the number on each side is formally counted, usually when the result of a voice or show-of-hands vote is uncertain or when an exact record is needed.

D

Debate / Discussion. The orderly exchange of information and viewpoints about a pending motion or issue before a decision is made.

Delegated Responsibility. A service principle under which a person or committee is entrusted with a defined task and enough authority to carry it out, while remaining accountable to the body served.

District. A local geographic unit within A.A.'s General Service structure, composed of groups represented by GSRs. A district is distinct from Intergroup.

E

Eligible Voter / Voting Member. A person authorized under the bylaws and local procedures to cast a vote. At Contra Costa Intergroup business meetings, this is generally the duly registered IGR or, in the IGR's absence, the eligible Alternate.

F

Fellowship. Depending on context, either Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole or the community of A.A. members who share in recovery and service.

Floor, The. A parliamentary term for the meeting's active consideration of business. A member who has been recognized by the Chair "has the floor" and may speak.

G

General Consent / Unanimous Consent. A way to approve a routine or noncontroversial action without taking a formal vote. If any member objects, the Chair uses the normal discussion and voting process.

General Service. A.A.'s service structure connecting groups through GSRs, districts, areas, delegates, the General Service Conference, the General Service Board, and GSO. It is separate from, but may cooperate with, Intergroup.

General Service Board (GSB). The board of trustees with custodial oversight of A.A.'s principal world service organizations in the United States and Canada.

General Service Conference (GSC). The annual service meeting that brings together area delegates, trustees, directors, and staff to act as the active voice and group conscience of A.A. in the United States and Canada.

General Service Office (GSO). The A.A. service office that supports groups and the General Service structure in the United States and Canada. It is not the same as a local Intergroup or Service Center.

Good of the Order. A portion of the agenda for brief items related to the welfare of Intergroup or the local fellowship that were not otherwise covered. It is generally not intended for lengthy debate or new motions unless local procedure allows.

Group Conscience. The collective conscience or decision of an A.A. group or service body, developed through member participation and guided by A.A. principles rather than by any single authority.

Group Service Representative (GSR). The trusted servant who connects an A.A. group to the General Service structure through its district and area. A GSR's role is different from an IGR's local Intergroup role.

H

Hospitals and Institutions Committee (H&I). An A.A. service committee that carries the message into hospitals, treatment facilities, correctional facilities, and other institutions. It is separate from Intergroup but may cooperate with it.

Home Group. The A.A. group in which a member regularly participates and ordinarily takes service commitments. An IGR represents the conscience of the group that selected them.

Hotline Volunteer. An A.A. member trained and scheduled to answer or support Contra Costa Intergroup's 24-Hour Hotline.

Hybrid Meeting. An A.A. meeting that permits participation both in person and through an online platform.

I

Informed Group Conscience. A collective decision reached after members have received relevant facts, had time to ask questions and discuss the issue, considered A.A. principles, and heard differing viewpoints, including the minority opinion.

Intergroup Business Meeting. The regular meeting where eligible group representatives receive reports, exchange information, discuss local service needs, and make decisions for Contra Costa Intergroup.

Intergroup Number (IG No.). The local identifying number assigned by Contra Costa Intergroup to a group or meeting for administrative records, contributions, literature purchases, and participation in Intergroup. It is not a GSO group number.

Intergroup Operating Committee (IOC) / Operating Committee. The committee described in the bylaws as consisting of elected Intergroup officers and committee chairs, with the Service Center Manager participating as provided by the bylaws. It administers Intergroup affairs at the direction of the Intergroup body.

Intergroup Representative (IGR). The trusted servant selected by an A.A. group to serve as its two-way communication link with Contra Costa Intergroup, represent the group's informed conscience when known, and participate in local service decisions.

L

Liability Insurance. Insurance coverage arranged as one of Contra Costa Intergroup's group-support services. The specific scope of coverage is controlled by the applicable policy and endorsements.

M

Main Motion. A formal proposal that the body take a specific action. Only one main motion is normally considered at a time.

Majority Vote. More than half of the votes cast by eligible members, unless the bylaws or another applicable rule requires a different threshold.

Mayhew Meeting Room. The meeting facility at 193 Mayhew Way used for Contra Costa Intergroup business meetings and other local A.A. activities.

Meeting Minutes. The official written record of a business meeting, including actions taken, motions, vote results when recorded, and other proceedings required by local practice. Minutes are a record of what was done, not a transcript of everything said.

Meeting Schedule / Meeting List. The published listing of local A.A. meetings, including relevant times, locations, and formats, maintained as an Intergroup service.

Membership Committee. The Intergroup committee that encourages group participation, communicates with groups, orients new IGRs and Alternates, and supports service workshops as described in the bylaws and handbook.

Minority Opinion. The opportunity for members on the nonprevailing side of a vote to present information or perspectives that may not have been fully considered. It supports an informed group conscience but is not simply a repeat of the entire debate.

Minutes Approval. The body's confirmation that the written minutes accurately record the previous meeting's proceedings. Approval may occur by formal vote or general consent.

Motion. A formal proposal that the body take a particular action. A motion is stated by a member, normally seconded, restated by the Chair, discussed when debatable, and then decided.

N

New Business. New topics, concerns, motions, or service needs brought before the body for the first time.

Newcomer. A person new to A.A. or newly seeking help for a drinking problem.

Non-Affiliation. See "Cooperation, Not Affiliation."

O

Office Volunteer. A trained volunteer who helps staff the Service Center, answer calls, welcome visitors, provide information, and assist with authorized office services.

Old Business. Unfinished matters carried forward from an earlier meeting for follow-up, further discussion, or decision. In formal parliamentary terminology, "unfinished business" is often the more precise term.

Online Meeting. An A.A. meeting conducted through an internet-based audio or video platform.

Opening / Closing Prayer. A prayer used to begin or end a meeting according to local custom. Participation is voluntary, and the prayer is not itself a rule of parliamentary procedure.

Outside Contribution. Money, property, or other support offered by a non-A.A. source. In keeping with the Seventh Tradition, A.A. groups and service bodies decline outside contributions.

Outside Enterprise / Outside Issue. An organization, cause, controversy, or activity not part of A.A.'s primary purpose. The Traditions caution against affiliation, endorsement, financing, and public opinions on outside issues.

P

Parliamentary Procedure. A set of meeting practices used to consider business fairly and in an orderly manner, protect majority and minority rights, and produce clear decisions.

Participating Group / Affiliated Group. An A.A. group that chooses to connect with Contra Costa Intergroup and use or support its services. Participation does not require financial contribution.

Point of Information. A request for factual information relevant to the pending business. It is not a speech or argument.

Point of Order. A procedural objection raised when a member believes a rule is not being followed. The Chair rules on the point, subject to any applicable right of appeal.

Postpone. To delay consideration of a matter until a specified later time or meeting. This differs from referring the matter to a committee for study.

Predatory Behavior. Conduct that exploits, pressures, manipulates, or targets another person, including sexually inappropriate conduct or misuse of a service role. The handbook directs concerns to an appropriate trusted servant and immediate threats to emergency services.

Primary Purpose. A.A.'s central purpose, stated in Tradition Five: to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

Principles Before Personalities. The Tradition Twelve practice of placing A.A.'s spiritual principles, common welfare, and primary purpose ahead of personal preference, status, conflict, or resentment.

Prudent Reserve. Funds set aside for reasonable contingencies and financial stability. The bylaws advise retaining a prudent reserve while avoiding unnecessary accumulation beyond current needs.

Public Information (PI). A.A. service work that provides accurate information about A.A. to the general public and community organizations while observing anonymity, attraction rather than promotion, and non-affiliation.

Publishing Committee. The Intergroup committee responsible for The Communiqué and other Intergroup publications, including distributing local news and meeting information.

Q

Quorum. The minimum number of eligible members who must be present for a body to conduct official business. The applicable number is set by the bylaws for the Intergroup and Operating Committee.

R

Recess. A short temporary break in a meeting. A motion to recess ordinarily states the length of the break.

Recognition. The Chair's acknowledgment that a member may speak. A recognized member has the floor.

Refer to Committee. To send a pending matter to a committee for study, action, or recommendation, usually with instructions about what the committee should do and when it should report.

Registered Group. A group recorded with Contra Costa Intergroup for participation and administrative purposes. Voting rights depend on registration of the group's representative and the requirements in the bylaws and local procedures.

Reconsider. A motion asking the body to consider again a vote already taken. Under standard parliamentary practice, it must be made by someone who voted on the prevailing side and is subject to timing and local rules.

Restatement of a Motion. The Chair's repetition of the exact motion before discussion or voting so the body is clear about the question being considered.

Right of Appeal. The Concept Five principle that minority views and personal grievances should receive careful consideration. In parliamentary procedure, an appeal may also ask the body to review a ruling of the Chair.

Right of Decision. The Concept Three principle that trusted servants should have enough discretion to carry out assigned responsibilities effectively, within the scope of their authority and accountability.

Right of Participation. The Concept Four principle that voting participation should be reasonably proportionate to the responsibility a person or service element is expected to carry.

Robert's Rules of Order. A recognized guide to parliamentary procedure used when the local bylaws, adopted policies, established procedures, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts do not address the matter. It is a tool to support, not dominate, the group-conscience process.

Roll Call / Sign-In. The process used to record attendance and representation at a meeting. Sign-in may also affect registration, voting eligibility, or the calculation required by the bylaws.

Rotation. The A.A. service practice of regularly passing service positions to new trusted servants. Rotation encourages participation, prevents concentration of authority, and reduces burnout.

S

Second. An indication by another member that a motion should be considered. A second does not necessarily mean the member supports the motion.

Self-Support / Seventh Tradition. The A.A. principle that groups and service bodies support their own activities through voluntary contributions from A.A. members and groups and decline outside contributions.

Service. Work performed to help carry the A.A. message and support the fellowship, including group commitments, hotline work, office volunteering, committee work, public information, and representative service.

Service Body. A board, committee, office, conference, or other structure created to carry out A.A. service work and remain directly responsible to those it serves.

Service Center. See “Contra Costa Service Center (CCSC).”

Service Center Manager / Office Manager / Special Worker. The paid worker responsible for managing the Service Center and implementing policies established by the Operating Committee and Intergroup. “Special worker” is the Tradition Eight term for a paid employee whose work does not make A.A. professional.

Service/IG Liaison. The local service role or committee that shares information between Intergroup and other A.A. service entities, such as General Service and H&I.

Special Events Committee. The Intergroup committee that plans and coordinates approved local events, public meetings, and related volunteer needs.

Special Worker. An employee paid for professional or administrative work needed by an A.A. service center. A.A. remains nonprofessional because the worker is paid for services performed, not for carrying the A.A. message as a profession.

Standing Committee. A continuing committee established in the bylaws to manage an ongoing area of service, such as Publishing, Hotline, Office Volunteers, Public Information, Membership, or Special Events.

Substantial Unanimity. A.A.’s preference that important decisions reflect broad support after full discussion and consideration of minority views. It does not always require every person to agree; the applicable voting threshold is determined by the bylaws or other governing rule.

T

Table / Table a Motion. A parliamentary term often used informally to mean delay an item. Under formal Robert’s Rules, “lay on the table” has a narrower purpose; when the intent is to delay until a later meeting, “postpone” is usually clearer.

Third Legacy. A.A. service, often called the Fellowship’s Third Legacy after Recovery and Unity. The term also refers to the election procedure in The A.A. Service Manual designed to combine voting with selection by lot when repeated ballots do not produce the required result.

Traditions, Twelve. The spiritual principles that guide A.A. groups and the Fellowship in matters such as unity, authority, autonomy, primary purpose, non-affiliation, self-support, public relations, and anonymity.

Treasurer. The elected officer responsible for financial reporting and other duties assigned by the bylaws, policies, or Intergroup.

Treasurer’s Report. A financial report that may include balances, income, expenses, group contributions, literature sales, budget concerns, and upcoming costs.

Trusted Servant. An A.A. member entrusted with a service responsibility and accountable to those served. Trusted servants lead and facilitate; they do not govern.

Twelve Concepts for World Service. Principles explaining A.A.'s world service structure and addressing responsibility, authority, participation, appeal, leadership, accountability, and safeguards. They can also inform local service work.

Twelve Steps. A.A.'s suggested program of personal recovery from alcoholism.

Two-Thirds Vote. At least two-thirds of the votes counted under the applicable rule. Contra Costa Intergroup's bylaws require a two-thirds majority for motions and impose additional requirements for bylaw amendments.

Two-Way Communication. The IGR/ALT function of carrying accurate information from Intergroup to the home group and bringing the group's questions, concerns, updates, and conscience back to Intergroup.

U

Umbrella Group / Fellowship. A local arrangement in which several meetings share a name, location, treasury, or administrative structure. Under Contra Costa Intergroup's bylaws, each weekly meeting may still be treated as a group entitled to one representative.

Unanimity / Unanimous Consent. Unanimity means complete agreement. Unanimous consent, also called general consent, is a procedure for approving an action without a formal vote when no one objects.

Unity. The shared spiritual principle expressed in Tradition One that A.A.'s common welfare comes first and personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.

V

Voice but No Vote. The right to participate in discussion without authority to cast a vote. The bylaws assign this status to certain Intergroup participants.

Vote. The formal expression of a choice on a motion, election, or other question by an eligible member.

W

Withdraw a Motion. A request by the maker to remove a motion from consideration. Once the Chair has stated the motion, withdrawal generally requires the body's permission by general consent or vote.

World Services. Services that support A.A. as a whole through the General Service Conference structure, the General Service Board, and its service corporations, as distinguished from local Intergroup services.