

SUGGESTED GUIDELINES
for the
“HEARTBEAT” NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE
of the

GREATER LOS ANGELES AREA SERVICE COMMITTEE OF NA

This body shall be known as the Greater Los Angeles Area Newsletter Committee of Narcotics Anonymous and operate as a subcommittee of the Greater Los Angeles Area Service Committee of Narcotics Anonymous.

"God, grant us the knowledge that we may write according to Your Divine precepts. Instill in us a sense of Your will and grant us a bond of selflessness, that this may truly be Your work, not ours, in order that no addict, anywhere, need die from the horrors of addiction."

PURPOSE:

To publish a bi-monthly newsletter. To support individuals and the groups in our Area with our *primary purpose*, which is to carry the message to the addict who still suffers, while providing a forum to encourage the growth of the Fellowship. More importantly, in keeping with our first tradition, building N.A. unity through communication.

THE NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE:

The Newsletter Committee consists of members who plan, format and distribute the newsletter. Membership in the committee is open to all members of the Fellowship.

The committee consists of an Executive Committee and Attending Members. Members must attend two consecutive regularly scheduled meetings to have voting privileges. Members who miss two consecutive regularly scheduled meetings lose their voting privileges. If a member of the Executive Committee misses two consecutive regularly scheduled meetings, on the third regularly scheduled meeting a vote will be taken on whether to replace that member.

This committee's regularly scheduled meetings are held on the third Wednesday of every month at 7:30pm. The committee makes regular reports to the Greater Los Angeles Area Service Committee. Our bi-monthly budget is:

- Printing.....\$319.00---1500 copies
- Stamps.....\$10.20
- Internet.....\$50.00

We must remember we have only one need for money in N.A., and that is to further our primary purpose. It is used to develop, produce, translate and distribute our message in written form and bring our members together in a service committee to vision of spreading our message around the world to those in need."

(Twelve Concepts for NA Service, Eleventh Concept P. 24)

Suggested qualifications and requirements for the Executive Committee:

1. *Qualifications:*

- Chair 3 years clean + 1 year N.A. newsletter experience
- Vice Chair 3 years clean + 1 year N.A. newsletter experience
- Secretary 1 year clean
- Alt. Secretary 1 year clean
- Graphic Artist 2 years clean + computer hardware & software knowledge

2. *Requirements*

All Executive Committee members need a working knowledge of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, Twelve Concepts, Handbook for Narcotics Anonymous Newsletters, A Local Guide To Service, and Roberts Rules of Order, and have the willingness to be of service.

Responsibilities of the Executive Committee

Chair

1. Chairperson has overall responsibility for the Newsletter Committee.
2. Organizes meetings, sets agenda, provides focus and direction, stays informed of the activities of each member and provides help when needed.
3. Delivers expense receipts and newsletters to Area Meeting. Picks up check from Area Treasurer.
4. Attends all Newsletter committee meetings.
5. Attends all Greater Los Angeles Area Service Committee meetings with a written report.

Vice Chair

1. Acts as Chairperson in the Chair's absence.
2. Works closely with the Chairperson.
3. Attends all Newsletter meetings

Secretary

1. Takes accurate minutes at all meetings and distributes to each member.
2. Assists with other functions of producing the newsletter and maintains record of prior month's minutes.
3. Attends all Newsletter meetings.

Alternate Secretary

1. Acts as secretary in Secretary's absence.
2. Maintains accurate list of members and their phone numbers.
3. Calls current members notifying them of committee meetings, their locations and times.
4. Informs committee of consecutive 'no-shows'.
5. Attends all newsletter committee meetings

Graphic Artist

1. Maintains archives of old heartbeat newsletters and a file of other Area's newsletters.
2. Provides a layout of upcoming issues for committee review and approval.
3. Delivers layout to printer in a timely manner, and picks up final drafts from printer for distribution.
4. Attends all newsletter committee meetings

Operations

Editorial/Review Policy

the heartbeat newsletter presents the experiences and opinions of individual members of Narcotics Anonymous.

The newsletter review policy includes but not limited to:

- Articles should be no longer than one page handwritten or typed.
- Use of NA language of recovery.
- No profanity
- No personal attacks directed towards NA members or NA as a whole.

the heartbeat newsletter committee assumes no responsibility to return submitted material and does not guarantee that submissions will be published. **the heartbeat** committee reserves the right to edit any material submitted in accordance with our review policy. The articles and letters do not necessarily express the philosophy of NA as a whole nor does publication imply endorsement by NA, **the heartbeat** newsletter committee, or the Greater Los Angeles Area of Narcotics Anonymous. Additional editing policies are spelled out in The Handbook for Narcotics Anonymous Newsletters.

Articles should be submitted to:

the heartbeat
P.O. box 512431
Los Angeles, CA 90051

EDITING

The Twelve Traditions of N.A. should serve as the basic guidelines for editing your newsletter. We have no opinions on outside issues, we are not affiliated with any other organizations, we remain anonymous in print, and we are non-professional. All the principles contained in the traditions must be studied carefully and followed to the letter. You will most likely receive a good deal of input that is not usable or needs to be changed before it is used. The job of the editor is to make those decisions and changes before anything is printed. Group discussions and proof reading sessions help, because this responsibility is then shared by a number of people, and a better group conscience is obtained. Always edit out any profanity. Whether or not you distribute outside of N.A., your newsletter represents the public image of our fellowship. This basic courtesy is essential if we are to be viewed as a respectable recovery program. The language of N.A. recovery should be used. Our steps and traditions are worded to keep the focus of our program on addiction and recovery, not on specific drugs. We are addicts and our disease is addiction. Alcohol is often arbitrarily separated from other drugs in the speaking and writing of some N.A. members. This practice should not be reinforced in our printed word. For us, such a distinction is artificial, and contributes to a lack of understanding of our First Step. For those reasons, we make the following edits in the essays we print:

These changes are in keeping with the accepted language in all of our Conference approved literature, and are intended to help us keep the N.A. principles of recovery clearly in focus.

Of course, all grammatical and structural errors, misspellings and faulty information should be corrected. Some newsletter editors are well versed in technical matters, and some are not. The rule of thumb is to do your best with the resources at your disposal. The clearer the newsletter the better, but perfection is not always possible. The most important concern is that a clear message of N.A. recovery comes through that is consistent with the Twelve Traditions and N.A. philosophy.

Some input you receive will be controversial. If the controversy is over an issue, of course the article should not be printed. If the controversy is over some issue within N.A., the committee should discuss among itself whether the articles should be printed. If solutions are offered, and the tone of the article is positive and helpful, controversy may be healthy. If, however, the writer seems to be using the newsletter to simply vent hostility or as a forum for promoting self will, such articles may do more harm than good. A rule of thumb: the newsletter should carry the message, not the disease.