

**North Olympic Peninsula Area  
Public Relations Committee**

(Public Relations Guidelines Approved 3/28/2010, Motion 2010-01-24-05)

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**I. Name**

The name of this committee shall be the North Olympic Peninsula Area Public Relations Committee of Narcotics Anonymous, hereinafter referred to as the PR committee. And, the North Olympic Peninsula Area Service Committee is hereinafter referred to as the ASC.

**II. Purpose**

The purpose of the PR committee is to work together in the spirit of unity and cooperation to carry the message of recovery. In addition, the PR committee shall fulfill the goals as stated in this document, and serve the NA groups and the community at large in the greater North Olympic Peninsula Area to ensure that our message reaches all those who might benefit from the NA program of recovery. The committee will accomplish this by coordinating the services we provide to maximize our ability to fulfill our primary purpose. This committee should maintain open communications with other Areas, Regions, and World Services (NAWS).

**III. Spiritual Guidance**

In all endeavors, the Public Relations Committee will comply the following:

- i.** The Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous.
- ii.** The Twelve Concepts of service of Narcotics Anonymous.
- iii.** The current PR Handbook.

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- iv. NOPASC guidelines.
- v. Any special rules of order adopted by this committee. In case of conflict, and unresolved grievances, this committee will turn to the ASC for guidelines.

## **IV. Goals**

The goals of the PR committee are:

- i. Clarify what services NA can and cannot provide to our area and the community in which we live. The ASC has the final say on any clarification information.
- ii. Make NA members aware of their role in NA's Public Image.
- iii. Our aim is for the public to recognize NA as a positive and reliable organization.
- iv. Internal
  - A. Provide education regarding the responsibilities of each service position.
  - B. Encourage and support our trusted servants.
  - C. Demonstrate leadership and training.
  - D. Provide traditions and concepts workshops.
- v. External
  - A. Show NA is an effective, reliable and responsive program of recovery.
  - B. Inform professionals and the general public that NA is an effective, reliable, and responsive program of recovery.
  - C. Work with professionals and the public to use their services to reach potential members (PSA's, Bus Signs, and Meeting Space).
  - D. Create solid and reliable relationships via external interactions with the public.

## **V. General**

As a service committee of Narcotics Anonymous, this body shall adhere to the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, Twelve Concepts of Narcotics Anonymous, Guide to Local Services, and the PR Handbook, and all other approved Narcotics Anonymous literature, in use, such as H&I manuals.

## **VI. Participation and Voting**

- i. Participation in this committee shall be open to any NA member.
- ii. Voting privileges in the committee shall be open to participating committee members. A participating committee member is any NA member that has been orientated by the PR committee.

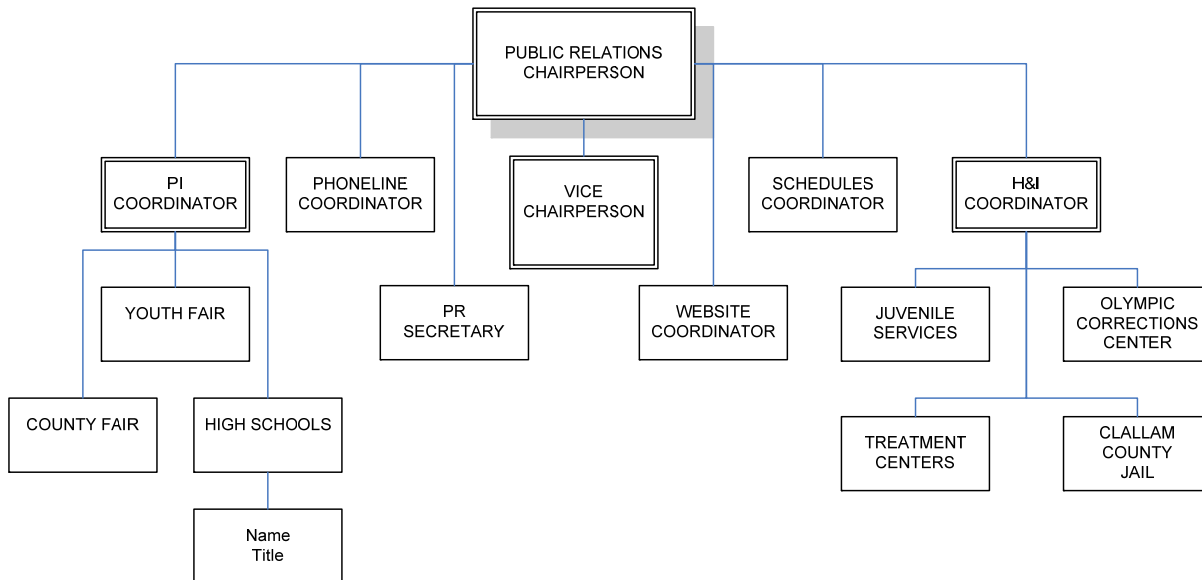
## **VII. Meetings**

- i. The committee shall meet, but is not limited to, monthly in regular session at the locations approved by the ASC.
- ii. A special meeting may be called by the PR chairperson and/or the written request of the ASC chairperson.
- iii. In the event of a special meeting, the chairperson is reasonable to notify the ASC chairperson of the change for proper notification. (i.e. email, website, minutes, and notification at the respective location).
- iv. A PR committee inventory shall be held at least, but not limited to, yearly. The ASC chairperson or designated ASC officer must be present.

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- v. Consensus based decision making shall be used in all decision making.

## VIII. Public Relations Committee Structure



## IX. Qualifications and Terms of Service

- i. We recommend that all committee members possess the following qualifications:
  - A. The willingness and desire to serve.
  - B. Have a thorough understanding of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, Twelve Concepts of Narcotics Anonymous, and the content of the PR Handbook.
  - C. Have the time and resources to be an active participant.
- ii. In addition to the qualifications listed above, further requirements for each service position are as follows:
  - A. PR Chair
    - a. 5 years recommended continuous clean time.
    - b. The term of service is 2 years.
    - c. 2 years previous PR committee or other relevant service experience.
  - B. PR Vice-Chair
    - a. 3 years recommended continuous clean time.
    - b. Willing to move into PR Chair position.
    - c. The term of service is 2 years.
    - d. 1 year previous PR committee or other relevant service experience.
  - C. PR Secretary
    - a. 18 months recommended continuous clean time.
    - b. The term of service is 1 years.
    - c. Previous PR committee or other relevant service experience.
  - D. Web Coordinator

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- a.** 3 years recommended continuous clean time .
  - b.** The term of service is 1 years.
  - c.** Previous PR committee or other relevant service experience.
  - d.** Possess the technical ability to update area website (i.e. Person has their own computer and internet access).
  - e.** Familiarity with all internet and website related information in NAWS handbooks and the PR Handbook.
- E. Phonline Coordinator**
- a.** 2 years recommended continuous clean time.
  - b.** The term of service is 1 years.
  - c.** Previous PR committee or other relevant service experience.
  - d.** Familiarity with all phone line related information in NAWS handbooks and the PR Handbook.
- F. H&I Coordinator**
- a.** 5 years recommended continuous clean time.
  - b.** The term of service is 1 years.
  - c.** Previous hospital and institution panel leader experience.
  - d.** Familiarity with the PR Handbook, all approved H&I related publications, and all facility guidelines.
- G. PI Coordinator**
- a.** 5 years recommended continuous clean time.
  - b.** The term of service is 1 years.
  - c.** 1 year previous PR committee or other relevant service experience.
  - d.** Familiarity with all phone line related information in NAWS handbooks and the PR Handbook.
- H. Schedules Coordinator**
- a.** 2 year recommended continuous clean time.
  - b.** The term of service is 1 years.
  - c.** Have adequate access to a computer and a working knowledge of its operating system, and internet access.
  - d.** Possess a working knowledge of publication or word processing software.
- I. Newsletter Coordinator**
- a.** 2 year recommended continuous clean time.
  - b.** The term of service is 2 years.
  - c.** Familiar with the NAWS “Guide to N.A. Newsletters,” “A Guide to Local Service”, “Public Relations Handbook”, “North Olympic Peninsula Area NA Guidelines”, and the “PR committee Guidelines.”
  - d.** Have adequate access to a computer and a working knowledge of its operating system.
  - e.** Possess a working knowledge of publication or word processing software.
- J. Resource Pool**
- All resource pool members must have a minimum of six months continuous clean

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time, unless otherwise noted. All resource pool members must complete PR committee orientation and provide a completed information sheet.

**a. H&I Panel Members**

The member must meet facility clean time requirements and/or clearance criteria. If facility does not establish clean time requirements the panel member must meet the PR committee panel member clean time requirement of six months.

**b. Phone line Carriers**

Clean time requirement of six months.

**c. PR Panel Members**

Clean time requirement of six months.

**d. Twelve Step Volunteers**

Clean Time Requirement of 3 years.

## **X. Roles and Responsibilities**

**i. Chairperson**

- A.** Coordinates all public relations efforts.
- B.** Preside at regular and special committee meetings.
- C.** Makes regular reports to NOPASC on the status of all proposed, current, or completed plans.
- D.** Represents PR committee at the regular meeting of the NOPASC.
- E.** Attend the quarterly regional all subs committee meeting.
- F.** Prepare and submit required budget requests to the ASC.
- G.** If committee officer or coordinator position is vacant, insures the duties of that position are fulfilled.
- H.** Works with all committee coordinators to assure the most effective and efficient use of available resources.
- I.** Is responsible for the proper archiving of committee materials and documents. All documents no longer in use in the committee will be forwarded to the ASC.
- J.** When necessary, the PR chairperson will serve as the PI coordinator, or H&I coordinator, or both positions.
- K.** In absence of a committee officer, the Chairperson insures the duties of that position are fulfilled.

**ii. Vice Chairperson**

- A.** In absence of the chairperson assumes all those responsibilities normally carried out by the chairperson until the NOPASC has an election or appointment for that position.
- B.** Works closely with the chairperson.
- C.** Attends the regular meetings of the PR committee.
- D.** Works with all committee coordinators to assure the most effective and efficient use of available resources.
- E.** Conduct PR committee orientations.

**iii. Secretary**

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- A.** Keeps a complete record in the form of minutes of every PR committee meeting.
  - B.** The committee meeting minutes will document the attendance and members present.
  - C.** The member maintains current listing of resource pool members, their qualifications, preferences, and restrictions.
  - D.** The member maintains files of all PR committee minutes.
- iv. Web Coordinator**
- A.** Attend monthly PR committee and NOPASC meetings, if necessary.
  - B.** Coordinates all website activities.
  - C.** Makes monthly written report to the PR committee on the status of the website.
  - D.** Maintains contact with the Regional Webservant and report all issues to the chairperson.
- v. Phone line Coordinator**
- A.** Coordinate all phone line activities.
  - B.** Attend monthly PR committee meeting.
  - C.** Make monthly written report to the PR committee on the status of all completed and ongoing phone line plans.
  - D.** Shall be available on an “on call” basis to answer questions and concerns by carriers, and to troubleshoot and rectify problems with ensuring the ability to answer calls.
  - E.** Can assist with PR committee orientations.
  - F.** Be knowledgeable of this committees PR information document.
  - G.** Have phone skill in accordance with Narcotics Anonymous literature and the proper level of crisis management that we are required by Narcotics Anonymous and the law for a “HELPLINE.”
- vi. H&I Coordinator**
- A.** Attend monthly PR committee meeting.
  - B.** Can perform all the duties of the PI coordinator.
  - C.** Coordinate all hospital and institution panel activities.
  - D.** Attend quarterly regional committee (all subs) meetings.
  - E.** Assist with PR committee orientations.
  - F.** Submit requests to PR committee for any incremental literature requirements.
  - G.** Keeps in contact and works with PR committee officers, facility Liaison and panel leaders regarding all panel presentations.
  - H.** Makes monthly written report to the PR committee on the status of panel presentations.
  - I.** Insures regularly scheduled panels are held.
  - J.** Keep panel leaders informed of current facility rules and policies.
  - K.** When necessary will serve as the PR chairperson as directed by the ASC.
- vii. PI Coordinator**
- A.** Attend monthly PR committee meeting.
  - B.** Can perform all the duties of the H&I coordinator.
  - C.** Coordinates all public information activities.
  - D.** Makes monthly written report to the PR committee on the status of public information presentations.
  - E.** Prepare and submit required budget requests to PR committee Chairperson.

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- F.** Can assist with PR committee orientations.
- G.** Coordinate with WNIR for all regional public information activities.
- H.** When necessary will serve as the PR chairperson as directed by the ASC.

## **viii.** Schedules Coordinator

- A.** Responsible for collection of data, updating, and Liaison to the printers for printing schedules.
- B.** Maintain an up-to-date contacts database and have it available upon request of the committee or the ASC.
- C.** Attend all regularly scheduled PR committee and ASC meetings.
- D.** Submit monthly written report to the PR committee.
- E.** Maintains close communication with the PR committee Web Coordinator.
- F.** Responsible for maintaining the Schedules archives.

## **ix.** H&I Panel Leader (**Do we have these?**)

- A.** Conducts facility panel meetings/presentations according to facility guidelines, NA handbooks, and service guidelines.
- B.** Informs H&I coordinator as soon as possible when unable to conduct meeting.
- C.** Invite panel members to meeting and inform them of all applicable rules of the facilities and procedures for that meeting.
- D.** Go over “Do’s and Don’ts” with panel members.
- E.** Attend the monthly PR committee meeting and submit a written report to Panel Coordinator within the first 15 minutes of the committee meeting.
- F.** Pickup and distribute literature for facility.
- G.** Maintain interim communication with H&I coordinator and/or facility Liaison as required.

## **x.** Resource Pool

Resource pool consists of H&I and PR panel members, phone line carriers, special projects participants, twelve step volunteers and other NA members willing to serve.

- A.** Participates in meeting/presentations in the facilities presentations according to NA handbooks, service guidelines, and PR committee orientation instructions.
- B.** Informs panel leader as soon as possible when unable to attend meeting.
- C.** Adheres to all applicable rules of the facilities and procedures for that meeting.
- D.** Complete Resource pool information sheet, as required.

## **XI.** Elections

### **xi.** General

Elections for the PR committee Chairperson will be conducted by the ASC. Voting can be held at the PR committee level for a recommendation of a nominee to the ASC. All other committee positions will be elected at the PR committee level. Any participant may nominate an individual for election to PR service position who meets the qualifications of that position as outlined in these guidelines. Nominees must be present to be elected. A simple majority is required to elect service members. The PR chairperson can appoint, when necessary, any position under the responsibility of the chairperson.

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## **xii. Non-Compliance**

A PR service member may be removed from office for noncompliance via a vote at the PR committee meeting or from the ASC. A 2/3 vote in favor is required for removal, unless directed by the ASC. However, loss of abstinence or misappropriations of any NA property means immediate removal from a position.

### **A. Noncompliance is defined as:**

- a.** Loss of abstinence.
- b.** Failure to attend and/or submit a written report for two consecutive PR committee meetings or quarterly budget meetings.
- c.** Failure to attend three consecutive PR committee meetings.
- d.** Inability to meet the outlined qualifications of one's position.

### **B. Moratorium**

A six-month moratorium shall be required of PR committee member resigning or removed from their elected position prior to completion of their term unless they resigned in order to fill another position within the PR committee and/or ASC.

### **C. Terms of Service**

An elected PR committee member shall assume the duties of the office at the end of the meeting at which s/he was elected. In the event a PR committee member is unable to fulfill their term, the PR Chairperson shall appoint an interim member, with election for replacement to serve until the next regularly scheduled election for that position. Any PR committee member fulfilling an interim position shall be considered as having completed their term of service. No individual shall hold more than one PR committee position at any given time.

### **D. PR committee Admin positions shall be elected monthly as follows:**

- a.** February PR committee Chair, PR committee Vice-Chair.
- b.** March Public Relations Coordinator, Phone line Coordinator.
- c.** June Secretary, Schedules Coordinator.
- d.** November H&I Coordinator, Panel Coordinator.

## **XII. Funding**

Budgets are simply a projection of anticipated monthly expenses for the upcoming year. Budgets will be determined by these guidelines. All funding needs in excess of the monthly PR committee budget, or annual budget update, shall to be brought before the ASC by the PR Chairperson for approval by the GSR's.

## **XIII. Amendment of Guidelines**

Any PR service member may propose an amendment to the guidelines at a regular monthly PR committee meeting. The proposal must be seconded and submitted in writing. A 2/3 majority of voting members present is necessary to amend. The amendment shall go into effect immediately upon its adoption, unless the motion to adopt specifies a time otherwise or relates to a required modification to the ASC guidelines (i.e. Items relating to officer positions and responsibilities). *Actual funding is the responsibility of the ASC.*

## **XIV. Grievance Procedure**

The first item of new business on the agenda at each regularly scheduled PR committee meeting

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will be any Grievances. This will be a standing item and is provided for anyone having a grievance against the PR committee or its members.

**i. Format**

To be heard, a grievance must:

- A.** Be submitted in writing.
- B.** Clearly state the problem.
- C.** Propose a resolution.

**ii. Discussion**

PR committee will discuss and attempt to resolve the grievance.

**iii. Review**

In the event, that the aggrieved party is not satisfied with the PR committee's actions, they may present the grievance to the ASC.

## **XV. Glossary of Terms and Acronyms**

GSR	Group Service Representative: Functions as a liaison between the meeting/group & the NOPASC.
H&I	Hospital & Institutions: A committee of the NOPASC, which conducts presentations in Hospitals, jails and other institutions.
LIT	Literature: A committee of the NOPASC that orders and distributes literature to the groups.
NAWS	Narcotics Anonymous World Service committee: The International office of Narcotics Anonymous located in Van Nuys, CA.
PI	Public Information: A committee of the NOPASC, which provides presentations to outside agencies and groups about what NA is and where to find us by doing public outreach.
PNW	Pacific Northwest Convention of Narcotics Anonymous: The oldest convention on the West coast. Held within a 3 region area in the late fall of each year.
PR	Public Relations committee: The NOPASC committee responsible for carrying the message to professionals, facilities and potential new members via H& I Panels, PI Presentations, Phone line, 12 Step activities and Special Projects.
RD	Regional Delegate: Takes our regional conscience to the WSC.
RCM	Regional Committee Member: Takes our Area conscience to the Regional Service Committee.
RSC	Regional Service Committee: A committee that is comprised of different Area Groups that meets quarterly to provide NA service at a regional level.
C&E	Regional Conventions & Events committee: This is a regional committee responsible for organizing and signing contracts for large regional conventions.
NOPASC	North Olympic Peninsula Area Service Committee: Also know as the Area Service Committee (ASC) and described within this guide.
WCNA	World Convention of Narcotics Anonymous: Generally held every other year on the 1st weekend of September.
WNIRCNA	Washington Northern Regional Convention of Narcotics Anonymous: (wi-nurk'-nuh): Our annual regional convention, held in the spring of each year.
WNIR	Washington-Northern Idaho Region: Made up of the North Olympic Peninsula Area, South King County Area, Everett Area, and approximately 14 other Area

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throughout Washington and Northern Idaho.

**WSO** World Service Office: The International office of Narcotics Anonymous responsible for literature orders and other various NA approved publications. Basically the WSO is the headquarters for NA.

**WSC** World Service Conference: A week long business meeting of World Service and administrative committees that conduct business for NA at the World Level – not to be confused with the World Service Convention, which is held every two years.



# ANTI-THEFT POLICY

## Addendum "A"

The Eleventh Concept establishes the sole absolute priority for use of NA funds, which is to carry the message. The Twelve Concepts for NA Service give the NOPASC a mandate from the NA Groups that calls for total financial accountability. With this in mind, any misuse of funds by NOPASC Trusted Servants cannot be tolerated.

Should any NOPASC member or subcommittee member be found to have allegedly misappropriated (stolen), or misused NOPASC funds and/or other assets, and evidence can be presented to demonstrate the alleged theft or misuse, the Chairperson of the NOPASC, immediately upon calling the NOPASC meeting to order, must fully disclose the alleged misuse of funds and/or other assets and the individual(s) involved. Any member accused of misuse of funds and/or other assets may exercise their Tenth Concept right to redress at this time. For the purpose of this document, the 'term misuse of funds' will be defined as "using funds in a manner clearly different than the inherent purpose or function outlined in the motion passed to appropriate them".

### A. NOPASC ACTION:

The NOPASC, once informed of the alleged misuse of funds and/or other assets, may suspend the participation of individual(s) involved "with cause" by a two-thirds (2/3) vote, pending investigation and resolution. Having been found to have misappropriated or misused funds and/or other assets, said individual(s)' participation is immediately terminated, with cause, by a two-thirds (2/3) vote. Additionally, any member removed by the NOPASC for misappropriation or misuse of funds and/or other assets may not hold an elected seat on the NOPASC or its subcommittees for a period of two (2) years.

### B. RESTITUTION:

1. Individuals removed for misappropriation or misuse of funds and/or other assets, are expected to make full restitution of all NOPASC funds. Should a member removed for misuse of funds fail to make full restitution said member may be subject to criminal and/or civil prosecution by the NOPASC.
2. NOPASC Members shall be requested to sign agreements of financial responsibility.
3. Procedure for Resolution:
  - a. A thorough review of all books and financial records shall be performed by the Treasurer, Chairperson, and one voting member of the NOPASC to determine the magnitude of any misappropriation of funds. If the Treasurer is the member responsible for the issue, the Assistant Treasurer will perform the duties of the Treasurer.
  - b. Then a meeting will be scheduled, assuring that the individual(s) who allegedly misappropriated or misused funds and/or other assets, is/are informed of the meeting and given the opportunity to present his or her point of view. After all sides have been heard, a break in the meeting format shall take place to allow all present time to get in touch with their own Higher Power and focus on spiritual principles, before coming back to decide the best course of action.
  - c. If the individual admits to the theft and agrees to pay back the funds and/or other assets, a restitution agreement can be developed that will outline the repayment amount and timeframe (i.e. \$xx per month for xx months). The individual shall be notified in said agreement that if the restitution agreement is not adhered to, the intent is to take legal action based on the signed and witnessed restitution agreement.
  - d. A report about the situation shall be published in the NOPASC minutes, and regular reports on the status of the restitution agreement shall be published until the agreement is satisfied. Protecting the identity of the person involved is secondary to being accountable to the fellowship for its funds and ensuring that the person is not put in a position where he or she may do further harm, is the fellowships primary intent.
  - e. If the individual refuses to repay the money, or agrees to a plan but does not follow through with the agreement, or if the person has disappeared, it may be appropriate to take legal action. The decision to take legal action is an option that does not compromise traditions or spiritual principles, but it should be **our last resort, opted for only when everything else has been tried.** We strongly suggest that the decision to prosecute be thoroughly explored before going ahead, using the NOPASC open sharing session, the Washington Northern Idaho Region, the NA World Board, and the Narcotics Anonymous World Services Incorporated as resources.
4. If legal action is pursued one or all of the following may occur:
  - a. A civil action may be filed against the individual(s) and a judgment for full restitution may be obtained.
  - b. The NOPASC may pursue a criminal prosecution of the individual(s) through the proper authorities.
    - i. The NOPASC Chairperson will preside over an ADHOC subcommittee formed specifically to deal with issues related to the litigation. That ADHOC subcommittee will have discretion to enlist the assistance of professionals if it is deemed necessary and funds are available.

**North Olympic Peninsula Area Service committee**  
**MEMORANDUM OF FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

***Addendum "B"***

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_, a trusted servant of the fellowship of the ASC agree to use properly and keep safe any money or other asset entrusted to me by the Fellowship of NA.

I agree to avoid mixing Fellowship money with my own money or the money of anyone else.

I agree to use Fellowship money or other assets only as directed by the Fellowship of NA.

I agree that if I misappropriate or misuse Fellowship money or other assets because of my personal negligence or dishonesty that I will accept full responsibility for their replacement.

I agree that as a trusted servant I serve as a volunteer and will not be paid for my work. When I complete my term of service or if I am removed from service I agree to promptly turn over any Fellowship money, assets, records or any other Fellowship property.

I have agreed to follow and adhere to the ASC Anti-Theft Policy.

Signed,

\_\_\_\_\_ (trusted servant) Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Witnessed by:

\_\_\_\_\_ (officer, ASC) Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

This document was created to implement the ASC Anti-Theft Policy and should be signed by all ASC Service Members (as defined in ASC guidelines) as well as all subcommittee treasurers and any members handling NA funds on behalf of the North Olympic Peninsula Area Service committee. Members who are standing for election to any position that would place them in a position to handle ASC funds should be asked if they are willing to sign this document as a condition of their service.

The North Olympic Peninsula Area Service committee has adopted guidelines and operational policies, which apply to and shall guide the conduct of NA Trusted Servants. Current copies of these documents are available on request.

List all non-consumable items (NA Property) being received (Use back if necessary):

## WORLD SERVICE BOARD OF TRUSTEES BULLETIN #30 (Excerpt)

### Theft of NA funds

#### Addendum "C"

##### **Safeguarding funds**

- It's our responsibility to prevent theft from happening in the first place.
- The very best safeguard against theft is to remove the opportunity to steal.

##### **Selecting trusted servants**

- Honesty, integrity, maturity, and stability, both in recovery and in personal finances, are but a few. Not only is it okay to ask members standing for election about their qualifications in these areas, it is irresponsible not to.
- Substantial clean time and financial stability should be required for positions where money is handled. Many NA communities have found it helpful to develop a list of questions regarding employment, service experience, experience with handling funds, and financial stability. These questions are then asked of all nominees as a matter of course, so that people do not feel singled out based on personalities.

##### **Responsible management**

- The guidelines for handling NA funds should include both recognized accounting practices and procedures that ensure the accountability of our trusted servants.
- The Treasurer's Handbook is an excellent resource for groups and service committees to use in instituting accounting procedures.
- All guidelines should include appropriate safeguards, such as monthly reporting, regular audits, two-signature checking accounts, and monthly reconciliation of original bank statements. For groups without checking accounts, many of these practices can still be incorporated into the handling of NA funds.
- It is critically important that all processes be monitored by another person: two people count receipts; two people make the bank deposit (and this should be done immediately, not the following day); two people reconcile the original bank statements; and most importantly, two people are always present when any funds are disbursed.
- Financial records should be readily available to other trusted servants.
- It is important to note that other assets, such as convention merchandise, literature, and office equipment, should be treated as carefully as money.
- Financial procedures need to be written into guidelines that require a review and signature of those responsible for handling funds before they are put into positions of responsibility. Members who know they will be held to standardized accounting and auditing procedures will most likely behave in a responsible manner.
- Include a statement that theft will not be tolerated, and outline the process that will be followed if a theft occurs. If you are unsure about how to write adequate financial guidelines, please contact the World Service Office for assistance.

##### **When safeguards fail**

- Our program of recovery provides every member with an opportunity to make amends. We are closest to the spiritual principles of our program when we begin to deal with a theft by encouraging the member who has stolen funds to make amends, which can then provide healing for all involved.
- The disappearance of NA funds should not be taken lightly or a service committee should not sit and passively wait for a member who has stolen funds to be moved to make amends. We instead encourage a process that is both responsible and spiritual, taking steps of increasing severity should they prove necessary.
- First of all, a thorough review of all books and financial records should be conducted to make sure the funds were actually misappropriated. How much? By whom? What failing in the accounting procedures and safeguards allowed this to happen?
- If it becomes clear that money has indeed been taken, the group or service committee should then schedule a meeting, making absolutely sure the individual(s) who took the money is informed of the meeting and given the opportunity to present his or her point of view. At this meeting, there should be a format that allows time for everyone involved to express their feelings and concerns. This allows everyone to give their input and may also allow a "defusing process" to occur. After all sides have been heard, a break in the meeting format is encouraged to allow all present enough time to get in touch with their own Higher Power and focus on spiritual principles, before coming back to decide the best course of action.
- If the individual admits to the theft and agrees to pay back the missing funds, a restitution agreement can be developed. Such an agreement can include regular payments at any interval acceptable to all involved, though it is best not to drag out the process unnecessarily. Most agreements specify regular weekly or monthly payments until the full amount is repaid. We strongly suggest drafting a legally binding document, utilizing legal advice if possible, and having it signed and witnessed. Let the individual know that if the restitution agreement is not adhered to, you intend to take legal action based on the signed and witnessed restitution agreement.
- A report about the situation should be published, and regular reports on the status of the restitution agreement should be published until the agreement is satisfied. Protecting the identity of the person involved is secondary to being accountable to the fellowship for its funds and ensuring that the person is not put in a position where he or she may do further harm.
- Again balancing spirituality with responsibility, we have found that it is best to remove the individual from his or her service position, and not consider the person for another position until he or she has dealt with the issue through the process of the steps.
- If the individual does not appear at the special meeting, you will need to ensure that every effort to contact the person has been made. Use registered mail and send a letter explaining that an audit of financial records has been performed, that facts show the individual is responsible for missing money, that repayment is expected, and what the consequences will be if the individual does not respond to the letter. Copies of the letter should be put in a safe place for further reference. This may seem severe, but if the previous steps have been taken without result, sometimes something this harsh is the impetus that encourages the individual to make restitution.
- If the individual refuses to repay the money, or agrees to a plan but does not follow through with the agreement, or if the person has disappeared, it may be appropriate to take legal action. The decision to take legal action is an option that does not compromise traditions or spiritual principles, but it should be our last resort, opted for only when everything else has been tried. We strongly suggest that the decision to prosecute be thoroughly explored before going ahead, using area and regional service committees, and world services as resources.

**Resolution and recovery** The safeguards recommended in this bulletin not only protect our funds, but protect us from our disease