

## **Appendix C            Utah Area Assembly/Workshop Guidelines**

*The primary purpose of the Utah Area Service Structure is to help carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous. Area Service Events help to fulfill this primary purpose by providing a forum to carry out the service work of the Utah Area and by providing a setting in which members of the fellowship can meet and share their experience with each other.*

### **Purpose**

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide a resource for hosting committees which contains the accumulated experience of Utah and other areas in hosting area events, and the ongoing conscience of the Utah Area as to how area events are best organized and carried out. These guidelines are intended to be used in conjunction with the "AA Guidelines - Conferences and Conventions".

### **Selection of Location**

At each Area service event DCM's or DCMC's of districts willing to host that event in the future submit an oral bid to the body assembled two years in advance for assemblies and one year in advance for workshops and area committee meetings. In the event there are two or more bids a vote by show of hands is taken. In the case of more than two bids, the district receiving the lowest number of votes is dropped following each vote until one district receives a simple majority of the votes cast.

### **Scheduling of Activities**

All Area activities are to be scheduled to coincide with the dates and times listed in Section 2.0 of the Area Guidelines. Any deviation from the dates listed in the guidelines for holding Area Assemblies, Workshops, and Committee Meetings must have the prior approval of the Area Committee and notification of the change made available as soon as possible prior to the event.

### **Selection of Chair and Co-Chair**

The District Committee of the district selected to host an event selects a chair and co-chair for the activity and forwards those names to the Area Committee as soon as possible. Experience shared by past committees suggests that whenever possible the chairperson of the last activity hosted by the district be selected as the co-chair of the present committee to act in an advisory capacity.

### **Financial**

The Area may advance to a District the start up funds requested by its hosting committee up to the amount allocated for that purpose in the current year's budget. All advances exceeding this amount shall require approval of the Area Committee. All advances will be forwarded to the chairperson of the host committee. The district committee of the district hosting the event shall be responsible to see that the advance money--adjusted by the gain or loss from the event is returned to the Area Treasurer within 60 days following the activity. Experience suggests that all funds involved in hosting Area activities are best handled in a separate checking account bearing the name of the activity and requiring the signatures of two or more members of the hosting committee to withdraw funds.

**Hosting Committees** – Each district active in hosting area events will develop an organizational style that works best for them. Following is a list of typical hosting committee positions with a brief description of the responsibilities that go with each job. This list not intended to tell district hosting committees what they must do but to serve as a general guide to districts relatively new to hosting area events and may offer new ideas to those who have previously served on hosting committees.

**Area Convention/Agenda Chair** – This individual is a member of the Area Committee who serves as the communication link between the host committee and the Area Committee. The Area Convention/Agenda chair makes the hosting committee aware of the theme and discussion topics selected by the General Service Conference, assists in the preparation of agendas for area assemblies, workshops, and committee meetings, and provides assistance and guidance to host committees by sharing the knowledge gained from past experience found in the Utah Area Assembly/Convention Guidelines and “AA Guidelines – Conferences and Conventions”.

**Chairperson** – Experience has shown it is best if the chairperson is someone who has previously served on one or more host committees. Coordinates all aspects of planning and carrying out the activity, selects/recommends members to serve on the committee, makes all arrangements, reservations, etc. with the host facility, schedules and chairs planning meetings, coordinates the site, schedule, format, and initial funding of the activity with the area committee through the Area Convention/Agenda Chair. Along with the Area Convention /Agenda Chair and one Area Officer, signs all contractual agreements required to host the event. All contracts shall be in the name of the event, i.e., Utah Area Pre-Conference Assembly, and not in the name of Alcoholics Anonymous. The following wording should be requested for inclusion in all contracts with hotels: “In order to protect A.A.’s principle of anonymity that it (the hotel) will not use the list of A.A. hotel guests in conjunction with the words “Alcoholics Anonymous” or “A.A.” in any property, chain or outside marketing campaign. Makes interim and final reports to the Area Committee and is responsible for the Saturday speaker meeting including setting up and chairing the meeting.

**Co-Chair/Alternate Chair** – Serves as an advisor to the present committee (if this position is filled by the chairperson of a past committee), fills in for the chairperson when necessary, is responsible for the Friday evening meeting including setting up and chairing the meeting.

**Treasurer** – Responsible for all income and expenditures, sets up and maintains a separate account for the event, keeps all financial records, makes regular financial reports to the committee and a final report following the activity.

**Secretary** – Keeps all minutes of committee planning meetings, notifies committee members of scheduled meetings, assists chairperson in making final report, and turns in a copy to the Agenda/Assembly Chair and Area Archivist.

**Registration** - Sets up a P.O. box for mail in registration, responsible for keeping records of pre-registration, prepares registration packets and/or materials, coordinates on site registration during the event. Provides badges, ribbons, corsages and other appropriate courtesies for speakers and special guests.

**Program** - Works closely with the area liaison to determine what types of activities are to take place and the times allocated for each, prepares a printed program, suggests/selects speakers, panel members, moderators, etc., arranges travel and accommodations for guest participants as required, mails letters thanking participants following the activity. When a speaker is used at an Area service event, a strong effort should be made to suggest speakers who will include their experience, strength, and hope with regards to General Service and how this service has enhanced their sobriety.

**Hospitality** - Forms a committee to act as hosts, greeters, sources of information, etc., makes all arrangements for A.A. hospitality room including coffee, refreshments, hosts, etc. Enlists members to donate snacks, pastries, etc. when these are permitted to be brought in by the facility. Arranges local transportation for speakers and other special guests as needed.

**Publicity/Information** - Prepares and distributes all flyers and pre-registration forms, provides timely notification of the activity to the Grapevine, La Vina, Box 459, the area newsletter, and central office/\_ Intergroup newsletters, makes arrangements for media publicity when appropriate in the manner guided by our Traditions, ensures that A.A.'s anonymity statement is included in each meeting's format, makes all arrangements for the sale of souvenir items as directed by the host committee and in keeping with the Area Guidelines.

**Literature/Display** – Coordinates with the area literature chair, chairs of other area standing committees, and local central office/\_ Intergroup the sale and/or display of A.A. literature, works with the appropriate committee to make arrangements with the facility for adequate and functional display areas, tables, etc.

**Marathon Meetings** – As directed by the committee schedules and organizes continuous A.A. meetings held in conjunction with the activity, is responsible for selecting meeting topics, scheduling chairpersons, arranging for the coffee, and providing materials needed to conduct the meetings.

**Hotel/Facility** – Shares with the committee chairperson the duties and responsibilities of making arrangements with the host facility. Works with the Area Agenda/Assembly Chair to assure an adequate and dependable PA system is available.

**Gopher/Utility** – Has a good working knowledge of the responsibilities of each of the committee positions, assists or steps in when needed to ensure the work of the committee is carried out, may assume the responsibility for the Sunday morning meeting including set-up, clean-up, and chairing the meeting.

**Alanon/Alateen** - When Al-Anon activities are held in conjunction with A.A. events in the spirit of cooperation, experience has shown that it is helpful to invite a member of the Al-Anon planning committee to participate in the meetings of the A.A. host committee. When working together the "AA Guidelines - Relationship Between A.A. and Al-Anon" should be utilized. Responsibilities of shared meeting facility expenses should be clearly outlined upfront.

## **General Comments and Suggestions**

- It seems to be the consensus in Utah and in other areas that A.A. activities should be self-supporting. Registration fees are usually kept as reasonable as possible to allow greater participation. To encourage greater participation in all aspects of the event, it is suggested that general registration be required in order to participate in other activities such as banquets, dances, etc.
- In many instances districts, groups, or individuals donate registrations so individuals lacking the resources may attend.
- With rising costs some committees are seeking less expensive alternatives to using large hotels and holding banquets such as dessert bars, meeting in smaller groups in restaurants, etc. that still provide opportunities for fellowship.
- The selling of coffee mugs, tapes, and other non A.A. souvenirs and literature at area activities is often a source of controversy. In Areas where this practice is allowed there seems to be general agreement that the display and sale of non A.A. items be sufficiently set apart from the A.A. displays, literature, and registration in order to minimize any implied A.A. endorsement or affiliation.
- Raffles should not be allowed to interfere with A.A. service activities or disrupt the continuity of A.A. speaker meetings.
- Most committees have found best it to strictly adhere to the spirit of the Seventh Tradition declining donations of money, goods, or services from outside the fellowship.
- It is becoming increasingly important for hosting committees to be aware of and to provide for attendees with special needs.
- A recurring challenge of hosting committees is providing accommodation for members who smoke and those who do not. Smoking and non-smoking areas should be well marked and in strict compliance with the rules of the facility and existing laws. Areas in which smoking is allowed should be adequately supplied with ashtrays and cleaned on a regular basis.

## **Taping Guidelines**

- Area business meetings should be taped. The Area taping equipment should be used for Area business meetings, including panels and workshops. If a professional taper is already on-site, they may be used to tape the panels and workshops.
- If speakers are taped, it is the responsibility of the Hosting Committee. The Host Committee ensures that the taper has an understanding of AA's Twelve Traditions. Only open speaker meetings should be taped. The taper should be encouraged to use agreements/release forms, and the Hosting committee should oversee this process.
- A mutual agreement should be reached by the committee and the taper regarding the taper's compensation of service (room, mileage, meals, etc.) Well in advance of the event.

- A mutual agreement should be reached by the committee and the taper regarding what the taper sells or displays on-site.
- Experience shows that it is best to encourage speakers not to use full names in their talks. The strength of our anonymity tradition is reinforced by speakers who do not use their last names and by taping companies whose labels and catalogs do not identify speakers by last names, titles, service jobs, or descriptions.

#### **A.A. Activity Planning Schedule/Checklist**

- **12 - 24 months before** - Confirm the date and place of the activity with the Area Committee, reserve dates with the facility, select the activity chair and co-chair, select and line up guest speakers.
- **8 - 12 months before** - Select committee members, begin holding regular planning meetings, provide facility with general information. Sign contract with hotel or other facility (Area Officer, Area Assembly/Agenda Chair and Host Committee Chair sign).
- **6 months before** - Give hotel updated information as available, distribute preliminary flyers listing dates and location of activity, set up a separate checking account and P.O. box for the event.
- **4 months before** - Prepare a proposed budget, set registration prices, print and distribute registration forms, order materials and supplies not locally available, notify Grapevine and La Vina, Box 459, and Central Offices/Intergroup.
- **2 months before** - Go over final details with the hotel, work with the Area Assembly/Agenda Chairperson to complete the program and agenda, prepare the first draft of the program, do a second distribution of registration forms, recruit workers to help on each committee, confirm arrangements made with guest speakers, panelists, taper, music, coffee vendors, etc.
- **4 weeks before** - Have all signs, etc. printed, procure all needed materials and supplies. Sign final function sheets with facility.
- **2 weeks before** - Close mail in registration, prepare pre-registration lists, packets, and/or materials. meet with committee to go over final detail of assignments and to take care of any "loose ends". Print programs/schedules.
- **1 week before** - Have the committee meet at the hotel to become familiar with the layout of the facility, provide the hotel with a banquet estimate (if planned), check committee assignments and preparations.