



GUIDELINES OF THE MENDOCINO AREA PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

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In keeping with the spiritual nature of Narcotics Anonymous, our structure should always be one of service, never of government. (12th Concept for NA Service)

PURPOSE OF THE PUBLIC RELATIONS SERVICE COMMITTEE

This section defines our purpose—the reason we exist. Our purpose is based on NA’s 5th tradition, “Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry the message to the addict who still suffers,” and the 12th step, “we tried to carry the message to the addict who still suffers”. Everything we do in NA Service must be motivated by the desire to successfully carry the message of recovery— that an addict, any addict can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use, and find a new way to live. The Mendocino Area Public Relations Committee is the working body for our combined group service efforts, and it is directly accountable to the ASC and the groups it represents in its actions, “The final responsibility and authority for NA Services rests with the NA Groups.” (2nd Concept)

- 1.1** The name of this committee shall be the Mendocino Area Public Relations Committee of Narcotics Anonymous, hereafter referred to as PR.
- 1.2** PR is a standing sub-committee of the Mendocino Area Service Committee.
- 1.3** Our public relations committee’s purpose is to effectively communicate and demonstrate Narcotics Anonymous, ability to help addicts stop using drugs, lose the desire to use, and find a new way to live. This will be accomplished by coordinating the services we provide to maximize our ability to fulfill our primary purpose.
- 1.4** PR shall perform all functions historically performed by the Hospitals and Institutions Committee, and the Public Information Committee. It will utilize local, region, and world approved service handbooks and materials that are written for those committees.
- 1.5** PR shall comply in all its actions with the following documents in order of priority as listed below:
 1. The Twelve Traditions, Concepts, and Steps of Narcotics Anonymous
 2. The current guidelines of PR
 3. The current guidelines of the Area Service Committee
 4. A Guide to Local Services in NA, and NAWS approved service handbooks

PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETINGS & MEMBERSHIP

The PR meeting is a resource for groups and NA members interested in combining and coordinating efforts to reach the addict who still suffers, and improve NA's reputation as a viable program of recovery in our community. It is also an opportunity for any committee member to receive information on public relations related issues they would like guidance on, and for our committee members to report on the effectiveness as well as any needs they have to continue and improve the services we currently provide. PR establishes a time and place to meet that accommodates the needs of the groups and current or prospective committee members.

2.1 Business meetings shall be held at least once monthly, at a time and place designated by the membership. No business meeting shall last for more than one and one half hours, except when a decision to extend this time limit is made by the members present.

2.2 Any Narcotics Anonymous member or interested person may attend the PR meeting.

2.3 Any Narcotics Anonymous member will become a committee member by attending two consecutive PR meetings and allowed to vote at the 3rd PR meeting. The member will lose voting rights by missing two consecutive meetings without prior notification.

DECISION MAKING

As a spiritual body, we try to reach all decisions by consensus; we believe that a loving God's will is expressed through our group conscience (2nd Tradition). One of the reasons we try to achieve consensus is that it insures we follow our 9th Concept, "All elements of our service structure have the responsibility to carefully consider all viewpoints in their decision-making process." By carefully discussing and respectfully listening to all points of view we try to make sure this happens at PR. The reason all committee members are allowed to vote is the 7th concept, which states, "All members of a service body bear substantial responsibility for that body's decisions and should be allowed to fully participate in its decision-making processes."

3.1 All PR motions and decisions except elections will first be considered using consensus-based decision-making. For PR's purposes, the process for consensus-based decision-making allows for points of view to be heard and fairly considered within PR. The Chairperson has an opportunity to limit the pros and cons to three each due to time constraints.

3.2 Any PR member, except the Chair, is eligible to vote at nominations and elections.

3.3 Any PR member except the Chair can make or second a motion.

3.4 Any PR member may submit by written proposal an amendment to these guidelines, if passed; this written proposal will be kept by the Secretary to later reference if needed.

3.5 All committee members have one vote regardless of number of positions held.

ELECTIONS

In our election process we use the 4th concept, "Effective leadership is highly valued in Narcotics Anonymous. Leadership qualities should be carefully considered when selecting trusted servants." We trust that our committee's group conscience will select coordinators and officers best suited to fulfill the responsibilities of the positions.

4.1 Elections of all Officers and Resource Coordinators other than Chairperson and Panel Coordinators shall be held annually in February. The Chairperson is elected by the ASC however the committee is encouraged to submit a recommendation for Chairperson to the ASC, for their consideration.

4.2 Elections of all Panel Coordinators shall be held annually in February.

4.3 All terms of service are one year. In the event a member cannot complete his or her term of service, the Chairperson shall appoint someone to fill the vacancy until the next regularly scheduled election. Terms begin at the end of the meeting where the election was held.

4.4 The officers of PR are Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Secretary. They shall perform their duties as described in these guidelines and in other approved service handbooks.

4.5 The Resource Coordinators for PR are Literature Coordinator, Phonenumber Coordinator, Website Coordinator and Panel Coordinators. They shall perform their duties as described in these guidelines and in other approved service handbooks.

4.6 No member of the committee can serve in more than one elected administrative staff position simultaneously.

4.7 Any member or officer of the committee can serve as any Resource Coordinator or panel leader regardless of other positions held.

4.8 During elections nominees shall leave the room following all discussion and prior to voting.

4.9 Elections will be decided by a simple majority. In the case of more than two candidates for a position where no candidate receives a majority vote, the two candidates receiving the most votes will have a second election between only those two candidates.

4.10 A PR trusted servant may be removed from their office for non-compliance. If a member who is the subject of a motion to be removed from office is present they can address the concerns of their fulfillment of their service responsibilities raised by the maker of the motion. If they are not present, a 2/3 vote is needed. Non-compliance includes failure to fulfill the commitment but is not limited to:

- a. Loss of abstinence from drugs
- b. Failing to perform the duties of the position
- c. Two consecutively missed PR meetings without prior notice

PUBLIC RELATIONS PLAN

In order to insure the best use of our limited resources, it is essential to use good planning in our public relations efforts. All proposed projects will be submitted to the committee using the public relations planning form contained in these guidelines. Using this form allows the committee to thoroughly analyze and prioritize each proposed project. The planning form helps insure all our communications and interactions are professional, consistent and mutually beneficial.

5.1 All proposed PR action plans will be submitted on the planning form included in these guidelines.

5.2 Each plan will be reviewed and either:

- a. Approved
- b. Approved when resources are available.
- c. Referred to ASC with a recommendation for approval.
- d. Rejected by the PR committee.

In the event the plan potentially significantly affects the groups and/or area as a whole, the plan will be referred to the ASC with recommendation for approval.

5.3 All planning forms will be kept by the secretary.

SPECIAL RULES

From time to time PR will make special rules to assist in carrying out its projects. Those that are permanent are recorded in this section of the guidelines.

6.1 Only NA approved literature will be used in PR projects, meetings, presentations, etc.

6.2 In facilities where our meetings will consist of only men or only women, the NAWs literature (Hospitals & Institutions Handbook pg 7) feels strongly that only same-sex Narcotics Anonymous members should participate. So, for our PR members, if conducting a meeting in a facility where only men or only women will participate the NA members bringing the meeting in will be of the same-sex.

TRUSTED SERVANTS

“For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as he may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.” (2nd tradition). Being of service to the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous is recognized as a valuable tool for the addict seeking recovery. This section lists many of the basic responsibilities for those members who serve as a PR trusted servant. Our groups have shown their trust in these individuals by, “delegating to the service structure the authority necessary to fulfill the responsibilities assigned to it.” (3rd Concept). Once we select them, we trust our trusted servants.

7.1 Chairperson

- a.** 2 years minimum clean time and 1 year previous PR or other relevant service experience.
- b.** Coordinates all public relations efforts.
- c.** Presides at all regular, and special subcommittee meetings.
- d.** Makes regular reports to ASC on the status of all proposed, current or completed plans.
- e.** Represents PR at the regular meeting of the ASC.
- f.** Attend all regional subcommittee meetings.
- g.** If elected officer or coordinator position is vacant, insures the duties of that position are fulfilled.
- h.** Familiarity with all public relations related NAWS approved handbooks.
- i.** Facilitate or appoint someone to facilitate PR Committee Orientations.
- j.** Responsible for all funds generated by PR events
- k.** If unable to attend PR meeting, send a written report.

7.2 Vice Chairperson

- a.** 18 months minimum clean time and 6 months prior PR or related service.
- b.** In absence of the chairperson assumes all those responsibilities normally carried out by the chairperson until the ASC has an election for that position.
- c.** Works closely with the chairperson.
- d.** Attends the regular meetings of the PR and ASC.
- e.** Works with panel leaders to assure that volunteers are placed as panel members.
- f.** Attend all regional subcommittee meetings.
- g.** If elected officer or coordinator position is vacant, insures the duties of that position are fulfilled.
- h.** Familiarity with all public relations related NAWS approved handbooks.
- i.** Can assist with PR Committee Orientations.
- j.** If unable to attend PR meeting, send a written report.

7.3 Secretary

- a.** 1 year minimum clean time and 3 months prior PR or related service.
- b.** Keeps a complete record in the form of minutes of every PR meeting.
- c.** Maintain records of attendance at PR meeting.
- d.** Sends letters or makes calls to committee members about PR business.
- e.** Prepares written committee correspondence.
- f.** Maintains files of all PR plans, minutes and correspondence.
- g.** Maintains record of name and contact information for committee members and oriented members.
- h.** If unable to attend PR meeting, send a written report.

7.4 Literature Coordinator

- a.** 1 year minimum clean time.
- b.** Coordinates literature needs for all public relations activities.
- c.** Submits and obtains orders from ASC literature
- d.** Makes monthly written literature report to PR.
- e.** Familiarity with committee literature policies.
- f.** Ensures dispensation of literature to the facilities we serve
- g.** Attend monthly PR subcommittee meeting.
- h.** If unable to attend PR meeting, send a written report

7.5 Website Coordinator

- a.** 1 year minimum clean time.
- b.** Attend monthly PR subcommittee meeting.
- c.** Coordinates all website activities.
- d.** Makes monthly written report to PR on the status of the website.
- e.** Previous public information or other relevant service experience.
- f.** Technical ability to update website.
- g.** Familiarity with all internet and website related NAWS handbooks.
- h.** If unable to attend PR meeting, send a written report

7.6 Phone line Coordinator

- a.** 1 year minimum clean time.
- b.** Attend monthly PR subcommittee meeting.
- c.** Coordinates all phone line activities including training and workshops
- d.** Makes monthly written report to PR on the status of all completed and ongoing phone line plans.
- e.** Previous public relations or other relevant service experience.
- f.** Can assist with PR Committee Orientations.
- g.** Familiarity with all phone line related NAWS handbooks.
- h.** If unable to attend PR meeting, send a written report

7.7 Panel Leaders

- a.** 1 year minimum clean time and 6 months prior PR or related experience.
- b.** Attend monthly PR subcommittee meeting.
- c.** Keeps in contact and works with PR officers and panel members for the meeting/presentations for which he/she is a leader.
- d.** Makes monthly written report to PR on the status of meeting.
- e.** Insures panel is filled for meetings for which he/she is a leader.
- f.** Keep panel members informed of facility rules and policies.
- g.** Go over “Do’s and Don’ts” with panel members
- h.** Keeps updated lists of panel members for their facility and makes sure that the PR Chair has a copy of the updated list.
- i.** Fills out contact information for the facility, updates as necessary, and makes sure that the PR Chair has a copy of this information also.
- j.** Conducts panel meetings/presentations in facility served according to NA handbooks and service guidelines.
- k.** Informs PR Chair as soon as possible when unable to conduct meeting.
- l.** Familiarity with all H&I related NAWs handbooks.
- m.** Pickup and distribute literature for facility at PR meeting
- n.** Probation and parole status subject to facility’s rules
- o.** Panel leaders are responsible for training and orientation of all new panel members and if not capable then delegate an experienced member to do so.
- p.** If unable to attend PR meeting, send a written report.

7.8 Panel Member

- a.** 6 months minimum clean time or to be guided by the rules of the facility.
- b.** Participates in an active role in meeting/presentations in facility served according to NA handbooks and service guidelines.
- c.** Informs panel leader as soon as possible when unable to attend meeting.
- d.** Adheres to all applicable rules of the facilities and procedures for that meeting.
- e.** Go over “Do’s and Don’ts” with panel leader.
- f.** Probation and parole status will be guided by the rules of the facility.

Appendix A
Mendocino Area PR Planning Form

Name of plan: _____

Is this plan one time or recurring? _____ If recurring, how frequent? _____

Describe plan: _____

NA member responsible to communicate with public contact: _____

Public contact name and phone: _____

Did public contact request this plan from NA? _____ If yes, when? _____

Is ongoing contact necessary or recommended? _____ If yes, how frequently and for what purpose? _____

What human resources are needed? (for example how many people are needed? How often are they needed? Are there clean-time or orientation requirements? Are any special skills, abilities or experience needed?) _____

Is NA literature needed? _____ If so, what: _____

_____ Lit. Cost: _____

Are there specific project resources other than literature (such as a meeting room or microphone) needed? If so, what are they and what are the financial costs? _____

Does the public contact or facility have any special rules or conditions for this plan? _____

Does the plan adhere to NA's traditions and concepts? _____

How does this project specifically fulfill NA's primary purpose? _____

Is any special research or planning needed to implement this plan? _____

If so, what? _____

Are there any special considerations of dress or language which will help our message be better received? _____

Should this plan be referred to the Area and/or Groups for their approval? _____

Total approximate cost: _____ **Total approximate hours:** _____

PLAN STATUS: ___ **APPROVED** ___ **APPROVED WHEN RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE**
___ **REJECTED** ___ **REFERRED TO AREA WITH RECOMMENDATION TO APPROVE**

RESOURCE COORDINATOR ASSIGNED TO REPORT ON PLAN TO PR: _____

APPENDIX B

Public Relations Committee Orientation Format

1. Open with prayer of choice (serenity prayer, 3rd step prayer, etc.)
2. Welcome
3. Introductions
4. Introduce Mendocino Area Public Relation Committee and distribute PR Committee Guidelines.
5. Introduce Public Relations Handbook and distribute Chapter 2 'Core Principles & Philosophies' handout
6. Introduce H&I handbook and distribute 'Sample Panel Member Orientation' handout.
7. Introduce Phonenumber handbook and distribute 'Phonenumber Flow Chart' handout
8. Distribute Public Information FAQ (frequently asked questions) handout.
9. Distribute current PR Committee Contact sheet.
10. Distribute current Area Schedule
11. Questions and Answers
12. Close with prayer of choice (serenity prayer, 3rd step prayer, etc.)