

# 2019 Tri-County Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous Bylaws

## **ARTICLE I - NAME**

The name of this organization shall be the Tri-County Intergroup (IG) of Overeaters Anonymous, a land-based intergroup. The Tri-County IG of Overeaters Anonymous is composed of OA meetings within Johnson, Parker, and Tarrant counties.

## **ARTICLE II - PURPOSE**

### **Section A - Purpose**

The primary purpose of Tri-County IG of Overeaters Anonymous (OA) is to carry the message of recovery to those with the problem of eating compulsively, by fostering the practice of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of OA, guided by the Twelve Concepts of OA Service; and to serve and represent member groups. This IG is in compliance with, and qualifies as an exempt organization under Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 as amended (or the similar provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), without profit to any member. This IG will submit a copy of these Bylaws to the World Service Office (WSO) whenever it is updated or revised.

### **Section B - The Twelve Steps**

The Twelve Steps are suggested for recovery in the Fellowship of Overeaters Anonymous. They are as follows:

- 1) We admitted we were powerless over food--that our lives had become unmanageable.
- 2) Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
- 3) Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*.
- 4) Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
- 5) Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
- 6) Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
- 7) Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
- 8) Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
- 9) Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
- 10) Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
- 11) Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we Understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry it out.
- 12) Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to compulsive overeaters and to practice these principles in all of our affairs.

### **Section C - The Twelve Traditions**

The Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous are:

- 1) Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon OA unity.
- 2) 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.
- 3) The only requirement for OA membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively.

- 4) Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or OA as a whole.
- 5) Each group has but one primary purpose--to carry its message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers.
- 6) An OA group ought never endorse, finance or lend the OA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary goal.
- 7) Every OA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
- 8) Overeaters Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
- 9) OA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
- 10) Overeaters Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence, the OA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
- 11) Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, television, and other public media of communication.
- 12) Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all these Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

## **Section D - The Twelve Concepts**

The Twelve Concepts of OA Service are:

- 1) The ultimate responsibility and authority for OA world services reside in the collective conscience of our whole fellowship.
- 2) The OA groups have delegated to World Service Business Conference the active maintenance of our world services; thus, World Service Business Conference is the voice, authority, and effective conscience of OA as a whole.
- 3) The right of decision, based on trust, makes effective leadership possible.
- 4) The right of participation ensures equality of opportunity for all in the decision-making process.
- 5) Individuals have the right of appeal and petition in order to ensure that their opinions and personal grievances will be carefully considered.
- 6) The World Service Business Conference has entrusted the Board of Trustees with the primary responsibility for the administration of Overeaters Anonymous.
- 7) The Board of Trustees has legal rights and responsibilities accorded to them by OA Bylaws, Subpart A; the rights and responsibilities of the World Service Business Conference are accorded to it by Tradition and by OA Bylaws, Subpart B.
- 8) The Board of Trustees has delegated to its Executive Committee the responsibility to administer the World Service Office (WSO).
- 9) Able, trusted servants, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are indispensable for effective functioning at all service levels.
- 10) Service responsibility is balanced by carefully defined service authority; therefore, duplication of efforts is avoided.
- 11) Trustee administration of the World Service Office should always be assisted by the best standing committees, executive, staffs, and consultants.
- 12) The spiritual foundation for OA service ensures that:
  - a) no OA committee or service body shall ever become the seat of perilous wealth or power;
  - b) sufficient operating funds, plus an ample reserve, shall be OA's prudent financial principle;
  - c) no OA member shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority;

- d) all important decisions shall be reached by discussion, vote and whenever possible, by substantial unanimity;
- e) no service action shall ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; and
- f) no OA service committee or service board shall ever perform any acts of government; and each shall always remain democratic in thought and action.

## **ARTICLE III - MEMBERS**

### **Section 1 - Membership**

Membership in the IG with voice and vote includes the following:

- A. The IG executive officers.
- B. Intergroup Representatives (IRs), which consists of one member from each group.
- C. World Service Business Conference Delegates.
- D. Region III Representatives.
- E. IG members not acting as IRs but elected or appointed to carry out specific duties, e.g., Public Information Chair.
- F. Visitors are welcome and are encouraged to participate in the discussion but are not allowed to vote.

### **Section 2 - Qualifications**

Qualifications of eligibility for group membership in an IG:

- A. Those groups, whether land-based or virtual, within the region or the geographic definition of IG that have formally registered with WSO and indicated their intention to belong to IG may be considered members.
- B. IG endorses the definition of an OA group in Overeaters Anonymous, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article V, Section 1, as written and as it may be amended by a future World Service Business Conference.
- C. These points shall define an OA group:
  - 1) As a group, they meet to practice the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, guided by the Twelve Concepts of OA Service.
  - 2) All who have the desire to stop eating compulsively are welcome in the group.
  - 3) No member is required to practice any actions in order to remain a member or to have a voice (share at a meeting).
  - 4) As a group they have no affiliation other than Overeaters Anonymous.
  - 5) It has affiliated as an Overeaters Anonymous group by registering with the World Service Office.

### **Section 3 - Intergroup Representatives**

The duties of the IR are to represent the group at IG meetings and to serve as a contact to carry communications between the IG and the represented group.

## **ARTICLE IV - THE INTERGROUP BOARD**

### **Section 1 - The IG Board**

- A. The IG Board includes the following executive officers: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer.
- B. The IG Board may also include other positions such as World Service Business Conference Delegates, Region III Representatives, and Committee Chairs.
- C. In the event the Chair of the IG Board should be unable to attend any meeting of the Board, the next highest ranking executive officer in attendance shall serve as Chair for that

meeting. The ranking of these officers shall be as follows:

- 1) Vice Chair
- 2) Treasurer
- 3) Secretary

D. The immediate past chair may serve as an ex-officio member of the IG Board for one year.

## **Section 2 - Nominations of the IG Board Executive Officers**

Nominations of executive officers of the IG Board may be made from the floor at the Fall IG Retreat. A nominating Committee may be formed at the discretion of the IG Board.

## **Section 3 - Qualifications for the IG Board**

To qualify for election to the IG Board an individual must:

- A. Be working the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of OA, guided by the Twelve Concepts of OA Service to the best of his/her ability.
- B. Have six (6) months of current abstinence except as follows (each person shall be the sole judge of his or her abstinence.) The definition of abstinence and recovery was updated in 2019, in WSBC Policy 1988b, as follows:
  - 1) Abstinence is the act of refraining from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors while working towards or maintaining a healthy body weight.  
Recovery: Removal of the need to engage in compulsive eating behaviors.  
Spiritual, emotional and physical recovery is achieved through working and living the Overeaters Anonymous Twelve Step program.
  - 2) World Service Business Conference Delegates must comply with the abstinence and length of service requirements in the OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article X, Section 3c1.
  - 3) Region III Representatives must comply with the abstinence and length of service as specified in Region III Bylaws.
- C. Be a regular member of an affiliated group.
- D. Have attended a minimum of three (3) IG meetings.

## **Section 4 - Method of Election of IG Board Executive Officers**

- A. Elections shall be held annually at a meeting in the month of December specified for that purpose.
- B. Nominations may be made from the floor at the time of election.
- C. To be eligible for election to the board, a nominee must:
  - 1) Meet all qualifications as defined in Article IV, Section 3.
  - 2) Understand responsibilities of the position as defined in Article IV, Section 6, and as defined in the Intergroup job descriptions.
- D. Nominees must be present at the election meeting. For election, the candidate must receive a simple majority of votes cast.
- E. Nominees must have agreed to serve.

## **Section 5 - Term of Office**

- A. Board members shall be elected to serve for a period of one (1) year. The exceptions are the World Service Business Conference Delegate(s)/Alternate and Region Representative(s)/Alternate, who may be elected for a two (2) year term.
  - 1) Newly elected officers shall begin service at the Intergroup meeting in the month of January.
- B. Board members shall serve no more than two (2) consecutive terms in the same office.
- C. After an interval of one (1) year, a member may again be eligible for election to their prior office.

## **Section 6 - Responsibilities of the IG Board Members**

- A. Serve as guardians of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, guided by the Twelve Concepts of OA Service with respect to the functions of the IG.
- B. Perform the duties of their offices in accordance with IG policies and procedures.
- C. Serve as guardians of IG funds; participate in an annual financial audit.
- D. Provide a forum for the interchange of ideas and information among member groups.

## **Section 7 - Vacancies and Resignations**

- A. A Board member may be removed from his/her position after a finding of cause as determined by a majority of the executive officers and recorded in the IG minutes of a regular meeting or a special meeting announced for that purpose.
- B. Any Board member may resign at any time for any reason by giving the Chair of the IG written notice.

## **Section 8 - Filling of Vacancies**

- A. Vacancies shall be filled by a majority vote of the board at the next meeting or special meeting of IG announced for that purpose after the vacancy occurs. Persons chosen to fill the vacancies shall serve for the remainder of the unexpired term.
- B. A person chosen to fill any vacancy on the IG Board shall meet the qualifications as defined in Article IV, Section 3.

# **ARTICLE V - MEETINGS**

## **Section 1 - Regular Meetings**

The IG will meet at a time and place designated by a majority of the voting members present at the January meeting for the remainder of the current year through January of the following year.

## **Section 2 - Annual Meetings**

An annual meeting shall be held in the month of December for the election of executive officers. The chosen date must be at least 70 days prior to the World Service Business Conference (WSBC) allowing adequate time for election of the WSBC Delegate(s).

## **Section 3 - Special Meetings**

A special meeting may be called at any time by a majority vote of the IG Board, or by a quorum of IG members, providing sufficient notice is given to the member groups and Board members.

## **Section 4 - Meeting by Virtual Conference**

Members of the IG may participate in a meeting through use of electronic means, so long as all members participating in such meeting can hear one another and have a way to participate in any voting. Participation by IG members in a meeting in the manner provided in this Section constitutes presence in person at such meeting.

## **Section 5 - Method of Notification**

The IG will provide at least five (5) days' notice to each member group.

## **Section 6 - Quorum**

The quorum for voting purposes shall be a simple majority of those voting members in attendance.

### **Section 7 - Meeting Procedure**

The Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, and the Twelve Concepts of OA Service shall be read at the beginning of each IG meeting.

## **ARTICLE VI - SOURCE OF FUNDS**

### **Section 1 - Source of Funds**

- A. Voluntary contributions of the member groups shall be the primary source of funds.
- B. Secondary source of income may be such occasional projects or activities as may be authorized by the IG according to Tradition Six.
- C. The IG may accept donations from OA members, conforming to the general practice of OA.
- D. The maximum allowable annual donation to the Intergroup by OA members is to be limited to an amount set by vote of the Intergroup and listed in the Intergroup policy manual. *(Note: The limit for WSO is currently five thousand dollars (\$5,000), subject to change by the Board of Trustees.)*
- E. The acceptance of requests from outside parties or donation to any outside parties is prohibited. Monetary bequests from persons via their will can be unlimited.
- F. The IG shall not accept the responsibility for trusteeship over, or enter into the distribution or allocation of, funds set up outside of OA.

### **Section 2 - Prudent Reserve**

The IG Treasurer will maintain a prudent reserve of three (3) months' expenses to cover expected operational needs. Excess funds will be donated for OA service bodies as determined by the IG.

## **ARTICLE VII - COMMITTEES**

The IG Board may establish committees as are needed for the welfare and operation of IG. Each Committee is responsible to the IG Board.

## **ARTICLE VIII - PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE**

The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern this IG in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws, the Overeaters Anonymous, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B or any special rules of order this IG may adopt.

## **ARTICLE IX- AMENDMENTS TO THESE BYLAWS**

### **Section 1 - Amending the Bylaws**

These IG bylaws, with the exception of Article II, Sections B, C, and D, may be amended at any time by a two-thirds vote of the IRs and board members present at any regular or special meeting of the IG, provided a copy of the proposed amendment(s) has been submitted in writing and received by each group affiliated with this Intergroup and approved by group conscience at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting in which action is to be taken on the

amendment(s). The notice of the group conscience with the date and action taken will be submitted in writing to the IG Chair.

## **Section 2 - Forwarding Recommended Bylaws to World Service Office**

Once all affiliated groups have reported their group conscience action to the Chair, the IG Board will submit a clean copy of the recommended changes along with a memo to WSO signed by the executive officers, indicating the date that group conscience of the IG Board to recommend the changes submitted. WSO will review the submitted request for compliance with OA, Inc., Bylaws, Subpart B, and, if the changes are consistent, will forward the recommendation to the Region III Trustee. In the event that the recommended changes are not consistent, the IG will be notified in writing of the inconsistency so that we can change our recommendation. Any substantive change to our recommendation will have to go back to the affiliated groups for group conscience again and steps repeat.

## **Section 3 - Amended Bylaws are forwarded to Region III Trustee**

The Trustee will review the recommended changes which have been approved as consistent with OA, Inc., Bylaws, Subpart B, for consistency with Region III Bylaws. If not consistent, the Trustee will return the recommendations with written notice of the inconsistency so we can change our recommendation. If the change is substantive, the IG will have to go back to the affiliated groups for group conscience and steps repeat, except the Trustee will have informed WSO of his/her recommendation so reapproval by WSO won't be required. With approval by the Trustee, the amended Bylaws are retained on file at WSO and by IG.

## **Section 4 - The Twelve Steps, 12 Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of OA Service may not be Changed at the IG Level**

The Intergroup may not make amendments to the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of OA, or the Twelve Concepts of OA Service, except as per OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article XIV, Section 1.

### **Article XIV – Bylaw Amendments, Section 1 – Procedure**

*Subpart B of these bylaws may be amended as follows:*

- d) Except as otherwise specified in these bylaws, proposed amendments to OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B may only be adopted by a two-thirds vote of the delegates present and voting provided a quorum is present at WSBC.*
- e) Amendments to Article I (Twelve Steps) and Article II (Twelve Traditions) of Subpart B of these bylaws may only be adopted if, in addition to d) above, they are ratified by three-fourths of the registered Overeaters Anonymous groups responding within six months of notification, provided at least 55 percent of the registered groups have responded.*

## **ARTICLE X - MAJOR POLICY MATTERS**

- A. Matters that affect this IG and/or groups within its service area shall be referred to the Board of this IG.
- B. Matters, which relate to OA as a whole, which affect Subpart A of the Bylaws of Overeaters Anonymous, Inc., shall be referred to the Board of Trustees.
- C. Matters which affect Subpart B of the Bylaws of Overeaters Anonymous, Inc., or which relate to the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts of OA Service shall be referred to the World Service Business Conference.

## **ARTICLE XI - DISSOLUTION**

### **Section 1 - Deregistration**

In order to deregister, an IG must submit a written notice to the World Service Office, Region III Chair and Region III Trustee.

### **Section 2 - Disbursal of Funds**

Upon the dissolution of this body, after paying or adequately providing for its debts and obligations, the remaining assets shall be distributed according to Tradition Six, which guides us to disburse funds only to other OA service bodies. Such distribution shall be made to the World Service Office of Overeaters Anonymous, and/or Region III, and/or another registered OA service body. If no registered OA service body exists to which the assets can be transferred, distribution shall be made to a nonprofit fund, association, foundation or corporation, which is organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational, and/or scientific purposes and which complies with applicable laws. For example, such organizations or entities within the USA must comply with Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code.

### **Section 3 - Final Disbursal**

No part of the net earnings of this association shall ever inure to or be used for the benefit of, or be distributed to, its members, trustees, officers or other private persons, except that the association shall be empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payment and distribution in furtherance of the express purposes for which it is formed.

## **ARTICLE XII - SAVING CLAUSE**

It is hereby intended that if, for any reason, a portion of these Bylaws is not adopted or ratified, or is subsequently declared invalid, the remaining portion of these Bylaws shall not fail as a result of the partial failure, but shall continue in force and effect, as if no invalidity occurred.

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# 2019 Tri-County Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous Bylaws

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