

Debbie P., Chairperson

Policy statements are interpretations of our basic guides: the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts of Service. They help clarify how a Tradition or Concept might apply to a new or confusing situation that arises in Al-Anon or Alateen. Changes and additions to the Policy Digest are made only as our circumstances and growth require, since anticipating and including every specific situation would be impossible.

The purpose of the update sent each quarter by the Policy Committee Chairperson is to report progress and provide information on the following:

- Topics that are generated by the fellowship and discussed by the Policy Committee regarding issues or concerns that need clarification or interpretation in consideration of the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts of Service.
- Progress of work being completed by Policy Committee work groups and task and thought forces.
- Policy motions to be presented to the World Service Conference (WSC).
- Policy motions passed by the WSC.

The Policy Committee meeting occurs quarterly prior to the Board of Trustees meeting. The Policy Committee met virtually on October 18th, 2024.

2024-2025 Concept Study Task Force

The Concept Study Task Force presented the second installment of the Policy Committee Concept Study, which offers Policy members the opportunity to study the Concepts together throughout this year. The October session focused on Concepts Four, Five, and Six. Members appreciated and valued the opportunity to explore the Concepts as a group, particularly in the context of their world service responsibilities.

“Local Services – Autonomy of Groups” Task Force

This Task Force has carried over several years and has been charged with considering the text of the “Local Services” section of the Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies. The Task Force was now specifically charged with considering the feedback from the previous discussions on language and placement of the remaining “Autonomy of Groups” section of the Policy Digest.

The Task Force recommended, and the Policy Committee agreed, that the “Autonomy of Groups” section contained an important interpretation of our Traditions that needed to remain in the Policy Digest. The Task Force also recommended including language about meeting list publishing policies which have been implemented since this section was last updated. After discussion, the Policy Committee approved the Task Force’s recommendations to bring the revised text to the 2025 WSC for consideration following Board approval.

AI-Anon Members who are also members of A.A. Thought Force

As a follow up on a previous Policy Committee conversation regarding this Policy, a Thought Force was formed to engage the Committee members in a legacy-based conversation on the topic. The conversation included examining the question of whether the Policy applies to those who are also past members of Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.). Since it had been several years since the original conversation, the Policy Committee began by considering and confirming the current Policy. Additionally, we concluded the Policy did not need to be changed to include past A.A. membership.

Following the discussion, the Policy Committee recommended that the Board of Trustees consider revising its criteria for WSO Volunteers and At-Large members, since it currently restricts applications based on both current and past A.A. membership.

“Choosing a Group Name Policy” Task Force

At the 2024 World Service Conference (WSC) after much consideration and thoughtful discussion from the Policy Committee, the Board of Trustees, and the World Service Conference members, a substantial revision was made to the Choosing a Group’s Name Policy. The intent of this revision was to ensure the Policy clearly conveyed the principles found in our Traditions that group names, like AI-Anon Family Groups themselves, be welcoming for all AI-Anon members and potential members.

Immediately following the WSC approval, the World Service Office began its work determining how to apply this Policy. At the July 2024 Policy Committee meeting, Staff presented an implementation approach to the Policy Committee for consideration. The approach involved using the “Participants” search feature rather than names to help members find meetings where they may feel most comfortable. The Policy Committee instructed Staff to begin implementing the approach when new groups were registering and when registered groups were requesting a name change. The Policy Committee also agreed that while the Policy applies to established groups as well, the Committee needed to engage the WSC in further conversation regarding how to educate and engage the membership in the ongoing implementation of this Policy.

Since the 2024 WSC approved the amended “Choosing a Group’s Name” Policy, the World Service Office has received several member appeals. In the spirit of Concept Five, these appeals were forwarded to the Policy Committee. At the October Policy Committee meeting, the Policy Committee thoroughly reviewed all the appeals that had been received and held an in-depth, comprehensive and legacy-based discussion. From the discussion, the Policy Committee concluded that the revised policy statement reflects an accurate interpretation of AI-Anon’s basic guides, the Twelve Traditions, and should remain as written.

As background for the conversation regarding ongoing implementation being brought to the 2025 WSC, the Policy Committee will provide the WSC members with redacted copies of the member appeals to inform them in their decision-making role regarding Policy.

As always, the Policy Committee welcomes all questions and suggestions from any Al-Anon member, meeting, group, or Area regarding issues that might need further clarification or interpretation in light of our Legacies.