

Hospitals & Institutions
Tampa Funcoast Area

Policy and Guidelines

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1. Traditions and Concepts

1.1. The Twelve Traditions of NA

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on NA 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 membership is a desire to stop using.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or NA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.
6. An NA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the NA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, or prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every NA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Narcotics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. NA, as such, ought never be organized, but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Narcotics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the NA 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, and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

1.2. The Twelve Concepts for NA Service

1. To fulfill our fellowship's primary purpose, the NA groups have joined together to create a structure which develops, coordinates, and maintains services on behalf of NA as a whole.
2. The final responsibility and authority for NA services rests with the NA groups.
3. The NA groups delegate to the service structure the authority necessary to fulfill the responsibilities assigned to it.
4. Effective leadership is highly valued in Narcotics Anonymous. Leadership qualities should be carefully considered when selecting trusted servants.
5. For each responsibility assigned to the service structure, a single point of decision and accountability should be clearly defined.
6. Group conscience is the spiritual means by which we invite a loving God to influence our decisions.
7. 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.
8. Our service structure depends on the integrity and effectiveness of our communications.
9. All elements of our service structure have the responsibility to carefully consider all viewpoints in their decision-making processes.
10. Any member of a service body can petition that body for the redress of a personal grievance, without fear of reprisal.
11. NA funds are to be used to further our primary purpose, and must be managed responsibly.
12. In keeping with the spiritual nature of Narcotics Anonymous, our structure should always be one of service, never of government.

1. H&I Primary Purpose

The ultimate goal of H&I is to carry our message of recovery to any addict whose attendance at regular NA meetings is restricted. A strong and stable H&I Subcommittee, with support and willingness from the local NA community, is crucial to accomplish this.

2. Introduction

After many years of experience with various types of H&I meetings/presentations, we recommend the “panel system” as the most effective. The H&I meeting sponsored or conducted by a particular NA group does not allow for the H&I Subcommittee to have enough influence over the meeting and defeats the Subcommittee system our Fellowship utilizes. We then lose the benefit of the full-time consideration of H&I matters that an H&I Subcommittee provides. This often gives rise to problems in communication and consistency.

There is occasionally some confusion with the terms “panel system” and “panel format.” The “panel system” refers to the specific way in which a given panel structures its presentation. A subcommittee using the panel system has a “panel coordinator” who oversees several different H&I commitments to assure that communications between the facility and the H&I Subcommittee are going well. Each H&I meeting has a “panel leader/panel chairperson”, who makes all the necessary arrangements to put on the meeting itself. “Panel members” are those who attend the meeting to share their recovery. A variety of formats can be used within such a panel system.

The Area H&I Subcommittee plays a central role in the overall H&I service effort. It initiates, coordinates and conducts all NA H&I meetings within the area. It is the hub of H&I planning and organization. It meets regularly at least once a month. Its Chairperson reports to and is accountable in all matters to the ASC. The Subcommittee is composed of the H&I Chairperson, the H&I Vice-Chairperson, the H&I Secretary and other elected officers as well as any other members of the Fellowship who wish to be involved.

3. The H&I Subcommittee

3.1. Unity Through the Subcommittee Structure

As is always the case in committee work, it is important to work together as a team. The experience of many members of the Fellowship shows that the unity of purpose and the subcommittee members’ ability to work together will be vital to the success of our service efforts.

For this reason it is vital for all subcommittee members to adhere to all guidelines.

Failure to comply can result in removal by the subcommittee from any and all positions.

The Area H&I Subcommittee plays a central role in the overall H&I service effort. It initiates, coordinates and conducts all NA H&I meetings within the area. It is the hub of H&I planning and organization. It meets the 2nd Saturday of every month. A chairperson reports to and is accountable in all matters to the ASC. The Subcommittee is composed of the H&I Chairperson, the H&I Vice-Chairperson, the H&I Secretary and other elected officers as well as any other members of the Fellowship who wish to be involved.

3.2. Responsibilities

1. Provides a monthly forum to pool experiences. "I can't – We can!"
2. Prepares H&I Policies and guidelines for the H&I Subcommittee's and the ASC's approval.
3. Serves as a communication link between local H&I meetings/presentations and H&I Subcommittees at the Region and World levels.
4. Selects the individuals who are to conduct the H&I meetings.
5. Serves as a distribution point for literature for the meetings and reports these transactions to the ASC.
6. In cooperation with Public Information, makes all initial contacts with facilities.
7. Is responsible for all H&I oriented services within the Area.

3.1. Restrictions on Motions

If a motion is introduced at an H&I Business Meeting, and it fails to pass, this same motion cannot be re-introduced again for 90 days afterwards.

3.2. Business Meeting Duration

To respect the time of H&I members, all Business Meetings will have a hard stop after 1 ½ hours. All topics not covered will be carried over to next month's meeting.

4. Qualifications and Responsibilities of H&I Officers

The responsibilities of the Subcommittee Officers are shown below, but the list is only a summary. Officers will often do a lot more than this outline describes. The success of Subcommittees depends upon the dedication and leadership of good officers.

4.1. Chairperson

1. 3 years abstinence from all drugs.
2. 2 years on H&I Subcommittee
3. 1 year service commitment, 2 term maximum
4. Facilitate all monthly scheduled meetings of the subcommittee.
5. Attend all H&I business meetings and new member orientations.
6. Keep discussion on topic in an impartial manner.
7. Prepare an agenda for each subcommittee meeting.
8. Ensure that the Traditions and Concepts are upheld.
9. Attend ASC meetings, submits a monthly written report of the subcommittees meetings, including a Treasurer's report as required.
10. Keep ASC informed of Subcommittee activities, needs, and other relevant information.
11. Expedite action on motions deferred to the Subcommittee.
12. Submit a year end written report at the Tampa Funcoast ASC.
13. Comply with all H&I Guidelines.

4.2. Vice-Chairperson

1. 2 years abstinence from all drugs.
2. 1 year on H&I Subcommittee.
3. 1 year service commitment, 2 term maximum.
4. Attend all H&I subcommittee business meetings and new member orientations.
5. Help chairperson keep proceedings orderly.
6. Act as chairperson in the absence of the Chairperson.
7. In the event the office of chairperson becomes vacant, serve as chairperson until confirmed by the ASC or until a new chairperson is elected.
8. Assist in the absence of all subcommittee officers.
9. Comply with all H&I Guidelines.

4.3. Secretary

1. 6 months abstinence from all drugs.
2. 1 year service commitment.
3. Attend all subcommittee business meetings and new member orientations.
4. Take an accurate set of minutes at each business meeting and new member orientation.
5. Provides a copy of the minutes for download on area website; excluding any personal information like phone numbers or addresses.
6. Keep an updated, active member list as well as who would like to go to the H&I presentations.
7. Maintain an ongoing file of all correspondence and minutes.
8. Comply with all H&I Guidelines.

4.4. Literature Coordinator

1. 6 months abstinence from all drugs.
2. 1 year service commitment.
3. Order and distribute literature.
4. Attend all H&I Subcommittee business meetings.
5. Comply with all H&I Guidelines.

4.5. Co-Panel Coordinators

1. 3 years abstinence from all drugs.
2. 2 years on the H&I Subcommittee
3. 1 year service commitment.
4. 2 positions of equal responsibility.
5. Preferably each would be of the opposite sex to help with gender-specific facilities, however this will be fulfilled based on the willingness of volunteers for the position.
6. Each Panel Coordinator will take responsibility for roughly half of the facilities to ensure ideal coverage of them all.
7. To avoid conflicts of interest, Panel Coordinators will not also serve as Panel Leaders.
8. Assure that the presentations are conducted in accordance with the Policies of the H&I Subcommittee and the rules of the facility.
9. Each coordinator will conduct a minimum of 2 unexpected visits to facilities per-month, for 4 visits combined.
10. Be eligible for access to all assigned presentations.
11. Be available to assist on all panels when needed.
12. Comply with all H&I Guidelines.

4.6. Panel Leader

1. 1 year abstinence from all drugs.
2. Minimum of 1 year on H&I Subcommittee.
3. Assure meetings start and end on time.
4. Report all problems to the Panel Coordinator and include in the regular panel report to the Subcommittee.
5. Comply with all H&I Guidelines.
6. Contact appropriate person(s) in a timely manner, when not able to make meeting.
7. Do not bring anyone who is not a part of H&I, other than a Guest Speaker.
8. Listed below are the suggested guidelines for Panel speakers:
 - a. Recommended clean time of at least 1 year.
 - b. If speaker has between 6 months and 1 year clean, it is then the Panel Leader's responsibility to use care and due diligence when qualifying this speaker.
 - c. The Panel Leader must inform speaker(s) about the facility's expectations.
 - d. The Panel speaker should not use profanity.
 - e. The Panel speaker must comply with all H&I guidelines.

4.7. Panel Member

1. 6 months abstinence from all drugs.
2. Have completed 2 H&I Business Meetings and orientations within 3 months.
3. Have completed 3 H&I sit-ins. Please see later section for definition of “sit-in.”
4. Willingness to share a clear NA message with the full understanding of an H&I presentation.
5. A clear understanding of the Fellowship and the Policies and Concepts relevant to the H&I Presentation is essential.
6. Comply with all H&I Guidelines.
7. Contact appropriate person(s) in a timely manner when not able to make meeting.
8. Be on time.
9. Must be voted in as a Panel Member by the Subcommittee.

4.8. H&I Member

5. 6 months abstinence from all drugs.
6. Must attend 2 H&I business meetings and orientations within three months.
7. Comply with all H&I guidelines.

4. Resignation or Impeachment of H&I Officers

The H&I Subcommittee Chairperson is an officer of the Funcoast ASC, and resignation or impeachment of that office is covered in the Funcoast ASC policy. For all other H&I Subcommittee officers, the policy for resignation or impeachment is as follows:

4.1. Voluntary Resignations

Voluntary resignations are given in writing to the H&I Chairperson prior to an H&I Business Meeting.

4.2. Involuntary Resignations

Involuntary resignations are automatic upon the following:

1. Failing to maintain the required Business Meeting attendance for remaining an H&I member.
2. Relapse during term in office.

4.3. Impeachment

1. An officer may be impeached in the following circumstances:
 - a. Breach of the Twelve Traditions.
 - b. Failure to perform duties and responsibilities.
2. The procedure to impeach an officer is as follows:
 - a. A motion to initiate impeachment procedures is passed. A majority vote is required to initiate impeachment proceedings.
 - b. The individual being impeached must be given written notice at least 7 days prior to the meeting where the impeachment proceedings will take place.
 - c. The motion to impeach must be presented with said due cause.
 - d. The individual being impeached is given time for rebuttal, if so desired, not to exceed five minutes.
 - e. A closed ballot is taken.
 - f. A 2/3 vote is necessary to impeach.

5. H&I Member Guidelines

5.1. Business Meeting Attendance

Attendance at H&I monthly meetings will be recorded. To remain an active H&I member, one must attend no fewer than one Business Meeting every three months. Members are encouraged to attend as frequently as possible in order to participate in the decision making process of the subcommittee.

Additionally, attendance at the business meeting requires attending the meeting on time. Members who show up late and skip large portions of the business meeting are not fully participating in the service structure. Therefore, any member who arrives later than 20 minutes after the start of the business meeting will be counted as absent for that week.

To help ensure that all H&I members have the best capacity to serve, an alternate (or “makeup”) Business Meeting be considered on an as-needed basis. Anyone may attend this meeting as an alternative to the regular Business Meeting. The only thing that will not occur at this alternate meeting is voting on motions.

5.2. Voting

Any individual who meets the qualifications to be an H&I member can vote in H&I Business Meetings.

5.3. Definition of “Sit In”

New members of H&I are required to complete sit-ins to become Panel members. A “sit-in” is defined as attending an H&I presentation to observe how it is run. Sit-ins cannot chair meetings, however they can participate at the discretion of the Panel Leader if they have 6 months or more clean.

6. Additional Guidelines

6.1. Gender Specific Facilities

For a facility that is gender specific, meaning that its residents are either only male or only female, the panel members assigned to the facility should be of that gender as well. To further clarify, all-male facilities should only have male panel members, and all-female facilities should only have female panel members. An exemption exists for the Panel Coordinator to fulfill their role of observing panels.

6.2. Book Drive

H&I conducts an annual book drive to acquire literature for the facilities. The goal of this book drive is to collect as many books as possible and then distribute them evenly throughout all the facilities that H&I currently carries meetings to.

The book drive will be held once a year. It will begin in January, and continue through June. During this time, H&I members will be encouraged to solicit donations of books from other NA members and groups. Additional ways of spreading the word such as fliers can also be used.

6.3. Group Inventory

In keeping with the principles behind the 10th Step, this subcommittee will perform a group inventory at the start of each calendar year. The method of performing the inventory is up to the group, however it should provide all H&I members the opportunity to submit anonymous feedback on ways to improve the subcommittee. The results of the inventory should be provided to the body as a whole so that members can decide if any new actions need to be taken.

7. DOs AND DON'Ts

Dos

- Do: Make schedules of outside meetings available to residents.
- Do: Clarify the facility's rules with anyone you bring in.
- Do: Avoid any personal relationship with residents.
- Do: Get all agreements with the facility in writing (where applicable).
- Do: Start and end the panel presentation on time.
- Do: Briefly define and explain H&I.
- Do: Make it clear that NA is separate and distinct from the facility as well as other fellowships.
- Do: Try to get residents involved, especially those in long term facilities.
- Do: Obey all dress codes. Exercise common sense and dress appropriately.
- Do: Keep staff aware of your whereabouts at all times.
- Do: Stamp all literature you bring into the facility with the local NA Helpline number.
- Do: Screen all panel members carefully, especially regarding clean time or other requirements.
- Do: Explain the language that we use ("addict", "clean", "recovery") and why we use it (1st Step and 6th Tradition of NA).
- Do: Emphasize in NA recovery is available to any addict, regardless of the "type" of drug(s) used.
- Do: Emphasize the importance of getting to an NA meeting the first day out of the facility.
- Do: Emphasize the importance of getting a sponsor and a home group, the ongoing nature of recovery, and the importance of attending meetings (suggest 90 meetings in 90 days).
- Do: Use the literature recommended for H&I work, if we are supplying the literature. Encourage the treatment centers to supply NA literature on their own if at all possible.
- Do: Be selective about who you choose to take into H&I meetings. Clean time requirements are very important. People who sit on H&I Panels should be able to share a message of recovery in Narcotics Anonymous.
- Do: Clarify the rules with whomever you bring into the facility.
- Do: Adhere to the security regulations at all times.
- Do: Arrive early to satisfy security requirements and let staff get prepared.
- Do: Screen all panel members, speakers, and chairpersons.
- Do: Adhere to clean time requirements of the H&I subcommittee.
- Do: Ensure that a clear NA message of recovery is carried by all panel members.
- Do: Choose panel members and speakers according to H&I guidelines.
- Do: Remember this is a "WE" program.
- Do: Remember that an addict is an addict regardless of their age.
- Do: Tell them there is FUN in recovery.

Do: Acknowledge and validate their feelings and emotions.

Don'ts

Don't: Break another person's anonymity or tell his or her story.

Don't: Debate any issues involving the facility's rules or regulations.

Don't: Discuss conditions within facility or opinions about staff members.

Don't: Debate the merits of the treatment center's program or another fellowship. Remember, we have no opinion on outside issues. The best approach is to focus on the positive and unique qualities of our program of recovery.

Don't: Sponsor residents in facilities where H&I presentations are carried.

Don't: Carry a presentation alone.

Don't: Comment on the methods used by the treatment facility. Not all facilities are 12-step based nor do their understandings of the steps necessarily coincide with the understanding gained in Narcotics Anonymous. We share our experience without reference to the facility's methods or to residents comments.

Don't: Put too much focus on what it was like. They already know.

Don't: Debate which drugs are acceptable. NA is a program of complete abstinence from *all* drugs.

Don't: Carry excessive cash or wear expensive or flashy jewelry.

Don't: Show favoritism to any residents.

Don't: Take messages in or out of the facility.

Don't: Give out any other person's address or phone number.

Don't: Carry in any contraband items, such as cigarettes (if applicable) or weapons.

Don't: Rely on flooding a treatment center with literature to carry our message. The most powerful tool for carrying our message is the NA member.

Don't: Read too many literature selections at the beginning of the meeting. Keep it short and simple to keep their attention.

Don't: Let the meeting run too long. Most treatment center residents spend much of their day in meetings of one sort or another.

Don't: Bring in anyone who is not a part of H&I, other than the cleared speaker.

Don't: Collect any money. This is not an NA meeting. It is an H&I Panel.

Don't: Glorify your past.

Don't: Say, "I feel like I'm talking to my kids."

Don't: Compare your bottom to theirs.

Don't: Patronize adolescents.

Don't: Use profanity whenever possible.

Don't: Preach or "talk down" to residents.

Don't: Use your phone during meetings, except to access NA literature.

Don't: Give out your own phone number to any residents of facilities, even if you see that resident at an outside meeting or at a facility you are not a panel member of. This is to avoid the appearance of favoritism.