

**ACADIANA AREA CENTRAL OFFICE, INC.**

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**BY-LAWS**

**AS AMENDED AND REVISED January 17, 2021\_Rev-0.1**

**PREAMBLE**

In solemn affirmation of the letter and the spirit of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions and placing all our activities under the guidance of a Higher Power, the various and several groups of Alcoholics Anonymous in the Acadiana Area have met to form a Central Office. These By-Laws and Constitution serve to fulfill our legal obligation as an incorporated association, but more importantly to serve as a guide for our successors.

**ARTICLE I**

**NAME**

The name of this Association is the Acadiana Area Central Office, Inc., a non-profit corporation, referred to hereinafter as the Central Office.

**ARTICLE II**

**PURPOSE**

Central Office is organized exclusively for charitable and educational purposes under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

The purposes of the Central Office are to:

1. Maintain a central business office with paid/volunteer staff as a clearing house for Alcoholics Anonymous activities in the Acadiana Area.
2. Safeguard the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous as the group conscience dictates.
3. Support the local groups of the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous.
4. Receive and disburse funds as necessary to meet the purposes and carry on the business of the Central Office.
5. Perform any and all lawful acts deemed necessary by the Central Office Steering Committee in the conduct of its business and/or to meet its purposes.
6. Serve and function as the communications center for the member groups with respect to matters of local area policy and interest.
7. Conduct special events in accordance with and in the furtherance of these objectives.

**ARTICLE III**

**OBJECTS EXCLUDED**

Specially excluded from the objects of the Central Office are:

1. The operation and maintenance of a club or clubhouse.
2. Any interference in the policies, procedures, and internal business at the local, district, area, national or international level of Alcoholics Anonymous.

**ARTICLE IV**  
**RESPONSIBILITIES OF CENTRAL OFFICE**

The Central Office is the business office of the Acadiana Area and is charged with the following responsibilities:

1. Receive and disburse funds as necessary to:
  - a. Provide office space and equipment for a Central Office.
  - b. Provide a paid or volunteer office staff and additional staff as needed
  - c. Supply literature and products pertaining to recovery from the disease of alcoholism.
  - d. Arrange speakers for civic organizations, schools, hospital, institutions, et cetera.
  - e. Assist new Alcoholics Anonymous groups in getting started.
  - f. Provide a list of Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, updated as deemed necessary by the CORs.
  - g. Provide telephone coverage during non-business hours.
  - h. Handle inquiries from newcomers, professional people, industry, institutions, and the news media, where applicable, referring inquiries to qualified people.
  - i. Provide confidential 12-step list of individuals taking phone calls after business hours.
  - j. Publish a monthly newsletter called The Plug-in-Jug.
  
2. To disburse no funds without the approval of the Central Office Representatives. However, the Central Office Representatives may give continuing approval to the Central Office Steering Committee for regular funds disbursement required by the Central Office, i.e., rent, utilities, telephone, literature, et cetera. Funds disbursement to meet requirements on an irregular basis in excess of \$250.00, and regular funds disbursement which increase by \$250.00 or more, must first be approved by a majority vote of the Central Office Representatives at a regular monthly meeting.
  
3. The hours of operation for Central Office will be set by a majority vote of the Central Office Representatives. Time not filled by the Office staff may be worked by volunteers from member groups as determined by the Office staff and/or Chairperson. When no one is available to work the office will remain closed.
  
4. Establish and maintain an Advisory Committee made up of prior Steering Committee members, Past Delegates, etc. to insure that proper Local, State and Federal filings and returns are submitted in a timely manner.  
This committee will be made up of the Agent of Record, the Corporate Secretary and one other qualified member.

**ARTICLE V**  
**MEMBERSHIP ELIGIBILITY**

Membership eligibility includes any group registered with the General Service Office in New York and located in the following parishes: Acadia, Evangeline, Iberia, Lafayette, St. Landry, St. Martin, St. Mary and Vermillion.

**ARTICLE VI**  
**MEMBERSHIP**

In order for an eligible group to be a member it shall

1. Submit in writing the names of its elected Central Office Representative and/or alternate Central Office Representative, listing of the dates and times and locations of its meetings and its willingness to accept 12-Step calls.
2. Be represented by its Central Office Representative and/or alternate Central Office Representative at the Central Office Representative monthly membership meeting.

**ARTICLE VII**  
**CENTRAL OFFICE REPRESENTATIVES**

- I. The group Central Office Representative and Alternate Central Office Representative shall faithfully reflect the "group conscience" and shall act as a liaison between his/her group and the Central Office in the following manner:
  - a. He or she shall be a member of the group he or she represents.
  - b. He or she should attend all Central Office Representative meetings.
  - c. He or she communicates to his group the activities, growth and current problems of the C.O.
  - d. Normally he or she is expected to vote and act for his or her group at each Central Office Representative meeting without consulting the group on every issue. However, when it is necessary for him or her to know the feelings of his or her group on particular problems, he or she shall ask his or her group chairperson to call a business meeting of the group in order to discuss the issue which is pending.

The Central Office Representative is a "trusted servant" who shall be governed by the principles of Tradition Two and Concept III of the 12 Concepts of World Services. Concept III, which state, in part, "we ought to trust our responsible leaders to decide, within the understood framework of their duties, how they will interpret and apply their own authority and responsibility to each particular problem or situation as it arises." However, the "right of decision" should not be used for "persistently failing to consult those who are entitled to be consulted before an important decision or action is taken."

- e. From time to time he or she will be asked to recruit volunteers from his or her group for 12<sup>th</sup> Step work and to perform committee work at the Central Office.
  - f. He or she can expect to perform any other services of this nature which relate to his or her office.
  - g. To remind the treasurer of his/her group about the suggested Alcoholics Anonymous support system to constitute Alcoholics Anonymous' essential services.
2. Everything covered in this Article relates equally to the Alternate who performs for the Central Office Representative in the Central Office Representative's absence.

**ARTICLE VIII**

## CENTRAL OFFICE STEERING COMMITTEE

The Central Office Steering Committee shall consist of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, four (4) Members-at-Large (Communications – Activities – Contact – Website). The Steering Committee officers are "trusted servants" who shall be governed by the principles of Tradition Two and Concept III of the 12 Concepts of World Services. Concept III, which state, in part, "we ought to trust our responsible leaders to decide, within the understood framework of their duties, how they will interpret and apply their own authority and responsibility to each particular problem or situation as it arises." Additionally, the "right of decision" should not be used for "persistently failing to consult those who are entitled to be consulted before an important decision or action is taken."

1. The CHAIRPERSON is responsible for:
  - a. Attending all Central Office Steering Committee meetings and COR meetings.
  - b. Conducting Central Office Steering Committee meetings and Central Office Representative meetings.
  - c. Appointing committees, other than standing committees, as necessary to carry out the business of the Central Office.
  - d. Overseeing the activities of the Central Office Steering Committee and the CORs.
  - e. Supervise the day-to-day activities of the Central Office and its staff.
  - f. Being a co-signatory on financial disbursements to cover monthly operations, all of which require two signatures.
  
2. The VICE-CHAIRPERSON is responsible for:
  - a. Attending all Central Office Steering Committee meetings and Central Office Representative meetings.
  - b. Assisting the Chairperson and, in his/her absence, to serve as Chairperson.
  - c. Serving as co-signatory on financial disbursements when either the Chairperson or Treasurer is unavailable. All checks require two signatures.
  
3. The RECORDING SECRETARY is responsible for:
  - a. Attending all Central Office Steering Committee meetings and Central Office Representative meetings.
  - b. Recording minutes of the Central Office Steering Committee meetings and the Central Office Representative meetings and presenting those minutes at their respective following meetings.
  - c. Initiating any correspondence the Central Office Steering Committee may require.
  
4. The TREASURER is responsible for:
  - a. Attending all Central Office Steering Committee meetings and Central Office Representative meetings.
  - b. Reviewing records of all funds received and disbursed through Central Office and reporting to the Central Office Steering Committee and Central Office Representatives whether those records are accurate and complete by prepping and submitting Monthly/YTD financials.
  - c. Prepare and submit all required Local, State and Federal filings and returns in a timely manner.
  - d. Assuring all funds is disbursed by check requiring two signatures.
  - e. Being a co-signatory on financial disbursements.
  
5. The MEMBER-AT-LARGE is responsible for:

- a. Attending all Central Office Steering Committee meetings and Central Office Representative meetings.
  - b. Serving as chairperson of one of the Standing Committees of the Central Office.
6. Any officer may resign at any time by submitting a written resignation to the Central Office Representatives.
  7. Any officer may be removed from office by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at a monthly Central Office Representative meeting, provided that the motion for removal was made and seconded at the previous monthly meeting.
  8. Any officer will automatically be removed from office if that officer ceases to maintain sobriety.
  9. In the event of a vacancy in the Chairperson position, the Vice-Chair shall succeed to the Chair. Any other Steering Committee vacancy shall be filled by the election of a qualified member, chosen from those nominated, by majority vote of the CORs present and voting at the next regular COR meeting following announcement of the vacancy. An officer elected to fill a vacancy shall serve for the remainder of that position's term of office.
  10. No officer of the Central Office Steering Committee shall receive, either directly or indirectly, any compensation for serving as an officer. However, the Central Office Representatives may approve reimbursement of expenses incurred in the discharge of an officer's assigned duties.
  11. The Steering Committee shall be responsible for establishment and maintenance of a Prudent Reserve. Any monies held to be in excess of the Operating Budget shall be deemed Prudent Reserve.
  12. It is the duty of the Steering Committee to select the Office Staff and to periodically Review his /her job performance.

**ARTICLE IX**  
**ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Election of officers to the Central Office Steering Committee shall be conducted each year in an alternating pattern as follows: For Chairperson, Recording Secretary and two Members-At-Large (Activities Chairperson and Website Chairperson) in even numbered years; for Vice-Chair, Treasurer and two Members-At-Large (Communications Chairperson and Contact Chairperson) in odd numbered years. All officers will serve a period of two (2) years from June 1<sup>st</sup> through May 31<sup>st</sup>.

1. The Chairperson shall appoint an Elections Committee at the regular February Central Office Representative meeting. This committee will be comprised of no less than two (2) Central Office Representatives and one (1) Officer whose term is not ending.
2. The Elections Committee will accept nominations from Alcoholics Anonymous members for the office of the Central Office Steering Committee at the regular March Central Office Representative meeting.
3. The following qualifications must be met in order for a person to be nominated for office on the Central Office Steering Committee:
  - a. CHAIRPERSON - Previously a member of the Central Office Steering Committee and have at least two years of continuous sobriety.
  - b. VICE-CHAIRPERSON –have at least two years of continuous sobriety.

- c. RECORDING SECRETARY –have at least two years of continuous sobriety.
  - d. TREASURER –have at least two years of continuous sobriety.
  - e. MEMBER-AT-LARGE (4) –have at least two years of continuous sobriety.
4. The CORs may suspend the two-year sobriety rule for any given election by a two-thirds (2/3) vote if it becomes necessary to do so to fill a position, except for the positions of Chairperson, Vice-Chair and Treasurer.
  5. The nominations will be closed and announced at the March Central Office Representative meeting and an official ballot will be included in the April Newsletter.
  6. Each member Alcoholics Anonymous group is entitled to one vote for each office on the Central Office Steering Committee.
  7. The ballots will be submitted to and tabulated by the Elections Committee at the regular April Central Office Representatives meeting. The results of the election will be announced by the Elections Committee at that meeting.
  8. There will be no proxy voting.
  9. The newly elected officers will take office at the regular June Central Office Representative meeting.
  10. A qualified member may stand for and be elected to a position he/she has held previously except That he/she may not serve consecutive terms in the same office.

**ARTICLE X**  
**HISTORIAN**

The HISTORIAN shall be responsible for the documentation of all significant events of the Central Office and serve as custodian of all records of historical value.

1. The Historian is not a member of the Central Office Steering Committee.
2. The Historian may serve as a Central Office Representative for his or her group while in this position.
3. The Historian must have at least one year of continuous sobriety.
4. The Historian shall be elected in the same manner as officers of the Central Office Steering Committee and his/her term of office shall be for two years.

**ARTICLE XI**  
**MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS**

Membership (COR) meetings will be held monthly at a time and place designated by the Chairperson of the Central Office Steering Committee. The Recording Secretary will notify all officers and members of the meeting time and place.

1. The order of business (Agenda) at membership meetings will be:
  - a. Call to Order by the Chairperson and introduction of new CORs.
  - b. Reading of the minutes of the preceding membership meeting by the Recording Secretary.
  - c. Treasurer's report.
  - d. Central Office Chairman's report.
  - e. Committee reports. (Includes District Liaison reports)
  - f. Old business.
  - g. New business.
  - h. Announcements
  - i. Adjournment followed by The Lord's Prayer.

2. Voting on the issues before the Central Office Representatives is limited to one vote for each member Alcoholics Anonymous group present.
3. There will be no proxy voting.
4. No person under the influence of alcohol will be allowed to participate in any Central Office meeting.
5. The agenda is to be made by the Central Office Chairperson following the Steering Committee Meeting and made public to the fellowship in the Plug-in-the-Jug newsletter at least one week prior to the Central Office Representative meeting.
6. Anyone wishing to place something on the agenda must present it to the Central Office or the Chairperson in writing by the last Monday of the month before the Central Office Representative meeting.
7. Members of the Steering Committee (Officers) are not allowed to vote as Officers on any motion or agenda item brought before the Central Office Representatives for a vote. However, any member (including an Officer) may cast a vote as the duly authorized Central Office Representative or Alternate COR for his/her home group. In addition, the Chairperson may cast a tie-breaking vote on the first ballot.

**ARTICLE XII**  
**FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF CENTRAL OFFICE**

1. The activities of the Central Office will be financially supported by funds contributed by member Alcoholics Anonymous Groups, fundraising activities, and profits realized from the retail sales by the Central Office.
2. Alcoholics Anonymous members may make voluntary contributions provided such contributions fall within the 12 Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous and do not exceed General Service Conference limits.
3. Any change in the prices of books, literature, chips, etc., must be approved by majority vote of the Steering Committee.

**ARTICLE XIII**  
**SALARIES**

Compensation for services rendered will only be awarded to Office Staff of Central Office and the combined total shall not exceed forty (40) hours per week.

1. Compensation will be paid in the form of an hourly rate in an amount fixed by the Central Office Representatives and reviewed annually by the Central Office Steering Committee.
2. Anonymity - All Office Staff shall zealously guard the anonymity of all members of Alcoholics Anonymous and shall never under any circumstances break any member's anonymity unless directly authorized to do so by such individual.

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**ARTICLE XIV**  
**STANDING COMMITTEES**

There shall be four (4) Standing Committees, each chaired by a Member-at-Large of the Steering Committee, consisting of

- A. Activities — is responsible for planning, supervising and conducting all Central Office events.
- B. Contact — to assure that member groups have access to Central Office information and to serve as a liaison to the groups.
- C. Communication — is charged with publishing and distributing the monthly Plug-in-Jug newsletter.
- D. Website - responsible for maintaining and updating the Central Office Website and assuring that operation of the site conforms to established policies and guidelines (See “Official Central Office Website Guidelines”) and to establish and define guidelines for use of the Central Office computer(s).

2. The following guidelines shall apply to the above committees:

- A. Members of a committee will be appointed by each committee chairperson.
- B. The scheduled locations and times of meetings will be published in the newsletter and announced at COR meetings.
- C. Chairpersons shall assure that a report on the work of the committee is made at each monthly Steering Committee and COR membership meeting.
- D. Central Office activities and events must be brought before the Steering Committee for approval before event arrangements are finalized.
- E. All expenses must be approved in advance by the Steering Committee; amounts in excess of \$250.00 also require approval by a majority of the COR’s voting at a regularly scheduled membership meeting.
- F. Additional policy guidelines to be observed in the conduct of committee business may be established from time to time by the Steering Committee and/or the CORs.

#### **ARTICLE XV** **AMENDMENTS**

Amendments to these By-Laws may be made by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Central Office Representatives membership, present and voting, provided the amendment was proposed for consideration at the previous regular monthly Central Office Representative meeting.

#### **ARTICLE XVI** **DISBURSEMENT PLAN**

In the event of the closure of the Acadiana Area Central Office, Inc. any remaining assets/funds will become the property of the Louisiana State Area Assembly, Inc.



**ARTICLE XVII**  
**EFFECTIVE DATE**

The effective date of these By-Laws of the Acadiana Area Central Office of Alcoholics Anonymous,  
as revised and amended, shall be **January 17, 2021**.

**2019-2020 MEMBERS OF THE ACADIANA AREA CENTRAL OFFICE, INC. STEERING COMMITTEE**

**Chairman — Charlie P.**

**Vice-Chairman – Hassan I.**

**Recording Secretary – Mary L.**

**Treasurer – Clint F.**

**Activities Chair – Rick S.**

**Communications Chair – Tory H.**

**Contact Chair – Skyla S.**

**Website Chair – Open**

**01-17-2021**