

# BY-LAWS OF WEST HAWAII CENTRAL OFFICE OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

## PREAMBLE

In all its proceedings, WEST HAWAII CENTRAL OFFICE shall observe the spirit of the A.A. Traditions, taking great care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds, plus an ample reserve, be its prudent financial principle; that none of its members shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority over any of the others; that all important decisions be reached by discussion, vote and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that no WEST HAWAII CENTRAL OFFICE action ever be personally punitive, or an incitement to public controversy; that though the WEST HAWAII CENTRAL OFFICE Steering Committee may act in the service of Alcoholics Anonymous and may traditionally direct its daily operations, it shall never enact laws or regulations binding on A.A. as a whole or upon any A.A. group or member thereof, nor shall it perform any other such acts of government; and that, like the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous which it serves, WEST HAWAII CENTRAL OFFICE will always remain democratic in thought and action.

The above is adapted from *A Resolution Offered by Bill W. and Adopted at the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention of A.A., in 1955. (This Resolution Authorizes the General Service Conference to Act for Alcoholics Anonymous and to Become the Successor to Its Co-Founders.) The A.A. Service Manual Combined With Twelve Concepts for World Service, Appendix B, pg. S99.*

## I. NAME AND PURPOSE OF THE ORGANIZATION

The name of the organization shall be WEST HAWAII CENTRAL OFFICE and shall, for convenience, be referred to herein as CENTRAL OFFICE.

The purpose of CENTRAL OFFICE is to carry out certain functions common to all the groups – functions which are best handled by a centralized office – which is maintained, supervised and supported by these groups in their general interest. CENTRAL OFFICE exists to aid the groups and individual members in their common purpose of carrying the A.A. message to the alcoholic who still suffers and to be a point of contact as well for non-A.A. members to obtain accurate information about the A.A. program and the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous.

CENTRAL OFFICE Functions:

- Answer inquiries in person, on the phone, online and by mail.
- Maintain an office staffed by volunteers during published hours
- Provide AA meeting schedules, literature and sobriety tokens to groups and individuals
- Exchange Information with the groups
- Sponsor local A.A. events and activities and support group events and activities
- Publish a monthly West Hawaii A.A. Newsletter “The Coconut Wireless” in full color on our website, and print an abbreviated format in black and white for handing out by CENTRAL OFFICE Reps as requested.
- Provide special needs services where possible, including accessibility information for meetings and activities
- Manage a 24-Hour Hotline which is staffed by A.A. volunteers
- Oversee a functional and effective website: <http://www.westhawaiiiaa.org> which is managed by a volunteer

The above is adapted from *A.A. Guidelines Central or CENTRAL OFFICE Offices, pg. 1*

Specifically excluded from the objectives of CENTRAL OFFICE are the operation of any club, clubhouse, or drying-out place, and the endorsement of any public or private projects on alcoholism as outlined in Tradition Six.

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## II. ELECTIONS

The Steering Committee Officers and Standing Committee Chairs shall serve for two years commencing on January 1<sup>st</sup> of odd numbered years. In the Spirit of Rotation, no Steering Committee Member may serve two (2) consecutive full terms in the same position. "Traditionally, rotation ensures that service positions, like nearly everything else in A.A., are passed around for all to share...Rotation helps to bring us spiritual rewards far more enduring than any fame. With no A.A. "status" at stake, we needn't compete for titles or praise – we have complete freedom to serve as we are needed."

Nominations for Steering Committee Officers and Standing Committee Chairs shall be closed at the October monthly CENTRAL OFFICE Business Meeting in even numbered years with elections to follow at the November meeting. In the event that any Standing Committee Chair, or any Officer, other than the Chairperson, is unable to complete his or her term, the then Chairperson and remaining Steering Committee members shall appoint a temporary replacement to serve until such time as a replacement is duly elected. The open position would be announced at the next monthly CENTRAL OFFICE Business Meeting, nominations would be accepted at the following (second) monthly meeting with the election to be held at the third monthly meeting.

## III. STEERING COMMITTEE

The CENTRAL OFFICE Steering Committee shall be comprised of the Officers of CENTRAL OFFICE (Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Recording Secretary and Treasurer), and the Standing Committee Chairs. Each member of the Steering Committee shall be entitled to vote at both the monthly Steering Committee Meeting and the monthly CENTRAL OFFICE Business Meeting.

The Steering Committee shall make all routine decisions pertaining to the daily operations of the CENTRAL OFFICE and shall establish the Agenda for the monthly CENTRAL OFFICE Business Meeting. In the event that a major decision must be made in a hurry, a majority decision of the Steering Committee is required, and such action must be reported at the next CENTRAL OFFICE Business Meeting for approval/non approval by CENTRAL OFFICE as a whole (Steering Committee members and CENTRAL OFFICE Representatives (or Alternates) "present" to vote.) Standing Committee Chairs may appoint a committee member to vote as directed. No person shall hold more than one vote and votes may only be cast in person.

The basic duties and qualifications of the Steering Committee Officers shall be as follows:

A. The Chairperson: (minimum of 3 years sobriety required) shall be the Executive Officer of CENTRAL OFFICE and shall be present to preside at all CENTRAL OFFICE meetings. The Chairperson shall abstain from voting at the Business Meeting unless casting such vote is necessary to break a tie. The Chairperson preferably will have held service positions at the Home Group and CENTRAL OFFICE levels and have a working knowledge of the Twelve Traditions of A.A. The Chairperson preferably shall attend monthly District 8 Business Meetings to present a CENTRAL OFFICE report and vote as directed. The Chairperson shall be responsible for making sure that all necessary reports etc. are filed with Governmental Agencies, Banks etc. in a timely manner as detailed in IV below.

B. The Vice Chairperson: (minimum of 3 years sobriety required) shall assist the Chairperson in all matters where practical and shall be present to preside at all CENTRAL OFFICE meetings in the absence of the Chairperson. In the event that the Chairperson is unable to fulfill his or her elected term of office, the Vice Chairperson shall assume the office of Chairperson. An election would then follow to fill the vacant Vice Chairperson position. The Vice Chairperson preferably will have held service positions at the Home Group and CENTRAL OFFICE levels and have a working knowledge of the Twelve Traditions of A.A.. He/she shall be present at all monthly CENTRAL OFFICE Steering Committee meetings and monthly CENTRAL OFFICE Business Meetings to give reports as needed. The Vice Chairperson preferably shall attend monthly District meetings in the absence of the Chairperson to present a CENTRAL OFFICE report and serve as a voting member of District 8 as directed.

C. The Recording Secretary: (minimum of 1 year sobriety required) shall be present at the Monthly Steering Committee Meeting to record the agenda for the monthly CENTRAL OFFICE Business meeting for distribution at the meeting. The Recording Secretary shall also record the minutes of all CENTRAL OFFICE Business Meetings and distribute them at the next month's CENTRAL OFFICE Steering Committee and Business Meetings.

D. The Treasurer: (minimum of 2 years sobriety required) shall maintain accurate financial records for CENTRAL OFFICE and produce a month end Treasurer's Report by the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month. He/she shall accept and deposit

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contributions made by A.A. groups and members and promptly disburse payments for all CENTRAL OFFICE expenses. The Treasurer shall be present to make monthly reports at the monthly Business Meeting and shall keep copies of all financial records available at the CENTRAL OFFICE. The Treasurer shall draft a Proposed Annual Budget each year no later than October 1st. The Treasurer shall monitor and support the financial goals of CENTRAL OFFICE, including maintenance of the current approved Prudent Reserve, and provide clear financial guidelines for expenses and activities/events. The Treasurer is responsible for updating bank account information and for updating utilities, internet and office property management information.

E. AA Hotline Committee Chair: (minimum of 2 years sobriety required) The AA Hotline Committee operates the CENTRAL OFFICE 24 Hour Hotline, a telephone service that enables the suffering alcoholic to speak to an A.A. member 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The basic duties and qualifications of the AA Hotline Chairperson shall be as follows: The AA Hotline Committee Chairperson shall preferably have held service positions at the Home Group and CENTRAL OFFICE levels and have working knowledge of the Twelve Traditions of A.A. The AA Hotline Chairperson shall preferably have 12<sup>th</sup> Step Call service experience and will be responsible for the operation of the 24 Hour Hotline. The AA Hotline Chairperson or Alternate shall be present at all monthly CENTRAL OFFICE Business Meetings to present a monthly report. Duties include: recruiting and training volunteers, maintenance and revision of the AA Hotline volunteer schedule, monitoring Hotline shifts, and supplying all volunteers with up-to-date literature as needed. Good communication skills are essential.

F. Newsletter Committee Chair: (minimum of 1 year sobriety required) Duties include monitoring local and outside A.A. news, collecting and reporting local sobriety birthdays, current CENTRAL OFFICE financial reports and other reports, and creating, editing, publishing and distributing a monthly newsletter within the guidelines of A.A.'s 12 Traditions. The newsletter Editor shall preside as the Newsletter Committee Chairperson. The Chairperson or Alternate shall attend all monthly CENTRAL OFFICE Business Meetings to present a report as needed.

G. Website Committee Chair: (minimum of 1 year sobriety required) The Chairperson of the Website Committee shall have a minimum of 1 year of sobriety and shall be known as the Webmaster. The Webmaster is responsible for the maintenance of the West Hawaii CENTRAL OFFICE website: <http://www.westhawaii.org>. The Chairperson or Alternate shall also attend all monthly CENTRAL OFFICE Business Meetings to present a report as needed.

H. Activities Committee Chair: (minimum of 1 year sobriety required) The Chairperson shall be responsible for coordinating and arranging all CENTRAL OFFICE activities and special functions. The Chairperson shall be responsible for selecting and securing the venues and obtaining and returning any required license(s)/permit(s)/key(s) for all CENTRAL OFFICE functions. The Chairperson or Alternate shall also attend all monthly CENTRAL OFFICE Business Meetings to present a report as needed.

### **IV. RELATIONSHIP WITH GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES**

The Chairperson shall be responsible for making sure that the following reports are made in a timely manner to satisfy all requirements of governmental agencies regarding CENTRAL OFFICE:

The following kinds of reports shall be made:

Financial Reports; Annual Reports; Change of Officer Reports (signers at bank); any other required reports.

Reports shall be made to:

US Internal Revenue Service (Annual Form 990 Report); State of Hawaii Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (Annual Business Registration Report); The bank where CENTRAL OFFICE accounts are maintained; and any other necessary entities requiring them.

### **V. BUSINESS MEETINGS**

The membership of CENTRAL OFFICE shall consist of The Steering Committee and CENTRAL OFFICE Representatives (CORs) or Alternate CORs from registered A.A. groups in West Hawaii. Each Group Representative shall serve for two years or until replaced by his or her group, shall be entitled to one vote at the monthly CENTRAL OFFICE Business Meeting, and shall vote his or her 'group conscience' or exercise their 'Right of Decision' on behalf of their group. Groups may also direct their representatives to attend the monthly Steering Committee Meeting to propose agenda topics for the next CENTRAL OFFICE Business Meeting. The Steering Committee votes on whether or not to advance proposed topics.

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The District Committee Member or the Alternate DCM, if present, shall be entitled to vote at the monthly CENTRAL OFFICE Business Meeting.

The Current Area Chairperson or the Alternate, if present, shall be entitled to vote at the CENTRAL OFFICE Business Meeting.

The monthly CENTRAL OFFICE Business Meeting shall be held at such time and place as designated by the Chairperson at the preceding meeting. Matters which relate to policies affecting groups or A.A. as a whole shall automatically be tabled for thirty days by the Chairperson and referred for group discussion.

### **VI. FINANCE**

CENTRAL OFFICE may accept donations from A.A. members and Groups conforming with the Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous and consistent with the General Service Conference Guidelines. CENTRAL OFFICE shall not accept the responsibility of, trusteeship for, or enter into the distribution or allocation of any funds set up outside of the CENTRAL OFFICE. A Prudent Reserve of 6 months fixed operating expenses is to be maintained at all times.

West Hawaii CENTRAL OFFICE is organized exclusively for purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, and is a Registered Section 501(c)(3) corporation. West Hawaii CENTRAL OFFICE is registered with the State of Hawai'i Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (DCCA) as a Domestic Nonprofit Corporation.

Upon the completion and dissolution of this corporation, after paying or adequately providing for the debts and obligations of the corporation, the remaining assets shall be distributed to another non-profit corporation that is dedicated to providing the same AA services as West Hawaii CENTRAL OFFICE, but, if there is no such corporation, the distribution shall be in equal portions to District 8 (West Hawaii), Area 17 (Hawaii), and G.S.O. (General Service Office) of Alcoholics Anonymous.

### **VII. AMENDMENTS**

These By-laws may be amended at any time by a two-thirds majority vote of the Group representatives present at any regular monthly meeting of CENTRAL OFFICE, provided a copy of the proposed amendment has been submitted to each Group at least thirty days before the meeting at which action is to be taken on the amendment.

**By-laws submitted for the approval of West Hawaii Groups on September 21, 2016.**

**Approved at WHCO Business Meeting October 19, 2016**

**Amended at WHCO Business Meeting April 17, 2019. Section VI Finance, first paragraph, prudent reserve changed from 3 months to 6 months.**