



### **New Meeting Suggestion Guide**

We recognize that each Opiates Anonymous group is autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or Opiates Anonymous as a whole. This guide is meant to help your meetings run smoothly and according to our traditions.

#### Some suggestions that we have found helpful when establishing new meetings:

1. After deciding on a meeting place, it is suggested to have a business meeting right away or immediately after the first meeting to create a group conscience. This helps assure that from the start, the group does things democratically in accordance with Tradition 2 to help preserve unity in Tradition 1.

At the first business meeting, some key details of the meeting may be agreed on such as:

Is the current format suitable to the meeting ?

What are the qualifications of the speaker --- i.e. experienced all 12 Steps and has a specified amount of clean time?

What Opiates Anonymous approved readings do we use in beginning or end of meeting?

Have we created an opening statement particular to the group?

2. Some key group positions and their qualifications that should be voted on at first business meeting may include:
  - a) Chairperson – opens and closes meeting and helps maintain meeting in orderly fashion
  - b) Secretary – someone who can take notes on minutes of business meeting and keeps group informed on matters affecting group and Opiates Anonymous as a whole.
  - c) Treasurer – someone who can collect money and pay any rent to facility hosting meeting or other expenses.
  - d) Greeter – someone who can greet people and make them feel welcome.

The above are considered essential to the functioning of the group. Other important but non-essential service positions may include:

1. Coffee person – if it is allowed at meeting location, group needs to decide if it is going to have coffee. Typically the coffee person does not need to have gone through the steps or have any specified clean time requirement. Also some groups take up a special collection for initial costs associated with coffee since it may be deemed a “luxury” item.

2. GSR – not all Opiates Anonymous areas have an intergroup. If one is in existence, the GSR is the liaison between the local group and intergroup. Typically a GSR should be someone who is familiar with the traditions and meets certain requirements decided by group vote.
3. Speaker Seeker – Some groups create this position to allow chairperson to concentrate on opening and closing the meeting. A speaker seeker might be someone who has been around a while and knows speakers who carry a message of depth and weight.

### **Some Suggestions for Group Policy**

Group policy is suggested to be in writing to avoid any potential disagreements or misunderstandings. As long as a policy is in writing, it can be referenced when a disagreement inevitably arises at a business meeting. Group policy can be established right away or some groups like to wait until the second business meeting to establish group policy. After practical experience of the group running for several meetings, members can get a better idea of what items may need to be in place for that particular group i.e. who has been attending etc?

1. How often are business meetings? Last or first meeting day of month?
2. Does group establish a list of group members and what constitutes a group member?
3. Who can vote at meetings ----- i.e. only group members or others?
4. What is the format of the meeting?
5. Does group have anniversaries and what are policies regarding them?
6. How does group prioritize the use of its funds?
7. How much of a “prudent reserve” should group maintain?
8. How much should a group donate to wider Opiates Anonymous service structures ---- area, region, world services or whatever applicable structures are in existence in state or region to help carry the message?
9. How often can group policy be changed?

10. How much notice, if any, is needed to vote on a policy change at a business meeting?
11. If a motion to change policy fails to pass, how much time must elapse before the same or similar motion can be made?
12. Does group use Roberts Rules of Order as its guide for business meeting and voting protocol?
13. How many members need to be present to have a quorum before a vote on any issue can take place?
14. Does group have a policy to address disruptive or violent behavior?
15. Does group take a “group inventory” at how well group is adhering to traditions – i.e. Tradition 5 in carrying the message or other traditions?

These are some suggested considerations to help alleviate any misunderstanding within the group. We wish you well in the creation of your new group. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to serve you.