

To Southern California Group Representatives

November 22, 2016

A number of Group Representatives asked the Task Force that developed this policy to suggest how to describe the new policy at their meetings. Here it is! Please note: it will take some time to fully implement this policy...

The reason for the policy:

Up until now, if a member or group had a problem with something in their group about a practice that may affect Al-Anon as a whole (in other words, larger issues), it wasn't clear where to go or how to deal with it. Problems that members have called District or Area officers about have included people outside of Al-Anon such as therapists creating meetings and charging fees; meetings that use outside literature, such as AA literature and others, in their format; meetings with formally structured and/or dictatorial sponsorship; meetings that misused funds or had a financial relationship with an outside entity; and more.

Until now, there was no structure to support finding outside neutral help. More than two-thirds of the Area's Group Representatives at the November 2016 Assembly voted to approve a new policy called the "Southern California Policy for Resolving Group and Member Concerns." Six other areas have approved policies like these including Ohio, Missouri, Virginia, Tennessee, Idaho, and New York South. A number of other areas are developing policies as well.

The policy:

1. Establishes a place to go and a clear and orderly process to open up communication.
2. Puts conversation, fact-finding, and education first.
3. If an issue seems more charged or difficult to resolve, Area officers can appoint a Resolution Team removed from the issue to engage in collaborative fact-finding.
4. If, after all of this discussion and education, a group chooses to continue practices that are outside the Legacies, the Area has the autonomy to remove those groups from online and printed directories in the Area.
5. Per the 2014-2017 Al-Anon Service Manual, groups that are removed from the directories still have voice and vote at all service arms.
6. And there is a process by which groups can become relisted.

The full policy, the Assembly presentation, and a list of frequently asked questions is on the Southern California World Service website. The address for the website is http://www.scws-al-anon.org/director_presentations/.

With love, in service,

Members of the Task Force for Groups Who Do Not Consider Al-Anon as a Whole

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