

BYLAWS of the SUNCOAST INTERGROUP OF OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS

Revised 12/2021 and Approved 1/2022

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Suncoast Intergroup, hereinafter known as Intergroup.

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

Section 1 – Purpose

The primary purpose of this organization is to aid those with the problem of compulsively eating through the Twelve Steps of Overeaters Anonymous, and to serve and represent the OA groups from which the Intergroup is formed; this Intergroup is in compliance with and qualifies as an exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding section of any future United States Revenue Law).

Section 2 – The Twelve Steps

The Twelve Steps are suggested for recovery in the Fellowship of Overeaters Anonymous. The Twelve Steps are:

1. We admitted we were powerless over food — that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. We're entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to compulsive overeaters and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

Section 3 – The Twelve Traditions

The Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous are:

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

Section 4 – The Twelve Concepts

The Twelve Concepts of OA Service are:

Concept One

The ultimate responsibility and authority for OA world services reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.

Concept Two

The OA groups have delegated to the World Service Business Conference the active maintenance of our world services; thus, the World Service Business Conference is the voice, authority and effective conscience of OA as a whole.

Concept Three

The right of decision, based on trust, makes effective leadership possible.

Concept Four

The right of participation ensures equality of opportunity for all in the decision-making process.

Concept Five

Individuals have the right of appeal and petition in order to ensure that their opinions and personal grievances will be carefully considered.

Concept Six

The World Service Business Conference has entrusted the Board of Trustees with the primary responsibility for the administration of Overeaters Anonymous.

Concept Seven

The Board of Trustees has legal rights and responsibilities accorded to them by OA Bylaws, Subpart A; the rights and responsibilities of the World Service Business Conference are accorded to it by Tradition and by OA Bylaws, Subpart B.

Concept Eight

The Board of Trustees has delegated to its Executive Committee the responsibility to administer the OA World Service Office.

Concept Nine

Able, trusted servants, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are indispensable for effective functioning at all service levels.

Concept Ten

Service responsibility is balanced by carefully defined service authority; therefore, duplication of efforts is avoided.

Concept Eleven

Trustee administration of the World Service Office should always be assisted by the best standing committees, executives, staff and consultants.

Concept Twelve

The spiritual foundation for OA service ensures that:

- (a) No OA committee or service body shall ever become the seat of perilous wealth or power;
- (b) Sufficient operating funds, plus an ample reserve, shall be OA's prudent financial principle;
- (c) No OA member shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority;
- (d) All important decisions shall be reached by discussion, vote and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity;
- (e) No service action shall ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; and
- (f) No OA service committee or service board shall ever perform acts of government, and each shall always remain democratic in thought and action.

ARTICLE III – MEMBERS

Section 1 – Membership

Membership of the Intergroup shall consist of the following:

- A. The Intergroup Board.
- B. Intergroup Representatives (IRs), which shall consist of one member from each group within the geographic area or virtual group which associates itself with the geographic area. Visitors are welcome and encouraged to participate in the discussion.
 - I. Geographic area shall be defined as Hillsborough County, the towns of Wesley Chapel and Zephyrhills in Pasco County and the town of Spring Hill in Hernando County.
- C. Group members not acting as IRs but elected or appointed to carry out specific duties, e.g. Newsletter Editor.

Section 2 – Groups

- A. These points shall define an Overeaters Anonymous group:
 - I. As a group, they meet to practice the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of
 - II. Overeaters Anonymous, guided by the Twelve Concepts of OA Service.
- B. All who have the desire to stop eating compulsively are welcome in the group.
- C. No member is required to practice any actions in order to remain a member or to have a voice (share at a meeting).
- D. As a group, they have no affiliation other than Overeaters Anonymous.
- E. It has affiliated as an Overeaters Anonymous group by registering with the World Service Office.
- F. Virtual groups (groups which replicate face-to-face meetings through electronic media) may be an Overeaters Anonymous group if they:
 - I. otherwise meet the definition of Overeaters Anonymous groups;
 - II. are fully interactive, and;
 - III. meet in real time.
- G. Each group shall be entitled to one vote through its elected Intergroup Representative/s (IR).
- H. Groups may have an alternate Intergroup Representative to serve during an IR's planned absence
- I. No group may be registered with another Intergroup.

Section 3 – Intergroup Representatives

- A. Intergroup representatives shall be selected by the group conscience of the group they represent. Each IR shall be selected by any method deemed appropriate by their group. These IRs shall serve for a period designated by their group, always subject to recall by the group they represent. Each group shall be free to designate an alternate delegate when the necessity arises.

- B. IRs should be selected for willingness to serve, commitment to the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of OA and length of time in program (to be determined by the group).
- C. The primary responsibility of the IR, or alternate, is to represent their group at all meetings of the Intergroup, to act as a liaison between this Intergroup and their group, to see that all communications pertaining to Intergroup are made available and, where requested, read aloud to the group.

Section 4 – Absences of Intergroup Representatives

In the case of recurrent IR absences at the monthly Intergroup meeting, the represented group may choose to select a new IR.

Section 5 – Membership with voice and no vote may be:

- A. Any employee
- B. Any member of the Fellowship who is not a duly elected representative or alternate; i.e. a visitor or observer.

ARTICLE IV – THE INTERGROUP BOARD

Section 1 – The Intergroup Board

- A. The board shall consist of at least a Chairperson, vice Chairperson, secretary and treasurer.
- B. The immediate past Chairperson may serve as an ex-officio member of the Intergroup Board for one year. The Intergroup Board may also include other positions such as the World Service Business Conference delegate(s), committee chair(s)/regional representative(s). Their duties shall be set by policy adopted by the Intergroup and contained in the Intergroup job descriptions.
- C. This Intergroup Board shall serve as the executive board. In the event the Chairperson of the board should be unable to attend any meeting of the board, the next highest-ranking executive officer in attendance shall serve as chair for that meeting. The ranking of these officers shall serve as follows:
 - I. Vice Chairperson
 - II. Treasurer
 - III. Secretary

Section 2 – Nominations to the Intergroup Board

Nominations to the board may be made from the floor at the time of the election. A nominating committee may also be formed, at the discretion of the Intergroup

Section 3 – Qualifications for the Intergroup Board

- A. Working the Twelve Steps of OA for 12 months.

- B. Familiarity with the Twelve Traditions of OA.
- C. Familiarity with the Twelve Concepts of OA Service.
- D. 12 months of current abstinence.
- E. Regular attendee of an active group for a period of 12 months.
- F. A volunteer may serve in an “acting” position until all listed requirements are met or a permanent replacement steps forward.
- G. The World Service Business Conference Delegate/alternate (whether or not a member of the Intergroup Board) shall have at least one (1) year of current abstinence and meet qualifications and requirements as outlined and defined in the Overeaters Anonymous, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article X, Section 3, and as required for election to the Board by Article IV, Section 4, of these bylaws.
- H. The regional representative/alternate (whether or not a member of the Intergroup Board) shall meet qualifications and requirements as outlined and defined in the Region VIII Bylaws, and as required for election to the board by Article IV, Section 4, of these bylaws.

Section 4 – Method of Election

- A. Elections shall be held every odd year at the October intergroup meeting.
- B. To be eligible for election to the board, nominee must:
 - I. Meet all qualifications as defined in Article IV, Section 3.
 - II. Understand responsibilities of the position as defined in Article IV, Section 6, and as defined in the Intergroup job descriptions.
- C. In order to be elected to membership on the Intergroup Board, a nominee must be present at the election meetings and must receive a majority vote of the IRs present and voting. Voting can be by show of hands or anonymous ballot, to be determined by the chair one month prior to the voting meeting. The Intergroup board Secretary will count and announce results.
- D. Only IR’s shall vote for board elections.

Section 5 – Term of Office

- A. Board members shall be elected to serve for a period of two years.
 - I. Newly elected officers shall begin service in January of the upcoming year.
 - II. The current and newly elected officers shall share responsibilities during the transition period for training purposes.
- B. Board members shall serve no more than two consecutive terms in the same office.
- C. In the event that a board member is elected to a position that has been vacated prior to term, their term will begin immediately and does not count towards the two consecutive term limit.
- D. After an interval of two years, a member may again be eligible for election to their prior office.

- E. Upon election to the board, members shall cease to be representative of their group and that group shall elect a new Intergroup representative.

Section 6 – Responsibilities of the Intergroup Board

A. Chairperson:

- I. Shall preside at all regular and special meetings of this Intergroup and Intergroup board.
- II. Shall be responsible to establish the agenda for all Intergroup meetings.
- III. May cast the deciding vote to make or break a tie.
- IV. May participate in a ballot vote.
- V. Shall serve on either the Retention and Prevention Sub-committee or Spreading the Message sub-committee. If the Chair is the only board member on the sub-committee, then he/she shall serve as chair. If more than one board member is on the same committee, then one of the board members shall serve as the chair.
- VI. Shall ensure that the general account of the Intergroup be audited annually.
- VII. Shall perform all other duties as prescribed in the Intergroup policy for job descriptions.

B. Vice Chairperson:

- I. Shall serve in the absence of the Chairperson.
- II. Shall serve on either the Retention and Prevention Sub-committee or Spreading the Message sub-committee. If the Vice Chair is the only board member on the sub-committee, then he/she shall serve as chair. If more than one board member is on the same committee, then one of the board members shall serve as the chair.
- III. Shall perform all other duties as prescribed in the Intergroup policy for job descriptions.

C. Secretary:

- I. Shall see that minutes are kept of all Intergroup and Intergroup Board meetings and that a copy of the Intergroup minutes is e-mailed to the distribution list. As a cooperative gesture, a copy of the minutes may be sent to the regional trustee.
- II. Shall maintain a file of all minutes of past meetings.
- III. Shall perform all other duties as prescribed in the Intergroup policy.
- IV. Shall serve on either the Retention and Prevention Sub-committee or Spreading the Message sub-committee. If the Secretary is the only board member on the sub-committee, then he/she shall serve as chair. If more than one board member is on the same committee, then one of the board members shall serve as the chair.

V. Shall receive World Service Office (WSO) meeting contact list, verify by contacting each group at least annually and return to WSO.

D. Treasurer:

- I. Shall maintain a checking and savings account, if necessary, for disbursement of Intergroup funds.
- II. Shall submit financial reports each month at the Intergroup meetings.
- III. Shall be authorized to sign checks. The IG Chair and past IG treasurer shall also be authorized to sign checks.
- IV. Shall perform all other duties as prescribed in the Intergroup policy for job descriptions.
- V. Shall have familiarity with reconciling bank statements.
- VI. Shall serve on either the Retention and Prevention Sub-committee or Spreading the Message sub-committee. If the Secretary is the only board member on the sub-committee, then he/she shall serve as chair. If more than one board member is on the same committee, then one of the board members shall serve as the chair.

E. The Intergroup Board shall provide a means of conducting the Intergroup business in the case of emergencies and/or between meetings of the Intergroup.

Section 7 – Vacancies and Resignations

- A. If a member of the Intergroup Board fails to attend 2 consecutive meetings without prior notice, his/her office may be declared vacant by a majority of those members present and voting.
- B. Any board member may resign at any time for any reason by giving the Chairperson of the Intergroup written notice.
- C. Any board member of this Intergroup may be removed from office for due cause by a 51% vote of the IRs.

Section 8 – Filling of Vacancies

- A. Vacancies shall be filled by a majority vote. Such persons chosen to fill said vacancies shall serve for the remainder of the unexpired term.
- B. A person chosen to fill any vacancy on the board shall meet the qualifications as defined in Article IV, Section 3, and be aware of all responsibilities of that position as described in Article IV.

ARTICLE V – MEETINGS

Section 1 – Regular Meetings

The Intergroup shall meet a minimum of 6 times a year at a time and place designated by a majority of the voting members.

Section 2 – Special Meetings

A special meeting may be called at any time by a majority vote of the Intergroup Board, or by petition of 2 Intergroup members, by giving notice as prescribed in Article V, section 4.

Section 3 – Method of Notification

Notification of all meetings shall consist of notices prepared by the Intergroup secretary and e-mailed to the distribution list five days prior to the date of the meeting.

Section 4 – Quorum

Those voting members present at any meeting of this Intergroup shall constitute a quorum for all proceedings of the Intergroup.

Section 5 – Meeting Procedure

It is suggested at the beginning of every meeting, OA's Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions to be read. In addition, it is requested that the Twelve Concepts of OA Service be read. The meeting will open and close with the Serenity Prayer.

ARTICLE VI – COMMITTEES

Section 1 – Sub-Committees

The following sub-committees will carry out the purpose of Intergroup in the most effective and efficient manner:

- A. Retention & Prevention
- B. Spreading the Message

Section 2 – Sub-Committee Chairpersons

An executive board member will serve on either the Retention and Prevention Subcommittee or Spreading the Message subcommittee. Board members will be evenly divided between the subcommittees when possible. One of the board members on the subcommittee will serve as the chair. Each committee head shall assign tasks to willing and able committee members for the work of the committee.

Section 3 – Sub-Committee Procedures

Each sub-committee shall follow the Twelve Traditions of OA and the Twelve Concepts of OA Service.

Section 4 – Sub-Committee Responsibilities

Sub-committee responsibilities are outlined below. Any decision which establishes or changes a policy, sets a procedural plan for a special event, or expends funds in excess of the approved budget, shall require approval by the Intergroup prior to implementation.

RETENTION & PREVENTION (R&P):

- Shall be headed by a member of the Executive Board
- Shall meet for 20 minutes during monthly Intergroup meetings and provide a report to the larger group as a whole immediately following.
- Shall brainstorm ways & means efforts and prepare yearly budget requests for October budget meeting, referring to WSO Documents “Budget Guidelines for Service Bodies” and “Fundraising and Prudent Reserve Guidelines for Groups and Service Bodies”.
- Shall participate in the organization of Florida State Convention, as per committee assigned by that body. Shall follow FSC guidelines for assigned subcommittee.
- Shall plan intergroup-sponsored events at the discretion of the group. Focus will be on celebrating OA holidays as noted in the OA Bylaws. Current OA holidays include OA birthday (3rd weekend in January), Unity Day (4th weekend in February), Sponsorship Day (3rd weekend in August), International Day of Experiencing Abstinence (3rd weekend in November) and Twelfth Step Within Day (December 12th).
- Shall organize and support other activities to retain members within the OA fellowship and provide support for relapse treatment and prevention.
- Shall work towards representation of each group at Intergroup and support group outreach efforts.

SPREADING THE MESSAGE (StM):

- Shall be headed by a member of the Executive Board
- Shall meet for 20 minutes during monthly Intergroup meetings and provide a report to the larger group as a whole immediately following.
- Shall brainstorm ways & means efforts for the sub-committee and prepare yearly budget requests for October budget meeting, referring to WSO Documents “Budget Guidelines for Service Bodies” and “Fundraising and Prudent Reserve Guidelines for Groups and Service Bodies”.
- Shall focus on efforts in the following areas:

Communication and Technology

- Shall refer to and utilize service body support and WSO Document “Website Development Guidelines”
- Shall maintain communication with the webmaster to ensure that website is updated at least once a month.
- Shall refer to WSBC policy statement 2011a regarding Public Media.
- Shall oversee administration of Information line (Ring Central) and refer to provider’s (Ring Central) online guidelines... Phone 888-528-7464
- Shall refer to WSO Document for greeting message guidelines “ –Suggested OA Hotline Message for Service Bodies”.

- Shall review RingCentral website for usage data and contact Suncoast account manager at RingCentral with any issues/questions.
- Shall initiate and ensure maintenance of various forms of social media including but not limited to Facebook information page and text messaging service, ensuring maximum protection of members' personal anonymity, and again referring to WSBC guidelines for social media.
- Shall be responsible to ensure that Suncoast Gmail address is checked on an at least weekly basis and respond to requests for information.

History & Archives

- Shall refer to WSO Document "Guidelines for Writing the History of Your Local Area."
- Shall refer to Intergroup Archive Binder for guidance and information.
- Shall maintain current files to document changes to meeting lists, contact lists, newsletter, meeting minutes, etc.

Newsletter

- Shall refer to other service body support - WSO Document "Guidelines for local Newsletters."
- Shall review archived newsletters.
- Shall request contributions from members.
- Shall set a deadline for contributions.
- Shall create a semi-annual newsletter.

Public Information & Professional Outreach (PIPO)

- Shall refer to Service Manuals, other service bodies and WSO Documents "Guidelines for Health Fair Participation, Guidelines for Public Information Events, Guidelines for Professional Outreach Committees".
- Shall utilize committee internet files and PIPO binder to review past outreach projects, reports and contacts.
- Shall brainstorm ideas for a Plan of Action.
- Shall choose projects and ask for help from groups.
- Shall refer to WSBC policy statement 2011a on Public Media and the document Guidelines for Anonymity in a Digital World.
- Shall maintain binder with reports of activities and projects.

Section 5 – Nominating Committee

The Intergroup may have a nominating committee to recommend persons to serve as officers, RRs, WSBC delegates and persons to fill vacancies and to serve on the next nominating committee. The number of members on the committee should be 3. The chairperson of the Intergroup shall not serve on the committee, but may provide background information and input as requested by the committee.

Section 6 – Ad Hoc Committees

The Intergroup may form ad hoc committees aside from the two larger sub-committees to address events or concerns as determined by the Intergroup membership. An ad hoc committee would have a specific goal and limited time frame of action, and would have a chairperson who is not a member of the standing board.

ARTICLE VII – Source of Funds

Section 1 – Sources of Funds

- A. Voluntary contributions of the member groups shall be the primary source of funds.
- B. Secondary sources of income may be such occasional events or activities as may be authorized by the Intergroup according to Tradition Six.
- C. The Intergroup may accept donations from OA members, conforming to the general practice of OA.
- D. The maximum allowable annual donation to the Intergroup by an individual OA member is to be limited to \$5,000.
- E. The acceptance of bequests or donations from any outside source is prohibited.
- F. The maximum allowable bequest to the Intergroup by OA members is to be limited to \$100,000.
- G. The Intergroup shall not accept the responsibility for trusteeship over, or enter into the distribution or allocation of, funds set up outside of Overeaters Anonymous.

Section 2 – Prudent Reserve

There shall be no accumulation of funds beyond current necessities, with retention of only a prudent reserve for contingencies. Current procedure calls for maintaining a prudent reserve of one year's worth of fixed expenditures plus \$500 needed to maintain our bank account. Funds in excess shall be donated to Region 8 and the World Service Office annually as budgeted and directed by the Intergroup.

ARTICLE VIII – PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern this Intergroup in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these Bylaws, the Overeaters Anonymous Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B or any special rules of order this Intergroup may adopt.

ARTICLE IX – AMENDMENTS TO THESE BYLAWS

These bylaws, with the exception of Article II, Sections 2, 3 and 4, may be amended at any time by a majority ballot vote of the IRs and board members present at any regular or special meeting of the Intergroup, provided a copy of the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing and received by each group affiliated with this Intergroup at least 1 month prior to the meeting in which action is to be taken on this amendment.

ARTICLE X – MAJOR POLICY MATTERS

Section 1

- A. Matters that affect this Intergroup and/or groups within its service area shall be referred to the board of this Intergroup.
- B. Matters, which relate to Overeaters Anonymous as a whole, which affect Subpart A of the Bylaws of Overeaters Anonymous, Inc., shall be referred to the Board of Trustees.
- C. Matters which affect Subpart B of the Bylaws of Overeaters Anonymous, Inc., or which relate to the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts shall be referred to the World Service Business Conference.

ARTICLE XI – DISSOLUTION

Section 1

Upon the dissolution of this association, after paying or adequately providing for the debts and obligations of the association, the remaining assets shall be distributed according to Tradition Six, which guides us to disperse funds only to other OA service bodies. Such distribution shall be made to the World Service Office of Overeaters Anonymous, and/or Region # 8, and/or another registered OA service body. If no registered OA service body exists to which the assets can be transferred, distribution shall be made to a non-profit fund, association, foundation or corporation, which is organized and operated exclusively for charitable, education, religious and/or scientific purposes and which complies with applicable laws. For example, such organizations or entities within the USA must comply with Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Section 2

No part of the net earnings of this association shall ever insure to or be used for the benefit of, or be distributed to, its members, trustees, officers or other private persons, except that the association shall be empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payment and distribution in furtherance of the express purposes for which it is formed.

Section 3

In order to deregister, the intergroup must submit a written request to the World Service Office, region chair and region trustee.