

Guidelines

The Shared Experience of Al-Anon Members

Al-Anon Conventions

These guidelines are intended to share the experience of Al-Anon members in organising conventions. There are many different types of conventions, from national, to local or mini-conventions. Experience suggests that there are a number of points that should be considered.

PLANNING



- It is important that you have the support of your Group, District and/or Area (your supporting body) and that the convention is planned well in advance.
- Either the supporting body appoints a Chairman/Convenor, or a group of like-minded members form a committee and then approach their District and Area.
- The chairman forms a committee of active members appointed to plan and run the convention, with each member being given a clearly defined role. You will need committee members to take responsibility for finance, the programme, publicity, literature, catering and fund raising.
- *If planning a National Convention, it is recommended that the Regional Trustee for the region of the Host Committee, acts as liaison between the committee and the General Service Board.*
- A previous committee for a similar convention, may helpfully pass the records of one committee to the next.
- While the items below will normally be the responsibility of one committee member, other members will be needed to help carry out these duties at the convention.
- If there is no seed fund money for booking deposits, it may be loaned to the committee by the supporting body. The committee may also arrange fund raising within the Area, District or Group.
- Insurance cover for the event should be checked with GSO.
- The Convention Treasurer prepares a statement of income and expenditure immediately after the convention. If the convention is to be an annual event, some money should be retained for a seed fund for next year's initial expenses. Annual convention organisers will need to review this sum each year. All surplus money should be passed to the supporting body and to the General Service Office, to support the work of Al-Anon Family Groups UK & Eire.

PROGRAMME

- The committee should choose a theme for the convention and a topic for each meeting.
- Careful timing of meetings, with time limits for speakers, is important to enable maximum participation. Remember to allow some time between meetings for relaxation and discussion.
- Chairmen, speakers and alternate speakers, who regularly attend Al-Anon meetings, should be arranged for each session, giving as much notice as possible.

FINANCE

- Tradition Seven, that we be fully self-supporting, applies to the financing of conventions.
- The Convention Treasurer is responsible for keeping a record of all money. It is recommended that the Treasurer open a bank account in the name of the convention. It is advisable to have two signatories to the account.
- Costs should be obtained in the early planning stages and an estimate of income and expenditure prepared. This will help to make realistic, achievable plans.

PUBLICITY

- Flyers should be prepared well before the event to send out as appropriate.



- Dates, location and an anonymised email address for information can be included for the Events section of the website if details are sent to GSO as soon as they are available.

CATERING

- Catering arrangements should be made well in advance with a committee member responsible for overseeing this.
- If self-catering ensure facilities are available and you have sufficient plates, cutlery, etc.
- For some conventions, it can be practical for members to bring their own packed lunches and only tea and coffee need be provided.



LITERATURE

- It is a good idea to have a good stock of literature available to see but please order it in plenty of time for delivery.
- Geography permitting, it is a great help if bulk literature orders can be collected from GSO at an agreed time.
- Larger conventions may place a Sale or Return order. A Sale or Return order is limited to books. It requires Returns to be in pristine condition and to be made in accordance with the terms of the Sale or Return Agreement, accompanied by the final payment. Sale or Return orders are accepted at the discretion of GSO – please contact GSO for information. It is advisable not to over-order as return costs must be paid out of convention funds.

REGISTRATION

- There needs to be a clear procedure for members to register on arrival.

ALATEEN

Alateen participation will involve:

- providing suitable space for separate meetings.
- being aware of the requirements for registration.
- being aware of the responsibilities set out in *Al-Anon's Policies and Practices Concerning Alateen (available from GSO)*.

It cannot be stressed firmly enough that organising committees must be fully conversant with *Al-Anon's Policies and Practices Concerning Alateen (available on request from GSO)*.

The main points to note are that:

- Two Screened Group Sponsors need to be present at all Alateen meetings.

- A consent form must be completed by the parent/guardian giving their permission for the Alateen member to attend and naming the adult responsible for the Alateen member if the member is not accompanied by a parent or guardian.
- **It is the organising committee's responsibility to check that Group Sponsors are on the current Register of Screened Group Sponsors held at GSO.**
- The responsibility of the Screened Group Sponsors only covers the duration of the Alateen meeting. At all other times full responsibility lies with the parent(s) or guardian(s) named on the permission slip.

SOUVENIRS/RAFFLES

- In keeping with our Traditions, it is inappropriate for an individual or outside entity to use Al-Anon events as a market place for the sale of souvenirs or products.
- Please be aware that raffles are subject to local bylaws.

AA PARTICIPATION



When Al-Anon invites AA participation, the Al-Anon hosts:

- provide suitable space for separate meetings.
- invite an AA liaison member to attend the planning sessions.

AA members organise their own meetings and choose their own speakers.

For Al-Anon/Alateen participation in AA conventions, see Guideline UKG9 *Co-operation between Al-Anon and AA*.

AFTER THE CONVENTION

A final committee meeting should be held to:

- assess the convention.
- review finances.
- arrange the return of literature as applicable.
- list helpful suggestions to be added to the files for the next committee.

