

# **Bylaws**

## **of the Foothill Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Foothill Intergroup, started on February 13, 1978, is the oldest intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous and a member of Region 2. Our primary purpose was and remains to carry the message to the compulsive eater who still suffers.

One evening each month, the Foothill Intergroup holds a business meeting which serves as a forum for a representative from every meeting in the Foothill Intergroup to participate in sharing ideas, concerns, and suggestions with other compulsive eaters. The primary purpose of the Intergroup delegate is to represent their group's concerns at the Intergroup meeting, act as a liaison between the Foothill Intergroup and their group, and to see that all communications from the Intergroup are made available and reported back to their group.

In all of its proceedings, Foothill Intergroup shall observe the spirit of the Overeaters Anonymous traditions, taking care that the Intergroup never becomes the seat of wealth or power; that sufficient operating capital, plus reserves, be its prudent financial principle; that none of the Foothill Intergroup Board members 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 action by the Foothill Intergroup ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; that though it may act in the service of the Foothill Intergroup meetings' groups, it shall never perform any acts of government, and, that like the fellowship of Overeaters Anonymous, the Intergroup itself will always remain democratic in thought and deed.

In collective thought, we ask our Higher Power to guide us in loving service and mutual respect while we perform our duties of active participation on behalf of ourselves and other compulsive overeaters.

## PREAMBLE

Overeaters Anonymous is a Fellowship of individuals who, through shared experience, strength, and hope, are recovering from compulsive overeating.

We welcome everyone who wants to stop eating compulsively. There are no dues nor fees for members; we are self-supporting through our own contributions, neither soliciting nor accepting outside donations. OA is not affiliated with any public or private organization, political movement, ideology, or religious doctrine; we take no position on outside issues.

Our primary purpose is to abstain from compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors, and to carry the message of recovery through the Twelve Steps of OA to those who still suffer.

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## ARTICLE ONE – NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Foothill Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous, also known as the Overeaters Anonymous Foothill Intergroup.

## ARTICLE TWO – PURPOSE

Section 1 - The primary purpose of the Foothill Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous is to carry the message of recovery to those with the problems of compulsive eating and compulsive food behaviors by fostering the practice of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, guided by the Twelve Concepts of OA Service; and to serve and represent member groups and/or intergroups.

- A) The specific and primary purpose of the Foothill Intergroup is to aid those with the disease of compulsive overeating, to overcome that problem. As Tradition Five states: “each group has but one primary purpose, to carry this message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers,” Primacy to this end is the distribution of the Foothill IG printed meeting list, *The Footnotes*, the operation of the Foothill Intergroup Meeting Information telephone line, blog, website, workshops, and events.
- B) The general purpose is to promote the public health and to work with and furnish charitable and cultural assistance to those with the problem of compulsive eating.
- C) Specifically excluded from the objectives of the Foothill IG is the operation of any club or clubhouse. Also, specifically excluded, is the endorsement of any private or public project on overeating as described in Tradition Six.
- D) This corporation is organized and operated exclusively for educational purposes, with the meaning of Section 501(c) (3) and Section 509 (a) (2) of the Internal Revenue Code.
- E) The Twelve Steps  
The Twelve Steps suggested for recovery in the Fellowship of Overeaters Anonymous are as follows:
  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. Were 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.

*Permission to use the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous for adaptation granted by AA World Services, Inc.*

F) The Twelve Traditions

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.

*Permission to use the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous for adaptation granted by AA World Services, Inc.*

G) The Twelve Concepts of OA Service

1. The ultimate responsibility and authority for OA World Services reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.

2. The OA groups have delegated to World Service Business Conference the active maintenance of our world services; thus, World Service Business Conference is the voice, authority, and effective conscience of OA as a whole.
3. The right of decision, based on trust, makes effective leadership possible.
4. The right of participation ensures equality of opportunity for all in the decision-making process.
5. Individuals have the right of appeal and petition in order to ensure that their opinions and personal grievances will be carefully considered.
6. The World Service Business Conference has entrusted the Board of Trustees with the primary responsibility for the administration of Overeaters Anonymous.
7. 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.
8. The Board of Trustees has delegated to its Executive Committee the responsibility to administer the OA World Service Office.
9. Able, trusted servants, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are indispensable for effective functioning at all service levels.
10. Service responsibility is balanced by carefully defined service authority; therefore, duplication of efforts is avoided.
11. Trustee administration of the World Service Office should always be assisted by the best standing committees, executives, staffs, and consultants.
12. 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, by 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 any acts of government, and each shall always remain democratic in thought and action.

## ARTICLE THREE – MEMBERS

### Section 1 – Membership

Membership of the Intergroup (IG) with voice and vote includes the following:

- A) The IG officers
- B) Intergroup representatives (IRs), consisting of one (1) or two (2) members from each meeting

- C) World Service Business Conference delegates group
- D) Region 2 representatives
- E) Committee chairs (NOTE: a committee chair, like every other IG member, will have only one vote even if also serving as an IR.)
- F) Foothill Intergroup Immediate Past Chairperson

## Section 2 – Qualifications

- A) Qualifications for group membership in the Intergroup: groups registered with the World Service Office that are within its region or geographic proximity may affiliate with the Intergroup. There is one exception: virtual groups registered with the World Service Office may affiliate with the Intergroup without regard to geographic proximity.
- B) The Foothill Intergroup endorses the definition of an OA group written in Overeaters Anonymous, Incorporated, Bylaws, Subpart B, Article Five, Section 1, as written and as it may be amended by a future World Service Business Conference.
- C) These points shall define an Overeaters Anonymous Meeting:
  - a. As a group, we meet to practice the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of 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 action/s in order to remain a member or have a voice (i.e., share at a meeting).
  - d. As a group, it has no affiliation other than Overeaters Anonymous.
  - e. It has affiliated as an Overeaters Anonymous group by registering with the World Service Office.
- D) Virtual groups (groups which replicate face-to-face meetings through electronic media) may be considered an Overeaters Anonymous Group if they:
  - a. Otherwise meet the definition of OA groups.
  - b. Are fully interactive.
  - c. Meet in real time.

## Section 3 – Intergroup Representatives

- A) Intergroup Representatives (IRs) will be selected by the group conscience of the group they represent.
- B) The purpose of the IR is to represent that group at IG meetings and to serve as a conduit to carry communications between the IG and the represented group.

# ARTICLE FOUR – THE INTERGROUP BOARD

## Section 1 – Membership

- A) The Board consists of the following officers: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, World Service Business Conference Delegate, Region 2 Representative, and designated Committee Chairs.

- B) Meetings shall be led by the Chair of the Board. In the event the Chair is unable to lead any meeting, the Vice Chair will lead the meeting. In the event the Vice Chair is not available, the Secretary will open the meeting and hold an election for a Temporary Chair.

## Section 2 – Nominations to the Intergroup Board

Nominations to the Board may be made from the floor at the time of election. A nominating committee may be formed at the discretion of the IG Board.

## Section 3 – Qualifications for the Intergroup Board

To qualify for election to the IG Board, an individual must:

- A) Be working the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of Service to the best of his/her/their ability.
- B) Have one (1) year of current abstinence except as follows (each person shall be the sole judge of his/her/their abstinence):
  - a. World Service Business Conference delegates must comply with the abstinence and length of service requirements in the OA, Inc., Bylaws, Subpart B, Article Ten, Section Three C. Current requirements are one year current abstinence and at least two years of service beyond the group level.
  - b. Region Representatives must comply with the abstinence and length of service specified in the region's bylaws. Region Two (2) states that: "Each group or Intergroup selects its RR in any manner it chooses as long as it stays within the framework of the Twelve Steps, the Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of OA Service."
- C) Be a regular member of an affiliated group.
- D) Have been a meeting delegate for at least six (6) months.

## Section 4 – Election of Board Members

- A) Nominations may be made from the floor at the time of election in October.
- B) Nominees must be present at the election meeting. The candidate must receive a majority vote of ballots cast.
- C) Voting will be by ballot. In the event of a non-contested election, a show of hands is acceptable.

## Section 5 – Terms of Board Members

- A) The term of office of a Board Member commences on the first of January of a calendar year. A term of service is for one year, with the exception of Region 2 Representative and WSO Delegates, who are elected to a two (2) year term.
- B) Board Members may serve no more than two (2) consecutive terms in the same position. A member may serve again after a leave of one (1) year from the position.
- C) Once elected, a Board Member may not serve also as a group representative at the Intergroup.

## Section 6 - Responsibilities of the Intergroup Board Members

- A) Intergroup Board Members serve as guardians of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of Service with respect to the functions of the Intergroup.
- B) Intergroup Board Members perform the duties of their offices in accordance with Intergroup policies and procedures.
- C) Intergroup Board Members serve as guardians of Intergroup funds and participate in an annual financial audit.
- D) Intergroup Board Members provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and information among member groups.

## Section 7 – Vacancies and Resignations

- A) If a Board Member is absent three (3) or more times in a twelve (12) month period, he/she/they may be removed from the position by a simple majority vote of the ballots cast either at a regular IG meeting or a meeting announced for that purpose.
- B) Any Board Member may resign at any time for any reason by giving the Chair of the Intergroup written notice.
- C) Any Board Member of the Intergroup may be removed from office for due cause by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the ballots cast at a regular or special meeting.

## Section 8 – Filling Vacancies

- A) Vacancies shall be filled by a majority vote at the next meeting, special meeting, or Chair-led special email vote after the vacancy occurs. Such person/s 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 Four, Section 3.

## ARTICLE FIVE – INTERGROUP MEETINGS

### Section 1 – Regular Meetings

The Intergroup will meet monthly, January through November, at a time and place designated by the majority of the voting members.

### Section 2 – Annual Meetings

An annual meeting shall be held in the month of October for the election of officers. Nominations may begin at the September meeting, with elections the following month. November is designated for orientation of incoming officers.

### Section 3 – Method of Notification

The Intergroup will provide at least seven (7) days' notice to each member group.

### Section 4 – Quorum

Those voting members present at any meeting of the Foothill Intergroup shall constitute a quorum for all proceedings of that meeting as long as three (3) or more Board Members are present.

#### Section 5 – Meeting Procedure

The Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of Service shall be read at the beginning of each meeting.

#### Section 6 – Special Meetings

- A) A special meeting or email vote may be called at any time by a majority vote of the IG Board, or by a quorum of IG members. A minimum of three (3) Board Members is needed to constitute a quorum. Sufficient time must be provided to make it possible for as many as possible to attend or vote.
- B) The Chairperson will alert as many IG Members as possible, and the meeting will take place in person, by text, telephone, or online platform. A minimum of three (3) Board Members is needed to constitute a quorum.

#### Section 7 – Emergency Meetings

- A) From time to time, it may be necessary to call an emergency Foothill IG Board meeting in the event that an Intergroup related decision must be made quickly.
- B) Specific issues will be discussed, and necessary votes taken. A majority of three (3) voting members will constitute a quorum. Details, including receipts, will be given to the IG Secretary and Treasurer, and the emergency meeting minutes will be shared with the entire Board at a regularly scheduled Foothill IG meeting.

### ARTICLE SIX – COMMITTEES

The Board may establish committees as are needed for the welfare and operation of the Intergroup. Each committee is responsible to the IG Board.

### ARTICLE SEVEN – PRUDENT RESERVE

The IG Treasurer will maintain a prudent reserve of six (6) months' worth of expenses to cover expected operational needs. Excess funds will be donated to Region Two (2) and to World Service as determined by the IG and/or 501(c)(3) and/or 509(a)(2) requirements.

### ARTICLE EIGHT – PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

The parliamentary authority commonly in use throughout Overeaters Anonymous is the most current available edition of Robert's Rules of Order. The Intergroup may conduct the business of the group by any method it chooses.

### ARTICLE NINE – AMENDMENTS TO THESE BYLAWS

These Bylaws may be amended at any time by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the voting members present at any regular or special meeting of the Intergroup. The proposed amendment must be communicated in writing to each member group at least thirty (30) days prior to the voting meeting. Amendments to the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of Service may only be made as per OA Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article XIV, Section 1. Intergroup bylaw Amendments are subject to Region 2 and WSO review.

## ARTICLE TEN – DISSOLUTION

### Section 1 – Deregistration

In order to dissolve, the Intergroup must deregister. The Foothill Intergroup must submit a written request to the World Service Office, Region 2 Chair, and Region 2 Trustee.

### Section 2 - Disbursement of Remaining Funds

When the Intergroup ceases operation and all debts have been paid, all remaining funds shall be distributed to Region 2 or the World Service Office, in accordance with Tradition Seven.

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