



W O R L D S E R V I C E O F F I C E

March 10, 2020

The World Service Office (WSO) has been receiving inquiries about how groups should respond to COVID-19 (coronavirus).

The WSO has received inquiries about the OA events it coordinates throughout the year. At this time (March 2020), there are ***no plans to cancel or postpone*** either World Service Business Conference (WSBC) in April or World Service Convention (WSC) in August. For up-to-date information regarding WSO events, visit oa.org and click on What's happening at OA? Please be assured that the health and safety of attendees is a priority. The WSO is closely monitoring relevant health advisories regarding COVID-19 (coronavirus).

Groups and members are understandably concerned about health and safety issues and are looking for guidance on how to address questions. The WSO is a repository of shared group experience, and it functions as a resource center for OA members and groups who are looking for the shared experience of the Fellowship.

Providing guidance on health issues is outside the scope of the OA sharing that the WSO offers. However, we might suggest contacting your national, state/provincial, and local health authorities for appropriate information.

We do have some general experience to share regarding how some groups and members have begun to address this health and safety issue. Our collected experience suggests that talking about issues before they arise can help a group be prepared to address them in a sensible and helpful manner and allow the group to continue keeping the focus on our common welfare and primary purpose. Some groups have discussed making changes to customs at their meetings. Some examples include avoiding shaking hands and handholding, for the time being.

Regardless of group decisions, each individual is responsible for their own health decisions. Some groups have considered contingency plans in case the group is temporarily unable to meet face-to-face. Plans have included creating contact lists and keeping in touch by phone, email, or social media; meeting by phone or online.

If a group isn't holding its regular meetings, they may want to communicate this to local OA resources, such as the intergroup and region.

We hope this limited sharing is helpful.