

3) As a District how do we handle the announcement of a member's death, illness, etc., and is it proper to use the CMA to notify the members?

The first issue I saw when addressing the research here was “anonymity” and because the issue is being addressed “as a District,” it is an anonymity issue “within Al-Anon/Alateen.”

You may wish to turn to pages 92-94 of the 2014-2017, Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual

1. Within the fellowship members use their full names when they wish... However, regardless of our personal choice, we guard the anonymity of everyone else in the fellowship --- Al-Anon/Alateen and AA.

BEFORE ANNOUNCING SOMEONE IS ILL, DECEASED, ETC., WE MIGHT FIRST ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS:

- Do they want others to know about it?
- Does the family mind if the death is announced?

2. If an announcement is made at a meeting, group anniversary, convention, or workshop where non-members may be present,... it is well to begin these meetings with a brief explanation of the Eleventh and Twelfth Traditions: One suggestion is as follows:

There may be some who are not familiar with our Tradition of personal anonymity in any form of press, radio, films, TV, Internet, and other electronic media.

If so, we respectfully ask that no Al-Anon, Alateen or AA speaker or member be identified by full name or picture in published, broadcast, or Web-posted reports of our meeting.

The assurance of anonymity is essential to our efforts to help other families of alcoholics, and our Tradition of anonymity reminds us to place Al-Anon and Alateen principles above personalities.

3. Service communication via e-mail is expedient and efficient, but care and common sense must be taken in its use, particularly in forwarding messages.

Use of blind copies protects members' anonymity.

Members should select with care the e-mail address(es) they use to conduct Al-Anon/Alateen business. It is recommended not to use members' full names in them. Business e-mail addresses might not provide privacy and could imply affiliation.

[emphasis added]

4. *As postal correspondence is delivered by public means, letters (including the return address) to an Al-Anon or Alateen member should never have the name Al-Anon or Alateen on the envelope. The World Service Office uses “AFG, Inc.” on envelopes sent to members in order to protect anonymity.*

So, the important thing to maintain anonymity here is not to associate that person’s name with the words “Al-Anon” or “Alateen.”

5. *Publications and other materials meant for members (such as flyers, reports, letters, e-mail messages, newsletters) that identify members by full name or provide members’ phone number[s] or address[es] can be posted on Al-Anon/Alateen password-protected Web sites.*

...Is it proper to use the CMA to notify the members?

1. CMA in this question means “Current Mailing Address.”
2. *Current Mailing Addresses (CMAs), Group Representatives (GRs) and other trusted servants sending information by e-mail to group members must take care in the wording of e-mail subject lines and use an e-mail address that protects anonymity*

as the e-mail addresses to which they are mailing may not be private. [emphasis added]

3. In the Al-Anon Guidelines, Form G-12, page 2, it says: *The CMA regularly attends the meeting and is willing to receive group postal and electronic mail, and bring it to the group.*

Therefore, if someone is unwilling to attend meetings regularly and [/or] receive group postal and electronic mail and bring it to the group, then it might not be a good idea for them to take on this responsibility.

4. If you look at the Al-Anon Registration/Group Records Change Form (GR-1), you will see that both a first name and a last name, along with a full address (or PO Box), telephone number and E-mail address are on the form.

So, it is a good idea to keep your own “personal anonymity” issues in mind when making a decision to be a CMA.

Therefore, if a member is ill or deceased and that member or his/her family doesn't mind an announcement being made within our Al-Anon District, then it is proper to make such an announcement within our guidelines --- verbally and/or via the Current Mailing Address.