

# Al-Anon World Service Conference Charter

As amended by the 2022 WSC

## Introduction

The Al-Anon World Service Conference Charter is a body of principles and relationships through which Al-Anon as a whole can function. The provisions of the document are not legal but traditional, since the Conference is not incorporated. This charter is an informal agreement between all Al-Anon and its World Service Office (WSO). Certain countries of the world, for language or geographic considerations, have established or may desire to establish their own General Service Office and national conference. This World Service Conference is now the senior conference.

## Charter

### 1. Purpose

- a. To be the guardian of both Al-Anon's world services and its Twelve Traditions;
- b. To be a service body, not a government.

### 2. Composition

- a. Delegates from states, provinces, and territories within the United States (including Puerto Rico), Bermuda, and Canada, and from non-geographically based Areas, which collectively comprise the WSC Structure; together with the Board of Trustees of Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc., the Executive Committee, and voting members of the WSO Administrative Staff, the three groups that comprise the Policy Committee.
- b. Representatives from other countries, when these countries as well as the Conference may be ready for their participation.
- c. Representatives from non-panel Areas within the WSC Structure.

### 3. Relation to Al-Anon

- a. The Conference acts for Al-Anon in the perpetuation and guidance of its WSO services.
- b. The Conference is a vehicle by which Al-Anon can express its views on policy and note deviations from Traditions.

- c. Delegates are free to vote as their conscience dictates and not necessarily as instructed by their Areas.
- d. No changes are to be made in the Al-Anon or Alateen Traditions, the Steps, the Concepts of Service (except the descriptive text), or the General Warranties of the Conference Charter (Item 12) without written consent of three-quarters of the Al-Anon Family Groups.
- e. Wording in the Charter may be changed by the vote of three-quarters of the Conference members; however, the protections afforded the Al-Anon and Alateen Traditions, the Steps, the Concepts of Service, and the General Warranties in item 3-d may not be taken away or lessened by Conference vote.

#### **4. Relation to the World Service Office**

- a. Two-thirds vote of Conference members in attendance is binding upon trustees and any related corporate service.
- b. The above does not affect legal obligations of the WSO in conducting business.
- c. In accordance with the provisions of the Bylaws of Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc., three-quarters of all members registered at the Conference may bring about a reorganization of the WSO if or when it is deemed essential and may request the resignation of the whole Board and nominate a new slate of Trustees. For this purpose only, the number of WSO members voting shall be limited to one-quarter of the total Conference vote.

#### **5. Assemblies: Purpose of**

- a. In each Area within the WSC Structure, Assemblies convene at least every three years and as often in between as is deemed necessary for the purpose of electing District Representatives (if not elected in their own districts), Assembly officers, a Delegate to the WSC, and an Alternate.
- b. Assemblies are concerned primarily with world service affairs of Al-Anon.

#### **6. Assemblies: Composition of**

- a. In each state (including Puerto Rico), province, territory, and non-geographically based grouping, elected representatives of all Al-Anon groups desiring participation meet together.
- b. Areas within the WSC Structure with large Al-Anon populations may petition the Conference to divide and send an additional

delegate to the Conference, as provided for in the “World Service Handbook” for Al-Anon and Alateen groups.

## **7. Assemblies: Preferred Method of Election**

- a. District Representatives are elected from Group Representatives by confidential ballot.
- b. Delegates are chosen from District Representatives by a two-thirds confidential ballot or by lot.
- c. Alternates are elected at the same time and for the same term of office.
- d. It is strongly advised that the term of office of the Chairperson, other Assembly officers, and District Representatives follow the same pattern.

## **8. Panels and Delegates’ Terms of Office**

A third of the Delegates, called a panel, are elected every three years for a three-year term. The election of each of the three panels is held on each of three consecutive years. This staggered election and tenure of office is provided so that a Conference shall always include a panel of Delegates with two years’ experience. (This method was adopted because some A.A.s found that their two-year plan resulted in too fast a turnover and the valuable experience of two-year Delegates was lost to the Conference.)

## **9. Conference Meetings**

The Conference meets annually. In grave emergency, special meetings may be called. Conference members may also be asked by the WSO to render advisory opinions at any time by mail or telephone poll.

## **10. Board of Trustees: Composition, Jurisdiction, Responsibilities**

- a. The Board of Trustees of Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. is composed of qualified members of Al-Anon groups. The Board elects its own successors, with nominees subject to the approval of the Conference or a committee thereof.
- b. The Board is the chief service arm of the Conference, which is guardian of Al-Anon’s Twelve Traditions. Subject to e, below, the Board has the responsibility to determine policy and manage the business affairs of the WSO. It may appoint suitable committees and elect members to its Executive Committee.

- c. If any subsidiary services are later formed, the Board of Trustees will be primarily responsible for their policy and financial integrity.
- d. The Bylaws of Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc., and any amendments thereto are subject to recall by the Conference by a two-thirds vote of all its members. All Bylaw amendments will be presented to the first Conference to be held after their adoption by the Board of Trustees.
- e. Except in great emergency, the Board of Trustees ought never take action liable to greatly affect Al-Anon as a whole without consulting the Conference. However, it is understood that the Board shall reserve the right to decide which of its decisions may require referral to the Conference.

## **11. Conference Procedure**

- a. The Conference hears financial and policy reports of the Board of Trustees and WSO services.
- b. Delegates and WSO members take under advisement all matters affecting Al-Anon as a whole, engage in debate, appoint necessary committees, and pass suitable motions for the direction of the Board of Trustees and the WSO.
- c. The Conference may recommend action respecting serious deviation from Al-Anon Traditions and Concepts of Service.
- d. The Conference may adopt procedures and elect any needed officers by a method of its choosing.
- e. A quorum shall consist of two-thirds of the members registered at the Conference.
- f. At the close of each yearly session, the Conference will send a full report of its proceedings to all World Service Conference members, past WSC members, and Area World Service Committees (Area officers, Coordinators and District Representatives).

## **12. General Warranties of the Conference**

In all proceedings the World Service Conference of Al-Anon shall observe the spirit of the Traditions: that only sufficient operating funds, including an ample reserve, be its prudent financial principle; that no Conference member shall be placed in unqualified authority over other members; that all decisions be reached by discussion, vote and whenever possible by unanimity; that no Conference action ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; that though the Conference serves Al-Anon it shall never perform any act of

government; and that like the fellowship of Al-Anon Family Groups which it serves, it shall always remain democratic in thought and action.

**Note:** The term Al-Anon includes Alateen. Therefore, the above Charter applies to all registered groups, including Alateen.