

# *Alcoholics Anonymous*

## Ventura County Hospital and Institution Committee

### BY-LAWS

(Approved 10/14/2012) – Revised 09/12/2021)

#### I. Purpose

The purpose of the Ventura County Hospital and Institution Committee (a.k.a. VCAAH&I) is to carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous to those alcoholics in hospitals, jails, prisons, treatment centers and recovery homes.

#### II. Operation

The VCAAH&I Committee operates in accordance with the Twelve Traditions and the Twelve Concepts of Alcoholics Anonymous. Panel meetings are held at the invitation of respective hospital and institution administrations. Although we are not affiliated with these institutions, we strive to maintain the spirit of cooperation in our service.

- **Board Meetings:** The VCAAH&I Board meets on a day agreed to by a majority of Board members and announced to the Committee, at Central Office with the purpose of reviewing the status of the Committee business and aiding the Director in preparing an agenda for the next Committee meeting. All Board members are required to attend at least ten board meetings per year unless excused by the Director. All Committee members are invited to attend Board meetings to discuss any Committee business they want added to the agenda.
- **Committee Meetings:** The VCAAH&I Committee meets on the second Sunday of each month at Central Office. All interested members of Alcoholics Anonymous are invited to attend the Committee meeting. Each meeting is conducted according to the agenda prepared by the Director, who presides over the meeting. All A.A. members attending Committee meetings will have their full name and telephone number recorded by the Registrar. All names and telephone numbers are for VCAAH&I Committee use only and are not to be shared for any purposes other than VCAAH&I Committee business. Any special or emergency meetings called by the Board will be presided over by an officer designated by the Board.

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#### III. Membership Overview

- **Policy Council:** Select group totaling five members chosen by the current Director that convenes at least once a year for the purpose of reviewing these By-laws and, if necessary, recommending changes to the Committee. The Policy Council will convene as deemed necessary by the Committee for changing the By-Laws.
- **Board Members:** Board Members: Group of officers elected by the Committee including; Director, Co-Director, Secretary, Treasurer, Registrar, and Area Coordinators, who meet once a month at Central Office with the purpose of reviewing the status of Committee business and aiding the Director in preparing an agenda for the next Committee Meeting.
- **Service Members:** Group of officers appointed by the Director including Orientation Coordinator, Literature Coordinator, Southern California H&I Intergroup Representative, Panel Coordinators and Panel Leaders who serve the Committee in specific ways including reporting at Committee Meetings.
- **Committee Members:** Members of Alcoholics Anonymous who either have attended at least one Committee meeting or are currently serving as Panelists, Service Members or Board Members of the Committee.

#### Policy Council Members:

- **Policy Council Chairman:** Immediate past H&I Director (whenever possible) who shall attend Committee meetings for By-law reference and consultation.
- **Four Appointed Council Members:** Committee Members chosen by the current Director including current and past Directors whenever possible.
- **Recommended Changes to By-Laws:** Recommended changes to the By-Laws will be presented by the Policy Council Chairman at a Committee Meeting. A simple majority vote of approval at two consecutive Committee Meetings by those eligible voting Committee members present will be necessary for approved changes to be adopted by the Committee.

1.

#### Board Members:

- **Director:**  
Requirements:

- Is a Committee Member in good standing with a minimum of four years of continuous sobriety, two years of Committee service, at the time of the election.
- Needs to be computer literate.
- Holds office for one year and may run for second term.

Responsibilities:

- Chairperson for all Committee and Board meetings.
- Coordinates and directs all Committee activities.
- Keeps informed of all Committee business and activities via Committee personnel.
- Appoints selected personnel for any appointed positions considering the spirit of rotation.
- Appoints selected personnel to any vacated elected position for the remainder of the term.
- Oversees all panels in both hospitals and institutions, with assistance from the Co-Director

○ **Co-Director:**

Requirements:

- Is a Committee member in good standing with a minimum of three years of continuous sobriety and one year of continuous Committee service, at the time of election.
- Needs to be computer literate.
- Holds office for one year and may run for second term.

Responsibilities:

- Attends monthly Committee meetings and Board meetings (except when excused by the Director).
- Works with the Director in a capacity delegated by the Director.
- Oversees all panel activities in both hospitals and institutions as delegated by the Director.
- Assumes Director's duties and responsibilities when Director is absent.
- Handles all clearance applications. Maintains current directory, panel schedules and clearance phone lists.

○ **Secretary:**

Requirements:

- Is a Committee member in good standing with a minimum of one year of continuous sobriety and one year continuous Committee service; at the time of election.
- Needs to be computer literate.
- Holds office for one year, and may run for second term.

Responsibilities:

- Attends monthly Committee meetings and Board meetings (except when excused by the Director).
- Records the minutes of the monthly Committee meeting, and reads same minutes as directed. Provides copies as requested.
- Records the minutes of the monthly Board meetings, and reads same minutes as directed. Provides copies as requested.
- Serves as typist in the preparation of all documents deemed necessary by the Director.
- Maintains yearly files for all incoming and outgoing correspondence related to the Committee.
- Upon expiration of term, turns over to the newly elected Secretary all files on hand. Informs all Committee members of times, dates and places of Committee and Board meetings.

○ **Treasurer:**

Requirements:

- Is a Committee member in good standing with a minimum of two years of continuous sobriety and one year of continuous Committee service; at the time of election.
- Needs to be computer literate.
- Holds office for one year and may run for a second term.

Responsibilities:

- Attends monthly Committee meetings and Board meetings (except when excused by the Director).
- Receives, deposits, and disburses all monies and funds donated to the Hospital & Institution Committee. Maintains separate records for H&I Literature and the General Fund.
- Maintains a checking account at a local bank with signatures on the account, being of the Treasurer and one additional Board member.

2.

○ **Treasurer: (continued)**

- All Committee funds are accounted for through transactions on this account.
- Upon expiration of term, turns all money, records, and checkbooks over to the new Treasurer. (If termination of office is premature, all files are turned over to Director immediately).
- Records are to be kept current and may be examined by any Committee member at any time.
- Submits a written report of current financial condition at each monthly Committee meeting.
- Maintains records for all literature purchased and disbursed.

○ **Registrar:**

Requirements:

- Is a Committee member in good standing with a minimum of one year of continuous sobriety and at least six months of continuous Committee service; at the time of election.
- Needs to be computer literate.
- Holds office for one year, and may run for second term.

Responsibilities:

- Attends monthly Committee meetings and Board meetings (except when excused by the Director).
- Circulates and explains the official attendance record at monthly Committee meetings and Board meetings.
- Maintains an up-to-date record of attendance for each member of the H&I Committee, including their sobriety dates.
- Advises Panel Coordinators if there are recurring absences.
- Polls attendance at Committee meetings designated for either nominations or elections (January/February) and verifies the voting eligibility of each member present.
- Upon expiration of term, turns all records over to new Registrar. (If termination of office is premature, all records are turned over immediately to Director.)

○ **Area Coordinators:**

Requirements:

- Is a Committee member in good standing with a minimum of three years of continuous sobriety and one year of continuous Committee service; at the time of election.
- Has served minimum of one year as Panel Leader or Panel Coordinator in area of service.
- Holds office for one year, and may run for second term.

Responsibilities:

- Attends monthly Committee meetings and Board meetings (except when excused by the Director).
- Helps in coordination of relationships with new facilities and setup of panels within the new facilities.
- Gives Co-Director any updated records of phone numbers for Panel Coordinators and Panel Leaders, and maintains a current phone list of cleared Panel Participants.
- Appoints Panel Coordinator and Panel Leaders to vacant positions.
- Reports to Committee of any facility changes at monthly Committee meetings.

**Service Members:**

○ **Orientation Coordinator:**

Requirements:

- Is a Committee member in good standing with a minimum of three years of continuous sobriety and two years of continuous Committee service; at the time of appointment.

Responsibilities:

- Attends monthly Committee meetings and Board meetings (except when excused by the Director).
- Provides a brief overview of H&I Service work in Ventura County and the purpose of the Committee for new members.

○ **Literature Coordinator:**

Requirements:

- Is a Committee member in good standing with a minimum of six months of continuous sobriety and has attended one Committee meeting; at the time of appointment.

Responsibilities:

- Attends monthly Committee meetings (except when excused by the Director).
- Actively promotes literature to panel leaders and facilities.
- Periodically reviews H&I literature list and coordinates new additions with facilities.
- Explains to the Committee the function and process of providing literature to facilities. 3.

○ **Southern California H&I Intergroup Representative:**

Requirements:

- Is a Committee member in good standing with a minimum of two years of continuous sobriety and one year continuous Committee service; at the time of appointment.

○ **SoCal H&I Intergroup Representative (continued)**

Responsibilities:

- Attends monthly Committee meetings and Board meetings (except when excused by the Director).
- Attends all Southern California H&I Intergroup meetings. Selects qualified member of VCAAH&I Committee to substitute if absolutely necessary. (Consistent attendance at Southern California H&I Intergroup meetings is an absolute necessity)!

- Mails monthly VCAAH&I meeting minutes to intergroup librarian.
- Reports all pertinent information concerning the VCAAH&I Committee to Southern California H&I Intergroup and reports back all pertinent information and minutes to VCAAH&I Committee.
- Works with Director to coordinate the hosting of a Southern California H&I Intergroup meeting and meal in Ventura County, as voted upon by the VCAAH&I Committee.
- Coordinates VCAAH&I Committee's participation in Southern California H&I Conference.
- Eligible for reimbursement by the Board for travel expenses.

○ **Panel Coordinator:**

Requirements:

- Is a Committee member in good standing with a minimum of one year of continuous sobriety and six months of continuous Committee service; at the time of appointment.
- Minimum of six months as a Panel Leader at the facility.

Responsibilities:

- Attends at least one Committee meeting per quarter (except when excused by the Director).
- Assists Panel Leaders to ensure all panels are covered.
- Reports on facility service at Committee meetings when requested.
- Keeps Area Coordinator up-to-date as to any changes in panel leadership, phone number changes or open Panel Leader positions.

○ **Panel Leader:**

Requirements:

- Is a Committee Member in good standing with a minimum of six months of continuous sobriety; at time of appointment.
- Minimum of three panels as panelist at chosen institution; at the time of appointment.

Responsibilities:

- Attends at least one Committee meeting per quarter (except when excused by the Director).
- Leads panel meeting regularly. If unable to attend, notifies Panel Coordinator and arranges for qualified Panel Leader.
- Notifies Panel Coordinator of any problems with facility and/or Panel meeting.
- Keeps personal contact info up to date with Panel Coordinator.
- Selects and assists all Panel Participants in their understanding of the requirements and purpose of panel visits at their facility.

**Committee Members:**

○ **Panel Participants:**

Requirements:

- Are sober members of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Responsibilities:

- Are encouraged to attend Committee meetings.
- Meet all requirements for participation at their chosen panel:
  - Minimum of 90-days of sobriety for treatment facilities.
  - Minimum of 1 year sobriety for correctional facilities
  - Successfully meet all security requirements necessary for facilities they serve.
- Agree to abide by VCAAH&I Committee guidelines and By-Laws.
- Always dress appropriately for panels, ever mindful that each member represents both VCAAH&I and Alcoholics Anonymous.

4.

○ **Committee Attendees:**

Requirements:

- Member of Alcoholics Anonymous
- Have attended at least one Committee meeting.

Responsibilities:

- None, keep coming back.

**V. Department**

Any member of this H&I Committee may be disqualified from their present H&I service and panel participation when any of the following occurs:

- Loss of sobriety: Sobriety requirements of their service position must be re-established before resuming service.
- Willful refusal to abide by the rules and regulations of the Facility or the Hospitals & Institution Committee By-Laws:

- Violations submitted to the Board will be reviewed.  
The Board will decide whether or not to disqualify the member from service.

## **VI. Committee Elections**

- Nominations for the offices of Director, Co-Director, Secretary, Treasurer, Registrar and Area Coordinators will open at the January Committee meeting. Nominations will close for a vote at the February Committee meeting. On that same night, all eligible members may vote: one nominee per office. The candidate with the majority votes will honor the elected position. The newly elected personnel take office at the close of the March Committee meeting. No elected Committee member may be elected to the same office for more than two consecutive years.
- Committee members are eligible to vote after they have attended four Committee meetings during the previous twelve-month period.
- All candidates for elected positions must have met the attendance requirements by the January Committee meeting.

## **VII. Finances**

The VCAA Hospital and Institution Committee is funded entirely by contributions from members of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Group and/or individual contributions to VCAAH&I, unless specifically directed otherwise by the contributor, will be allocated as follows:

85% to VCAAH&I Literature Fund

15% to VCAAH&I General Fund

The Board of the VCAAH&I Committee oversees all expenditures unless an alternate motion is introduced, in which case the issue is voted upon by eligible members at the next regularly scheduled Committee meeting. A simple majority vote is required in either case.

We will donate an amount equal to 15% of the total literature fund, a maximum of \$2000, to SOCAL H&I Intergroup quarterly, using the balance at the end of the second month of each calendar quarter. Donation will be in the form of literature purchased from our local central office. The above paragraph applies to any other "as needed" donated literature purchases. This disbursement was suspended for the entire calendar year of 2020 because of extreme complications of the Covid-19 pandemic. Should any future conditions indicate suspension or reduction is prudent, the Board Of Directors may vote to do so in consult with committee.

## **VIII. Website Content**

Any website submissions, amendment or deletions that concern or relate to a change or variation in adopted policy of the VCAAHI Committee shall first be presented to the Board for approval or forwarded by the Board to the Policy Council for bylaw clarification before being uploaded to the website.

## **INDEX**

<b>Area Coordinator .....</b>	<b>page 3</b>	<b>IV. Board Members</b>
<b>Board Meetings .....</b>	<b>page 1</b>	<b>II. Operation</b>
<b>Board Members Defined .....</b>	<b>page 1</b>	<b>III. Membership Overview By-</b>
<b>Laws Changes .....</b>	<b>page 1</b>	<b>IV. Policy Council Members Co-</b>
<b>Director .....</b>	<b>page 2</b>	<b>IV. Board Members Committee</b>
<b>Attendees .....</b>	<b>page 4</b>	<b>IV. Committee Members</b>
<b>Committee Meetings .....</b>	<b>page 1</b>	<b>II. Operation</b>
<b>Committee Members Defined .....</b>	<b>page 1</b>	<b>III. Membership Overview</b>
<b>Director .....</b>	<b>page 2</b>	<b>IV. Board Members Elections &amp;</b>
<b>Voting .....</b>	<b>page 5</b>	<b>VI. Committee Elections</b>
<b>Finances .....</b>	<b>page 5</b>	<b>VII. Finances</b>
<b>Literature Coordinator .....</b>	<b>page 3</b>	<b>IV. Service Members</b>
<b>Loss of Sobriety .....</b>	<b>page 5</b>	<b>V. Department</b>
<b>Orientation Coordinator .....</b>	<b>page 3</b>	<b>IV. Service Members</b>
<b>Panel Coordinator .....</b>	<b>page 4</b>	<b>IV. Service Members</b>

<b>Panel Leader .....</b>	<b>page 4</b>	<b>IV. Service Members</b>
<b>Panel Participant .....</b>	<b>page 4</b>	<b>IV. Committee Members Policy</b>
<b>Council Chairman .....</b>	<b>page 1</b>	<b>IV. Policy Council Members</b>
<b>Policy Council Defined .....</b>	<b>page 1</b>	<b>III. Membership Overview Policy</b>
<b>Council Members .....</b>	<b>page 1</b>	<b>IV. Policy Council Members</b>
<b>Purpose .....</b>	<b>page 1</b>	<b>I. Purpose</b>
<b>Registrar .....</b>	<b>page 3</b>	<b>V. Board Members</b>
<b>Rules &amp; Regulations Refused .....</b>	<b>page 5.</b>	<b>V. Department</b>
<b>Secretary .....</b>	<b>page 2</b>	<b>IV. Board Members Service</b>
<b>Members Defined .....</b>	<b>page 1</b>	<b>III. Membership Overview</b>
<b>Southern California H&amp;I Intergroup</b>		
<b>Representative .....</b>	<b>page 3</b>	<b>IV. Service Members</b>
<b>Treasurer .....</b>	<b>page 2</b>	<b>IV. Board Members</b>