

## **Bylaws of the OA FOOT STEPS Virtual Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous**

Passed on June 28, 2020

Updated July 1, 2020

Updated January 15, 2021

Updated July 27, 2021

Updated September 1, 2021

### **Article I – Name**

The name of this organization shall be the OA FOOT STEPS Virtual Intergroup also known as “OA Foot Steps VIG” or OAFSVIG.

### **Article II – Purpose**

The primary purpose of the OA FOOT STEPS Virtual Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous is to carry the message of recovery to those with the problem of eating compulsively, 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. 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 affairs.

#### **B. Twelve Traditions**

The Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous are:

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.

### C. Twelve Concepts

The Twelve Concepts of OA Service are:

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, 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.

D. Service bodies may not make amendments to the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts except as per OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article XIV, Section 1

## **Article III – Members**

### ***Section 1 – Membership***

- A. Membership of the virtual intergroup (VIG) with voice and vote includes the following:
  - a. The VIG officers which consists of a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer
  - b. Intergroup representatives (IRs), which consist of
    - i. 1 elected member(s) from each registered, real-time virtual group
    - ii. 1 elected member from each registered, non real-time virtual group
  - c. World Service Business Conference delegate(s)
  - d. Region representative(s)
  - e. Committee chairs
- B. Membership with voice and no vote
  - C. Any member of the fellowship who is not a duly elected representative

### ***Section 2 – Qualifications***

- A. Qualifications for group membership in an intergroup: A land-based intergroup is composed primarily of groups within its region or groups within its geographical proximity. A virtual intergroup is composed primarily of virtual groups. With permission, a land-based group may affiliate with a virtual intergroup and a virtual group may affiliate with a land-based intergroup. No group may be a member of more than one (1) intergroup.
- B. Each intergroup has the autonomy to determine which groups may affiliate with it; that decision should always be guided by OA Traditions and Concepts.
- C. The OAFSVIG endorses the definition of an OA group in Overeaters Anonymous, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article V, Section 1, as written and as it may be amended by a future World Service Business Conference.

These points shall define an Overeaters Anonymous group:

- 1. As a group, they meet to practice the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, guided by the Twelve Concepts of OA Service.
- 2. All who have the desire to stop eating compulsively are welcome in the group.
- 3. No member is required to practice any actions in order to remain a member or to have a voice (share at a meeting).
- 4. As a group they have no affiliation other than Overeaters Anonymous.
- 5. It has affiliated as an Overeaters Anonymous group by registering with the World Service Office.

### ***Section 3 – Voting Rights***

- A. Each member of the OAFSVIG as defined above in Section 1, membership, shall have only one (1) vote even if also serving in other positions whether as an officer, IR, delegate and/or region representative or committee chair.
- B. The Chair of the OAFSVIG may only vote to break a tie even if serving in other positions.

### ***Section 4 – Intergroup Representatives***

- A. Intergroup representatives (IRs) will be selected by the group conscience of the group they represent.
- B. IRs shall have thirty (30) days of current abstinence.
- C. The duty of the IR is to represent the group at OAFSVIG meetings and to serve as a contact to carry communications between the VIG and the represented group.
- D. The IR may resign at anytime

- E. A member meeting may elect an alternate intergroup representative to vote on intergroup matters when the representative will be absent from the business meeting.

#### ***Section 5 – Committee Chairs***

- A. Committee Chairs will be selected by the group conscience of the committee they represent.
- B. The duty of the Committee Chair is to represent the committee at OAFSVIG meetings and to serve as a contact to carry communications between the VIG and the represented committee.

### **Article IV – The Virtual Intergroup (VIG) Board**

#### ***Section 1 – The Virtual Intergroup Board***

- A. The board consists of the following officers: Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer.
- B. The VIG board may also include other positions such as World Service Business Conference delegate(s), and/or regional representative(s).
- C. Meetings shall be chaired by the Chair of the board. In the event the Chair is unable to chair 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 OAFSVIG 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 VIG board.

#### ***Section 3 – Qualifications for the OAFS Virtual Intergroup Board***

To qualify for election to the VIG board, an individual must:

- A. Be working the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of OA Service to the best of his/her ability.
- B. Have one (1) year of current abstinence except as follows (each person shall be the sole judge of his or her abstinence):
  - a. World Service Business Conference delegate(s) must comply with the abstinence and length of service requirements in the OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article X, Section 3c 1).
  - b. Region representative(s) must comply with the abstinence and length of service specified in the region's bylaws
- C. Be a regular member of an affiliated group.
- D. No one person may hold two officer positions at the same time.

#### ***Section 4 – Election of Board Members***

- A. Election of Board Members is held during the December Business Meeting.
- B. Nominations may be made from the floor at the time of election.
- C. Nominees must be present at the election meeting. For election, the candidate must receive a majority vote of ballots cast.

- D. Voting will be by ballot defined as follows for the purpose of Zoom:
  - a. Use of the “polling” function by the Chair or Host of the meeting or, if unavailable;
  - b. “Raised hand” function to be counted for 3 categories for each vote to include “In Favor”, “Against”, “Abstaining”.

#### ***Section 5 – Term of Office***

- A. The term of office for an OAFSVIG board member is one (1) year starting on the 3rd Sunday of January.
- B. Board members may serve no more than two (2) consecutive terms in the same position. A member may serve again in the same position after a leave of one (1) year from the position.
  - a. If no qualified nominee is available, the officer may serve an additional 1 month until the next scheduled OAFSVIG meeting, at which point an additional election will be held to fill the position.
- C. In the case that any officer position becomes vacant between elections, a special VIG meeting may be called for the purpose of a group conscience to establish an existing OAFSVIG member as a temporary officer in the position until the next scheduled VIG Meeting.
  - a. A person chosen to fill any vacancy on the board shall meet the qualifications as defined in Article IV, Section 3.

#### ***Section 6 – Responsibilities of the OAFSVIG Board Members***

- A. Serve as guardians of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts with respect to the functions of the intergroup.
- B. Perform the duties of their offices in accordance with the OAFSVIG Policy and Procedure Manual.
- C. Serve as guardian of OAFSVIG funds; participate in an annual financial audit.
- D. Provide a forum for the interchange of ideas and information among member groups.

#### ***Section 7 – Vacancies and Resignations***

- A. If a board member is absent from a VIG meeting more than 1 time in a term of office (3 months), he/she may be removed from the position by a majority vote of the ballots cast either at a regular or special VIG meeting announced for that purpose.
- B. Any board member may resign at any time for any reason by giving the Chair or the Vice-Chair of the VIG written notice.
- C. Any board member of this VIG may be removed from office for due cause by a ¾ majority vote of the ballots cast at a regular or special VIG meeting announced for that purpose.

### **Article V – Meetings**

#### ***Section 1 – Regular Meetings***

- A. The OAFSVIG will meet the 3rd Sunday of the month in the designated business Zoom Room.
- B. Regular meetings will include votes on active motions and reports by the Secretary and Treasurer.
- C. The regular meetings will follow the Regular Meeting Guidelines as outlined in the OAFSVIG Policy and Procedure Manual.

#### ***Section 2 – Quarterly Meetings***

- A. Quarterly meetings shall be held in the months of January, April, July, and October.
- B. Quarterly meetings will include all regular meeting business, and additionally will hold elections for officer positions, and reports by committee chairs and board members as necessary.
- C. The quarterly meetings will follow the Quarterly Meetings Guidelines as outlined in the OAFSVIG Policy and Procedure Manual.

### ***Section 3 – Special Meetings***

A special meeting may be called at any time by a group conscience within the VIG board, or by 10 VIG members, provided sufficient notice is provided to the membership. Sufficient notice is defined as 3 days.

### ***Section 4 – Meetings by Virtual Conference***

Members of the VIG may participate in a meeting through use of electronic means, so long as all members participating in such meetings can hear one another and have a way to participate in any voting. Materials presented during the meeting shall be made available to those participating virtually. Participation by VIG members in a meeting in the manner provided in this section constitutes presence in person at such meetings.

### ***Section 5 – Method of Notification***

The VIG will provide at least 7 days notice in writing by public posting on the OAFS website.

### ***Section 6 – Quorum***

The quorum for voting purposes shall be, at a minimum, 2 VIG officers and 5 intergroup representatives.

### ***Section 7 – Meeting Procedure***

The Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts shall be read at the beginning of each quarterly meeting. All meetings will begin and end with the Serenity Prayer.

## **Article VI – Committees**

Voting members may establish committees as are needed for the welfare and operation of the VIG. Each committee is responsible to the OAFSVIG board. A committee may be established by group conscience taken during a VIG meeting.

## **Article VII – Prudent Reserve**

The VIG Treasurer will maintain a prudent reserve of twelve (12) months of expenses to cover expected operational needs. There shall be no accumulation of funds beyond current budgetary needs, allowance for future expenses, and a prudent reserve for contingencies. Funds in excess may be donated to the Virtual Region or World Service Inc. as determined by the VIG.

## **Article VIII – Parliamentary Procedure**

The parliamentary authority common in use throughout Overeaters Anonymous is the most current available edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised.

### **Article IX – Amendments to These Bylaws**

These bylaws may be amended at any time by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting at any regular or special meeting of the VIG. The proposed amendment must be communicated in writing by public posting on the OAFS website at least 30 days prior to the voting meeting. Amendments to the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of OA may only be made as per OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article XIV, Section 1.

### **Article X – Dissolution**

#### ***Section 1 – Deregistration***

In order to deregister, an intergroup must submit a written notice to the World Service Office, region chair, and region trustee.

#### ***Section 2 – Disbursement of Remaining Funds***

When this VIG ceases operation and all debts have been paid, all remaining funds shall be distributed to other Overeaters Anonymous service bodies or the WSO in accordance with Tradition Six.

#### ***Section 3 – US Non-Profit with 501c (3) Status***

Upon the dissolution of this association, after paying or adequately providing for the debts and obligations of the association, the remaining assets shall be distributed to the World Service Office of Overeaters Anonymous, or to a non-profit fund, association, foundation, or corporation which is organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational, or religious and/or scientific purposes, and which has established its tax exempt status under Section 501c (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. In accordance with Overeaters Anonymous Traditions, such non-profit fund, association, foundation, or corporation should be either the OA World Service Office or another OA service body.

No part of the net earnings of this association shall ever inure to be or be used for 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.