

Policy Committee Update

Pennie K., Chairperson

October 2023

Policy statements are interpretations of our basic guides: The Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts of Service. They help clarify how a Tradition or Concept might apply to a new or confusing situation that arises in Al-Anon or Alateen. Changes and additions to the Policy Digest are made only as our circumstances and growth require, since anticipating and including every specific situation would be impossible.

The purpose of the update sent each quarter by the Policy Committee Chairperson is to report progress and provide information on the following:

- Topics that are generated by the fellowship and discussed by the Policy Committee regarding issues or concerns that need clarification or interpretation in consideration of the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts of Service
- Progress of work being completed by Policy Committee work groups and task and thought forces
- Policy motions to be presented to the World Service Conference (WSC)
- Policy motions passed by the WSC

The Policy Committee meeting occurs quarterly prior to the Board of Trustees meeting. In October, the Committee met virtually on Thursday, October 23.

Task Force: Choosing a Group Name

The Policy Committee reviewed and thoughtfully discussed the suggested edits and revisions provided in advance to each Committee member by the Choosing a Group Name Task Force. This practice of allowing time for reflection brought clarity and clear direction as Committee members discussed the proposed edits to the “Choosing a Group Name” section of the “Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies” section of the *2022-2025 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual (P-24/27) v2* (pages 85-86). This Task Force will continue its work at the January 2024 Policy Committee meeting.

Discussion: Minors not allowed in Al-Anon meetings

The WSO was informed by an international structure that its Board of Trustees had voted not to allow minors under 18 to attend Al-Anon meetings on the basis of professional guidance. International structures commit to honoring the Al-Anon Twelve Traditions and the policies contained in Policy Digest and approved by the senior Conference for Al-Anon Family Groups, the World Service Conference. The decision led to the topic being brought to the Policy Committee for discussion at its October meeting.

The Policy Committee had an enlightening and thoughtful discussion regarding this decision. The Policy Committee was asked to look at it through our Traditions, Concepts, and policy statements and in the context of legal requirements applicable in the structure. As the conversation concluded, the Committee asked WSO Staff to obtain additional information to support continued discussion on the topic at the January 2024 Policy Committee meeting.

The Policy Committee Thought and Task Force discussions continue to exemplify the thoughtfulness, open-mindedness, humility, and courage that each member expresses to make the “Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies” clear and concise. As always, I thank Staff, the Board of Trustees, and the Executive Committee for bringing their time, talents, and gifts to the fellowship, but most of all for their diligence in using spiritual principles in all they bring to the table.

As always, the Policy Committee welcomes all questions and suggestions from any Al-Anon and Alateen member, meeting, group, or Area regarding issues that might need further clarification or interpretation in light of our Legacies.