

**The Fellowship Service Manual  
of Co-Dependents Anonymous**

**Part 3**

**CoDA**

**Guidelines for Service Levels Between**

**Meetings and World**

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### Section 01 Introduction

### Purpose of this Manual

The purpose of this document is to provide a more detailed description of our service structure between the meetings and the CoDA world level.

### Section 02 Intergroup or Community Service

### The Intergroup (Community Service Group)

A strong CoDA Intergroup (community service group) (CSG) is the key to the success of CoDA in general. This CoDA community group may also be called an Intergroup (community service committee) a sense of community at the local level leads to success in attracting and sustaining the involvement of members of the fellowship in service work and in community building activities. The Intergroup (CSG) is made up of Group Service Representatives (GSRs) from area meetings and CoDA members from the local Fellowship. The *Twelve Service Concepts of CoDA* offer guidance in establishing service boards.

### Service Participation at the Intergroup (Community Service Group)

All members of the Fellowship are welcome to attend and participate in their Intergroup (CSG). All CoDA groups are encouraged to send a Group Service Representative to Intergroup (CSG) meetings. Commonly, input is welcome from all in attendance, but Group Service Representatives are usually the only participants who vote.

### Intergroup Members (GSRs)

An Intergroup (CSG) service member belongs to a CoDA group and has an interest in doing local service work. There are no "job requirements" for service to CoDA, although 6 months of meeting attendance is helpful before beginning service work. Some consider it a way of practicing and demonstrating responsibility and accountability to self and to others, while working a program of recovery and remaining open to Higher Power’s will.

### Group Service Representative (GSR)

A GSR is a person the Intergroup (community Service Group) selects/ elects to act as a trusted servant and attend Voting Entity meetings. An alternate GSR can be selected/ elected as well.

The GSR is a link between group representatives and the Delegates. The GSR is very valuable to the meeting because they carry the "grassroots" group conscience to the Voting Entity. GSRs may help select/ elect Delegates who represent the Group Conscience of that Voting Entity at the CoDA Service Conference.

### Alternate Group Service Representative

### The Alternate Group Service Representative acts on behalf of the community if the GSR cannot serve. The selection/election process is the same as that for the GSR. The alternate GSR normally accompanies the Group Service Representative to meetings as a member in training, asks questions, and learns procedures.

### Section 03 Voting Entity Service

### Voting Entity Service Structure

Voting Entity definition: Each State and Territory of the United States of America and each Country is automatically entitled to send two (2) Delegates.

Sometimes two or more Voting Entities may choose to join together in order to combine resources and better serve the needs of their meetings and Intergroups. A Voting Entity may also choose to divide into two or more Voting entities according to CoDA's By-laws. Please review FSM Section 07, under the Issues Mediation Committee description "Voting Entity Division Process", for IMC guidance regarding the process. Each separate Voting Entity may then effectively serve the meetings and Intergroups in its area. Acceptance of the new structure will be granted through IMC.

In any organization, levels of management are necessary to connect and coordinate localized activities with broader levels of planning, information distribution, and organization. The Voting Entity organization provides a bridge between Intergroups (community service groups), and CoDA. Every CoDA member is welcomed and encouraged to attend all CoDA service meetings.

### Voting Entity Structure Guidelines

1. Hold regular, well-announced business meetings. Quarterly meetings are recommended.
2. Adopt and maintain a working set of bylaws; conduct business accordingly.
3. Vote one's conscience when no group conscience is available, keeping in mind the group and the health and welfare of the Fellowship. Allow presentation of minority opinions.
4. Make your best effort that Voting Entity reflects the will of the Fellowship. Assure that the Voting Entity’s agenda is not in conflict with the will of a majority of the represented Fellowship (i.e., publish and distribute meeting and decision summaries).
5. Place a high priority on continued communication with CoDA and local Intergroups

Available are additional suggested guidelines at CoDA’s website under “CoDA’s Guidelines for the Development and Structure of Intergroups and Voting Entities” or you may contact the Voting Entity Liaison at imcvel@coda.org.

### Voting Entity Committees

Voting Entity committees are organized along the same structural lines as meetings and Intergroups (groups and community service groups). Voting Entity Committees function through the group conscience decision making process as they carry out service work. Priorities for this work usually come from meetings and Intergroups.

**Voting Entity Delegates**

The Voting Entity Delegate is a service volunteer who is selected/ elected at the Voting Entity or by other means determined by the group conscience of the Voting Entity members. The Voting Entity Delegate is that Voting Entity's representative to the CoDA Service Conference.

The primary function of the Voting Entity Delegate is to facilitate communication between the Voting Entity and CoDA. This includes attending CoDA's Service Conference to vote, on behalf of the Voting Entity, on Conference motions affecting CoDA as a whole. Also, a Delegate is invited to join committee(s) or other services at the world

level, thus performing service in accordance with Tradition Seven. This valuable participation builds important

relationships at the World level, therefore fostering the communication within the whole Fellowship. Ideally, a Voting Entity Delegate has worked the *Twelve Steps* with a CoDA sponsor or “Step study” group and has a practical and spiritual knowledge of the *Twelve Traditions*. The job is rewarding, gratifying, and spiritually uplifting, providing exposure to the enormous experience of the group conscience at the CoDA level.

**Delegate Characteristics:**

While many characteristics define a Delegate, familiarity and practice of CoDA's *Twelve Steps* and *Twelve Traditions* are the most important part of acting on behalf of the Voting Entity Fellowship. These spiritual principles lay the foundation of the CoDA service role. In addition, an effective Delegate is able to build personal relationships and communicate effectively, understands organizational structure, and is familiar with service functions and the activities of CoDA. For background, see CoDA's organization chart in the group conscience section of this manual (Section 2). To learn more about Delegate service, participate as either an alternate Delegate or Observer at the CoDA Service Conference or speak with former Delegates.

A Delegate is not, politically speaking, a "senator" of a Voting Entity, but is a servant of CoDA as a whole. The Delegate’s responsibility is to follow our Steps and Traditions and use these principles to carry our spiritual message to those who still suffer, in and out of CoDA.

**Voting Entity Delegate Activities:**

1. Participate in the annual CoDA Service Conference.
   * Send in Voting Entity issues as defined in Section 10, Community Problem Solving Method and Conference Procedures, Guidelines for Board, Committee and VEI Reports, Issues and Motions Presented at CoDA Service Conference (CSC)
2. Read the Delegate Conference packet before Conference and consult with the other Voting Entity Delegate, or regional officers, and community members for input on issues.
3. Communicate and publish, for the Voting Entity or regional CoDA groups, the motions passed at the CoDA Service Conference, and any changes made.
4. Convey the CoDA Service Conference experience to the Voting Entity or Intergroup Fellowship, providing a greater picture of CoDA as a whole.
5. Attend the Voting Entity meetings to inform members about Conference events.
6. Report on the spiritual, financial, and material aspects of CoDA and its boards.
7. Stress the importance of Seventh Tradition funds for CoDA's, continued existence.
8. Pass reports, records, policies, and procedures to incoming Delegates to ease transition.
9. Inform Voting Entity officers and Intergroup representatives of Conference approved literature, and encourage contributions of material for new literature.
10. Emphasize to the Voting Entity secretary, Intergroup officers, and group representatives the importance of sending current directory information to CoDA as changes occur.
11. Act as a liaison for the Voting Entity and CoDA Board of Trustees
12. Keep the alternate Delegate informed and engaged with all activities, correspondence, and events to build the alternate's expertise in Intergroup, Voting Entity, and CoDA matters.

### Alternate Delegates

The Alternate Delegate has the same responsibilities and accountability as a Delegate, without the Conference "voting" privilege, unless the Delegate leaves the Conference floor, which is called "passing-the-badge" for voting eligibility. In the event a Delegate cannot serve, resigns, or falls ill, an alternate Delegate fills the position of Delegate in accordance with the Voting Entity or region’s procedures. When funds are available, Voting Entities may send more than one alternate Delegate to initiate and educate them in CoDA procedures and protocols. Alternate Delegates registered with the CoDA Board secretary will receive the same informational mailings as the primary Delegate.

### Delegate Expenses

The Voting Entity’s treasury pays expenses ahead of time, or reimburses the Delegate after Conference, as funds allow. Delegate expenses may include travel, hotel, and meals, as well as telephone, facsimiles, mailings, postage, and other sundry expenses. It is the Delegate's responsibility to account for expenses and to present a report to the Voting Entity. The primary Delegate may choose to write a report for Voting Entity distribution explaining the expenditure of Seventh Tradition funds. Delegates' expenses are paid as Voting Entity or regional budgets permit. To encourage participation, a Voting Entity may pay some part of an alternate Delegate's expenses.

Voting Entity, Intergroups may contribute to Conference and other related expenses, or may contribute towards a “Conference Fund” to allow any individual the financial ability to serve CoDA at large, without regard for personal financial resources. CoDA guidelines suggest limiting individual contributions to no more than $1000/year.

**Voting Entity Delegate Term of Service**

The Voting Entity Delegate's term of office is often two years, the Alternate Delegate’s, one. CoDA encourages rotation of leadership positions among members. This practice broadens the base of service experience and prevents the domination of personality and pursuit of prestige in service roles. Every CoDA member has the opportunity to serve at any level of CoDA: Intergroup, Voting Entity or CoDA committee, or Board of Trustees.

Every member is recognized as having an equal voice in a CoDA service role, so any Voting Entity member may serve in any service position,. A Delegate does not serve a meeting or Intergroup. The Delegate service role is on behalf of the Voting Entity, and the CoDA Fellowship as a whole. Voting Entity Delegates may come from any part of that Voting Entity. CoDA emphasizes inclusiveness, not exclusiveness, no matter who or where one is in recovery