



**WELCOME**

**TO THE**

**FA MAINE CHAPTER**

**ORIENTATION GUIDE**

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### ***What is FA Maine Chapter?***

The FA Maine Chapter of Eastern Area Intergroup (EAI) is made up of FA members who are committed to doing service to help reach food addicts in Maine and New Hampshire. As a service body, the Chapter provides support to associated meetings located in Maine and New Hampshire. Contacts from these meetings, and other interested members, gather monthly to share experience, strength and hope, to discuss issues that confront our meetings, and to generate new ideas on how we can better reach food addicts on a local and regional level. All FA members are welcome at the Maine Chapter's monthly meeting.

The Maine Chapter of FA began in 2002 when the need to coordinate service opportunities became apparent. Organizing as a chapter of Eastern Area Intergroup allows us the ability to function as a nonprofit entity operating under EAI bylaws, and to benefit from EAI's years of experience and resources. Currently, the Maine Chapter offers such services as a toll-free informational phone line, a monthly directory of area meetings, assistance with public information outreach and more. (*See Organization of FA at a Glance pg. 7.*)

### ***Where and when does the Maine Chapter meet?***

Maine Chapter meetings are generally held the **third Sunday of the month from 9:30-11:30 a.m.** at the University of Maine, 46 University Drive, Augusta, ME 04330 Randall Bldg. (NOTE: actual dates may vary based on conflicts with holiday weekends, etc. For specific dates please email **MeSecretary@foodaddicts.org**. or access online on the Maine Upcoming Events page at **www.foodaddicts.org**.)

### ***What happens at FA Maine Chapter meetings?***

The Chapter meeting begins at 9:30 a.m. with the Serenity Prayer and introductions and ends at 11:30 am. During that time period, the Committees (Public Information, Office, and 12<sup>th</sup> Step) meet separately. (A full description of these committees is provided on the next page.) All Committees require that their members have at least 90 days of continuous abstinence in FA and are working with an FA sponsor in order to have a voice and a vote. The Committees come together in the main meeting room and participate in a meeting designed to address the general business of FA in Maine. These meetings adhere to our Eastern Area Intergroup bylaws that have been voted on by the Maine Chapter membership. For a copy email the Bylaws Chair at **mebylaws@foodaddicts.org**. It can also be found online at **www.foodaddicts.org**.

Business meetings follow parliamentary procedure, which is described in further detail later in this handout.

### ***What do I do after this orientation? How do I join a committee?***

After this orientation, the leader will walk you to the rooms in which the committees are meeting. You are invited to sit in on any of the committee meetings already in progress. The committee chairperson may not be able to interrupt the meeting depending on the volume of work s/he is trying to complete. However, feel free to talk to the chairperson or anyone on the committee after the meeting ends. You are welcome to join any of these committee meetings and do not have to make a commitment to a particular committee until you are ready to do so.

### ***What are the Service Positions of the Chapter?***

The Chapter Board consists of the Executive Board (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer; also known as the officers) and the chairs of the various Chapter Committees (Office, Public Information, 12<sup>th</sup> Step, Bylaws, Intergroup Liaison and Meeting Support Committee). The Maine Chapter Body elects the officers in May on a rotating basis. The Chair and Vice-Chair are elected for two years; the Secretary and Treasurer are elected in alternate years, also for two years, so there is not turnover of all four positions at the same time. The Executive Board appoints all committee chairs for a two-year term. The following is a description of the Executive Board positions.

**The Chapter Chair (MEChair@foodaddicts.org)** sets the agenda and directs the monthly chapter meetings, provides overall coordination of committees to ensure that projects are accomplished without redundancy, assures sufficient resources are available for chapter projects, and communicates with Eastern Area Intergroup and FA World Service specifically as a member of the WSI Chapter and Intergroup Support Committee.

**The Vice-Chair (MEViceChair@foodaddicts.org)** assists the chair and assumes responsibility for special projects as delegated by chair. This includes coordinating liaison phone calls with meeting chapter contacts, drafting the meeting highlights for the chair's approval, and serving as a member of the WSI Chapter and Intergroup Support Committee. The Vice-Chair also serves as chair in the absence of the Chair.

**The Secretary (MEViceChair@foodaddicts.org)** takes reliable and accurate minutes at each chapter and board meeting and assists the office committee with archiving and maintaining chapter records.

**The Treasurer (METreasurer@foodaddicts.org)** receives Seventh Tradition contributions from local meetings, pays chapter expenses, sends donations to the intergroup and WSI, reports on the financial status of the chapter, and prepares the chapter budget. In addition, the treasurer submits the chapter's financial information to the EAI Treasurer at the close of the fiscal year.

The Chapter Board meets each month prior to the Chapter meeting. The Board helps to set a strategy to keep the Chapter's focus on fulfilling Tradition 5 regarding maintaining our primary purpose in reaching the suffering food addict. To that end, the Board discusses administrative issues and issues that have been raised by Committees or that require lengthy discussion before they are brought to the general assembly (e.g., financial issues, project planning, bylaws, etc.). The Board also serves as final approval for determining procedures that guide the Chapter in conducting its business.

### ***What are the committees of the FA Maine Chapter? Where do the committees meet? What do the committees do?***

Currently, the FA Maine Chapter has 3 working committees (Office, Public Information and Twelfth Step), a Bylaws chairperson, an Intergroup Liaison and a Meeting Support Committee Chair. To the extent possible, the committees meet in separate rooms. The Bylaws Chair and

Intergroup Liaison are also a part of the Board but do not function as a committee unless specific issues arise which require their attention. The Meeting Support Committee currently meets outside the regular committee time structure. The primary work of the committee is planning Meeting Support Day, which involves members participating in other committees. The Executive Board appoints all committee chairs for a two-year term.

**Bylaws Chair (MEBylaws@foodaddicts.org)** is available at Chapter meetings to answer questions and research issues that may pertain to the bylaws. Generally, there are no monthly Bylaws Committee meetings held during the Maine Chapter meetings unless a specific issue arises that requires attention. The Chapter Chair may appoint a small committee to review a bylaws issue. The FA Maine Chapter has adopted and operates according to the Bylaws of the Eastern Area Intergroup. Any revision to the bylaws is done at the Intergroup level. To obtain a copy of the bylaws contact the Bylaws Chair or go to [www.foodaddicts.org](http://www.foodaddicts.org), click on For Members, go to Intergroups & Chapters, then Eastern Area Intergroup then Documents and Forms to the EAI Bylaws.

**Intergroup Liaison (MEIGLiaison@foodaddicts.org)** receives all correspondence and materials sent by the Eastern Area Intergroup (EAI), gives a brief EAI report at the monthly Maine Chapter Meeting, and attends the EAI meeting each month, if the meeting is within a manageable traveling distance. If the liaison is unable to attend the EAI meeting, the liaison communicates monthly with the liaison from the Chapter Support Subcommittee of EAI. The liaison may also have the option of attending the monthly EAI Chapter Support Committee via conference call.

**Office Committee (OC) (MEOffice@foodaddicts.org)** fosters communication between our Maine/New Hampshire fellowship, EAI, and WSI; maintains the on-line registration information for Chapter affiliated Maine and New Hampshire meetings and creates the monthly Maine Chapter Meeting Directory. OC responds to inquiries from newcomers and active members, checks the Information Phone Line listing in area telephone directories, and maintains vendor relationships (i.e.: post office, email host). OC also distributes information to Chapter contacts, including the updated Meeting Directories, 12th Step Speakers Lists and Chapter Meeting Highlights. Additionally, OC works with WSI Office Director to maintain the Chapter presence on the FA website and assists WSI with re-registration and profile update efforts. The committee consists of the Office Committee Chair, Chapter Treasurer, Meeting Directory Coordinator, Facilities Coordinator and other interested members.

**Maine Meeting Support Committee (MEMS@foodaddicts.org)** serves as a resource for our Maine Chapter affiliated meetings with an objective to promote general meeting health. The goal of this committee is to provide support, assistance and connection for our meetings, and to support the individuals who do service within those meetings. The primary committee function is to plan the Chapter's annual Meeting Support Day. The committee consists of the Maine Chapter Board and interested FA members with at least 90 days of abstinence and working with a FA sponsor. Members with two years of abstinence are involved in the planning process for the content of the day, and those with less than two years are able to share ideas and help with a variety of tasks necessary for MSD.

**Public Information Committee (MEPI@foodaddicts.org)** conveys information about the FA program to the general public and to health care professionals. Examples include, organizing distribution of FA Information Booklets, racks, brochures and information to business professionals, doctors' offices, and to the media; coordinating volunteers answering voicemails left on the Information Line; coordinating chapter participation health fairs; and publishing advertisements in Maine newspapers. This committee also helps individual FA meetings plan FA Information Sessions. Any inquiries about newspaper articles, radio, or TV are referred to this committee for guidance.

**Twelfth Step Committee (ME12thStep@foodaddicts.org)** supports the message of recovery by updating the Twelfth Step list, Speaker's list, organizing personal visits to food addicts requesting support (12th step calls) and by arranging FA Road Trips (commitments to FA meetings requesting support). The committee also provides the orientation for newcomers to the Chapter as well as supporting meetings conducting Thanksgiving Thank-a-thons.

- **Connection Magazine Subcommittee** helps FA members use the tool of writing through the FA magazine by facilitating Writing Sessions for members to develop stories or artwork about their own experiences as food addicts. The Writing Sessions are held quarterly after the regular Chapter Meeting.

### ***What is Intergroup? How is it related to the FA Maine Chapter?***

To answer what intergroup is, we must first understand that Food Addicts in Recovery Anonymous (FA) has members all over the world. Certain geographical areas in the U.S. host especially large FA memberships. Each of these centers hosts an intergroup — a group of FA members who volunteer their time to perform service work for FA on a regional basis. Currently FA has two Intergroups: Eastern Area Intergroup (based in Massachusetts) and Western Area Intergroup (based in California). Eastern Area Intergroup — commonly referred to as **FA/EAI** — has members from all over the eastern US seaboard, Canada, England, and Germany, as well as our chapter in Maine. Our chapter is not yet big enough to support our own Intergroup, so we look to FA/EAI for support. *Please refer to the last page for an explanation of FA's organizational structure.*

As a chapter of EAI, the Maine Chapter adheres to the bylaws and committee structure of EAI. EAI has additional committees to those mentioned above. Descriptions of the additional committees follow:

There are two committees devoted to region support. They are the **Chapter and Region Support Committee and the Region Outreach Committee.**

**Chapter and Region Support Committee** provides an exchange of ideas and information by

- Hosting annual fellowship weekend (Chapter, Region, and Meeting Support Weekend) and, when requested, organizing service gatherings ("Reach Outs") to outlying areas seeking assistance and fellowship.
- Providing liaisons who keep in contact with meetings and service groups to identify and help resolve any challenges they may be facing.

**Region Outreach Committee Chair** serves as a resource to the FA/EAI fellowship and EAI

Board members by identifying ways EAI can be of more assistance to meetings, local service organizations and chapters, and the individuals who do service in those structures. The chair of Region Outreach will work initially with the Public Outreach and the Chapter and Region Support committees to develop structures, processes and communications vehicles that will enhance EAI's relations with its members in all geographic areas. The chair will identify and, where possible, act on liaison opportunities to help develop and support an active, two-way engagement with service persons at all levels.

**connection Committee** helps FA members use the tool of writing through the FA magazine by facilitating group Writing Sessions for members to develop stories or artwork about their own experiences as food addicts. In addition, the committee helps members subscribe to the magazine online.

**Financial Resource Committee** provides financial aid and logistical resources for FA members attending EAI and WSI functions. The committee determines financial aid for FA members attending the EAI annual Meeting Support Weekend or traveling a distance to speak at an Information Session, and for Voting Members to attend the WSI Business Convention. In addition, the committee coordinates travel options for members in need of carpooling and lodging for events.

**Teens and Twenties Committee** helps reach out to people who are under age 30, with emphasis on colleges, universities and high schools. This may include helping to identify contacts at local colleges and high schools, establishing weblinks between college websites and the FA website and assisting with health fairs and Information Sessions presented in classrooms.

#### ***What is FA World Service (WSI)?***

FA World Service is the group of FA Fellows that do service on behalf of the world organization. WSI hosts a website [www.foodaddicts.org](http://www.foodaddicts.org), which holds a wealth of information and resources for the public, for FA members, and for meetings. On the Home page under Meetings, you can find resources such as Meeting Requirements and Guidelines (including service position descriptions). Under the For Members tab, you can find many multiple resources such as trifold to help you manage 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition funds and disseminate public information, the *Gratitude in Action* newsletter, and the FA Public Information (PI) Kit with a wide variety of helpful tips and sample documents to help you publicize your meeting or information sessions, to name just a few. The tab for Media/Professionals also has a lot of helpful and instructive information about FA and food addiction.

*Can you explain some of the Parliamentary Procedure terms I heard at the general meeting?*

<b>Motion</b>	A proposal put forth either by a committee or an individual. A <i>motion</i> is essentially either a recommendation that FA/EAI modify the way it conducts business or a suggestion to enhance its program.
<b>Second</b>	Any motion must be <i>seconded</i> by another voting member before it is heard by the body.
<b>Point of Information</b>	A member may offer a <i>point of information</i> if s/he has clarifying information about the topic that is being discussed. A <i>point of information</i> is also a way to ask a question: "I have a point of information. Can you explain why . . . ?"
<b>On the floor</b>	A motion is <i>on the floor</i> when it is being discussed.
<b>Amendment</b>	Someone may offer an <i>amendment</i> to a motion as a way of suggesting how to improve the motion. The person who made the original motion may accept the amendment or reject it. Regardless of whether the maker of the motion accepts or rejects it, the amendment must be voted on by the body for adoption or the amendment fails.
<b>Table</b>	Someone may table a motion, meaning to remove the current motion. This requires a two-thirds vote.
<b>Postponing</b>	This means delaying the discussion and/or action on the motion until a future meeting. This is usually done because additional information is needed before an informed vote can be made.

## The Organization of FA at a Glance

### FA Member

An FA member is an individual who desires to stop eating addictively and who is part of the fellowship of Food Addicts in Recovery Anonymous (FA).



### Meetings

Meetings are formed when two or more food addicts come together to share experience, strength, and hope, are registered with a local chapter OR intergroup, and practice the 12 steps of food addicts in recovery.



### Chapters

Chapters are formed when a group of meetings within a geographical area doesn't have enough meetings to form an intergroup (see below). They can form a chapter to carry out the message of FA recovery to food addicts in the local vicinity. Chapters are affiliated with a particular intergroup and operate based on legal documents that are adopted from those of the affiliate intergroup. A chapter comes under the umbrella of the incorporation and tax-exempt status of its intergroup, and can use the guidance of the intergroup for ideas and resources. Chapters have their own officers and committee chairs.



### Intergroup

Local meetings and other interested meetings can combine to form regional intergroups, which work together with and are supported by the World Service Office (WSO); Intergroups have elected officers and committees that function within their region. FA intergroups are separately incorporated, non-profit organizations that take on the expense of incorporating and obtaining federal tax-exempt status. The intergroup serves as a model and as a source of guidance and information for its chapters. Many intergroups have established a chapter support committee for its chapters. An intergroup must be established as a legal non-profit entity, under the applicable state laws.



### WSI (World Service, Inc.)

The day-to-day management of FA's world service operations is housed at the World Service Office (WSO). The board of trustees, also called the World Service Board (WSB), is made up of elected officers and the chairs of the WSI committees. WSI is not a controlling, but is, rather, a serving organization. The FA groups are the main voice of the fellowship, and choose members to vote at the FA annual convention. Chapters, intergroups, and the WSI itself exist only to serve the groups and FA as a whole. All FA groups are registered with a local chapter or intergroup, which forward each meeting's registration information to the WSI.