



FOOD ADDICTS
in recovery anonymous

**WORLD SERVICE
CONFERENCE MEMBER
MANUAL**

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1. THE BASICS

The purpose of this manual is to help prepare World Service Conference (WSC) members for FA's annual World Service Business Convention. By serving as a WSC member, you are contributing to FA's work around the globe and therefore helping to reach still-suffering food addicts in ways that cannot be foreseen. Your service as a WSC member is very important and greatly appreciated. Thank you in advance for your commitment and willingness to serve.

Important Points about Being a Voting Conference Member

The WSC member is elected by the meeting, but does not represent the meeting. The member is elected as a trusted servant who attends the convention as a voting member, and who votes in accordance with his or her own conscience, keeping in mind the needs of FA as a whole rather than serving as the voice of an individual meeting.

World Service Conference or **WSC** refers to people who are voting.

World Service Business Convention or **WSBC** refers to the annual gathering in Massachusetts.

Therefore: **Conference = people; convention = meeting.**

The WSC consists of "members," not "delegates," because those elected to serve are asked to think of the needs of the whole of FA; they do not represent individual meetings.

Typically, motions that have been placed on the convention agenda are sent to all WSC members at least one month prior to the convention. **All WSC members are asked to read this material as soon as it is received.** The World Service Board welcomes questions and feedback prior to the convention. The goal is that all WSC members arrive at the convention feeling fully prepared and having a clear understanding of the intent and impact of all motions prior to casting a vote.

WSC Member Requirements and Responsibilities

Each registered FA meeting is asked to elect one member from the meeting to serve as a WSC member. The bylaws of World Service, Inc. (WSI) require that WSC members have a minimum of five years of continuous abstinence in FA, regularly attend the meeting that elects them, have completed at least one AWOL, and demonstrate physical, mental, and spiritual recovery. If a meeting does not have anyone who fulfills these requirements by the date that voting member registration closes (usually in early March), then the meeting is unable to elect a WSC member for that year.

Each WSC member

- Registers as a WSC member at www.foodaddicts.org.
- Serves as a WSC member for one year, from the date voting member registration closes until voting member registration closes the following year
- Carefully reads all materials sent to WSC members in order to prepare for the annual World Service Business Convention.
- Attends the convention as a member of the voting body.

Prior to each year's convention, WSC members will find it helpful to become familiar with the remaining pages of this manual, which consist of

- World Service Conference Mission Statement
- Organizational Overview: The Organization of FA at a Glance and FA World Service, Inc. Terminology
- The Twelve Concepts of FA (Short Form)
- Voting: Elections, Motions, Procedures for Emergency New Business, Parliamentary Procedure Basics

Additionally, WSC members may also find it helpful to review the following documents, found among the "governing documents" on the FA website

- FA WSI Bylaws
- FA WSI Continuing Effect Motions Manual (CEMM)

2. WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE MISSION STATEMENT

(Adopted by the WSC June 2011)

In accordance with Concept One, the voting body at the annual FA World Service Business Convention, also known as the “Conference,” serves as the active voice and collective conscience of the FA fellowship.

In accordance with the Twelve Traditions and the Twelve Concepts of FA, our mission is to

1. Carry forward the world services of FA, in an effort to reach the food addict who still suffers.
2. Vote in accordance with the dictates of our individual consciences, in conjunction with what will best serve FA as a whole.
3. Rely upon our trusted servants (the World Service Board) to act freely and effectively in our absence.
4. Ensure our future effectiveness by supporting rotation of leadership at all service levels.

Guiding Principles

In carrying out this mission, we are committed to the six core principles defined in Concept Twelve:

1. We shall never become the seat of perilous wealth or power.
2. Sufficient operating funds plus an ample reserve shall be our prudent financial principle.
3. No member should ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority over another.
4. All important decisions shall be reached by discussion, vote, and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity.
5. Our actions shall never be personally punitive nor incite public controversy.
6. We will never perform any acts of government and will always remain democratic in thought and action.

The above statement articulates a vision of the central purpose and guiding principles of the work of the World Service Conference. It is intended to help clarify for all in our fellowship the role and function of the Conference, and it will help the Conference remember the central purpose that should guide its decision making.

3. ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

The organizational flow below depicts the reverse pyramid structure that is true to FA. In our service work in general, and especially as WSC members, we are wise to remember that the individual FA member is most important to our organization. Members are supported by FA meetings, the meetings are supported by chapters and intergroups, and the chapters and intergroups are supported by WSI.

FA World Service, Inc. 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 FA chapter or intergroup; and practice the Twelve Steps of Food Addicts in Recovery Anonymous.

Chapters

Chapters are formed when a group of meetings within a geographical area wishes to pool efforts to support the growth and strength of FA in that area but doesn't have enough meetings to form an intergroup (see below). Chapters are affiliated with a particular intergroup and operate based on legal documents that are adapted 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.

Intergroups

When there are many meetings spread over a large geographical area, local meetings and other interested meetings can combine to form regional intergroups, which work together with and are supported by FA World Service, Inc. (WSI). Intergroups have elected officers and committees that function within their region. FA intergroups are separately incorporated, non-profit organizations that take on the expenses of incorporating and obtaining federal tax-exempt status. An intergroup serves as a model and as a source of guidance and information 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 transacted at the World Service Office (WSO) in Massachusetts. The board of trustees, also called the World Service Board (WSB), is made up of four elected officers and nine chairs of WSI committees. WSI is a serving organization rather than a controlling one. FA meetings are the main voice of the fellowship and choose members to vote at the FA annual business convention. Chapters, intergroups, and the WSI exist only to serve the FA meetings and FA as a whole. All FA groups are registered with a local chapter or intergroup, which forwards each meeting's registration information to the WSI. (Revised 11/4/19)

FA WSI Terminology

WSC members may find it helpful to become familiar with the following terms and acronyms before the convention and/or to keep it on hand during the convention.

ACRONYMS

World Service Office (WSO): the central FA Office in Massachusetts

World Service Board (WSB): the Board of Trustees of FA

World Service, Inc. (WSI): FA's central operating organization

World Service Conference (WSC): the voting members of FA, the "voice of FA"

World Service Business Convention (WSBC): the annual business meeting of FA

World Service Conference or WSC refers to people who are voting.

World Service Business Convention or WSBC refers to the annual gathering in Massachusetts.

The WSC consists of "members," not "delegates," because those elected to serve are asked to think of the needs of the whole of FA; they do not represent individual meetings.

ADDITIONAL TERMINOLOGY

FA WSI Bylaws: Our primary governance document.

Continuing Effect Motions Manual (CEMM): Contains all policies adopted by the World Service Conference over the years.

WSI Procedure Manual: Contains procedures for all WSI standing committees and their subcommittees.

WSB Manual: Defines responsibilities and procedures related to all activities of the WSB, the WSB standing committees, and recurrent WSB special committees.

WSC Service Manual: Contains all pertinent information for being a WSC member.

WSB Standing Committees: Committees that serve the World Service Board (Finance, Personnel, Design, Inquiry Response, Board Motions Review, Audit [pending])

WSI Standing Committees: Committees that serve the Conference, namely, Bylaws, Service Group Support, *connection*, Convention Planning, Literature, Office, Public Information, Traditions Review, and Twelfth Step).

Special Committees: Short-term or *ad hoc* committees to provide essential services for WSI (e.g. Resolutions Committee, Emergency New Business Committee).

Conference-Approved Literature: Works intended for the entire FA fellowship and made available to the public at large. Any new literature shall be written or revised by or under the direct supervision of the literature committee. Currently Conference-approved literature consists of *Twenty-Four Hours A Day (Hazelden)*, *Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)*, *The Little Red Book (Hazelden)*, *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions (AA)*, and all FA pamphlets and books that have been approved by the World Service Conference, including both those in English and those translated into languages other than English.

Conference-Recognized Material: Works intended for the entire fellowship and made available to the public at large, but not written or revised under the direct supervision of the Literature Committee. Examples include *connection* (the FA magazine) and “Gratitude in Action” (a quarterly e-newsletter).

WSI Board-Approved Material: Works intended for the entire fellowship and sometimes made available to the public at large. Such works are not submitted to the Conference for approval prior to distribution, e.g. *Your FA Seventh Tradition: Reaching the Suffering Food Addict*.

3. THE TWELVE CONCEPTS OF FA

As individual FA members, we are guided by the Twelve Steps. FA meetings are guided by the Twelve Traditions. As a conference, we are guided by FA's Twelve Concepts. Understanding these concepts is an integral part of serving as a WSC member. At the 2005 World Service Business Convention, the Conference adopted AA's Twelve Concepts, as adapted by FA. The short version of the FA Twelve Concepts is seen below. The longer version can be found at www.foodaddicts.org.

Note: Given the strong parallel, WSC members may find it helpful to understand the origin of AA's The Twelve Concepts. A detailed history and explanation can be found in *The AA World Service Manual combined with The Twelve Concepts 2018-2020 Edition*. [PDF available at http://www.aa.org/pdf/products/en_bm-31.pdf]

The Twelve Concepts of FA (Short Form)

1. Final responsibility and ultimate authority for FA world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.
2. The World Service Conference of FA is understood to be, for nearly every practical purpose, the active voice and the effective conscience of our whole society in its world affairs.
3. To ensure effective leadership, we should endow each element of the FA Conference, including the World Service Board, the group delegates, and any other corporate entities, staffs and committees that may be created in the future, with a traditional "Right of Decision."
4. Every service responsibility should be matched by an equal service authority, with the scope of such authority well defined.
5. Throughout our world service structure (groups, chapters, intergroups, the World Service Board, and the World Service Office), we ought to maintain a traditional "Right of Participation," allowing a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each individual or group of our world servants must discharge.
6. Throughout our world service structure, a traditional "Right of Appeal" ought to prevail, so that minority opinion will be heard and personal grievances receive careful consideration.
7. The FA Conference recognizes that the chief initiative and active responsibility in most world service matters should be exercised by the trustee members of the Conference, acting as the World Service Board. In this capacity, the trustees shall serve as the principal planners and administrators of overall policy and finance, as well as the overseers of any subsidiary entities that may be established.

8. The bylaws of FA are a legal instrument, empowering the trustees to manage and conduct world service affairs. The FA Conference itself is not a legal entity; it relies upon tradition for final effectiveness, and its practical power will nearly always be superior to the legal power of the trustees. The trustees are the principal planners and administrators of overall policy and finance.
9. At all levels, good service leadership by those demonstrating long-term physical, mental, and spiritual recovery is indispensable for our future functioning and safety. Primary world service leadership, initially exercised by the group of members who founded FA, must necessarily be assumed by the World Service Board of Trustees.
10. The trustees should always have the best possible committees, corporate service directors, executives, staffs, and consultants. Composition, qualifications, induction procedures, rights and duties, just financial compensation, and the nature of working relationships will always be matters of serious concern.
11. Among Twelve Step programs, FA is unique in that food addicts must work with their drug, food, each day in order to survive. Therefore our program must differ from other Twelve Step programs with respect to structure and disciplines. Notwithstanding our immeasurable debt to Alcoholics Anonymous and other Twelve Step programs, our ultimate source of direction must always remain our collective experience of recovery through the FA program and our personal understanding of the will of God, as each of us understands God.
12. The FA Conference shall observe the spirit of FA tradition, taking care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds and reserve be its prudent financial principle; that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others; that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote, and, whenever possible, substantial unanimity; that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; that it never perform acts of government; that, like the Fellowship it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action.

4. VOTING

By definition, WSC members are “voting” members. Each year’s World Service Business Convention will include time for elections of WSI officers and committee chairs, as well as motions that will be discussed, debated, and voted upon.

WSC members may be asked to vote by a show of hands, ballot, or other method designated by the presiding officer. Conference members may override the method called for by the presiding officer by a majority vote.

Elections

WSI officers and committee chairs agree to serve for two years upon election and are able to serve for two two-year terms if elected a second time.

In even years, elections occur for the WSI chair, vice chair, bylaws chair, convention planning chair, office chair, *connection* chair, and traditions review chair.

In odd years, elections occur for the WSI secretary, treasurer, service group support chair, literature chair, public information chair, and twelfth-step chair.

Under our bylaws, nominations must be received at least 90 days before the convention; therefore, no new candidates can be nominated at the convention. Each candidate will complete an application for the position of interest. **Completed applications will be sent to all WSC members one month prior to the convention so they may make an informed decision when voting. WSC members are advised to read this material prior to the convention.** (Note: Material from some candidates may at first appear outdated. If an applicant is running for a second-term in the same position, they may choose to use the application already on file from their first term.)

Motions and Parliamentary Procedure

Motions

The World Service Business Convention almost always includes discussing, debating, and the passing of motions.

Motions that have been placed on the convention agenda are sent to all WSC members at least one month prior to the convention. **All WSC members are asked to read the motions as soon as they are received.** The WSB welcomes questions and feedback prior to the convention. The goal is that all WSC members arrive at the convention feeling fully prepared and having a clear understanding of the intent and impact of all motions prior to casting a vote.

According to the FA WSI Bylaws (Article VIII, Section 3):

(a) Main motions may be submitted by (1) executive boards or committees of FA chapters or FA intergroups, (2) WSI committees, or (3) the WSB.

(b) Main motions, including proposed bylaw amendments, must be submitted in writing to the secretary at least 90 days prior to the first day of the WSBC.

(c) Motions to amend the bylaws will be referred to the Bylaws Committee for review pursuant to Article XII. All other main motions will be referred to the Resolutions Committee (a special committee, as defined in Article IX, Section 10) for review.

(d) Sixty (60) days prior to the World Service Business Convention, registered WSC members will receive written notice by first class mail, or electronically, of any proposed main motions submitted by chapters or intergroups. (This procedure does *not* apply to motions coming from the World Service Board.) Upon receipt of notice, WSC members shall be entitled to vote on which of these proposed main motions will be heard at the WSBC. Ballots must be received electronically by the World Service Office within 15 days of receipt of notice. Main motions that receive an affirmative vote from a majority of the responding WSC members will be placed on the WSBC agenda. NOTE: This is *not* a vote on the substance of the proposed motions, only on whether they should be placed on the WSBC agenda for discussion and a vote.

(e) Main motions requiring emergency action may be submitted fewer than 90 days prior to the start of the World Service Business Convention or during it. The Resolutions Committee will review emergency motions and make a recommendation to the World Service Conference as to their hearing. The Conference shall decide by a 2/3 vote, without debate, whether the motion will be placed on the agenda. **Main motions to approve FA literature or to amend the bylaws shall not be submitted as emergency motions, as they require prior notice for adoption pursuant to Article VIII, Section 2 (d).**

(f) Motions submitted by the World Service Board may be placed on the agenda without prior approval from WSC members.

Parliamentary Procedure Basics

Parliamentary procedure is a method of conduct used at many business conventions to ensure the clear communication of information and an orderly decision-making process. *The Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedures* governs all of our business sessions during the World Service Business Convention.

1. **Main motions** bring business before the World Service Conference. Except for emergency new business motions, all main motions are prepared and circulated to World Service Conference members prior to the convention
2. **Subsidiary motions** help the Conference manage main motions. These motions help get the main motion into its best form before we have to vote on it. We can change the main motion (**amend**), send it back to a committee to do more research on it (**refer**), put off the decision on it to the next meeting/convention (**postpone to a certain time**), or close debate (**close debate**).

3. **Incidental motions** usually relate to matters of the business meeting rather than directly to the main motions. They may be offered any time they are needed. Usually they are made when a main motion is already on the floor. Incidental motions are used to keep all members in line (**point of order**), ask questions about procedures (**parliamentary inquiry**) and issues (**point of information**), appeal the chair's decisions (**appeal**), and make sure the vote count is accurate (**division of assembly**).

Bear in mind that we need not be experts at parliamentary procedure in order to participate in the business sessions. A parliamentarian will be present to ensure that the meetings are run appropriately.

Tips for the Voting Process

1. The chair and the parliamentarian will guide the Conference as to how to conduct itself, so listen carefully.
2. Sit toward the front of the room, where seating is reserved for voting members. ONLY registered voting members may address the Conference.
3. The chair and the parliamentarian will clarify the issue being addressed. Stay attentive to the issue under consideration, for example, is it the original motion or an amendment?
4. Prepare in advance by reading the materials, and participate in one of the board-scheduled conference calls to discuss the motion prior to the convention.
5. Typically, the chair will open up discussion on a motion. If you would like to speak for or against the motion, stand in line at the microphones in the center aisle. State your first name and your number. (Your number will be on your name tag.)
6. Do not speak out from your seat unless you have a "point of order" (pointing out a rules violation) or a "request for information" (seeking clarification).
7. Do not clap after a vote is taken, as we in FA don't win or lose, no matter what side of the question we are on. We are seeking a group conscience.
8. Main motions are made in advance of the convention. However, voting members may make a motion to amend a motion.
9. Members may move to "table" (postpone) a motion, "call the question" (close debate and bring the matter to a vote), or "adjourn" (end) a session.
10. Ask God for help in expressing yourself. When debating a motion, focus your remarks on the issue and avoid straying off topic.

Procedures for Emergency New Business

I. Bringing Emergency New Business Motions to the Convention Floor

- A. Motions will only be accepted on official forms and only from (1) executive boards or committees of FA chapters or FA intergroups, (2) WSI committees, or (3) the WSB and are submitted to the Resolutions Committee.
- B. The Resolutions Committee will meet as often as necessary to address emergencies.
- C. The maker of the motion will be informed as to the approximate time at which their motion will be heard.

II. Procedure during the Resolutions Committee Meeting

- A. Any member of the presenting intergroup or chapter executive board or WSI committee or WSB may speak to the motion, at the discretion of the Resolutions Committee chair. This will be contingent upon the volume of motions and time available.
- B. During the general business session, as mentioned in III A below, the Resolutions Committee will present its recommendation to the World Service Conference regarding whether or not the Conference should hear the motion. The standards for a positive recommendation are the following:
 - 1. The motion must be an emergency that cannot wait until next year. Emergency is defined as a “sudden unforeseen crisis usually involving danger.”
 - 2. The motion must not be in conflict with the Twelve Traditions.
 - 3. The motion cannot be redundant with stipulations already made in FA governance documents (bylaws, policies and procedures, and continuing effect motions).
 - 4. The motion must not be frivolous.

III. Procedure at the General Business Session

- A. The resolutions committee chair will give a report and recommendation for each motion that was presented to the committee and will give a brief summary of the process involved in determining the recommendation.
- B. The voting body will then hold a yes or no vote, without discussion, to agree with the Resolutions Committee or not. *The voting body has the final say.* The job of the committee is not to decide if the motion itself has merit. That responsibility falls to the Conference.
- C. If the motion receives a two-thirds affirmative vote from the body, the WSI chair places it on the agenda. Once on the agenda, it proceeds as any other motion.