

1) AA Guidelines: Central or Intergroup Offices

A) Functions of a Central Office

1) Pg. 1, paragraphs 1 & 2

a) “The A.A. experience has demonstrated that central offices are helpful, particularly in populous areas. There are nearly 1000 central/intergroup offices throughout the world, performing vital AA services. These constitute a network of service outlets and AA contacts to help carry the AA message.”

b) “Sometimes, however, central office ventures have bogged down in disputes over money, authority, and like matters—thus becoming less effective in carrying the AA message. It’s not always clear why these troubles have come up, but often it’s because the proper functions of a central office were not clearly explained or understood, or there was some disregard of the principles in AA’s Twelve Traditions.”

B) Getting Under Way

1) Pg. 2, paragraph 2

a) “Once formed, the committee takes over the responsibility for the project and outlines it aims and purposes for approval by the participant groups. Such an outline might cover these points:

1) “Listing of all groups in the community that want to participate.”

2) “A reminder that financial support is voluntary and not a condition of membership (in keeping with AA tradition).”

3) “A clear explanation that responsibility for the maintenance of the service office rests with the groups. Therefore, each group should name a central office representative and an alternate to serve a specified term as the connecting link between the group and its central office.”

4) “A summary of the functions of the central office and an explanation of how it will be staffed and operated.”

5) “A discussion of how the service office will handle such vital matters as inquiries from newcomers, relations with the press, and similar duties.”

6) “Assurance that the service center will be operated in keeping with AA’s Twelve Traditions.”

C) Group Representation at a Central Office

1) Pg. 2, paragraph 1 & 2

a) “Service centers usually have no authority on their own account; they derive it from the participating groups. Local group representatives reflect the groups’ conscience in the service center operations.”

b) “In most communities, a central office committee or steering committee is set up to handle the administrative activities of the service office.” “Periodically, the steering committee reports to group representatives on central office problems and accomplishments.”

D) Communication

1) Pg. 4, paragraph 3

a) “Central offices and general service area committees are complementary, rather than competitive, AA operations. Both exist to help insure AA unity and to fulfill AA’s primary purpose of carrying the message.”

E) Good Luck and Smooth Sailing

1) Pg. 4, paragraph 1

a) “These are suggestions only, and it’s the spirit and cooperation behind the central office idea that will make it work.”