

A Brief Guide to Eastside Intergroup

This guide to Eastside Intergroup is designed to briefly describe our purpose and functions. Hopefully this will answer some of the questions you might have about our organization and some of its activities.

Welcome to all new Intergroup Representatives

We welcome you to the Intergroup meeting! Eastside Intergroup is the central clearinghouse for local AA activities. Your service as an Intergroup Rep is a vital task. It includes being part of the smooth operation of the Intergroup network and ensures that the AA members in your home group stay interested and informed about the work done by our Intergroup. As an Intergroup Rep, you carry the important message about other AA activities on the Eastside.

Congratulations on your new service position! You will find your new job both rewarding and enjoyable.

Our name and function

We are registered with federal and state authorities as a non-profit organization titled "Eastside Intergroup Association of Alcoholics Anonymous, Inc." The word "Eastside" is used because we serve nearly all of eastern King County, plus some surrounding areas. The "Association" part of our title describes the action taken in 1982 by Eastside AA groups to centralize and coordinate their 12th step work and make AA available to the community. We are known in the Fellowship as Eastside Intergroup (or ESIG), which is an umbrella term for the functions which follow.

Intergroup office

The office is the nerve center of the Eastside Intergroup. It maintains a telephone information service on a 24-hour basis and provides AA literature and medallions for the groups and for the public. It maintains and publishes a meeting directory and a monthly newsletter.

Our finances

The office and our communities are supported by contributions from AA groups and individuals, donations from occasional AA events, and literature and medallion sales. Many years ago our co-founder Bill W. warned the membership about the accumulation of money reserves "for no stated AA purpose", and Eastside Intergroup adheres to that principle as a non-profit entity. Surplus moneys are used for either increased services to the groups or lower pricing of literature.

Our standing committees

The Intergroup standing committees service hospitals, jails and prisons, and treatment facilities. Providing public information to the community is one of the main reasons for the existence of Eastside Intergroup. These groups of volunteers carry the message beyond the AA meeting into the community. Some members spend many hours and even years helping in these communities, and they reap great rewards both in the understanding of their own programs and with the opportunity to practice the 12th Step.

Public Information Committee (PI)

The PI Committee works mainly with schools, churches, and other organizations that want to know more about Alcoholics Anonymous. PI people talk about what AA does and does not do, and they

answer questions about the Fellowship. This committee holds regularly-scheduled training workshops on how to speak at non-AA events. PI volunteers generally work in teams when they give talks in the community. Public Information is also responsible for keeping in touch with the media by issuing press releases when there is a newsworthy AA event.

Cooperation with the Professional Community (CPC)

It is important to have a group of people ready to offer the hand of AA to the professional community upon request. The CPC Committee carries the message to doctors, lawyers, business firms, or other professional organizations that deal with alcohol-related issues or problems with employee intemperance. The PI and CPC committees currently meet jointly under one committee chair.

Correctional Facilities Committee

The Corrections Committee carries the message to jails and correctional facilities. The committee assigns a sponsor for each meeting who is responsible for the "clearance" of AA members who want to attend meetings in correctional facilities. If you have an interest in these meetings, contact the Intergroup office. They will tell you about the meetings at juvenile facilities, county and city jails, and other correctional facilities.

The people who do this work are an especially dedicated group who carry the message to people ranging from those who have barely heard of our program to those with many years of sobriety. We do not pass the 7th Tradition basket at correctional meetings. The committee supplies all literature with funds generated through the Pink Can program and funds supplied by the groups through Eastside Intergroup.

Treatment Facilities Committee

This committee holds meetings in a variety of institutions. They assign sponsors to meetings, in the same manner as the Correctional Committee. Again, most of these meetings do not pass the 7th Tradition basket and literature is supplied by the committee. Meetings can be held in treatment centers, extended care units, psychiatric wards, juvenile facilities, and other recovery centers. Clearance is rarely needed.

One of the more important activities of the Treatment Facilities Committee is the Bridging the Gap program. This is a nationwide network of AA members who help individuals find their way to their first AA meetings, upon their release from treatment facilities.

Hotline Committee

The Hotline is one of our most supported committees. This committee sees to it that the phones are answered while the office is closed. Phones being answered 24/7 is an essential part of Intergroup. When someone reaches out for help by calling AA, it is often the very first contact for many alcoholics.

The chair of this committee fills the next month's calendar with AA members who volunteer to take calls at their home, or wherever they and their cell phone happen to be. The way the Hotline works is through the use of an answering service. When someone calls Intergroup after hours, the answering service asks the caller if he/she would like to speak to an AA member. If the caller wants to talk to someone, for meeting information, a 12th Step call, or other AA related information, the answering service connects the caller to the volunteer. At no time is the caller given the volunteer's name or phone number. Utmost care is taken to ensure the anonymity of the Hotline volunteers.

Grapevine and Literature Committee

This committee is a traveling display of the literature available in the office. Traditionally, this committee will receive invitations to special events, such as gratitude dinners, pancake breakfasts, and conferences. There they will set up a table full of General Service Conference approved and Grapevine literature. The committee member attending the event will bring extra display material to sell. If you

would like to request this service, please contact the committee (through the office) well in advance of the event.

Website Committee

This committee is responsible for maintaining and updating the Eastside Intergroup website, which offers a variety of services: a meeting directory, literature prices, contact information, links to other AA sites, current events, district information, and much more. The website is www.eastsideintergroup.org.

Special Events Committee

Our Special Events Committee is responsible for overseeing and planning any yearly activities. Primary examples are the Intergroup Picnic and the Pancake Breakfast. The picnic is held in August and the breakfast is held in April. These Fellowship events are designed to be low in cost so that anyone can participate.

Workshops

The standing committees are responsible for their own training workshops. The Eastside Intergroup Board may choose to add other workshops related to the Third Legacy, group secretaries, or 12th step calls. These workshops vary in topic or time as the need arises.

AA Literature

The Intergroup office sells a complete line of General Service Conference (GSO) approved and Grapevine literature and CDs. We have some Spanish, Russian and French books, and other foreign language literature can easily be ordered. The office also stocks aluminum and bronze medallions. Eastside and Seattle meeting directories are available for purchase. Eastside directories are published approximately four times a year and are based on current group registrations.

“Pass It On” Newsletter

Our monthly newsletter Pass It On has been published since 1989. It helps to keep the membership up to date on current AA events, meeting changes, office news, and other AA related issues. The newsletter committee welcomes people who like to write and who have a good eye for proof-reading. The editor also supports people who want to share their experience even if they think they can't write, meaning that anyone can contribute to the newsletter!

Eastside Intergroup Structure

The western Washington area is divided into geographical areas called districts. The factor that dictates which district a group belongs to is the meeting location of the group. Eastside Intergroup umbrellas the following districts: 34 (Redmond, Bellevue, East Lake Sammamish, Mercer Island); 35 (Issaquah); 36 (Snoqualmie, North Bend, Carnation, Duvall, Preston); 38 (Kirkland); 39 (Bothell, Woodinville, Kenmore). Each AA group within these five districts has an Intergroup Representative who attends the monthly business meeting. These representatives are voting members who see that the office and the standing committees operate efficiently and follow the 12 Traditions.

A Board of Directors is elected from these Intergroup Reps and/or from the general membership. There are nine members on the Board, each with a term of three years. Every April three of these Board members rotate out, and three new Board members are elected to replace them. The Board of Directors acts very much like the Board of Trustees of the General Service Board in New York in that it has latitude

in deciding the management of Intergroup's affairs. When there is a division of opinion, the question goes back to the groups for their opinions, or group conscience. This is the way we stay within the democratic principles that are so important to the health of Alcoholics Anonymous.

The Intergroup structure is governed by a set of bylaws that were approved in 1998. They are revised, from time to time, through a formal procedure. Current bylaws are available upon request at the Intergroup office. They are also posted on the website.

Thank you for your interest and support. We know that you will find involvement and service work a rewarding part of your recovery – we sure have!!
