

**BYLAWS**  
**of the**  
**SUBURBAN NORTH INTERGROUP**  
**OF OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS**

**ARTICLE I – NAME**

The name of this organization shall be the Suburban North Intergroup, hereinafter known as SNI.

**ARTICLE II – PURPOSE**

The primary purpose of SNI is to aid those with the problem of compulsive eating through the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, guided by the Twelve Concepts of OA Service, and to serve and represent the OA groups from which SNI is formed. SNI is in compliance with and qualifies as an exempt organization under Section 501(C)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding section of any future United States Internal Revenue Law).

**Section 1 – The Twelve Steps**<sup>1</sup>

(These Twelve Steps cannot be amended by an Intergroup except as per OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article XIV, Section 1e)

The Twelve Steps are suggested for recovery in the Fellowship of Overeaters Anonymous. The Twelve Steps are:

1. We admitted we were powerless over food – that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

---

<sup>1</sup> Permission to use the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous for adaptation granted by AA World Services, Inc.

9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to compulsive overeaters and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

## **Section 2 – The Twelve Traditions <sup>2</sup>**

(These Twelve Traditions cannot be amended by an Intergroup except as per OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article XIV, Section 1e)

The Twelve Traditions are:

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon OA unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority – a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for OA membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or OA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose – to carry its message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers.
6. An OA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the OA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every OA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Overeaters Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. OA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Overeaters Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the OA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

---

<sup>2</sup> Permission to use the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous for adaptation granted by AA World Services, Inc.

11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than on promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, television, and other public media of communication.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all these traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

### **Section 3 – The Twelve Concepts of OA Service**

(These Twelve Concepts cannot be amended by an Intergroup except as per OA, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article XIV, Section 1)

1. The ultimate responsibility and authority for OA World Services reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.
2. The OA groups have delegated to the World Service Business Conference the active maintenance of our world services; thus, the World Service Business Conference is the voice, authority and effective conscience of OA as a whole.
3. The Right of Decision, based on trust, makes effective leadership possible.
4. The Right of Participation ensures equality of opportunity for all in the decision-making process.
5. Individuals have the right of appeal and petition in order to ensure that their opinions and personal grievances will be carefully considered.
6. The World Service Business Conference has entrusted the Board of Trustees with the primary responsibility for the administration of Overeaters Anonymous.
7. The Board of Trustees has legal rights and responsibilities accorded to them by OA Bylaws Subpart A; the rights and responsibilities of the World Service Business Conference are accorded to it by tradition and by OA Bylaws Subpart B.
8. The Board of Trustees has delegated to its Executive Committee the responsibility to administer the OA World Service Office.
9. Able, trusted servants, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are indispensable for effective functioning at all service levels.
10. Service responsibility is balanced by a carefully defined service authority; therefore, duplication of efforts is avoided.
11. Trustee administration of the World Service Office should always be assisted by the best standing committees, executives, staffs, and consultants.
12. The spiritual foundation for OA service ensures that:
  - a. No OA committee or service body shall ever become the seat of perilous wealth or power

- b. Sufficient operating funds, plus an ample reserve, shall be OA's prudent financial principle
- c. No OA member shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority
- d. All important decisions shall be reached by discussion, vote, and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity
- e. No service action shall ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy and
- f. No OA service committee or service board shall ever perform acts of government, and each shall always remain democratic in thought and action.

### **ARTICLE III - MEMBERS**

#### **Section 1 – Membership**

Members of SNI shall consist of the following:

- A. The SNI Board.
- B. Intergroup Representatives (IRs), which shall consist of one (1) voting member from each affiliated group within the geographic area
- C. The SNI geographic area shall be defined as Lake County, Northern and Northwest Cook County, and McHenry County.
- D. Group members not acting as IRs but elected or appointed to carry out specific duties, e.g. committee chair

#### **Section 2 – Qualifications for SNI Group Membership**

- A. Those groups within Region 5 or the geographic definition of SNI that have formally registered with World Service Office and affiliated with SNI may be considered member groups. With SNI permission, a virtual group may affiliate with SNI.
- B. SNI endorses the definition of an OA group in Overeaters Anonymous, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B. Article V. Section 1. as written and as it may be amended by a future World Service Business Conference.
- C. These points shall define an Overeaters Anonymous group:
  - 1. As a group, they meet to practice the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, guided by the Twelve Concepts of OA Service.
  - 2. All who have the desire to stop eating compulsively are welcome in the group.
  - 3. No member is required to practice any actions in order to remain a member or to have a voice (share at a meeting)
  - 4. As a group they have no affiliation other than Overeaters Anonymous.
  - 5. It has affiliated as an Overeaters Anonymous group by registering with the World Service Office.

- D. Each group shall be entitled to one (1) vote through its elected IR.
- E. No group may be registered with another Intergroup.

### **Section 3 – Intergroup Representatives**

- A. Intergroup Representatives shall be selected by the group conscience of the group they represent. Each IR shall be selected by any method deemed appropriate by their group. These IRs shall serve for a period designated by their group, always subject to recall by the group they represent. Each group shall be free to designate an alternate representative when the necessity arises.
- B. IRs should be selected for commitment to the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of OA and their willingness to serve.
- C. The primary responsibilities of the IR/Alternate, is to represent their group at all meetings of SNI, to act as a liaison between SNI and their group, to see that all the communications pertaining to SNI are made available and, where requested, read aloud to the group.

### **Section 4 – Voting Membership**

Membership with voice and eligible to vote may include:

- A. Elected SNI representatives (IRs) or alternates — each represented group gets one vote
- B. Elected officers: vice chair, treasurer, recording secretary, and corresponding secretary. The SNI Chair only votes in accordance to chair duties as recorded in the SNI Policy and Procedure Manual Article II, Section D Paragraph 12
- C. Non-elected volunteers fulfilling the duties that normally would be that of an elected officer
- D. Committee chairs
- E. WSBC delegates and alternates
- F. Region 5 representatives and alternates

## **ARTICLE IV – SNI ELECTED POSITIONS**

### **Section 1 – The SNI Board**

- A. The Board shall consist of a chair, vice chair, treasurer, recording secretary, and corresponding secretary.
- B. The immediate past SNI Chair shall serve as an ex-officio member of the SNI Board for one (1) year.
- C. In the event the SNI Chair should be unable to attend any meeting of the Board, the next highest ranking SNI officer in attendance shall serve as chair for that meeting. The ranking of these officers shall serve as follows.

1) Vice Chair

- 2) Treasurer
- 3) Recording Secretary
- 4) Corresponding Secretary

## **Section 2 – Nominations to SNI Elected Positions**

Nominations to SNI elected positions may be made from the floor at the time of election. A nominating committee may also be formed, at the discretion of SNI.

## **Section 3 – Qualifications for SNI Elected Positions**

- A. Working the Twelve Steps of OA for a minimum of one (1) year
- B. Familiarity with the Twelve Traditions of OA
- C. Familiarity with the Twelve Concepts of OA Service
- D. One (1) year of current abstinence
- E. Regular attendee of an active group for a period of at least six (6) months and to have been an SNI Representative for a minimum of six (6) months or served on a committee or subcommittee
- F. The World Service Business Conference Delegate/Alternate shall be a current or past member of the SNI Board (when possible), shall have serviced as a representative for at least two (2) Region 5 Assemblies, shall have served at least two (2) years of service beyond the group level, and shall have at least one (1) year of current abstinence and meet qualifications and requirements as outlined and defined in the Overeaters Anonymous, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, Article X, Section 3, Paragraph c, and as required for election to SNI positions by Article IV, Section 4, of these bylaws.
- G. The Region 5 Representative/Alternate shall have attended at least three (3) SNI meetings, shall meet qualifications and requirements as outlined and defined in the Region 5 Bylaws, and as required for election by Article IV, Section 4, of these bylaws. If a Region Representative fails to attend two (2) consecutive assemblies his/her position may be declared vacant by a majority of SNI members present and voting.

## **Section 4 – Method of Election**

- A. Elections shall be held annually at a meeting specified for that purpose.
- B. To be eligible for election to SNI elected positions, nominee must:
  - 1) Meet all qualifications of the position as defined in Article IV, Section 3 of these bylaws
  - 2) Understand responsibilities of the position as defined in Article IV, Section 6 of these bylaws and in the SNI Policy and Procedure Manual, Article II.

- 3) Be present at the election meeting
- C. Election voting will be by ballot.
- D. To be elected, a candidate must receive a majority of the votes cast.

### **Section 5 – Term of Office for SNI Elected Positions**

- A. Board Members
  - 1) Board members shall be elected to serve for a period of two (2) years.
  - 2) On even-numbered years, the Chair and Treasurer shall be elected. On odd-numbered years, the Vice Chair, Recording Secretary, and Corresponding Secretary shall be elected.
  - 3) Newly elected officers shall begin service at the conclusion of the SNI meeting at which they were elected.
  - 4) Board members shall serve no more than two (2) consecutive terms in the same office.
  - 5) After an interval of one (1) year a member may again be eligible for election to their prior office.
  - 6) Upon election to the Board, members shall cease to be a Representative of their group and that group shall elect a new SNI Representative.
  - 7) A board member filling an unexpired term or a vacancy shall be eligible for two (2) consecutive elected terms after the unexpired term or vacancy is completed.
- B. A WSBC delegate/alternate shall be elected to a two (2) year term and shall serve no more than two (2) consecutive terms with two (2) exceptions: 1) A WSBC delegate/alternate filling an unexpired term or a vacancy shall be eligible for two (2) consecutive elected terms after the unexpired term or vacancy is completed. 2) A WSBC delegate elected as SNI chair will continue to serve as WSBC delegate while serving as SNI chair.
- C. A Region 5 representative/alternate shall be elected to a two (2) year term and shall serve no more than two (2) consecutive terms with two (2) exceptions: 1) A Region 5 representative/alternate filling an unexpired term or a vacancy shall be eligible for two (2) consecutive elected terms after the unexpired term or vacancy is completed. 2) A Region 5 representative elected as SNI chair will continue to serve as a Region 5 representative while serving as SNI chair.

### **Section 6 – Responsibilities of the SNI Board**

- A. Serve as guardians of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of OA and the Twelve Concepts of OA Service with respect to the function of SNI
- B. Perform the duties of their offices in accordance with SNI Policy and Procedure Manual Article II
- C. Serve as guardian of SNI funds
- D. Provide a forum for the interchange of ideas and information among member groups

E. Provide a means of conducting SNI business in case of emergencies and/or between SNI meetings

### **Section 7 – Vacancies and Resignations**

- A. If an SNI member holds an elected position and fails to attend three (3) consecutive meetings without prior notice, his/her position may be declared vacant by a majority of those members present and voting.
- B. Any member in an elected position may resign at any time for any reason by giving the SNI Chair written notice.
- C. Any SNI member may be removed from an elected position for due cause by a three-fourths ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) majority of SNI Representatives at a special meeting announced for that purpose.

### **Section 8 – Filling of Vacancies**

- A. Vacancies shall be filled by a majority vote at that meeting in which the vacancy occurred, or at the next meeting or special meeting of SNI. Such persons chosen to fill said vacancies shall serve for the remainder of the unexpired term.
- B. A person chosen to fill any vacancy on the Board shall meet the qualification and be aware of the responsibilities of the position as defined and described in Article IV of these bylaws and Article II of the SNI Policy and Procedure Manual.

## **ARTICLE V – MEETINGS**

### **Section 1 – Regular Meetings**

SNI shall meet once a month at a time and place designated by a majority of the voting members.

### **Section 2 – Annual Meetings**

An annual meeting shall be held in the month of October for the election of officers.

### **Section 3 – Special Meetings**

A special meeting may be called at any time by a majority vote of the SNI Board, or by petition of ten (10) SNI members, by giving notice as prescribed in Article V, Section 4 of these bylaws.

### **Section 4 – Method of Notification**

Notification of all meetings shall consist of an e-mail prepared by the SNI Chair and distributed to each SNI Representative prior to the date of the meeting.

### **Section 5 – Quorum**



Two (2) officers and any other voting members present at any SNI meeting shall constitute a quorum for all SNI proceedings.

### **Section 6 – SNI Meeting Procedure**

The beginning of every meeting shall start with OA’s Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions followed by a brief reflection on the tradition of the Month (i.e. Tradition 1 reflected on in January). Then the corresponding Concept of the Month from the Twelve Concepts of OA Service shall be read.

## **ARTICLE VI - COMMITTEES**

### **Section 1 – Standing Committees**

Standing committees may be established as required to carry out the purposes of SNI in the most efficient manner. Standing committees may include but not be limited to:

- A. Newsletter (*Winging It*)
- B. Public Information/Professional Outreach (PI/PO)
- C. Twelfth Step Within (TSW)
- D. Bylaws
- E. Finance

### **Section 2 – Special Committees**

The SNI Board shall designate such special committees as are deemed necessary for the welfare and operation of SNI.

### **Section 3 – Nominating Committee**

SNI may have a nominating committee to recommend persons to serve as officers, Region 5 representatives, and WSBC delegates, and persons to fill vacancies and to serve on the next Nominating Committee. The number of members on the committee should be at least three (3) and no more than five (5) besides the SNI Vice Chair. The SNI Chair shall not serve on the Nominating Committee, but may provide background information and input as requested by the committee.

### **Section 4 – Committee Chairs**

#### **A. Committee Chair Appointment**

The SNI Chair shall appoint a committee chair from the board or an OA member present who meets the SNI qualifications listed below. This will include standing committees or any special committee that is deemed necessary to conduct business for SNI.

## B. Committee Chair Qualifications

1. must have a commitment to the OA 12 Steps and 12 Traditions and the 12 Concepts of OA Service
2. must have six (6) months of current abstinence
3. must have a willingness to serve a two (2) year term
4. must have the approval of the majority of the voting members present

## C. Committee Chair Term of Service

1. All committee chair appointments will be for a two (2) year term and the committee chair will serve no more than two (2) consecutive terms in the same position. After an interval of one (1) year, a member may be eligible for appointment to their prior committee chair position.
2. A committee chair filling an unexpired term or a vacancy shall be eligible for two (2) consecutive full terms after the unexpired term or vacancy is completed.

## **Section 5 – Committee Procedures**

Each standing or special committee shall be responsible for calling and holding meetings, and establishing the method of procedure, subject to the approval of the SNI Board and the guidelines of the Twelve Traditions of OA.

## **Section 6 – Committee Responsibility**

Any committee decision and/or vote which establishes or changes a policy, sets a procedural plan for a special event, or expends funds in excess of the approved budget, shall require approval by SNI prior to implementation. Each Standing Committee Chair shall submit a written or verbal report to SNI at the end of any specific event coordinated by that committee. If any monies are expended from an approved budget, a detailed and itemized report shall be included with the committee report. All receipts must be turned over to the Treasurer for reimbursement.

## **Section 7 – Ex-officio Members**

- A. Past committee chairs may serve in an ex-officio capacity in their respective committees.
- B. The SNI Chair is an ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominating Committee.

## **Section 8 – Committee Bank Account**

- A. If it is deemed necessary by the SNI Board that a committee shall open a bank account, the following procedure shall be followed:

1. The SNI Chair and Treasurer shall be cosigners on the account. Only one signature shall be required on all checks.
2. The Treasurer shall keep all financial records and shall present a detailed, itemized report of transactions to SNI within thirty (30) days following any event for which monies were expended or received.
3. The Committee Chair shall arrange for an audit of the committee account during the final month of each year. The audit shall take place at the same time as the audit for the general SNI account.

### **Section 9 – Vacancies**

Should a vacancy, resignation, or removal of a committee chair occur, all pertinent information shall be turned over to the SNI Chair. The SNI Chair shall then appoint a new committee chair to serve the remainder of the unexpired term.

### **Section 10 – Removal of Committee Chair**

A committee chair may be removed for cause from office by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the SNI Board. (For example: non-attendance, return to compulsive overeating, unworthy conduct, etc.)

## **ARTICLE VII – SNI FUNDS**

### **Section 1 – Sources of Funds**

- A. Voluntary contributions of the member groups shall be the primary source of funds.
- B. Secondary source of income may be such occasional projects or activities as may be authorized by SNI according to Tradition Six.
- C. SNI may accept donations from OA members, conforming to the general practice of OA.
- D. Regarding the maximum allowable annual donation to SNI by any OA member, please refer to the current World Service Bylaws for guidelines.
- E. The acceptance of bequests or donations from any outside source is prohibited.
- F. A bequest from an OA member must be within one (1) year after death and conform to the general practice of OA.
- G. The maximum allowable bequest to SNI by OA members is to be limited to an amount set by the vote of SNI, and is subject to change by the SNI Board. Specific details will be listed in the SNI Policy Manual.
- H. SNI shall not accept the responsibility for trusteeship over, or enter into the distribution or allocation of, funds set up outside of Overeaters Anonymous.

### **Section 2 – Prudent Reserve**

A Prudent Reserve shall be maintained as appropriate for fiscal management. There shall be no accumulation of funds beyond current need, with retention of a prudent reserve for six (6) months operating expenses. Excess funds shall be donated to Region 5 and the World Service Office as budgeted and as directed by SNI.

## **ARTICLE VIII – PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY**

The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern SNI in all cases to which they are applicable, and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws, the Overeaters Anonymous, Inc. Bylaws, Subpart B, or any special rules of order SNI may adopt. A non-OA Parliamentarian may be requested at the discretion of the SNI Chair.

## **ARTICLE IX – AMENDMENTS TO THESE BYLAWS**

### **Section 1 Proposed Bylaw Amendments**

These Bylaws, with the exception of Article II, Sections 1, 2, and 3, may be amended at any time by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the SNI voting members present at any regular or special SNI meeting, provided a copy of the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing or electronically and received by each group affiliated with SNI at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting in which action is to be taken on the amendment.

### **Section 2 Editorial Changes**

Editorial changes may be made by the SNI Board when correcting an oversight or typographical error in these bylaws. Such changes cannot alter the intent or effect of the bylaw. The SNI Chair will report any changes made by the next SNI meeting.

## **ARTICLE X – MAJOR POLICY MATTERS**

### **Section 1**

- A. Matters which affect SNI and/or groups within its service area shall be referred to the SNI Board.
- B. Matters which relate to Overeaters Anonymous as a whole or which affect Subpart A of the Bylaws of Overeaters Anonymous, Inc. shall be referred to the Board of Trustees.
- C. Matters which affect Subpart B of the Bylaws of Overeaters Anonymous, Inc. or which relate to the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts shall be referred to the World Service Business Conference.

## **ARTICLE XI – DISSOLUTION**

### **Section 1 — Deregistration**

In order to deregister, SNI must submit a written request to the World Service Office, the Region 5 Chair, and the Region 5 Trustee.

## **Section 2 — Disbursement of Remaining Funds**

Upon the dissolution of SNI, after paying or adequately providing for SNI debts and obligations, the remaining assets shall be distributed to the World Service Office of Overeaters Anonymous, and/or Region 5.

## **Section 3 — US Non-Profit with 501c (3) Status**

No part of SNI net earnings shall ever inure to or be used for the benefit of, or be distributed to, its members, trustees, officers or other private persons, except that SNI shall be empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payment and distribution in furtherance of the express purposes for which it is formed.