**How to Operate Healthy & Effective OA Meetings**

*Resource of the Peninsula Intergroup, Washington State, USA*

**There are two ways of attending an OA meeting: face to face or online. Face-to-face meetings are where members travel to the meeting location and are in the same physical space while sharing and hearing what each of the members have to say.**

**Online meetings in the Peninsula Intergroup (Peninsula IG) may be accessed virtually through your computer, phone, or tablet (iPad, etc.). See below for further discussion on Special Recommendations for online meetings.**

**Starting a New Meeting:**

Starting an OA meeting in your area is easy. The Peninsula Intergroup Meeting Coordinator (see [www.oapeninsula.org](http://www.oapeninsula.org)) and WSO (info@oa.org or 505-891-2664) will answer questions to help you navigate through this process.

[Thanks for being willing to start a meeting (oa.org)](https://oa.org/app/uploads/2019/12/Start-a-Meeting-Flyer.pdf). Click this link for the document “How to Start a Meeting of Overeaters Anonymous”. This provides helpful information in starting your meeting (regardless of location).

* Order the New Group Starter Kit, item #730 at [www.bookstore.oa.org](http://www.bookstore.oa.org).
* Find a meeting space.
* Submit the New Group Registration/Change form to World Service Office (WSO) or register your meeting electronically.
* We strongly suggest that your group affiliate with Peninsula Intergroup #09196.
* Check out other meetings!
* Get the word out!

**Other links**:

Suggested meeting format at oa.org: <https://oa.org/app/uploads/2019/12/Sug_Mtg.pdf>

Newcomers Meeting kit at oa.org: <https://oa.org/app/uploads/2019/12/Newcomer_Mtg_Guide.pdf>

Guidelines: Literature and Meetings: <https://oa.org>

Meeting Basics Archives: <https://oa.org/archives>

Add a Meeting: <https://www.oa.org/Add>

Working the Program: <https://www.oa.org>

**Setting up and Operating a Meeting Located in the Peninsula Intergroup Region:**

**Suggested Literature** (<https://oa.org/bookstore>) New Meeting Essentials:

* For Today – daily reader
* Voices of Recovery – daily reader
* The Twelve Steps and Twelve Trads of Overeaters Anonymous Second Edition;
* AA Big Book Fourth Edition – step work (available as e-book).

**Other Literature**

* OA e-books are available through Amazon: [Kindle](https://amzn.to/2WcqnZs), Barnes and Noble: [Nook](https://www.barnesandnoble.com/s/%22Overeaters%20Anonymous%22?Ntk=P_key_Contributor_List&Ns=P_Sales_Rank&Ntx=mode+matchall) Apple: [Apple Books](https://books.apple.com/us/author/overeaters-anonymous/id1301358385)
* Pamphlets such as “In OA, Recovery is Possible” (<https://oa.org/bookstore>)

**Resources**

* [www.oa.org](http://www.oa.org) – Main website for Overeaters Anonymous
* [www.oaregion1.org](http://www.oaregion1.org) – Region 1 website
* [www.oapeninsula.org](http://www.oapeninsula.org) – Peninsula Intergroup website
* [www.seattleoa.org](http://www.seattleoa.org) – Seattle Intergroup website

**Intergroup**

* Board Members – Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary
* Committees – Meeting Committee, Newsletter/Communication Committee, Election Committee, and Bylaws Committee
* Meeting Coordinator – see description in this document.

**Special Recommendations for On-line Meetings:**

Groups that meet on-line purchase an account with an on-line meeting application. (Zoom has proven popular and is in use by many 12 step fellowships.) Generally, this account will need to be purchased by an individual. The group is responsible for determining how to operate that account in keeping with the 7th tradition. (In most cases, the person of record purchasing the account will be reimbursed from the group’s treasury.) The individual named on the account will be considered a “host” by the application; this position is similar to a meeting opener for an in-person meeting. This “host” function can be handed off to another individual at the time of the meeting. The host should be considered a group position. It’s recommended that the term for this position be no less than 6 months, but more appropriately for one year.

With on-line meetings you have a new service position, that of “host.” It replaces the position of “opener,” someone who has the key to the physical meeting space and is responsible for set up. Like the opener, you will want to make sure the “room” is open a few minutes before the meeting starts. In addition, the host can explain how zoom works to new attendees, and mute individuals who are not speaking to avoid unwanted interruptions, background noise. Zoom instructions may depend on meeting size.

On-line meetings have particular considerations related to the program principles, such as:

*Anonymity:* Meeting attendees can be invited via a link emailed to them by the meeting secretary (or other group member), and therefore are known to group members. However, individuals can enter the meeting simply using the Meeting ID and Password publicized by the intergroup/region/world service arms. They can do this without a video or specific name (For example, they can choose to keep their video off, and their “name” could be the name of their device or the phone number if they are calling in.) For some, this is a matter of managing their anonymity. For some, it’s protection against an unstable internet. However, those who are on video attending the meeting can be uncomfortable with an unnamed and unpictured attendee. Many on-line meeting scripts will include a request for those not on video to announce themselves at the start of the meeting so they can be welcomed; the meeting script can also provide guidance on how to change how they are being identified by the application using the “rename” function “with first name only.”

*7th Tradition:* On-line meetings will need to provide directions for participants as to how to contribute to the meeting and other levels of OA, such as the region and world service office. (Usually this is announced and/or included in the chat.) Both the region and world service office accept contributions on-line and these can be attributed to the specific group using the group’s number (the group number can be found listed on [www.oa.org](http://www.oa.org) meeting list). The group may maintain a group treasury. If so, directions may be provided for mailing a check to the treasurer. Using a commercial pay application (such as Venmo or PayPal) is sometimes used by groups to make deposits into a bank account.

*Newcomer Welcome:* Most groups include an explicit method of welcoming newcomers as part of their meeting script. This can include offering newcomer brochures to new attendees. As a service position, a member can be responsible for maintaining a supply of newcomer brochures and mailing supplies, collecting address information via chat, and mailing the material to the newcomer. The group can reimburse the member for materials they purchase. Another option is to provide the newcomer with information about how to purchase newcomer brochures in the chat as part of announcements related to purchase of (any) OA literature (see next).

*Literature:* When using literature, considerthe fact that not all attendees will have copies of all OA literature with them. Include an invitation to read OR share, to allow for those who may not have a copy of the book on hand. The meeting chair should make clear which book/brochure/article that is being read (holding it up and naming it) and include the name in the chat. Information about how to purchase literature from OA.org should be in the chat.

*Sponsorship:* Often in meetings, the chair will ask if there are members willing to be a sponsor. By adding an asterisk or other symbol to their name, an individual can communicate whether they sponsor, or are available to sponsor. They can also be asked to raise their hands, but this is more suited to a smaller meeting where all attendees show up in one screen.

**Intergroup Meeting Coordinator: A resource!**

The Peninsula Intergroup has created a position of “Meeting Coordinator” The Coordinator’s duties applies to all Peninsula Intergroup meetings, both in-person and on-line and includes the following:

* + Acts as liaison to all Meeting Reps about meeting format and information (Cyl)
  + Sends updates to the OA PI webmaster (Martha)
  + Sends updates to Region 1 webmaster (Martha)
  + Fills out online forms to add/edit/delete PI meetings on [www.oa.org](http://www.oa.org/) at the World Service Office (WSO) (Martha)
  + Reports changes to meetings at the monthly OA PI meetings if the Meeting Rep is not available (Martha)
  + Maintains Speakers list for IG (Cyl)
  + Maintains Sponsors list for IG (Cyl)
  + Updates meeting format documentation when necessary (Cyl)
    - Present to OA PI Board for approval
    - Send final documentation to OA PI Secretary for distribution
    - Sends final documentation to PI Webmaster for posting on web