

**By-Laws of A.B.E Intergroup Association of Alcoholics Anonymous**

**(As adopted November, 2011)**

**ARTICLE 1 –PURPOSE AND OFFICE**

**1.01 Purpose:**

ABE Intergroup exists to coordinate the service activities of Alcoholics Anonymous in the Greater Lehigh Valley area that are beyond of the resources of a single group to complete. Regularly scheduled meetings will provide updates to the association’s membership as to the status of these activities. All activities are in direct support of the Fifth Tradition of Alcoholics Anonymous: To carry the AA message to the alcoholic that still suffers.

**1.02 Mailing Address:**

The association shall maintain its address of 2285 Schoenersville Road, Suite 208, Bethlehem, PA 18017

**ARTICLE 2 – MEMBERS AND REPRESENTATIVES**

**2.01 Membership:**

The voting membership of the Association shall consist of each present A.A. Group and any future A. A. Group located in the Allentown, Bethlehem, Easton area and their environs (currently District 37 and 57), which shall have elected or which shall elect to participate in the Association. Such election shall be evidenced by the giving of notice to the association.

**2.02 Representatives and Alternative Representatives**

Each membership group of the Association shall designate or elect one person to serve as representative of the membership group to represent such group in the affairs of the Association.

Each membership group may also designate or elect an alternate representative. The name, address and email address of each representative and alternate representative of existing member groups elected of designated to serve as such for any calendar year shall be registered with the Association not later than December 31<sup>st</sup> of the preceding calendar year.

In the calendar year in which a group first elects to become a member of the Association and elects or designates a representative or alternate to serve for such year, the name and address of the representative and alternate shall be registered with the Association concurrently with, or as soon as practical after his or her designation or election.

No person may serve concurrently as representative or alternate for more than one Group.

### **ARTICLE 3 – MEETINGS OF REPRESENTATIVES**

#### **3.01 Regular Meetings:**

Regular meetings of the representatives shall be held at 8:00 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday of each month unless another time and/or date is designated by the Steering Committee of the Association and notice thereof is given to each representative or alternate.

#### **3.02 Special Meetings:**

Special meetings of representatives may be called at any time (other than a regular meeting date) by a majority of the Steering Committee or by written request of a least 25% of the member groups received at the Association office.

#### **3.03 Notices of Meetings:**

Notice of any change in the regular meeting dates or of each special meeting shall be given in writing or verbally to each representative or alternate at the address registered with the Association for the current year at least two weeks prior to the date or revised date of each such meeting.

#### **3.04 Place of Meeting:**

All meetings of the representative shall be held at Wesley United Methodist Church at 2540 Center Street, Bethlehem, PA, 18017 except as noted in §3.03 above.

#### **3.05 Quorum; Adjournment:**

The presence in person of representatives or alternates from at least ½ of the current member groups shall constitute a quorum for the purposes of conducting business at a meeting of delegates.

If a quorum is not present at a duly scheduled or announced meeting, the meeting shall be adjourned to a time and place specified by the chair person in a notice to representatives or alternates given in the manner provide in Section 3.03 hereof. At such adjourned meeting, the presence in person of representatives or alternates from at least 1/10 of the membership groups shall constitute a quorum.

#### **3.06 Voting:**

Every member group represented at a meeting by a currently registered representative or alternate shall be entitled to one vote on each matter brought before the meeting, such vote to be exercise either by the representative or alternate.

Unless otherwise specified in these by-laws, the favorite vote of a majority of those present and entitled to vote shall be sufficient to approve any matter brought before a meeting.

## **ARTICLE 4 –STEERING COMMITTEE**

### **4:01 Composition:**

The Steering Committee of the Association shall consist of the following officers of the Association: Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, and each of the Directors of the Permanent Committees.

### **4.02 Personal Liability:**

A member of the Steering Committee shall not be personally liable for monetary damages for any action take, or any failure to take action, as a member of the Steering Committee except to the extent that, by law, liability or monetary damages may not be limited.

### **4.03 Election of Steering Committee:**

The representatives, at the annual June meeting, in the even years, shall elect a Chairperson of the Hospitals and Institutional Committee, a Chairperson of the Public Information Committee, a Chairperson of the Schedules Committee, a Chairperson of the Telephone Services Committee, a Chairperson of the Literature Committee and a Chairperson of the Unity Committee.

And in the odd years shall elect an ABE Intergroup Association Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer. Individuals elected in the above capacities will serve for a period of a two years, effective immediately.

### **4.04 Qualifications; Removal:**

All members of the Steering Committee must be continuously sober for a period of at least two years, officers for a period of five years, and must meet such additional sobriety and service requirements as may be established from time to time by the Association.

Steering Committee members shall be subject to removal or recall by a majority vote at a duly constituted meeting of the representatives, held after notice of the proposed action has been sent to the affected member.

### **4.04a Qualifications; Intergroup Chairperson:**

In addition to the stated sobriety time, previous Intergroup Committee Chair or Executive Panel experience is strongly desired in any nominee for the Intergroup Chairperson position.

### **4.05 Responsibilities:**

The Steering Committee shall be responsible to conduct, manage and direct the affairs of the Association subject to instructions by members adopted by a formal resolution of representatives at a dully constituted meeting.

#### **4.06 Resignation; Vacancies:**

Any member of the Steering Committee may resign by giving written notice to the Chairperson or Secretary.

Any vacancies in the Steering Committee because of death, resignation, or removal or any other cause may be filled by the Chairperson subject to approval by a majority of the remaining members of the Steering Committee though less than a quorum and the approval of the representatives at the next meeting of the representatives.

#### **4.07 Quorum; Voting:**

The presence in person of a majority of the members of the Steering Committee then in office at any meeting shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of conducting all business coming before such a meeting. Unless otherwise specified in these by-laws, the favorable vote of a majority of the members present at any meeting at which a quorum is present shall be sufficient to approve any matter brought before the meeting.

### **ARTICLE 5 – OFFICERS / RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **5.01 Designation:**

The officers of the Association shall be the persons elected as such at a meeting of representatives and currently serving as the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer. They and the Directors of each Permanent Committee of the Association shall constitute the Steering Committee.

#### **5.02 Chairperson:**

The Chairperson shall coordinate the affairs of the Association subject to the requirements established by the Steering Committee. The Chairperson shall preside over the Steering Committee meetings and Intergroup Representative meetings.

#### **5.03 Vice Chairperson**

The Vice Chairperson shall perform the duties of the Chairperson in the absence of the Chairperson, shall perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Steering Committee or the Chairperson.

The Vice Chairperson shall coordinate all activities as related to the Web site. This includes (but is not limited to) the addition and deletion of electronic meeting announcements, updating the electronic schedule and any other changes to the Web site as directed by the representatives. The Vice Chairperson will serve as primary liaison with the Web site administrator and will, on a monthly basis, communicate all relevant usage statistics regarding the Web site to the Intergroup representatives.

**5.04 Secretary:**

The Secretary shall attend all meetings of the representatives and the Steering Committee, and shall record the minutes of such meetings, votes take and to provide copies of the minutes at the meetings. The Secretary shall also perform all other duties relevant to the office of Secretary.

The secretary shall also be responsible for the maintenance of all Intergroup archival documents.

**5.05 Treasurer:**

The Treasurer shall have or provide for the custody of funds or other property of the Association; shall collect and receive or provide for the collection and receipt of money earned by or in any manner due to or received by the Association: shall deposit all funds in his or her custody in such banks or other places of deposit as the Association may from time to time designate; shall, when so required by the Association, render an account showing all transactions as Treasurer and the financial condition of the Association: and , in general, shall discharge such other duties as may from time to time be assigned by the Steering Committee or the Chairperson.

**5.06 Chairperson of a Permanent Committee:**

The Chairperson of each Permanent Committee shall be responsible to assure performance of the purposes of the Committee including the attraction and direction of Committee members. Each outgoing Chairperson shall mentor any newly elected Chairperson.

**ARTICLE 6 – PERMANENT COMMITTEES**

**6.01 Identity and Composition:**

The Association shall have six permanent committees as previously identified in §4.03 above. Each Committee shall consist of a Chairperson and such members or member groups who shall elect to join and serve on the Committee.

**6.02 Hospital and Institutions Committee:**

The Hospital and Institutions Committee shall establish and oversee the conduct of A. A. meetings in various hospitals, rehabilitation centers and other institutions in the Greater Lehigh Valley area in coordination with and at the request of the directors or officials of such institutions.

The Hospital and Institutional Committee shall meet monthly at an agreed upon time and place prior to the regular monthly meeting of the Association’s representatives.

**6.03 Public Information Committee:**

The Public Information Committee shall, on request, provide information to the public about A A. and the A.A. recovery program through presentations in schools, to churches and service groups, at health fairs and to other non- A. A. groups within the Greater Lehigh Valley Area. The Public Information Committee shall meet monthly at an agreed upon time and place prior to the regular monthly meeting of the Association’s representatives.

**6.04 Schedule Committee:**

ABE Intergroup will provide a regularly scheduled and updated print version of the local meeting directory. Appearance requirements for this directory are as follows: (a) the group or meeting must be in existence for not less than six (6) months at the time of publication and (b) that as a group or meeting, they may have no affiliation, either direct or implied, with any outside organization.

Removal from the directory is possible only via request from the appointed representative from the group/meeting or upon verification that the group/meeting no longer exists.

The Schedule Committee shall be responsible for the compiling, printing, and distribution of A A. meeting schedules. The schedule is to be reviewed and updated on a semi – annual basis. Format and cost consideration is the responsibility of this committee subject to Steering Committee approval. The Schedule Committee shall meet monthly at an agreed upon time and place prior to the regular monthly meeting of the Association’s representatives.

**6.05 Telephone Service Committee:**

The Telephone Service Committee shall be responsible for maintaining and overseeing answering service facilities to answer call for information and/or help in the Greater Lehigh Valley Area. The Telephone Committee shall meet monthly at an agreed upon time and place prior to the regular monthly meeting of the Association’s representatives.

**6.06 Unity Committee:**

The Unity Committee shall provide information to A. A. groups and meetings in the Greater Lehigh Valley Area of programs and activities of the Association and shall encourage participation. . The Unity Committee shall meet monthly at an agreed upon time and place prior to the regular monthly meeting of the Association’s representatives.

**6.07 Literature Committee:**

The Literature Committee shall be responsible for the ordering, selling and distribution of A. A. literature to groups/meetings within the Greater Lehigh Valley Area. . The Literature Committee shall meet

monthly at an agreed upon time and place prior to the regular monthly meeting of the Association's representatives.

At each regularly scheduled meeting of the Association, a status report detailing the current finances, inventory and other as-requested information from the representatives will be presented. An annual audit of the Literature Committee will be performed by representatives appointed by the Steering Committee.

#### **6.08 Committee Reports:**

All Committees shall be responsible for giving a brief report on their committee's activities at the regular meeting of the Association's representatives. The chairperson of the subject committee or a duly appointed committee member will be responsible for making said report.

### **ARTICLE 7 – SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

#### **7.01 Identity:**

The Association shall from time to time authorize special committees, including, but not limited to, the Audit Committee. When applicable, the Chairperson may appoint other special committees to serve specific purposes.

#### **7.02 Audit Committee:**

This Committee shall at least, annually audit the records of the Association's treasurer and any other group within the Association responsible for the funds of the Association. Any fiscal audit year shall be for the year ending December 31st. The results will be reported to the representatives at the regular January meeting of the Association.

The Audit Committee shall consist of two or more active members of member groups. These committee members shall be selected and approved by the Steering Committee.

#### **7.03 Advisory Committee:**

The Advisory Committee shall consist of past officers of the Association. The Committee members will be invited to attend regular monthly intergroup meetings and continue to receive copies of the minutes but will not have a vote on any matters brought before such meeting. The Advisory Committee to meet as needed.

### **ARTICLE 8 – GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

#### **8.01 Twelve Traditions:**

The Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous are guides for the A B E Intergroup Association of Alcoholics Anonymous (A. A)

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. 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 A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
6. An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

## **8.02 Twelve Concepts:**

The Twelve Concepts of Alcoholics Anonymous are also accepted as guides regarding the A B E Intergroup Association of A. A .

1. Final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.
2. The General Service Conference of A.A. has become, for nearly every practical purpose, the active voice and the effective conscience of our whole society in its world affairs.
3. To insure effective leadership, we should endow each element of A.A.—the conference, the General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives—with a traditional “Right of Decision.”



4. At all responsible levels, we ought to maintain a traditional “Right of Participation,” allowing a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.
5. Throughout our structure, a traditional “Right of Appeal” ought to prevail, so that minority opinion will be heard and personal grievances receive careful consideration.
6. The 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 General Service Board.
7. The Charter and Bylaws of the General Service Board are legal instruments, empowering the trustees to manage and conduct world service affairs. The Conference Charter is not a legal document; it relies upon tradition and the A.A. purse for final effectiveness.
8. The trustees are the principal planners and administrators of over-all policy and finance. They have custodial oversight of the separately incorporated and constantly active services, exercising this through their ability to elect all the directors of these entities.
9. Good service leadership at all levels is indispensable for our future functioning and safety. Primary world service leadership, once exercised by the founders, must necessarily be assumed by the trustees.
10. Every service responsibility should be matched by an equal service authority, with the scope of such authority well defined.
11. The trustees should always have the best possible committees, corporate service directors, executives, staffs, and consultants. Composition, qualifications, induction procedures, and rights and duties will always be matters of serious concern.
12. The Conference shall observe the spirit of A.A. 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 Society it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action.

## **ARTICLE 9 – AMENDMENTS TO THE BY-LAWS**

### **9.01 Amendments:**

These By – Laws may be amended at anytime by a ⅔ vote of the representative present at any regular meeting provided a quorum has been met and provided a copy of the proposed amendment is submitted to each currently registered representative and/or alternate at least 30 days before the meeting at which the action is taken on the amendment.

### **9.02 Reviews:**

These By – Laws shall be reviewed at least every four years, unless sufficient changes require an earlier review. A special committee, By – Law Review committee shall be appointed by the Steering Committee and shall consist of up to five active representatives of the Association.

## **ARTICLE 10 – INTERNAL REVENUE CODE SECTION 501 ( C ) ( 3)**

### **10.1 Purpose of the Association:**

The purpose of the Association shall be the administration and coordination of Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A) activities, including for such purposes the making of such distributions to organizations under §501(C) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code ( or corresponding section of any future Federal tax code).

### **10.2 Exclusions:**

No part of the net earnings of the Association shall be diverted for the use of individuals for their own personal gain. Individuals are considered to include members, representatives, officers or other private persons.

However, the Association is allowed to provide reasonable compensation for services rendered consistent with the purposes of §501(C) (3) purposes. No substantial part of the activities of the Association shall be directed toward an effect of legislation or the promotion of any candidate for public office.

In addition, the Association shall refrain from engaging in any activities which would violate the exempt status provisions applicable under the provisions of §501(C) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code or §170 ( c) (2) ( or corresponding section of any future Federal tax code)which diverts any earnings to private individuals.

### **10.3 Dissolution of Association:**

Upon dissolution of the Association, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of §501(C) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code (and/or any other appropriate sections of the Federal tax code).

### **10.4 Prudent Reserve Concept:**

Prudent reserve for the Association shall be defined as one to three months of normal operating expenses. An average month's operating expenses will be determined by adding up the expenses for the last two full calendar years divided by 24.

Aside from the prudent reserve, the Association's checking account shall have no more than \$500.00 above a one month's operating expense except under special conditions. Acceptance of any special conditions requires approval by the representatives following an explanation by the Treasurer. In the absence of any special conditions, the excess of one month's operating expenses are to be transferred from the checking account to the prudent reserve.

## **ARTICLE 11 – ELECTRONIC POSTING OF THE INTERGROUP BY-LAWS**

### **11 Electronic Posting of the Intergroup By-Laws:**

A downloadable version of the most recently approved version of the By-Laws of A. B. E. Intergroup Association of Alcoholics Anonymous shall be posted on the Association's website and will be accessible to all visitors of said site.