

**GEA Symposium - Your Delegate
Shares**
**Simposio del AEG - Su Delegado
comparte**

Choosing a Group's Name Policy

25 Jan 2025 @ 10 AM ET (UTC -5) via Zoom

Política de Elección del nombre del grupo

25 de enero a las 10am Hora del Este de EE.UU. (UTC-5)

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Welcome to GEA's Your Delegate Listens Symposium on the Choosing a Group's Name Policy.

I am Burt Peterson and I am honored to serve as GEA's Delegate.

Please join me in welcoming GEA's Alternate Delegate, Tom L.

Tom and I will present a few slides on the policy and its history.

Let's look at our agenda. Take it away, Tom.

Choosing a Group's Name Policy Política de Elección del nombre del grupo

- Framing – Policy Background, Timeline
- Response Questions
- Wrap Up, Closing
- Elaboración - Historial de la Política, Cronograma
- Respuesta Preguntas
- Conclusión, Clausura

Today we will cover these topics:

- Framing – Policy Background, Timeline
- Response Questions
- Wrap Up, Closing

**Framing – policy Background, Timeline
Elaboración - Historial de la Política, Cronograma**

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I prepared a document in October, 2024 showing the background and timeline of the “Choosing a Group’s Name” Policy, including the recent policy changes.

Today’s presentation is summarized from that document.

Please see that document for details.

June 2024 - Delegate's Report from the 64th WSC

Junio 2024 - Informe de la 64a CSM por parte del

Delegado

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|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| • Group name characteristics | • Características del nombre de un grupo |
| • Service Manual, Digest of Policies (pp 79-136) | • Manual de Servicio, Compendio de Políticas (pg. 79-136) |
| • Changes considered since early 2022 | • Cambios bajo consideración desde principios de 2022 |
| • Proposed name trends | • Tendencias propuestas en los nombres |
| • 'Focus' area checkoff (previously) became | • La sección de 'Enfoque' (anteriormente) se convirtió en |
| • Part of Group name (2005/2012?) and finally | • Parte del nombre del grupo (2005/2012?) y, finalmente, |
| • 'Attendee' focus/filter (now) | • Un filtro/enfoque de 'Asistentes' (actualmente) |

Group Names:

- ***It is vital that Group names are inviting, attractive and avoid public controversy***
- ***They can have a lasting impact***
- ***They often are widely published, on al-anon.org and elsewhere***
- ***They can serve to promote our common welfare and unity***
- ***Our only membership requirement is a problem of alcoholism in a relative or friend***
- ***Group names must not imply outside affiliation***
- ***There is more information in the Service Manual on pages 85-86***
- ***2024 WSC Motion 3 to "improve the clarity of the wording" carried.***

This is part of the second section of the Service Manual, the “Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies”. It “reflects policy statements that grew out of questions and experiences from the Al-Anon fellowship worldwide. They are interpretations of our basic guides, the Twelve Traditions and the Twelve Concepts of Service.” Its content is Conference Approved.

The proposed changes have been under consideration since at least early 2022.

WSO staff had noticed an increasing volume of requested group names which were possibly unwelcoming to newcomers, reflected affiliation and/or seemed to focus more on differences than similarities and our principles. They have been the topic of a Thought Force and a Task Force, multiple Policy Committee and Board of Trustees meetings, and ultimately the 2024 World Service Conference.

Around 2005 the ‘focus’ area checkoff (“men’s”, etc.) was deleted and Groups began including this is the Group’s name instead. More recently, Groups check a box for an ‘Attendee’ focus area and do not include the attendee focus area in the Group’s name. The checked box is reflected in the registration and on the search page on al-anon.org, where they may be readily identified through the search filters.

Meeting Search Pages on alanon.org

Paginas de busqueda de reuniones en al-anon.org

Global Electronic Meetings Search (GEMS) & Meetings Search pages (+ Phone!)

- GEMS & Phone Meetings use 'soft buttons' for "Attendees" filter options
- Meeting search page uses an "Advanced Search" check-box and "Participants" check-boxes
- Check-boxes and 'soft buttons' get similar results
- ALL meetings are open to those affected by someone else's drinking; e.g., women can attend a "Men's" meeting (this is not new!)

Búsqueda de Reuniones Electrónicas Mundiales (GEMS por su siglas en inglés) y páginas de Búsqueda de Reuniones (+ Teléfono)

- GEMS y las reuniones por teléfono utilizan "botones suaves" para las opciones de filtro de "Attendees".
- La página de búsqueda de reuniones utiliza una casilla de "Búsqueda Avanzada" y casillas de "Participantes".
- Las casillas y los "botones suaves" obtienen resultados similares.
- TODAS las reuniones están abiertas a cualquier persona cuya vida ha sido afectada por la bebida de alguien más; por ejemplo, las mujeres pueden asistir a una reunión para "Hombres" (¡esto no es nuevo!).

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Now might be a great time to look at how the Attendee filter options work on the meeting search pages.

The Global Electronic Meetings Search (GEMS) and Phone Meetings Search pages display 'soft buttons' which tailor the meetings list using the selected "Attendees" filter options. These 'soft buttons' are typically shown automatically when using a computer or tablet, or are in a dropdown on a phone.

The Meetings Search page uses the "Advanced Search" check-box, which reveals check-boxes for the "Participants" filtering options to

tailor the meetings list. The “Participants” list is essentially the same as the “Attendees” list on the GEMS page – two terms for the same results.

Both search pages remind us that “If you are concerned about someone’s drinking, you may attend ANY Al-Anon meeting. While some groups choose to have certain Attendees selected, they will welcome anyone looking for help.”

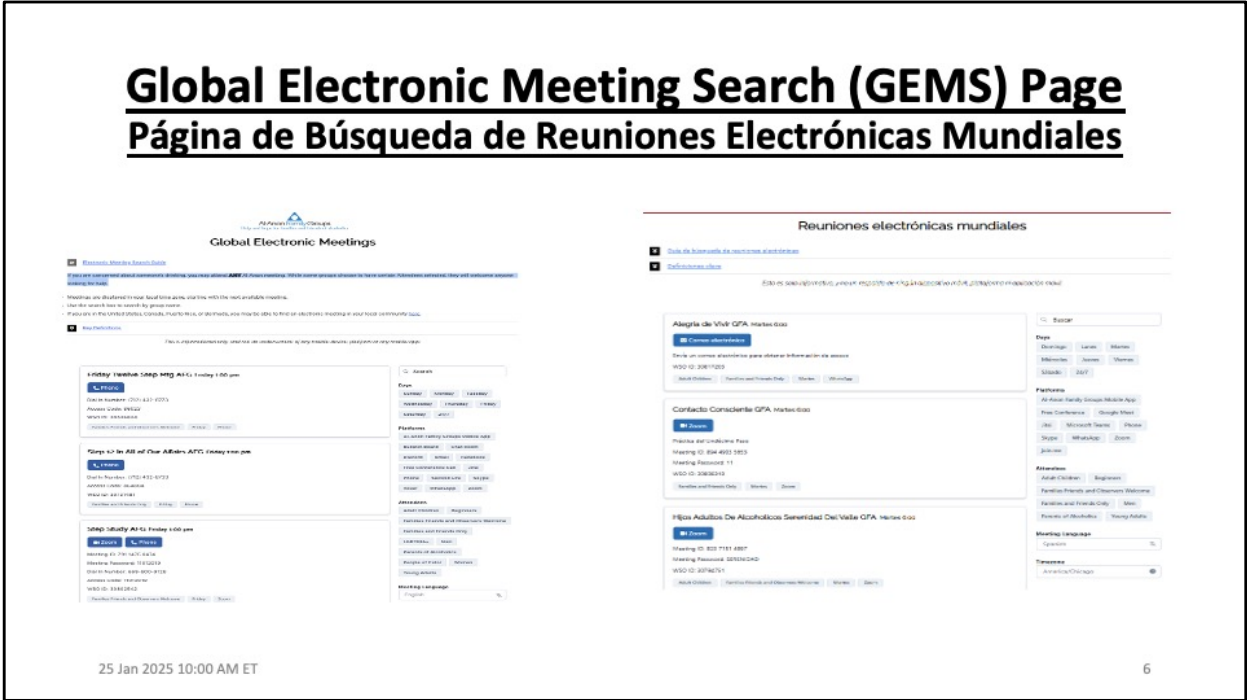
Page 29 in the Service Manual reminds us: “All Al-Anon Family Group meetings welcome anyone who believes that his/her life has been affected by someone else’s drinking, either currently or in the past.”

These reminders are consistent with our Declaration, which suggests that “When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, let the hand on Al-Anon and Alateen always be there.”

These Attendee/Participant policies were not changed

Global Electronic Meeting Search (GEMS) Page

Página de Búsqueda de Reuniones Electrónicas Mundiales



Here is the Global Electronic Meetings Search (GEMS) page using a laptop on alanon.org.



GEMS page, zoomed in on the Attendees ‘soft buttons.’

These typically display automatically on a laptop or tablet.

Meeting Search Page Pagina de Busqueda de Reuniones

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Here is the Meetings Search page using a laptop on alanon.org.

Clicking on the “Advanced Search” check-box (circled in red on the slide) opens the “Participants” filter options check-boxes (circled in blue).

These function like the ‘soft buttons’ on the GEMS page.

August 2024 – Policy Committee Update
Agosto 2024 - Actualización por parte del Comité de
Políticas

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2024 WSC Policy Change Approved • WSO procedures based on the changed policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>New or changed Group names</u> to follow new policy • Encourage Groups to use the “Attendees” designation • Obedience to the unenforceable | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cambio de Política aprobado en la CSM 2024 • Procedimientos de la OSM basados en la política cambiada <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Nombres de grupos nuevos o modificados</u> seguirán la nueva política • Fomentar que los grupos usen la designación de "Asistentes" • Obediencia a lo que no se puede imponer |
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The following is quoted from the Policy Committee Update from the July, 2024 Board Meeting:

“As a result of the 2024 WSC’s approval of the “Choosing a Group’s Name” Policy, the Staff Policy Implementation Round Table (SPiRiT) brought forward recommendations for the Policy Committee related to WSO implementation of new procedures to reflect the updated Policy. The recommendations were accompanied by background on the WSO procedures related to group names, including the historical preference of groups across the WSC Structure for using the “focus” (now called “Participants”) field for community identification. When the

“focus” field had been removed earlier, trusted servants reported their groups still wanted that feature to help members search for a meeting in which they felt comfortable.

A thoughtful and spiritual discussion occurred, which resulted in the Policy Committee confirming that the proposed WSO procedures align with the new Choosing a Group’s Name Policy.

Through this confirmation, the WSO was directed to:

- Register new groups and update existing group names only when their name does not contain community-identifying designations.***
- Guide groups seeking to encourage community-specific participation to use the “Participants” designation.***

The Committee directed Staff to communicate widely through the links of service so that existing groups with names containing such designations would be encouraged to practice “obedience to the unenforceable” by aligning their group name with the new Policy.”

October 2024 – Service Manual Update

Octubre 2024 - Actualización del Manual de Servicio

- Service Manual Policy Digest now includes 2024 WSC revisions (pp 85-86)
- “Groups at Work” section is WSO staff-prepared
 - Policy provisions (pp 85-86) currently apply
 - Groups at Work (procedural provisions) will be updated
- EL Compendio de Políticas del Manual de Servicio ahora incluye las revisiones de la CSM 2024 (pg. 85-86)
- La sección "Grupos en Acción" es elaborada por el personal de la OSM
 - Las disposiciones de la política (pg. 85-86) actualmente están en vigor
 - Grupos en Acción (disposiciones del procedimiento) serán actualizadas

The Service Manual was updated to include revisions approved at the 2024 Conference and these are available in English, French and Spanish. Pages call out changes made in versions 2, 3 and 4 of the Service Manual. See “V4 Replacement Pages” for revised pages.

The changed pages are 85-86 of the Service Manual, which now read this way:

Choosing a Group’s Name

When choosing an Al-Anon or Alateen group name, consider the welcoming and comforting focus of Tradition Five. Anyone affected by someone else’s drinking is welcome at an Al-Anon meeting. It is vital

that group names are inviting, attractive, and avoid public controversy. Our spiritual growth has its roots in the principle of anonymity, to enhance the sense of belonging and unity.

A group's name may be a person's first impression of Al-Anon. Consider the lasting impact the group name can have on newcomers, members, the public, and professionals. The group's name and meeting information may appear on local meeting lists, printed materials, websites, and other venues for sharing public information (see "Publicizing Meeting Locations" in the "Policies" section of this Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual).

Members weigh the guidance of the spiritual principles found in the Twelve Traditions when choosing a group name:

- Common welfare for the greatest number in Al-Anon depends upon unity.
- Al-Anon does not affiliate with or endorse any outside enterprise, such as other Twelve Step groups, self-help groups, religious groups, rehabilitation facilities, or commercial businesses.
- The only requirement for membership in Al-Anon is that there be a problem of alcoholism in a relative or friend.
- The name does not affect another group or affect Al-Anon or A.A. as a whole.
- Al-Anon has no opinion on outside issues.

The Policy Committee and the World Service Conference have delegated authority and responsibility to the WSO for reviewing proposed group names for adherence to Al-Anon policies and principles.

The "Al-Anon and Alateen Groups at Work" section of the Service Manual is prepared by WSO staff and is not subject to Conference approval. That section is currently under review based upon the update to the policy section pages which were approved at the 2024 Conference. Presently the policy provisions contained in the updated pages apply, until the procedural support contained in the Groups at Work section is updated.

AI-Anon Policy Process **Procedimiento de Políticas de AI-Anon**

- WSO Policy Committee
 - Thought, Task Forces
 - Recommendations to:
 - Board of Trustees and then
 - World Service Conference (2/3+ vote)
 - Published, Service Manual updated
 - Email to wso@al-anon.org
 - Service Manual, page 83 etc.
- Comité de Políticas de la OSM
 - Equipo generador de ideas, equipo de tareas
 - Recomendaciones a:
 - Junta de Administradores (Custodios) y luego
 - Conferencia de Servicio Mundial (mayoría de 2/3 partes de los votos.)
 - Publicación, actualización del Manual de Servicio
 - Enviar correo electrónico a wso@al-anon.org
 - Manual de Servicio, página 83, etc.

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All AI-Anon policy questions are referred to the WSO Policy Committee.

Questions are reviewed, discussed and statements are made that interpret and encourage the use of the Traditions and Concepts. Review may involve a thought force and a task force before changes are proposed.

Any recommended changes are brought to the Board of Trustees for review, discussion and approval and then to the World Service Conference for review, discussion and approval by no less than a 2/3 majority vote. Approved policies are then published and the Service Manual is updated in English, French and Spanish.

Some policy questions are brought to the Conference by WSO staff or committees or as Chosen Agenda Items. Each Conference member, including Delegates, may submit two topics for consideration. Conference members vote in advance which topics they would like to discuss at Conference and the Conference Leadership Team includes those topics in the agenda.

You may email the WSO Policy Committee on any Policy matter (including “Choosing a Group’s Name”) to wso@al-anon.org with subject line “Attention: Policy Committee.”

For more information about Al-Anon/Alateen Policies see the Digest of Polices in the Service Manual beginning on page 83.

Response Questions Respuesta Preguntas

Response Questions

1. **What are your / your Group's concerns with this Policy?**
2. **Do you or your Group have any additional Attendee filter options to suggest?**
3. **What additional information on the Policy would be helpful to provide to GEA members?**

Respuesta Preguntas

1. **¿Cuáles son sus preocupaciones o las de su grupo con respecto a esta política?**
2. **¿Usted o su grupo tienen alguna opción adicional de filtro de Asistentes para sugerir?**
3. **¿Qué información adicional sobre la política sería útil proporcionar a los miembros del EAG?**

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Here are three questions on the Choosing a Group's Name policy to consider:

1. **What are your / your Group's concerns with this Policy?**
2. **Do you or your Group have any additional Attendee filter options to suggest?**

(Present Attendee filter options are Adult Children, Beginners, LGBTQIA+, Men, Parents of Alcoholics, People of Color, Women, and Young Adults.)

3. **What additional information on the Policy would be**

helpful to provide to GEA members?

Thank you for learning more about the policy and for participating in this event.

Wrap Up **Conclusión**

- **Raise your hand if you felt this event was:**
 - Helpful?
 - Informative?
 - **Send any responses to Burt P by JotForm at**
<https://form.jotform.com/250154311520036>
 - **Or email to**
GEADelegate262@gmail.com
- Levanten la mano si sintieron que este evento fue:
¿Útil?
¿Informativo?
- Envíen cualquier respuesta a Burt P. a
<https://form.jotform.com/250154311520036> OR
GEADelegate262@gmail.com

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Raise your hand if you felt this event was:

Helpful?

Informative?

Send any responses not presented to Burt P by JotForm at

<https://form.jotform.com/250154311520036>

OR email to GEADelegate262@gmail.com

And now we're back to our Area Chair, Brenda for our closing.