

## Conversations About the Non-Panel Area for AFGWME

### **FROM: SUE PEREZ, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR - GROUP SERVICES**

Permanent electronic meetings is now a term that we do not need to use. A "registered meeting" is not connected to a service structure...this is what was the previous terminology. These registered phone and online meetings have been taking place since 1996, when these meetings first started to register with the WSO.

*(Karla: You may see "permanent electronic meetings" abbreviated as PEM)*

The current terminology is Al-Anon Family Groups which meet electronically (AFGWME). This terminology supports the ability to elect a Group Representative in order to create the service structure. This is the same process that has occurred in each of our Areas before we each became part of the World Service Conference structure. It may help to review the 1986 WSC Summary, page 14, which refers to meetings in Alaska becoming part of the WSC with the request to be admitted to the Conference.

As of November 19, 2021 there are a total of 613 registered AFGWME which conduct a total of 854 meetings. AFGWME also conduct and participate in multiple meetings, which is why the number is so high. Of the 613 groups, 117 are phone groups and 436 are online (across 14 different platforms)

*(Karla: The World Service Conference Summaries are found on the Al-Anon.org website. Members/World Service Conference (WSC). On the left is a link for the current WSC Summary and a link for past (Summary Archive). Click on Summary Archive and click on the year you want.)*

### **Various Questions**

#### **Question:**

A Delegate asked if all Delegates could become a member of the new CMA AFG Connects discussion group. This was the response:

#### **Answer:**

The WSO Staff will be assisting the members of the AFGWME in the formation of the Non-Panel Non-geographic Area. There is a Non-Panel Task Force that has been created consisting of WSO Staff and CMAs to the phone and online groups. Meetings have taken place with CMAs to AFGWME to explain the process and need to elect GRs in order to hold an Assembly to elect a Delegate and Area officers. Group Services continues to support these groups with business meeting Webex conference calls. The process for creating a non-panel Area is outlined in the "World Service Handbook" section of the 2018-2021 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual (P-24/27) version two (2). The Non-Panel Non-geographic Area is following this process to form itself and elect a Delegate in preparation for the 2022 WSC

#### **Question:**

- 1) If the non-geographical, non-panel area elects a Delegate and petitions to come to part of the 2022 WSC will they need to come in person to participant if the WSC is in person?
- 2) Will there travel expenses be then figured into the equalizing expense for the Delegates?

#### **Answer:**

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The elected Delegate will be expected to attend in person just as every other Conference member attends in person. The Delegate's expenses are to be paid by the Area.

### **Question:**

How would incorporating electronic groups into our geographic area affect Intergroup (AIS)?

### **Answer:**

As Areas start the discussion about considering accepting Al-Anon Family Groups which meet electronically into their service structures, it may help to think about what District the group will be assigned to. The Area can consider a variety of options including, but not limited to, creating a virtual District. The Area then also decides which service entity/service arm will be the resource for the electronic Al-Anon group to list/display the meeting information

## **AREAS ACCEPTING AFGWME**

### **Vermont:**

#### **Voted to allow AFGWMEs into the Area**

1. Task Force Report From 11/8/21
2. The CMA can live anywhere
3. The GR will live either in Vermont or in one of the contiguous states, NY, MA or NH and Quebec
4. The meeting itself does not need to be an English speaking group however we would like either the contact or GR to be able to speak English.
5. We also discussed ways to keep the groups and districts informed.
  - a) We will be writing a report for the AWSC each time they meet. We asked that reports are forwarded to the DRs and that the DRs forward it to the groups.
  - b) We will invite DRs and Grs to our zoom meetings
  - c) Task force members will attend district meetings
  - d) Task force members will be available to talk to groups
6. We will hold a Town Hall meeting probably sometime March to answer questions.

### **Upcoming Discussions**

Several things become obvious to us during our first discussion.

1. One was we needed to keep the AWSC, districts and groups informed on what we are thinking and proposing every step of the way.
2. We need to prepare the members for change.
3. We need to get the members feedback along the way.
4. We recognized that PEMs are autonomous like the F-t-F meetings and should not be treated otherwise.
5. Another thing that became apparent in our discussion is to keep it simple.
6. We are not trying to solve everything at once.
7. We have proposed guidelines of how a group can join.
8. Next we will discuss the district aspects of electronic groups

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### **Delegates requesting information from Vermont:**

Arizona, New Jersey, Alberta/NWT, Delaware

- New Jersey will be developing a task force in 2022.
- Delaware is moving toward inviting AFGWME to their Area according to their group conscience.
- Alberta/NWT is starting a task force.