VIII. Public Information: Monday-Tuesday - EN

General Service Conference - Conférence des Services généraux - Conferencia de Servicios Generales

2026-04-27 09:00 - 2026-04-28 13:00 EDT

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committee eyes' only

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2026 Conference Committee on Public Information

ITEM A: Review progress report on PSA Development and Review Plan.

Background notes:

Excerpt from the November 2025 trustees' Committee on Public Information meeting:

> The PSA subcommittee chair provided an update on the subcommittee work including a proposed plan of creating Spanish and French PSAs that would be translated to English. The public information Staff secretary sent an RFI (request for information) to eight production companies and has received proposals. The subcommittee also outlined progress on a plan to create Hispanophone and Francophone working groups consisting of A.A. members to support the review of French and Spanish PSAs.

Excerpt from the August 2025 trustees' Committee on Public Information meeting:

> The committee discussed two committee considerations which suggested developing a plan for new video content and that careful consideration be given to ensuring that new content appropriately reflects an awareness of, and respect for, the cultural and linguistic differences that exist between Canadian French-speaking members, Spanish-speaking members and those whose primary language is English.
>
> Acknowledging the complexity of creating multimedia content that works across multiple languages and with different ages and audiences, the chair appointed a subcommittee to develop a plan for creating new video content. The subcommittee will include David S.(chair), Clinton M., Joyce S. and Teresa J. (ex-officio) with support from the Staff secretary.
>
> The scope of the subcommittee is to develop a plan for developing new short video content that can be shared on AAWS platforms, on social media and as PSAs. The plan for new videos should address how to incorporate respect for linguistic and cultural differences. The subcommittee scope will also include a review of efforts to create a process for regular reviews of PSAs in Spanish and French.
>
> The committee looks forward to a progress report at the November 2025 meeting.

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Advisory Action of the 2025 Conference Committee on Public Information:

The committee recommended that the trustees' PI Committee review of video Public Service Announcements (PSAs) be changed to a review cadence of five years from the release date of each video. The review of audio PSAs should follow a similar cadence.

Committee Considerations of the 2025 Conference Committee on Public Information:

- The committee reviewed the 2025 report on the "Relevance and Usefulness of Audio and Video Public Service Announcements," and offered the following suggestion:
    - That the trustee's Public Information Committee consider offering further clarification on the process of creating new Public Service Announcement (PSA) and for retiring or discontinuing PSAs.
- The committee suggested that when developing new video content, including Public Service Announcements, that careful consideration be given to ensuring that new content appropriately reflects an awareness of and respect for the cultural and linguistic differences that exist between Canadian French-speaking members, Spanish-speaking members and those who primarily speak English.
- The committee discussed the suggestions made by the trustees' Public Information Committee to have Francophone and Hispanophone delegates review Public Service Announcements in French and Spanish and suggested that the trustees' Public Information Committee begin implementing this plan. The committee requested that a progress report on these efforts be brought back to the 2026 Conference Committee on Public Information.

Secretary's Note:

PSA Distribution and Tracking – The Staff secretary is moving forward with a contract for the year 2026 with Connect360 to run a refresh campaign. A request for proposal (RFP) will be sent out in the late spring/early summer of 2026 to possible vendors for a 2027 contract.

Background:

1. Progress Report on PSA Development and Review Plan

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PI
Item A
Doc. 1

Trustees' Committee on Public Information

PSA Progress Report

At the August 2025 trustees' PI meeting, a subcommittee was formed to develop a plan for developing new short video content and PSAs with David S. as chair and Clint M. and Joyce S. as subcommittee members.

The subcommittee met four times since the August trustees' PI Committee (TPIC) meeting. At those meetings, the subcommittee discussed the 2025 Advisory Actions and Committee Considerations related to PSAs. In keeping with the committee consideration to reach diverse audiences, the committee focused on developing a strategy for creating new public service announcements. One approach considered is to begin development of new public service announcements in Spanish and in French that would later be translated to English.

The subcommittee drafted a request for information (RFI) that was translated to Spanish and sent to eight production companies. Responses to the RFI are being received and reviewed by the Staff secretary.

The subcommittee considered outstanding concerns about PSA translations that needed revision and suggested that the trustees' PI committee include PSA translation and editing in its annual budget.

The subcommittee recommended a draft PSA review cadence calendar that was created to reflect the 2025 GSC Advisory Action to review PSAs every five years. The committee noted the value of reviewing PSAs holistically and that this can be part of the review process. In keeping aligned with the advisory action, a PSA will be reviewed every five years, and part of that review process will include a comparison to other PSAs to better assess the need for retirement or revision.

Review of PSAs by Hispanophone and Francophone Members

It is recommend that a panel of past Hispanophone delegates or trustees and a panel of past Francophone delegates or trustees be solicited. Each panel would be comprised of between four and six members and would self-elect a leader. The panel would have a number of initial responsibilities, including:

1) Review existing PSA rubric (which was developed in English but has now been translated into French and Spanish) for suitability for Spanish and French language PSA review and suggest edits as needed for review by the PSA subcommittee and full PI committee.
2) Review all existing Spanish and French language PSAs against new PSA rubrics.

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3) Provide input/recommendations to the TPIC on the development of new Spanish and French PSAs at critical points in the development process.
4) Provide input/recommendations to the TPIC into any newly translated PSAs in Spanish and French.
5) The panel would meet virtually on an annual basis to review PSAs (open to suggestions on the best time of year) and meet as needed to provide input on new PSAs in development.
6) The panel would be a test for an initial three-year period so as to learn from experience and adapt processes as needed before becoming an ongoing effort.

The subcommittee has done outreach to Spanish and French-speaking A.A. members to form these working groups. The Staff secretary can provide a verbal report on that progress to the 2026 Conference Committee on Public Information.

Draft Schedule for Trustees' Public Information Committee Review of Public Service Announcements for Relevance and Usefulness

Year Approved	PSA name (EN)	SP	FR	Proposed review year
2012/ 2016	Since getting sober, I have hope (Hope)	Tengo Esperanza	J'ai de l'espoir	2025
2019/ 2021	When Drinking is no longer a Party (Party)	Cuando beber deja de ser una fiesta	Quand la boisson n'est plus un plaisir	2025
2019/ 2021	My Drinking Built a Wall (Wall)	Mi forma de beber creó un muro a mi alrededor	Ma consommation formait un mur autour de moi	2026
	Radio PSAs			2027

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2015	Opening doors to a life without drinking (Doors)	Abriendo las puertas a una vida sin beber	Ouvrir les portes vers une vie sans alcool	2028
2018	We made changes to stop drinking (Changes)	Hicimos los cambios para dejar de beber	Des changements pour arrêter de boire	2028

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2026 Conference Committee on Public Information

ITEM B: Review report on the GSO Podcast, *Our Primary Purpose*.

Background Notes:

Excerpts from the August 2025 trustees' Public Information Committee meeting:

The committee reviewed the GSO Podcast, *Our Primary Purpose* first and second quarter 2025 reports.

The committee also discussed 2025 Conference Committee on Public Information Committee Considerations related to the podcast. The committee discussed the suggestion to develop a plan for French and Spanish podcasts and agreed that while this suggestion is of significant spiritual value, the additional resources, staffing, potential advisory committees and thoughtful planning are not available at this time. Noting that the current GSO podcast, *Our Primary Purpose* (available in English) is still in its infancy, more learning is needed in order to prepare for podcasts in other languages.

The committee also noted that future consideration of podcasts or other media content in Spanish and French would be well served by thoughtful collaboration and exploration of needs and preferences of the members who speak those languages.

Committee Consideration of the 2025 Conference Committee on Public Information:

The committee reviewed and accepted a progress report for the GSO podcast, *Our Primary Purpose*. The committee noted appreciation for this audio service material and for many of the topics covered on the podcast. The committee looks forward to a report with analytics data for the podcast to be brought to the 2026 Conference Committee on Public Information and offered the following suggestions:

- The committee suggested that A.A. World Services (AAWS) consider developing a plan to create Spanish and French versions of the GSO podcast, *Our Primary Purpose,* and suggested that pilot episodes in each language be created.

- The committee suggested that consideration be given to developing an episode of the GSO Podcast, *Our Primary Purpose*, focused on anonymity and social media.

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- The committee requested that A.A. World Services consider a suggestion that when featuring individual experiences on the GSO Podcast, *Our Primary Purpose*, that multiple perspectives on the topics be included in the segment.

Secretary's note: Work on the GSO Podcast began with a 2020 Conference Committee on Public Information agenda item followed by an Advisory Action of the 71st General Service Conference. It was suggested that the podcast would serve as a new format for service material, similar to *Box 4-5-9*.

Background:

1. Report on GSO Podcast *Our Primary Purpose* Q4 2024 (October) – Q3 2025 (September)

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PI
ITEM B
DOC.1

Podcast: Annual summary
Q4 2024 (October) – Q3 2025 (September)

OVERVIEW OF PROJECT: https://www.aa.org/gso-podcast

1. HISTORY OF THE GSO PODCAST, *Our Primary Purpose*

The podcast began with a 2021 General Service Conference Advisory Action, which recommended that the General Service Office begin work on a podcast that would serve "as a new format to produce 'service material' to communicate on topics with similar sharing that can be found in *Box 4-5-9, About AA,* aa.org, and sharing from *AA Grapevine* and *La Viña*."

2. PLATFORM GOAL(S)

The primary goals of the GSO podcast are:

- To communicate to the Fellowship and external audience about the General Service Office and how it supports A.A. members to carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous.
- To inform A.A members and the general public about A.A.'s service structure, its history and how the General Service Office supports the work of the General Service Conference.
- To improve GSO's connection to the Fellowship.
- To engage listeners and provide accurate, compelling stories about Alcoholics Anonymous.

3. INTENDED AUDIENCE(S)

- Members of Alcoholics Anonymous
- The non-A.A. public, including professionals who may encounter problem drinkers.

4. CURRENT STATUS

Season 1 of the podcast launched in January 2025 and consisted of eight episodes plus a bonus episode that previewed the 2025 Internation Convention. Season 1 episodes are as follows:

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- **Episode 1 – Flipping the Triangle:** Explored A.A.'s history, principles, and self-support model with rare audio of co-founder Bill W. and insights from members and staff.
- **Episode 2 – Welcome to GSO:** A tour of GSO, with an introduction to departments, literature distribution, support of local and regional A.A., and commitment to A.A.'s mission.
- **Episode 3 – Behind the Mic:** A look at Public Information, Bill W's insights, and the global reach of A.A., including the 2025 International Convention.
- **Episode 4 – Plain Language, Big Impact:** The powerful impact of A.A. literature in making the message accessible to diverse communities in the U.S. and Canada and around the world.
- **Episode 5 – Sobriety, Service and Second Chances:** How GSO helps support the work of bringing A.A. into jails and prisons.
- **Episode 6 – Unlocking the Vault:** A tour of the GSO Archives, exploring A.A.'s history, growth, and impact — with insider stories.
- **Episode 7 – Beyond the Rooms:** How A.A. works with professionals to help problem drinkers.
- **Episode 8 – Leading with Service:** GSO General Manager Bob W. discusses servant-leadership, A.A. literature translation, and the global impact of the A.A. service structure.
- **Bonus Episode – Countdown to Vancouver!**

- Season 1 was launched using Captivate hosting, which pushes content to multiple podcast streaming platforms, including Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Amazon Music, Google Podcasts, and others.
- The podcast was launched with an announcement that was emailed to 36,929 recipients, posted on What's New on aa.org, the News tab on Meeting Guide app, ads in *Box 4-5-9*, and inserts in literature orders.
- The *Grapevine Podcast* also previewed the GSO podcast through an interview with the PI coordinator and posted a flyer on their Instagram page in March.
- Posters with information about the podcast were also displayed at the 2025 International Convention, where the podcast team conducted interviews with Convention attendees and captured the sounds and spirit of the many Convention highlights. Before the Convention, short video clips of the International Convention bonus episode were produced and shared via YouTube and Grapevine's Instagram page.
- The podcast team is exploring ways to expand publicizing the podcast throughout the Fellowship to increase reach and audience.

5. ANALYTICS (As of September 30, 2025)

Total downloads: 40,692

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Title/Episode #	Published date	Downloads
Trailer	1/4/2025	4738
Flipping the Triangle [Season 1, Episode 1]	1/14/2025	5754
Welcome to GSO [Season 1, Episode 2]	1/21/2025	3692
Behind the Mic [Season 1, Episode 3]	1/28/2025	3354
Plain Language, Big Impact [Season 1, Episode 4]	2/4/2025	3805
Sobriety, Service, and Second Chances [Season 1, Episode 5]	2/11/2025	3475
Unlocking the Vault [Season 1, Episode 6]	2/18/2025	3209
Beyond the Rooms [Season 1, Episode 7]	2/25/2025	3164
Leading with Service [Season 1, Episode 8]	3/4/2025	3849
Bonus Episode: Countdown to Vancouver! [Season 1]	3/25/2025	5652

Understanding the broader podcast landscape provides important context for evaluating the performance of a new show. As of Q1 2025, more than 2.6 million podcasts are available on Apple Podcasts and nearly seven million on Spotify. The number of podcasts focused on alcoholism and recovery also continues to grow each year. Within this increasingly crowded environment, *Our Primary Purpose* has established a strong early foundation from which to continue building its audience and expanding its reach. Its episodes have a long shelf life, as well — because the topics are not time-sensitive or tied to current events, the content remains relevant over time, and new listeners can engage at any point in the show's archives.

6. Q3 ACTIVITIES:

- Produced episode and segment recordings for Season 2 with weekly listening/editing meetings of the podcast team.
- Interviewed A.A. members visiting the GSO office.
- In-depth discussion of in Season 2 episode topics, segment ideas, and overall direction of the podcast. Continued planning for content for Season 2 to launch in 2026.
- Explored additional marketing strategies and outreach opportunities to expand awareness of the podcast within the Fellowship.
- Worked with the Legal, Licensing & IP department on trademarking name and logo.
- Analyzed analytics to improve attraction and increase listenership.
- Gathered feedback from the Fellowship, trustees, and Staff on future topics, including the following working topics:
    - International Convention
    - Getting involved in Service (including interviews at a GSR orientation)
    - The Tradition and Power of Self Support

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- The role of “Expressed Need” in the Fellowship
- The message stays the same: Finding new ways to carry the A.A. message and meeting people where they are
- 90 years of A.A./50 years of GSO Archives
- Social Media, Anonymity, and Traditions 11&12
- Twelve Traditions

Other topics will be covered as short “drop-in” segments throughout the season

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2026 Conference Committee on Public Information

ITEM C: Review report on the AAWS YouTube channel.

Background notes:

Excerpts from the August 2025 trustees' Public Information Committee meeting:

The committee reviewed the AAWS YouTube channel first and second quarter 2025 reports.

The committee also discussed the 2025 Conference Committee on Public Information Committee Consideration to add shorter versions of the Public Service Announcements (PSAs) to the AAWS YouTube Shorts channel. The committee discussed best practices related to YouTube Shorts channels and agreed that the AAWS channel might be better served by developing new content to encourage engagement with AAWS platforms and provide a more focused approach on key messaging.

The committee requested that the GSO Communication Services Department and the Public Information Staff secretary develop suggestions for what new and existing content will represent the best use of the AAWS YouTube Shorts channel as a tool for carrying the message to the still-suffering alcoholic and communicating with A.A members and the public.

Committee Consideration of the 2025 Conference Committee on Public Information:

The committee reviewed and accepted the 2024 report on the usefulness and effectiveness of the AAWS YouTube account. The committee offered the following suggestions and looks forward to a report to be brought to the 2026 Conference Committee on Public Information.

- The committee noted ongoing challenges with search engine optimization (SEO) for YouTube and expressed appreciation for work already being done to add new content to the platform on a regular basis.

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- The committee suggested that consideration be given to posting short versions of video Public Service Announcements as YouTube Shorts.

Background:

1. Report on AAWS YouTube Channel Q4 2024 (October) – Q3 2025 (September)

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Item C
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YouTube: Annual summary

Q4 2024 (October) – Q3 2025 (September)

OVERVIEW OF PROJECT: https://www.youtube.com/c/AlcoholicsAnonymousWorldServicesInc

1. **HISTORY**

The current AAWS YouTube channel was launched in 2017.

2. **PLATFORM GOAL(s)**

The primary goals of the AAWS YouTube channel are:

- To share our video content more broadly in a contemporary medium while also meaningfully improving our search engine optimization (SEO).
- To create an online video channel for access to online videos developed by Alcoholics Anonymous with a clean, attractive design.
- To provide the public AAWS video content, offering local service structures and intergroups/central offices the ability to embed video content directly on their local websites.

3. **INTENDED AUDIENCES & HOW WE SERVE THEM**

Key message: There is a solution.

The key audiences for the AAWS YouTube channel are:

- A.A. members, particularly those who are more comfortable with social media. This may include members who prefer videos to written (text-based) content and others (like those in the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing community) who rely on video communications.
- Problem drinkers who may be interested in getting help.
- Professionals and other members of the public who may interact with those who need help with a drinking problem.

4. **SUCCESSES AND MILESTONES**

There are more than 12,000 subscribers to the channel as of October 2025. The videos include informational videos for members of the Fellowship and professionals, as well as all of the current video PSAs.

Between Q4 of 2024 and Q3 of 2025, we have posted 31 additional videos and five shorts. The new content published included the GSO podcast, ASL pamphlets, military

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audio interviews, videos for young people and hype videos for the International Convention.

Watch time and total views both increased in the past year. We attribute this increase to the popularity of the International Convention shorts, the GSO podcast and the variety of other content shared.

5. PAGE IMPROVEMENTS

- Existing playlists were updated with new content. Traffic via playlists is increasing.
- Shorts were added as a format and they've been popular.
- To improve the user experience, hashtags continue to be added to all English and ASL videos. *Note*: The project to add hashtags to French and Spanish videos is on hold as we determine a process for research on French and Spanish hashtags.
- To improve SEO, we added new content on a regular basis.
- We have continued the effort to update the ASL *Alcoholics Anonymous* (Big Book), and ASL videos of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions were updated with timestamps to reference important moments that a sponsor may want to highlight.
- Retired videos were removed.

6. CHALLENGES

Closed Captioning: Some visitors continue to have issues switching the closed captioning from English to Spanish or French on videos that were produced in English and have Spanish or French captions as the translation element. This impacts the Archives video, Military audios, and new Young People videos. We have prepared guidance on how to change the caption language manually for any visitors. Affected videos were removed from French and Spanish playlists to avoid further confusion.

Copyright claims: YouTube has an automated algorithm that identifies any potential copyright issues. We had a number of videos flagged this year and were able to successfully dispute each one. These mostly relate to music or other elements we have licensed for video production.

7. NEXT STEPS/PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS:

- Continue posting videos as they are completed.
- Continue exploring the shorts format.

8. ANALYTICS:

- Channel statistics: Lifetime: August 25, 2017 – September 30, 2025:
  - Total views: 582,626
  - Total watch time: 22,364.9 hours
- Channel statistics: October 2024 – September 2025:

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- Total views: 84,018 (21% increase from last year: 69,205)
- Total watch time: 3,541.5 hours (10% increase from last year: 3,216.8)
- Total subscribers: 12,332 (19% increase from last year: 10,355)
- Top 20 videos:

Video title	Views	Watch time (hours)	Average percentage viewed (%)	Impressions	Impressions CTR (%)
Enjoy the International Convention – Virtually!	7196	46.18	102.31*	6874	6.2
Celebrating A.A.'s First 90 Years	6930	49.70	90.8	5275	3.13
Esperanza: Alcohólicos Anónimos	6847	445.95	23.38	15894	4.46
Hope: Alcoholics Anonymous	5435	479.95	31.57	26032	5.55
Alcohólicos Anónimos	3445	108.14	25	5591	3.08
Experience the 2025 International Convention!	3408	37.21	76.84	10388	6.02
Sobriety in AA: My Drinking Built A Wall	2988	34.89	62.75	5704	9.45
Celebrando los primeros 90 años de A.A.	2181	11.90	81.06	7369	3.66
Les Alcooliques anonymes: un espoir	1856	132.33	25.51	16327	5.98
Sobriety in A.A.: Opening doors to a life without drinking (Public Service Announcement)	1566	20.74	61.13	7590	4.98
Alcoholics Anonymous	1529	38.63	20.13	6600	3.39
Sobriety in A.A.: We made changes to stop drinking (Public Service Announcement)	1325	15.57	52.9	5049	7.29
Our Primary Purpose Podcast - Season 1: Episode 1 - Flipping the Triangle	1307	146.52	28.56	8865	5.6
Your A.A. General Service Office, the Grapevine and the General Service Structure	1228	74.17	26.78	6475	5.41
Profitez du Congrès international - virtuellement !	1148	3.22	81.46	1255	0.88
Célébrons les 90 premières années des AA	1014	8.05	94.24	2045	1.52
A.A. Twelve and Twelve in ASL: Step One	819	53.2608	32.79	3281	7.65
A.A. Video for Employment/Human Resources Professionals	818	12.4931	15.66	1601	4.81
The International Convention is Coming Soon!	757	4.5629	77.75	3983	4.59

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A New Freedom	754	81.4205	20.88	2816	7.24

**A YouTube video's average watch percentage exceeding 100% generally indicates that viewers are rewatching parts of the video, causing the average to be higher than the video's total length. This can happen with short videos that loop or when viewers rewind to watch specific segments again.*

How did viewers find our content?

Traffic source Q4 2024 – Q3 2025	**Views***	**Traffic source Q4 2023 – Q3 2024**	**Views***
External	26314	External	42,765
Playlists	6693	YouTube search	6,748
YouTube search	6234	Channel pages	5,724
Channel pages	5289	Direct or unknown	3,889
Suggested videos	4677	Playlists	3,451
Direct or unknown	3846	Suggested videos	2,849
Browse features	2073	Browse features	1,872
Notifications	1208	Notifications	1,212
Other YouTube features	606	Other YouTube features	628
End screens	145	End screens	47
Related Shorts	18	Hashtag pages	20
Hashtag pages	16		

**Please note that the total views in this chart may not match the total views for the full channel. YouTube shared that there are a number of factors removed from the source report (bots, unverified accounts, etc.) which are not removed from the overall channel total that may cause this gap.*

GLOSSARY:

- **Views –** The number of times a video was started.
- **Impressions –** The number of times a video's thumbnail is shown to viewers on YouTube.
- **Impressions CTR (Click Through Rate) –** The percentage of times a thumbnail was shown to viewers on YouTube followed by them clicking to view the video.
- **Traffic source –** The platform or method that a viewer uses to find and watch a YouTube video.

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2026 Conference Committee on Public Information

ITEM D: Review report on Google Ads.

Background Notes:

Excerpts from the August 2025 trustees' Committee on Public Information meeting:

The committee reviewed the Google Ads first and second quarter 2025 reports.

The committee discussed the Google Ad Grants spending and expressed gratitude for the ongoing participation and usage of the grant.

Committee Consideration of the 2025 Conference Committee on Public Information:

The committee reviewed and accepted the 2024 report on the usefulness and effectiveness of AAWS's use of Google Ads and looks forward to a report to be brought to the 2026 Conference Committee on Public Information. The committee noted appreciation for the ongoing work with Google Ads and expressed support for maximizing use of the Google Ad Grants each month and for continuing to monitor changes to the Google Ads for nonprofits program for any changes that impact aa.org.

Excerpts from the February 2025 trustees' Committee on Public Information meeting:

The committee reviewed the fourth quarter Google Ads report and discussed current status of our participation in the Google for Ads for nonprofits program.

A committee member shared that the problems AAWS is facing with participation in the Google Ads for nonprofits program are much like those being experienced by other similar organizations. She recommended that the current practice of using Google Ads as much as the platform will allow is the best way to manage a difficult situation.

The committee also heard from the chair of the AAWS Technology, Communications and Services (TCS) Committee, who shared that the TCS Committee has reviewed the same reports and concluded that this tactic is their preferred approach.

Background:

1. Google Ads report Q4 2024 (October) – Q3 2025 (September)

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Google Ads: Annual summary

Q4 2024 (October) – Q3 2025 (September)

OVERVIEW OF PROJECT:

1. About Google Ads

When a search engine (e.g. Google, Safari and Bing) is used, it produces:

1. **A ranked list** of web content (the ranking is determined using a combination of factors including location, relevance, quality of content, etc.)
2. **Ads**, which are often paid for and show up alongside the ranked list

When search engines started selling ads, companies quickly started driving traffic to their sites by purchasing keywords. Not surprisingly, for-profit companies and larger organizations had greater ability to spend large sums on these efforts. Ads are priced based on two variables: the click-through rate (CTR) and the cost per click (CPC).

In 2003, Google started providing some free search ads to nonprofit organizations. Today, the Google Ad Grants program offers nonprofits the opportunity to receive up to $10,000 a month in “in-kind” media value (ad space). If the full amount is not used, there is no payment or credit, and the amount resets the following month.

The 69th General Service Conference approved the use of Google Ads and later emphasized, in 2021 and 2022 Committee Considerations, management of the Google Ads account by the General Service Office. All ads link back to aa.org to provide specific information on resources for alcoholics, finding a meeting or how to learn more about A.A.

Between Q4 2024 and Q3 2025, our ads brought visitors to aa.org more than 72,000 times. This visibility is the foundation of the opportunity offered by Google Ad Grants.

Each quarter, the Communication Services Department reports on how much of the Google Ad Grants allotment has been used, and specifically which ads and which search terms have generated the most clicks and impressions. In addition, there is regular maintenance and follow up on any content that gets flagged.

2. Primary goal for the platform:

The primary goal of GSO’s participation in the Google Ads program is to improve reach of aa.org by using Google Ads to better reach our intended audiences:

- Suffering alcoholics looking for help

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- Family members and friends of alcoholics/potential A.A. members
- A.A. members, inside and outside the service structure
- The professional community
- The media

3. Use of Google Ad Grants:

We are utilizing nearly the entire $10,000 monthly placement value with around $300 unused each month on average. At the same time, the cost of each click has increased over the past few years so, every click is using a larger percentage of the grant than in the past.

The “Find a Meeting” ad group continues to receive greater engagement than any of our other content. This has been consistent for the life of the account.

In every quarter, keywords are adjusted as recommended by the keyword tool on the platform. The top 50 terms (by click volume) out of over 27,000 are included in this report. Nearly all the top 100 terms relate to finding meetings.

In the past year, our number of clicks decreased by almost 50%. This is partially an overall downward trend in traffic from the ads and partially because of a disruption in the flow of traffic from our ads between June 23 and September 29 for two reasons:

- An unintentional change in campaign strategy from “Maximize clicks” to “Maximize conversions” during a routine review of account settings, which took a while to identify.
- A Google Tag was not deployed correctly on aa.org.

Both issues have been resolved, and traffic has returned to expected levels.

Also in the past year, there was one major change that impacted our use of the grant. In February 2025, Google changed their policy to prohibit ads in our category showing in Canada. Now, our ads only show in the United States.

4. Status of flagged ads and disconnections:

Why would A.A. ads get flagged? Google prevents advertising on certain keywords or topics. Some of these are easy to avoid, such as those involving copyrighted terms or illegal activities. Since the flagging process is automated by Google, sometimes content that seems innocuous will get flagged.

Beginning in May 2023, GSO was informed that “Mutual Support Groups,” our category assigned in the grant program, were no longer eligible to participate. We were subsequently informed that Google would no longer allow certain kinds of ads, including those with content related to alcoholism and help for a drinking problem. Google categorizes these under the umbrella of “Addiction Services.”

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Although these policies had been in place since May 2018, they were not applied to our account until May 2023. Google gave no additional explanation for their action.

As of June 2024, two-thirds of our content is disapproved, paused or flagged for "Addiction Services" policy issues, limiting our engagement potential. Despite this, our account continues to use nearly the entire grant with the remaining one-third of active ads.

While regularly refreshing content is a best practice, without the "Addiction Services" certification, submitting new content or adjusting current content is not possible.

A no-cost consultation (in 2023) between members of the Communication Services Department and professional agencies explored options in managing the account and suggested that vendor management of the ad program is likely to be cost-prohibitive and unlikely to resolve the policy issues.

5. Next steps

Given the importance of making A.A. information available to those who might not otherwise find it in search results, the account will continue to be monitored and all relevant findings will be reported through the AAWS TCS Committee and the trustees' Public Information Committee.

6. Analytics:

Clicks	Impressions	Avg CPC	Cost
72.5K (-48%)	551K (-23%)	$1.26 (+52%)	$91.7K (-21%)

For context, only highlighted rows in the Ad Group chart below are active as of September 30, 2025. All other ads are paused or disapproved due to policy issues.

Ad Group	Ad	Ad type	Clicks	Impressions	CTR	Avg CPC	Cost
FindMtg							$88,559.81
	MeetingGuide	Expanded text	33097	312121	10.60%	1.43	47418.5
	AANearYou	Expanded text	16518	98216	16.82%	1.41	23342.1
	FindAA	Responsive	17411	84745	20.55%	0.88	15240.84
	MeetingGuide	Responsive	2301	19921	11.55%	0.84	1929.19
	MeetingGuide	Expanded text	568	5581	10.18%	1.11	629.19
	FindAA	Expanded text	-	-	-	-	-
GetHelp							$3,084.89
	GetHelp	Expanded text	782	8860	8.83%	$1.33	$1041.08

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	GetHelp	Expanded text	261	2885	9.05%	$1.65	$430.60
	GetHelp	Expanded text	376	6590	5.71%	$1.50	$564.18
	GetHelp	Responsive	1195	11381	10.50%	$0.88	$1049.03
CPCLegal							$6.07
	Corrections	Responsive	3	62	4.84%	$2.02	$6.07
	ArmedForces	Responsive	-	17	-	-	-
	Legal	Responsive	-	-	-	-	-
CPCHealth							$10.04
	Healthcare	Responsive	6	148	4.05%	$1.67	$10.04
	Treatment	Responsive	-	-	-	-	-
CPCCommunity							$4.87
	HumanResources	Responsive	5	70	7.14%	$0.97	$4.87
	Education	Responsive	-	-	-	-	-
	Faith Leaders	Responsive	-	-	-	-	-
						Total	$91,665,69

Search term	Ad group	Cost	Clicks	Click Through Rate
aa meetings	FindMtg	$7956.31	5,934	20.56%
aa meetings near me	FindMtg	$7259.47	5,486	18.07%
online aa meetings	FindMtg	$1905.94	1,604	15.31%
aa online meetings	FindMtg	$1776.68	1,473	15.00%
aa meetings online	FindMtg	$1518.64	1,239	13.56%
aa org	FindMtg	$1156.68	3,836	39.49%
meeting guide	FindMtg	$774.44	867	31.98%
aa zoom meetings	FindMtg	$683.10	556	10.19%
aa	GetHelp	$575.95	492	18.12%
aa near me	FindMtg	$475.10	382	12.45%
online aa meetings zoom	FindMtg	$465.46	371	17.98%
everything aa	FindMtg	$455.63	317	12.87%
virtual aa meetings	FindMtg	$448.83	390	19.23%
zoom aa meetings	FindMtg	$440.89	374	15.21%
meeting guide app	FindMtg	$408.83	343	30.22%
aa virtual meetings	FindMtg	$293.17	250	23.95%
open aa meetings near me	FindMtg	$272.95	197	20.85%

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find aa meetings near me	FindMtg	$244.00	187	32.08%
local aa meetings	FindMtg	$229.67	175	24.07%
aa online	FindMtg	$225.03	180	10.50%
aa meetings zoom	FindMtg	$223.08	175	15.11%
aa zoom meetings now	FindMtg	$216.69	164	12.36%
meeting guide aa	FindMtg	$213.28	164	31.36%
aa website	GetHelp	$212.31	200	25.48%
aa org	GetHelp	$191.06	241	15.73%
aa meetings boston	FindMtg	$190.45	135	16.69%
aa	FindMtg	$182.69	147	22.21%
aa world service	FindMtg	$181.27	177	31.33%
aa find a meeting	FindMtg	$173.10	133	38.78%
aa groups near me	FindMtg	$167.36	124	16.21%
find aa meetings	FindMtg	$156.17	108	26.87%
aa meetings denver	FindMtg	$151.30	97	15.40%
aa org meetings	FindMtg	$148.31	160	34.26%
a a meetings near me	FindMtg	$136.01	105	14.85%
aa meetings toronto	FindMtg	$133.00	114	21.97%
am i an alcoholic quiz	GetHelp	$123.28	132	14.60%
aa meetings calgary	FindMtg	$121.00	107	19.81%
aa groups	FindMtg	$118.16	94	13.15%
aa meetings online zoom	FindMtg	$115.98	91	10.81%
aa meetings nyc	FindMtg	$108.10	75	4.22%
meeting finder aa	FindMtg	$105.33	81	27.09%
meeting finder	FindMtg	$104.76	66	21.64%
aa intergroup	FindMtg	$98.32	71	3.14%
aa org online meetings	FindMtg	$97.33	80	29.41%
online aa	FindMtg	$96.27	85	12.14%
aa meetings chicago	FindMtg	$94.58	66	8.45%
aa online zoom meetings	FindMtg	$92.64	67	10.01%
aa meetings st louis	FindMtg	$92.21	67	25.38%
find a meeting aa	FindMtg	$85.58	62	28.97%
aa meetings philadelphia	FindMtg	$85.19	61	18.48%

Any duplicates in the above list can be attributed to the same keyword relating to different ads or ad groups. Not all of these terms are assigned in our profile (aa org, aa website, etc.), but Google recognizes they are related to us and serve our ads.

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GLOSSARY:

- **Impression** – Each time an ad appears on a search result page.
- **AVG CPC (average cost per click)** – Average amount charged for a click on an ad. Calculated by dividing the total cost of clicks by the total number of clicks.
- **CTR (click-through rate)** – A ratio that measures how often people click on a Google Ad after seeing it. Calculated as clicks divided by impressions.
- **Search term** – Can relate to the keywords we've assigned to our ads or other terms that people are searching for that also brought up our ads — determined by Google.

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2026 Conference Committee on Public Information

ITEM E: Review report on Meeting Guide app.

Background notes:

Excerpts from the August 2025 trustees' Public Information Committee meeting:

The committee discussed a 2025 Conference Committee on Public Information Committee Consideration, which included a suggestion to have Meeting Guide sync with calendar applications.

The committee discussed the challenges of adding new features to Meeting Guide, given the goal of continuing to support an app that functions at a very high level.

The committee also noted that when evaluating requests for platform enhancements, the Communication Services Department tries to evaluate whether a given suggestion or request reflects a widely expressed need.

The director of the Communication Services Department shared that there is a path to receive technical feedback and suggestions for platform enhancements on aa.org.

The committee requested that the Communication Services Department explore the possibility of adding calendar functionality to the Meeting Guide app.

The committee also discussed the 2025 Conference Committee on Public Information Committee Consideration to ensure that all updates to Conference-approved literature, including *Daily Reflections* are reflected on Meeting Guide app. The committee heard a verbal report from the director of the Communication Services Department who shared that the department has worked with the Publishing Department to clarify the process and that the changes to *Daily Reflections* have already been made on Meeting Guide. The committee looks forward to a progress report at the November 2025 meeting.

Committee Considerations from the 2025 Conference Committee on Public Information:

The committee reviewed and accepted the 2024 Report on the Alcoholics Anonymous World Services (AAWS) Meeting Guide. The committee expressed enthusiastic support for the Meeting Guide app and offered the following suggestions:

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- The committee suggested that consideration be given to having the Meeting Guide app sync with calendar applications.

- The committee requested that the trustees' Public Information Committee ensure that all updates to Conference-approved literature, including *Daily Reflections* be reflected on the Meeting Guide app.

Excerpts from the February 2025 trustees' Public Information Committee meeting:

The committee reviewed the fourth quarter Meeting Guide app report.

The committee reviewed the report and discussed the in-progress app update which will provide Meeting Guide app users with an option to more easily search for virtual meetings.

There was a subsequent discussion of how best to encourage A.A. entities to keep their local meeting information updated.

Background:

1. Report on AAWS Meeting Guide app Q4 2024 (October) – Q3 2025 (September)

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Meeting Guide: Annual summary

Q4 2024 (October) – Q3 2025 (September)

OVERVIEW OF PROJECT: www.aa.org/meeting-guide-app

1. HISTORY

The Meeting Guide app was acquired by AAWS and launched in August 2019.

Since then, Meeting Guide has shown a steady increase in users, entities, meetings listed and sessions. In the last year, Q4 (October) 2024 – Q3 (September) 2025, Meeting Guide had:

- More than 1.9 million active users
- More than 38 million user-initiated sessions
- 554 connected A.A. entities
- 153,543 meetings listed

2. PLATFORM GOALS

- To serve the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous in the United States and Canada by providing accurate, easy-to-access information about A.A. meetings.
- To facilitate communication from GSO to the Fellowship using the “Meeting Guide News” feature.

3. SUCCESSES AND MILESTONES

- The new Online Meetings view was developed and released.

4. ANALYTICS:

Google Analytics are attached.

- The majority of data shows increases across the app. Sessions per user, and a few other points have decreased, but we see no cause for concern.

HelpDocs:

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- Serves as a critical resource for entities and users alike. This repository of knowledge ensures that the majority of questions or concerns have clear, standard answers and helps the app team to manage the volume of correspondence. (support analytics below)
- Support analytics held no surprises the last four quarters, showing spikes in expected areas when there were releases. The team's average reply time remains in the range of one to two days.

HelpDocs Support Analytics	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
Article Views	11,322	11,285	12,215	10,734
Searches	2,551	2,651	2,817	2,508
Top 3 tags				
Add/Update local entity	79	77	77	66
Education Needed	117	51	54	49
No Coverage/Nonparticipating	63	49	46	18
Top 3 articles				
How to Find an A.A. Meeting	4,100	3,293	2,507	2,928
What is Meeting Guide	909	1,480	1991	2,404
How to Connect to Meeting Guide	804	782	796	828

5. **GLOSSARY:**
   - **Total, active, and new Users:**
     a. **Total users –** Overall number of users who interacted with an app during a specific time period. Active and New users are a subset of total users.
     b. **Active users –** The number of users who interacted with an app by starting at least one session. Multiple sessions count as a single user.
     c. **New users –** Only counts the number of users who accessed your app for the very first time within that timeframe.
   - **Sessions –** When a user either opens an app or views a page or screen and no session is currently active or their previous session has timed out. By default, a session ends or times out after 30 minutes of inactivity. There is no limit to how long a session can last.
   - **%Δ (percentage change) –** The percentage difference between the number for the current time period and the number for the same time period prior.
   - **Use of app features:**
     a. **(not set)* –** A placeholder that is used when the analytics software hasn't received any information for a dimension.
     b. **Blank* –** A data field where no information has been sent, appearing as an empty space in the analytics console
     c. **Duplicate names or slight difference in name* –** For example "MeetingList" vs. "MeetingsList"; "QuoteScreen" vs. "Quote" vs. "Quotes."

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**For these items in the analytics, we will bring the information to our vendor to understand if we can clean up the data labels to eliminate the confusing results*.

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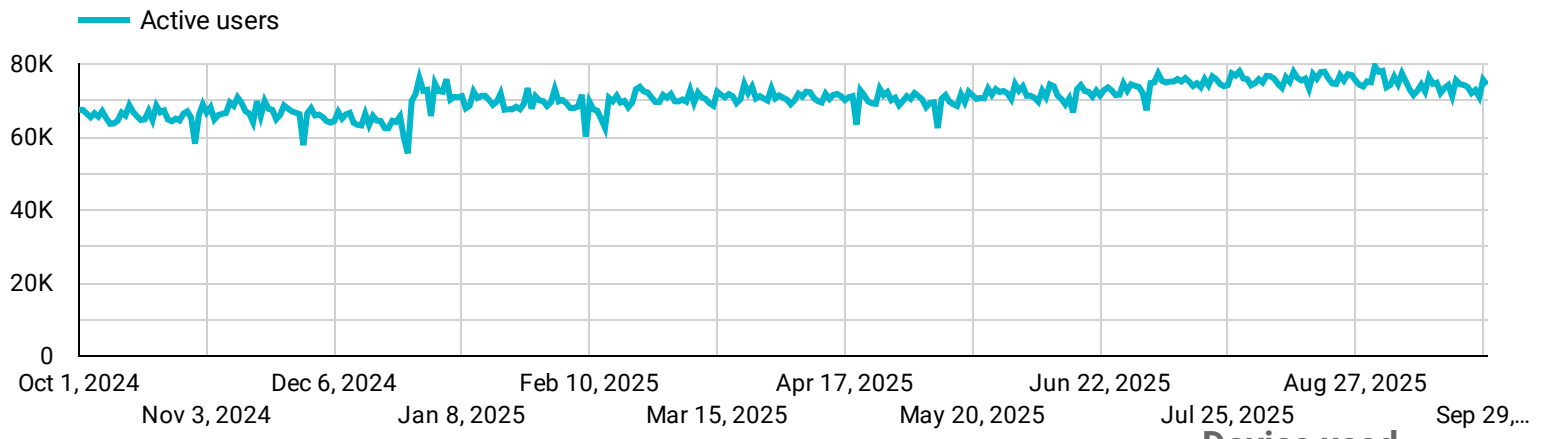
Meeting Guide Annual Summary: Q4 2024 to Q3 2025

Oct 1, 2024 - Sep 30, 2025

Audience at a glance



Total users
1,963,977
18.9%

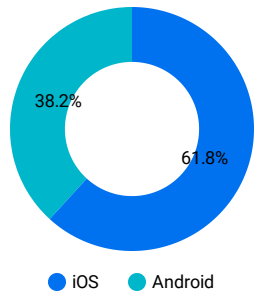
Sessions per user
19.82
-10.2%

Sessions
38,120,418
6.8%

Active users
1,923,731
18.9%

New users
1,093,638
7.3%

Device used



Use of app features

Page title and scre...	Views ▼	% Δ
(not set)	131,576,295	10.1%
MeetingList	34,498,973	8.2%
MeetingsDetail	33,987,997	8.8%
MeetingsSearch	9,002,524	9.6%
QuoteScreen	2,931,674	2.2%
FavoritesScreen	2,288,885	21.0%
NewsScreen	1,940,136	6.8%
ContactScreen	1,104,558	4.9%
FavoritesMeetingsDetail	790,341	32.9%
MeetingsList	65,166	-51.9%
ContactLocal	63,827	-3.7%
ContactUpdate	59,118	-7.3%
ContactLiterature	58,641	-5.5%
AboutScreen	41,250	-12.1%
MeetingsFilter	40,966	-48.0%
ContactSuggestion	17,258	-7.8%
ContactConnect	15,228	-4.7%
MeetingListOnline	4,097	13,556.7%
Quote	2,659	-41.4%
MeetingsDetailOnline	1,448	-
News	611	-65.0%
Contact	503	-55.0%
Favorites	354	-67.8%
FavoritesOnlineScreen	111	-
FavoritesScreenOnline	52	-

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Language breakdown

Language	Views	% Δ	Total users	% Δ
English	212,826,165	9.5%	1,908,405	19.3%
French	4,044,870	6.9%	36,389	7.7%
Spanish	511,588	24.3%	9,308	34.8%
German	430,173	45.1%	4,735	31.1%
Polish	345,666	10.3%	6,932	10.1%
Japanese	90,799	36.7%	754	12.7%
Norwegian B...	81,664	11.3%	1,129	17.4%
Dutch	23,147	5.3%	577	24.9%
Russian	19,032	-6.6%	364	13.0%
Swedish	18,662	31.7%	442	37.3%

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Top Countries

Country	Views ▼	% Δ	Total users	% Δ
United States	200,514,925	9.5%	1,795,514	20.0%
Canada	12,439,632	6.3%	125,658	12.9%
Australia	1,478,449	20.5%	12,329	23.8%
United King...	994,087	8.9%	16,914	-1.2%
Germany	553,726	31.8%	8,365	4.5%
Poland	363,185	12.0%	7,535	12.9%
Mexico	219,245	40.0%	10,497	33.0%
France	215,921	18.4%	6,072	11.5%
New Zealand	209,196	8.7%	2,650	2.3%
Japan	171,986	72.0%	4,609	142.8%

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City	Views ▼	% Δ	Total us...	% Δ
New York	9,911,212	10.4%	172,108	17.7%
(not set)	8,340,108	-11.3%	315,451	1.4%
Los Angeles	6,959,853	0.4%	126,986	9.4%
Boston	4,751,146	25.5%	101,574	35.1%
Philadelphia	4,298,798	0.7%	81,319	2.2%
Chicago	4,266,011	2.6%	104,610	11.8%
Seattle	3,442,780	2.3%	72,863	11.9%
San Francisco	3,210,464	26.6%	81,973	41.4%
San Diego	2,759,776	10.9%	62,156	9.5%
Phoenix	2,493,583	5.9%	56,837	18.3%
Orlando	2,289,019	5.7%	72,304	12.4%
Atlanta	2,230,888	-5.8%	70,913	10.7%
Houston	2,196,712	24.2%	65,120	30.5%
Montreal	2,081,555	-2.0%	33,034	-0.3%
Dallas	2,055,264	-10.6%	71,723	6.3%
Charlotte	2,016,621	3.5%	48,437	3.9%
Sacramento	2,010,200	6.1%	52,824	3.2%
Denver	1,989,887	-5.0%	55,963	-0.7%
Washington	1,960,606	-5.6%	56,681	14.9%
Austin	1,890,437	11.6%	50,232	13.9%
Las Vegas	1,831,111	14.3%	56,278	31.6%
Tampa	1,803,971	-17.6%	44,925	-12.6%
Raleigh	1,801,604	-1.3%	48,964	22.9%
Portland	1,798,721	16.6%	39,961	29.6%
Miami	1,793,260	3.8%	56,591	16.8%

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2026 Conference Committee on Public Information

ITEM F: Review report on GSO's A.A. website.

Background Notes:

Excerpts from the August 2025 trustees' Public Information Committee meeting:

The committee reviewed the GSO A.A. website's 2025 first and second quarter reports.

The committee also discussed a Committee Consideration from the 2025 Conference Committee on Public Information to add chat functionality to aa.org.

The committee discussed the process for evaluating suggestions for new features to the website and noted that expressed need, impact on budget, workload and impact on other A.A. entities need to be considered.

The committee suggested that chat functionality might be better managed by local A.A. service entities who are responsible for Twelfth Step work and suggested that the Staff secretary encourage local A.A. entities contact the PI desk to provide shared experience about local efforts to incorporate chat functionality into local A.A. websites.

The committee also heard a verbal update from the Communication Services Department on in-progress improvements to the search function on aa.org, including improvements for searches in Spanish and French.

The committee also discussed the Committee Consideration to explore whether a texting platform could be used for regular communications to the Fellowship to reach members who don't prefer email. The committee agreed that there is a need for a communications platform other than email for reaching some members of the Fellowship, particularly in the Spanish-speaking community.

The committee requested that the PI Staff secretary reach out to GSO Technology Services Department to conduct preliminary research on the process for developing a texting platform for GSO. This is a work in progress.

Committee Considerations from the 2025 Conference Committee on Public Information:

The committee reviewed and accepted the 2024 annual report on Alcoholics

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Anonymous World Services (AAWS) website, aa.org and offered the following suggestions:

- The committee suggested that AAWS explore adding a chat feature to aa.org and looks forward to an update report being brought back to the 2026 Conference Committee on Public Information.

- The committee suggested that AAWS explore ways to improve the aa.org search function in French and Spanish (including use of accent marks and diacritics).

Excerpt from the February 2025 trustees' Public Information Committee meeting:

The committee also received a verbal report on plans to make the website "mobile-device friendly" in 2025.

Background:

1. Report on aa.org: Q4 2024 (October) – Q3 2025 (September)

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aa.org: Annual summary

Q4 2024 (October) – Q3 2025 (September)

OVERVIEW OF PROJECT: www.aa.org

1. HISTORY

The aa.org website was completely redesigned and relaunched in December 2021. The focus of the redesign included technical, visual and structural improvements.

2. PLATFORM GOALS

- To present Alcoholics Anonymous as a credible, relevant resource to new visitors and deliver value to existing members
- To share A.A.'s message of hope and recovery through literature, multimedia resources and information about how to find A.A. locally
- To serve as a repository and archive for A.A. content, including Conference-approved publications and service materials
- To serve as a communication hub for the Fellowship
- To serve as a repository of tools for service committees

3. INTENDED AUDIENCES AND HOW WE SERVE THEM

One way that aa.org serves its key audiences is through a series of landing pages designed to address the needs of each of these audiences. They are continuously evaluated and improved based on user feedback, current analytics, the needs of the audiences and the availability of new content.

Audience	Landing page(s)
Still-suffering alcoholic/problem drinker	Need help with a drinking problem? Self-assessment
A.A. members	Ready to get involved in A.A.? The A.A. Group Box 459 Newsletter
Service committees/trusted servants	Service Committees

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	Information for New Trusted Servants
Professionals	A.A. can support professionals About A.A. Newsletter
Media/ Journalists	Press and Media
Students/researchers	Frequently Asked Questions History of A.A. Archives Access Membership Survey
Concerned family members and friends	Is there an alcoholic in your life?

Additional landing pages that serve those looking for specific resources:

- What's New: News and Announcements
- Find A.A. Near You
- Daily Reflections
- The Big Book
- Literature Listing
- Media Library
- Meeting Guide
- A.A. and Anonymity
- Regional, Local and Special Forums
- International Convention
- Military Members in A.A.
- PSA downloads
- GSO Podcast
- Quarterly Reports
- AAWS Highlights
- Contributions and Self-Support

4. KEY MESSAGE

There is a solution. If you or a loved one has a drinking problem, A.A. can help.

5. SUCCESSES AND MILESTONES

Efforts in the past year have been focused on modernization and dynamic content delivery. Along with an improved experience for visitors, these efforts have also led to improved processes and flexibility for maintaining the website.

Traffic levels remain relatively steady with slight increases overall (in part from 2025 International Convention) that began in September 2024. 98% of our traffic is from organic search and direct traffic. 78% of our traffic is from mobile devices. While Active User and New User numbers have decreased, the activity by each visitor has increased overall. In addition, the percentage of people coming from links on other websites and through emails has also increased.

The Daily Reflections page continues to be the top item for our visitors in English, Spanish, and French.

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The Communication Services team has focused on content enhancements, including:

- An International Convention page with numerous updates including a new countdown clock
- A dedicated podcast page
- A dedicated AAWS Highlights page
- A redesign and reorganization of the Self-Support page
- SEO improvements: Completed a description audit for all items in the literature and media libraries to identify where descriptive language needs to be added or developed. The more than 300 page level descriptions and meta descriptions (used in search results) added not only help visitors understand what they are looking at, but aid in searchability both on and off our website.
- An accessibility feature added to large image graphics. This feature allows a link to a page for full text description of an image and an on-page text caption for screen readers. (https://www.aa.org/participating-in-aa and https://www.aa.org/participating-in-AA-images-descriptive-text)
- Improved anti-spam and security solutions.

6. CHALLENGES

Please note a traffic spike indicated in the analytics in September 2025 that was a DDoS (distributed denial of service) attack. It was quickly contained and resolved.

Past issues with analytics dropping off after we deploy updates are resolved. Please note, there was one final drop in December 2024 before the problem was solved, which is indicated in the analytics.

7. NEXT STEPS/ PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS:

- Automated literature updates via the AAWS Digital Asset Management system (DAM) are in process. By early 2026, most literature PDFs and their images on aa.org will automatically synch with the master file in the DAM, solving version control issues as items are revised. This effort will also significantly reduce manual labor needed to maintain content.
- Discovery and preparation for migration/consolidation for hosting both video and audio on aa.org.
- An improved digital *Box 4-5-9* newsletter is nearly complete as we test the backend functionality. Specific attention is being paid to make this publication more mobile-friendly, sharable and searchable.
- Accessibility review and improvement is an ongoing project, as the team looks at ways to move forward while leveraging current resources.

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- Development in 2026 will continue to focus on improvements to existing features and bug fixes.

8. **ANALYTICS:** See attached report

9. **ANALYTICS GLOSSARY:**

- **Audience at a glance:**
  - **Active users** – Website visitors who have an engaged session or have been reported as a new user.
  - **New users** – The number of people who visit your website for the first time in the selected date range. Since most users are based on the Google Analytics tracking code and browser cookies, it's important to highlight that people who cleared their cookies or accessed your website using a different device will be reported as a new user.
  - **Sessions** – A single visit to your website, consisting of one or more events, including page views, purchases or other events.
  - **Views** – The total number of times events have been collected.
  - **Engagement rate** – Calculated by dividing the number of engaged sessions* by the total number of sessions.
    - ***Engaged session** – A visit that meets at least one of the following criteria: it lasts longer than 10 seconds, includes at least one conversion event, or involves two or more page or screen views.
  - **Event** – Includes page views and other automatically collected interactions.
  - **Event count** – Total number of times events have been collected.
- **How visitors find aa.org:**
  - **Session default channel** – The channels by which users arrived at your site/app when they initiated new sessions.
  - **Direct** – Direct traffic includes people who typed a website's URL into their browser or clicked a link in an email application (that didn't include campaign tags). Direct sessions also include other cases where Google Analytics cannot identify the source of the click.
  - **Referral** – When a user clicks through to your website from another website.
  - **Paid search** – Users arrive at your site via ads on search engines.
  - **Organic /organic social /organic video** – Organic refers to people clicking on a free link to your website. For example, people clicking through to your website from a free result on a Google search results page.
  - **Unassigned** – Traffic that is not attributed to any one of the other default channel groups.

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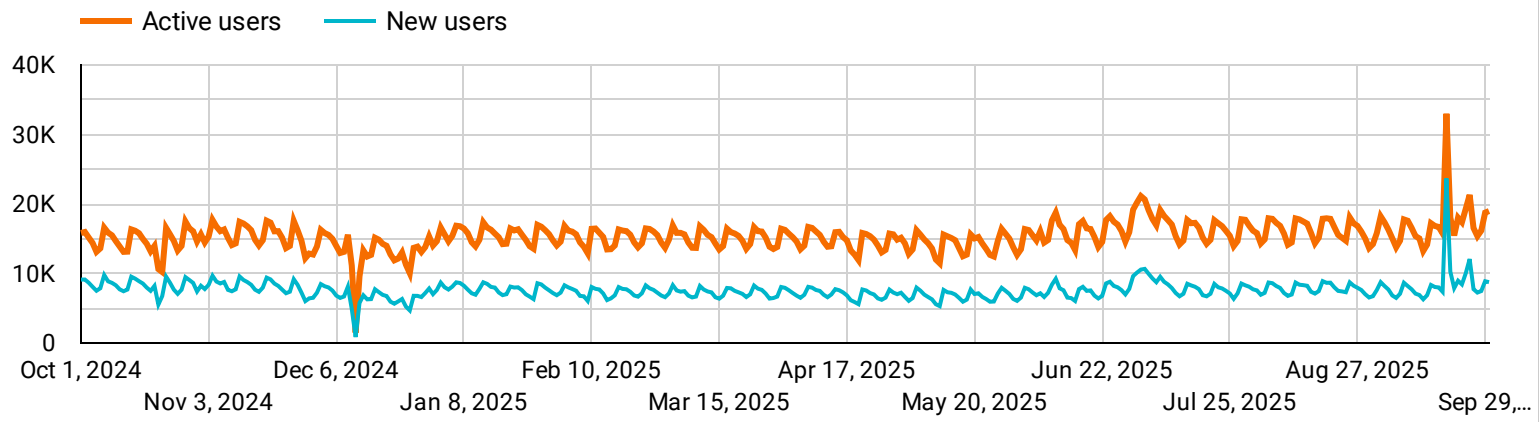
aa.org Annual Summary: Q4 2024 to Q3 2025

Oct 1, 2024 - Sep 30, 2025

Audience at a glance



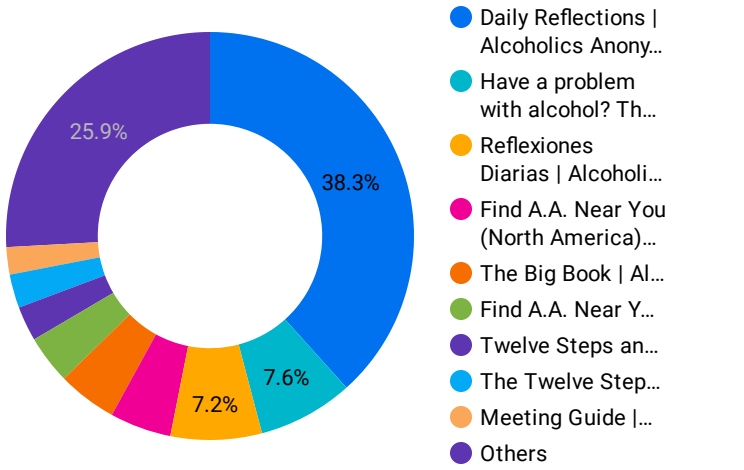
Active users	New users	Sessions per user	Sessions
2,838,341	2,773,213	3.86	10,955,152
-8.5%	-8.4%	20.7%	10.4%

Views	Engagement rate	Event count
15,288,019	42.71%	41,629,817
7.8%	4.1%	10.1%

How do visitors find aa.org?

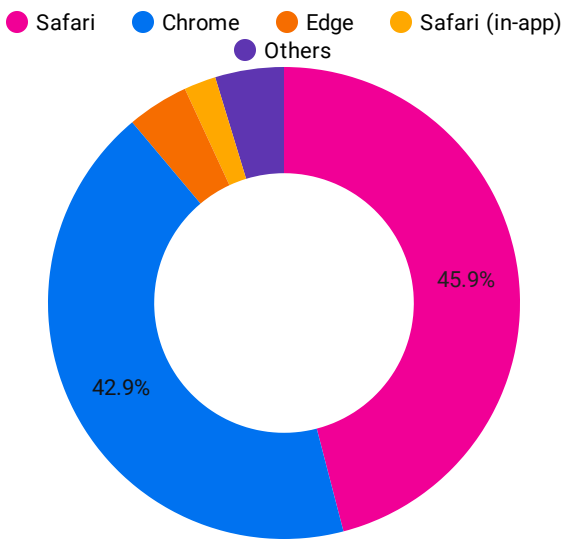
Session default cha...	Active users ▾	% Δ
Organic Search	1,854,813	-3.3%
Direct	943,252	-15.6%
Referral	130,398	19.6%
Paid Search	25,020	-41.2%
Organic Social	23,148	-21.8%
Unassigned	18,762	27.2%
Email	513	92.9%
Organic Video	255	-19.8%

Top pages

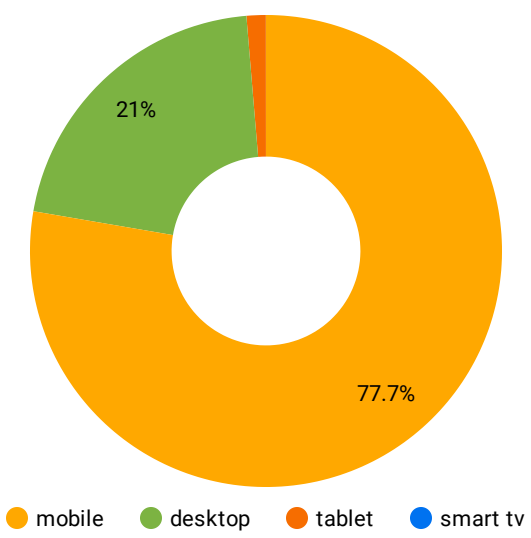


Page title	Views ▾	% Δ
Daily Reflections | Alcoholics Anonymo...	5,861,046	7.4%
Have a problem with alcohol? There is ...	1,155,270	4.2%
Reflexiones Diarias | Alcoholics Anony...	1,104,722	35.8%
Find A.A. Near You (North America) | A...	743,656	-4.9%
The Big Book | Alcoholics Anonymous	718,448	7.5%
Find A.A. Near You | Alcoholics Anony...	589,465	-5.6%
Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions Bo...	421,228	0.1%
The Twelve Steps | Alcoholics Anonym...	407,496	0.2%
Meeting Guide | Alcoholics Anonymous	331,144	12.6%
Search Results | Alcoholics Anonymous	287,789	22.7%
Literature Listing | Alcoholics Anonymo...	257,136	43.5%
International Convention | Alcoholics A...	197,014	1.8%
Réflexions quotidiennes | Alcoholics An...	172,691	27.3%
Is A.A. for You? A self-assessment | Alc...	122,274	-
Doce Pasos y Doce Tradiciones | Alcoh...	107,038	5.3%
Find A.A. Near You (World) | Alcoholics...	106,282	2.0%
El Libro Grande de AA | Alcoholics Ano...	89,513	34.9%
Los Doce Pasos | Alcoholics Anonymo...	88,335	-11.3%
The Twelve Traditions | Alcoholics Ano...	87,986	-2.9%
What is A.A.? | Alcoholics Anonymous	75,126	-6.0%
What to Expect at an A.A. Meeting | Alc...	68,824	6%
¿Tiene un problema con el alcohol? Ha...	58,514	4.3%

What browser are visitors using?



What device are visitors using?



Country breakdown

Country	Active users ▾	% Δ
United States	2,048,014	-11.5%
Canada	215,585	-1.1%
Mexico	189,618	5.7%
United Kingdom	96,665	-10.8%
Australia	25,545	-1.1%
India	25,132	2.1%
Spain	23,290	1.1%
France	21,959	4.2%
Colombia	18,937	-3.5%
Ireland	12,141	-5.7%

Language breakdown

Language	Active users ▾	% Δ
English	2,445,668	-10.2%
Spanish	297,283	3.5%
French	59,888	8.4%
German	5,419	5.7%
Portuguese	3,883	43.6%
Dutch	3,811	2.0%
Russian	3,503	37.5%
Swedish	3,026	-2.8%
Polish	2,505	15.6%
Italian	2,059	31.5%

2026 Conference Committee on Public Information

ITEM G: Review report on AAWS Online Business Profiles.

Background Notes:

Committee Consideration from the 2025 Conference Committee on Public Information:

> The committee reviewed and accepted the 2024 Report on Online Business Profiles. The committee expressed appreciation for the work and looks forward to a progress report being submitted to the 2026 Conference Committee on Public Information.

Secretary's note: The 2024 Online Business Profiles report format was revised, taking into consideration the suggestions outlined in the 2024 Additional Committee Considerations. The 2025 report follows suit.

In addition, it was noted that at the request of the AAWS Board, work had already begun to "cross link" various pages that AAWS has oversight of, including online business profiles and those for YouTube and LinkedIn.

Background:

1. Report on Online Business Profiles Q4 2024 (October) – Q3 2025 (September)

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Online Business Profiles: Annual summary

Q4 2024 (October) – Q3 2025 (September)

1. ABOUT ONLINE BUSINESS PROFILES

Online business profiles are pages that display an organization's information on directory websites, search engine result pages, social media and business reviews. We currently have business listings on Google, Bing, and Yelp. The individual search platforms automatically generate these with our publicly available company contact information.

2. HISTORY

In 2019, the office began to actively manage business listings on Google, Bing and Yelp in order to correct inaccuracies and improve public relations.

In 2024, crosslinks were added to connect the online business profiles to the AAWS YouTube channel and LinkedIn profile.

3. PRIMARY GOAL(S) FOR THE PLATFORM

The primary goal for managing online business profiles is to ensure that accurate information about Alcoholics Anonymous, GSO, the General Service Board and Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. is provided online.

4. INTENDED AUDIENCE AND HOW WE SERVE THEM

- Anyone looking for accurate contact, operating hours and location information
- Online visitors who have posted questions or misinformation about GSO or AAWS on a search engine
- Anyone who might encounter that question or misinformation when they search for the General Service Office using a search engine.

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5. KEY MESSAGES

GSO's online business profiles focus on providing factual information and communicating about how members of Alcoholic Anonymous stay sober and help other problem drinkers one day at a time.

6. CURRENT STATUS

The Communication Services Department and Public Information Staff have been monitoring comments and questions and continue to respond when appropriate. A total of 47 (+4 from last year) Google comments have been responded to and 93 (+3 from last year) Google questions have been answered since the project commenced. Our continued efforts to respond to all questions and comments increases not only ranking of accurate information in search engines, but also engagement with the public.

7. ANALYTICS

The analytics below show that our profile views have increased, but our overall interactions have decreased. The information is being presented to more people, but a smaller percentage of those that see our listing interact with it.

Analytics:

Google/Bing	Total 2024	Total 2025	Percentage change
Total views (majority from mobile search)	**152,069**	**215,581**	**41% increase**
Total interactions (next 3 lines combined)	**13,343**	**12,174**	**9% decrease**
Calls from profile	2,499	2,405	4% decrease
Direction requests	2,202	1,443	34% decrease
Website clicks	8,642	8,326	4% decrease

The Yelp profile received less than 200 visits between October 2024 and September 2025 and less than 25 interactions. This is in line with average traffic for the profile on Yelp.

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Sample of Questions and Comments from October 2024 to September 2025

Questions/Comments	Response
Los visito desde México y una muy grata experiencia 😊😇 todos muy amables	(English version, was translated) Thank you so much for your visit and your kind words. One of the truly wonderful parts of being at the General Service Office in New York is being able to welcome visitors from all over the world.
Why is the main offices for Alcohol Anonymous in New York city? You know some of the most expensive real estate in the country, and as far way from most of the rest of the country.	Thank you for the question. The decision about the location for the General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous is the responsibility of the General Service Board, in consultation with the A.A. General Service Conference. Approximately every ten years the board conducts a careful review of location, taking into consideration the price of rent, along with a great many other variables. A.A. members who want to know more about this process are encouraged to reach out to their GSRs (General Service Representatives).
Should addicts be allowed to join an AA groups	A.A. experience suggests that sobriety — freedom from alcohol — through the teaching and practice of the Twelve Steps, is the sole purpose of an A.A. group. One of Alcoholics Anonymous' Traditions (Tradition 3) says that the only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking. At the same time, we know that many people have multiple "problem areas" in their lives. For instance, some people identify as both alcoholics and something else (addict, gambler, debtor, etc.). As long as they have a problem with drinking and want to stop, they are welcome in A.A. Individuals who are nonalcoholic addicts may attend open A.A. meetings, which are available to anyone interested in A.A.'s program of recovery.

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2026 Conference Committee on Public Information

ITEM H: Review the AAWS Social Media Policy.

Background notes:

Excerpt from the November 2025 trustees' Public Information Committee meeting:

> The committee discussed the AAWS Social Media Policy and noted that, though informative, this document is under the purview of the A.A. World Services Board.

Secretary's note: Although the 2025 Conference Committee on Public Information recommended that the A.A. World Services Social Media Policy currently under review be brought back to the 2026 Conference Committee on Public Information for approval prior to implementation, this recommendation **did not receive the two-thirds vote necessary to become a Conference Advisory Action.**

The AAWS Social Media Policy is included here for reference and for information purposes only.

Background:

1. AAWS Social Media Policy

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AAWS Social Media Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear and comprehensive guidelines for the AAWS Board to maintain effective oversight of the organization's social media presence. This will ensure that social media activities align with the mission, goals, and the Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.), while fostering increased visibility, engagement, and outreach to members, suffering alcoholics, and other key audiences, including professional, media, and anyone looking for more information on A.A. The policy is designed to ensure accountability and strategic alignment in the management of AAWS social media channels.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all official social media accounts created or managed by Alcoholics Anonymous World Services (AAWS) and provides a framework for both current platforms and future social media initiatives. It establishes clear guidelines regarding who has the authority to create or manage an official AAWS social media account, as well as the process for making significant changes to the overall social media strategy.

• Authority and oversight: The board has the authority to oversee the creation, modification, and overall strategy of social media accounts. Social media strategy and significant changes must be approved by the appropriate AAWS leadership, ensuring consistent lines of authority and oversight across all channels. This policy and the actions of the board regarding social media will be guided by and adhere to the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous and be consistent with Advisory Actions of the General Service Conference related to social media.

3. Responsibilities

• Oversight role: The board will provide oversight of social media strategy and content, which will be developed by the appropriate departments at GSO and following actions and recommendations of relevant board committees. The board will also review performance metrics to ensure alignment with organizational goals and the A.A. Traditions.

• Approval process: The board will establish and follow a formal approval process for launching a new AAWS social media account. The board will review and approve any major change to an account before implementation.

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• Monitoring: The board will periodically review social media performance, including audience engagement metrics, to assess the effectiveness of social media efforts, based on key performance indicators (KPIs). This includes tracking engagement levels (e.g., "likes" and "shares") and reach (e.g., number of unique users who have seen an account's content), and other KPIs. The board will receive updates on major social media campaigns and initiatives.

4. Guidelines for content oversight

• Brand consistency: All social media content must consistently reflect the A.A. brand identity. "Brand" refers the overall image, identity, and perception of Alcoholics Anonymous and includes name and logo, graphic standards, voice, core mission and values, and the Traditions. Content should be appropriate, respectful, and inclusive, upholding A.A.'s commitment to anonymity and AAWS privacy policies.

• Legal compliance: AAWS social media activities must comply with relevant legal and regulatory standards, including copyright, privacy, and intellectual property laws. It is critical that all content shared does not infringe upon third-party rights and that personal information is protected.

• Crisis management: The AAWS office will develop and maintain protocols to address any misuse of the platform or AAWS content, or if social media crises arise. A clear procedure will be in place in collaboration with the Office to handle situations where there is potential harm to the organization's reputation or the anonymity of A.A. members.

5. Evaluation

• Annual review: The effectiveness of the AAWS social media strategy will be evaluated annually. This will include an assessment of audience engagement, content effectiveness, alignment with organizational goals, and overall strategic impact. The findings will be presented to the board for consideration and decision-making.

6. Reporting

• Periodic reporting: The AAWS Communications and Language Services Committee recommends to the AAWS Board that section 6 of the Social Media Policy be updated to read: "The Communications Services Department will provide periodic updates to the AAWS Board regarding social media performance, challenges, opportunities, and any significant developments. Any new social media initiatives will be communicated to the respective trustees' committees and, when appropriate, to the corresponding General Service Conference committees for awareness and alignment with Advisory Actions."

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7. Policy Review

• Annual policy review: This policy will be reviewed annually by the board to ensure it remains up-to-date, effective, and aligned with the evolving needs of AAWS and its social media presence. Any necessary revisions or updates will be made to ensure continued strategic alignment and compliance with best practices.

By adhering to these guidelines, AAWS will strengthen its digital presence, ensuring responsible, effective, and consistent communication across its social media platforms, furthering the mission of Alcoholics Anonymous and providing valuable resources to members and the wider public.

Approved by AAWS Dec 2025

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2026 Conference Committee on Public Information

ITEM I: Review proposed plan for the 2026 Membership Survey.

Background Notes:

Excerpts from the November 2025 trustees' Public Information Committee meeting:

> The committee discussed the Membership Survey Content Subcommittee report, and the revised draft survey. The committee noted that too many additional questions have been added and may need further review. The committee looks forward to additional reporting from the subcommittee at the Q1 2026 meeting.
>
> The Membership Survey Methodology Subcommittee suggested to the committee that the following be added to their scope:
>
> > The scope of the Membership Survey Methodology Subcommittee is to focus on sampling methodology; selection of groups/meetings; consideration of gender differences in meeting attendance or group preferences. **In addition, the scope of the subcommittee will include responsibility to review and suggest improvements to the process of communicating about the Membership Survey to the Fellowship and to area delegates who have responsibility for administering the survey.**
>
> The trustees' Public Information Committee approved the revision to the subcommittee scope. The subcommittee acknowledged that further work is needed prior to a final report being provided to the committee.

Excerpts from the August 2025 trustees' Committee on Public Information meeting:

> The committee discussed the Advisory Action of the 75th General Service Conference, "that the trustees' Public Information Committee develop a plan for a 2026 A.A. Membership Survey utilizing random sampling methodology." The committee agreed that given the large volume of work required to fulfill this Advisory Action, that two subcommittees would be required.
>
> The chair appointed Dawn Klug (chair), Cheryl S., Joyce S. and Teresa J. (ex-officio) with support from the Staff secretary to serve on a Membership Survey Content Subcommittee. The scope of the subcommittee is to evaluate the questions and survey layout used in the 2022 Membership Survey and make suggestions for changes to the questionnaire for a 2026 Membership Survey.

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The chair appointed Jennifer B. (chair), Tom Ivester, David S. and Teresa J. (ex-officio), with support from the Staff secretary to serve on the Membership Survey Methodology Subcommittee. The scope of the Membership Survey Methodology Subcommittee is to focus on sampling methodology, the selection of groups/meetings and consideration of gender differences in meeting attendance or group preferences.

The committee requested that the Staff secretary forward related Advisory Actions and committee considerations to each of the two subcommittees.

The committee looks forward to a progress report from each committee at the November 2025 meeting.

Advisory Action of the 75th General Service Conference:

The trustees' Public Information Committee develop a plan for a 2026 A.A. Membership Survey utilizing random sampling methodology. The committee requested that the plan for the 2026 Membership Survey be brought to the 2026 Conference Committee on Public Information.

Committee Considerations of the 2025 Conference Committee on Public Information:

The committee discussed the report on the A.A. Membership Survey and expressed appreciation for the comprehensive work. The committee suggested that the planning for a 2026 A.A. Membership Survey include the following:

- Continued use of random sampling for the main Membership Survey.
- That any publications related to Membership Survey be based on the data generated by the random sample version of the Membership Survey.
- That an external survey methodologist be consulted as part of developing a plan for the next Membership Survey. The committee suggested that the survey methodologist be consulted about whether the convenience sample methodology could be adjusted to mitigate bias.
- A trial for utilizing four-year intervals between Membership Surveys be piloted, with plans to evaluate this shift after an appropriate interval.
- Taking into account staff workload, the committee requested that information about expense, including the costs for survey tabulation, analysis, report writing and development of communications to the Fellowship be detailed in the plan for the next Membership Survey.

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- Discussion of purpose/audience for the survey should be considered, with caution that revisions to the questions should be minimized in order to optimize the ability to consider changes in results over time.

- Careful consideration should be given to supporting the area delegates in the Membership Survey data collection process through workshops and discussion.

- Upon completion of the next Membership Survey, plan for a formal debrief from the trustees' Public Information Committee to the Conference Committee on Public Information about the results of the next Membership Survey.

- That consideration be given to developing multimedia tools to support discussions of future Membership Surveys.

- In the plan for the next Membership Survey, the trustees' Public Information Committee is encouraged to consider how to address additional concerns including:

    - Whether consideration should be given to surveying meetings as well as groups.

    - Whether counting the number of A.A. members is an appropriate goal.

    - Whether the Membership Survey infographics created in 2022 have been useful for local committees.

- The committee suggested that future Membership Survey planning should consider how the survey might address outstanding questions, including:

    - How do we make sense of ongoing gendered differences in meeting attendance?

    - Why has A.A. failed to make meaningful progress on attracting and retaining a more racially/ethnically diverse Fellowship?

    - The most recent survey indicated that the Fellowship is aging and not attracting as many young members. How should we understand and respond to this shift?

Background:

1. Survey Methodology Plan
2. Draft Membership Survey Questions

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Trustees' Public Information Committee
Subcommittee on Membership Survey Methodology Progress Report
January 6, 2026

At the August 2025 trustees' PI committee meeting, a Membership Survey Methodology Subcommittee was formed to work on the methodology part of the plan for a 2026 Membership Survey, with Jennifer B. as chair, and David S. and Tom I. as subcommittee members.

The scope of the Membership Survey Methodology Subcommittee as assigned was "to focus on sampling methodology; selection of groups/meetings; consideration of gender differences in meeting attendance or group preferences." After meeting for the first time, and with the approval of the full PI committee, the subcommittee's scope was expanded as follows: "In addition, the scope of the subcommittee will include responsibility to review and suggest improvements to the process of communicating about the Membership Survey to the Fellowship and to area delegates who have responsibility for administering the survey."

The subcommittee met four times, including one meeting with Dr. Alexandra Cooper, the survey methodologist. The subcommittee reviewed Advisory Actions and Committee Considerations related to the Membership Survey. The subcommittee also reviewed past reports from Dr. Cooper from 2020–2024 and the "Report of the 2024 Membership Survey Working Group" of the trustees' PI Committee. The subcommittee gave particular attention to prior recommendations that were not implemented, along with questions raised in the analyses of the 2022 random sampling survey and the 2023 convenience sample pilot.

The subcommittee discussed at length the potential benefits and challenges of including non-registered meetings/groups in the Membership Survey, noting concerns that focusing only on registered groups may overlook parts of the Fellowship. They explored using Meeting Guide data for sampling, but the Staff secretary learned from AAWS's digital strategist that duplication and data overload would create issues. The digital strategist recommended a small pilot, working with 2–3 entities whose data feeds into Meeting Guide to assess feasibility. The subcommittee then asked the Staff secretary to consult with methodologist Dr. Cooper on how meetings that aren't already in the GSO database might be incorporated. Dr. Cooper's pilot proposals are included in the attached report.

In light of Dr. Cooper's preliminary report in October, the subcommittee questioned whether moving ahead with the 2026 Membership Survey before a pilot would be financially prudent, as it might produce similar results. Staff reached out to Dr. Cooper to ask if pausing the survey and conducting the pilot first to see what we can learn would be a better course of action.

Dr. Cooper's response:

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"There are advantages and disadvantages to each, and no one clear 'right' answer to whether (a) proceeding with the survey or (b) delaying the survey until completion of the pilot is the better choice. With that said, I'll note the following:

1. *Although at times described as the triennial survey, and clearly often conducted historically on a three-year cycle, the spacing of the survey has varied.*
2. *Generally speaking, the survey has found consistencies, rather than dramatic changes, in the membership from one iteration to the next.*

Given the clear interest in the pilot, for both reasons listed I'd recommend delaying the survey and focusing on completing the pilot in 2026 as a tool to expand the survey's scope and increase its accuracy and value."

While working separately on two aspects of the plan, the Membership Survey Methodology Subcommittee notes with appreciation the Membership Survey Content Subcommittee's efforts to propose new questions that could make the survey more useful to the Fellowship and to professionals. Our subcommittee had wide-ranging and thoughtful discussions about the Membership Survey, and wants to emphasize that this work requires significant time from all involved and relies on Seventh Tradition contributions. A broader Fellowship discussion about the survey's purpose — who it is for and how we use it — could help guide our efforts moving forward.

A summary of the Methodology Subcommittee's recommendations is below (with more detail following):

- Consideration of a pilot to see what we could learn by incorporating meetings listed with other entities, in addition to groups registered with GSO.
- Implementing the following suggestions to minimize and understand non-response:
    1. Early communication with areas — starting with reminders to clean up group records and possibly a sharing session with delegates to hear what would be useful to them in planning their participation.
    2. Selection of a better survey platform for the questionnaires (still utilizing digital and paper).
    3. Production of a how-to video, FAQ, and other resources.
    4. Asking data collectors to complete a form ("cover sheet") with additional context about the meetings surveyed.

<u>Pilot proposal</u>:

<u>Pilot and Survey Timeline</u>: Based on methodologist Dr. Cooper's proposal, the trustees' PI Committee would like to provide **two** possible tracks for moving forward with the 2026 Membership Survey:

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1. Continue with producing the survey per usual and run a pilot in 2027 to potentially inform the next Membership Survey.
2. Pause production of the Membership Survey to conduct a pilot which would be informed with guidance by methodologist Dr. Cooper.

Dr. Cooper proposed two possible methods (see pp. 8–9) to pilot inclusion of non-registered meetings in the survey:

a) Surveying all the entities on Meeting Guide app about their data and willingness to share.
b) A pilot survey of a selection of unlisted groups from 3–5 areas to see if there are significant differences compared to past Membership Surveys.

While the subcommittee is leaning toward options 2 and b), broader input is desired from the Conference.

Suggestions for Survey Cover Sheet: To be completed by the data collector (area delegate or trusted servant) for each meeting where questionnaires are completed. The purpose is to provide additional context to help interpret the non-response rate and offer a snapshot of the meetings selected. It will be important to determine how the data will be coded to support meaningful reporting before we request it.

Possible topics (note to Conference committee — please let us know if you have any suggested additions/cuts):

1. How many people were in attendance on the day of the survey?
2. Is the meeting open or closed?
3. Is the meeting in person, online, or hybrid?
4. How is the meeting tailored? Does it focus on particular topics? Target particular audiences (e.g. women, Spanish speakers)?
5. Can the meeting document attendance for those who have been referred to A.A. by a treatment program or through a court?
6. Approximately how many typically attend this meeting? Do many of those who attend regularly share particular qualities, for example, is it made up mostly of men? Of young people? Of retirees?
7. At a typical meeting, how many in attendance are typically newcomers (may need to define what that means: first-timers? People there who have been attending meetings for three months or less? Whatever would be most useful to know)

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How do we provide a compelling reason to take the survey?

The way we present the survey when asking members to fill it out likely has impact on response rate. The subcommittee suggested using a more engaging tone and connecting it to our primary purpose.

Some proposed language:

Your group has been selected to respond to the A.A. membership survey. This survey has been conducted since 1968. It provides a valuable snapshot of the experiences and attributes of A.A. members and helps with outreach to those suffering from alcoholism who may want to stop drinking — thus fulfilling our primary purpose.

The snapshot of the A.A. membership that the survey provides can:

1. Provide someone considering attending an A.A. meeting for the first time with a sense that A.A. has helped other people like them and can help them.
2. Provide professionals with the data needed to consider the A.A. program a viable option for their clients.
3. Demystify A.A. and bust myths about the program for anyone interested in learning more.
4. Paint a picture of the A.A. program for what we know it is — a roomy, inclusive, welcoming program.

Cover page — Addition of QR Code to Introduction/How-to video, FAQ section on aa.org, and link to 2022 Membership Survey results.

Draft Outline of Introduction/How-to Video:

1. Explanation of the value of probability sampling in layman terms
2. Step by step instructions
3. Delegating responsibilities
4. Timeline
5. Shared experience from 2–3 past delegates
6. Questions? Check out the FAQ on aa.org

Utilization of Meeting Guide app for communication: The subcommittee noted that the Meeting Guide app can be utilized to inform members what the survey is, why we do it, and that they might be selected to participate, based on clear and objective methodology. This can include

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links to the introduction video and an FAQ page on aa.org.

The Meeting Guide app could also be used in communication to groups before the survey. We could let groups know if they want to be considered for the survey to please make sure they are registered and that their information is up to date with GSO by emailing memberservices@aa.org

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Review of the A.A. Membership Survey Research Methodology

Report to the Trustees Public Information Committee

prepared by Alexandra Cooper

submitted January 15, 2026

Executive Summary

This report responds to a request by the General Services Board (GSB) of Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.), Inc., for expert advice regarding key steps in planning its next survey of its membership ("the Survey"). These steps include its sampling strategy, adding non-registered groups to the population it seeks to survey, questions about the gender distribution of the A.A. membership that different sampling approaches have identified, ensuring that the questionnaire used for the Survey is up-to-date and focused on the topics most relevant to the purpose of the Survey and A.A. itself, and plans for administering the Survey using online tools as well as the paper questionnaires that it has traditionally used.

The report begins with brief overview of the two most recent membership surveys that A.A. has conducted – a 2022 administration of the Survey using a probability sample and a 2023 survey that relied on a convenience sample recruited through the Meeting Guide App and related outreach. Although the datasets produced from these two surveys resemble each other in many ways, a gender gap between the two did emerge, with a much higher proportion of women responding to the convenience sample than to the probability sample. The report briefly discusses ways in which non-response errors might lead to underrepresentation of women in the probability sample, and/or that women may have been disproportionately willing to respond to the Meeting App request and therefore overrepresented in the convenience sample. In its discussion of sampling strategies and resulting datasets, the report next turns to a question that A.A. has raised, of adding non-registered groups to the population surveyed. It provides an overview of what has been learned regarding the data available about such groups, stresses the importance of their inclusion in the Survey if the resulting data are to be truly able to characterize and report on the entire A.A. membership, and recommends prioritizing including such groups in the Survey.

The report next turns to an overview of the 2022 Survey and of recommendations I made regarding its administration. It lists various sources of error that the Survey may involve. It notes A.A. already has strategies in place to address a number of these, but that non-response, which is among the problems listed, is particularly difficult to navigate. It therefore focuses particularly on strategies that can be used to reduce non-response and assess its severity. In this context, the report again notes the value of including non-registered as well as registered groups in the Survey

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sample to ensure that all A.A. members are included in the Survey.

Proceeding to the questionnaire and the wording of its questions, the report notes that this is an area to which the Membership Survey Content Subcommittee has devoted considerable time and effort. It briefly discusses the pros and cons of changing question wording and questionnaire layout and design, and the value of Subcommittee's focus on the relevance of question items to A.A.'s goals for the survey. It also highlights the importance of keeping the questionnaire brief, something A.A. should continue to prioritize.

Before concluding, the report addresses A.A.'s interest in identifying and adopting a suitable online survey tool for use in data collection. It lists the benefits of online survey software offers and notes that, as with so much contemporary technology, this is an area where change occurs rapidly and can have significant effects. Given the likely delay in conducting the Survey that may result from efforts to add non-registered groups to the sample and the likelihood of rapid change in the tools available, costs associated with acquiring and using them, and related issues, this report does not make a specific recommendation regarding which online survey software will best meet A.A.'s needs, but instead recommends that A.A. revisit this question in the near future, before conducting the next Survey. The report then concludes with a very brief summary of what it has covered.

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Review of the A.A. Membership Survey Research Methodology
Report to the Trustees Public Information Committee

prepared by Alexandra Cooper
submitted January 15, 2026

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1. Overview

As the General Services Board (GSB) of Alcoholics Anonymous, Inc. develops plans to administer its next Membership Survey ("The Survey"), it has sought expert assistance in assessing the tools and strategies it uses to collect and analyze data in order to understand the attributes of its membership. The GSB seeks to ensure that the data collected accurately characterize the organization's members and address topics relevant to the organization's purpose. To achieve these goals, it is evaluating a number of aspects of The Survey, including the following:

1. It is reviewing the sampling strategy employed in 2022 to identify opportunities for improvement, including assessment of its methods for selecting alternative groups and adding meetings in addition to groups to the survey population.
2. It is examining whether results from The Survey accurately reflect the gender distribution of the A.A. membership. This question arises both from a general sense that prior iterations of The Survey may – for whatever reason – have undercounted the participation of women in A.A. and on a discrepancy in gender balance between the findings of the probability-sample based Survey and a convenience-sample based survey conducted in 2023. A.A. is therefore particularly interested in evaluating the measurement and interpretation of data regarding the gender distribution of its membership.
3. It is reviewing its questionnaire and the wording of its question items to ensure they are kept updated and that those included on the questionnaire are relevant to the organization's goals.
4. It is seeking information about and developing plans to use online tools, rather than relying exclusively on paper questionnaires, in conducting the next iteration of The Survey.

This evaluative process incorporates several objectives, including keeping the questionnaire and the systems used to administer them up-to-date, accurately portraying the A.A. membership, and reporting The Survey findings in a way that best serves its membership and the still-suffering alcoholics whom A.A. seeks to reach and serve.

This report addresses these topics. It begins by providing an overview of the 2022 probability sampling strategy and the 2023 survey conducted using convenience sampling. As part of this overview, it considers the gender imbalance generally identified through The Survey, the different pattern that emerged from the 2023 convenience sample, and the possibility that women are underrepresented as respondents to The Survey, relative to their participation in A.A. The report next describes the goal of adding meetings to the population studied – and from which the sample is drawn – and the challenges that adding meetings may involve.

Proceeding from this overview of the key issues relating to the sampling strategy A.A. uses for the survey and the ways in which the Survey does or may mis-represent the population on which it seeks to report, the report reviews the recommendations made in 2020 for the planning of the 2022 survey and examines the actual approaches used in 2022 – considering which recommendations were implemented and which were not. It focuses particularly on non-response and the ways in which non-response may bias the results of the Survey, including the possibility that it leads to the underrepresentation of women. It makes recommendations regarding sampling strategy and survey administration focused on maximizing the representativeness of the survey data collected, assessing to what extent biases in the data are being

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introduced by non-response and evaluating the severity of those biases. The report also considers A.A.'s interest in adding non-registered groups to its sample and thus, to the population studied. It makes recommendations for next steps in implementing this objective, which it considers important but at present, infeasible.

The report next discusses questionnaire design and makes recommendations focused on ensuring the questionnaire is kept current and relevant. It touches briefly on the issues involved in incorporating online survey tools into the survey administration process. It concludes with a brief summary of its contents.

2. Administration of The Survey: Learning from and Building on the 2022 Protocol and 2023 Convenience Sample

In 2022, A.A. conducted its most recent iteration of The Survey, basing its protocol both on longstanding practices and on recommendations made in a 2020 report I prepared for the organization. Consistent with its existing practice and recommendations from the 2020 report, it relied on a stratified probability sample, using its 93 Areas as strata and sampling 1.3% of groups that meet in-person within each stratum. These groups served as clusters, and for each group sampled a census of all members present at an individual meeting was solicited. For the first time, the organization also conducted a sample of virtual groups using a similar but distinct stratified sample. A.A. has far fewer virtual meetings than in-person meetings – about 680 of the former compared to 54,000 of the latter were listed in 2022. To ensure (a) inclusion of all Areas that include virtual meetings and (b) a sufficiently large sample, it sampled one virtual meeting per Area for all Areas that had at least one virtual meeting listed. This provided a robust data set for the organization's first study of virtual meetings; the data sets from both virtual and in-person meetings were also combined using weights to ensure the results accurately reflected the overall proportion of each type of group in the organization as a whole.[1] Thus – although a greater amount of time had passed since the prior Survey than is typical – in 2022 A.A. both continued and improved its study of and reporting on the attributes and experiences of its membership, a practice that has been in place for over 50 years.

In 2023, A.A. again surveyed its membership, employing for the first time a convenience sampling strategy that relied on the Meeting Guide App and related outreach efforts to invite members to complete its questionnaire. It received slightly over 7,000 responses from members of 476 distinct groups, both listed and unlisted. The results from the convenience sample in many ways resembled those found through the probability sample or reflected comparatively small differences between the probability sample and convenience sample. However, there was one striking exception – 52% of convenience sample respondents were female, compared to only 35% of probability sample respondents. Interpreting what caused this discrepancy is difficult. It is possible that women are inaccurately *under*represented among probability sample respondents perhaps because they are more likely to depart meetings promptly due to childcare or other responsibilities. It is also possible that women are *over*represented among

[1] For a full discussion of sampling strategy and A.A.'s commendable reliance on probability sampling, please refer to my 2020 report, *Sampling Methodology of the A. A. Membership Survey: A Report to the Trustees Public Information Committee*. In that report, I stress that probability samples are unparalleled in their ability to accurately represent the population from which they are selected, and that the effort they require is worthwhile. Probability sampling is a cornerstone of scientific research, and it makes it possible both to estimate population characteristics with mathematical precision and to quantify the uncertainty associated with those estimates.

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convenience sample respondents because women, generally, are more willing to respond to surveys than are men (Green, 1996: 176; Becker & Glauser, 2018). Disentangling the source of this discrepancy between the probability and convenience sample results is an important – but challenging – goal for the next iteration of survey that will be best addressed by minimizing and understanding non-response.

Administration of the next survey will, as with prior such administrations, employ a probability sample. However, recognizing that a subset of participants have been systematically excluded from its probability sample in the past, A.A. is interested in modifying the population list it uses to draw its sample in order to add previously excluded members to the Survey. This is important, as it will increase the accuracy with which the Survey captures the qualities, experiences, and needs of all its members.

Specifically, to date, the Survey has included groups but not non-registered meetings in its sample. The exclusion of meetings arises from understandable logistical challenges. Nonetheless, limiting the Survey's focus to registered groups clearly omits portions of the Fellowship, and may introduce bias into the sample – and thus, the survey results. A.A. seeks to include such meetings in the next iteration of the survey, thereby improving the Survey by making its sample more inclusive and more representative. This is important and worth the effort it will involve.

Roughly 550 entities provide data to the database used for the App, and each of these provides between 25 and 500 meetings, some of which are listed and some of which are not. Only by including unlisted meetings in the sample is it possible accurately to claim that the Survey fully represents the A.A. membership. As A.A. has not previously collected data from non-registered meetings it is impossible to know how much or how little their members differ from the members of registered groups, and thus, how much error their exclusion introduces into the survey results, but their exclusion (and a lack of information about just how many such meetings are being excluded) is problematic.

To summarize the current situation, as embodied in the 2022 administration of the Survey, the sampling strategy A.A. employs is in many ways excellent. However, its exclusion of non-registered meetings is problematic – just how problematic it is currently impossible to know, but ending this exclusion is an essential to ensuring that the Survey truly captures information that accurately reflects the entire A.A. membership. However, even the best sampling strategy cannot prevent other sources of error, such as non-response, from introducing inaccuracies into the resulting data. To examine these sources of error, this report next reviews the recommendations made in 2020 to reduce sources of error in the 2022 survey and briefly considers additional sources of error not discussed in the 2020 report. It also examines which of the recommendations the report included were implemented and which were not. Though the implementation of these recommendations will differ somewhat across in-person and virtual groups they are in many ways the same and offer the same benefit, and the discussion below does not distinguish between the two. Following that discussion, the report also provides recommendations regarding the addition of non-registered groups to the sample.

3. Overview of 2020 Recommendations and their Implementation, and Recommendations for the 2026 Administration of The Survey

This report now examines potential shortcomings within the existing survey protocol that provide opportunities for improvement. Although most are distinct from sampling strategy, these shortcomings relate to the quality of the *actual* sample obtained, and thus to the extent to which it is possible accurately to estimate the attributes of the A.A. membership from that sample.

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Possible sources of error addressed in the 2020 report and used to shape planning for the 2022 survey include the following:

1. Members who attend multiple meetings will on average be overcounted;
2. Members who attend meetings less frequently will on average be undercounted, as their less frequent attendance does not make them "less" important or relevant as members;
3. Listed groups excluded from the sampling list will not be included in the sample;
4. There exists no mechanism for assessing systematically the error introduced into the sample because of non-response, that is, for assessing the following:
    - what proportion of members present at a meeting actually completed the survey;
    - whether those who decided against completing it are different from those who completed it;
    - why those who did not complete it decided against doing so.

Two additional and related sources of error not on the list included in the 2020 report, but also worth considering, are (5) non-response at the cluster (meeting) level and (6) the exclusion of unlisted meetings which, because of their unlisted nature have – to date – been omitted from the sample.

Examining this list of possible sources of error, A.A. already collects data useful for addressing items 1 and 2 – the Survey asks members about how often they typically attend meetings, information that the data analysis team uses to craft weights so that the frequency of attendance does not shape the impact a member's responses have on survey results. The problem of there being Groups excluded from the sampling list (item 3 on the list above) is clearly a real one and can be minimized by detailed attention to using the most accurate and up-to-date version of the list available. Not participating in the survey – whether at the individual level (item 4) or at the Group level (item 5) is a problem the 2020 report focused on only at the individual level, but both warrant attention as non-response clearly detracts – potentially significantly – from the ability of the data collected from a sample to estimate accurately the qualities of the population it is intended to represent.

As noted, non-response can occur at either the cluster (meeting) or respondent (member) level. Unfortunately, at both levels non-response is almost certainly not random. For this reason, it is a source of bias. At the group level, some groups are less willing than others to participate in The Survey, and differ systematically – for reasons that may relate, for example, to their type or their membership – from those groups that are willing to participate. The same applies to sample respondents (i.e., attenders of a sampled meeting), where those less committed to A.A., more concerned about privacy and anonymity, or simply in a hurry to get to their next commitment are less willing to fill out a survey form than are other members. Taking members being too much "in a hurry" to participate as an example of a source of bias, it is not difficult to imagine that members who are employed, as well those with child-care responsibilities, may be less likely to participate in the survey than are retired members without responsibility for dependent children. If this is true, then the data collected through The Survey will underestimate the proportion of employed members, and of members with childcare responsibilities – the latter are probably more likely than those without such responsibilities to be female (and may also be more likely to fall within a certain age range, say 20-40).

Non-response is difficult or impossible to eliminate. At the cluster level, substitution appears to be a solution – if one meeting declines to participate, select another meeting – but this is problematic since as exhibited by their behavior meetings that decline to participate in the survey differ on a least one, but likely also other, metrics as compared to meetings that do respond. For this reason, substituting a different meeting for one that declines to respond shifts the sample away from it being a probability sample and toward being a convenience sample, one that includes only or primarily those units most interested in and willing to participate in The Survey. More generally, the basic problem with non-

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response is that *we know nothing about non-respondents*. Whether at the cluster or the unit level, because they decline to provide survey answers we do not know in what ways non-respondents differ from and in what ways they are the same as respondents.

The first and best strategy for managing non-response is to minimize it. Providing compelling explanations of the survey purpose to administrators selected to distribute the questionnaire within a meeting, together with a clear and easy-to-implement protocol, is an important first step. Making surveys appealing to respondents by such means as clearly explaining their purpose, providing reassurance about the privacy (or anonymity) of their answers, using attractive and easy-to-read formatting, making questions easy to answer (for example by using straightforward language and providing a succinct yet complete list of answer options), and providing incentives such as a gift card for completing a survey can all increase the likelihood of response. So can making a survey available in multiple formats, including a respondent's preferred language and source – e.g. online as well as paper. The more accessible a survey is (for example, the provision of an online version that can be accessed later, after a sampled meeting has concluded), the more likely individuals will respond (though conversely, accessibility can increase the risk of response by non-sample members, e.g. if a targeted respondent makes copies of a paper survey or shares the link to an online survey).

This list of tasks clearly involves effort at both the organization and the survey administrator level. A.A. must ensure that it maximizes the quality, appeal, and clarity of its survey and of the protocol used to administer it. This includes but will not be limited to making it available in multiple languages – something A.A. typically does – and likely providing it in both paper and online forms. It must also strive to obtain the buy-in of all sampled meetings and ensure that they are willing to distribute the survey. In its Progress Report dated January 6th, 2026, the Subcommittee on Membership Survey Methodology has provided helpful proposed language for communications with administrators regarding the purpose and value of the Survey. The Subcommittee also recommends creation of a how-to/introduction video and notes that the Meeting Guide App can be used to inform members about the survey – both valuable recommendations.[2] Administrators will also need to work to communicate to the members of selected meetings the importance and value of the survey, as this will increase the likelihood that those present at each such meeting will take the time to complete it.

Even with all these tasks optimized, not every Group included in the survey sample will participate in the survey and not every member present at a sampled meeting will fill out a questionnaire. Returning to the challenge presented by non-respondents mentioned above – that we know nothing about them – this is, in the context of A.A. meetings, a problem with some, albeit partial, solutions. The 2020 report recommended many of these, however, they were not employed in administration of the 2022 survey. What would they entail?

Examining the process of data collection itself, those charged with the data collection effort could, if they decline to participate, be asked to provide an explanation for their decision. It is possible that this information could shed light on ways to improve administration of the Survey, as understanding groups' reasons for non-participation could help refine the protocol in ways that might reduce the number of groups that decline to participate. Similarly, among participating groups, survey administrators might be able to request that non-respondents tick off a short list of reasons

[2] Alerting the entire membership to the Survey may raise – or increase the frequency of – questions from members of groups that are not in the probability sample selected for the Survey, including questions about why they are not included. One possible approach to this situation is to repeat the convenience-sample survey, offering those not selected but interested in completing the survey the opportunity to do so through a separate sample offered via the Meeting Guide App.

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for not completing the survey (this list could be provided on the questionnaire itself or as a separate sheet). This could help provide some basic information about non-respondents, or at least the challenges they face and the reasons for their unwillingness to respond to the survey which, again, might be useful in reducing non-response in the future.

Among participating groups, administrators themselves could also provide some information about the meeting at which the data are being collected, and about the survey experience itself. Data-gatherers could report on how closely they did (or did not) adhere to the protocol A.A. requested that they administer, providing insight on the consistency with which that protocol is employed. Such a request can and should be framed neutrally, for example by asking, "How did the protocol for administering the survey we provided work for you, and did you find you needed to make any changes to it? Please describe any changes you made." A neutral tone (rather than one that might be perceived as critical or even accusatory) would encourage honest and complete responses, which could yield useful information, as understanding administrators' concerns might make it possible to improve the administrative process by allowing A.A. to address those concerns, if not in the moment then in subsequent years when the Survey is re-administered.

Survey administrators could also be asked to provide basic information about the meeting in which the survey took place. Some such questions might be about the meeting itself; the Subcommittee on Membership Survey Methodology has reviewed a list of suggestions for such items that I provided and using those and their own experience and expertise offers the following list of potentially useful items:

1. Is the meeting open or closed?
2. Is the meeting in person, online, or hybrid?
3. How is the meeting tailored? Does it focus on particular topics? Target particular audiences (e.g. women, Spanish speakers)?
4. Can the meeting document attendance for those who have been referred to A.A. by a treatment program or through a court?
5. Approximately how many typically attend this meeting? Do many of those who attend regularly share particular qualities, for example, is it made up mostly of men? Of young people? Of retirees?
6. At a typical meeting, how many in attendance are typically newcomers?[3]

A simple but very valuable additional piece of information would be how many members were present at the meeting where the survey was conducted, and asking "How many people were in attendance on the day of the survey?" would (as the Subcommittee also noted) be an appropriate question to include with those listed above – getting this information would make possible calculation of a response rate. To add nuance, administrators *might* also be able to provide estimates of the gender, age, and possibly even racial and ethnic breakdown of those in attendance – certainly this information would be helpful in understanding the gender discrepancy between the results of the 2022 Survey and the 2023 convenience sample (as will minimizing non-response generally). Whether asking any of these questions would be appropriate in the context of an A.A. meeting is of course a judgment call, but each of them could add

[3] The Subcommittee noted that it may be necessary to define what is meant by "newcomers," which could refer for example to first-timers, or to people who have been attending meetings for 3 months or less? Whatever would be most useful to know!)

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useful information to understand what the survey can and cannot tell us, and how accurately it represents the organization's membership overall.

Considering the goal of understanding the entire A.A. membership ties into the final source of error listed above, item 6, the exclusion of unlisted meetings from the sample. For its next administration of The Survey, A.A. is interested in taking a step that should appreciably reduce this source of error, adding meetings that appear in the Meeting App, but that are not listed by the General Service Office (GSO), to the survey. This task is clearly worthwhile, as A.A. knows much less about its unlisted meetings and their members than it does about registered groups. Yet having explored the steps involved in adding this component to the survey effort, it is clear that doing so will involve a number of steps that have not yet been completed and that will be difficult to complete in time to add such meetings to the population sampled for a 2026 administration of The Survey.

As noted above (see p. 4), approximately 550 entities provide data to the database used for the App, with each providing as few as 25 or as many as 500 meetings, some of which are listed and some of which are not. A.A. does not at this point know how different types of entities structure their data, whether any would hesitate to share their data, nor what commitment will be required to clean, structure, and sample from these data once they have been compiled.
Moreover, some entities do not populate the App but do use their own websites to provide information about meetings; unsurprisingly, these entities may differ in systematic ways from those that use the App – for example, Spanish-speaking meetings may be particularly likely to rely on their websites rather than the App to communicate with members and prospective members.

For these reasons, adding the unlisted meetings included in the Meeting Guide App and indeed, other types of unlisted meetings, will be challenging. Still, doing so is important – really, it is essential – to the organization's goals for the Survey. Given each of these facts, I recommend that A.A. consider one or both of the following two tasks prior to conducting the next Survey.
First, it would be useful to survey all of the 550 entities themselves in order to gather information about them and the data they house which feed information to Meeting Guide App, their willingness to participate by providing their data to A.A. for use in sampling for The Survey, and the tools and strategies they use to organize and manage their data. Second, a pilot survey of selected unlisted groups sampled from data provided by a small number of entities willing to provide that information in usable (or readily cleanable) form might also be helpful in planning next steps for including unlisted groups in The Survey.

In prioritizing these tasks, the second one – a pilot survey of unlisted groups – would make it possible to begin to assess whether unregistered meetings differ significantly from the findings generated from surveying (exclusively) registered groups as has been done in prior Membership Surveys. However, the (presumably) small size of the sample for such a pilot, and its likely focus on entities that are willing to participate and have their data more readily available and better structured risks leading to a sample for the pilot that is not fully representative of the nature of unlisted groups and their members. For this reason, if possible I recommend that A.A. reach out to all 550 groups prior to the selection of the pilot sample to assess their willingness to participate and to gather information about the data they have and are willing to make available, as completing these tasks will make it possible to select a more inclusive and representative sample for the subsequent pilot.

These tasks could be completed in tandem with, or even after, administration of the next Survey, but if A.A. wants the Survey to involve a sample representative of all its members – and it does – it must include unlisted meetings in proportions appropriate to their number. As it is not currently

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able to do that, I recommend delaying the Survey in order to make the sample fully inclusive of the membership.

As it prepares to conduct the Survey – and whether or not it delays survey administration in order to accommodate piloting and incorporating inclusion of unlisted groups – A.A. is also working to maximize the quality and relevance of its questionnaire. This report now turns to that process, another important step in planning the Survey.

4. Questionnaire Design and Question Wording

In 2021, A.A. solicited an assessment of its extant survey questionnaire, including evaluating the appropriateness of its question items and, where needed, updating them. At that time, it had been relying on the same questionnaire and question wording for many iterations of the survey and recognized that updates might be needed. Noting that since the questionnaire was crafted, important changes had occurred regarding some of its questions and their answer options, and that best practices in survey research had identified important design aspects useful in encouraging participation, I reviewed the questionnaire, conducted interviews with a small sample of members about their perception of The Survey and its contents, and in early 2022 provided a report recommending updates, many of which A.A. implemented for the 2022 Survey.

As noted in my 2022 report, the existing questionnaire possessed many good features worth keeping and prioritizing in the 2022 (and any subsequent) revisions to the questionnaire. The questionnaire was succinct and focused on key characteristics of the A.A. membership and aspects of members' experience in finding A.A., attending meetings, and achieving sobriety – topics central to the organization's purpose. At the same time, there were opportunities to improve the questionnaire, including ensuring that the preliminary items that appeared on the questionnaire appealed to members' interests and drew them in to completing the survey, and making the language consistent, shorter, simpler, and more colloquial to increase its accessibility to a wide range of reading levels. In addition, I did recommend wording changes to a subset of the individual question items, including those about marital status (changed to "relationship status,"), gender, racial and ethnic background, and employment. I also recommended several additions to the questionnaire, including an item about attending virtual meetings, and one about meeting attributes. I based my recommendations for these changes and additions on changing social norms, current understanding of best practices in survey research, and input from the A.A. members I interviewed.

As A.A. prepares for the next iteration of The Survey, its Membership Survey Content Subcommittee has worked to review the existing questionnaire (in its updated 2022 form), consider the appropriateness of its item wordings, and evaluate each item's relevance to the organization's goals for The Survey, including considering both deleting and adding items.
These tasks are important and worthwhile, and the Subcommittee members deserve to be commended for the thoughtful effort they have put into these processes. As A.A. considers the recommendations the Subcommittee has made, it should bear in mind the importance of keeping the questionnaire short, appealing, and easy to read and understand. The Subcommittee's focus on the relevance of each item (both existing and new) will be particularly valuable; asking the questions, "How will we use these data?" or "What of value will these data tell us?" is a very useful step in evaluating a survey instrument – in conducting survey research it is regrettably easy to add or keep items without considering those issues, and neglecting them creates unproductive work for survey researchers and survey respondents alike.

As it updates the survey questionnaire, A.A. will also want to remember that modifying survey items can affect how respondents perceive and answer questions (as can modifications to survey

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design and layout), even when the underlying facts have not changed. That is, changing question wording changes the data that result (possibly in ways we cannot readily predict or detect), even when underlying facts remain unchanged. Because of this, when change does arise following an update to a questionnaire, it is impossible to know whether the change reflects real changes, or simply changes in respondent behavior

that result from the modified questionnaire. In the case of The Survey, this may not be a major problem. Though the Survey has been conducted and reported for many years, its results are generally used to provide a snapshot of A.A. "in the moment," rather than to track changes over time. This focus makes knowing how much of a set of changes resulted from changes to the questionnaire, and how much from real changes in the membership, less important than it might otherwise be.

5. Online Survey Software

Noting the prevalence of online survey software, A.A. seeks to identify and adopt a suitable online survey tool for use in the Survey. This makes sense; most people are familiar with completing surveys online and routinely carry devices – smart phones – that make it easy for them to do so. And online surveys offer many advantages over paper questionnaires. They eliminate the need to convert completed surveys into machine-readable data, which, even allowing for the up-front costs involved in accessing and using good survey software often makes them more cost-effective than paper surveys. They can be easier for respondents to use, can provide a tailored survey experience and can offer interactive guidance that can reduce errors in survey responses.

At the same time, administration of the Survey is sufficiently complex that selecting an appropriate software tool warrants careful assessment and decision-making. Such software can be expensive, so consideration of costs is one issue. But beyond this, A.A. will (and should) continue to offer its questionnaire in paper format, so a system that facilitates paper as well as electronic administration is preferred. It must make the questionnaire available in multiple languages, will benefit from survey logic tools (e.g. branching tools that show respondents tailor a follow-on question contingent on their answer to an earlier one), and should consider how difficult the software is to use and the tech support and reporting tools it provides. And it of course needs software that protects respondent anonymity.

Like other contemporary technology, survey software changes rapidly – providers add and remove formats and functions, change pricing packages, and may merge with other firms or go out of business. For this reason, rather than make a recommendation regarding the pros and cons of different survey tools at this stage, I will defer to the GSB's decision about how to proceed with incorporating non-registered groups into the survey sample. The impact that has on the timing of the next Survey will shape when an evaluation of survey software will be most valuable, and if desired I would be pleased to provide one.

6. Conclusion

This report has been prepared for the Trustees Public Information Committee as it works to develop and finalize plans to administer the Survey. The report examines A.A.'s extant survey protocol, the organization's concerns regarding key components that it may be able to improve, and challenges involved in making those improvements. It includes information about recommendations made in 2020, and their implementation (or non-implementation) in the 2022 Survey, and provides recommendations for the next Survey. A.A. is to be commended for its efforts to understand the composition and needs of its membership – and to serve both existing and prospective members – and I hope that the information contained in this report will be useful to the members of the Committee as they work to achieve those goals.

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2026 A.A. MEMBERSHIP SURVEY — draft from the General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous

(THIS SURVEY IS ANONYMOUS • PLEASE DO NOT SIGN YOUR NAME)

Meeting Name:

Town/City: Province/State: Date:

A.A. USES THIS SURVEY TO:

- **Tell A.A. members about their Fellowship.**
- **To gain a better understanding of the current A.A. membership.**
- **Provide information about A.A. to the professional community.**
- **Inform the public about what A.A. does.**

Questions in Bold – Inward facing

Questions in Italic **–** *Outward facing*

Questions
1. ***Where did you first hear about A.A. before you came to meetings?*** o Internet, or social media o Newspaper, magazine, radio or TV o From a friend or family member o In school o In a correctional facility o From a counselor or mental health professional o From a member of clergy o Court ordered or through the judicial system o Medical professional o A TV or radio commercial (public service announcement) o A.A. literature
2. ***Please note which best describes how you first came to A.A.:***

DRAFT

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- I came on my own
- I came as a requirement from a judge or other judicial/ correctional facilities requirement
- I came to satisfy a work requirement
- I came to satisfy a requirement of social services/ child protective services or similar institution
- I came as a requirement of my educational facility
- I came as a result of some health concerns
- Pressure from friends and/or family
- Other (please specify)

3. *Have you received any treatment or counseling (such as medical, psychological or spiritual, etc.) related to your drinking? (Please check all that apply. If yes, answer 3a)*

- Yes, before coming to A.A.
- Yes, after coming to A.A.
- No

3a. Did that play an important part in your participation in A.A.?

- Yes
- No

4. **What date did you first come to A.A.?**

Month/Year /

5. *What is the date of your last drink?*

Month/Year /

6. *How long did it take you to get your first sponsor?*

_ Days _Months

7. **Do you have a sponsor now?**

- Yes
- No

8. ***Please check all of the following activities you have done with your current and/or past sponsors:***

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- Read A.A. literature together
- Work 12 Steps together
- Attend A.A. meetings together
- Introduce me to service
- Participate in A.A. service together
- Go on 12 step calls together
- Regularly meet on-on-one
- Regular phone calls and/or texts
- Phone calls when challenging circumstances arise

9. ***Have you worked the 12 Steps?*** If no, answer 9a.

- Yes
- No

9a. ***If you have not completed all 12 Steps, which step are you currently on?***

10. ***Do you have a home group?***

- Yes
- No

11. Does your doctor know you are in A.A.?

- Yes
- No

12. ***How have you attended A.A. meetings? (Check all that apply***)

- Online
- Telephone
- In Person

13. **Which do you attend more frequently?**

- In-person
- Online/telephone
- Both equally

14. **When you came to A.A., what made you feel welcome?**

- Kindness of A.A. members

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- Accessibility (such as no stairs, or served by public transportation)
- Held in a particular language (please list language under additional characteristics)
- Refreshments (coffee or cookies)
- The AA message
- The meeting place
- Seeing people like myself
- Finding a sponsor right away
- Seeing people I already knew in the rooms
- Not seeing anyone I knew/ Being anonymous
- Being able to participate in Fellowship
- Additional characteristics (please describe)

15. ***Do you consider yourself:*** (Choose all that apply)

    - Spiritual
    - Religious
    - Atheist
    - Agnostic
    - Other

16. ***What is your age?***

__years

17. ***Which best describes you***:

    - Male
    - Female
    - Non-binary
    - Prefer to describe

18. **Current Relationship status:** (Check one only)

    - Single, never married
    - Married or Life partner
    - Divorced
    - Separated
    - Widowed
    - Nontraditional
    - Prefer to describe

19. **Racial and ethnic background:** (Check all that apply)

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- Asian
- Black American or Black Canadian
- Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
- Native American, Alaska Native, First Nations, Indigenous, Métis or Inuk (Inuit)
- Pacific Islander or Hawaiian Native
- White, Caucasian, or European American
- Prefer not to answer
- Prefer to describe

20. ***What is your employment status now? (Please pick the one option that best applies to you)***

- Employed full time
- Employed part time
- Unemployed and looking for work
- Unemployed, not currently looking for work
- Not working due to disability
- Student
- Retired
- Homemaker or stay-at-home parent
- Gig worker
- Self-employed
- My situation is more complicated (for instance, I am a student and also work, or I am a homemaker and participate in the gig economy)

21. ***What is the nature of your employment status now? (Check one only)***

- Manager/Administrator
- Clerical worker
- Educator
- Transportation and material moving occupations
- Non-profit professional
- Project Manager
- Artist
- Health professional
- Retired
- Service worker
- Unemployed
- Professional/Tech.

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- Disabled (not working)
- Homemaker
- Student
- Sales worker
- Skilled trade
- Craft worker
- Laborer
- Other (including self-employed)

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2026 Conference Committee on Public Information

ITEM J: Review progress report or draft revision of the pamphlet "Understanding Anonymity" (Item P-47).

Background notes:

Excerpt from the November 2025 trustees' Public Information Committee meeting:

> The committee reviewed a progress report and the revised draft of the pamphlet "Understanding Anonymity" (Item P-47). The committee looks forward to a draft or progress report at the Q1 2026 meeting.

Excerpt from the August 2025 trustees' Committee on Public Information meeting:

> The committee discussed the Advisory Action of the 75th General Service Conference, "that the pamphlet 'Understanding Anonymity' (Item P-47) be revised to address anonymity and social media."
>
> The scope of the subcommittee formed to address the Advisory Action is to review the pamphlet and other A.A. publications related to anonymity and social media and to make suggestions for how the pamphlet "Understanding Anonymity" might best be revised to address these concerns.

Advisory Action of the 2025 Conference Committee on Public Information:

> The pamphlet "Understanding Anonymity" (Item P-47) be revised to address anonymity and social media and looks forward to a draft or an update report to be brought to the 2026 Conference Committee on Public Information

Additional Committee Considerations of the 2025 Conference Committee on Public Information:

> The committee suggested that if revised, the trustees' Literature Committee consider adding a QR code to the pamphlet "Understanding Anonymity" (Item P-47). The committee observed that for literature that typically sits in a literature rack, QR codes may be more useful on the front of pamphlets rather than the back.
>
> The committee reviewed and accepted the progress report on developing communications to address anonymity and social media.

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Background:

1. Draft Revision of “Understanding Anonymity” (Item P-47) **Committee Eyes Only**
2. Current version of “Understanding Anonymity” on aa.org (Item P-47)

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2026 Conference Committee on Public Information

ITEM K: Review content and format of PI Kit and Workbook.

Background Notes:

Workbooks (and applicable service kits) for Archives, CPC, Corrections, Public Information, and Treatment and Accessibilities are reviewed by the appropriate Conference committees during each General Service Conference.

Between Conferences, ideas for changes to a workbook may be received. These may be reviewed by the appropriate trustees' committee and/or respective Staff assignment and implemented as directed.

Alternatively, the trustees' committee may choose to forward an idea to the Conference committee for review. Members of the Conference committee then have an opportunity to review proposed changes to a workbook during the next General Service Conference.

Note: Workbooks and kits are service pieces. Any suggested changes to their content from the Conference committee are put forth as Committee Considerations rather than recommendations. The Public Information Workbook (Item M-27i) is available on GSO's A.A. website (www.aa.org).

Background:

1. The Public Information Workbook and Kit Content Lists available to view at the links below:

   Workbook:

   - ENG
   - FR
   - SP

   Kit content lists:

   - ENG
   - FR
   - SP

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