

MRCNA Convention Policy

Convention Type: Regionally sponsored convention hosted by any willing member of Mississippi Narcotics Anonymous. The RCMs shall elect the executive convention committee, prior to the yearly convention, at the convention wrap up meeting, but no later than the December RSC meeting.

Due to the motion that passed at the MRSCNA in September 2014 this convention is now centralized in the state of Mississippi. The areas considered for centralization are from Philadelphia to Vicksburg, Mississippi. The convention committee should obtain three bids from hotels to compare prices and accommodations. The convention committee should also be mindful of attempting to establish and maintain a primary location to increase support.

Convention Committee Responsibilities: The convention committee acts as a subcommittee of the Mississippi Region Service Committee (MRSC) and as a whole is charged with the responsibility of organizing and carrying out the convention in its entirety. The convention will be held every other year in the October. (2015) (2017).

Executive Committee: The executive committee consists of the Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary; that will be considered for nomination and vote, based on a nomination from their area or requires a second in motion from an RCM. The initial voting will take place during the yearly convention wrap up meeting and no later than the RSC in December. (2015) The executive committee meets as often as needed at the discretion of the chair. They are ultimately responsible to the MRSC. It oversees the functioning of the committee and ensures the various subcommittees work together. The Executive Committee also assists subcommittees which may need extra help, although it is not necessary that it involve itself in the specific workings of each subcommittee.

The members of the Executive Committee discuss the overall performance of each subcommittee and the overall convention budget and other matters which affect the convention. The results of these discussions are included in the reports at convention committee meetings.

As soon as possible, the Executive Committee drafts a schedule of meeting dates and elects subcommittee chairs for the convention committee. The Executive Committee may choose to request nominations from area groups and invite GSRs to participate in the voting process.

The Executive Committee makes regular reports to the Regional Service Committee. Comments and suggestions from the region service committee are included in the chairperson's report at the beginning of each committee meeting as well as the regional meeting.

Chair Person Responsibilities/Requirements: Seven years continuous clean time, demonstrated stability in local community and administrative abilities. The Chairperson serves as a liaison between the Area's and Regional Service Committee.

Note: Concept four should be reviewed.

1. Organizes subcommittees and delegates major tasks to specific subcommittees. Stays informed of the activities of each subcommittee and provides help when needed.
2. Helps resolve personality conflicts.
3. Keeps activities within the principles of the Twelve Traditions and in accord with the purpose of the convention.
4. Monitors the fund flow and overall convention cost, and helps organize the subcommittee budgets. Prepares a budget for the Executive Committee functions.
5. Prevents important questions from being decided prematurely, in order to foster understanding by the entire committee prior to action.
6. Allows the subcommittees to do their jobs while providing guidance and support. Only major issues need to be brought to the Convention Committee meeting. Subcommittees should be given trust and encouragement to use their own judgment.
7. Prepares the agenda for Convention Committee meetings and Executive Committee meetings.
8. The Chair does not vote.
9. Chairs the convention committee meetings as well as the convention.
10. Prepare and deliver a report of the committee's activities to the Mississippi RSC at each of the MRSC meetings.

11. Acts as a cosigner or on the convention committee bank account or assigns this responsibility to the co-chair.

Vice Chairperson Responsibilities/Requirements: Five years continuous clean time, personable and familiar with all committee members, and oversees the subcommittees.

1. Acts as chairperson if the chairperson is unavailable.
2. Coordinates subcommittees and attends subcommittee meetings, in order to ensure that they get the necessary support to do a good job.
3. Works closely with the chairperson to help delegate responsibilities to subcommittee chairpersons.
4. Responsible for chairing subcommittees in the absence of a chairman. To fill any vacant position.

Secretary Responsibility/Requirements: Three years continuous clean time. Service experience and good typing/note taking skills, as well as service experience to ensure accurate minutes are distributed to the committee members.

1. Keeps minutes of all committee meetings and subcommittee reports.
2. Mails/emails minutes to Executive Committee members and subcommittee chairpersons when appropriate. Mail convention committee meetings within 10 days after the convention committee meetings.
3. Maintains a list of names, addresses, and phone numbers of committee members for committee use.
4. Keeps extra sets of minutes, updated after each committee meeting, for members who request a complete set.
5. Can assist all committees in mailing and correspondence.

Treasurer Responsibilities/Requirements: Seven (7) years continuous clean time, demonstrate stability in the local community, accounting skills, service experience with conventions or other large scale fellowship activities, and accessibility to other committee members, especially the Merchandising, Registration, Programming, Fundraising & Entertainment subcommittees.

1. Opens a bank account for the convention committee on which two signatures should be required. Starting in the year 2015, this checking account should be opened as a single primary checking account that will remain the Mississippi Regional Convention Committee checking account. Each year, minutes must

be submitted to the bank to change the positions of Chair and Treasurer on the account.

2. Works with the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson to prepare a budget for the convention, which is used for planning fund raising activities. The budget is based on the subcommittee's recommendations as to the monies they will need to carry out their tasks. The budget can be a rough estimate at the beginning of the planning, and revised as the convention draws near. When all of the financial needs of the subcommittees are listed and totaled, the income should be outlined: one source of income comes from fundraisers, the second from registration and the third from prudent reserve to be established by 50% of total cost of previous years' convention.
3. Writes all checks directly to vendors whenever possible and is responsible for collecting receipts from subcommittees for monies paid out.
4. Responsible for all monies, including revenues from registration and banquet tickets; pays all bills; and advises the chairperson on cash supply, income flow and rate of expenditures.
5. Reviews subcommittee reports for departures from the financial plan not mentioned in the original budget so that an accurate budget can be maintained. This information is included in the Treasurer's Report.
6. Acts as primary signature on all checks. (Chairperson/Vice Chairperson may also sign checks). Additionally, a complete treasure's report within three months of the convention should be submitted to the regional service committee along with fund distribution.
7. Prepares a report on all financial matters for each Convention Committee meeting. Regular audits in June and at turnover by the treasurer and one other MRSC officer.
8. Proposes guidelines for the handling of all monies.

Convention Committee Meetings: All convention committee meetings will be held monthly until three months prior to the convention, at which time they will take place every other week. In order to handle all last minute details, the convention committee will meet each week one month prior to the convention, as agreed upon by the committee.

The meetings will be held at a time and place agreed upon at the previous meeting. Meetings will be conducted by and presided over by the Convention Committee Chairperson following the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order. The purpose of the meetings is to gather and share information regarding the planning and carrying out of the MRCNA and is open to all NA members.

Ad Hoc committee suggests a recommendation for the Convention Committee to meet at least four times corresponding with state NA related functions: Surrender by the Seashore, Recovery on the River, Lake Tiak O Khata, Delta Area Convention, and North East Area Convention. We feel meeting at these times could give unity/support for the upcoming convention and show unity/support for all of our member's functions. (2015)

Voting privileges are extended to officers and subcommittee chairs of the convention chairs of the convention committee. If a tie should occur, it can be resolved by the executive committee. Any member who holds an office, chairs a subcommittee is considered a member. All subcommittees should hold meetings prior to the convention committee meetings. The subcommittee chairpersons submit reports, recommendations and other details about their areas of responsibility.

Subcommittees: Subcommittees are elected by the executive committee of the convention. Subcommittee chairpersons should have general qualifications as outlined in the qualifications section. Specific service or vocational experience should be carefully considered prior to election. It must be clearly understood that the subcommittees have specific services to perform.

Subcommittees are vital to the convention, and individuals must expect to be replaced if they are unable to serve for any reason. Naturally, relapse necessitates replacement; this is because we are as concerned for the member as we are for the service responsibility. Each subcommittee has only one chairperson who then recruits committee members. Subcommittee chairpersons should provide the secretary with a list of committee members for reference.

Each subcommittee chairperson ought to be aware of what responsibility each member has assumed, and make sure that every task assigned is carried out.

Subcommittees maintain accurate record of the activities of the committee as well as all correspondence. Financial reports, including needs, expenditures and receipts must be included with each subcommittee report. The subcommittees of the convention committee work together. Subcommittee meeting minutes shall be submitted to the vice chair as well as the secretary of the convention committee.

Hospitality Subcommittee: This subcommittee chairperson to conduct business meetings, make sure the duties of the committee are carried out and make progress reports to the convention committee.

The first objective is to project attendance figures to help determine the amount of food and refreshments, which will be needed. The projected figure need not be accurate, although using criteria from previous conventions should help the committee to project a reasonable figure from which to work.

This committee must open and operate a hospitality area where the fellowship can gather and relax and drink coffee as well as obtain information pertinent to the hosting community.

The Hospitality committee should keep in mind that the majority of problems arise from lack of communication. Good communication between the Hospitality Committee, the Executive Committee and all other subcommittees is extremely important. Almost everything that will be done by other committees will hinge on how well the Hospitality Committee performs and communicates.

Fundraising/Entertainment Subcommittee: The chair person should have group or area experience serving as activities liaison. This subcommittee should consist of a chairperson to conduct business meetings, make sure the duties of the committee are carried out and make progress reports to the convention committee. A minimum of one fundraising event experience should be held in each Area of the state to gain Area support.

According to our Seventh Tradition, “we out to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.” This is the most important guideline for fundraising activities. We never affiliate ourselves with anyone and we never under any circumstances accept any monetary contributions from any outside source. In Narcotics

Anonymous, whenever we do need to “raise funds,” we fund raise from our own fellowship.

Care should be taken in not placing an unreasonable financial drain on local resources for funds in support of the convention, while at the same time welcoming activities which motivate attendance by increasing awareness of how conventions, like meetings, help us as members in our personal recovery.

Communication about fundraising events is extremely important. Fundraising events for conventions should be held first to generate interest and support for the convention, and second to raise money. All fund-raising events held in support of the conventions should include an explanation as to why money is needed. Finally, all of our events, be they to raise money or simply to provide entertainment for our Fellowship, should always be in good taste, consistent with our spiritual principles, and set a tone which emphasizes caring and sharing the NA way.

Ad hoc committee suggests that the fundraiser chair or delegate attend all ASC meetings at least once to support our First Tradition which states, “That our common welfare should come first, personal recovery depends on NA unity.” We feel that by attending all ASC meetings, we can further show unity/support for the convention by holding “fun” raisers and/or fundraisers as deemed allowable by each ASC. We have taken into consideration that the fundraiser chair possibly will need to submit with their initial budget, monies allowable for travel to the individual areas for presentation. (2015)

This subcommittee shall responsibly plan and carry out all fundraising activities and will need to interface with other subcommittees to successfully complete its projects. An event calendar should be created and distributed to all Areas within one month of the subcommittee being formed.

This subcommittee also has responsibility for entertainment activities, selecting the band or disc jockeys for fundraising and convention dances. They also arrange for all other forms of entertainment, which are provided in conjunction with the convention.

The Fundraising/Entertainment Subcommittee should also prepare a budget for fundraisers and a separate budget for entertainment activities at the convention.

Registration Subcommittee: Enthusiasm and a desire to continuously reach out are a couple of qualities needed for this position and committee. This subcommittee should consist of a chairperson to conduct business meetings, make sure the duties of the committee are carried out and make progress reports to the convention committee.

Usually the first people convention attendees meet are those members manning the registration tables. How well they are greeted in many ways sets the tone for how well the convention comes off. Smooth, prompt, orderly and hospitable service is key ingredients to successful registrations. Therefore, organizing and planning by this committee is important. Written records must be typed and kept to pass on to the next convention registrar.

The number of members needed for this committee will depend on the anticipated attendance and length of registration hours. It is not advisable to have the same members working five to eight hours without a break or a few members handling registration for a large rush of people. Therefore, the creation of shifts and work teams is important. A suggested shift for a team to work is three hours on and three hours off.

Policies will be proposed by the Registration Subcommittee Chairperson, and established by the Executive Committee and the Treasurer on the procedure of handling registrations and money. One person should be assigned the responsibility of picking up registrations from the committee's post office box at least once a month, before the convention committee meetings. This person should bring all money received to each convention committee meeting and to the Treasurer at the Convention Committee Meetings.

As each registration is received, by mail or by direct sale, a record should be made indicating information about the registrant and all money received (typed copy if possible). If registrations are given out as a part of promotional activities, the committees must keep careful records of what is provided and to whom.

The Registration Subcommittee conducts its activities within the scope of the budget authorized by the full convention committee. When funds are needed for expenses, they are obtained from the convention committee treasurer. All monies must go through and from the treasurer.

Confirmation emails or letters should be sent to registrants as they are received.

The Registration booth should be open throughout the convention, and should only close during main speaker events. The Registration Subcommittee is responsible for preparing a complete registration packet. The packets may include

- Convention program
- Name tag or badge
- Tickets (Banquet, brunch, etc.)
- Sightseeing information
- List of local restaurants with approximate price ranges (especially those open 24 hours)
- Marathon meeting list
- Souvenir items

Merchandising Subcommittee: The subcommittee consists of a chairperson to conduct business meetings, ensures duties of the committee are carried out and reports progress to the convention committee.

The Merchandising effort of any convention should be based strictly on the need to generate funds to ensure the success of the event. The focus of any convention is the celebration of recovery. Our efforts to generate funds from our members should be based solely on what is necessary to ensure that the convention is successful. Every convention committee want to be able to provide commemorative items for the convention attendees. The Merchandising Subcommittee should be fairly business minded and have an understanding of the twelve traditions; especially regarding the sale of NA related items. **The practice of allowing commercial vendors not licensed by WSO to sell their products at an NA convention violates our Sixth Tradition.** Approved vendors should submit at least 25% of their net sales to the convention. Any funds generated from an NA convention should be used to further enhance our Fellowship either locally, regionally or worldwide.

Careful consideration should be made in negotiating the purchasing price of items selected for sale. Usually three different bids are submitted for consideration. All items selected by the Merchandising Subcommittee should be purchased outright by the Convention Committee. In cases where funds are not available to purchase the items, then the possibility of a consignment agreement should be investigated. This will ensure that the Merchandising Subcommittee or its equivalent body does all merchandising done at a convention.

The committee is responsible for the sale of all merchandise and for communicating with the Executive Committee for the provision of space at the convention site. Merchandising hours should be coordinated with the Program and Executive Committee and facility management to assure proper scheduling and should not be open during main speaker events. The Merchandising Subcommittee is responsible for the storage of all items, in a secure place, and the delivery of all receipts promptly to the Convention Committee Treasurer along with an accurate list of remaining items in the inventory. Following the convention final statement of remaining inventory is given to the treasurer. This should be provided no more than one week from the closing date of the convention. This information must be included in the treasurer's final convention report. In addition to the statement of remaining inventory a complete set of records showing all subcommittee orders for merchandise, expenditures and sales must be given to the treasurer to assure accountability for all merchandise and expenditures. On occasion there will be committee representatives from other NA conventions or similar activities (i.e. state, regional, world convention committees) at a convention. Many times these committees would like to sell items from a previous or upcoming NA event. This should be allowed as long as it does not conflict with the merchandising effort of the sponsoring convention committee and should be held on the last day of the convention.

The Merchandising Subcommittee is responsible for the acquisition and sale of NA conference approved literature and other items selected for sale at the convention.

Arts and Graphics: This committee consists of a chairperson to conduct business meetings, make sure the duties of the committee are carried out and make progress reports to the convention committee.

The chairperson of the Arts & Graphics Subcommittee must develop a budget including printing, banner and other expenses. Once the budget is developed, it should be presented to the convention committee for approval. If possible this committee should present a variety of designs for each item to the committee in order to provide a choice of selections. This subcommittee is also responsible for the designing and printing the final program.

Program Subcommittee: This committee consists of a chairperson to conduct business meetings, make sure the duties of the committee are carried out and make progress reports to the convention committee.

The chairperson of the Program subcommittee shall develop a budget including costs for travel and hotel stay for the main speakers chosen by the committee and other related expenses (not to exceed 4, Friday night, Saturday midday, Saturday night Sunday morning). Once the budget is developed, it must be presented to the convention committee for approval.

This committee is also responsible for the overall development of the program of events, this includes workshops times, speakers and location as well as any other recreational activities planned for the convention. Once the program is finalized, it should be given to the Arts and Graphics subcommittee for design and printing.

In the event of a no show the Program Subcommittee should have a pool of members available from which to select replacements.

The basic qualification for participation on the program of an NA convention is membership in NA. **To speak in a workshop, members should have a minimum of three years clean time. Main speakers should have a minimum of 10 years NA recovery. We encourage newcomers with a minimum of 90 days clean time to be involved (i.e. chairing workshops, being on other committees).** A speaker at a convention shares his or her personal experience of recovery in Narcotics Anonymous.

Potential speakers and program participants should be selected based on a solid program of recovery and Narcotics Anonymous message. It is important to keep in touch with speakers as the convention draws near and assist them in any way possible

to ensure their attendance. We need to insure that we are staying in touch with speakers to insure that their clean date has not changed and that they will still be in attendance. It is important to have special consideration for speakers travel expenses. Convention committee members should also take into consideration potential speakers from in-state, surrounding states, and members willing to do service work with minimal compensation.

Workshops are held to satisfy the needs of our membership for information or discussion on specific topics and services related to NA. These workshops allow attending members to ask questions, and learn about various aspects of the program of recovery. It is important to schedule similar workshops consecutively rather than at the same time. This allows interested members to attend an entire series rather than having to choose between two or more workshops that they would like to attend.

Taping the speakers and workshops allow members who are unable to attend all functions the opportunity of hearing them at home, or sharing them with others. Care should be taken to inform the speakers and/or workshop participants that they are being recorded. When contracting with someone to record meetings it should be clearly understood that the MRSCNA Committee hold the copyrights to the recordings. The committee should obtain a minimum of three bids from perspective recorders.

Spiritual Team: The subcommittee should consist of a chairperson to conduct business meetings, make sure the duties of the committee are carried out and make progress reports to the convention committee.

The spiritual team is a committee that works closely with the Chair, Vice Chair, and Hotel Staff at the convention. Their duties may include things such as: meeting and greeting attendees, making sure members aren't breaking hotel rules, helping to ensure that members are not smoking in non-smoking areas etc. The duties of this committee could mean many different things, but mostly keeping in mind handling situations as spiritually as possible.

Meeting Agenda:

1. Opening: Begin with a moment of silence asking for all members to reflect on their involvement, thinking about who they serve and why. Follow with the Serenity Prayer and the Twelve Traditions/Concepts.
2. Roll Call
3. Read and approve the minutes of the last meeting
4. Chairperson's report: review progress to date and relay recent information
5. Treasurer's report: Update on expenses and new balance
6. Subcommittees Report's: Reports including goals and progress of each committee
7. Old Business carried over from the last meeting
8. New Business to be undertaken before the next meeting
9. Open Forum
10. Plan next meeting
11. Closing prayer

Clarity Statement

We are presented with a dilemma; when NA members identify themselves as “addicts and alcoholics” or talk about “living clean and sober,” the clarity of the NA message

is blurred. To speak in this manner suggests that we have two distinct diseases, or that one drug is somehow separate from the others and requires some kind of special recognition. Narcotics Anonymous makes no distinction among drugs. Our identification as addicts is all-inclusive and lets us concentrate on our similarities instead of our differences.

Press Statement

As our Eleventh Tradition says, “Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.” The primary purpose of our public relations effort is to tell the story of Narcotics Anonymous and what our program offers so that we may better reach the still-suffering addict. We do not disclose our last names in the media as identifiable members of Narcotics Anonymous. If members of the press approach you, please direct them to the Convention Information booth located on the _____

Photos, Videos, and Social Media

We recognize that it is a common practice for members to take photos and videos at NA events and post them on social networks. We do not believe this to be in conflict with our Traditions so long as they are for the enjoyment of members and are not made available to the general public. Please be considerate of our guiding principles and the anonymity of others as you share your photos and videos from this NA event. For more information, please see the service pamphlet Social Media and Our Guiding Principles.

Let’s Walk Our Talk

The Mississippi Regional Convention is a time of great joy and celebration. We are grateful to the city of _____, which is graciously welcoming recovering addicts this weekend. However, the convention’s massive attendance presents a challenge: Our behavior affects others and reflects upon NA as a whole. Please monitor your own behavior, and keep an eye on others, too. Our Basic Text, Narcotics Anonymous, suggests that ***“we are each other’s eyes and ears. When we do something wrong, our fellow addicts help us by showing us what we cannot see.”*** After all, we can easily lose track of how our excitement might be affecting others. Perhaps more importantly, the public will form an opinion about Narcotics Anonymous based upon what they see and hear from our members. Every one of us is a member of the PR committee this weekend, everywhere we go. We ask that we all gently remind each other that our individual behavior, good or bad, reflects on NA as

a whole. If you see someone behaving inappropriately, we encourage you to lovingly call that member's attention to it.

Note: These are the current changes in the MRSCNA Convention policy and will be sent to the homegroups for approval. If there are any changes, please email Autum P. at apierce@theoxfordcenter.org. Topics to be considered that were presented as not final was discussion for fundraising chair and programing chair and the solicitation of speakers. Thank you for allowing me to serve and for all the members who helped from each area.