

BIG DEEP SOUTH CONVENTION COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

The Big Deep South Convention Committee (“Committee”) is a standing committee of the Greater New Orleans Service Board (GNOSB). It is responsible for putting on the annual Big Deep South Convention (BDSC). These guidelines have been developed to assist the Committee and Sub-Committee Chairpersons to understand their responsibilities as they pertain to the BDSC.

The Committee shall consist only of members of Alcoholics Anonymous with five (5) or more years continuous sobriety to serve a designated term of one (1) year and shall consist of a Convention Chairperson (“Chair”), Vice-Chairperson (“Vice-Chair”), and Treasurer. The Chair will be appointed by the GNOSB Chair, who will then appoint the Vice-Chair and Treasurer with recommendations by the GNOSB Trustees. Note, the Vice-Chair of the Convention does not automatically become the Chair for the following year’s Convention. Also, GNOSB Trustees cannot sit on Convention Committee or Sub-Committee Chair positions.

The Chair will then select the following Sub-Committee Chairpersons (“Sub-Chair”) who shall consist of members of Alcoholic Anonymous with at least one (1) year continuous sobriety except money-handling (\$) positions which should have at least three (3) years continuous sobriety:

- Secretary
- Registration (\$)
- Scholarship Attendance
- Speaker Coordinator
- Workshops
- Marathon Meetings
- Website
- Outreach
- Merchandise (\$)
- Raffle / Auction (\$)
- Games (\$)
- 50 / 50 (\$)
- Voice
- Hospitality
- Entertainment
- Decorations
- Welcoming
- Special Needs
- Security
- Housekeeping

The Convention Chair may also invite AA affiliates to participate in the Convention event such as Al-Anon Liaison, COB / Literature Rep, T&C, CPC / PI, Archives, Grapevine, Audio-Video, etc.

ALL COMMITTEE CHAIRS

- As trusted servants of the membership represented, all those who participate in the Convention will adhere to the principles of AA (as outlined in the 12 Steps, 12 Traditions & 12 Concepts), as well as dress and behave appropriately for the position entrusted.
- In the spirit of rotation, each Sub-Chair shall serve a term of one (1) year and assist in recruiting, training, and sharing experience, strength, & hope to following year's Sub-Chair.
- Regularly advises Chair directly with status reports as well as any issues (either resolved or un-resolved) and attends monthly Committee Meetings prepared to present progress updates to all members.
- Arrange and coordinate necessary number of volunteers to serve as Sub-Committee Members to staff event and accomplish tasks of that Sub-Committee.
- Has input on Convention themes (chosen from Conference Approved AA Literature), Speakers, Artwork, Merchandise, Entertainment, etc. which are selected by a simple majority vote.
- As good stewards of the funds provided by the membership, keeps expenses to a minimum and adheres to their Sub-Committee budget submitted by the Chair and approved by the GNOSB Trustees.
- Based on A.A. experience shared with G.S.O., Committees have found it best not to solicit for outside donations of any kind. This is in keeping with our A.A. principle of self-support and therefore any gifts, prizes, supplies, etc. must be donated by a member of AA or purchased by Committee with collected donations or budgeted funds.
- Submits estimate / quote for any expense in excess of \$200 to Chairperson for approval prior to commitment.
 - Note: The Convention Committee may or may not review and reimburse a Committee Member who, without prior authorization, incurs unauthorized expenses in the performance of their position.
- Prior to event, submits all receipts within that month for Chairperson approval and reimbursement processing and after the event, within a week.
- Obtain all supplies, donations, prizes, etc. at least one (1) month before convention to avoid last minute panic spending and rushed reimbursement by Treasurer.
- Turns in all remaining funds, merchandise, donations, supplies and documentation for Sub-Committee to Chair at close of Convention event.
- Provide a final report at "wrap-up" meeting outlining any problems / suggestions for Sub-Committee that should be addressed before the next convention.
- "Money-handling" (\$) Sub-Chairs will receive an initial "bank" from Treasurer to be used at event, requiring Sub-Chair's and Treasurer's signature on receipt. Once "bank" is reimbursed to Treasurer, receipt is collected and recorded as "cleared".
- "Money-handling" (\$) Sub-Chairs will turn in all income obtained from their activity to Treasurer frequently during the event, which is counted in the presence of the Sub-Chair, receives receipt with Sub-Chair's and Treasurer's signatures, and is recorded accordingly.
- Experience has shown that for all gaming activities (Raffle, Auction, Bingo, 50/50, Doorprize, etc.) winner should be present with winning ticket, verified by Sub-Chair and that at no time should Sub-Chair or their volunteers be allowed to participate in gaming activity that they are representing.
- Registers and attends the entire Convention to be available to make decisions as needed, as well as present for set-up and clean-up at event location on designated days and times.

CHAIRPERSON

- Works in partnership with Vice-Chair to guide and oversee Sub-Committees throughout the planning and presentation of the Convention.
- In any case of a tie-vote, casts the deciding vote.
- Attends GNOSB meetings prepared to present progress updates.
- Submits detailed budget to GNOSB Trustees for approval.
- Oversees and reviews for approval any income and expenses from receipts submitted.
- Coordinates with GNOSB Trustees and C/O Manager all items concerning contracts and/or financial requirements.
- All final approvals and contract signatures (including Venue/Hotel) must be the Convention Chair.
- Coordinates with Venue/Hotel Management regarding facility costs, contracts, requirements and set-up. May choose a liaison with specific experience to assist in this.
- Schedules and conducts a monthly Committee Meeting to accomplish Convention goals.
- Attends the entire Convention event and is available to make decisions as needed.
- Provides a “wrap-up” report to GNOSB outlining any problems/suggestions that should be addressed before next convention and includes Treasurer’s detailed financial report.
- In partnership with Vice-Chair, makes initial exploration toward securing Venue/Hotel and Speakers for next year’s Convention.
- Advises GNOSB Chair of any revisions necessary to these Guidelines and, once approved, instructs Secretary to make changes and file current hardcopy in C/O BDSC file.
- Organizes all remaining supplies and documentation from individual Sub-Chairs and turns in to C/O Manager for next year’s Committee and C/O BDSC file.
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VICE-CHAIRPERSON

- Works in partnership with Chair to guide and oversee Sub-Committees throughout the planning and presentation of the Convention.
- In the absence of the Chairperson, attends GNOSB meetings prepared to present progress updates or conducts a monthly Committee Meeting to accomplish Convention goals.
- Attends the entire Convention event and is available to make decisions as needed.
- In the event that the Chair must resign, the Vice-Chair should be prepared to assume the duties of the Chair.
- Acts as back-up Sub-Chair on any Sub-Committee where existing Sub-Chair resigns too close to event to fill position.
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TREASURER

- Should have sufficient financial or business background to properly account for all financial transactions associated with BDSC.
- Assists Chairperson in all financial matters including preparing annual budget.
- Records all income and expenses to General Ledger Account against budget by each Sub-Committee.
- Receives only approved expense estimates, quotes, and receipts from Committee Chair, records by Sub-Committee against budget and reimburses with BDSC check in accordance with existing GNOSB bill paying schedule.
- Receives registration income report from Registration Chair and records according to individual affiliation (AA, Al-Anon, Al-Ateen, etc)
- Supplies all “money-handling” (\$) Sub-Chairs with an initial “bank” to be used at event no more than 1 hour prior to event start time, requiring Sub-Chair’s and Treasurer’s signature on receipt. Once “bank” is reimbursed, receipt is collected and recorded accordingly by Sub-Committee as “cleared”.
- Receives all income from “money-handling” Chairs frequently during the event, counted in the presence of the Sub-Chair, provides receipt with Sub-Chair and Treasurer signatures, and records accordingly by Sub-Committee.
- Prepares bank deposits and either a) brings deposit to bank, receives deposit receipt, and records OR b) turns over all monies collected at event to Committee Chair to be secured in locked safe until deposit with receipt can be performed.
- Regularly advises Committee Chair of income and expenses against budget by each Sub-Committee as well as bank account balance.
- Reconciles monthly bank statement, merchant charge card statement, and online PayPal statement to General Ledger and advises Chair of any discrepancies.
- Provide P&L, Balance Sheet, and Budget vs. Actual Reports at monthly Committee Meeting which Chair will also present to GNOSB monthly meeting.
- Provides to Chairperson the final detailed treasury report to be presented with “wrap-up” at GNOSB meeting.
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SECRETARY

- Attends all Committee Meetings to record meeting minutes; if unable to attend arranges for back-up to perform task.
- Maintains contact list including names, phone number and email of Committee Members.
- Keeps hardcopy of recorded minutes of all Committee meetings in C/O BDSC file and furnishes them to the Committee members within a week of the meeting.
- Assure BDSC Committee Meeting notice appears in monthly bulletin and that all Committee Members are reminded by phone/email/text at least 2 days prior.
- Responsible for making authorized revisions, printing, and C/O BDSC file maintenance of all Committee documents, including these guidelines.
- Assists any Sub-Chair with word-processing type tasks.
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REGISTRATION (\$)

- Obtains estimate/quotes for registration supplies (name badges, blank inserts, plastic badge holders, lanyards, gift bags, etc) and submits to Chair for approval.
- Obtains estimate/quotes for registration gift (magnet, bookmark, notepad, pen, etc) and submits to Chair for approval.
- Once approved, orders and receives all supplies/gifts.
- Prior to event, receives hardcopy pre-registration forms and email online forms, records accurate information on spreadsheet of income (AA, Al-Anon, Al-Ateen, Scholarship, pre-registration, regular registration, donations, T-Shirt w/size, Mug, etc), and provides this report to Chair, Treasurer, and monthly Committee Meeting.
- Provides list of pre-paid merchandise items (including attendee name, quantity, sizes, etc.) to Merchandise Sub-Chair on regular basis so items can be reserved separately for pick-up at event.
- Assembles name badges (clearly typed), holders, lanyards, gift bags, etc. and makes available at event pre-registration table along with program.
- Provides The Voice with regular attendee count at event for podium announcement.
- Though not required to man the event registration tables at all times, should be available at regular intervals at the table to handle Sub-Chair responsibilities and any problems that arise.
- Trains event volunteers and assures adherence to the following tried and proven processes that are in place:
 - Receive registration form and payment from every attendee
 - Mark method of payment on form (CK# ____ , CC, or CASH)
 - If paying by check or credit card, MUST verify all information on form MUST be completed including address and phone # that matches their ID
 - Staple check or credit card slip to form
 - Writes name on badge with sharpie and gives to attendee with program
 - Minimum of one dedicated volunteer handles cash transactions, one handles check transactions and one handles credit card transactions
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SCHOLARSHIP ATTENDANCE

- Works in conjunction with Registration Chair, T&C, and CPC/PI.
- Announces at meetings the need for individual or group donations to assist with members who have financial hardship to cover Convention attendance only.
- Coordinates Scholarship attendance by:
 - Contacting facilities (ie: treatment centers, sober living houses, etc) prior to event by phone call and mailing invitation explaining this program allows them a Reduced Rate for convention attendance only of \$10 per person.
 - Produces flyer for fellowship circulation explaining this program allows limited number of Scholarship Attendees & participants must sign-up to provide service work to a Committee prior to the actual Convention Event.
 - Coordinates with each Sub-Chair five (5) "Scholarship Slots" to be used for members who have financial hardship and have participated in Convention Service Work throughout the year.
 - Assures the volunteers that are assigned to Sub-Chair are, in fact, performing Convention Service Work as agreed.
 - Other attendance requests are at the discretion of the Convention Chair, Vice-Chair, or Scholarship Chair (provided donation collections permit) and may be turned away if no prior arrangements were made.
- Provides completed standard Registration Form hardcopy for each attendee marked with the words "Scholarship" or "Reduced Rate \$ __" and any donation funds received to Registration Chair no later than two weeks prior to the event for recording and badge preparation.
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SPEAKER COORDINATOR

- Coordinates speaker participation by contacting selected speakers, books their appearance, communicates the conditions of their appearance (convention type, purpose, theme, set-up, terms for expenses, etc.), obtains speaker's approval for audio recording and video transmission of them, and turns in their receipts for reimbursement.
 - Note: Reasonable expenses include speaker's standard sleeping room accommodation and on-site food/beverage (charged to the Master Account which is settled directly by Convention Committee), coach airfare or current mileage rate if driving (reimbursed by receipts prior to event or upon "wrap up" after).
 - In an effort to encourage speakers to effectively participate in the Convention event, only on-site expenses will be reimbursed, therefore any activity elsewhere at the speaker/host's option is not covered by the Committee.
- Selects volunteers to "host" each speaker who will assure the speaker has transportation to and from the event venue, adequate accommodations, acts as chair for that speaker's meeting and introduce the speaker.
- Decides on an appropriate speaker gift and presents to each speaker after talk at podium.
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WORKSHOPS

- To include Morning Meditations, Panel Q&A, Audio-Visual Presentations, etc. (preferably associated with Convention theme).
- Decides from variety of topics (preferably associated with Convention theme) and local presenters and submits final selection to Chair for approval.
- Coordinates number of workshops, time schedule, and location with Chair so as not to conflict with other activities.
- Communicates to presenters the time, location, and room set-up for their workshops.
- Assures any additional requirements (ie: Audio-Visual equipment, white board, hardcopy handouts, etc) are communicated to appropriate Sub-Chair at least one month prior to event.
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MARATHON MEETINGS

- To include only open or closed regular discussion topic meetings (preferably associated with Convention theme) and not any speaker or panel type which conflicts with main speakers or workshops.
- Coordinates quantity of meetings, time schedule, and location with Chair so as not to conflict with other activities (possibly every hour except when speaker in progress ???)
- Selects meeting topics (preferably associated with Convention theme) and schedules volunteers (min. 1 year sobriety) to moderate various meeting times.
- Assures room is equipped with "AA Preamble", "How It Works", Big Book, and 12&12 for each meeting.
- Posts meeting schedule with times, topics, and moderator on meeting room door as well at Registration desk and hallway.
- Acts as back-up meeting chair if scheduled volunteer does not show.
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WEBSITE

- Utilizes approved Convention theme, artwork, text, etc. to design electronic information and “store-front” for purchasing (registration, donations, T-Shirt, Mugs, etc.) on internet (webpage, newsletters, social sites, etc.) referring to website guidelines as well as GSO Publications (ie: AA Guidelines – Internet, etc.)
- Maintains a current electronic presence by updating information as planning progresses on a regular basis.
- Establishes specific Convention email accounts and passwords for various Sub-Chairs with links on electronic media as Convention Contact Information for public use.
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OUTREACH

- To include any print hardcopy information such as Registration form, flyers, notices, event program, merchandise marketing, etc.
- Utilizes approved Convention theme, artwork, text, etc. to design, print, and distribute hardcopy information at least three months in advance to advise various AA Groups, Meetings, Central Offices, T&C, CPC/PI, Grapevine, Box 459, etc. of the Convention.
- Provides C/O Manager and Website Chair with flyer to post online.
- Attends and schedules volunteers to attend various Groups, Meetings, Central Offices, etc. to distribute hardcopy information and make verbal announcements.
- Coordinates and provides volunteers for mass mailing distribution (hardcopy or emailed) of information with C/O Manager.
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MERCHANDISE (\$)

- Utilizes approved Convention theme, artwork, text, etc. to design merchandise items (T-Shirts, Mugs, Caps, etc) to be sold and submits to Chair for approval.
- Obtains estimate/quotes for approved merchandise and submits to Chair for approval.
- Once approved, orders items as soon as possible to receive well in advance of event to facilitate advance sales.
- Upon item receipt, confirms all correct/as expected or resolves any issues.
- Attends and schedules volunteers to attend various Groups, Meetings, Central Offices, etc. with merchandise items for advance sales.
- Assures any pre-paid items on list provided by Registration Chair are reserved separately for pick-up at event.
- Coordinates and provides volunteers to assists pre-paid purchasers receive correct items and markets merchandise items to other attendees at event.
- After event, contacts any attendee that did not receive any pre-paid merchandise and arrange for them to pick up from C/O Manager or to be mailed if out of town.
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RAFFLE / AUCTION (\$)

- Decide on type of activity (ie: Open Auction, Silent Auction, General Raffle, Box/Bucket Raffle, etc.), game rules, ticket price, method of awarding prize (live drawing, witnessed drawing and posting winners, etc.) and submit ideas to Chair for approval.
- Solicit individual or group donations of prizes or funds to purchase items.
- Obtain all supplies and prizes at least one month before convention.
- Publicize Raffle/Auction event, including prizes, time and location, both prior and during event.
- Arrange attractive display of prizes with appropriate signage as to game rules, ticket price, etc.
- Coordinates and provides volunteers to market to attendees.
- Sub-Chair shall conduct drawings and award prizes.
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GAMES (\$)

- Decide on number of games, type (ie: Bingo / regular, blackout, tickets, , AA Trivia, Scavenger Hunt, etc.), rules, price, etc. and submit ideas to Chair for approval.
- Solicit individual or group donations of prizes or funds to purchase items (AA Literature, handmade crafts, giftcards, electronics, or nice garage sale items are good ideas).
- Obtain all supplies and prizes at least one month before convention.
- Publicize game activities, including prizes, time and location, both prior & during event.
- Arrange attractive display of prizes with appropriate signage as to game rules, ticket price, etc.
- Sub-Chair shall conduct games and award prizes with assistance from volunteers.
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50 / 50 (\$)

- Decide on ticket price, or other suggestions and submit ideas to Chair for approval.
- Obtain all supplies at least one month before convention.
- Publicize 50/50 event, including ticket price, both prior and during event.
- Coordinates and provides volunteers to market tickets to attendees in all event areas.
- Provides The Voice with regular prize amount at event for podium announcement.
- Selects non-biased person (usually an attendee's child) in advance to draw winning ticket at podium.
- Sub-Chair announces winning ticket number and presents cash prize.

THE VOICE

- Must be a member of AA and alternates from Male to Female each year.
- Opens meeting with The Serenity Prayer, welcomes attendees, makes opening announcements (including Anonymity Statement) at beginning of each meeting, introduces the meeting Chairperson, makes closing announcements (including upcoming activity reminders) and closes the meeting with The Lord's Prayer.
- Ensures that the meeting format, readings (AA Preamble, How It Works, etc), water pitcher, glasses, etc. are available at the podium for every meeting.
- Keeps "Welcome Candle" lit daily during the event and assures it is properly extinguished at end.
- Selects AA member to conduct count-up and have AA member with most years sobriety light "Welcome Candle" at podium.
- Selects AA member to conduct count-down and have AA member with least years sobriety blow out "Welcome Candle" at podium and present them with signed Big Book.
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HOSPITALITY

- Solicit individual/group donations of coffee, cream, sugar/sweetener, cups, stirrers, etc. or funds to purchase items
- Obtain all supplies at least one month before convention.
- If Venue/Hotel is brewing the coffee, attain specific “do’s and don’ts” from management and Chair.
- Coordinates and provides volunteers to assist in maintaining cleanliness of hospitality room and assure coffee/supplies are available throughout the event for the attendees.
- If Venue/Hotel allows Committee to bring in outside food/beverage, decides on items, obtains estimates/quotes, submits for Chair approval, coordinates outside vendors or recruits volunteers to prepare, set-up, serve, and clean-up. This includes ice cream/snowball social.
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ENTERTAINMENT

- Decides on entertainment options (speaker meet & greet, dance, brass band, play, talent showcase, karaoke, board games, movies, etc.) for the attendees to be scheduled around meetings (before/after) so as not to conflict and submit ideas to Chair for approval.
- Obtains estimate/quotes for supplies, equipment, vendors, etc. and submits to Chair for approval.
- Once approved, orders and receives all supplies/equipment, coordinates vendor participation.
- Publicize entertainment options, including time and location, both prior & during event.
- Arranges volunteers appropriate to each activity to assist in execution.
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DECORATIONS

- Utilizes approved Convention theme, artwork, text, etc. decides on types of appropriate decorations, ornamentation, or embellishments to enhance the visual appeal of the Venue/Hotel and convey the theme without distracting from the primary purpose of the Convention and submit ideas to Chair for approval.
- Obtains estimate/quotes for supplies, equipment, vendors, etc. to design, produce, and install and submits to Chair for approval.
- Once approved, orders and receives all supplies/equipment, coordinates vendor participation, volunteer assistance and facilitates overall final look.
- In regard to Venue/Hotel installation, attain and adhere to specific “do’s and don’ts” from management and Chair.
- Resist the urge to compete with prior year’s conventions, going “bigger” is not always “better”.
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WELCOMING

- Utilizes approved Convention theme, artwork, text, etc. decides on types of appropriate “welcoming gift” (stickers, bracelets, beads, pins, etc.) to be purchased or hand-crafted that do not conflict with Registration gift, obtains estimate/quotes and submits to Chair for approval.
- Once approved, orders and receives all items and produces/prepares gifts for event.
- Purchases large decorative candle on stand at podium to be lit at count-up and blown out at count-down.
- Selects outgoing / friendly volunteers scheduled throughout time of event & orientates them to assist {excellent opportunity for newcomers / sponsee to participate}.
- At event will stand, mingle, greet, and welcome attendees in hallway before Registration table.
- Assists Registration Chair with directing attendees upon entrance to the correct area for Registration / Pre-Registration.
- Acts as “Ambassador” reaching out to make members (especially newcomers) feel comfortable & connect by introducing them to other members.
- Knowledgeable about activities and acts as informational guide to attendees.

SPECIAL NEEDS

- In consideration for our diverse membership, coordinates accommodations for attendees requiring special needs to include, but not limited to, ASL (American Sign Language) interpreters, reserved accessible seating for physically handicapped, language translators, specific equipment (crutches/wheelchair), etc.
- If obtaining personnel or equipment through professional agency is necessary, confirms type of need with attendees and obtains estimate/quotes for items or services and submits to Chair for approval.
- Once approved, orders services well ahead of time and receives all supplies/equipment and coordinates volunteer participation.
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SECURITY

- As event Venue/Hotel is usually quite large, attendance often tops 600+, and Chair/Vice-Chair cannot be in all places at all times, it may become necessary to utilize trusted members to provide assistance regarding the wellbeing of all attendees and facility.
- Ensures noise level in hallways outside meeting rooms does not conflict with meeting inside, including posting assistant at Main Entrances to all meeting room doors to facilitate opening/closing without disturbing speakers or attendees.
- Makes sure each attendee wears Registration badge in all event areas and if not, escorts them to Registration Chair.
- Observes and reports to Chair any issues, including inappropriate dress or behavior, vandalism, theft, parking violations, etc.
- Uses extreme caution and common sense in all situations and if necessary calls upon professional Venue/Hotel Security to handle.
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HOUSE-KEEPING

- Works in cooperation with Hospitality & Scholarship Chairs to coordinate and provide volunteers to maintain cleanliness of entire event area (ie: pick up coffee cups, handouts / programs left in meeting rooms, empty ashtrays in smoking area, etc.).
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AA ASSOCIATES

- May be invited by Committee Chair to participate in cooperation, but not affiliation, with the Convention Committee for the planning and execution of the event (such as Al-Anon Liaison, COB/Literature Rep, T&C, CPC/PI, Archives, Grapevine, Audio-Video, etc.)
- Associates are expected to abide by the BDSC Guidelines same as other Sub-Chairs.
- - AL-ANON LIASION: Coordinates with the Committee to plan the Al-Anon program (usually one speaker & one workshop) to take place during the event, but not in conflict with any other AA activity.
 - COB/LITERATURE REP: Central Office closes on the Friday of the Convention weekend and prepares only conference-approved literature to be set-up and sold at the Convention as well as solicits for COB (Central Office Backer) donations.
 - ARCHIVES: Coordinates with the Committee to plan the display of Archive items and answer attendee questions regarding items, history, etc.
 - GRAPEVINE: Coordinates with the Committee to plan the display of Grapevine magazines, including providing blank subscription forms, and may include distributing free tickets for Grapevine subscription door prize.
 - T&C:
In progress ...
 - CPC/PI:
In progress ...
 - AUDIO-VIDEO: Coordinates with the Committee to provide necessary equipment and knowledge to properly project speaker's voice to all attendees via PA or Video system while simultaneously capturing voice only recording onto CD for sale to AA Members during & after Convention event.

Submitted by the BDSC Committee, on this _____ date _____ month _____ year

Approved by the GNOSB Trustees, on this _____ date _____ month _____ year
