

**CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS of HEARTLAND INTERGROUP, INC.**  
**Approved unanimously on July 12, 2021**

**ARTICLE I: ORGANIZATION MISSION, SERVICE AREA, AND MEMBERS**

**Section 1 (ORGANIZATION NAME AND PURPOSE OF THE BYLAWS)**

This organization shall be known as HEARTLAND INTERGROUP, INC., hereafter referred to as Intergroup. This *Constitution and By-Laws* set forth herein apply only to Intergroup members identified in section 4. The bylaws set forth the reason for the organization's existence and provide the organizational structure to enable Intergroup to carry out its mission. The Bylaws are explicit in design, but undoubtedly cannot anticipate every conceivable occurrence where a reference to a prescribed bylaw dictates how the organization is to operate; thus, members of Intergroup shall be guided by the *36 principles* (12 steps, 12 traditions, and 12 concepts) of Alcoholics Anonymous and the *A.A. Guidelines on Central or Intergroup Offices* in addition to these bylaws, and use them to interpret and amend these bylaws as necessary in order to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

**Section 2 (SERVICE AREA AND LOCATION)**

The tri-county area of Polk, Hardee and Highlands counties is the area serviced by Intergroup. The Intergroup office shall serve the above counties, maintain an office in one of the counties but may change the location of the office within the tri-county area, as determined by the Intergroup Representatives.

**Section 3 (MISSION STATEMENT)**

The *mission* of Intergroup is to assist Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) Groups and individuals in the tri-county area of Polk, Highlands and Hardee County, through centralization efforts that advance the shared primary purpose of staying sober and helping other alcoholics achieve sobriety. Centralization efforts include, but are not limited to, the formation, procedures, and empowerment of an intergroup office, a Representative Body, Board of Officers, and the employment of an Office Manager and Volunteers necessary for Intergroup to operate.

**Section 4 (MEMBERSHIP)**

Membership of Intergroup shall consist of all AA Groups in the tri-county area, the Representative Body (who represents the AA Groups), the Intergroup Board of Officers, and Intergroup's employee(s)/volunteers.

**ARTICLE II: BOARD OF OFFICERS**

**Section 1 (BOARD OF OFFICERS AND ELECTIONS)**

- A. Candidates must have at least two (2) years of continuous sobriety when placed in nomination.
- B. The intergroup Board of Officers are elected positions voted on by the Representative Body, existing Board of Officers not on the ballot, and the Office Manager (See Article II, Section 6: Voting Rights). The board officer positions include:
  - Chairperson
  - Vice-Chairperson
  - Secretary
  - Treasurer

**Section 2 (ELECTIONS)**

Board of Officers shall be elected at the regular November Intergroup meeting and installed at the January meeting. Officers hold office for a period of two (2) years, the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson to be voted upon in even number years, the Secretary and Treasurer to be voted upon in odd number years.

**Section 3 (NOMINATIONS)**

- A. At least 30 days prior to the October Intergroup meeting, the AA community must be informed of the positions up for election.
- B. At the October Intergroup meeting, any member of AA may stand for one but not both positions up for election, either by:

- i. Being present at the October Intergroup meeting and announcing their intention to run, or,
- ii. Presenting their intention to run in writing to the Intergroup Office Manager or any of the current officers at the September meeting.

#### **Section 4 (ELIGIBILITY)**

- A. No member may hold the same position as an officer of Intergroup for more than two (2) consecutive full terms.
- B. No member may be an officer of Intergroup for more than three (3) consecutive full terms.
- C. If no one else stands for the position, the above requirements are waived.

#### **Section 5 (FAILURE TO ATTEND MEETINGS)**

Any officer who misses two (2) consecutive Intergroup Representative meetings without notice can be removed from office by vote of the Representatives.

#### **Section 6 (VOTING RIGHTS)**

The intergroup Board of Officers are elected positions voted on by the Representative Body (or their alternates), existing Board of Officers not on the ballot, and the Office Manager. The Representative Body or their Alternates shall be eligible to vote in the election process. This rule provides one (1) vote per group properly represented at the election meeting. Intergroup Representatives may only represent one group and may only cast a ballot for one group. The Board of Officers and the Office Manager each have a vote; however, the Chairperson shall only cast a vote if a contest results in a tie, as the Chairperson shall cast the tie-breaking vote.

#### **Section 7 (VOTING PROCEDURES, REQUIREMENTS, AND TALLYING THE VOTE)**

- A. Before voting occurs, it shall be the duty of the Chairperson to appoint two (2) or more tellers to see that the ballots are properly executed, counted, and tallied.
- B. Election shall be by secret ballot, where a voter's choice in an election is anonymous.
- C. The order will be Secretary before Treasurer, and Vice-Chairperson before Chairperson.
- D. The candidate receiving a majority of the votes for a single office shall be declared elected.
- E. When there are more than two (2) candidates for a single office, and no one receives a majority of the votes cast, the two (2) receiving the most votes on the first ballot shall be listed on the second ballot, which shall be voted on to determine the majority winner.
- F. An election by electronic means is allowable if 1) members of the Representative Body or their Alternates are unable to gather under special circumstances, 2) the adherence to a secret ballot method is maintained, and 3) agreement on the preceding is settled upon in advance.

#### **Section 8 (VACANCIES AND RECALLS)**

Any vacancy of a permanent nature, whether for cause or resignation, shall be filled by a vote for the unexpired term. Any officer may be removed for cause with a vote of  $\frac{3}{4}$  majority of the representatives. At any normally scheduled meeting, a group representative may propose the recall of an officer. The representatives will state their case for recall and discussions may take place. Once discussions have finished, the recall request will be tabled so all representatives can take the information back to their groups. At the meeting in the following month, further discussions may take place and a vote will be taken. Should the vote to recall pass, the officer's term will be filled as described in this section.

#### **Section 9 (APPOINTMENT OF OTHER COMMITTEE HEADS AND WORKERS)**

The Chairperson or Office Manager shall appoint all standing committees with the approval of the Representative Body.

### **ARTICLE III: MEETINGS**

#### **Section 1 (TIME AND PLACE)**

- A. Regular meetings of Intergroup Representatives must occur at least once month. This meeting can take place in person or via electronic video conferencing (i.e., Zoom).
- B. Place and time of meeting will be decided by Representatives.
- C. Meetings will be open to all AA members.

## **Section 2 (SPECIAL CALLED MEETINGS)**

- A. Special Called meetings of Representatives may be called upon by written request to the Office Manager by two (2) officers, or three (3) Representatives or Alternates.
- B. Notice of Special Called Meetings shall be made in writing or by electronic means to all Representatives and Alternates at least five (5) days in advance of any called meeting.
- C. Such notice shall state the nature of the business for which the meeting is being called, and no business may be acted upon at any special meeting except that for which the meeting was called.

## **Section 3 (QUORUMS)**

A quorum for the Intergroup meeting shall consist of at least five (5) Representatives being present.

## **Section 4 (MAJORITIES)**

- A. All policy decisions of Intergroup shall be determined by a majority vote, where eligible voters include the Intergroup Representatives present, Board of Officers, and the Office Manager; however, the Chairperson shall only cast a vote when there is a tie.
  - i. Each group shall have only one vote.
  - ii. Voting by proxy will not be permitted.

## **Section 5 (COMPENSATION OF ELECTED OFFICERS)**

The elected Board Officers of Intergroup shall receive no compensation, except for reimbursement of expenses as authorized by the Representative body.

## **Section 6 (ORDER OF BUSINESS)**

The following order of business should be considered at regular Intergroup meetings:

1. Opening Prayer.
2. Introduction and affiliation of Intergroup.
3. Announcements.
4. Designation of voting Intergroup Representatives.
5. Reading of other Statements.
6. Reading of Minutes of previous meeting.
7. Reading of Treasurer's Report.
8. Vice-Chairperson's/Group Relations Committee Report.
9. Office Manager's Report.
  - a. Intergrouper/Event Email Report.
  - b. Faithful Fiver Report.
  - c. Webmaster/Where and When Report.
  - d. Fundraising Event Report.
  - e. Ad Hoc Committee Report.
  - f. District III Liaison Report.
10. Old Business.
11. New Business.
12. Adjournment with the Responsibility Statement.

## **Section 7 (CONDUCT OF BUSINESS)**

- A. In the interest of good order, all meetings should be conducted in accordance with the latest revision of Robert's Rules of Order where they do not conflict with the 36 principles of AA, including the AA Traditions, and the Intergroup By-Laws.
- B. Any member of AA may attend and participate in the Intergroup meeting.

# **ARTICLE IV: REPRESENTATIVE BODY MEMBERS AND FUNCTIONS**

## **Section 1 (REPRESENTATIVE BODY MEMBERS)**

The Representative Body of Intergroup is comprised of individuals who represent the AA groups in the tri-county area. The Representative Body shall consist of:

- i. One (1) Representative or one (1) Alternate from each AA group in the Intergroup area. No Representative or Alternate shall represent more than one group.

- ii. District III Liaison member to Intergroup.

## **Section 2: (REPRESENTATIVE FUNCTIONS)**

The functions and duties of the representatives shall be:

- A. To oversee the operations of the Intergroup office and responsibility for its sustained function.
- B. To encourage group interest in the Intergroup office and all of its operations.
- C. To review and approve financial reports provided by the Treasurer.
- D. To consider, evaluate and recommend to the Representatives other ways and means of aiding the AA program in accordance with its traditions and principles, and in conformity with The General Service Office (GSO) guidelines for Intergroups and Central Offices.
- E. To have protective custody of all tangible property of the Intergroup that has not been otherwise provided for in this Constitution and By-Laws.
- F. To ensure that an annual audit of the Intergroup finances be reviewed by special committee appointed by the Chairperson and approved by the representatives and the results shall be reported at the next Intergroup meeting.
- G. To be familiar with 36 principles of AA and adhere specifically to the Twelve Traditions.
- H. To be available to the Board of Officers for advice and to perform any other duties the Chairperson may request.

## **ARTICLE V: DUTIES OF THE BOARD OF OFFICERS**

### **Section 1 (CHAIRPERSON)**

The duties and service obligations of the Chairperson include:

- A. Chair Intergroup Meetings
  - i. Prepare, after consultation with officers and the office manager, agenda for the next Representatives meeting.
  - ii. Preserve order at meetings.
  - iii. Encourage each representative to participate promoting the necessity of a well-informed group conscience.
  - iv. Close meetings in a timely manner.
  - v. Oversee annual physical inventory of the Intergroup Office in January.
  - vi. Approve office manager overtime when special circumstances arise.
  - vii. Must be familiar with these By-Laws and 36 principles.
- B. Service Obligations
  - i. Attend and open all Intergroup-sponsored functions.
  - ii. Oversee and coordinate all Intergroup business and activities.
- C. Appoint a special committee to hire a new Intergroup Office Manager, subject to approval of the Representatives.
- D. Chairperson votes on all issues only in the event of a tie vote.

### **Section 2 (VICE-CHAIRPERSON)**

The duties and service obligations of the Vice-Chairperson include:

- A. Chair Intergroup meetings in Chairperson's absence.
- B. Act as Chairperson of a Group Relations Committee. This committee might operate in the following manner:
  - i. Visit AA Groups on a regular basis, explaining the functions of the Intergroup office.
- C. Attend all Intergroup-sponsored events.
- D. Perform any other duties that the Chairperson may request.
- E. Must be familiar with the By-Laws and 36 principles.

### **Section 3 (SECRETARY)**

The duties and service obligations of the Secretary include:

- A. Record minutes of Intergroup meeting.
- B. Attend all Intergroup-sponsored functions.
- C. Make certain that all necessary materials are made available at Intergroup meetings, such as sign-in sheets, etc.
- D. Perform other duties that the Chairperson may request.
- E. Must be familiar with the By-Laws and 36 principles.

#### **Section 4 (TREASURER)**

The duties and service obligations of the Treasurer include:

- A. Require skills of current bookkeeping system.
- B. Prepare a monthly financial statement and present this report at Representatives meetings.
- C. Attend all Intergroup-sponsored functions.
- D. Perform any other duties the Chairperson may request.
- E. Must be familiar with the By-Laws and 36 principles.

#### **ARTICLE VI: OFFICE MANAGER, EMPLOYEES/VOLUNTEERS**

The Intergroup may employ service workers and volunteers, including an Office Manager and administrative front desk volunteers.

#### **Section 1 (OFFICE MANAGER)**

- A. Office Manager candidates shall be members of AA and shall have at least two (2) years of continuous sobriety.
- B. The Office Manager shall be a voting member of the Heartland Intergroup with the exception of salary related or performance related issues.
- C. The Office Manager shall receive financial compensation. Such compensation shall be commensurate with similar managerial positions in the non-profit sector. (Office manager is a paid employee. This is not a service position.)
- D. The compensation will be agreed to and voted on by the Representatives.
- E. Office Manager is a 20 hour a week, part-time job with no benefits except vacation and sick leave.
- F. Financial compensation shall be paid monthly.
- G. Any overtime or comp time must be preapproved by the Chairperson and will be financially compensated at the current pay rate.
- H. All mileage incurred by performing office manager duties shall be reimbursed at the current IRS rate.
- I. At the October meeting, the Chairperson shall appoint a standing committee to review the Office Manager's performance for the previous year and report at the November meeting. This report will be used to determine changes in salary or bonuses by vote at the November meeting.
- J. Benefits
  - i. Vacation time:
    - a. After 1 year of employment = 1 week paid vacation.
    - b. After 2 years = 2 weeks paid vacation.
    - c. After 5 years = 3 weeks paid vacation.
  - ii. Paid sick leave:
    - a. After 90 days = 1 paid sick day per 60 days.
    - b. After 1 year = 1 paid sick day per month.
- K. Any unused vacation or sick time will not be accrued.
- L. Must be familiar with these By-Law and 36 principles.
- M. Special financial circumstances (i.e., pandemic) may have to be considered due to financial revenue loss.

#### **Section 2 (VOLUNTEERS AND FRONT DESK OFFICE)**

- A. Shall have at least one (1) year of continuous sobriety.
- B. Shall be approved and trained by the Office Manager.

#### **ARTICLE VII: DUTIES OF THE OFFICE MANAGER**

The duties and service obligations of the Intergroup Manager include, but are not limited to management duties, public relation duties, AA duties, and fiscal responsibility.

#### **Section 1 (MANAGEMENT DUTIES)**

- 1. Responsible for proper office maintenance.
- 2. Ensure office is staffed during open hours.
- 3. Handle correspondence and maintain filing system.
- 4. Pay bills (including signing checks) and make timely deposits.

5. Ensure checks & balances procedures are followed to advance honesty and accuracy in financial stewardship, including but not limited to the policy that both the Chairperson and Treasurer have password access to all accounts.
6. Maintain inventory and place timely orders.
7. Provide contribution lists to newsletter editor for publication.
8. Select, approve, and train who shall work at the direction of the Office Manager.
9. Office Manager has oversight over all web related activity.
10. Any other duties identified by the Board of Officers or Representative Body.

## **Section 2 (PUBLIC RELATIONS)**

1. Maintain contact with District, Area & GSO, and share information with Intergroup Representatives and officers.
2. Attend annual Intergroup Office Managers Seminar and prepare report for Intergroup Representatives meeting. (Reimbursement is made for expenses related to this seminar.)

## **Section 3 (AA-RELATED DUTIES)**

1. Maintain up-to-date confidential 12-Step lists.
2. Monitor office logs daily, insuring that 12-Step calls and all phone messages/emails are responded to in a timely manner.
3. Keep postings of AA communications & AA event flyer postings current.
4. Provide up-to-date meeting lists.
5. Oversee newsletter publication and maintain database for approved mailings.
6. Update group information and contact person whenever possible.

## **Section 4 (FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY)**

The office manager is expected to run the office in a fiscally responsible manner and keep on hand the tools necessary to accomplish that. This may include purchasing items needed to perform a variety of tasks. Should the cost of these items exceed \$200.00, the manager must get approval from the representatives prior to purchase. Purchase of inventory and general office supplies are not governed by this limitation. Fiscal responsibility can extend beyond the bylaws, be guided by the 36 principles, and is subject to be a standalone policy.

# **ARTICLE VIII: STANDING COMMITTEES**

## **Section 1 (COMMITTEE CREATION)**

The Chairperson and/or Office Manager shall appoint all standing committees and their chairpersons, subject to the approval of the Representatives. Such committees include but are not limited to the following:

- A. Intergrouper/Event email
- B. Faithful Fiver
- C. Webmaster/Where and When
- D. Fundraising events
- E. Ad Hoc

## **Section 2 (COMMITTEE MEMBER ELEIGIBILITY)**

At least one (1) year of continuous sobriety is required to chair standing committee.

# **ARTICLE IX: CONTRIBUTIONS AND SUPPORT**

## **Section 1 (REVENUE OPTIONS)**

While realizing that there are no dues or fees in AA, we also know that if the aims and purpose of Intergroup are to be served, it must be self-supporting. This support must necessarily be derived through the voluntary contributions of the area groups and the individual members of AA. Supplementary financial income may be obtained through Intergroup sponsorship of special events.

1. In the event of a special situation (i.e., pandemic) special funding can be obtained with the approval of the Representatives.

## **Section 2 (RESERVES)**

Sufficient operating funds providing a two (2) month prudent operating reserve shall be maintained. This prudent reserve shall be reviewed and, if necessary, revised at the January Intergroup meeting, based on the previous 12 months of expenses.

### **Section 3 (ASSETS)**

All funds and property received by, or coming into custody of, Intergroup belong to and are trust funds and property of Intergroup, to be used only for the purposes authorized.

### **Section 4 (BANK DEPOSITS AND WITHDRAWALS)**

All funds of Intergroup deposited in banks or depositories shall be deposited in the name of Heartland Intergroup, Inc., and all withdrawals from such accounts shall be made only by checks, debit/credit cards or similar orders.

### **Section 5 (ANNUAL PERSONAL CONTRIBUTIONS)**

Annual personal contributions to Intergroup are limited to the same amount as periodically reviewed and established by the AA General Service Office (GSO) in New York, NY.

## **ARTICLE X: RECORDS RETENTION**

### **Section 1 (FISCAL AND CALENDAR YEAR)**

Intergroup shall operate on a fiscal year basis that runs concurrent with the calendar year of January 1<sup>st</sup> through December 31<sup>st</sup>.

### **Section 2 (PROCEDURES)**

- A. Intergroup financial files shall be maintained as listed below, following the advice of our accountant:
- B. Prudent accounting records will be maintained via an approved accounting system.
- C. All financial records shall be maintained for a period of ten(10) years.
- D. All other office records, including invoices, shall be kept for a one-year period.
- E. Office telephone logs shall be retained for one (1) month.

## **ARTICLE XI: AMENDMENTS TO THE BY-LAWS**

- A. Any member of the Heartland Intergroup may propose amendments to the By-Laws by motion at any Intergroup meeting.
- B. These By-Laws may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Representatives present.
- C. A vote to amend the By-Laws may not occur at the same meeting amendments are initially presented.
- D. Amendments to the Bylaws must pass approval twice at two separate but consecutive monthly meetings where a majority vote of 2/3 of the Representative body present is required at both meetings.
- E. Intergroup shall be guided by 36 principles (12 steps, 12 traditions, and 12 concepts) of Alcoholics Anonymous in, in addition to these bylaws and use them to interpret and amend these bylaws.