

# Passaic County Area of Narcotics Anonymous Public Relations Subcommittee Guidelines

Revised 11/11/13

## **Definition**

The Passaic County Area Public Relations (PR) Subcommittee is a standing subcommittee of the Passaic County Area Service Committee of Narcotics Anonymous (PCASCNA). PR is composed of elected officers and NA members who have the desire and willingness to be of service consistent with the Twelve Traditions, Twelve Concepts of Service and these guidelines.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of the Public Relations Subcommittee is to inform the public that Narcotics Anonymous exists, and that we offer recovery from active addiction. We do this by creating, distributing and managing all communications regarding Narcotics Anonymous throughout the Northern New Jersey Area, in accordance with the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts of Narcotics Anonymous as well as the Narcotics Anonymous Guide to Public Information and “A Guide to Narcotics Anonymous Helpline Service in New Jersey”.

## **Why Public Relations is important to the NA member**

The Narcotics Anonymous message is “that an addict, any addict, can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use and find a new way to live.” Our relations with the public enable us to share this message broadly so that those who might benefit from our program of recovery can find us. We perform public relations service to increase the awareness and credibility of the NA program. We share our message openly with the public at large, with prospective members, and with professionals. Maintaining an open, attractive attitude in these efforts helps us to create and improve relationships with those outside the fellowship. Establishing and maintaining a commitment to these relationships, can help us to further our primary purpose.

The spiritual principles of our steps, traditions, and concepts guide us in pursuing our public relations aims and our efforts to enhance NA’s public image and reputation. These principles apply to our community and service efforts as well as to the personal behavior and attitude of individual NA members.

The following points are goals that we can strive to fulfill in making NA a visible and attractive choice for addicts:

1. We clarify what services NA can and cannot provide to the community.
2. We make NA members more aware of their role in NA’s public image.
3. We aim for the public to recognize NA as a positive and reliable organization.
4. We develop valuable relationships with professionals and the general public.

## **Mission**

Our objective is to carry out our primary purpose in accordance with the 5<sup>th</sup> Tradition: “To carry the message to the addict who still suffers.” We do so in accordance with our 11<sup>th</sup> Tradition: “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.” We do this by making information available to addicts at the public in a manner that is clean and objective.

## **Description**

1. The name of the committee shall be defined as the Public Relations Subcommittee (PR).
2. The Public Relations Subcommittee is responsible for services included, but not limited to; Public Information, Passaic County Area Newsletter, Helpline Workshops, Learning Days, and the Passaic County Area Website.

3. The committee shall be accountable to the PCASCNA body consisting of Executive, Administrative, Subcommittee Chairs and Group Service Representatives (GSR'S)
4. To open and maintain the lines of communication between NA and the public, and between the groups, the ASC, Region and NAWS.
5. To respond to all request for information in a timely and efficient manner; to see that those requests are handled at the appropriate level of service.
6. To conduct Learning Days and Helpline Workshops as needed and requested by the PCASC.
7. Operate and maintain the Passaic County Area website. The Uniform Resource Locator ("URL") for the Passaic County Area website, which is the property of PCASCNA, shall be <http://www.passaicarea.org>. The URL <http://www.passaicarea.com> will be directed to the "dot org" site.

### **Responsibilities and Duties of Trusted Servants**

1. Public Relations Chairperson
  - a. It is required that the Public Relations Chairperson has a minimum of two (2) years of continuous abstinence from all drugs.
  - b. A working knowledge of the guided principles embodied in the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous.
  - c. Possess the ability to organize and give direction with a firm, yet understanding hand.
  - d. Prepares an agenda and presides over all Public Relations subcommittee meetings.
  - e. Attends the monthly PCASC meeting. Makes regular reports to ASC on the status of all proposed, current or completed plans and submits yearly budget to ASC service body.
  - f. Answers questions asked by the PCASC about the subcommittees past, current and upcoming activities, contents of the PR subcommittee report, and other questions as deemed appropriate by the Facilitator.
  - g. Attends NJ Regional Public Relations subcommittee meetings.
  - h. Attends all JAC (Joint Administrative Committee) meetings.
  - i. Prepares annual budget for subcommittee, including but not limited to, monthly rent expenses, website costs (such as hosting, software development programs and domain registration), poster and newsletter printing costs.
  - j. Familiarity with all public relations related NA conference, fellowship and World Board approved handbooks and literature.
2. Vice Chairperson
  - a. It is required that the Vice Chairperson has a minimum of one (1) year of continuous abstinence from all drugs.
  - b. Acts as Chairperson in the absence of the Chairperson and must be able to complete duties of same.
  - c. Works closely with the Public Relations Chairperson.
  - d. Assists in coordinating Learning Days
3. Secretary
  - a. It is required that the Secretary has a minimum of six (6) months of continuous abstinence from all drugs.
  - b. Keeps a complete record in the form of minutes of every Public Relations subcommittee meeting.
  - c. Maintain records of attendance at Public Relations subcommittee meeting.
  - d. Sends letters and makes calls to committee members about Public Relations business.
  - e. Prepares written Public Relations subcommittee correspondence.
  - f. Maintains files of all Public Relations subcommittee plans, minutes and correspondence, and relinquishes to the incoming secretary when stepping out of the position.
  - g. Maintains record of name and contact information for committee members and past/potential panel speakers.
  - h. Acts as Vice Chairperson in the absence of the Vice Chairperson and must be able to complete duties of same.
4. Web Servant
  - a. It is required that the Web Servant has a minimum of one (1) year of continuous abstinence from all drugs.

- b. Must have at least one (1) year experience in Internet communications and be proficient in current web technology.
  - c. Attends all Public Relations subcommittee and PCASC meetings.
  - d. Is responsible for the timely upkeep and maintenance of the entire PCASCNA website in coordination with the Public Relations chairperson.
5. Newsletter Editor
- a. It is required that the Newsletter Editor has a minimum of one (1) year of continuous abstinence from all drugs.
  - b. Responsible for gathering all submissions and conducting interviews.
  - c. Must have access to a computer/the Internet
  - d. Possess basic computer literacy.
  - e. Well versed in the English language. Proofreads all submissions for spelling and grammar.
  - f. Approves the final release of the newsletter prior to being submitted.
  - g. Makes flyers for support, comes up with ideas for topics.
  - h. Attends all Public Relations subcommittee meetings.
6. Helpline Volunteer
- a. It is required that the Helpline Volunteer has a minimum of one (1) year of continuous abstinence from all drugs (this is a NJ Regional requirement)
  - b. Willingness to receive and return calls any hour of the day or night.
  - c. A working knowledge of the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous.
  - d. Attendance at a Helpline volunteer workshop.
  - e. Regular attendance at NA meetings
  - f. Must carry a current statewide meeting directory on their person at all times.
  - g. Have a telephone-answering device with a clear and simple message.
  - h. Advise any other members of your household that your name and number appear on an NA helpline.

### **PUBLIC RELATIONS DO'S AND DON'T'S**

#### **We Do:**

Follow our traditions, public relations plans, and guidelines.

Try to be consistent. We follow through on our plans of action.

Keep updated records of contacts, posted flyers, Public Service Announcements (PSAs), etc.

Remember that quality is better than quantity.

Present a good image of recovery: punctual, appropriately dressed, and avoid using obscenities when we speak.

Consult with members experienced in PI work before contacting the media.

#### **We Don't:**

Do public information service alone.

Abuse our precious resources. When we don't complete a project, we create a negative image of NA.

Present ourselves as the only spokesperson for NA.

Accept contributions from outside our fellowship.

State an opinion or take a stand on any non-NA or public issue.

Give out personal information about individual NA members.