Information Technology (IT) Committee
Workbook and Guidelines

Updated 2023

Contents

INTRODUCTION

The Information & Technology Committee of the World Service Conference was established at the 2018 Conference to assist the H.A. fellowship in matters relating to the global communications phenomenon called "the Internet." In order to fulfill this mission, the H.A. World Service Conference Information Technology Committee (WSCITC or IT Committee) has created this Workbook to assist and guide the entire H.A. service structure in the development of websites that will ensure unity throughout the service structure.

The purpose of the committee is to serve as a resource for the H.A. service structure in areas of emerging technologies. In addition, we facilitate and assist areas, districts, and regions in approving their local websites, so that they may have a link directly from the H.A. website. The IT Committee, on an ongoing basis, works on adapting available technologies to better carry the message of H.A., while always keeping in mind the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts of H.A., H.A. policies, privacy, and security.

This Workbook contains the guidelines for setting up H.A.W.S. approved area, district or regional websites. It is expected that this Workbook will change to cover other new developments as they arise in this rapidly changing environment. At this time, it is strongly recommended that groups and meetings use their area, district, regional websites as their exclusive internet outlet.

WEBSERVANT AND/OR INTERNET COMMITTEES

The area, district, or region should take care in selecting the person that will create and/or maintain their website (i.e., their webservant). Since the website will sometimes be the first contact people have with H.A. in their area, it is important that the website be presentable. Further, because websites are a form of public outreach, the web servant should be well versed in the Twelve Traditions. It is therefore strongly suggested that the webservant be a member of H.A. and have experience both in service work and in website design.

The area, district, or region is reminded that the website needs to be maintained after it is constructed, since some things (e.g., events and meeting locations) may change from time to time. A separate IT Committee or website committee may be formed to assist in ideas and design.

It is further suggested that a member of the Area or District Board be assigned to monitor the website, to maintain a link to the group conscience of the area, district or region, and for the webservant or committee attend the local area, district or regional business meetings to report any updates and status of the website.

It is further suggested that at least two area, district, or regional members, including the web servant, know all appropriate passwords or access details.

HOW TO SET UP AN INTERNET WEBSITE

1. **Register your Domain (the process of acquiring a domain name from a domain name registrar, usually your hosting provider).**

   Domain names are used to establish a unique identity. Organizations can choose a domain name that corresponds to their name, helping Internet users to reach them easily. (e.g. www.localha.org. Examples of domain names currently being used by H.A. Areas are: haazarea.org; georgiaha.org). Heroin Anonymous World Services has reserved the domain names heroinanoymous.org, heroinanonymous.net, and similar names for its own use.

   When selecting a domain name, it is suggested that area, districts, or regions pick a name easy to remember. Since many domain names are already in use, it is a good idea to have several possible choices in mind when applying for your domain. Domain registrars allow online inquiries to see if a given domain name is available. It is also suggested that, where possible, the domain name be registered such that the area, district, or region is listed as the "administrative contact".
   It is suggested to set up a reminder to renew your domain names and security certificates on time in order to keep your domain name and site secure.

2. **Set up an email address to match your domain name.**

You can use free email services to set up an email, but it is suggested using one that matches your domain name to make it easier to remember. The service provider who registers your domain name, or your web hosting company, may provide an email service or include it as a paid add-on feature.

3. Find a Website hosting provider.

For your website to be published and accessible on the internet, it must be hosted by a web hosting company. These companies provide you with a secure space on their server to store all your website content. You can host your website with the same company you register your domain name with, or you can choose a different host if this meets your needs better.

Monthly fees for web hosting can vary depending on how big your website is and how many visits you get.

4. Design your website.

Gather ideas from your area, district, or region on what design will work best. The person(s) (usually called a webmaster/webservant) or committee will need to create and maintain the website.
When designing your website, think about: the information you want to give the fellowship or visitors, what you want them to do on your site, the questions they'll have, and the order they'll be doing things in.

The structure of the site is to make it easy for them to find and do the things they need. It might help to look at websites of other areas or districts like yours to see how they've designed their site and what features they've added.

A well-designed and easy-to-use website will help your website stand out.

5. Build your website.

When deciding how to build your website, consider how it will be maintained and how easy it will be to make changes. You might need to make regular changes to the content on your website such as meeting information or changing the look and feel of your website.
Building your website can be a do-it-yourself (DIY) or do-it-for-me (DIFM) project. You can create your website by:

- using a template-based website builder (DIY)
- using a CMS to build a customized website (DIY or DIFM)
- hiring a professional web developer (DIFM).

Considering the advantages, disadvantages and cost of each option will help your area decide which one will work best. Most template-based website builders are free to little costs, the other options may cost money to develop or maintain.

Your website should display correctly on smart phones and other mobile devices. Web builders and CMS platforms automatically include mobile optimization in their products. If you hire a web developer, find out if mobile optimization is included in the build, or if they'll charge extra for it.

6. **Add and manage your website content.**

Once you've worked out what content you want on your website, you'll need to create or buy the content. Website content includes things like images, videos, copy (written words), interactive tools, like calculators and estimators, and landing pages.

Writing website content

The wording on your website provides the fellowship with the information they need to understand your website, who you are, and how to access it around your website. People read differently online, so make sure content is easy to read and understand. A few suggestions is to put the most important information first, use plain language, make sure content is easy to scan (not too cluttered), use clear headings, and keep paragraphs short and easy to read.

Managing and updating content

It's important to keep your website content up to date. You should, for example, always make sure that changes to meetings, events and contacts are reflected on your website.
The webservant and/or committee should know how to update content and write down the processes within the website. This is particularly important if a web developer has built your site for you. Include a request for basic training in updating content (if you think you need it) when getting quotes from web developers.

7. **Publish your website.**

Once the site is ready, it will need to be published or made live so it can be found by using your domain name. It can take a day or two for the website to go live across the internet (a process known as propagating). Keep this in mind if your area is planning a launch with an upcoming event or activities.

Please continue to read the rest of this document for information on:
- **What a typical area website may include**
- **Things to be avoided.**
- **Properly posting events and**
- **Requirements in order to be considered for linking to the H.A. Website**

A TYPICAL AREA WEBSITE

The www.heroinanonymous.org/meetings (H.A. World Services) contains links to many area, district, regional websites. It is suggested that areas, districts, or regions wishing to develop their own website first review some of these sites. While there is great variation among areas, districts, or regional websites, nearly all contain most of the following content:

- The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of H.A.

- Current conference approved literature

- A local meeting schedule

- A local activities and/or events page

- Area contact information, including email and telephone

- Information regarding service committee meetings

- The H.A. logo

  Additional content a website may wish to include are selections from H.A.'s many pamphlets, illustrative graphics, links to other local H.A. websites, & convention information. However, this additional content should be carefully considered, so that the overall website remains within H.A.'s Twelve Traditions. A later section will outline some things to be avoided.

  H.A.W.S. also has some content available for download (e.g., graphics, the H.A. logo, approved copyright and trademark statements, the current version of this document, and other useful information). These materials can also be obtained by emailing a request to hawswebmaster@heroinanonymous.org.

Any websites containing H.A. members' names, phone numbers, or email addresses, or displaying H.A. business reports or financial statements, need prior written approval from both the area, district, or region and the affected member(s). Additionally, when there is a need to distribute H.A. business or financial documents to members, it is suggested to utilize at least one secure access method (e.g., password protected site, etc.) to avoid H.A.'s name being drawn into public controversy, or any other potential violations of the Twelve Traditions of H.A.

The IT Committee will submit a quarterly report to the World Service Board Trustee assigned to the IT Committee. However, websites change over time, and should there be any questions regarding something seen on a H.A. website, please email hawswebmaster@heroinanonymous.org.

THINGS TO BE AVOIDED

The following items have been found to be in conflict with the Twelve Traditions, or otherwise harmful to Heroin Anonymous as a whole, and must be avoided by area, district, or regional websites:

1) Links to non-H.A. websites must be avoided, including all of the following:
   a) Commercial websites or any website containing advertising, except for the following:
      i) Mapping Services for meetings and events (e.g., to give directions to a meeting location), when accompanied by the disclaimer found in the Information Technology (IT) Workbook and Guidelines under the section entitled "REQUIREMENTS FOR H.A. AREA, DISTRICT, REGIONAL WEBSITES"
      ii) Online payment gateways (e.g., for the purposes of collecting donations or payments for events), when accompanied by the disclaimer found in the Information Technology (IT) Workbook and Guidelines under the section entitled "REQUIREMENTS FOR H.A. AREA, DISTRICT, REGIONAL WEBSITES
   b) Government websites
   c) Non-profit organizations websites (whether involved in the field of recovery or not)
   d) Recovery houses, hospitals, and alternative treatment providers.
   e) Websites of other 12-Step programs
   f) Pages posted by individual H.A. members.
   g) Any non-H.A. meetings or events
2) Websites may only post literature that is currently approved by the H.A. World Service Conference for use in H.A. meetings or H.A. service work.
3) No website may post material in violation of copyright law.
4) Discussion of, or reference to, outside issues, including (but not limited to) religion, politics or drug policy must be avoided.
5) No website may contain advertising, even if required as a condition of web service. This does not include, however, the name of a product or service as it might be used during H.A. business (e.g., a convention hotel's name).
6) Nothing will be posted or linked to by any area, district, or region which breaks the anonymity of any member of H.A., with or without their permission.
7) Area, district or regional websites must not post material that brings H.A.'s name into public controversy.
8) Chat rooms must not be used.
9) Non-conference approved audio/video files
10) Do not use the proper name of a location without including the sixth tradition disclaimer:

"In the spirit of Tradition Six, H.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution."

SUGGESTIONS ON POSTING EVENTS

Many area, district, or regional websites like to include a local activities or an events page. The following are suggestions regarding events that are posted to an area, district, or regional website that is linked to the H.A. World Service website.

1) Event must clearly be H.A. sanctioned by the area, district, or regional flyer with H.A. logo, such as:
    a) Conventions and retreats
    b) Multi-day events
    c) Regional events
    d) World Service events

2) Linked pages and files are suggested to:
    a) Be in compliance with the Twelve Traditions
    b) Be provided in a digital format
    c) Pertain to the event (e.g., convention registration form)
    d) Be of reasonable size and of printable dimensions (8½" x 11" or smaller)
    e) Be in .pdf format, or some other format convertible to "pdf"

3) It is suggested that the main page of information for events include the following disclaimer:

"Certain information listed herein about the local event, the event location, event activities, and even the host city is included for informational purposes only; so that those attending the event looking for something to do during the event might have that information. The listing of such information here does not, nor should it imply affiliation, cooperation or endorsement of such venues, hotels, or activities by H.A. or by H.A. World Services. If you have further questions or concerns on this matter, please contact the Event Chair."

REQUIREMENTS FOR H.A. AREA, DISTRICT, OR REGIONAL WEBSITES

All H.A. area, district, or regional websites must meet the following requirements in order to be considered for linking by H.A.W.S.:

1) The Service Committee for the area, district, or region must have approved the website, and H.A.W.S. must be contacted by an elected officer of the area, district, or region with a statement to this effect.

2) A link to the email address of the area, district, or region's current webservant must be posted on the website itself. This may be done in a way that obscures the individual's name, but the link must allow anyone to send email directly to the current webservant.

3) Contact information for the area, district, or region must remain current so that any problem not resolvable by contacting the webservant can be resolved directly with the area, district, or regional board.

4) The official H.A. logo, unaltered except for color and size, must be present on the homepage of the website. The size of the logo must be large enough so that the logo is legible. This logo, as a computer file, is available at heroinanonymous.org/resources.

5) The current H.A.W.S.-supplied copyright statement, edited to include the area, district, or regional name, and covering all material on the website, must also appear on the home page

   "This World Wide Website <your website url. (Example: www.yourarea.org)> is a publication of Heroin Anonymous <your area or district>, Inc. All material, including, without limitation, trademarks, copyrights and all other rights, presented or included herein, including all subsidiary pages, is registered, owned and/or copyrighted by <your area or district>. Permission is granted to download and store this material for individual, non- proprietary use only. All other rights are fully reserved. Heroin Anonymous is not affiliated with Alcoholics Anonymous or any other similar organization."

6) Any page containing quotes from copyrighted H.A. literature must contain the current copyright notice, and identify the piece being quoted. This current copyright notice is as follows:

   "Heroin Anonymous World Service Conference Approved Literature. Copyright © <year> Heroin Anonymous World Services, Inc. "H.A.", "Heroin Anonymous" and the H.A. logo are registered trademarks of Heroin Anonymous World Services, Inc. All rights reserved."

7) Area, district, or regional newsletters, personal stories, audio and video media must be approved by the area, district, or region before posting on the area, district, or regional website.

8) The following Disclaimer must be included on the bottom of the home page of any H.A. website, other than H.A. website:

"Some of the items contained in these pages are published with permission of H.A. World Services, Inc., but this does not imply endorsement of this website by the H.A. World Service Conference or Heroin Anonymous World Services. The information provided within this website is intended to be a convenience for those who visit our website. Such inclusion does not constitute or imply any endorsement by, or affiliation with, the <your local area> Area or the Districts within the Area."

9) When utilizing any of the following:
   a) Mapping Services for meetings and events (e.g., to give directions to a meeting location)
   b) Online payment gateways (e.g., for the purposes of collecting donations or payments for events) the following disclaimer should be included on the same page and in close proximity to the link, widget or form:

   "In the spirit of Tradition Six, H.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution. As such <your area/district/service committee> of Heroin Anonymous and Heroin Anonymous as a whole does not endorse and is not affiliated with <payment gateway/business name> or any of the companies and/or services offered on the <payment gateway/business name> site. Any links to external websites or services are only provided as a convenience to our members.

LINKING TO THE H.A. WEBSITE

When an area, district, or region wishing to have their website linked on the H.A. website, the H.A.W.S. webmaster committee contacts the WSCITC. The website will be viewed for compliance according to the currently approved WSCITC Workbook and Guidelines. If the website is compliant, the WSCITC chair will contact the HAWS Webmaster to proceed with the linking of the website and will notify the area, district, or regional Chair of the new link.

Non-compliance

If the website is found to be non-compliant with the information outlines in this handbook/guideline, the H.A.W.S. webmaster will send notice of non-compliance by all available methods to that website's web servant, area, district, or regional Chair, and Regional Trustee. This notification will include a description of the non-compliance and offer possible solutions for compliance. Unless and until the site comes into compliance, it will not be linked from the H.A. website.

When a possible non-compliance issue is brought to the attention of H.A.W.S. and/or H.A.W.S. webmaster, this information will be forwarded to the WSCITC chair responsible for internet matters. The website will be viewed for non-compliance, and if the website is found to be non-compliant, the H.A.W.S. Webmaster Chair will send the notice of non-compliance by all available methods to that website's web servant, area, district, or regional Chair and Regional Trustee. This notification will include a description of the non-compliance and offer possible solutions for compliance within a reasonable time frame.

If the website fails to come into compliance within the specified time frame, then the website will be de-linked, and notification sent to the website's web servant, area, district, or regional Chair and Regional Trustee. When the non-compliance issues are corrected, the website will be linked or re-linked to the H.A. website, upon request from the area, district, or region.

Any new websites not currently linked to H.A. website, or any concerns about existing websites regarding possible compliance and/or non-compliance issues, should be emailed to hawswebmaster@heroinanonymous.org, the WSCITC will then review the website for compliance in accordance with the WSCITC guidelines and forward any comments to the H.A.W.S. Webmaster.

The H.A.W.S. Webmaster is responsible for addressing any issues forwarded from the WSCITC.

Emergency De-Linking

The H.A.W.S. Webmaster chair may terminate the link from the H.A. website to any H.A. area, district, or regional website immediately, under any one of the following conditions:

- Direction from the WSCITC chair or the H.A.W.S Board as the result of a H.A.W.S. Board vote.

- Notification from the affected area, district, or regional officers that they do not authorize the site.

- The website contains material that is clearly illegal (e.g., drug sales), totally unrelated, and/or bringing disrepute to H.A. (e.g., pornography).

In all cases above, the WSCITC Chair, Regional Trustee, affected area, district, or regional Chair and Area Delegates will be immediately notified by all available methods of the action and the reason.

TEXT BASED CORRESPONDENCE, VIDEO AND/OR TELECONFERENCING

Many groups, both in the real and virtual space, have begun exploring the possibilities of utilizing technologies for meeting via text-based correspondence, video and/or teleconferencing. Presently, two distinct classes of interactions exist. The first class can be defined as a connection where all endpoints can be accounted for by trusted servants (e.g., a joint meeting between two geographically distant groups). With this class, there is a level of assurance that no person or group is exposed to issues concerning a potential breach of the Eleventh Tradition. The other class, however, which is characterized by one or more connection endpoints that cannot be moderated by a trusted servant, may be subject to violations of the Eleventh Tradition (e.g., the recording/duplication of images, video, audio, or text and the possibility for them to be posted publicly). Therefore, it is suggested that at the start of any such meeting and/or at regular intervals, the following disclaimer be read or displayed:

"Due to the technologies being used for this meeting, a participant's anonymity, or the anonymity of others mentioned, could be compromised at a public level. The individual participants and our group as a whole have the responsibility to consider the potential implications, and our level of participation in this meeting. Our group conscience reminds us that Anonymity is the Spiritual Foundation of all our Traditions. Additionally, in the spirit of Tradition Six, H.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization, or institution and as such does not endorse and is not affiliated with any of the specific technology providers utilized to facilitate this meeting."

It is suggested that at least two or more committee members, including the Chair, know all appropriate passwords or access details.

As always, members are suggested to abide by the traditions of H.A. when holding meetings. Since H.A. had not previously established online meetings, we suggest the following considerations when holding online meetings to preserve the anonymity of those attending.

During meetings:

- Members are suggested to use their first name and last initial in how their name is presented with their video feed. This can be edited in the individual profile settings.

- Members may use a "virtual background" to mask their location if desired. This may be helpful if the member is at their place of employment.

- It is suggested not to video record meetings. The administrator can disable all recording options in the settings. If audio recording is desired, the chairperson should make it clear at the beginning of the meeting.

- The administrator is suggested to disable auto-saving chats, feedback, file transfer, data sharing, and screen sharing.

In observation of the 7th tradition, organizers should pay for meeting platforms from group funds rather than, for example, using one's work account.

WSCITC AT THE CONFERENCE LEVEL

It is suggested that WSCITC Chair should not be the same person as the World Service Office Board Webmaster. These should be two different people with two different committees to uphold our second tradition and the spirit of rotation.

The WSCITC and the committee are to come up with ideas given to them by the various areas to help www.heroinanonymous.org be a free flowing and efficient website able to help all people find meetings and more information on H.A. as a whole. These committee members do not have to be fluent in any technical matters involving the website. They need only to have a creative mind and the drive to help other H.A. members get the needed information from all committees in an efficient way.

The IT Committee will assist the Conference Committee in providing any needed support as it pertains to Information Technology including audio and video recording. If desired, the IT Committee will provide a liaison to the Conference Committee to help coordinate, recommend, and provide any needed technology support.