

# **Circle of Sisters Women's Convention of Narcotics Anonymous**

## **Guidelines**

### History

The Circle of Sisters Women's Convention of Narcotics Anonymous was started in Portland, Oregon by a group of recovering addicts who had a vision of an annual convention for the women of our fellowship. The first convention, held in February 1998, was called the Pacific Northwest Women's Convention of Narcotics Anonymous #1. At that time, the organizers anticipated the convention would become an ongoing tradition in the Pacific Northwest. COS quickly outgrew its origins, however, and the second year the words "Pacific Northwest" were dropped. COS ventured far from its roots, all the way to Houston, Texas and the following year COS became an international NA convention by being held in Vancouver, Canada.

At the third COS, a decision was made to form a COS Advisory Committee to help provide continuity as the Circle of Sisters grew and traveled further afield. And at the fourth convention, the first version of these Guidelines was approved. In 2009 the COS Advisory Committee adopted a new model to become a standing sub-committee of each year's convention committee.

COS is a convention created by and for the women of Narcotics Anonymous. In keeping with our third Tradition, no addict will be turned away from any NA meeting. However, other convention activities may be restricted to women only.

*The Part I guidelines were approved at the COS bid/business meeting March 3, 2001 and amended in 2002, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2009 and 2012*

<b><i>Event</i></b>	<b><i>Dates</i></b>	<b><i>Location</i></b>	<b><i>Hosting NA service body</i></b>	<b><i>Theme</i></b>
COS I	Feb. 20-22, 1998	Portland, Oregon	Portland Area Service Committee	Unity and Diversity Through Recovery
COS II	Feb. 26-28, 1999	Seattle, Washington	Everett Area Service Committee	If you want what we have ...
COS III	March 10-12, 2000	Houston, Texas	Northside Area Service Committee	The Very Essence
COS IV	March 2-4, 2001	Vancouver, British Columbia	British Columbia Regional Service Committee	Anything is Possible
COS V	Feb. 15-17, 2002	San Jose, California	Northern California Regional Service Committee	I Believe in Miracles, for I Am One
COS VI	Feb. 28 - Mar. 2, 2003	Bloomington, Minnesota	South Suburban Fireside Area Service Committee	I am my Sister's Keeper
COS VII	Feb. 27-29, 2004	Seattle, Washington	Seattle Area Service Committee	Leap of Faith
COS VIII	Feb. 18 – 21, 2005	Brooklyn, New York	Brooklyn Area Service Committee	The Wing Beneath My Wings
COS IX	Feb. 24-26, 2006	Boise, Idaho	Treasure Valley Area Service Committee	Sharing Experience Strength and Hope
COS X	Feb. 23 - 26, 2007	Dallas/Ft Worth, Texas	Dallas/Ft Worth, Texas	Circle of Hope
COS XI	Feb. 1-3, 2008	Chicago, Illinois	Chicagoland Region Service Committee	Sisters on a Spiritual Journey
COS XII	March 6-8, 2009	Woodland Hills, California	San Fernando Valley	A spirit Beyond our Dreams
COS XIII	Feb. 26-28, 2010	South Hampton Bermuda	Bermuda	<u>H</u> elp <u>O</u> pen <u>P</u> eoples <u>E</u> yes <u>S</u> isters
COS XIV	Feb. 11-13, 2011	Richmond, Virginia	Richmond, Virginia Area	You Can't Stop A Circle Of Sisters
COS XV	Feb. 24-26, 2012	Portland, Oregon	Portland Area Service Committee	Freedom through the Steps
COS XVI	March 15-17, 2013	Tulsa Oklahoma	Eastern Oklahoma	Stepping into the world of Recovery
COS XVII	March 7-9, 2014	St. Louis Missouri	St. Louis	Gateway to hope & Endless Possibilities
COS XVIII	Feb. 27-March 1, 2015	Los Angeles, Ca	Greater LA Area	Diversity is Our Strength

## Part 1 Guidelines – How Circle of Sisters functions as a traveling NA convention

1. The name of the convention is: Circle of Sisters Women's Convention of Narcotics Anonymous. (Hereafter referred to as COS)
2. COS is a convention for the women of Narcotics Anonymous.
3. COS is held annually in February or March.
4. COS must be hosted by an Area or Region of Narcotics Anonymous. An Area or Region, in making a bid to host COS, agrees to these guidelines and to adhere to our bid guidelines.
5. COS will have an Advisory Committee composed of previous COS Chairs and the Chair of the next upcoming COS convention committee. If a COS Chair is unwilling or unable to participate on the Advisory Committee, her position may be filled by her Vice-Chair or Co-Chair. The COS Advisory Committee will be a standing sub-committee of each COS convention committee and is accountable to the COS convention committee. Elected members shall serve in a specific position for period of three-3years. Positions will be filled initially at the Advisory Committee meeting at COS XIII and vacancies will be filled at each subsequent COS Convention.
  - Chair – facilitate the work of the COS Advisory Committee, respond to all inquiries addressed to the COS Advisory Committee
  - Vice-Chair – assist the Chair
  - Treasurer – prepare Advisory Committee budget and ensure Advisory Committee expenses are paid; support the treasurers of the current convention committees.
  - Assistant Treasurer – assist the Treasurer
  - Secretary – prepare and distribute minutes of all Advisory Committee meetings
  - Archives – maintain a COS archives
  - Hotel Liaisons – support the work of the current convention committee hotel liaisons
  - Web Mistress – maintain the COS website
  - Entertainment/Fundraiser – support the work of the current convention committee entertainment and fundraising subcommittee chairs
  - Hospitality/Greeter – support the work of the current convention committee hospitality subcommittee chairs
  - Merchandise – support the work of the current convention committee merchandise subcommittee chairs
  - Programming – support the work of the current convention committee programming subcommittee chairs
  - Arts & Graphics – support the work of the current convention committee arts & graphics subcommittee chairs
  - Convention Information – support the work of the current convention committee Convention Information subcommittee chairs

6. There will be an open meeting of the COS Advisory Committee at each COS convention on the Saturday afternoon, followed by a half hour break, followed by the Bid Meeting. There will also be a closed meeting of the COS Advisory Committee on the Thursday evening prior to each COS convention. COS Advisor committee holds a minimum of three meetings at each COS Convention. Thursday night closed session advisory only, Friday; Current host committee,(following year host committee) Saturday open all attendee question & answers mtg. Sat bid meeting.

7. The COS Advisory Committee shall create and maintain an operating fund of up to \$2500 US dollars for Advisory Committee expenses such as holding conference calls, maintaining a website, and meeting room rental. This guideline takes effect immediately following COS XV in 2012.

8. The COS Advisory Committee shall create and maintain a prudent reserve of up to \$5000 US dollars, for the purpose of covering any losses remaining after a COS convention where the hosting Area or Region for that convention is unable to cover those losses. This guideline takes effect immediately following COS XV in 2012.(in the event proceeds need to be disbursed back to the hosting area/region the said amount of \$5000.00 shall not be maintained)

9. Hosting a COS convention includes financial responsibility, in accordance with these guidelines.

(a) Losses:

The hosting Area or Region is responsible for any financial losses arising from the convention it hosts. This includes, but is not limited to, all negotiable contracts including hotel, merchandise, and entertainment contracts.

(b) Distribution of Surplus Funds:

A COS convention, after paying all expenses, will divide any remaining funds as follows:

If the remaining funds total less than \$5500 US dollars: 80% to the next year's convention, 10% to the convention two years away, and 10% to the Advisory Committee operating fund.(if under the \$5000.00 prudent reserve)

If the remaining funds total \$5500 US dollars or more:

- I. \$5000 US dollars seed money to the next year's convention; then
- II. \$500 US dollars seed money to the convention two years away; then
- III. Top up COS Advisory Committee operating fund to \$2500 US dollars (i.e. add to the balance of the operating fund, until the fund reaches \$2500 or until remaining funds are exhausted); then
- IV. Top up COS prudent reserve to \$5000 US dollars (i.e. add to the balance of the prudent reserve, until the reserve reaches \$5000 or until remaining funds are exhausted); then
- V. Donate to Hosting Area or Region any remaining funds up to \$5000 US dollars; then
- VI. Donate any remaining balance to the World Service Office.

The distribution of funds set out above will take effect for COS XV in 2012.

Prior to that, the previous distribution of funds will continue to apply: 50% to the following year's convention (not to exceed \$5000 USD), 20% to the convention two years away (not to exceed \$500 USD), 15% to the hosting Area or Region, and 15% to the World Service Office.

Funds will only be forwarded at such time when future convention committees are official subcommittees of an Area or Region of N.A. and when these future convention committees have established bank accounts in the name of COS convention.

10. In the event that no Area or Region comes forward to host COS, the seed money will be held in a trust account by the COS Advisory Committee until an Area or Region comes forward with a bid. If a period of five years elapses where no Area or Region comes forward to host COS, the remaining funds will be disbursed to the WSO.

11. Fundraising: The COS Advisory Committee encourages the convention committee to host regular fundraisers to offset expenses. At each convention, the following year's convention committee will provide a full registration package (to their convention) to be used as a fundraising prize for the current year's convention.

12. Each COS convention committee will provide copies of its records to the COS Advisory Committee. This includes meeting minutes, treasurer reports with accompanying bank statements, and a final report indicating total registrations, meal sales, hotel room nights and other data.

13. These guidelines may be amended at the annual COS business meeting held at each convention.

14. The COS Advisory Committee will maintain a website. The cost of the website will be paid from the Advisory Committee operating funds, however if there are not sufficient operating funds the Advisory Committee shall include the cost of the website in a budget that it presents for approval to the current convention committee.

## Part 2 Guidelines – Bid Package Requirements

An Area or Regional Service Committee of Narcotics Anonymous that wishes to bid to host a future Circle of Sisters convention is asked to provide the following information:

1. A complete Bid Form from COS website [www.circleofsisters.org](http://www.circleofsisters.org).
2. A letter from the proposed hotel indicating the proposed terms of the hotel contract.
3. A copy of applicable Area or Region policies and current convention guidelines, if any.
4. Information regarding transportation from the nearest major airport to the proposed hotel, as well as information regarding alternative transportation such as train or bus.
5. The names, clean dates, and service resumes of the NA members who commit to serving on the convention committee.
6. A letter stating why your Area or Region would like to host a Circle of Sisters convention.

Bids are presented at each COS convention for the convention two years in the future. In order to be considered for presentation, a bid package from your Area or Region should be submitted to the COS Advisory Committee by email to [advisory@circleofsisters.org](mailto:advisory@circleofsisters.org) sixty (60) days prior to the convention. Bid Committees will be afforded the opportunity to present their bids at an open bid meeting on Saturday. If there are no accepted bids at that time, the Advisory Committee will grant an additional period of time (60 to 90 days) to accept complete bids. The two year out location will then be announced on the COS website.

Once an ASC or RSC has been advised that its bid was successful, elections are held to form a convention committee. (Organizational meeting)

We have found the following guidelines helpful for organizing a convention committee:

#### Purpose

A Circle of Sisters Host Committee is formed to plan and implement the Circle of Sisters Women's Convention of NA.

#### Guidance

The Host Committee and its subcommittees will follow these written guidelines, other written procedures the Circle of Sisters approves for the working group or subcommittees, the Twelve Traditions, the Twelve Concepts, and the NA Convention Guidelines. At all times a clear NA message of recovery and service will be a priority.

#### Responsibility and Accountability

The Circle of Sisters Host Committee is accountable to the hosting Area or Region.

#### Financial Responsibility

The hosting Area or Region has ultimate financial responsibility for the COS convention it hosts, however the COS Host Committee will make every effort to minimize financial risk. Should there be financial difficulties, the Host Committee shall approach the hosting Area or Region for guidance. (and provide updated details to COS Advisory committee)

#### Reporting

The Chairperson (or appointed representative) will make regular written reports, including financial statements, to the hosting Area or Region as to the business of the Circle of Sisters Host Committee

#### Meeting Schedule

A meeting schedule, location and time will be set at the first meeting of the Circle of Sisters Host Committee. Additional meetings may be scheduled if needed. The subcommittees of the Circle of Sisters Host Committee shall meet separately of the Host Committee.

#### Agenda

The Chairperson (or her designee) shall create and print the agenda for each Host Committee meeting. The agenda may include opening with the Serenity Prayer, reading of the Twelve Traditions and Concepts, reading of written reports, Old and New Business. As well, the agenda may include a section for open discussion.

#### Membership

The Circle of Sisters Host Committee will consist of four officers (usually a Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer) and a representative of each subcommittee (usually the Chair of the subcommittee).

#### Decision-making

Every officer and subcommittee Chairperson shall be allowed to participate in decision-making, whether the Committee chooses to make decisions by voting or by consensus. If voting is used, the committee may decide that the Host Committee Chairperson shall only vote to break a tie. Additional members may also participate in decision-making if they

are in attendance for two of the last three Host Committee meetings (including the current meeting).

### Motions and Voting

If the committee chooses to use Robert's Rules of Order to conduct business, then any officer, subcommittee chair, or voting member may make or second a motion. All motions must be in writing. All motions must be passed by a 2/3 (two thirds) majority. Abstentions are considered non-votes. The Host Committee may reconsider any motion by request of a member from the prevailing side.

If the committee chooses to use a method of consensus decision-making to conduct business, then any officer, subcommittee chair, or voting member may propose an idea for discussion and decision. Once consensus is reached, the exact wording of the decision must be recorded in the minutes.

### Attendance

Regular attendance is necessary for a functioning Host Committee. All officers and subcommittee chairpersons are required to attend each Host Committee meeting. Subcommittee chairpersons may send a representative from their subcommittee with a written report. If someone cannot attend they must notify the chairperson or vice chairperson prior to each Host Committee meeting. If a subcommittee chairperson or officer misses a host committee meeting there will be a motion to hold them in non-compliance. The Chairperson or Vice Chairperson must notify the member and they must then attend the next Host Committee meeting to state the reason for their non-attendance or their position may be filled at that time.

### Non-compliance

Non-compliance does not mean that a member is automatically removed from their position. Non-compliance means that the Chairperson or Vice Chairperson must notify the member that they are in non-compliance. That member must then attend the following month's Host Committee meeting and explain their absence and/or re-commit to their position. Non-compliance includes but is not limited to:

- Non-attendance at a host committee meeting
- Loss of abstinence

### Election of Officers and Subcommittee Chairpersons

A simple majority vote is required for election to the Host Committee.

### Subcommittees

All subcommittee chairs will provide the date, time, location, and major agenda items of their next meeting to the entire host committee to allow for participation by those interested. At least one of the four officers will be present at all subcommittee meetings.

### Decisions

All final decisions will be made at the full Host Committee level. The subcommittees will bring their drafts and recommendations to the host committee for approval.