

**OHIO STATE  
CONVENTION  
PLANNING  
COMMITTEE  
GUIDELINES**

Rev. November 7, 2020

*Printed 4/30/2021*

## PROLOGUE

These guidelines are revised and adopted by the Ohio State Planning Committee composed of the four (4) General Service Areas in the State of Ohio

*Previous versions of these guidelines have included State Advisory Committee, information, minutes, and actions; this information, explaining the formation and development of the Ohio State Convention Planning Committee may be found in the Ohio State Archives and is available upon request.*

**NOTE: The Ohio State Conference was renamed the Ohio State Convention at the November 11, 1995 meeting of the state planning committee.**

***NOTE: Meetings of the Ohio State Convention Planning Committee are indicated in the Composition on page 4. Additional meetings held at the Delegates Past & Present Conference and the Annual Ohio State Convention are informational meetings to keep all Areas aware of the host Area's planning and progress. Distribution of Convention flyers and registrations may occur, but these meetings are not considered business meetings. These meetings may conduct business when each Area Committee has been notified in writing of an agenda item to be addressed not-later-than 30 days before the meeting and five (5) of the seven (7) members are present.***

### Effective Date

These CONVENTION PLANNING GUIDELINES became effective 11/11/06 upon the acceptance and adoption by the Ohio State Convention Planning Committee. Revisions through 11/7/20 have been inserted.

### Amendments

Amendments to these CONVENTION PLANNING GUIDELINES shall be effective upon majority approval and acceptance by the Ohio State Convention Planning Committee.

*Revised by sub-committee – winter 2005-06; Revised November 09, 2008*

*Minor format changes July 20, 2009*

*8/15/2010 Added archives revision (5/6/10), updated conference statistics*

*Rev. 2/10/12 to change Mailing Flyers, Secretary, and map.*

*Rev. 11/10/12 to delete SE Michigan and for Trustee/Staffer contacting & talking.*

*Rev. 5/10/14 to include funds for the Archivist/Historian to attend the NAAAWs.*

*Rev. 11/7/15 to update Convention taper and sales directions plus speaker/ presenter directions.*

*Rev. 11/13/16 to update Secretary responsibilities.*

*Rev. 11/4/17 to update Archivist/Historian title to just Archivist and create Ohio State Convention Planning Committee Secretary and Ohio State Convention Host Secretary job descriptions.*

*Rev. 5/4/18 to reflect rotation change in attendance table.*

*Rev. 8/20/19 to change map, moving Harrison & Jefferson counties from area 53 to area 54.*

*Rev. 11/7/20 to include update on Mileage Reimbursement for convention speakers*

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## SCOPE

The scope of this planning guide is based on previous convention experiences. Except where otherwise noted, it is meant to be suggestive only.

In the sense of Unity and Service, this document is tempered by the Twelve Traditions and applicable portions of the Twelve Concepts of Alcoholics Anonymous. Strict adherence should be used where action touches on the above.

Your attention will be alerted, (\* = **Adherence Alert**), when these areas are formulated.

Final approval of the content of each Ohio State Convention agenda and all gratuities allowed rests with the Ohio State Planning Committee.

## STATEMENT of PURPOSE

The Ohio State Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous is an open, annual service convention hosted on a rotating schedule by one of the four Ohio General Service Areas comprised of Area 53 – Central & Southeast OH; Area 54 – Northeast OH; Area 55 – Northwest OH; and Area 56 – Southwest OH.

The purpose of the convention is to carry the spirit of the General Service Conference to *individual A.A. members of the districts and groups in Ohio*. This is accomplished by fostering cooperation among the four Ohio Areas, highlighting and celebrating the General Service Activities of Alcoholics Anonymous in these areas and through sharing experience on AA's legacies of unity, service and recovery.

The goal of the convention is to support and strengthen the General Service Conference structure in Ohio, helping us to stay sober to help other alcoholics achieve sobriety.

## COMPOSITION

The Ohio State Convention Planning Committee meets twice a year on the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday, in May and the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday, in November (*unless a vote is accepted to change the date.*) These meetings are considered closed business meetings of the Ohio State Convention and provide custodial oversight to the host Area for each convention. The following individuals form a committee to oversee the planning of the convention. Membership is restricted to the current area officers of our four areas plus past delegates of these four areas and the current Ohio State Archivist.

Interested AAs and members of the host convention Area committee are encouraged to attend and participate in developing this convention with an active voice, but no vote. Recognizing this is a State Planning Committee; membership is limited to those individuals currently or previously involved in planning beyond their given Area. All state planning meetings shall be non-smoking. The meetings shall be located at a convenient location central to the whole state, the Columbus area is suggested unless a vote is accepted to change the location. Costs for refreshments and/or rental shall be considered convention expenses.

## **CONVENTION OFFICERS – COMMITTEES**

*The hosting Area shall determine the Convention site approximate one year (earlier selection is encouraged) prior to the Convention date. Unless requested by the host Area to the Ohio State Planning Committee. The Ohio State Convention shall be held between the calendar dates of July 5<sup>th</sup> and September 1<sup>st</sup> each year. Please consider the 6-week window of The International Convention and other Regional activities when scheduling.*

The hosting Area's current Delegate shall be the Chairperson of the Convention.

### **Chairperson**

- 1) Selects convention Co-Chairperson.
- 2) \*Shall use, "Group Conscience", Concept to conduct business and actions.
- 3) \*Where conflict arises, the Convention Chairperson has the "Right of Decision", subject to Ohio State Convention Planning Committee.

### **Chairperson and Co-Chairperson (Are members of all Convention Committees)**

- 1) Selects Convention Committee Chairpersons.
- 2) Prepares Preliminary Budget.
- 3) Determines quantity of flyers and programs needed – each Area is to receive not-less-than 1,000 copies of flyers — first 500 considered early-bird in February—final 500 not-later-than June of the year of the Convention.\*
- 4) Invites the East Central Regional Trustee. Make plans for the Trustee to give a report on GSB activities and events.
- 5) Contact the General Service Office in New York for a staff member to give a report on GSO activities and events.
- 6) Contacts Al-Anon and Alateen to participate in committee and convention.
- 7) Maintains open communication with all Convention Committees progress.

### **Ohio State Convention Host Committee Secretary**

- 1) Serves a one-year term coincident with their Area responsibility for the Ohio State Convention. The term begins after the November meeting when their Area assumes the responsibility for the next Ohio State Convention. The term ends at the conclusion of the November meeting when their area turns the responsibility of the next Ohio State Convention to the next host Area.
- 2) Is responsible for minutes of the State Convention Planning Committee meetings.
- 3) E-mails or otherwise contacts the State Convention Planning Committee members as needed.
- 4) Sends minutes of the State Planning Committee to each Host Committee member and to the State Archivist and Area Archives Committee Chair/Archivist.

## **Ohio State Convention Planning Committee Secretary**

- 1) Serves a two-year term, beginning at the November meeting of the Ohio State Convention Planning Committee, in odd-numbered years.
- 2) Is responsible for minutes (or notes for non-voting meetings) for all meetings of the Ohio State Convention Planning Committee meetings. If the State Committee Secretary is unable to be present for any of these minutes, s/he is responsible for obtaining information from another attendee, arrange for in advance if at all possible.
- 3) Sends notices (postcards or email) to the members of the Ohio State Convention Planning Committee as reminders for the four (4) annual meetings of the Committee: at the ECR/CDPP in February first Saturday of May (voting meeting), Sunday at the State Convention and first Saturday of November (voting meeting) at least thirty days in advance, with follow-up e-mails in the interim as needed.
- 4) Sends minutes/notes of the State Planning Committee meetings to each Committee member and to the State Archivist.
- 5) Sends Convention dates/contact information to Grapevine and Box 459, being aware of the respective deadlines for posting.
- 6) Maintains and regularly distributes a calendar of state-wide events to Area Delegates, Planning Committee members, the State Archivist and whoever is maintaining the Ohio State website. The calendar of events will include at least the four Ohio Mini Conferences and the Ohio State Convention and is updated to reflect new information as it becomes available. Every effort should be made to include the annual OYPAA Conference as well.
- 7) Expenses including charitable mileage will be reimbursed from a separately-established fund of the Planning Committee. This fund should be maintained at a level of \$200.00 if possible. In November, this fund should be replenished from State Convention receipts.
- 8) Qualifications for the position of the State Committee Secretary include being a sober member of Alcoholics Anonymous and a current or former voting member of the Ohio State Convention Planning Committee, as well as having the computer knowledge which will allow for the tasks in the job description to be completed.

## **Treasurer**

- 1) Treasurer should be bondable.
- 2) Determines location of Convention PO Box.
- 3) Opens Convention checking account with seed money received from previous Host Area. Checks *should* require at least two signatures. Appoints person(s) for second signature(s) with approval of the Convention Chairperson.
- 4) Keeps records of registrations and meals.

- 5) Deposits all monies received from registrations, etc., on a timely basis.
- 6) Pays bills, records all debits and credits for Convention.
- 7) Prepares preliminary financial report following the Convention.
- 8) Forwards seed money of \$3,000.00 to next year's Convention Host Area not later than November following the most recent Convention, check payable to, "Ohio State Convention".
- 9) Prepares final financial report for the May meeting.
- 10) Disburses Convention proceeds in accordance with directions given by the Ohio State Planning Committee. As possible, replenish an archives reserve for the NAAAW at an amount set by the State Planning Committee. When contributions of proceeds are sent to A.A.W.S., each Area receives equal credit.

### **Coffee and Tea Committee**

- 1) The Convention Chairperson designates person or persons, *as needed*, to be responsible for signing all coffee or tea deliveries from facility service personnel.
  - a. Keeps copies of all signed receipts.
  - b. Matches all receipts to the master hotel bill.
  - c. Make sure that hotel management is aware of matching procedure. Only matched receipts will be honored.

**Archivist**– term of office shall be four (4) years or until the successor is elected. [Next election scheduled for May 2022]. Succession should, as possible, follow the same rotation as the Conventions.

Purpose and Duties – to preserve the history of Ohio General Service by acquiring, maintaining, and cataloging general service information and other items pertinent to our 4 areas including, but not limited to, minutes of Convention Planning Meetings, State Convention Planning Guidelines (for which they are responsible to maintain and distribute the current copy), Area minutes (as submitted), Convention flyers/programs/treasurer's reports; to ensure the State Archives rotate with the Host Committee as described in the Archives section; to create, as needed or desired, displays and histories to inform and inspire Convention registrants about our history and structure. As funds permit we will send the Archivist to the National AA Archives Workshops.

### **Archives**

- 1) Obtain from the State and Regional Archivist the existing archives for exhibition.
- 2) Set work schedule for volunteers to set up archives, to be in attendance during the Convention and to remove the display following the Convention.
- 3) Add copies of local archives when available.

- 4) Return archives back to the respective archivists.
- 5) If desired by host area, obtain a set of recordings for the host area's archives.

### **Registration Committee**

- 1) Establishes a schedule for volunteers at registration desk.
- 2) Prepares and distributes pre-registration envelopes.
- 3) Registers and keeps tally of registration and banquets from walk-ins and distributes Convention materials.
- 4) Deposits with the Treasurer all monies received from registration action.
- 5) Assigns banquet seating if desired. Arrange for seating of ushers.
- 6) Assigns greeters for each major Convention session.
- 7) Transfers registration files, after the Convention, to the succeeding Host Area Delegate.



## **Displays – Grapevine – Literature – Host Area Standing Committee(s)**

- 1) Some areas have separate chairpersons, separate displays accordingly.
- 2) The Convention Chairperson will be responsible that *ONLY* items in the current A.A. World Services, Inc. and A.A. Grapevine, Inc. catalogs will be displayed and sold.
  - a. Materials not included in the previous statement *shall be removed from the Convention floor immediately* by the Convention Chairperson or designee.
  - b. Do not include confidential items, i.e. World Directories, etc.
  - c. Contact previous Convention Chairperson as to quantities to order.
- 3) Outside vendors attending the Ohio State Convention will not be allowed to sell, display or promote their products on any part of the designated convention floor area or in any room accessible from the convention floor.
- 4) The convention floor area is designated as all meeting rooms, all lobbies in front of and leading to the meeting rooms and all rooms that are immediately adjacent to the meeting rooms
- 5) The exceptions are:
  - a) If the taper is asked to attend, record and even provide sound reinforcement for the Convention, then the committee may offer space away from the Convention floor where they may sell Convention and other recordings;
  - b) If the taper charges a fee for taping the Convention (and possibly providing sound reinforcement as well) then they may only offer Convention recordings from the Convention floor in the same manner as any other outside vendor.
  - c) Local Intergroups and AFG invited entities may display and sell literature with the understanding that they sell only AAWS, GV, and Alanon approved literature.
- 6) The designated convention taper and all other vendors may independently arrange with the host hotel their own rooms for the display and sales of their product, as long as the room is not immediately adjacent to the designated convention floor area.
- 7) The potential convention taper must understand and agree to this policy prior to agreeing to be the approved convention taper by the convention chairperson.
- 8) A secure lockable display room shall be provided free-of-charge for all A.A. related regional, state, local intergroup and service committee displays such as literature (Conference Approved only), Grapevine, Archives, etc. This room can be near the convention meeting rooms but may be in another part of the hotel if necessary.
- 9) Host Committee shall not become a vendor and sell souvenirs on the conference floor or at the registration table.

## **Speakers Committee**

- 1) To listen to speakers from recordings and recommend appropriate speakers to the Convention Host Committee.
- 2) Send a letter (see sample letter, appendix I) to each invited speaker reminding them that business attire is in effect for both males and females and profanity in any form will not be tolerated. Included in the letter

should be a statement that all discussion and sharing must adhere to our traditions as it relates to our problem with alcoholism.

- 3) The letter is to be signed and returned to the chairperson.
- 4) Make early contact with chosen speakers for confirmation.
- 5) Follow up with confirmation and inform the speaker which of the expenses that the [Ohio State] Convention will reimburse; including travel, room, meals, and registration.

## **Audio**

The Convention Chairperson shall be responsible to hire someone to record the Convention. The Chairperson will inform the audio/communication person that *only audio material made of the Convention will be sold on the Convention floor*. Any other audio material shall be *removed from the Convention floor immediately*.

Prepare for possibility of multiple sessions to be recorded simultaneously.

The audio/communication person will be responsible for any expenses incurred to set up equipment, equipment rentals, or charges made by the Convention site to enable recording of the Convention.

## **Video Materials**

Make arrangements with GSO, New York, for video materials not available in the convention area.

Make sure that necessary equipment is available and in working order.

Coordinate the showing schedule with Program Chairperson.

Set up work schedule for volunteers.

## **Printing**

- 1) Flyer heading will be:

***“(Year) Ohio State Convention of A.A. Hosted by Ohio General Service”***

- 2) Include information for: Speakers, hotel rates, plus applicable taxes, registration fees, banquet cost, *facility smoking policy*, site of Convention, a directional map, telephone contact numbers, cut-off date, early bird date, statement that all convention attendees must be registered to attend.
- 3) ***Do not*** use full names on the flyers; get the best price for printing; printer must meet deadlines.

## **Program Committee**

Develop a theme for the Convention.

Plan a format that includes presentations on the theme.

Coordinate with Convention Chair/Co-Chair if East Central Trustee and/or GSO Staff will be one of the speakers.

Committee should depend strongly on the Chairperson and **on any Past Delegates** available for substance or direction.

## **Meeting Chairpersons**

8:00 pm – Friday – opening meeting of the Convention will be chaired by the Delegate of the previous Host Area.

8:00 pm – Saturday – chaired by the Delegate of the Host Area of this convention.

10:30 am – Sunday – chaired by the Delegate of the next Host Area

Saturday Morning Meeting – time to be announced – will be chaired by the Delegate of the remaining Area

## **Mailing Flyers**

Establish group to handle preparation of envelopes, the labeling or addressing.

Mailing is generally made to previous Convention attendees [obtain registration list from previous year's committee], all Delegate Areas in the East Central Region, all Intergroup/Central Offices within the state of Ohio, the Trustee of the East Central Region and GSO.

Delegate Areas also mail to their Area General Assembly mailing lists.

Determine, with Convention Committee, *if* second mailing of flyer is necessary.

Usually, Al-Anon and Alateen will handle their mailing needs. Check for quantities of flyers needed.

## **Entertainment Committee**

Handles details for entertainment chosen by Convention Committee.

If there is a dance, check for local union requirements.

Hires music available, keeping costs within budget established by the Convention Chairperson.

- a. Make arrangements with entertainment chosen for reservation down payment.

## **Hospitality Rooms**

- 1.) All Areas are expected to contribute \$200.00 to hospitality, based on past practice.
- 2.) Offer hospitality rooms to other Areas, if available.
- 3.) Has responsibility for coffee or other refreshments and people needed to handle services.
- 4.) If making own coffee, buys necessary supplies, borrows urns, etc.
- 5.) If hotel furnishes coffee, work through the Coffee Committee Chairperson for signature requirements and payment arrangements.
- 6.) Oversees good housekeeping practices

**KEEP IT CLEAN**

## **Committee Meetings & Miscellaneous Topics**

- 1) Meetings should be scheduled regularly, but not so often that they become a burden.

Secretary sends notices a week or so ahead of time and includes a copy of previous meeting's minutes *and agenda if available*.

**Estimate Attendance – consider past Convention attendance records:**

<b>CINCINNATI AREA 56</b>	<b>CLEVELAND AREA 54</b>	<b>COLUMBUS AREA 53</b>	<b>TOLEDO AREA 55</b>
1987 – 898 A Common Solution	1988 – 768 A Shared Experience – A New Life	<b>1989</b> – 928 Back to Basics	1990 – 1102 Freedom through Acceptance
1991 – 813 Carrying the Message: How and Where	1992 – 429 Unity equals Sobriety	1993 – 555 What Shape is your Triangle	1994 – 1050 Happy, Joyous, and Free
1995 – 250 Sharing 12 <sup>th</sup> Step Success	<b>1996</b> – 438 It All Started with a Nickel: AA Then and Now	1997 – 501 Service: Our Legacy Our Future	1998 – 647 Sobriety: The Gift of Living
1999 – 438 Sharing the Language of the Heart Into the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century	2000 – 190 Taking AA into the New Millennium	2001 – 401 Love & Service	<b>2002</b> – 619 Joy of Living through the 12 Steps
2003 – 300 Happy Joyous & Free	2004 – 119 Experience, Strength & Hope – the Changing Face of Sponsorship	2005 – 124? Inside AA	2006 – 283 For Those Yet To Come
2007 – 412 Service Is The Key To Happiness	<b>2008</b> – 298 Service, Our Legacy, Our Future	2009 – 275 I am Responsible...	2010 – 557 Unity
2011 – 231 Passing on the Spiritual Keys	2012 – 240 Service – What a Concept	2013 – 277 Service: Where the Miracle Grows	<b>2014</b> – 624 Alcoholics in Action...from the coffee pot to World Service.
2015 – 141 Rekindle the Passion of our Co-Founders. It Begins with a Handshake	2016 – 208 Working with Others Through Sponsorship	2017 – 269 Supporting Our Future	2018 – A Design for Living
2019 – Invitation to Fellowship	2020 –	*2022 -	* <b>2021</b> -
2023 -	2024 -	*2026 -	*2025 -

\* NOTE ROTATION CHANGE

A conservative break-even figure should be established for each convention site and used with the preliminary budget to set the registration fee. When hosting the Regional Convention (dates **bolded** above) along with the State Convention add between 10% and 15% to break-even figure.

**Registrations - Cancellation and Refunds**

The flyer should designate a reasonable time before the Convention date as a deadline for refund requests. For requests received after this date, consideration should be given for hardship cases and for sickness.

## **I. D. BADGES**

Registration Chairperson will obtain economical plastic holders. Badge inserts will show:

**“(year) OHIO STATE CONVENTION.”**

The badge insert will be completed by the registrar, by committee decision, or have pens available for individuals to complete at registration table.

## **Gifts - Flowers and Decorations**

- 1) Decide if gifts and/or flowers are to be given to guest speakers.
- 2) Make arrangements for platform decor.
- 3) Decide if head platform table should have flower pieces.

## **Banner and Flags**

- 1) When Ohio hosts the East Central Region Convention, the Regional Banner will be placed behind the speaker’s platform to the speaker’s right and the Ohio State banner will be placed behind the speakers to the left.
- 2) For the Ohio State Convention, the banner will be centered behind the speakers.
- 3) If there is an American flag already prominently displayed in the Convention Assembly, and it cannot be removed, ***do not place our American flag***. Otherwise, our American flag will be placed ***to the right of the speaker on the platform***. All State flags will always be placed to the right and lower than the American flag as you face the platform.
- 4) The Convention Chairperson is responsible for turning the Ohio State Convention banner over to the incoming Convention Host Area.

**Banquet Head Table** – The Area Host Committee decides if this is desirable.

## **Smoking Policy**

*Given the current state of our society regarding smoking or non-smoking the Convention accepts that all or most all facilities are non-smoking. Should any exception occur to this acknowledgement – notification shall be made on all flyers, announced at each meeting.*

## **Distribution of Fund Balance**

- 1) Following each year’s Convention, the Convention Treasurer will prepare a final detail Convention Financial Report after all outstanding bills are paid.
- 2) Responsibility for distributing excess monies, after seed money is transferred to next Convention Area, is the Ohio State Planning Committee.
- 3) In the event of a loss occurring for a State Convention, the State Planning Committee shall determine the extent of responsibility of the loss to be accepted by each of the Ohio Delegate Areas.

## **Mileage Reimbursement**

Mileage for speakers is to be reimbursed at two times (2x) the current IRS standard for mileage driven in service of charitable organizations.

## **Al-Anon and Alateen**

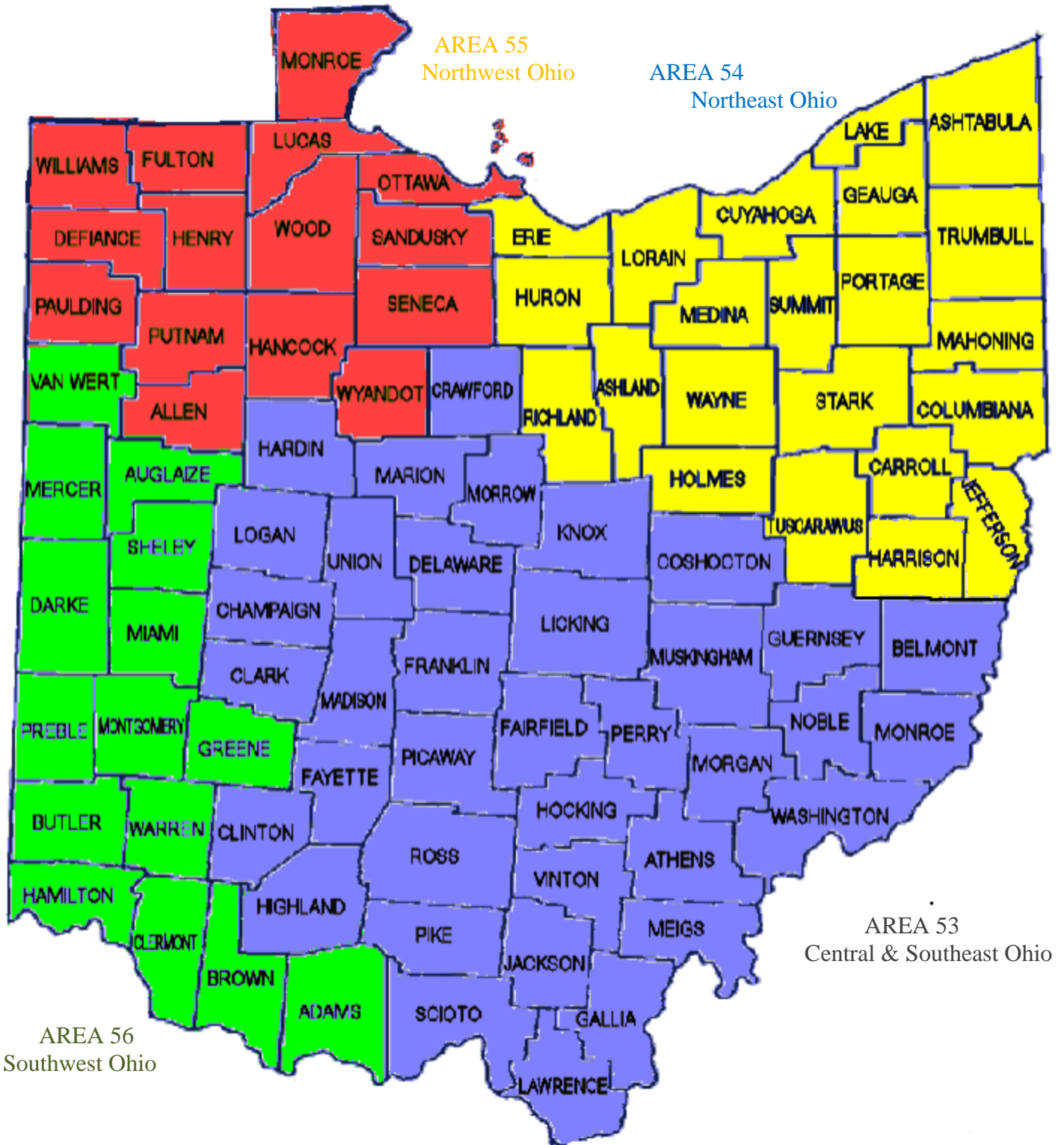
- 1) \*State and/or local representative should be extended an invitation to participate in all the Committee Planning meetings. The representative shall advise what participation Al-Anon/Alateen shall have. *Historically, Saturday afternoon has been available for Al-Anon/Alateen speakers, every effort to maintain this cooperation will be made.*
- 2) Check for Convention and hospitality room requirements.
- 3) Program schedule should be given to the Convention Chairperson and the Program Chairperson as soon as possible.
- 4) There will be no registration fees for their speakers. Any other costs will be Area Autonomy.

## **A.A. Guidelines – Conferences, Conventions and Roundups**

Since A.A. Guidelines can be changed by GSO at any time without notification, they have been separated from this document. The current version is: 7/17. It was obtained from web site:

[http://aa.org/en\\_pdfs/mg-04\\_conferenceandconv.pdf](http://aa.org/en_pdfs/mg-04_conferenceandconv.pdf)

# OHIO STATE GENERAL SERVICE AREAS





## Appendix I - Sample Letter of Loving Invitation to Selected Speakers

*(Letterhead to read)*

20xx Ohio State Convention Planning Committee  
Area 5X, incl. POB, address, City, State, etc.

Date

Addressee:

“Joe or Mary Staffer”  
c/o General Service Office  
475 Riverside Drive, 11<sup>th</sup> floor  
New York City, NY 00000

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

It is with gratitude in service, that the planning committee for the Umpteenth Ohio State Convention, hosted by Area 5X, extends a loving invitation to speak at this coming year’s convention, insert dates here.

“In keeping with our singleness of purpose and our Third Tradition which states that “The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking,” we ask that all who participates confine their discussion to their problems with alcohol.”

*While an individual’s story may be his/hers, no member’s sharing is more important than the preservation of the Unity of Alcoholics Anonymous as expressed by the AA Twelve Traditions. The committee does not consider the Traditions to be ‘suggested’...*

We respectfully request that speakers and panelists be dressed appropriately to represent AA, and to refrain from the use of profanity during their sharing.

Please respond at your earliest convenience to our invitation, including your willingness to cooperate with the above guidance.

In Love and Service,