

# **PUBLIC OUTREACH COORDINATOR JOB DESCRIPTION AL-ANON FAMILY GROUPS OF GREATER ST. LOUIS**

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## **Guidelines for Volunteers** *(December 2016)*

Public Outreach informs the general public through the media, professionals, facilities and organizations about who we are, what we do, and how to get in touch with us. Our goal is to attract to our program those whose lives are or have been affected by someone else's drinking, so that those who need our program can find the help and hope that we offer. We also strive for name recognition and credibility as a community resource.

### **JOB DESCRIPTION**

The coordinator acts in accordance with the spiritual principles of Al-Anon Family Groups and serves a 3 year term. The greater the awareness in the general public, the more likely those who need us will find us.

**Eligibility/Qualifications/Materials:** – Active member of Al-Anon with working knowledge of the 12 Traditions and 12 Concepts, as well as having knowledge and understanding:

- Current Service Manual (available on line);
- The Best of Public Outreach dated 3/15/12 (free on line);
- A “Meeting on Wheels” (See Guideline (G-22), which is available in the “Group Services” section of the WSO Members’ Web site);
- Comfortable representing Al-Anon in public maintaining anonymity at the level of Press, Radio, Films and TV, and Internet;
- Understanding of attraction vs. promotion;
- See Concept 11 in Service Manual;
- Read public outreach information on WSO members website: [www.al-anon.alateen.org/members](http://www.al-anon.alateen.org/members).

### **Duties/Responsibilities**

- To help AIS spread the word about Al-Anon/Alateen to the general public.
- Assemble volunteers and committees. Volunteers do not need prior experience to participate in Public Outreach projects. Valuable experience will come as a natural result of willingness.
- Please send your name and e-mail address to your Area Public Outreach Coordinator (currently Faye). She will provide access to the resources and information you can use to make your project as easy, inexpensive, and successful as possible.
- Share progress and results with Intergroup Representatives (IRs) at monthly IR meetings; write articles for Sincerely Al-Anon celebrating your Teams’ successes.
- Ability and flexible time to represent Al-Anon at the public level.
- Comfortable making phone contacts.
- Accessible, available, responsive, and flexible.
- Is able to communicate effectively, prepare written reports and meet deadlines.

- Creativity and problem solving skills. Has a strong sense of responsibility, able to prioritize and work independently or as a team member.
- Has a computer, email address, word processing, spread sheet for tracking volunteer and other information.
- It is not necessary to reinvent the wheel. We can learn from each other and spend our time and energy reaching more families and friends of alcoholics.

I. **Form Public Outreach Teams (POT)** that concentrate in specific areas. Below are the suggested teams. This is the meat of the program, and a team leader is suggested for each specific team. These teams should always be pro-active and in contact with their target market. It is suggested that each Team meet on a monthly basis, in person, conference call, etc. as well as suggested email communications with their team on a regular basis. Each Team should set goals. For example, if the Education Team decides to contact high school counselors, they discuss how they want to implement and outline their plan of action. Then, they go on to their next project which might be to contact universities and offer to speak at a class, assembly, etc.

1) **Treatment Facilities Outreach Team** that reaches professionals providing treatment, counseling, or therapy services to alcoholics at a variety of organizations. The staff, patients, clients, and consumers are focused on treatment and recovery from the effects of alcoholism. Numerous types of facilities and organizations offer treatment and mental health services for substance abuse, such as psychiatric wards in hospitals, clinics, or mental health centers providing detoxifications (“detox”) from alcohol, Rehabilitation centers (“rehab”), non profit organizations with substance abuse services, such as Salvation Army, Catholic Charities and Jewish Family Services. Mental or behavioral healthcare organizations, or agencies with addiction or substance abuse-related counseling, shelters, half-way, or “sober living” houses. Our commonality with them makes our communication easier. Members usually find that the treatment facilities welcome our services. Ask them if Al-Anon can do a weekly presentation at Family Week. Currently, Al-Anon has a presence at Harris House, Bridgeway, and Edgewood.

2) **Legal Team** focuses on the court system, criminal justice, drug, family, and juvenile courts, police stations, jails, fire and rescue.

- Board Member Kevin Hoffmeister advised that he found a new facebook page that was started recently. It is called Missouri Network Outreach Center, and they offer legal resources to people struggling with the disease of addiction. Their grand opening is on December 18, 2015, from 2-6 p.m. at 4022 S. Broadway. Their website address is [www.MoNetwork.org](http://www.MoNetwork.org).

3) **Medical Professionals Team** focuses on counselors, therapists, psychologists, clergy, mental-health professionals, employee assistance personnel. Medical and others who work with the public are in a position to identify and refer clients and their families to Al-Anon and Alateen. Members often share that a referral from a professional was a decisive factor in motivating them to begin attending Al-Anon. Some online resources are as follows:

- Family counseling resources, <http://www.allaboutcounseling.com>
- Marriage counselors, <http://www.marriagecounselors.us/>
- Marriage and family counseling, [http://www.counselsearch.com/about\\_us.aspx](http://www.counselsearch.com/about_us.aspx)
- Social workers, <http://www.helpstartshere.org/find-a-social-worker>
- Therapists by zip code, <http://www.goodtherapy.org/find-therapist.html>
- Referral Services to support groups and community resources

- Family counseling resources, <http://www.allaboutcounseling.com>

4) **Public/Media Team:** Al-Anon's message of hope and recovery can reach thousands of people with each news item, story, public service announcement, DVD broadcast, or Internet posting. The World Service Office (WSO) distributes the following, which we can utilize:

- ❖ TV and radio public service announcements annually,
- ❖ publishes Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism magazine biannually,
- ❖ posts podcasts monthly,
- ❖ uses Web sites to carry the Al-Anon/Alateen message of hope.

**Internet/Social Media:**

- Inform local community Web sites about the local Al-Anon telephone number, website address, and office address.
  - Include the AIS contact information on local Web site addresses in all outreach projects. **Our contact information:** Al-Anon Family Groups of Greater St. Louis, 14 Sunnen Drive, #144, Maplewood, MO 63143 \*\* 314.645.1572 \*\* [afgstl@att.net](mailto:afgstl@att.net).
  - The official Al-Anon Family Groups Facebook page has reached a new milestone – 20,000 Likes! Find them on Facebook by searching for Al-Anon WSO. Then help carry Al-Anon's message by sharing their posts. But when you do so, please remember that Facebook is a public domain, like press, radio, TV, films and other internet sites. Please do not make any public comments that would break your anonymity by revealing that you are a member of Al-Anon.

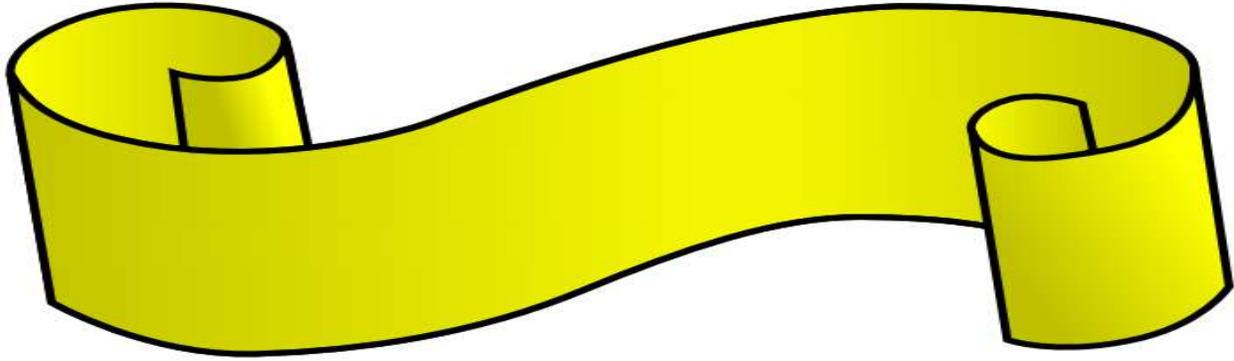
We may also implement billboard campaigns or provide video clips from the Public Outreach Web site for community access cable channels. Every time the media mentions Al-Anon Family Groups, our program increases its credibility in the minds of the general public and the professional community.

5) **Cooperation with Alcoholics Anonymous Team.** At a local AA Convention, such as *The Fall Classic or Spring Fling*, ask AA if they would like us to set up a literature table at the convention and sell literature. Some other ideas are:

- ❖ Do they need a speaker at a meeting, convention, workshop, etc?
- ❖ Offer to provide literature sales at workshops, such as District 9's January Al-Anon workshop that is heavily attended by Al-Anon members.

6) **Educational Team.** Reach out to local high schools, universities, nursing schools, etc. Offer to speak at a class. Some resources are:

- 1) High schools & universities, <http://www.directoryofschools.com/highschools/US.htm>.
- 2) National Parent Teacher Association (PTA), [http://pta.org/jp\\_find\\_your\\_pta.html](http://pta.org/jp_find_your_pta.html).
- 3) Public schools, <http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/>.



II. ***All teams have the option to work with an AI-Anon district. For example, you can call a district representative and ask to speak at a district meeting and pitch your public outreach ideas, ask for volunteers, etc.***

III. **Possible ways to reach the general public, professionals, etc.**

- ❖ Set up displays and distribute AI-Anon/Alateen literature at health fairs.
- ❖ Ask librarians to use AI-Anon bookmarks at their check-out counter.
- ❖ Place posters in community centers, courthouses, airports, colleges, grocery stores, malls, libraries, laundromats, bowling allies, and highway rest areas.
- ❖ Leave AI-Anon Faces Alcoholism magazine in break rooms, waiting rooms, hospitals, or beauty salons, among other places. Take copies of AFA magazines to police stations, churches, and nursing schools. Much can be said about this publication as it is our public outreach magazine, and it began as a “special edition” of the 2001 September *Forum*. In the past year, members have distributed almost 390,000 copies.
- ❖ Provide medical, mental health, and substance abuse agencies and professionals with AFA magazines.
- ❖ Contact and build relationships with local National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD) affiliates
- ❖ Utilize the AI-Anon business cards, which lists Area website with meeting schedules, local AI-Anon contact names, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses.
- ❖ Have the DVD, AI-Anon and Alateen’s Role in Family Recovery (AV-31), available to show to professionals, schools, colleges, and the public.
- ❖ Invite the religious leader of the church where you meet, a teacher, or a local police officer to an open meeting.
- ❖ Write letters or send e-mail messages to guidance counselors at community schools (K-12).
- ❖ Contact personnel at military bases, such as Chaplains at Family Service Centers.
- ❖ Place an Alateen poster with meeting information on a bulletin board in the school guidance office.
- ❖ Remember to ask for permission when posting or making AI-Anon/Alateen materials available in public areas, so they won’t be removed and discarded right away.

IV. **This sheet may be used to help list and prioritize projects for general public outreach projects.** Begin by selecting four projects. Then list the committee's two favorite projects, and finally trim the list to one project, if that is what the committee feels it can handle.

Committee selections:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

Committee's two favorite "general public" activities:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

Committee's favorite activity to reach the general public:

\_\_\_\_\_

V. **How to present information tables at health fairs and conferences:**

State, county, and community organizations, businesses, and associations often have community health fairs. Professional organizations also host conferences and workshops. They frequently invite Al-Anon to have information tables or to provide literature for a “take one” table. Here are a few guidelines that may be helpful.

- When gathering information about a health fair, inquire about the length of the event, the hours of operation, any fees that are required, and the number of attendees. If the organization charges for booth space, it is okay to ask about a special rate for not for profit, community-based organizations. Most of the time there is no charge to attend these events.
- Also, verify the equipment that is supplied or needed for rental, i.e., table, chairs, etc. Ask if Spanish or French literature will be helpful or appropriate.
- The Office has 2 PO suitcases that contain literature specifically for PO. The procedure is to call the office prior to checking out one suitcase and ask if it is available. If it is available, please go to the office and check it out, giving the Office staff your name, group #, and contact information. The procedure is to use PO literature specific to your event. If you are attending an event with Alateen age people, set out a lot of Alateen literature. Then, please return the suitcase to the Office in a prompt fashion because other PO teams will utilize it as well. There is a form that you fill out identifying which pamphlets you gave away so that the Office can replenish the suitcase literature. Sample of form is attached as Addendum 1.
- Prepare a list of Al-Anon volunteers and a schedule to include the day and times each volunteer will serve. It is suggested to have no more than two or three members staffing the table so that attendees are more inclined to approach the Al-Anon table.
- Plan your display. A tablecloth with an attractive display of literature, meeting schedules, and Al-Anon/Alateen posters works well. “Keep It Simple.” Avoid overwhelming visitors by having too many pieces of literature.
- There are business cards with your local Al-Anon contact information on hand and Where & When meeting schedules.
- One member can stand in front of the table and partially to the side of the table to greet visitors, if the health fair booth arrangement makes this possible. Another member can stand or be seated behind the table. Members can take turns sitting when they are tired of standing.
- It is okay to say, “Hello” or “Welcome” and to ask, “Are you familiar with Al-Anon Family Groups?” When both members are seated behind the table, they are likely to be talking to each other. This inadvertently gives the impression that the members are more interested in speaking with each other than providing information about Al-Anon.
- Professionals are more likely to approach the table if they are greeted with a statement such as, “Are you familiar with Al-Anon as a resource for your patients, clients, or students?”
- A warm, welcoming smile also draws visitors to your booth space.
- Maintain a professional appearance and attitude. Remember, it is highly unlikely that every attendee will stop by the Al-Anon table to pick up information.
- Much of our vital communications with each other, the media, professionals, facilities, and organizations can be done quickly, accurately, and inexpensively through e-mails, e-mail distribution lists, conference calls, and other technology.

**VI Budget for Public Outreach**

- A.) Since donations are voluntary, it's difficult to accurately forecast a budget.
- B.) Ask groups to donate literature, such as Forums or Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism, so we can distribute to Teams.

**VII. Dates to Remember**

- i. Leave Literature in honor of Lois W.'s birthday on March 4.
- ii. April: Alcohol Awareness Month.
- iii. September: National Recovery Month

**VIII Addendum and Resources to Utilize (please note that you can send an email in lieu of a letter)**

- ❖ Outreach to the Public/Media G-10
- ❖ Outreach to Institutions G-9
- ❖ Outreach to Professionals G-29
- ❖ Open Letter to Doctors
- ❖ Open Letter to Human Services Professionals
- ❖ Open Letter to Lawyers
- ❖ Open Letter to Law Enforcement
- ❖ Open Letter to Spiritual Leaders
- ❖ Open Letter to Student Assistance Professionals
- ❖ Open Letter to My Teacher
- ❖ Excerpt from Al-Anon Alateen Service Manual 2014-2017, pp. 109-116