

# ACA WSO Volunteer Orientation Document

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## Welcome to Service

Thank you for exploring the many opportunities to be of service at the World Service Organization (WSO) of Adult Children of Alcoholics and Dysfunctional Families (ACA).

As you know, ACA is a program of recovery. We recover from the effects of growing up in family dysfunction. The WSO, through literature and programming, supports the recovery of ACA members. This requires the inspired efforts of people like yourself, who offer their time and talents to help bring the message of recovery to a wounded world.

As you begin this journey, consider for yourself the talents you may bring and the amount of time you have to be involved. It is often expressed that service aids recovery. And ACA promises that our self-esteem will increase as we give ourselves approval on a daily basis. Congratulations on taking this step. Thank you for your willingness to join WSO.

## A Brief Description of the Organization

### What is the WSO?

The ACA WSO is a service body and a legal entity which was incorporated as a charitable nonprofit corporation in 1987 in the State of California. The service body is composed of volunteers (Committee Members and Board of Trustees) and staff. The corporate bylaws state: The sole purpose (of WSO) is to serve the fellowship of Adult Children of Alcoholics (ACA) by maintaining service for those who might be

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seeking, through ACA, the means for recovering from being raised in an alcoholic or otherwise dysfunctional home.

To achieve its purpose, ACA WSO shall:

3.1 Provide public information, meeting locations, educational material and such other services as may be deemed necessary.

3.2 To organize and provide support service to those Meetings, Intergroups, and Regions that are registered with ACAWSO and are guided by the Twelve Steps and follow the Twelve Traditions of ACA.

3.3 Convene an annual conference where consideration regarding the business of ACA WSO occurs and priorities for the coming year are discussed and implemented when/where feasible.

*(Full bylaws are found at: [ACA WSO Bylaws](#))*

The WSO employs paid staff, maintains a physical office in California, provides storage space for business records, archives, equipment, literature inventory, and operates the day-to-day business of ACA, including the sale and shipping of ACA literature.

## **The System of WSO Committees**

The Board of Trustees has committees to support the fellowship and to implement requests from the Conference. Several permanent committees keep the organization operating by focusing on tasks of policy, finance, archives, information technology and such. Some committees support the fellowship directly - member services, or public outreach, or those tasked with producing our Conferences or events. Others are specific to the purpose of the WSO, such as our literature committees and publishing.

The Board also has ad hoc type committees, designated to fulfill a special project or study; they may operate for a limited time. An example is the committee to explore changing the name of the fellowship to make it more inclusive, established by a motion adopted at the 2022 Annual Business Conference (ABC).

Membership in most committees is open to all ACA members. The WSO invites members to volunteer. Most committees are composed of four to six members, including a chair, a vice chair, and a secretary. Committees report regularly on the status of their work.

## **Deciding Where to Serve**

A good first step might be to “visit” several different committees and “try them on” to see which might suit you. To do that, start by visiting the website, [acawso.org](http://acawso.org). The Committees have webpages on that site where they state their purpose and list things like contact information, meeting times, reports and other materials.

Identifying your abilities and gifts could also be a good direction for finding a welcoming spot in WSO. Part of that process could be identifying your interests. Perhaps it’s something important to you. Personal inspiration can be useful in choosing a path within WSO.

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For example, ideas and concerns of ACA members for meeting safety sparked the development of both the Predatory Behavior Tent Card and the ComLine special edition, *Why We Need to Talk About Predatory Behavior*, March 2019. Their volunteering efforts made a big difference.

If you live near our distribution center in the Los Angeles, CA, you have the opportunity to volunteer in person. This is the heart of the WSO operations - shipping books, answering phones, organizing a physical archive and more. If interested, please contact the General Manager at [gm@acawso.org](mailto:gm@acawso.org).

Whether creating content, drafting a report or simply attending a business meeting, service generally involves technology. If you have a computer or phone you can volunteer at WSO.

## Helpful Links

The WSO Organizational chart	<a href="https://acawso.org/category/wso-org/">https://acawso.org/category/wso-org/</a>
The Committees Calendar	<a href="https://acawso.org/committees-calendar/">https://acawso.org/committees-calendar/</a>
A Synopsis of WSO Committees	<a href="https://acawso.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Synopsis-of-WSO-Committees-April.pdf">https://acawso.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Synopsis-of-WSO-Committees-April.pdf</a>

## WSO Websites

WSO has three main websites, which may change over time as new needs arise.

Our original website is <https://adultchildren.org/>. Here, ACA members are introduced to the ACA program, and can find ACA meetings, in-person and online. Recovery events and workshops may also be listed. Here you may find literature, for purchase and free. Resources for groups, intergroups, and regions are also available here. This site nests the webpages devoted to the Annual Business Conference and Delegate registration – <https://adultchildren.org/conference/>

The second website, <https://acawso.org/> focuses on service opportunities and the work of the World Service Organization. Volunteers will find information about the WSO committees including a calendar of meetings and links to the Latest News published in The Traveler, a monthly newsletter. Board meeting agendas and minutes are also posted on this site. And there is a form for Volunteer Sign up

The European Committee has its own special website at <http://acawsoec.org/>. This committee works to unify and carry the message to the fellowships of the European countries, according to the ACA traditions and concepts.

## Workspaces and Communication Tools

**Slack** is a computer (and smartphone) workspace for WSO committee communications. Volunteers interact with text-like messages and may post documents and materials. Zoom links to upcoming meetings can also be posted. There are many ‘channels’ in Slack, either open to all or limited only to members of a specific committee. Pay special attention to items that are ‘pinned’ to the channel. This could include permanent information such as committee purpose, meeting schedules with Zoom info and important documents.

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Here are two links to more information about Slack and how to use it:

- <https://www.salesforce.com/au/blog/2021/07/slack-basics-work-anywhere.html>
- <https://slack.com/help/articles/360059928654-How-to-use-Slack--your-quick-start-guide>

Here is the link to begin interacting on Slack.

WSO makes good use of **Zoom**. This is a virtual online meeting space, offering video and audio connections for WSO committee volunteers. **Skype** is also used by some volunteers for visual virtual meetings or conferences.

WSO uses **Google** applications for organizing, storing, and retrieving documents for committee work. Many committees have a shared Google Drive where members may access and work on committee documents in Google Docs, Google Sheets, or other Google applications. Most files can also be downloaded and opened with Microsoft Office applications.

Some WSO committees also use **WhatsApp** as a communications medium for smartphones and computers. WhatsApp is particularly popular among global volunteers.

## Code of Conduct

We ask that all members using Slack or Zoom to agree to the safety and courtesy agreements outlined in WSO's User Guidelines. A suggested healthy practice would be to review these guidelines once a year. Here is the link to the User Guidelines, which may be updated from time to time. Please review:

- <https://acawso.org/2023/09/11/wso-communication-platforms-user-guidelines-agreement/>

## Board of Trustees Meeting with the Fellowship

The WSO Board of Trustees holds an open Board Meeting with the Fellowship via Zoom each quarter. All ACA members are invited to attend these meetings. Presentations and discussions on various committee related topics are included in this meeting which can be found here:

- <https://acawso.org/board-meeting-with-fellowship/>

## Service Sponsor / Volunteer Support Network

A service sponsor is an ACA Member who has made progress in personal recovery and has performed service above the group level and shares this experience with volunteers who are new to service. A service sponsor can make the difference between struggling in your service position and feeling a sense of purpose and accomplishment (and having some fun along the way). A service sponsor can answer questions about responsibilities, about the structure of service, generally, and about applying the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts in service work. They can also share experiences on managing time and expectations. Service sponsors often introduce new volunteers to the various aspects of service: participating in meetings, working on committees, using technology, etc.

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Find a service sponsor from among your volunteer colleagues. Consider the ACA members you meet or hear at committee meetings, service workshops, regional meetings, conferences or events. Recognize a potential sponsor in a member who:

- Has been volunteering at WSO for a while – perhaps a year or more
- Has knowledge of ACA history and the service structure
- Exhibits emotional sobriety and good listening skills
- Is principled and well acquainted with the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts

Remember, our literature says, “It is okay to ask someone to show me how to do things,” and “I have the right to ask for what I want.” Having a friend and colleague as you venture into the world of committee work may make the experience extra rewarding.

## Questions?

Any member of the Volunteer Resources Committee can be approached or contacted to find the answer to any question you may have about volunteer service in the WSO. You can find contact information at the committee’s webpage at: [Volunteer Resource Committee | ACA WSO](#). You may also send an email to [vrcc@acawso.org](mailto:vrcc@acawso.org).

## Resources for the WSO Volunteer/Links

12 Traditions	<a href="#">The ACA Twelve Traditions</a> <a href="https://adultchildren.org/traditions-audio/">https://adultchildren.org/traditions-audio/</a>
12 Concepts of Service	<a href="https://adultchildren.org/wp-content/uploads/Literature/The_ACA_Twelve_Concepts_EN-US_LTR.pdf">https://adultchildren.org/wp-content/uploads/Literature/The_ACA_Twelve_Concepts_EN-US_LTR.pdf</a> <a href="https://acawso.org/album/concept-study/">https://acawso.org/album/concept-study/</a>
Commitment to Service	<a href="https://acawso.org/aca-committment-to-service/">https://acawso.org/aca-committment-to-service/</a>
OPPM	<a href="https://acawso.org/oppm-current/">https://acawso.org/oppm-current/</a>
Bill of Rights	<a href="https://adultchildren.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/ACA_Bill-of-Rights_EN_LTR.pdf">https://adultchildren.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/ACA_Bill-of-Rights_EN_LTR.pdf</a>
Downloadable workshops	<a href="https://shop.adultchildren.org/collections/audio">https://shop.adultchildren.org/collections/audio</a>