

**PPG-04**  
**FAMILIES ANONYMOUS INC. (FA)**  
**INTERNATIONAL POLICY**



**Adopted by the World Service Board 01/21/2012**

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## Introduction

### ***Applicability***

This policy is applicable to all FA Groups, Intergroups, and National Service Boards located outside the USA and its territories and possessions.

### ***Definitions / Abbreviations***

<b>Term</b>	<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Definition</b>
International Groups Committee	IGC	The standing committee of the World Service Board responsible for support of and communication with FA International Groups, International Intergroups, and National Service Boards.
International Group	IG	An FA group physically located outside the USA.
International Intergroup	IIG	An association of Families Anonymous groups within a specific geographical area outside the USA.
Literature Committee	LC	The standing committee of the World Service Board responsible for all published FA literature.
National Service Board	NSB	The governing body in any country, other than the USA, that has been elected and approved by the member groups in that country.
Planning Committee	PC	An ad-hoc committee of member groups coordinating the formation of an NSB.
Statement of Intent to Create an NSB	SOI	A written statement indicating that a number of International Groups desire to establish a National Service Board in their country.
World Service Board of Directors	WSB	The elected governing body of Families Anonymous, Inc.
World Service Office	WSO	The headquarters of Families Anonymous Inc. located in Des Plaines, Illinois, USA.

### ***Purposes of this Policy***

This policy has been developed to:

- Provide guidance to those interested in establishing an FA Group, an FA International Intergroup, or an FA National Service Board outside the USA
- Define the respective responsibilities of the international FA organization (IG, IIG, or NSB) and the WSB, the IGC, the LC, and the WSO
- Define the procedure for translation of approved FA literature to the local language
- Define the legal responsibilities for distribution and/or sale of translated FA literature outside the USA

## **Establishing an International Group, International Intergroup, or National Service Board**

### ***Establishing an International Group (IG)***

If your country does not have an NSB, the procedure for establishing an IG is the same as that for an FA group in the USA. Instructions on starting an FA group may be found on the FA website at [www.familiesanonymous.org](http://www.familiesanonymous.org). It is important that the new IG register with the WSO. Registration may be performed online using our website.

If your country has an NSB, contact your NSB for instructions on starting a group. You may find a list of FA NSBs in our online meeting directory on our website. IGs registered with their country NSB need not register with the WSO. If at some later date an IG should wish to rescind its membership in the NSB, it need only notify and re-register with the WSO. As a courtesy, the IG should also notify its NSB.

### ***Establishing an International Intergroup (IIG)***

As the number of groups in a given country grows, the groups may consider forming an IIG. An IIG is an association of Families Anonymous groups within a specific geographical area, state/province, or country. It is made up of representatives of each member group, elected by the local groups.

The IIG helps strengthen FA groups by lending additional support to the continuance of the program itself. Intergroups are an extension of our FA “family” and typically offer:

- Access to local speakers and leaders
- Support for new or struggling groups
- Financial support for IIG telephone, post office box, website, and email contact
- Bulk purchasing of FA literature; local stock and distribution
- Exchange of ideas regarding group attendance and other problems
- Local coordinated Public Information campaigns
- Media access
- Social functions and fellowship with wider attendance
- Fundraisers (guided by FA Traditions)
- Local, state/province, or national FA conventions

It only takes two or more interested FA groups to begin the process of forming an IIG. The usual sequence is:

- Interested groups form an interim committee to initiate the process of forming the IIG.
- The interim committee invites all “local” groups to appoint a delegate or representative to the first planning meeting. The delegates and representatives will report back to their

respective groups, presenting the benefits of an IIG. (“Local” is a relative term. It could mean all groups in a given city, county, region, state/province, or country.)

- Temporary officers are elected by the interim committee to lead discussions and begin planning for the IIG.
- IIG by-laws are written and submitted to the WSB for approval. (Sample by-laws are available by request from the WSO.) The WSB will respond with approval or will provide direction for modifications.
- If documents are submitted in English, approval response will be within two months.
- If documents are submitted in a language other than English, response will be within three months, unless there is difficulty locating a translation reviewer.
- To facilitate a speedy approval, a letter may accompany the submission of non-English by-laws certifying that the by-laws are a faithful and true translation from English to the native language.
- Upon receipt of by-laws approval, the new IIG must register with the WSO via online or hardcopy registration form.
- Upon receipt of the IIG registration, the WSO will notify the IIG of its unique FA identifying number and publish the IIG’s contact information in the FA meeting directories.

### ***Establishing a National Service Board (NSB)***

A National Service Board (NSB) represents FA member groups in a particular country (other than the USA) that has sufficient groups to support an NSB.

An NSB is created to facilitate and support the healthy growth of the FA program in that country.

An NSB must:

- Conform to local, state, and national laws governing a nonprofit corporation (a USA term) or its equivalent, as defined and recognized in its country
- Register officially with the appropriate government agencies
- File tax returns or their equivalent if required by local law
- Guide the FA groups in its country

However, an NSB is not autonomous in the following respects:

- Authority of an NSB is derived from the FA WSB and Families Anonymous, Inc., a registered nonprofit corporation in the state of California, USA.
- NSBs must refer all questions of policy, procedure, program, or Traditions to the WSB should they be unable to settle an issue on their own. The WSB is available for guidance at all times.

The procedure for creating an NSB is as follows:

- ***Statement of Intent***

The member groups in the country that are interested in creating an NSB form a temporary planning committee (PC) to serve as the liaison with the WSB during the NSB creation process.

The PC completes a “Statement of Intent to Create a National Service Board” (SOI) and forwards it via email to the WSB International Groups Committee (IGC) at [ig@familiesanonymous.org](mailto:ig@familiesanonymous.org) or via mail to the WSO. (A sample SOI appears in the Appendix of this policy.)

The IGC will review the information provided in the SOI and confirm with the PC that the SOI was received and is being processed.

- ***Vote by Member Groups***

The IGC will, in coordination with the WSO, forward via mail, fax, or email a copy of the SOI and a ballot to each registered IG and IIG in the country. The ballot will indicate a due date for return of the ballot, normally sixty days from the distribution date of the ballots.

Each member group receiving a ballot is encouraged to convene a business meeting to discuss and vote on the proposal. Since groups are autonomous, they may decline NSB representation by voting “no” on the proposed NSB creation.

Each member group returns its completed ballot to the IGC via mail, fax, or email per the instructions on the ballot within the voting deadline established by the IGC.

The IGC will inform the PC of the results of the voting within 14 days of the voting deadline.

- ***Authorization***

A minimum of 2/3rds of the registered groups in that country must return their ballots to the IGC authorizing their approval of and representation by the proposed NSB. If the 2/3rds required vote is met, the PC may continue with creation of the NSB.

If the required 2/3rds vote is not met, the PC will be denied authorization to proceed with creation of the NSB. In this case, the PC may evaluate formation of an IIG, if one has not previously been established. The IIG may then discuss the advantages and disadvantages of creating an NSB with its member group representatives to determine if an NSB should be created at a future time.

- ***Approval of Articles of Incorporation (or Statutes of Association) and By-laws***

Once authorization for the NSB has been achieved, the NSB will develop and submit for WSB approval:

- Articles of Incorporation (or Statutes of Association)
- By-laws

Articles of Incorporation (a USA term) or Statutes of Association document the creation of the organization and provide directions for its demise. It is recommended that the PC contact local government agencies and/or legal or professional sources (solicitors, counselors) to determine whether Articles of Incorporation or their equivalent are required by local law. If they are not, the PC shall submit a statement to the WSB indicating that Articles of Incorporation or their equivalent are not required.

By-laws describe the purpose(s) of the NSB and provide the mechanisms for holding elections and conducting the business of the organization. They include intent, purpose, and program ideals (Steps and Traditions) as established by Families Anonymous, Inc., the parent organization. By-laws may not be necessary in some countries. By-laws “content” may be included in the Articles of Incorporation or the Statutes of Association rather than in a separate document. Sample by-laws are available by request from the WSO.

Note that due to differing legal requirements in various countries, the WSB will accept other forms of filing documents for the NSB as long as they meet Families Anonymous Inc. and local requirements.

These materials, once approved by the PC, should be submitted to the IGC requesting approval by the WSB. The IGC and WSB will review the materials and will inform the PC of its approval or suggest modifications necessary for approval.

- ***Completing the NSB Formation Process***

Formal notification of approval by the WSB of the NSB Articles of Incorporation (or Statutes of Association) and the NSB By-laws shall constitute official recognition of the NSB by Families Anonymous, Inc.

The NSB shall then:

- Convene an assembly and hold new elections. Members of the original PC may be elected to continue for the term of office stated in the by-laws.
- Register the NSB with the WSO.
- Register each of its member groups with the NSB. Any groups NOT wishing to participate in or belong to the NSB will continue their registration with the WSO.
- Provide the WSO with a list of all groups registered with the NSB.
- Establish defined communications mechanisms to foster unity and fellowship between

the NSB and its member groups, including but not limited to regular NSB meetings, hosting a conference or convention among its member groups, and creating and distributing a regular NSB newsletter.

- Establish regular NSB communications with the WSO via the IGC to foster mutual support and encourage the growth of the fellowship. This should include identifying a primary point of contact between the IGC and the NSB.

## **Responsibilities**

### ***International Group (IG) Responsibilities***

International Groups shall:

- Register with the WSO (or with their NSB, if such a body exists) upon formation of the IG.
- Re-register with the WSO (or with their NSB, if such a body exists) on an annual basis during the twelve-month period prior to April 1 of each year.
- Notify the WSO (or their NSB, if such a body exists) of any change in group secretary status (name, mailing address, contact information) or meeting information (location, day, time, group contact information, etc.). Such notification shall also meet the group's re-registration requirement for that twelve-month period.
- Provide Seventh Tradition financial support to their IIG and/or NSB as applicable and to the WSO.

### ***International Intergroup (IIG) Responsibilities***

International Intergroups shall:

- Register with the WSO (or with their NSB, if such a body exists) upon formation of the IIG
- Provide the WSO (or their NSB, if such a body exists) with a copy of the initial by-laws of the IIG
- Provide the WSO (or their NSB, if such a body exists) with a list of all Intergroup officers along with contact information upon formation of the IIG
- Re-register with the WSO (or with their NSB, if such a body exists) on an annual basis during the twelve-month period prior to April 1 of each calendar year
- Notify the WSO (or their NSB, if such a body exists) of any change in IIG officers if or when such change occurs
- Notify the WSO (or their NSB, if such a body exists) of any change in IIG by-laws if or when such change occurs, and provide a copy of the updated by-laws to the WSO
- Provide Seventh Tradition financial support to their NSB (if such a body exists) and to the WSO



## ***National Service Board Responsibilities***

National Service Boards shall:

- Upon formation of the NSB, the NSB shall a) register with the WSO, b) provide the WSO with a copy of the initial by-laws of the NSB, and c) provide the WSO with a list of all NSB officers and their contact information.
- Re-register with the WSO on an annual basis during the twelve-month period prior to April 1 of each calendar year.
- Notify the WSO immediately of any change in NSB officers.
- Notify the WSO immediately of any change in NSB by-laws if or when such change occurs, and provide a copy of such amended by-laws to the WSO.
- Notify the WSO immediately of any former IG or IIG member who chooses to end his or her association with the NSB.
- Provide the WSO with a quarterly report of all IGs and IIGs registered with the NSB. Such report shall list the group ID/designation, and the city and state/province where the groups meet. It shall be transmitted to the WSO no later than one month after each calendar quarter, i.e., January 31, April 30, July 31, and October 31, of each year.
- Provide Seventh Tradition financial support to the WSO.

## ***World Service Board / WSO Responsibilities***

The WSB and/or the WSO shall:

- List in the FA meeting directory each IG, IIG, and NSB that has properly registered with the WSO. (Note that IGs and IIGs in a country that has an NSB are not listed in the directories because they are registered directly with the NSB.)
- Distribute ballots and information concerning the FA annual business meeting (ABM) and the FA elections held at the ABM.
- Provide the same or equivalent services to our international groups as provided to the USA groups.

## ***Disagreements and Problems***

The WSB is ready to assist IGs, IIGs, and NSBs with solving disagreements and problems, but it encourages the member groups to seek this help only when they cannot resolve the problem amongst themselves.

Honest disagreements that are based on the Twelve Traditions, the Twelve Steps, or the USA by-laws should be referred to the WSB via the IGC ([ig@familiesanonymous.org](mailto:ig@familiesanonymous.org)) for further assistance and advice. It is not unusual for members to interpret procedures and written directives differently, especially in the context of translations. Remember: “principles above personalities.”

## **Translation of FA Literature into the Local Language**

The WSB supports and encourages the translation of approved FA literature into the local language of international groups. In countries where NSBs are already established, it is the NSB that is responsible for translations. In countries with no established NSB, any IG or IIG may, with written WSB approval, undertake translation of FA literature in accordance with WSB policies and procedures.

The IGC shall be responsible for coordinating, guiding, and supporting all NSB, IG, or IIG efforts to translate FA literature into the local language and shall serve as the liaison between the translating group(s) and the WSB and its committees during the translation process.

The following procedure shall be followed by any NSB, IIG, or IG wishing to translate an existing FA literature item into another language.

### ***Authorization to Translate***

Prior to translation of approved FA literature into a local language, permission for translation must be authorized by the International Groups Committee (IGC). This prevents duplication of effort by multiple groups.

- The translating group shall complete the applicable portion of the “Permission to Translate” form (WSOF-22) and submit it to the IGC or to the WSO which shall forward it to the IGC. Form WSOF-22 is available by request from the FA World Service Office or may be downloaded from the FA website ([www.familiesanonymous.org](http://www.familiesanonymous.org)).
- The IGC shall notify the WSB Chair (or his/her designee) that such request has been received.
- The IGC shall also forward the request to the LC so that the LC can determine (a) whether the piece is suitable for translation in its present form or needs revision before being translated, and (b) whether the piece has been or is being translated by a different NSB, IG, or IIG. The LC shall so inform the WSB Chair and the IGC.
- Once the LC has cleared the piece for translation, the IGC shall determine whether to approve the translation. The IGC shall notify the translating group of the decision.
- If the request is approved, the IGC shall provide the translating group a copy of the “Request / Authorization to Translate” form with the approval indicated. Additionally, the LC shall provide, in electronic form, the current approved English text of the document to be translated.
- If the request is not approved, the IGC shall work with the LC and the translating group to resolve the issue(s) of concern.

- Upon receipt of IGC authorization to translate, the translating group may begin the translation process.

### ***Translation Verification***

- The translating group shall have the accuracy of its translation verified by an independent authority who was not involved in the original translation, who is fluent in both English and the language into which the piece has been translated, and who is knowledgeable about Twelve Step programs. This verification ensures that the translation conveys the same spirit and meaning of the FA program as the original English version.
- **Prior to publication**, the translating group must submit the completed translation to the IGC for LC approval and possible additional translation verification.
- Within 30 days of receiving the completed translation, the IGC (after consultation with the LC) shall either (a) notify the translating group that the translation has been approved or (b) return the manuscript to the translating group with comments and/or suggested changes.

### ***Compliance with Suggested Changes***

- The translating group must comply with suggested changes or provide rationale for its choice of verbiage and formatting.
- If a disagreement should ensue, the IGC may require the assistance of a professional translation organization, such as Berlitz. In this case, the submitting group will be expected to pay any costs related to the verification effort.
- If extensive revision is required, the IGC may require a second review to ensure an accurate translation.

### ***Publication***

- The translation must carry a catalog number consisting of the English-language catalog number immediately followed by a period and then the two-digit ISO-3166 country code of the translating country.
- The translation must be identified as FA literature and must include an FA logo.
- The format of the translation should, if possible, approximate or match the format of the English-language piece.

- Ownership of all rights resides with Families Anonymous, Inc. Copyright permission and privileges regarding any and all Families Anonymous, Inc. literature, logos, caveats and materials will remain the sole and exclusive property of Families Anonymous, Inc.
- Permission to publish and sell English, non-English, or other translated literature is not to be construed as copyright permission or privilege.
- Express written permission by the FA WSB to use, publish, translate, or distribute can be withdrawn at anytime with notice and cause.
- Families Anonymous, Inc. reserves the right to withdraw any and all translation permissions if such permission is deemed to be in violation of the requirements for said permission or the Twelve Traditions of Families Anonymous.

## **Sale of Approved Translated FA Materials**

### ***Permission to Sell***

Permission for the translating group to sell translated FA literature is implicit with the group's receipt of publication approval from the IGC.

### ***Sales Accountability***

- The WSB may require an accounting of all monies taken in sales and expended for printing and publishing, should a dispute occur.
- In certain circumstances, it may be necessary for an FA member to register the literature in his or her own name, but in no way does FA literature become anyone's personal property, nor may any member derive monetary benefit from its sale.
- Families Anonymous, Inc. reserves the right to distribute any approved or permitted English or non-English translation of FA literature and materials outside the country where permission to print and sell said literature or materials has been granted.
- In the event an NSB should disband, Families Anonymous, Inc. reserves the right to distribute said literature and materials in the same country where permission to print and sell FA literature has previously been granted.

### ***Other World Service Board Requirements***

- It is FA's desire to prevent duplication of translation efforts and to make existing translations available to the fellowship and the public wherever the need exists. To

meet this requirement, FA requires the following for informational and archival purposes: (a) at least two copies of each approved translated item that has been published and is for sale in any country outside the USA, (b) an electronic file containing an editable version of the translation (such as in Microsoft Word), and (c) an electronic file containing the formatted, print-ready translation (i.e., a PDF). The translating group must provide these to the WSO at the time of publication.

- Should the translating group need to make any changes subsequent to publication (for example, to correct a typographical error), FA requires that the translating group provide the WSO with updated versions of the three items listed in the previous paragraph.
- FA reserves the right to purchase translated materials for resale in the USA. Such materials will be purchased at their actual production costs plus reasonable shipping/handling.

**Appendix:**  
**Sample Statement of Intent to Create a National Service Board**

STATEMENT OF INTENT  
TO CREATE A NATIONAL SERVICE BOARD

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

To: Families Anonymous, Inc.  
701 Lee St, Suite 670  
Des Plaines IL 60016-4508  
USA

Attn: World Service Board of Directors (WSB)

It is with great pleasure that we inform you that FA groups in (*country name*) have met, discussed and voted to establish our own National Service Board.

We currently have (*number*) groups registered with the WSO. Later, an election will be held giving these groups the choice of joining the new NSB or remaining independent and continuing their registration with the WSO.

Our groups have sent delegates or representatives to our first planning meeting where we elected interim officers to conduct the business of fulfilling all the requirements of Families Anonymous, Inc., USA, in establishing the NSB. As we progress we will conform to the laws of our country for registration.

We understand our first commitment is to write or adapt (*a*) "Articles of Incorporation" (a USA term) or "Statutes of Association" for a nonprofit organization and (*b*) Bylaws. These documents are to be submitted to the Board of Directors of Families Anonymous, Inc., USA, for approval. We understand there may be delays due to translation issues and are informed of the procedure to accelerate approval by submitting a letter of certification of translation by an English-speaking member or professional.

We look forward to working with the WSB in completing this important task and will keep the WSB apprised of our progress.

Respectfully,

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Chair  
          \_\_\_\_\_ Vice-Chair  
          \_\_\_\_\_ Secretary  
          \_\_\_\_\_ Treasurer