

GAMBLERS ANONYMOUS

HOSTING AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

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Trustees Meeting
Cancun Attachment 37

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INTRODUCTION

International Conferences are held twice a year with the location determined by a vote of the Board of Trustees.

The voting takes place two years prior to that conference. Conferences should be scheduled as close as possible to the first of May and the first of November. Conferences are based around the Trustees meetings, which start on Thursday at 10:00 A.M. local time. These meetings quite often go through Friday and on occasion into Saturday.

During the spring conferences, provisions must be made for Gam-Anon to hold their meeting of Delegates. Out of respect for all our members and to ensure the largest possible member participation, close attention should be paid to holidays so the Trustees meeting and the Conference will not conflict with any national or religious holidays.

Any International Conference that does not receive bids at three (3) successive physical Trustees meetings will be canceled. The Executive Board will be responsible for selecting a site to host just a Trustees meeting in lieu of the International Conference.

ELIGIBILITY

Who can bid and when?

All International Conferences up for bid at a Board of Trustees meeting will be open to all areas or Intergroups, in any region of the North American continent. There will not be any geographical restrictions on the fall or spring conferences of any year. Since Gam-Anon holds their meeting during the spring conferences, their input is considered before the vote takes place. Gam-Anon does not have a vote on conference location.

CONFERENCE OVERSIGHT & ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE

The Board of Trustees has created a standing committee to oversee all processes dealing with International Conferences and to encourage and provide assistance to areas seeking to host an International Conference as well as to provide advice and assistance after a conference has been awarded.

INITIAL PLANNING and THE BIDDING PROCESS

Before embarking on your journey of hosting an International Conference, you need to make sure that you have a minimum of five to ten dedicated GA/Gam-Anon volunteers that understand they will be doing much of the work. Of course, many more members will eventually be needed to do service. There will be a need of volunteers to staff the registration, hospitality room, workshops etc. but a

minimum of five to ten is recommended to steer the conference committees. Once these dedicated members are in place, these guidelines will be invaluable.

Before an area or intergroup can bid on a conference, the following steps must be taken:

1. Area or Intergroup must take a vote and determine that they are willing to take the responsibility of hosting an International Conference.
2. A chairperson must be elected to oversee the process.
3. A suitable hotel must be found and approached. Hotel suitability will be covered later.
4. Area or Intergroup preparing a bid to be awarded an International Conference will contact the Conference Oversight & Assistance Committee of the Board of Trustees no less than thirty (30) days prior to the start of the Trustees meeting where the bid will be presented and will provide a copy of an unsigned contract with a local hotel. No contract will be made under the name of Gamblers Anonymous. The Conference Oversight & Assistance Committee will analyze the hotel contract and may make suggestions to change provisions in the hotel contract.
5. Area or Intergroup preparing a bid to be awarded an International Conference will provide the Conference Oversight & Assistance Committee, no less than fourteen (14) days prior to the start of the Trustees meeting where the bid will be presented, a copy of the final unsigned contract with a local hotel, a letter from the local Intergroup(s) that they are willing to take the responsibility of hosting an International Conference and a written agreement from the local hotel to accept the conference if their bid is accepted. The hotel written agreement should contain all pertinent information, including room prices and the days BEFORE and AFTER the conference that these rates will prevail. Generally, the hotel will accept 3 days before and 3 days after the conference. These prices cannot be changed and the hotel contract must so state.
7. Information about the area around the hotel. This can usually be obtained through the Chamber of Commerce or local Convention and Visitors Bureau. Sometimes the hotel also has information.
8. A flyer outlining prices of different plans. Procedures for setting up pricing plans will be covered later. *See Appendix 2* for a generic registration form.
9. Keep in mind that several areas might be bidding on that same conference and the more information you have, the better your chances of being selected to be the host city of the conference.
10. For bid presentations at the Trustees meeting, a bidding Area will provide all necessary information for an informed vote, including:
 - Theme of the Conference
 - Costs (hotel and registration fees, parking, transportation to and from the airport)
 - Number of room/nights and food & beverages commitment to the hotel
 - Room rate guarantees
 - Completed Registration Flyer
11. Conference bids will be heard during the Trustees meeting at a time designated by the Chairman of the Board of Trustees. Gam-Anon members from the areas presenting bids may speak as part of the bid presentation. Gam-Anon members, during the conferences in which

they hold Delegate meetings, will be able to reflect their preferences for area selection, which will be announced to the Board of Trustees before it takes its vote for the preferred area. Conference presentation that require audio or visual aid equipment will be approved at the discretion of the Chairman of the Board of Trustees and Conference Committee Chair of the current conference in which the vote will be held. Bids will be awarded by a simple majority of the Board of Trustees.

CONTRACTUAL PROCEDURES

a) Finding a hotel

The hotel must have at least 250 guest rooms and a banquet room large enough to host 450 people. Make sure there is an alternate hotel or motel with matching room rates nearby in the event more rooms are needed. Also make sure that there is parking available. Special rates can usually be negotiated into the contract.

It must also have a meeting room to accommodate 110 Trustees plus additional guests and a head table for the Board of Trustees Chair and Co-Chairs, the International Executive Secretary and the Board of Regents Chair.

Location and affordability are two important points in finding a hotel, but there are certainly other factors to consider. Check with local city council, Chamber of Commerce, Convention and Visitors Bureau, Bureau of Tourism, AAA, other internet sources or the Past Conferences Database available on the Trustee Website (www.trusteewebsite.com). You may also consider using other local members as a resource.

Airport hotels are ideal locations. They normally offer free shuttle service, which is a great relief for the conference committee. While it is beneficial to have free shuttle service provided, it should not be considered a deal breaker. However, there may not be anything else around an airport facility and this may cause other activities to be more expensive i.e., golfing, eating, shopping, etc.

The conference committee should have access to the hotel reservation system to view all the attendees that have already registered. This will allow the committee to be sure they are credited for all conference attendees, regardless of how the attendee registered for the hotel accommodations. Some hotels offer this option via internet access.

It is suggested to visit at least three facilities, spelling out the needs for the conference. Let the hotels make a contract proposal without negotiating yet. This allows the conference committee to have contracts and amenities to compare and contrast. Even if you have an ideal location in mind where you want to have your conference, it is always a good idea to have bids from other hotels and use them to negotiate.

Contacting the local CONVENTION AND VISITOR'S BUREAU (CVB) is an extremely important early action to take. If done properly with the correct information, it can reduce the amount of time spent searching for a hotel and stimulate competitive price quotes among eligible hotels.

Most CVBs and Chamber Tourism Boards can initiate a BULLETIN or REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) service. This service will notify all major member hotels with specific details of potential conference business. It will also direct interested hotels to submit their preliminary proposals and room rate quotes directly to the local site selection chairman/committee by a certain date.

See *Appendix 1* for an example of such a BULLETIN. The numbers and dates used are only for example.

b) Negotiating a contract

As you begin to negotiate the contract, everything needs to be spelled out: meeting rooms, breakout rooms, hospitality room, registration space, cost of meals, etc., but most importantly, price per room before, during and after the conference. Furthermore, in negotiating meals and room rates, you have to remember that the bid given by the hotel WILL NOT include service charges, gratuities and taxes. If it is applicable to include tax and gratuities with the price of the room and meals, have the hotel include this in the proposed bid. This will help keep the numbers even and there will be no uncertainty on the conference flyers.

All proposed contracts should include an attrition clause on the number of room nights and food commitments. Most contracts will already have this clause in place. A Force Majeure clause in the event of an Act of God or natural disaster, like hurricane, earthquake, terrorism, etc., is also important to be included in the contract. It has even been a past experience that a hotel was sold after the bid was awarded or during the planning phase of the conference. It is important to bring this possible situation up with your hotel to make sure that all guarantees will still be honored if the hotel changes ownership.

Conference committees need to carefully set the starting numbers of room nights. It is important for the committee to know how often they can edit the numbers and when the final time is that they will be able to edit the number. The Past Conferences database can be very helpful in this area.

Any item can be negotiated with the hotel. Our leverage comes when we explain to a hotel that we have a captive audience. The more nights our guests stay, the more revenue the facility will earn with restaurant sales, bar tabs, etc. A good example of a captive audience is buffet style meals for Trustees/Delegates for Thursday lunch & dinner and for Friday lunch, with the cost

passed onto those attending. This is direct revenue for the hotel and you could possibly use this in negotiating better room or meal prices.

Make it very clear with the hotels that are bidding that we need pricing for rooms, meals, meeting rooms, etc. to be a win/win situation. You can always access the Past Conferences database to view what items may have been negotiated. Do not allow the local area to be oversold by the hotel representative and NEVER sign a contract until the Board of Trustees has awarded the area the conference. Make sure that the area has the ability to make amendments or renegotiate the original contract if there should be anything missing from it. Do not sign the document or agree to anything unless you are completely sure you understand the agreement. Use the Past Conferences Database or the Conference Oversight & Assistance Committee to help clarify any concerns.

All contracts must be in the name of the local intergroup or in the name of the conference. The contracts are NOT to be in the name of Gamblers Anonymous, as it is not Gamblers Anonymous hosting the conference, rather the local intergroup. Individuals that are signing the contract with the hotel or using the Chamber of Commerce should be aware that their name will be associated with the event and may be used for marketing purposes. You may want to negotiate with the hotel, Chamber of Commerce or Convention Bureau that individual names shall not be used for marketing purposes. It is suggested to use the conference mailing address or the address of the Intergroup for all correspondence.

Each international conference committee should look at the possibility of acquiring liability insurance but it should remain on a case by case basis. The local conference committees should seriously consider acquiring such insurance if they bring food from outside the hotel or hold activities outside of the hotel.

c) Guest Rooms

The area should review the Past Conferences Database and find a past conference held in a similar city. There, the area will be able to see the number of room nights booked vs. actual room nights accountable. This should help planning the number of rooms needed for the duration of the conference. Spring conferences normally get a larger number of attendants due to the Gam-Anon Delegates meeting, thus a higher number of rooms than for a fall conference could be needed.

Higher rates directly affect local and week-end attendance. This needs to be kept in mind while negotiating rates. Hotels may try to up the meal charges to hold down the room charges. Another thing to remember is that taxes must be added to any amount bid by a hotel. This could easily add 15% to 20% to the original bid.

Try to book low and add on rooms as the event approaches. It is always much more difficult to cut back on rooms, rather than to add rooms. As mentioned before, an attrition clause should be included in all contracts with a hotel. It is possible to negotiate with the hotel that the attrition clause be used to reduce the number of room-nights booked, but also to increase the number. A flat rate for single, double or even triple occupancy should also be negotiated. Check with the hotel for the necessary room-nights needed to qualify for other amenities, such as free hospitality room, free meeting rooms, etc.

The hotel will normally give free rooms at the ratio of one (1) free room per 25/50 guest nights. Some past conferences were allowed to credit the value of free rooms to the master account; others were denied this opportunity. Check with the hotel if it is possible to credit the free rooms to the conference master account. If not, those free rooms should be sold to attendees, not given to conference committee members, GA officers or local Trustees. No individual should profit from serving the fellowship.

Some members have booked their accommodations using other means such as internet sites, travel agencies, etc. Negotiate with the hotel to credit those rooms to the conference master account and to give credit towards the total room-nights commitment.

d) Meals

A major concern for most conferences is the food guarantee. Do NOT try to guess the numbers. Our experience is that guessing at the number of meals has left conferences with a real concern for making the numbers. Use the Past Conferences Database to guide setting the numbers. Use real numbers; you can always add meals.

Most hotels will ask that we commit to a minimum dollar amount and use this number to negotiate other amenities. There should be an attrition clause on the food commitment similar to the attrition clause on the number of room-nights booked. It is important to consider the number of meals that your conference is offering when making the food commitment. Many conferences have offered four meals and some have only been able to negotiate three meals. This should be taken into consideration when committing to a food and beverage minimum. To help offset the meal commitment, negotiate with the hotel to include the bar tab from the cocktail hours on Friday and Saturday evenings. They can have a significant impact on the total food commitment amount.

Just as you need to add service charges and taxes to the cost of the rooms, you need to be sure to include gratuities and/or service charges and taxes to the price of a bid for a meal plan. Gratuities and/or service charges normally range from 15% to 22%. Be aware that taxes are charged on

gratuities. This is important to know in advance in order to price your plans accordingly. Try to negotiate a price that is all inclusive. This will save a lot of time and frustration on calculations.

e) Rooms for workshops, meetings, etc.

Many conferences have received free meeting rooms based on total room-nights or food commitment. These free rooms have included Trustees/Delegates meetings, workshops and therapy rooms arranged in a specific set-up style. There have been instances when a Board of Trustees committee will need a meeting room sometime during the conference. Negotiate with the hotel to always have an additional room available for them.

To avoid any conflicts with meeting room space, it is advised not to use the same room for meetings and workshops that will be used to hold the Trustees/Delegates meetings or the banquets. There is no guarantee that the Trustees/Delegates will complete the work they have come to do in the necessary time. The Trustees may sometimes need to continue working on business past the predicted schedule of events. Their meeting room should be secured for Friday evening and Saturday.

The hotels will suggest using a specific in-house firm for audio-visual needs. The area needs to be aware that these in-house firms charge extraordinary high cost for audio visual equipment. In some instances they have been four times more expensive than other local vendors. Make sure the area gets outside bids from local vendors to bring in the audio visual equipment. These bids will also serve to negotiate with the hotels in-house vendor.

f) Hospitality room

It is a common practice that the hotels will offer in the bid a free hospitality room based on total room-nights and/or food commitment. Please refer to the Past Conferences Database.

Some hotels will allow the conference committee to bring their own food, while others will only allow snacks, coffee and soft drinks. All facilities are different on this item, most likely due to corporate restrictions. It seems to be an issue with the liability of bringing outside food and/or serving prohibited beverages. Our experience leads us to believe that is a "grey area." You may try negotiating with the hotel to bring your own food and offer to sign a disclaimer to eliminate their liability. One way or the other, all items negotiated should be specified in detail in the contract.

FINANCIAL PROCEDURES

a) Projecting number of attendees

The number of attendees will depend largely on the number of members and rooms in the hosting area. You can start with the number of Trustees who will attend your conference. Approximately 65% of the active Trustees should be a good starting count. Spring conferences normally bring

more attendees with the Board of Delegates meetings, unlike during the fall conference, where there is no such meeting. Some conference committees have used the attendance of previous conferences and averaged the numbers. If your area chooses to use this method, the Past Conferences Database will be a useful tool. Local attendance is probably the key to a successful conference. Use an “all out” approach in your area in promoting your conference.

b) Pricing the plans

All steps to follow in pricing the various plans will be described in a detailed fashion later in the document. Please refer to it, but remember that all items should be spelled out so there are no questions or hidden costs.

c) Budgeting for Committees

Each committee must have a standing budget for each function of the conference committee (opening and closing ceremonies, entertainment, conference booklet, goodie bags, hospitality room, workshops, outside entertainment, tours, golf, etc.). One way to do this is to look at the Past Conferences Database and try to pick a conference similar to your conference as a reference. Once individual budgets for committees are set, follow up regularly to make sure they are within budget. You could create a form for each committee to fill out with the latest figures (revenues and expenses), which will help the Chairman and Treasurer follow up on conference finances.

It is suggested to give the committees a smaller budget than requested and explain that budgets can increase as registrations increases. Suggested committees are described later in the document.

CHOOSING A CHAIRPERSON

This is usually done by a vote at the intergroup meeting or at the area meeting that takes responsibility for hosting an international conference.

PRESENTING A BID

You now have a letter from your intergroup or area meeting, an offer from a suitable hotel that has agreed in writing to host the conference if your group is awarded the bid and you have designed a theme with specific goals for that conference. The time has come to arrange for one or more persons to present the offer at the next Board of Trustees meeting. The person or persons presenting the offer at the Trustees meeting does not have to be a Trustee or the chairperson elected for the proposed conference. This person should be part of the committee and so designated by the area or conference committee. Remember it is best to have as much information on the hotel and the area around the hotel as possible. It is also essential to have a Registration Flyer with you showing the following:

- 1- Plan A- 2 persons, 2 nights (4-10 meals depending on how you price the plan)
- 2- Plan B- 1 person, 2 nights (2-5 meals)

- 3- Plan C- 2 persons, 1 night, (4-6 meals)
 - 4- Plan D- 1 person, 1 night, (2-3 meals)
 - 5- Plan E- Registration and Saturday Banquet only
 - 6- Plan F- Registration only (usually \$30-\$55)
 - 7- Plan G- Saturday Banquet only. (This is optional depending on expected attendance). This should be used in the event a member wants to bring a guest. All GA members not using plans 1-4 should also register and use plan E or F.
- Keep in mind that plan prices submitted with the bid must remain as such.
THESE PRICES CANNOT BE CHANGED LATER.

COMMITTEES

It is suggested that all committees have a chairperson and that the workshop committee also has a Gam-Anon chairperson.

A) CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (*Steering Committee*)

This committee oversees all other conference committees. It sets the budget for each committee and approves or denies all expenses. The executive committee will approve the plans and suggestions of the various committees and will set timetables for completion of the committee tasks.

The executive committee chooses committee chairpersons and collects monthly committee reports. It also corresponds with the Conference Oversight & Assistance committee of the Board of Trustees.

The executive committee members should consist of the chair(s) of the conference, the treasurer, the secretary and all committee chairpersons.

B) FINANCES COMMITTEE

Handling cash flow/seed money is sometimes needed by the hosting area and up to \$1,000.00 is available from the ISO. This is considered a loan and can be repaid at any time sufficient funds are available but no later than the conclusion of the conference.

A bank account should be established in the name of the conference. Gamblers Anonymous *cannot be used in the title or appear on the checks*. This account should have four (4) signers with at least one being a Gam-Anon member. The check signers should never be persons who are related or involved as couples outside the program. All checks must have two (2) signatures. It is advisable to obtain a stamp that states "TWO SIGNATURES REQUIRED" or have this printed on the checks when they are ordered. This would prevent accidental single signature submissions.

1. Treasurer

The treasurer should not be a check signer but has the responsibility of overseeing the checking account on a monthly basis. The treasurer sends out receipts after deposits are received. The treasurer also keeps a listing of all those who have made deposits and all other pertinent information. The treasurer can also be the person who has the responsibility of holding the checkbook and writing the checks.

IT IS ALSO RECOMMENDED THAT ALL REGISTRATION INFORMATION BE KEPT ON A COMPUTER DATABASE. To help with this and with the general accounting of the conference, the Conference Oversight & Assistance committee of the Board of Trustees has created an Excel spreadsheet and is making it available to Conference Committees. Contact the Conference Oversight & Assistance committee directly for additional information.

2. The Go-For

This is a member of the registration committee who picks up the mail and opens the envelope with the registration and deposit checks. This individual cannot be the treasurer. This person checks over the registration to determine if all information is present and that the deposit check is in the amount shown on the registration form. If everything is correct, the form is initialed as being so.

The registration form is now forwarded to the Registration Committee which enters the information on a master form and forwards it to the treasurer. Registration funds and all other receipts should be deposited within forty-eight (48) hours.

3. Other check signers

They have the responsibility of checking all receipts before signing a check. DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK QUESTIONS. Also, check signers should never be in possession of the check book and/or blank checks.

4. Pricing the plans

Begin by deciding how many meals you plan on including. The following is a SAMPLE that can be followed and tailored to meet your needs:

Friday dinner: Hotel charges \$27.50 plus tax and gratuity= \$34.50

Saturday breakfast: Hotel charges \$15.00 plus tax and gratuity= \$19.50

Saturday banquet: Hotel charges \$45.00 plus tax and gratuity= \$57.50

Sunday brunch: Hotel charges \$22.00 plus tax and gratuity= \$27.75

Total= \$138.65 per person for meals. Round out to \$140.00

Hotel night comes to \$102.00 per night including all taxes.

Registration: \$40.00 per person

Plan A would be: 2 people, 2 nights with 8 meals:

$\$140.00 + \$140.00 + \$204.00 + \$80.00 = \$564.00$ (charge \$565.00)

Plan B would be: 1 person, 2 nights with 4 meals:

$\$140.00 + \$204.00 + \$40.00 = \384.00 (charge \$385.00)

Plan C would be 2 people, 1 night with 6 meals:

$\$104.50 + \$104.50 + \$102.00 + \$80.00 = \$391.00$ (charge \$395.00)

Plan D would be: 1 person, 1 night with 3 meals:

$\$104.50 + \$102.00 + \$40.00 = \246.50 (charge \$250.00)

Plan E would be registration and banquet:

\$40.00 + \$57.50= \$97.50 (charge \$100.00)

Plan F would be registration only= \$40.00

Plan G would be Banquet only= \$60.00

On plans C and D, we have eliminated the Friday dinner.

THE ABOVE INFORMATION IS FOR ILLUSTRATION PURPOSES ONLY

5. Budgeting committee

Each committee must have a standing budget for each function of the conference (opening-closing ceremonies, entertainment, conference booklet, goodie bags, hospitality room, workshops, outside entertainment/tours/golf, etc.). One way to do this is to look at the Past Conferences Database and try to pick a conference similar to your conference as a reference. Once individual budgets for committees are set, follow up regularly to make sure they are within budget. You could create a form for each committee to fill with latest figures (revenues and expenses), which will help the Chairman and Treasurer follow up on conference finances.

It is recommended to give the committees a smaller budget than requested and explain that budgets can increase as registrations increase.

Now we must determine how much we will have left over for entertainment, hospitality room, decorating, giveaway bags, transportation, signs, booklet printing, other printing, postage and miscellaneous expenses.

For this example, we will assume there will be 450 registered with 100 plan A, 100 plan B, 50 plan C, 20 plan D, 10 plan E, 15 plan F and 5 plan G.

450 registrations at \$40.00 each= \$18,000.00

100 plan A: \$1.35 (meal extra for 200 people) = \$270.00 plus 100 times \$1.00 per plan A= \$100.00= \$370.00 extra

100 plan B: \$1.35 (meal extra for 100 people) = \$135.00 plus 100 times \$1.00 per plan B= \$100.00= \$235.00 extra

50 plan C: \$1.35 (meal extra for 100 people) = \$135.00 plus 50 times \$4.00 per plan C= \$200.00= \$335.00 extra

20 plan D: \$1.35 (meal extra for 20 people) = \$27.00 plus 20 times \$3.50 per plan D= \$70.00= \$97.00 extra

10 plan E: \$2.50 (meal extra for 10 people) = \$25.00

5 plan G: \$2.50 (meal extra for 5 people) = \$12.50

\$1,074.50 extra (This can be added to the budget).

Let's figure our budget using the \$40.00 registration fees, which totaled \$18,000.00, plus the \$1,074.50

Entertainment: This includes a Saturday night band and a Friday night disc jockey:
\$3,000.00

Hospitality room: This might include serving cold cuts on Saturday:
\$4,000.00

Printing: 500 booklets and 500 itineraries:
\$1,500.00

Giveaway bags: This might include a pen, a pad and the bag:
\$2,500.00

Decorating:
\$1,500.00

Signs:
\$500.00

Transportation:
\$1,500.00

Postage:
\$500.00

Miscellaneous expenses: This could be extra snacks before the banquet or even a comedian to entertain:
\$4,074.50

Total: \$19,074.50

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6. Paying the bills

A detailed paper trail is essential in order to provide the Board of Regents/ISO and the Board of Trustees/Conference Oversight & Assistance Committee with a proper closing financial report. All expenditures exceeding \$100.00 should be made through the conference checking account. If all possible, it would be best to even pay smaller expenditures through the conference checking account. It is STRONGLY SUGGESTED that committee members never pay any bills larger than \$100.00 with their personal credit card or checking account.

THE HOTEL BILL MUST NEVER BE PAID BY ANY INDIVIDUAL'S CREDIT CARD. However, personal credit cards may be used to guarantee payments.

With regard to paying the hotel, they sometimes provide a schedule of payments required. It is important that this schedule be followed. If no schedule is provided, it is a good idea to make periodic payments to the hotel. Doing this pays down the final bill and keeps the hotel happy.

The ideal situation would be to show a small profit since an International Conference is not a fundraiser but a business meeting. In the event of a profit during the Spring Conferences, the profit will be divided with 65% going to GA ISO and 35% going to Gam-Anon. In the event of a

profit during the Fall Conferences, the profit will be divided with 80% going to GA ISO and 20% going to Gam-Anon. In the event the conference loses money, which should not happen if a budget is followed, the hosting area or group should make every attempt to cover the shortage before turning to the GA ISO for assistance.

7. Reports

It is important that your intergroup or area is aware of what is going on and a monthly report should be made. Also, as mentioned previously, a committee of the Board of Trustees, the Conference Oversight & Assistance Committee, is appointed to oversee your conference and a member of your committee should be appointed as the contact person who will be responsible for providing the Conference Oversight & Assistance Committee with any information they need.

Once a conference is awarded, the Area Conference Committee will provide the Conference Oversight & Assistance Committee with a copy of a signed hotel contract and, if possible, bank signature cards. From then, a monthly report will be made to the Conference Oversight & Assistance Committee. This report should include a statement of revenues and expenses, a copy of the current bank statement and cancelled checks and a running list of all registrations and amounts paid by those registered. Minutes of Area Conference Committee meetings will also be provided if available. Documentation should always be available should the Conference Oversight & Assistance Committee have any question.

In addition to financial reports, all conference handouts, giveaways and literature must be submitted to the Conference Oversight & Assistance Committee no less than fourteen (14) days prior to the start of the conference.

At the close of the conference, the hotel balance will have to be paid. Within ninety (90) days after the close of the conference, a complete financial report of the entire conference and any other information required will be provided to the Conference Oversight & Assistance Committee. A copy of the final hotel bill showing "Paid in Full" must also be provided.

Once all reports have been provided, the Conference Oversight & Assistance Committee may request additional information in order to update the Past Conferences database on the Trustee website. A conference committee should always reply positively to such a request, in order to help future International conferences

C) WORKSHOPS COMMITTEE

This committee is responsible for organizing and coordinating all workshops and therapy rooms of the conference.

Most workshops begin on either Friday evening around 9:30 PM or Saturday morning and run from 45 minutes to 1 hour and 15 minutes. In order to have a smooth flow, all workshops in a given time period should begin and end at the same time. Workshops are a very important part of any conference. When setting up workshops, it is usually a good idea to begin around 9:00 AM, with 2

or 3 time slots before the lunch break and 2 or 3 time slots after the break. This allows from 3 to 3½ hours before lunch and after lunch and before dinner.

During each time slot, it is suggested there be 2 GA, 1 Gam-Anon and 1 combined workshop. All workshops must be open workshops. It is usually the responsibility of the workshops committee to contact the persons doing the workshop and make sure all pertinent information regarding their workshop is received. This includes set-up, microphones or other equipment and a correct title sign outside the workshop.

There are some workshops that are what we might call "standard workshops" and are given at all international conferences. These standard workshops are "Higher Power" or "Meditation" (usually reserved for Sunday morning), "Candlelight Workshop" (usually reserved for late Saturday night) and the "Memorial Workshop" (usually held in one of the Saturday afternoon timeslots).

It is always a good idea to bring in workshops from past international conferences since many of these have already proven successful. Quite often, workshops given at local mini-conferences turn out to be very suitable for international conferences. It is usually a good idea for those doing workshops to provide the workshops committee chairperson with a brief outline of what the workshop is about. This way, when the workshops schedule is provided with registration, each workshop can have a brief outline regarding the workshop and the members can decide which are of most interest to them in each time period.

Remember that all material or handouts must be pre-approved by the Conference Oversight & Assistance Committee. It is the responsibility of the workshops committee to see that all timeslots are filled.

Any booklets or other printed material, including workshop handouts, are not Gamblers Anonymous approved or appropriate material unless they are designated as such by the Board of Trustees. These items must include a prominent listing on the cover of any booklet, pamphlet or all individual pages of the following:

"This material is NOT Gamblers Anonymous approved or appropriate literature. It cannot be used, displayed or distributed in any Gamblers Anonymous room."

D) HOSPITALITY ROOM COMMITTEE

This committee is responsible for the hospitality suite. A great hospitality room is always remembered and can help make for a very successful conference. Many conferences stock their hospitality room with food and snacks for Saturday since lunch is not usually provided with the package. The hospitality room should have sufficient seating for 20-30 people (more if possible). The hospitality room should open by noon Thursday and continue until Sunday. Some conferences keep their hospitality room open continuously throughout the conference.

The hospitality room must be manned by a committee member at all times. The hospitality committee chairperson should set up time slots with volunteers to cover all hours the hospitality room is open. It is imperative that this committee is well staffed and has good coverage for

cleanup, making coffee, stocking food and drinks and anything else required in making the hospitality room successful.

A good hospitality room should be stocked with at least the following:

1. Coffee (decaf and regular) and hot water for tea, hot chocolate, etc.
2. Soft drinks and bottled water
3. Snacks (chips, nuts, etc.)
4. Paper products
5. It is always good to have local GA and Gam-Anon members display their baking prowess
6. Anything else depends upon the budget of the conference

THE HOSPITALITY ROOM MUST ALWAYS BE A NON-SMOKING ROOM. THE HOTEL CAN PROVIDE AN OUTDOOR SMOKING AREA.

E) FOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE

The food services committee arranges for the meals that will be served for those attending. The minimum for an International conference will be three (3) meals, preferably (4) four or (5) five. These minimum meals are Friday night, Saturday night and Sunday morning. Friday night is usually a buffet or barbeque. Saturday night is what we call the banquet and is usually a sit down dinner. Sunday morning is a breakfast or brunch buffet. Additionally, some areas choose to include other meals such as breakfast and/or lunch on Saturday. Many groups choose to have a light Saturday lunch in the hospitality room.

Since Thursday is the first day of the Trustees meeting, some groups have made arrangements with the hotel to have a dinner between the second and third session of the Trustees meeting at the hotel. This is an extra charge dinner with the cost passed on to those attending. Trustees are not obligated to attend this dinner and many will choose to go elsewhere for dinner.

It is the responsibility of the food services committee to make all meal arrangements, including menu, as well as dietary and religious needs. It is important that the budget for meals be followed so as not to have cost overruns.

F) ENTERTAINMENT COMMITTEE

This committee is responsible for deciding and organizing entertainment for the conference. There are two parts to entertainment and both of these parts will be covered.

IN HOUSE entertainment

This includes all bands, disc jockeys, plays, speakers or other functions that take place in the hotel. Usually, a light form of entertainment is best for Friday night. This might include a singer, comedian or even speakers. This is left to the conference committee. On Saturday night, most groups usually choose to go with a live band. Dancing is always good after dinner. Many areas choose Saturday night after dinner and before the band comes on to have guest speakers and give thanks to all those that have helped in making the conference a success. Introductions of the International Executive Secretary, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Co-Chairs of the Board of

Trustees and Chairman of the Board of Regents and any others the conference committee decides is also done on Saturday night.

OUT OF HOUSE entertainment

This includes golf outings, field trips and anything else that takes place outside the hotel. An announcement of outside entertainment is given before the conference and all expenses are passed on to those participating. It is important for the committee to know how many are attending in order to make all of the proper arrangements. All fees for these events should be paid in advance.

G) REGISTRATION COMMITTEE

The registration committee starts its work right after the conference is awarded by the Board of Trustees. The registration committee will assign the "go for" member to handle the early registrations. The registration committee receives all registration forms, verifies the funds received with the forms and transfers the funds to the treasurer. The committee is responsible for transferring all information on the forms to a spreadsheet which can be shared with the steering committee and other committees.

The registration committee must be well prepared when registration is opened. At most conferences, registration opens on Thursday morning to enable Trustees to register since many could be tied up until Friday evening. The chairperson of the registration committee must have sufficient help and be prepared to handle the following functions:

1. Take payment of balance due from those registering.
2. Make sure that receipts are given for all funds received.
3. Pass out giveaway bags that should contain the conference booklet, schedule of workshops and other events, a pen, meal tickets and whatever else the conference committee decides on.
4. It is of utmost importance to be sure that too much cash does not build up. Regular trips to make deposits should be made to either the bank or the hotel safe.

ALWAYS GET CASH RECEIPTS

5. Name tags are usually made in advance for all individuals registered prior to the start of the conference. These name tags should contain first name and last initial and city and state of regular GA group.
Gam-Anon name tags should follow the same format as GA name tags since the spring conference also hosts the Gam-Anon delegates meeting. Extra name tags should be on hand for walk-in registers.
6. No person should be permitted to register for and/or attend an International Conference until all prior financial obligations to any prior International Conference has been satisfied.

H) GUEST SERVICES AND ROOM SET-UP COMMITTEE

This committee is responsible for all meeting rooms, eating rooms and Trustees room. Chairs and tables set-up must be made for all rooms. Some rooms, such as the Trustees room, might require 5 or 6 microphones. On rare occasions, a projector is required. Dance floor set-up and a stage are usually needed for Friday and Saturday night.

The Board of Trustees meeting takes place on Thursday and Friday, preceding the Conference itself, which usually starts on Friday. Availability of the Board of Trustees room on Friday evening and/or Saturday may be necessary. Keep in mind that the Trustees room should have seating for 110 Trustees plus additional guests and a front table. Extra chairs should be set up for those non-Trustees wishing to sit in the Trustees meeting. Gam-Anon should be consulted for set-up directions for the Gam-Anon meeting at spring conferences.

E) BOOKLET AND OTHER GIVEAWAYS COMMITTEE

This committee is responsible for obtaining and putting together a booklet with stories, poems and anything else submitted by Gamblers Anonymous and Gam-Anon members. The booklet can be an upside down booklet with two covers, one for Gamblers Anonymous and the opposite for Gam-Anon. The final format is left up to the committee; the more creative the better. The GA committee handles the Gamblers Anonymous section and a Gam-Anon chairperson handles the Gam-Anon part. This booklet is handed out to all individuals registered for the conference. It is usually included in the goody bag. This booklet can be bound in several ways, depending on the committee budget and the members of that committee.

This committee also has the responsibility of putting together the goody bag as mentioned as a giveaway at registration. This goody bag can contain anything from paper pads to hats and tee shirts. The contents of this giveaway bag are entirely up to the committee and budget allowed. Any questionable items put into the goody bag should be cleared with the Conference Oversight & Assistance Committee of the Board of Trustees.

MAKE SURE THAT YOU STAY WITHIN AN ALLOWABLE BUDGET.

J) SIGNS AND PRINTING COMMITTEE

This committee has the responsibility of putting together the signup registration form, printing meal tickets, printing conference and workshop schedules, making the workshop signs that are put out in front of the workshop doors and any other signs or printing required.

K) PUBLICITY COMMITTEE

This is the committee that gets the word out as to where and when this conference is being held. It is important to make announcements at local meetings. Host area Trustees can contact fellow Trustees as reminders of the conference via phone calls or e-mails. This is usually the best way to inform the local members.

Registration forms can be brought to conferences preceding your conference. The conference held six months prior to your conference is required to give you a table to sign up those wishing to register for your conference. Remember that when you hold your conference, you must provide the next conference a table to do their sign ups. During the preceding six months before your conference, the ISO bulletin will publish your registration form.

GET THE WORD OUT AND HAVE A SUCCESSFUL CONFERENCE.

L) TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

This committee arranges all transportation needs. Quite often, the hotel is close enough to the airport that the hotel has a shuttle. This committee will let you know how often the shuttle runs. If there is no shuttle, this committee might have the budget to arrange transportation for you. There could be a charge for this. The transportation committee will also get prices for taxis, buses or even limos if required. In some areas, members might volunteer to pick up individuals at the airport.

MISCELLANEOUS

There are some things done at all conferences that do not fit anywhere else, so the following list will explain them:

A) THE WALKATHON

This is a scheduled event that takes place at all conferences as a fundraiser for the ISO. Walkathon sponsorship sheets are sent out to all registrants to sign up sponsors for X amount of dollars per mile walked. The walkathon is usually from 3 to 5 miles. All proceeds go directly to the ISO office.

B) "WHAT IS THE ISO?"

This is something that some conferences do and some don't. The International Executive Secretary and the Chairman of the Board of Regents put on a question and answer seminar, explaining what the ISO and the BOR do. This is for those that want to know how the money is spent. "What is the ISO?" is typically scheduled during one of the workshop sessions. It is typically quite an informative workshop.

C) THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES DOOR COLLECTION

Delegated GA members are strategically placed at the doors of the Trustees meeting with boxes to collect donations for the ISO at the end of each session.

D) SALE OF LITERATURE

Space and personnel to sell GA and Gam-Anon literature are always provided by the conference. This literature is sent on ahead by both GA and Gam-Anon at no shipping cost to the conference. The conference must also make arrangements to return all unsold literature. All proceeds from literature sold at the conference must be remitted to GA ISO and Gam-Anon ISO.

E) MEMBERS STAYING OVER

Since some members stay over until Monday, it is usually a good idea to have someone on the conference committee make sure their checkout and transportation go smoothly.

Any other committees that a conference deems necessary can be added.

FOLLOW-UP

The follow-up is a very important part of the conference. It is important to provide an accurate and complete accountability of the entire conference. Copies of this report must be forwarded within ninety (90) days of the close of the conference to both the ISO office and the Conference Oversight & Assistance Committee of the Board of Trustees. This report should contain the following:

1. A total of all receipts from registration or any conference collections or special fundraisers.
2. A breakdown of all expenses including hospitality room, entertainment, goody bags, printing, decorating, transportation, name tags, hotel bill, etc.
The above mentioned items are in addition to the regular monthly requirements.
3. A paid in full hotel bill must accompany the final report.
4. Accountability of all profits showing:
Spring Conferences: 65% of the profits going to GA ISO and 35% going to Gam-Anon ISO.
Fall Conferences: 80% of the profits going to GA ISO and 20% going to Gam-Anon ISO.

MOST OF WHAT WE HAVE COVERED HERE ARE SUGGESTED GUIDELINES. ANY AREAS THAT FEEL THEY HAVE SOMETHING THAT IS INNOVATIVE AND/OR CREATIVE SHOULD RUN THEIR IDEAS PAST THE CONFERENCE OVERSIGHT & ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES BEFORE PROCEEDING.

APPENDIX 1

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

This group is considering your area for their

20__ INTERNATIONAL FALL CONFERENCE

GROUP: 2016 Fall Conference, Anywhere Intergroup

DATES: October 18th to 24th, 20__

Attendees*: 450

Peak night rooms*: 235

Major arrival: Wed./Thurs. 10/20, 10/21, 20__

Major departure*: Sun. 10/24, 20__

Largest food function*: 450

Meeting & Function space*: (1) Room for 150 classroom style
(6) Rooms for 50 theater style
(1) Banquet room for 550 at round tables

Room Block:	Day*	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.
	Date*	10/18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	Rooms*	10	50	110	150	175	200	20

HISTORY*:	Year	City	Hotel
	2013	Orlando, FL	Sheraton Lake Buena Vista
	2014	Houston, TX	Hyatt Regency Houston
	2015	Cherry Hill, NJ	Crowne Plaza Philadelphia-Cherry Hill
	2015	Cancun, Mex	Westin Resort & Spa

2016 Phoenix, AZ Sheraton Crescent

COMMENTS*: This group is rate-conscious!

 Please submit your proposal no later than (date)

 A definite decision on city and hotel host will be made on (date)

CONTACT*: **PAUL B.**
 P.O. Box 1234
 ANYWHERE, OR 12345
 EMAIL _____
 TEL: 000-000-0000

If the local CVB does not offer this service, the local conference committee may create its own bulletin and mail or email to selected hotels as a "Request for Proposals" (RFP)

This is not GA-Approved
It is not to be used, displayed or distributed, except for discussion prior to the Cancun Board of Trustees Meeting
Cancun Attachment 37

AGENDA

(This may be added as an extra sheet and should be a COMPLETE chronological schedule of meetings, events and food functions), e.g.:

DATE:

Wed. 10/25:	7:00 am-noon	Golf outing, fun run/walk, tours
Thurs. 10/26	10:00 am-11:00 pm	BOT meeting for 140
Sat. 10/28	8:00 am-noon	General Session for 400 – theater style (in-room coffee/tea)
	Noon-1:30 pm	Luncheon for 400 – round tables
	2:00 pm-5:00 pm	(6) meetings for 50 each – theatre style
	6:00 pm-7:00 pm	Cocktail reception for 550
	7:00 pm-11:00 pm	Banquet for 550 – round tables

APPENDIX 2

	REGISTRATION	Conference name Dates Location Hotel Hotel address & phone numbers	CONFERENCE	
	PLAN	PACKAGE	ATION	TOTAL
A	2 Persons, 2 Nights and 8 Meals	*\$	\$	*\$
B	1 Person, 2 Nights and 4 Meals	*\$	\$	*\$
C	2 Persons, 1 night and 4 Meals	*\$	\$	*\$
D	1 Person, 1 Night and 2 Meals	*\$	\$	*\$
E	Registration & Sat. Evening Banquet		\$	\$
F	Registration Only		\$	\$
G	Saturday Evening Banquet Only		\$	\$

*Room rates of \$ _____ are guaranteed for ___ days prior to, and ___ days following the conference. Those room rates do not include taxes. Hotel reservations are to be made directly with _____ by calling _____ or Toll Free at _____. When booking your room, mention _____ Spring/Fall Conference to receive the discounted rate. RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE BY _____ TO RECEIVE THE CONFERENCE RATE.
 WE RECOMMEND THAT YOU FLY INTO _____ AIRPORT CODE (_____)
 Airport transportation can be arranged by calling _____

----- Cut here -----

Registrant #1: Plan choice _____ Full Name _____
 Name on badge _____
 (Please check one) GA _____ GAM-ANON _____ NON-AFFILIATED _____

Registrant #2: Plan choice _____ Full Name _____
 Name on badge _____
 (Please check one) GA _____ GAM-ANON _____ NON-AFFILIATED _____

Mailing address: _____
Physical address Apt./Suite

_____ City _____ State/Province _____ Zip/Postal Code _____

Telephone Number: Home _____ Mobile _____

Email address: _____

Minimum deposit: _____ Amount enclosed: _____ (\$100.00 for plans A, B, C, D)

Make check or money order payable to: _____

Mail completed registration form with payment to: _____

Please note: the last date to receive a refund on registration and meals is _____

*Two separate reservations (Hotel and Conference) are to be made