**International FAQ V2.0**

The Twelve Traditions are the foundation of our service work -

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon CMA unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as expressed in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for CMA membership is a desire to stop using.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or CMA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the Addict who still suffers.
6. A CMA group ought never endorse, finance or lend the CMA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every CMA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Crystal Meth Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. CMA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Crystal Meth Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the CMA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films and all other media.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

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1. **There is no CMA in my country - how do we get started?**
    a. CMA meetings often begin when people have traveled and attended CMA elsewhere.
    b. Flexibility and autonomy - in keeping with Tradition 4 each meeting is autonomous, except in matters which affect CMA as a whole.
    c. Literature and readings can be downloaded at www.crystalmeth.org

2. **How do we start a CMA Meeting?**
    a. Download meeting packet from Meeting Packets
        i. Meeting formats
        ii. Pamphlets are available online
        iii. Meeting readings Download Readings
        iv. Literature and chips may be ordered online. Online Chips and Literature
        v. We encourage translation into your language and invite you to contact General Services about helping to facilitate translations literature@cmagso.net) (Currently we have translations in German, Spanish, Russian, French and Portuguese, with Dutch, Polish and Farsi in process.
    b. Find a room or space to meet if doing an in person or a time if starting an online meeting.
    c. Choose a regular meeting time.
    d. Invite some friends to attend.
    e. It can be useful to invite people with recovery experience in other fellowships as their experience can provide guidance and stability.
    f. Exercise caution around local laws and cultural customs, as well as health and safety. We suggest you prioritize the safety and legal status of your members in choices you make.
    g. Meetings may designate themselves as being open to all vs “closed” (i.e. addicts only) meetings. The latter may feel safer and promote greater intimacy and freedom to share.
    h. Open and free election of trusted servants; be sensitive to the principles of the program rather than the personalities of those who began the meetings.
    i. Bring awareness, the steps are there to guide our personal recovery, the traditions are there to guide the group. In light of that, it is useful to devote some time to tradition study.
    j. How to start an online meeting? (There are many things to consider in being online, documents at this link will be helpful Toolkit Download

k. There are several issues to consider in being online. Many of these factors are addressed in the CMA Online Traditions Guide found at the link above. Consider the importance of anonymity, being self-supporting, non-endorsement of specific technology, the challenges of online meeting etiquette.

3. **Who can start a meeting?**
    a. You can! There is an English language document called “Starting a CMA Meeting” available at Starting a Meeting

4. **Are meeting formats available in our language?**
    a. There is a suite of eight core readings that form the basis of a meeting format currently available on the CMA website at Literature Translations
    b. The suite of readings is available in the following languages:
        i. English
        ii. German
        iii. Spanish
        iv. French
        v. Russian
        vi. Dutch, Farsi, Polish, Arabic, Nepalese, Portuguese and other translations are in progress.

5. **Do we need to start a service entity?**
    a. Our experience has been that as meetings develop, shared needs such as ordering chips and literature, providing H&I (Hospitals & Institutions) outreach, and handling Public Information requests from the press or non-CMA members, the groups may need to develop a wider service entity.
    b. Though ours is a simple program, we are complicated people. Don't expect this process to be seamless. Our service structures are typically messy and can involve interpersonal conflict in the beginning. This doesn’t mean you’re “doing it wrong”, it's just part of the process. It is helpful to focus on principles over personalities.
    c. Having a service entity allows the groups to connect to other groups in your region and to CMA as a whole.

6. **How do we start a service entity?**

a. Familiarize members with the Twelve Traditions of CMA, perhaps through Tradition study meetings, in which the Twelve Traditions are read and discussed.
b. Consider familiarizing yourselves with the Twelve Concepts of CMA also, applying the principles in them will help you avoid many issues in relation to service as they arise. Reach out to a member of the international fellowship who is familiar with the concepts, and can help you utilise them effectively.
c. Build consensus that a service entity is needed.
    i. The main reason to have a service entity is to facilitate two-way communication between the groups and CMA as a whole
    ii. It may be helpful to remind members that:
        1. “Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern” (Tradition Two), and that
        2. “Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or CMA as a whole.” (Tradition Four)
    iii. Communicate clearly that the purpose of the proposed entity is to serve and not to govern, and that CMA is self-supporting (Tradition Seven), both financially and in providing services to our meetings.
d. Enlist help from folks with service experience in other fellowships.
e. Join the monthly CMA International meeting held **1200 UTC on the 2nd Saturday of each month:**

**Join Zoom Meeting**
**https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84228879590**
**Meeting ID: 842 2887 9590**

f. Encourage individual groups to elect a General Service Representative (GSR).
    i. GSRs organize into an Area Committee (generally organized along existing State, Province, Prefecture, County, Department, etc., boundaries) to elect Delegates and other trusted servants, and to discuss and respond to shared needs.
    ii. District Committees (generally local to a city or other geographic location, language, or culture) can be formed as well and report to the Area.
    iii. Initially, the grouping is proximate and may include all meetings in an existing country.
    iv. The committee of GSRs (District or Area) democratically elects officers, typically a chairperson, secretary, and treasurer. The

chairperson or co-chairs run the committee meetings, prepare the meeting agenda, etc.; a secretary keeps minutes of the committee meetings and takes responsibility for the preservation and maintenance of important records; and a treasurer keeps true and accurate records of the committee's funds and expenses, including Seventh Tradition contributions, and reports to the committee on the financial status of the fellowship.

g. It is suggested not to use the name "Crystal Meth Anonymous" or "CMA" in any corporate filing or setting up bank accounts for your service entity. More information can be found below in this FAQ, and in the Crystal Meth Anonymous Service Manual, under the section on "Intellectual Property Guidance".

**7. Starting H&I work (which is integral to bringing new members)**

a. Often outreach comes from CMA to an institution, particularly in the beginning. Once solid H&I work is happening in some facilities other institutions may then contact us to ask us to bring those meetings to them.
b. Often there is initial reluctance from Jails or Treatment Centers to involve CMA due to concerns about the solidity of our recovery and the stability of our program. While we often want to get H&I up and running as soon as we have some members in service, sometimes building out our fellowship, structure, and existing meetings can help our members develop the recovery and inspire the confidence of these facilities.
c. In many places, H&I work begins as a project of a member who was a previous resident of a facility and who has a passion for this work as a result. Often this enthusiasm inspires others to join in service.
d. Identification with others who have similar experiences motivates and inspires people toward recovery. It is effective to have folks involved in H&I who have been in institutions, but others with strong recovery can also carry the message just as effectively.
e. It is often said "you can't keep it unless you give it away", the service of bringing the message to residents helps us maintain our recovery.
f. Questions about H&I and PI&O being united or separate:
    i. They may begin as a function of a single person or commitment, but as the service structure matures can become separate committees. Generally speaking, PI&O deals with outreach or response to the general public, while H&I focuses on bringing the message of recovery to institutionalized populations. (Bearing in

mind that people in jails and treatment centers cannot access traditional meetings.)

ii. H&I - In addition to the requirements facilities/jails may have of us, we need to ensure that our Traditions and general principles of recovery are respected. For example, facilities may pressure H&I meetings to allow prison guards inside meetings, which significantly undermines the anonymity and freedom to share for the inmates. We should resist measures that compromise the ability of attendees at meetings to share.

1. Often H&I work involves a significant degree of administrative work, initially getting recognition of CMA as a legitimate fellowship may take time.
2. In some countries, Insurance must be carried to protect the fellowship against potential losses. This generally involves legal groundwork to put our structures and organizations on a basis where they can be recognized as legitimate legal entities.
3. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is generally required, and that may be provided by the facility, or it may be expected that visitors use the facility's medically certified PPE, temperature checks, or health clearances questionnaires. Be aware that different locations may have specific vaccination policies as well.
4. It is strongly recommended that H&I work be done with at least two sober members in attendance, care must be taken to ensure no inappropriate contact or behavior between visitors and inmates occurs. Guests to jails must be vetted and have security clearances.
    a. A security clearance may involve making sure attendees have no felonies, no active or pending criminal charges, and can't be on probation or parole. Specifics vary from facility to facility, so don't assume you can't do H&I work if you have a prior criminal record. Physical materials used in meetings have to be shipped in and cleared in advance, and items such as chips are often prohibited for security reasons.
    b. Some facilities require regular renewal of clearances, or have specific sobriety time requirements. Many facilities will require guests to attend specific training and certification processes. Others may require

contracts between H&I volunteers and the facility. Attendees at H&I meetings should anticipate that they may be searched on entry or exit.

5. Guests to Hospitals generally have specific sobriety or clean time requirements, physical materials have to be cleared, policies and procedures must be observed, entry and exit are logged, and certifications may be required.
6. Treatment Centers may or may not be affiliated with hospitals, and their entry policies can be somewhat different from them.
7. Please review the CMA H&I Resources if you would like to learn more.

g. Online H&I possibilities. (Transnational H&I.)
    i. Video meetings are a new technology and there is significant variation in whether this method of bringing a meeting into a facility is an option. Our experience has been that treatment facilities may be more open to this method than jails or prisons.

8. **Can our meeting(s) send representation to the CMA General Service Conference?**

International fellowships can send Delegates to the North American Conference, and those Delegates can vote. Currently, each country where CMA is in existence can elect two delegates to the Conference, and upon notification to the Conference registrar and General Services Committee Chair, the delegates will be credentialed to vote. Though credentialing can be done at the Conference, it is strongly encouraged to notify the conference committee and GSC chair that you are sending delegates in advance of the conference.

**9. What is our relationship with the North American General Service Conference?**

The CMA Charter allows other parts of the world to create their own Conferences, and to send representatives to the North American Conference.

Section Two of the CMA Charter states:

> “Other Sections of the Conference may sometimes be created in foreign lands as the need arises out of language or geographical considerations.

The North American Section of the General Service Conference will then become the Senior Section*, related to the other Sections by ties of mutual consultation and a cross-linking of delegates.

But no Conference Section shall ever be placed in authority over another. All joint action shall be taken only upon two-thirds vote of the combined Sections. Within its boundaries, each Conference ought to be autonomous. Only matters seriously affecting C.M.A.'s worldwide needs shall be the subject of joint consideration."

* The language "Senior Section" may sound as if the North American section is "in charge" or has authority over other sections, but this is not the case. The language specifically applies to the legal requirement that an incorporated entity holds intellectual property rights like trademarks, copyrights, and service marks, for example, to protect the language of the Twelve Steps and Traditions from copyright infringement or the sale of non-authorized CMA logoed merchandise. The second paragraph of Section Two clarifies that *spiritual authority in CMA resides with groups worldwide*, and is exercised through their elected trusted servants.

10. **Can we write our own literature?**

Yes! CMA is somewhat unique in that we allow local fellowships to develop their own literature. We encourage them to submit their literature to the General Services Literature Advisory Committee (litcommit@cmagso.net) for review and potential Interim or Conference approval. While CMA has its own literature that has been developed by the Literature Advisory Committee, other locations (such as New York and London) have created their own books, which have emerged out of their own unique culture and identity.

i. **What is "Conference Approved" and/or "Interim Approved" literature?**

CMA Literature goes through a staged process to gain the designation "Conference-approved." First, the literature is reviewed by the Literature Committee, and if it is deemed ready for distribution, the Literature Committee puts it to the Conference for "Interim Approval" status. Interim Approval allows the literature to be placed on CMA websites and distributed as "interim approved". Interim Approved literature is then widely circulated for review by

groups worldwide, and their feedback is sought through GSR's and the service structure over a period of several years. After a substantial amount of feedback is received and revisions made, the Literature Committee can then put the documents forward for a vote for Conference Approval. Once Conference-approved, the process to make revisions requires another vote of the Conference. Documents that need to be changed regularly (like the Service manual) are generally not Conference Approved.

ii. Conference-approved literature has been read and discussed by groups worldwide, suggestions for revision are forwarded to the literature committee, and then the documents are submitted to the Conference for a vote to adopt them as "Conference Approved" literature. Conference-approved literature is then fixed in a stable form, and changes to it require another vote of the Conference.

iii. While conference approval / interim approval is an important step in developing literature for CMA as a whole, it should not be interpreted that literature which has not gone through this rigorous process (such as the books developed by New York or London) is prohibited or unapproved. While they may not have gone through the Conference Approval process we celebrate their development and encourage their dissemination; they may become part of the corpus of conference approved literature at some point in the future.

iv. Translation/back translation: CMA is currently in the process of translating existing literature into a variety of languages. This work is initially undertaken by volunteers for whom the translation language is their first language. Once this draft is developed, a different first language speaker "back translates" the literature back to the original language (often, but not necessarily English.) This process helps ensure an accurate translation that is culturally aware, both in linguistic terms and in terms of Twelve Step phrasing and culture. If you would like to get involved in the translation of our literature, we would love to hear from you, please contact litcommit@cmagso.net for more information and support.

v. **Copyright issues**

CMA's intellectual property like the Twelve Steps, Traditions, Concepts, copyrights, service marks, etc. is owned by the CMA General Services Conference. The CMA Charter tasks the CMA Board of Trustees with custodial responsibility for CMA's intellectual property, and with safeguarding this property worldwide. The specific intellectual property are the Steps, Traditions, Concepts, Service and Trademarks, Logo, as well as literature under copyright.

**11. How do we best serve the newcomer?**

a. Our primary purpose in CMA is to carry the message of recovery from one addict to another, which we do through meetings and fellowship, sponsorship and step work, and service and commitments. Often, it is helpful to do outreach to bring along people with prior service experience in other fellowships.
b. Welcoming newcomers to meetings is important; a warm welcome, a simple hello, and the feeling of identification when we hear others who have shared in our experience can make a newcomer feel more comfortable at a difficult time.
c. We find it useful to share in a general way about our using, rather than get bogged down in the specifics of our using behaviors. (These specifics can trigger the desire to use, or alienate people whose experience may have been different.) Sometimes this is described as "carrying the message, not the mess." Sharing our experience in working the steps is one of the most vital ways we can help the newcomer.
d. Creating a safe meeting environment is critical. Our meetings can be a safe haven and may be the only moment of peace a newcomer has experienced in some time. A well-run meeting helps newcomers immensely, but is a work in progress; do not be discouraged if your meeting is somewhat chaotic in the beginning.
e. People with different backgrounds, identities, and experiences are likely to attend your meeting. Listening respectfully to others, even when their experiences differ from your own, and focusing on the similarities rather than the differences is helpful.
f. The Steps teach us how to live, and the Traditions and Concepts teach us how to do service work with others in recovery. We encourage you to keep these in mind as your meeting grows and during your work with newcomers.

g. Accessibility - It is vitally important that our recovery materials be available to people in their own languages. To this end, CMA has been engaged in creating translations of our literature. This is done by finding local language speakers who are familiar with twelve-step recovery concepts and are also fluent in English, who translate our materials into their own language. The CMA Literature Advisory Committee then finds speakers of the specific language to proofread the document or uses a professional translation company to verify that the context and content are effectively translated.
h. Similarly, recovery should be widely accessible to all addicts who suffer from the disease of addiction. For this reason, it is important that our meeting scripts, readings, and literature be inclusive and use language that is welcoming to all potential members of CMA.
i. Another factor in making recovery available is creating a safe environment for all members in our meetings. We do this by creating a culture of inclusivity for others, avoiding objectification of others, and encouraging sharing that avoids describing drug effects and using behaviors in specific detail. Many meetings include a specific inclusivity statement to underline this vital component of our collective recovery. This has been described by saying "The drug doesn't discriminate, so neither should we."

**12. What resources are available to us from CMA's service structure?**

a. These Advisory Committees can offer assistance in building your fellowship.
    i. Communications
    ii. Conference
    iii. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
    iv. Finance
    v. Hospitals and Institutions
    vi. Literature
    vii. Public Information

    There is also an International Working Group that can be reached by emailing international@cmagso.net
b. Recovery literature including brochures, books, meeting readings and materials are available through CMA's website, and our books are available on Amazon.com (search for "Crystal Meth Anonymous").

c. Chips and medallions to commemorate recovery milestones, as well as greeting cards and stickers are available for purchase on CMA's website - LINK
d. "You always have a seat here." International fellowships are welcome to participate in CMA's annual General Service Conference, which is the spiritual voice of the fellowship and offers guidance to our Trustees in their work.
e. As referenced above, the Literature Advisory Committee is actively working on translation projects, and is eager to work with you to make translations happen.
f. Our website crystalmeth.org is our primary means of communication worldwide.
g. Fellowship - We welcome participation from fellowships worldwide in our service work, on our committees, and at our annual Conference. Voting representation is available to delegates elected by international fellowships to further these goals.

13. **Do we need to legally incorporate?**

In the beginning, most service entities do not need to immediately incorporate or form a legal entity to formalize their structure. The fellowship's primary purpose is to reach the addict who still suffers, so it is useful to concentrate on services to your meetings and local area.

Our service work can be viewed as having two prongs, one within the fellowship, and the other public-facing. Public-facing responsibilities may include legal filings, compliance issues, tax reporting, insurance, or establishing credibility for H&I work.

a. Banking - you may need to have a formal legal status to open bank accounts.
b. Insurance - Meeting spaces and H&I facilities may require you to be insured. It is also prudent to carry insurance as you begin to produce fellowship events and fundraisers, as these events involve risk.
c. It is strongly recommended that you NOT use the name "Crystal Meth Anonymous" in legal incorporations, as this can create a legal perception of affiliation between your entity and CMA General Services. This exposes the entire fellowship to liability in the event you are sued. Local fellowships have used names like "OurTown Intergroup" or "Provincial Service."

d. Development of governing documents. If you do decide to incorporate, it is advisable to seek legal advice as you develop bylaws and submit applications to Government entities.
e. Filing taxes. Tax codes vary widely, you may or may not need to report on your income and expenses to government entities. We recommend seeking qualified professional advice in these matters.
f. Meetings and service work are funded through member contributions, which is referred to as the Seventh Tradition: “Every CMA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.”

**14. How should we handle our 7th Tradition funds?**

a. Transparency - it is a good idea to have shared “eyes on records” i.e have at least two individuals with oversight of financial records, count cash or review electronic payment records, and review Seventh Tradition reports on a regular schedule.
b. Accountability to groups - consistency of written records and regular reporting of the fellowship’s finances builds trust and accountability.
c. Suggest a clean time requirement, a working knowledge of the Twelve Traditions (and ideally the Twelve Concepts) for your Treasurer, and suggest a requirement for them to be solvent and to have a stable source of income. Many groups and Areas have experienced the challenge of a Treasurer disappearing or relapsing, and thus losing the Seventh tradition funds. For this reason, it’s important to elect fellows as Treasurers with solid and demonstrable recovery. Please refer to the CMA Service Manual for additional guidance on the selection and election of service positions and Area officers.
d. As productive and responsible members of society, it's important that we follow local laws and legal requirements about banking and financial matters.

15. **How do we conduct a business meeting for our group?**

A core principle of Twelve Traditions-based meetings is to make sure all voices have an opportunity to be heard, and that the group has a chance to carefully consider all opinions. One difference from non-Twelve Step & Tradition-based business meetings is that we strive for “substantial unanimity” (67% of voting members) where most members come to agreement, rather than simple majority (51%) rule.

We try to make sure the less popular opinion has ample opportunity to respond and offer their opinion (see Concept Five in the CMA Service Manual). After a group decision has been reached we ask if anyone would like to make a "minority report", or speak for the opinion with fewer votes. We have often seen that a well-stated minority report can prompt the group to reconsider, or at least makes the process more thoughtful and inclusive of all opinions.

It is important that a well-run business meeting has an agenda, which often takes the form of approval of the prior meeting's minutes, then a review of old business from the last meeting with updates on what has been done since then, then new business. If your fellowship is well staffed with volunteers, you may have reports from various committees or service positions as well.

16. **How do we elect Trusted Servants?**

In the beginning, our Trusted Servants are often drawn from "whoever shows up and is willing." While this fills the positions, it is desirable to grow toward a democratic process. We may feel an urgency to fill positions immediately, but it is okay to take time and allow the structure to grow as suitable candidates join. It is important that our trusted servants be chosen with great care (Concept IX), and that the fellowship has an opportunity to select the best and most thoughtful representatives to do our work (Concept XI).

Having regular Traditions Meetings (a meeting where the Traditions are read and discussed) will help our representatives grow in understanding and effectiveness.

There is a voting process for electing trusted servants called the Third Legacy Procedure that is designed to reduce the "popularity contest" aspect of electing representatives. The Third Legacy Procedure is beyond the scope of this FAQ; the Third Legacy procedure as outlined in the AA Service Manual may be utilized.

17. **What service positions are suggested?**

Generally, we find it useful for a service entity to elect a Chair and Co-Chairs, a Treasurer to track the Seventh Tradition funds and pay bills, and a Secretary to take minutes and communicate with the fellowship. As your service entity grows, it is important to have elected representatives from your meetings, often called

GSRs (Group Service Representatives) who vote on behalf of their individual meetings and act as a conduit for information between the service entity and the groups.

Your group may choose to add other service positions as needed, and we have found that online meetings may need specific technical or security positions. The "Meeting Starter Kit" referenced in Item 3 above has good descriptions of meeting service positions and responsibilities.

18. **How can we participate with the fellowship at large?**

We invite you to reach out to the CMA International Committee at international@cmagso.net and to participate in our meetings. Your fellowship may also send representation to the annual CMA General Service Conference in the USA, either in person or virtually. To do this, contact the CMA General Services Committee Chair at: chair@cmagso.net

19. **How can we add our meeting(s) to the CMA website, crystalmeth.org?**

You can add, update or remove your meeting at this link:

https://www.crystalmeth.org/a-new-cma-meeting-listing/