

# Guidelines for conducting an AA visit to the Ottawa Withdrawal Management Centre

## Overview

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### Purpose

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide information on the recommended format and content for hosting an Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) service meeting at the Ottawa Withdrawal Management Centre (OWMC). The OWMC is formerly known as “Detox”. However, while at this treatment centre, please refer to it using its proper name and do not use “Detox.”

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### Who needs these guidelines?

These guidelines are intended for use by members of AA who visit the OWMC to put on a meeting.

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### In this document

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# Meeting Logistics

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## Location

- The OWMC is located at the corner of Bruyère Street and Parent Avenue, across the street from the Élisabeth Bruyère Health Centre.
  - Enter at the rear off Parent Avenue.
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## Who can put on a meeting?

- Your name must be on the service list schedule as a host.
  - Minimum 2 AA members, maximum 4 members.
  - The meeting host must have at least 2 years of sobriety. Others should each have at least 6 months.
  - If you arrive alone, the OWMC will turn you away.
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## What if I cannot make a meeting commitment?

- Contact Greg L. as soon as possible if you cannot meet your meeting commitment.
  - It is not your responsibility to fill your spot. There are many volunteers that are willing to fill in.
  - Greg L. may be contacted at 613-251-0251 or [detox@12steps.ca](mailto:detox@12steps.ca).
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## Arrival times and sign-in

- The meetings begin daily at 7:00 PM daily and end at 8:00 PM.
- Arrive by approx. 6:45 PM, but not much earlier.
- Sign in at the front desk.
- OWMC staff will show you where to find the sign in sheet and AA meeting lists, etc.

# Meeting Format

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## Overview

The AA service meeting at OWMC is not a typical AA meeting. Please do not conduct it as such. Our visit is simply an information session about Alcoholics Anonymous, by qualified sober AA members.

AA members are there to try and “plant the seed”.

Please leave the last 10-15 minutes of the meeting open for questions, discussion, etc. Remember that some clients are detoxifying and their attention span may be short. Some may wish to talk.

There are key differences between this service meeting and a typical AA meeting that are explained below.

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## OWMC clients attend not by choice

- OWMC staff requires clients to attend or risk being discharged the next day.
- Not everyone wants to be there. Some have no desire to be in the room.

*NOTE:* This point cannot be stressed strong enough. As stated above, this is not an AA meeting. You may cause more harm than good by forcing someone to listen and/or participate who does not want to be there.

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## No prayers, no traditions, no phone numbers

- Do not recite the Serenity Prayer, the Lord’s Prayer, or any other prayer. No exceptions!
  - We suggest reading the 12 steps, but do not read the 12 traditions.
  - AA members should refrain from giving their personal phone numbers to clients
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## We are from AA and only AA

- AA members are there representing Alcoholics Anonymous and no other 12 step fellowship or treatment centre or anything else. We are there for AA only.
  - Please refrain from commenting on anything not AA related.
  - OWMC staff is fully qualified to answer questions regarding non-AA issues.
  - Never defend AA if someone has had a bad experience. We cannot speak for A.A. as a whole!  
Some suggested responses may be:
    - “That’s too bad, maybe you can try different meetings this time around.....”, or
    - “This is a healthy fellowship for sick individuals. Not everyone is at the same place in their recovery. There are those who are healthier than others, seek them out.....”
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# Suggested Topics

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## Overview

- These are guidelines and suggestions for you, the AA members.
  - There are many things that can be discussed at this meeting.
  - Time will likely be the biggest factor.
  - The list below is not intended to be all-inclusive.
  - Some AA members may wish to use the Ottawa AA meeting list as a guide (see Page 5).
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- The 12 steps of AA. Clients may introduce themselves and / or read a step. Tell them that they can ALWAYS pass if they wish. **Do not read the 12 traditions of AA.**
  - The AA member may identify by briefly explaining why they have come to the OWMC.
  - Sobriety date of each AA member present. Their home group?
  - What can be expected at an AA meeting?
  - What are AA's membership requirements?
  - The **Basic Text** of Alcoholics Anonymous (why is it called the 'Big Book'?)
  - How to get a Big Book or other AA literature.
  - Is recovery possible?
  - The importance of sponsorship. How to get one and who can be one?
  - The importance of contact phone numbers for AA members.
  - Fellowship in AA. What is it?
  - Self-support.....passing the basket.
  - About God....
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## **The Ottawa and Area Meeting List**

Some AA members use Ottawa and Area Meeting List as guide for discussion.

Some important points are:

Front Cover:

- The Date in top right corner. List is updated regularly for locations, time changes, etc.
- Contact AA in Ottawa at 613-237-6000 24 hours. For French callers, use 595-1916

Inside Front Cover:

- The AA Preamble. Explains what AA is.
- Webpage address
- “To The Newcomer” info

Inside:

- Meeting types
  - Open: anyone can attend: friends and family of the AA member, kids, etc.
  - Closed: alcoholics only (a requirement).
  - Speaker meetings versus Discussion meetings.
- Meeting locations within Ottawa
- Out of town meetings
- Meetings specifically for Women, Men, French, English, Gay meetings, etc.
- Meeting times: All times throughout the day
- Open spaces in the meeting list for phone numbers, etc. Explain importance of getting a phone number of an AA member.
- The Serenity Prayer. Just refer to it, but please do not recite it.

Inside Back Cover:

- 12 Steps and 12 Traditions of AA. Refer to and explain both. Please do not recite the traditions.
  - 20 Questions. Explain them, and maybe offer personal experience.
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