Some Tips From Your Group Records Coordinator

Bounced Emails From WSO

The WSO sends emails periodically to the CMAs or the group to verify that the email address on record is correct. If emails are returned as "undeliverable" or "rejected," the group is placed in a **"bounced email status"** and the Group Records Coordinator is alerted.

There are two reasons for bounced emails. The first is the obvious one where the email address is actually incorrect. The second reason is because WSO will send emails in bulk. Bulk emails are sometimes blocked by the providers' servers' either because the servers are busy or they are configured so as not to accept bulk emails. To prevent emails from being blocked, the WSO recommends that CMAs add this address to their address books: **Al_Anon_Family_Group_Headquarter@mail.vresp.com**. That should resolve this issue.
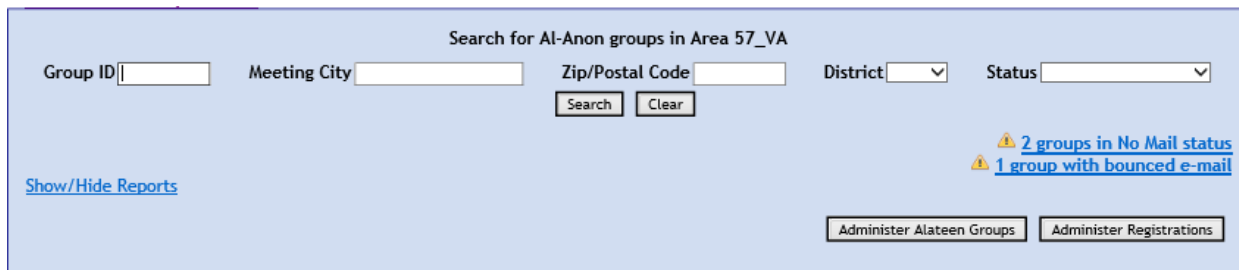
Group in No Mail Status

This occurs when WSO mails a packet or other information to the group CMA and it is returned. WSO will place the group in a **"no mail status"** until the mailing address is corrected and alert the Group Records Coordinator.

Group Reported Not Meeting

This occurs when a newcomer arrives at a meeting and no one is there. They then contact the WSO and report the group. The group is placed in a **"reported not meeting"** status. The WSO then contacts the Group Records Coordinator, requesting assistance in verifying the status of the meeting. Until verified that the group still exists, the meeting is temporarily removed from the WSO toll-free information meeting line, and the Public Outreach Web site meeting search results.

Below is an example of what the alerts look like:

Accessing the GR1 Form

If unable to access the web form from your Favorites list or by pasting the url address in the address bar, go to our Area website and access it from there: **http://www.vaalanon.org/group-records-process**. The link to the web form is located in step 2 under the Step by Step Process.

Submitting Additions/Changes

The GRC form, or tinyurl, can be used for adding new groups as well as making changes: **http://tinyurl.com/Va-Area-GRCform** *(please, no emails or written forms).* The web form is owned by the VAWSC and replaces the paper form. The tinyurl makes your job easier because it is a one stop shop. I will take care of the rest making sure that WSO and Area databases are both updated and in synch. Since I use the Area database for printing reports and mailing labels, it is really important to keep it current.

Submitting Additions/Changes, con't

If you are submitting a change for a CMA or GR, the full information for that individual must be provided:
- First and Last Name
- Address
- Phone #
- Email address (optional)

CMA information is key because both WSO and Area use that information for contacting the groups, regardless of whether the **CMA** and **GR** is the same individual. This information is explained in detail below.

Please make sure that all spelling/information is correct when entering submissions. I copy what you submitted and paste it into the databases, so if the spelling/information is incorrect, I will be inputting it incorrectly.

If a change does not take place till a future date, please note in the submission. Future changes can't be made until after the last meeting with the old information.

If you are interested in starting a new group please read the section in the Al-Anon Service Manual about the process (pp. 28 – 37).
- Meet requirements as outlined in Tradition Three
- Register the group with WSO through the DR or Group Records Coordinator **(this is a must before the group can be listed as an official Al-Anon meeting)**
- Groups can be registered via our GRC web form (see below for access)
- For assistance contact the Group Records Coordinator (see contact information below)

Submissions To DRs

Though GRs and CMAs have access to the web form, all group changes/updates/inactivations as well as new group information need to go through the DR so he/she is aware of activity in the district. Where there is no DR, then the GR/CMA would have to make the submission.

Regarding Alateen Groups

When submitting Alateen changes or adding new groups, the **Alateen Process Person**— *Stacy Lewis stacylee31@gmail.com*—must also be notified. I can update the Area database but I do not have access to update the WSO Alateen database.

Other Suggestions

DRs can view WSO group information and print reports at the following link:
http://www.al-anon.info/OnlineGroupRecords/(S(dklyuapbqgazxogl5p5pozsq))/Default.aspx
and by using the same login and password used for AFG Connects.

For Special Instructions, such as meeting location, room number, etc., please limit your description to 100 characters. That is all the WSO database will allow.

Something to keep in mind but not critical: the WSO database is configured so that it will not accept Al-Anon spelled out. Instead, it forces a change to AFG. This is for purposes of anonymity. So, if the name of your group is "Al-Anon Spoken Here AFG," for example, it will appear in the WSO database as "AFG Spoken Here AFG." The Area database is not restricted in that way.

While WSO reserves the right to reject the name of a group, it is a rarity. It is highly recommended to follow the guidelines in the Service Manual when starting a new group or making group changes.

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What Is CMA?
One of the most common questions that I have been asked is "What is CMA?" I have copied the information from the service manual for your convenience.

CMA (Current Mailing Address) (P. 33, Service Manual)*
It is essential to be able to contact the group. Each group needs to have someone who is willing to receive mail, and take it to the group. The CMA is a member who agrees to accept and deliver the group's mail (postal and electronic), anticipates keeping the same address for at least a year, and who attends the group's meeting regularly. The CMA may be, but does not have to be, the Group Representative (GR) or another group officer. Some groups rent a post office box, and members rotate the responsibility to deliver the mail to the group. Up-to-date CMA information assures the group of promptly receiving all mail. The WSO and the local service arms are to be notified immediately when the CMA changes, so there will be no disruption of service to the group. On the WSO group registration form (GR-1), groups are asked to provide a phone number and e-mail address for the CMA. E-mail is used for time-sensitive communications with the group and to distribute the monthly newsletter, Group e-News. Members who do not have access to e-mail may choose to have an "e-buddy" to receive the group's mail.

Contact Information
Your Group Records Coordinator is:
    Chris Batchelder
    grouprecords@vaalanon.org; cbnp15@verizon.net
    Phone: 703-389-1405 (After 6 PM Monday – Friday or Weekends)