

Secretaries Maintain the Connection

The group secretary is a link in a chain that gives out important information two ways: from the World Service Office (WSO) to group members and from the group to WSO.

Sending current group information or changes to WSO is a job that usually falls onto the broad shoulders of the group secretary. The secretary also has the responsibility to distribute information from the WSO, region and intergroup—such as newsletters, surveys and other mail—to members of the group.

Has this two-way flow of information been running smoothly in your group? If not, the place to start is to make sure your meeting is registered correctly with WSO. These are some important points to remember when registering or making changes:

- **Use the Group Registration/Change form. WSO can mail, email or fax this form if the group secretary or intergroup representative does not have one. On the OA Web site, a “print friendly” form (PDF) can be found on either the registration page for US groups or the page for groups outside the US.**
- **When submitting the printed Group Registration/Change form, write legibly and clearly. If we can’t read your writing, we can’t pass on accurate information to newcomers!**
- **Changes to group information may also be made using the online form on the OA Web site: http://www.oa.org/registration_forms.html.**
- **An email to the Group Registration Coordinator, Lorie Baird, at lbaird@oa.org will be accepted as well.**
- **When the group chooses to affiliate with an intergroup, include the intergroup’s number or at least the correct name of the intergroup.**
- **With ANY change it is important to give complete information. The critical areas to ensure the changes are applied to the correct group are the group number, city, state and meeting time. Make sure all information is accurate; check that apartment numbers are included, as these are often overlooked.**
- **Learn and use your group number on all WSO correspondence. Once a group is registered, it will maintain the same group number regardless of changes.**
- **Update the WSO with meeting detail changes as soon as you can, no matter how small the change. It is the group’s responsibility to do this. Some groups assume the intergroup will pass changes on to the WSO, and this is not always the case.**

The correct address of the current secretary ensures that the proper person receives mailings from the WSO. When the group receives mailings from the WSO, the group secretary can work with other members to make sure the information reaches everyone. For instance, the secretary can make sure someone downloads the WSO newsletter *A Step Ahead* from the OA Web site and makes it available to members in the meeting. Groups may also receive mailings from the intergroup with information that needs to be distributed to the groups. Each OA group should be sure the secretary receives adequate help and materials to do his or her job. The smooth flow of information between the WSO and the groups depends on the secretaries.

Other tasks of group secretaries are outlined in the *OA Handbook for Members, Groups and Intergroups* (available from WSO, #120, \$1.50 plus shipping). The secretary’s tasks may include presiding at group conscience and/or steering committee meetings or seeing that the meeting place is ready each week.

If you have questions about registering or recording changes for your group, please call, write or send an email to the WSO’s Group Registration Coordinator. WSO is interested in hearing your ideas on how we might improve the group registration process, and on group registrations in general.