

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS, INC.

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# Professional Exhibits Manual for Service Bodies

# Overeaters Anonymous, Inc.

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© Overeaters Anonymous, Inc.  
6075 Zenith Court NE  
Rio Rancho, NM 87144 USA  
Phone 505-891-2664 • Fax 505-891-4320  
URL [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org) • Email [info@aa.org](mailto:info@aa.org)

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## Local Expos and Health Fair Considerations

**E**xhibits and booths at local professional conferences and community health fairs offer additional opportunities to share OA's message. At such gatherings we can educate many professionals at one time by speaking to them directly when they visit the OA booth. Remember, we never present ourselves as professionals or experts in the field of eating disorders, nor do we affiliate ourselves with sponsors of the conference or other exhibits. We are there to distribute information about Overeaters Anonymous, and member volunteers are asked to speak only in that capacity and to their own recovery.

### How to Locate Local Expos and Health Fairs

Below are some resources for locating expos and health fairs in your area:

- **Local Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB):** Most cities have a convention and visitors bureau (CVB) which provides information on upcoming events. If your city does not have a CVB, consider contacting your local chamber of commerce. Some CVB's Web sites offer a calendar of events that lists upcoming professional conferences/conventions and health fairs for the year. If the Web site doesn't offer a calendar of events, call your CVB and ask for one.
- **Newspaper "Community Events" Section:** Most local newspapers offer a "Community Events" section or something of that nature. This resource provides information on events in the near future; these events are normally smaller events such as health fairs, public information forums, etc. Remember to check your morning and evening papers, as well as your community and local college/university newspapers.
- **Internet Searches:** The Internet has a wide variety of information on upcoming expos. Simply choose a search engine (i.e. Google, Yahoo, MSN, etc.) and type in the keywords for what you're looking for. Suggestions for keywords are "medical conferences," "obesity conferences," or you can search for more specific expos such as "bariatric conferences," "school counselors conferences," "family physician conferences," etc. The more specific your keywords, the better chance you'll have in locating the right kind of expo or health fair.
- **Professional Newsletters, Journals and Associations:** Your local library can provide you with a list of these types of resources. Refer to Appendix A for a list of professional associations. Refer to Appendix B for a list of suggested professional categories.

- **Region Trustee or Region Chairman:** Contact your region trustee and/or region chairman for information on upcoming expos and health fairs.
- **World Service Office (WSO):** Contact the WSO to inquire on upcoming expos and health fairs in your area. The WSO keeps a spreadsheet of expos throughout the United States and Canada.

## Choosing Criteria for Local Expos and Health Fairs

After researching the local expos and health fairs in your area, you may want to select criteria when choosing the expo or health fair to participate in. Below are some criteria to consider:

- **Target Audience:** Which groups do you think would best receive and carry our message of recovery to compulsive eaters who are still suffering?
- **Expo/Health Fair Theme:** Are any speakers on the agenda discussing symptoms of compulsive overeating, such as bingeing, purging, starving or obesity? Is it Twelve-Step oriented? Audiences are more receptive if the agenda includes professionals who already recognize our illness and recovery program. Is it just as important to inform the many professionals who are unaware of the OA program or who have misconceptions about OA.
- **Other Exhibitors:** What kind of exhibitors have participated in the event? Are most exhibitors demonstrating products rather than discussing services? Expos and health fairs with mainly product-oriented exhibits needn't be avoided, but consider booth location carefully. Inquire with the expo as to other Twelve-Step organizations that are exhibiting and consider placing the OA booth in that location. *Note: Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) exhibits at approximately 60 expos per year. It has been the experience of the WSO that AA is present at those expos OA is interested in.*
- **Number of Attendees:** If this expo or health fair has been held in previous years, how many people have attended in the past? What are the expected numbers this year? A larger audience is not always a better audience, but gives a better "yield" for the booth cost, and numbers may help you decide between two expos. Expected attendance also impacts how much literature to order and its cost. Be aware that event organizers can inflate their projected attendance figures, sometimes drastically.
- **OA Meetings:** Is it possible to hold an open OA meeting at the expo for professionals to attend?
- **OA Film/Web Site:** Is there a location and time available to show the OA film or demonstrate the OA Web site? Does the conference have a planned "film festival"? Is rental equipment available?
- **Location:** Are enough local volunteers who exhibit a healthy body weight available to staff the exhibit? Is OA strong enough in the location to provide support and serve a variety of new members? Have you or any other OA service body exhibited in this city recently? If so, you may want to choose another conference in another city.

- **Dates:** Do the dates conflict with regional meetings, with any other OA events or with a holiday, including religious holidays that might cause difficulties recruiting volunteers? Will the hours make it difficult for OA volunteers to attend?
- **Cost:** Consider your service body's budget. Try to get the best value for the dollar, but look for "hidden costs." Many expos require union fees for booth setup, teardown and electricity. Be sure to ask if they offer rates for nonprofit organizations. Do a budget sheet to analyze all costs. Refer to Chapter 3 for budget considerations.
- **Exhibit Space Requirements:** What is the size of the exhibit space? What is included in the exhibitor's registration fee? Are rentals available for tables, chairs, drayage, etc.? Will the expo provide a sign in the exhibit space? Does your region or a nearby service body have an OA display for loan? Can you setup the display yourself? Are adequate display materials available? *Note: If your service body or region does not own a display, you can contact the WSO to request the tabletop display. The 10X10 popup display is no longer available to service bodies.*
- **Shipping:** Will the display and/or supplies need to be shipped in advance? Will you need to use the expo's official shipping company?

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## Exhibitor's Prospectus and Service Manual

**P**rofessional conferences normally provide an exhibitor's prospectus to those organizations interested in exhibiting. Download the exhibitor's prospectus from the organization's Web site or call the organization directly and request an exhibitor's prospectus.

An exhibitor's kit is usually available to those organization's who have paid for exhibit space approximately 3-4 months before the expo.

### Exhibitor's Prospectus

The exhibitor's prospectus provides the information you'll need when selecting the criteria for an expo. Health fairs may have a condensed version (2 or 3 pages) plus the exhibit space application of an exhibitor's prospectus. Below is a list of common information found in the exhibitor's prospectus.

- Location, date(s) and time(s) of the conference/expo
- Attendance numbers and profiles
- Conference theme
- Conference/expo agenda
- List of previous year's exhibitors
- Booth costs, requirements, regulations
- Exhibit space application and floor plan
- Marketing and advertising opportunities (*Note: While these may be available, OA does not participate in these types of opportunities since it would be considered an endorsement of an outside enterprise.*)
- Expo company contact information

## Exhibit Space Application

Review the exhibit space application in its entirety. The application will provide information on space deadlines and fees, cancellation deadlines and fees, as well as space regulations. Keep in mind that most expos have early bird specials and nonprofit rates. If a nonprofit rate is not listed on the application or in the prospectus, consider contacting the professional conference to request a nonprofit rate. A deposit may be required at the time of application and may not be refundable after a certain date.

If information is missing from the application form, your application may be delayed or denied. Please make sure to include all the pertinent information as well as the required payment.

Once your application is accepted, you will be contacted to confirm your payment and booth assignment.

## Exhibitor's Service Manual

Approximately 3-4 months out from the expo, an exhibitor's service manual will be mailed to you. *Note: Some professional organizations require the exhibitor to download the service manual.*

Exhibitor's service manuals can be very lengthy and time consuming. It is important to read everything in the manual. If you're not sure about some of the information, contact the exposition organization.

Below is a list of common information found in an exhibitor's service manual.

- **Expo General Information:** This includes the purpose/scope of the conference/expo; general regulations for exhibiting; insurance requirements; contractual considerations such as cancellation, security, liability, etc.; booth information; booth construction; signage; utilities; shipping; material handling; labor; exhibitor setup and teardown dates and times; expo contact information; floor plan; and a list of current exhibitors.
- **Registration and Housing Information:** This includes information on how to register as a conference attendee and as an exhibitor; what is included in the exhibitor's registration fees; and housing information (i.e. hotel rates, guest information, etc.).
- **Promotional Opportunities:** This includes opportunities to sponsor special events during the conference/expo; sponsor educational sessions; sponsor the registration bag; etc. *Note: While these may be available, OA does not participate in these types of opportunities since it would be considered an endorsement of an outside enterprise.*
- **Exposition Company Information:** The professional conference hires an exposition company to handle all the exhibitor requirements such as shipping, material handling, labor, cleaning, furniture, etc. This section of the manual will include shipping information (advance shipments and direct shipments); booth package information; installation/dismantle dates and hours; show hours; tradeshow tips; show contact information; show site work rules; and expo company terms and conditions.

- **Shipping and Labor Information:** This includes expo shipping services; material handling information; freight questionnaire; shipping and labor order forms; special handling; storage information; and packing labels.
- **Furnishings:** This includes furniture and accessories available; carpet information; custom exhibits and information; and cleaning information.
- **Convention Center Services:** Since most larger expos are held at a convention center, the convention center is normally union operated and therefore only allows union workers to provide specific services. The exposition company cannot provide these types of services. These services can include catering and hospitality services; electrical services; telephone services; and business center services (i.e. copying, printing, equipment rental, etc.). Remember that each convention center is different and may include additional services. Make sure to read your service manual for convention center requirements.
- **Other Vendors:** Certain types of services are outsourced to other vendors. These types of services can include lead retrieval systems; audio visual; computer equipment rental; floral arrangements; photographic services; etc.

## Exhibitor's Service Manual Considerations

After reviewing the exhibitor's service manual, consider the following:

- **Discount Deadlines:** Most exposition companies establish discounted rates if materials are purchased by the designated deadline date. When reviewing the service manual, make sure to look at the discount deadlines. After the deadline, costs can be much higher. *Note: Dates may be different from the exposition company and the convention center, etc.*
- **Booth Shipments:** Most expos allow for advance (warehouse) and direct (exhibit site) shipments. If time allows, consider shipping the booth in advance (warehouse) in order to save shipping costs. Advance and direct shipments have a range of dates for shipments. The advance shipments allow for an approximate one month range of shipments (i.e. between June 15 and July 15). Direct shipments allow for 1 to 2 weeks range of shipments (i.e. between June 15 and June 22). Direct shipments normally require 2-day or 3-day service depending on where the booth is being shipped, which is considerably more expensive.
- **Materials Handling:** Whether the booth is shipped in advance or direct, there are fees for material handling. Make sure to contact your shipping company (if not shipped through the WSO) to find out times for delivery. Materials handling rates are based on standard and overtime rates as well as weekend rates.
- **Union:** Most convention centers require union labor for installation/dismantle of displays electricity, labor, etc. It is important to read the manual carefully to see if union labor is required. *Note: OA's 10' X 10' pop up display can be setup in 30 minutes; union labor is normally required to setup displays that take more than 1 hour. If you're using the OA display, it is recommended that you purchase supervised labor to install and dismantle the display. Supervised labor requires an OA member to be onsite during the install and dismantle of the display.*

- **Return Shipments:** There can be hidden costs when returning the display. The exposition company will charge for transporting the display (materials handling) from the exhibit floor to the shipping dock of the convention center. It is important that these costs are considered in addition to the costs to ship the display.
- **Packages:** When reviewing the service manual, check to see if there are furniture packages, cleaning packages and carpet packages. Some exposition companies will discount furniture if the package is purchased. A furniture package can consist of one 6' skirted table, two plastic chairs and a wastebasket. Be sure to check what furniture is included in the booth registration fee before purchasing this package. If these items are purchased separately, the costs will be significantly higher. The same applies to carpeting and cleaning.
- **Carpeting:** The service manual will provide you with the color of the carpeting placed in the common areas (aisles) of the exhibit hall. The exposition company does not provide carpeting in the booth spaces. When ordering carpeting, try to stick with the same color as the exhibit hall common areas so that the carpet transitions well. The OA booth is colorful enough that it will draw attendees to it.
- **Convention Center/Other Vendors:** When exhibiting at a convention center, the exposition company may not have any control over the purchase of certain items (i.e. audio visual, floral arrangements, lead retrieval systems, etc.). Make sure that when completing these forms, they are sent directly with payment to the convention center or offsite vendor.
- **Lead Retrieval Systems:** A lead retrieval system is an electronic scanner that scans attendee's contact information and then either prints out the information or emails it to an address you specify, depending on the service purchased. It is highly recommended to rent a lead retrieval system. It makes it much easier to have a printed/emailed copy of contact information rather than a handwritten contact list. Most attendees prefer to scan their contact card instead of writing down all their information.

## Onsite Considerations

The following items have been suggested for onsite use:

- Create a notebook for the booth to include schedule of volunteers and times scheduled, volunteer contact information, local meeting lists, a couple of *Lifeline* magazines and instructions for volunteers.
- Provide a clipboard for volunteers to tabulate the number of visitors per day (you may want to even break this down in gender).
- Provide a clipboard to record any observations or questions that need additional research.
- Provide note pads and pens as well as a rack for literature.

## Budgeting for an Exhibit

There are several resources for funding an exhibit: intergroup, region, professional exhibits fund, reduced cost literature and contributions. Below are considerations when budgeting for an exhibit.

### Budgeting at the Intergroup/Region Level

The following items are normally included in an itemized estimate for exhibit costs.

#### Expenses

Costs	Estimate	Actual
Exhibit Registration		
Shipping (exhibit display and literature)		
Booth Labor (install/dismantle)		
Rental Equipment (carpeting, cleaning, A/V)		
Literature		
Program Listing		
Hotel, if necessary		
Meals, if necessary		
Transportation/Parking Fees		
Miscellaneous		
Supplies		
Telephone		
Postage		
Lead Retrieval System		
<b>TOTAL</b>		

## Income

Costs	Estimate	Actual
Intergroup		
Region		
Professional Exhibits Fund		
Other		
<b>TOTAL</b>		

## Professional Exhibits Fund

The Board of Trustees established a professional exhibits fund in November 2004 for the purpose of designating contributions targeted to defray the cost of participation in professional conferences/exhibits. The fund is open for contributions from any OA member, OA service body or OA region.

### Professional Exhibits Fund Allocation Procedures

Applications shall be evaluated in the following manner:

- Applications shall be evaluated monthly.
- Consideration shall be given (in the following order) to those shows that are: national/international and regional.
- Preference shall be given to service bodies that have not applied for grant fund monies or who have not been awarded grant fund monies if they have applied for them.
- Applications will be reviewed on the first working day of the month.
- The committee shall convene, either via email or telephone, a consensus meeting to deal with the applications received within seven days of receipt.
- Service bodies shall be informed of the committee's decision within three days of that meeting via email or telephone if no email is available.

Refer to Appendix C for the professional exhibits fund application.

## Reduced Cost Literature

Intergroup PI/Professional Outreach committees may purchase literature through their regional trustee at a reduced cost when hosting health fairs/professional exhibits.

The reduced cost shall be calculated to be the higher of either:

- The actual cost of the literature, or
- 50% of the retail price.

Literature shall be shipped and the actual cost of shipping shall be added to the order.

*Note: Reduced cost literature should be used to purchase above and beyond what the professional exhibits fund has awarded the service body.*

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## OA Volunteers

**C**hoose a responsible, organized and committed OA volunteer to coordinate the expo. The coordinator should recruit volunteers who demonstrate recovery and arrange a schedule to staff the booth. Refer to the exhibitor's service manual as to the amount of complimentary registrations (normally 2 or 4).

### Organizing Participation at Expos

- Arrange to have the booth staffed by at least two people. This will allow volunteers to take breaks and still have the booth occupied (i.e. 1 volunteer takes a 15-minute break and the other covers the booth and vice versa). Orient and educate staff on dress, what to say and types of professionals attending. It is important to remind volunteers that “we are a program of attraction,” and suggest they be well versed in our Twelve Traditions. Refer to Appendix D for Volunteer Orientation Guidelines for Exhibits and Appendix E for Questions Frequently Asked by Non-OA Members. It is suggested that volunteers receive a copy of the guidelines before the event. Also keep a separate copy of both appendices at the booth for easy reference.
- Volunteers designated as registrants are to understand that their first obligation is to the booth. It reflects well on OA when the exhibit is staffed adequately at all times. Expo sponsors may be able to tell you in advance what times to expect the most traffic through the exhibit hall and what times are fairly slow. Although OA is nonprofessional, volunteers dressed in business attire add credibility to the message. Depending on lengths of shifts, volunteers may want to wear comfortable shoes as many expos are held on concrete floors with nominal padding. Inquire about the expo's policy on seminar attendance and other expo activities by exhibit volunteers. Then inform all volunteers whether they are eligible to attend any of the expo seminars.
- A good way to reach expo attendees is to hold open OA meetings every night, if appropriate. Ask the exposition company well in advance for a meeting room and time, and request that both the room and time be printed on all program material. Publish the meeting time in local OA newsletters and invite members to attend and support the meeting. *Note: There may be additional costs for meeting space.*
- Showing the OA film “OA—It Works!” has proven to be very effective. Check your exhibitor's service manual for audio visual equipment and costs. Renting computer equipment to display the OA Web site is also a consideration.

- Order literature no later than one month prior to the expo. Refer to Appendix F for suggested literature. Note: It is recommended that literature be purchased at 15% of the expected attendance (i.e. 1,500 expected = 225 pieces each of literature). It is also suggested that no more than three pamphlets and the *Courier* be distributed since attendees will not have time to read through a lot of literature. Having a local meeting list available is recommended. *Update: The WSO has combined literature into a professional folder that can be purchased through the reduced cost literature program or can be applied for through the professional exhibits fund.*
- Plan activities to add to the booth's excitement, such as a drawing for a free *Lifeline* subscription or other promotional items. There may be expos where this is inappropriate so check with the exposition company.
- Expo exhibitors are also often professionals we want to reach. Whenever possible, encourage extra volunteers to visit other booths when activity on the floor is slow. This provides an opportunity for us to introduce OA to those who are not able to leave their stations, and for the OA volunteers to learn more about other organizations' presentations.
- Anyone interested in additional OA information should leave their contact information (through the lead retrieval system or a business card). Indicate next to their name if the attendee would like to receive a professional kit.
- At the end of the day, secure the bulk of the literature and supplies. Leave some literature and other applicable information out for those who prefer to visit the booth when it is unattended. *Note: Check with the exposition company to see who has access to the booths after show hours.*
- A volunteer evaluation form is provided in Appendix G for feedback and suggestions for future expos.

## Closing the Expo

**T**he OA member responsible for coordinating the expo and volunteers should also be in charge of closing out the expo. Experience has shown that it is a good idea to have at least two volunteers scheduled for the closing. Below is a list of suggestions for closing an expo.

- If the OA tabletop display is used, the WSO will provide return shipping labels. Remove any old shipping labels and affix the return shipping labels to the shipping container. Work with the exposition company to transport the shipping containers to the shipping dock and contact the appropriate shipping company for pick up.
- If literature was secured through the professional exhibits fund, inventory the literature and contact the WSO with this information. Arrangements will be made to ship the remaining literature back to the WSO. Return of literature will be credited to the fund.
- Collect the volunteer evaluation forms and compile the information for a final report.
- Submit a final report to the WSO with the following information: name, date and location of expo; attendance; volunteer evaluation compilation; amount of literature used; feedback from attendees; suggestions for future expos.
- Submit a list of attendees to the WSO for input into the *Courier* database. Your service body will want to follow up with the professionals to see if they need any additional information.
- Reconcile all expenditures and reimburse volunteers when appropriate.

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## Professional Associations

The following is a partial list of professional associations. An asterisk (\*) indicates OA's suggested primary target groups.

- Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Administration\*
- American Academy of Family Physicians\*
- American Academy of Pediatrics
- American Academy of Nurse Practitioners\*
- American Academy of Nursing\*
- American Academy of Physician Assistants\*
- American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy
- American Association of Colleges of Nursing
- American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences
- American Association of Medical Assistants
- American College of Nurse Practitioners\*
- American College of Physicians\*
- American Correctional Association
- American Correctional Health Services Association
- American Counseling Association
- American Dental Association
- American Diabetes Association\*
- American Dietetic Association\*
- American Heart Association\*
- American Hospital Association\*
- American Medical Association\*
- American Nurses Association
- American Pediatric Society
- American Physical Therapy Association
- American Psychiatric Association\*
- American Psychological Association\*
- American Public Health Association
- American Public Health Services Association
- American Society of Bariatric Physicians\*
- American School Health Association
- American Schools Counselor Association

- American Society for Clinical Nutrition
- American Women's Medical Association\*
- Association for the Improvement of Mental Health
- Association of American Medical Colleges
- Association of American Physicians and Surgeons
- Association of Chiropractic Colleges
- Canadian Cardiovascular Society
- Canadian Counseling Association
- Canadian Medical Association\*
- Canadian Nurses Association\*
- Employee Assistance Professional Association
- Institute of Medicine
- International Association of Marriage and Family Counselors
- International Congress on Obesity
- John Howard Association
- Kiwanis
- Lions and Lionesses
- National Association of Community Health Centers
- National Association of Public Hospitals
- National Association of School Nurses
- National Association of Social Workers
- National Association to Aid Fat Americans\*
- National Council on Obesity\*
- National Education Association
- National Educators Association
- National League of Nursing
- National Medical Association\*
- New York State Society of Physician Assistants
- North Carolina Counseling Association
- Obesity Foundation\*
- Pennsylvania Psychological Association
- Pri-Med
- Rotary
- Society for Human Resource Management
- Society of Teachers of Family Medicine
- Soroptimist International
- Southeastern Psychological Association
- Washington State Psychological Association
- World Health Organization

## List of Suggested Professionals

The following is a partial list of professionals to target for outreach work. An asterisk (\*) indicates OA's suggested primary target groups.

### Health and Human Services

- Alcohol/Drug Abuse Counselors\*
- Allergists
- Case Managers
- Chiropractors
- Dentists
- Dieticians\*
- Discharge Planners
- Doctors\*
- Eating Disorder Counselors\*
- Family Counselors
- Health Club Managers
- Marriage Counselors
- Medical Librarians
- Medical Students\*
- Nurses\*
- Nursing Students\*
- Nutritionists\*
- Occupational Therapists
- Pharmacists
- Physical Directors
- Physicians Assistants
- Primary Care Physicians\*
- Psychiatrists\*
- Psychiatric Nurses\*
- Psychologists\*
- Public Health Administrators
- Social Workers
- Welfare Case Workers

### Clergy

- Ministers
- Pastoral Counselors
- Priests/Nuns
- Rabbis

## Educators

- Guidance Counselors
- Public Librarians
- School Administrators
- School Librarians
- School Nurses
- Teachers

## Business Community

- Employee Assistance Counselors\*
- Labor Management Consultants
- Personnel Consultants

## Judiciary

- Judges
- Lawyers

## Correctional Facilities

- Assistant Wardens of Programs
- Corrections Clinical Psychologists
- Corrections Officers
- Directors, Wardens or Administrators
- Parole Board Members
- Parole Officers
- Police Officers
- Prison Chaplains
- Probation Officers
- State or Local Medical Directors

## Institutions

- Child guidance centers
- Correctional facilities at the local, county, state and federal levels
- Eating disorder units and treatment facilities\*
- Educational institutions (i.e., high schools, colleges, technical schools)
- Employee assistance programs\*
- Family counseling or service agencies\*
- Hospitals\*
- Mental health centers\*
- Nursing homes
- Referral information or other mental services
- Retirement centers
- Substance abuse and recovery centers\*

Appendix

C

## Professional Exhibits Fund Application

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## **Professional Exhibits Fund Application**

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In 2005, the Board of Trustees created a special fund to help service bodies exhibit at professional conferences and conventions that might otherwise be too costly. This fund is supported by OA members' and service bodies' contributions. If you would like to support OA in carrying the message through large conferences and conventions, please consider donating to the Professional Exhibits Fund. You may send your check to the World Service Office at PO Box 44020, Rio Rancho, NM 87174-4020 USA, or donate by credit card on OA's Web site contribution page.

### **Professional Exhibits Fund Guidelines**

The Professional Exhibits Committee will review all applications received the first week of each month and consideration will be given (in the following order) to those conferences/conventions that are 1) national/international and 2) regional. Preference shall be given to service bodies that have not applied for matching grant fund monies or who have not been awarded matching grant fund monies if they have applied for them.

Service bodies shall be informed of the committee's decision within three days of the committee's meeting via email or telephone if no email is available.

### **Professional Exhibits Tabletop Display**

The professional tabletop display, when available, shall be provided to registered service bodies within North America under the following conditions:

- a) The full cost of insured transportation to and from the WSO will be paid by the service body requesting the exhibit booth.
- b) The service body shall be responsible for the cost of repairing any damage incurred to the exhibit booth (or replacing missing parts) over and above the insurance provided by the transporter.

### **Need Help?**

If you need help filling out the application or calculating costs, please contact Sandy Allen at the World Service Office.

Sandy Allen – Meeting Planner and Public Information Coordinator

T: 505-891-2664

Email: [sallen@oa.org](mailto:sallen@oa.org)

In addition, a Professional Exhibits Manual is available for download on the OA Web site at [www.oa.org](http://www.oa.org). It provides 41 pages of valuable information for service bodies participating in professional exhibits. Topics include criteria for selecting appropriate expos and health fairs, budgeting for an exhibit, organizing volunteers, and closing the expo.

**Application Date** \_\_\_\_\_

*It is recommended that the application is submitted at least 2 months in advance of the event. NOTE: Applications are reviewed the first week of each month.*

**Contact Information**

Name	Service Body #
Mailing Address	Service Body Name
City	State/Province
Postal Code	Country
Phone Number	Cell Number
Email	

**Professional Conference/Convention Information**

Conference/Convention Name	
Dates	Location
Expected Attendance	
Is this conference/convention <input type="checkbox"/> international <input type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> regional?	

**Booth Information**

Booth Fee (in US Dollars)	Is this fee a non-profit fee? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Do you plan to use the OA tabletop display? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	The tabletop display is three-fold 46" high and sits on a standard 6' table. It has a canvas carrying case and ships in a hard plastic container. The display, carrying case and shipping container weigh 26 lbs. total. NOTE: The WSO will calculate shipping costs and include them in the application request.

### Professional Folder

The literature available through the Professional Exhibits Fund is the professional folder which includes *Introducing OA to the Health Care Professional*, *Compulsive Overeating: An Inside View*, *Member Survey Report*, the latest edition of the *Courier* (OA's annual professional newsletter), and a cover letter to the professional.

Any additional literature should be purchased through the Reduced-Cost Literature Program. Additional details on this program can be obtained through your region trustee or on the OA Web site at [www.oa.org](http://www.oa.org).

**NOTE: It has been OA's experience that 5% of the expected attendance is needed for literature quantity. The WSO will calculate the cost of literature and shipping and include them in the application request.**

Professional Folder Quantity \_\_\_\_\_

### Miscellaneous Expenses

Please itemize any additional expenses (i.e. setup/breakdown fees, printing/copying, parking, lead retrieval system, etc.)

Description	Cost
	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$

### Service Body/Region Funding

Is your service body and/or region providing funding for this conference/convention?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If so, how much funding is available?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If funding is provided by the service body and/or region, is this funding in addition to what you are requesting from the Professional Exhibits Fund?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

**For WSO Use Only (please do not fill in this section)**

Booth Fee	\$ _____
Tabletop Display Shipping Fee (UPS ground to/from)	\$ _____
Professional Folder Cost	\$ _____
Professional Folder Shipping Fee (UPS ground to/from)	\$ _____
Miscellaneous Fees	
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
Service Body/Region Funding	\$ _____
<b>Total Requested Funds</b>	<b>\$ _____</b>

**For WSO Use Only (please do not fill in this section)**

Date last funded for professional exhibit _____	Amount Funded \$ _____
Date last funded for matching grant _____	Amount Funded \$ _____
Application <input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Denied	Amount Funded \$ _____
Reason Denied _____	
Date Service Body Notified _____	

## Volunteer Orientation Guidelines

- Remember that we are a program of attraction. With respect to appearance and attitude, please dress appropriately in a business fashion. Be hospitable to all those with whom you speak. This includes the other exhibitors, whether you agree with their ideas or not. Do not engage in debate with people of differing view.
- Please do not eat, smoke or drink at the booth. Do not wear stickers or buttons from other booths, so we will not violate our tradition of non-affiliation.
- When answering questions, remember we are not professionals and are not expected to be authorities on medical, psychological or nutritional topics concerning compulsive eating. When questions are asked about the disease rather than the OA program, give intelligent answer that do not conflict with our amateur status. To inform yourself, refer to OA Conference-approved literature. Do not hesitate to say, “I don’t know,” or “I’ll try and get the answer you requested and get back to you if you wish to leave me your name and address.” When speaking to professionals, it is suggested that you refrain from sharing your story or pictures unless asked.
- Look alert and interested in what you are doing. Attendees will be attracted to stop and see our exhibit by your smile and friendliness. Let people know you are ready and willing to speak with them—make eye contact. Look at their name tag, call them by name, and use an opening greeting such as, “Are you familiar with Overeaters Anonymous?” or “Do you work with compulsive overeaters?”
- Refer to the fact that OA is a Twelve-Step, Twelve-Tradition program patterned after Alcoholics Anonymous. This will answer a lot of questions.
- Don’t engage in a lengthy conversation with an attendee, especially if there a line.
- Don’t ignore a booth visitor even if you are already in conversation with someone else. Acknowledge their presence and indicate you’ll be with them shortly.

- Do not interrupt other volunteers when they are speaking to an attendee.
- If you state an opinion of your own, remember to say just that—that it is your opinion and not representative of OA as a whole.
- You will be speaking to professionals. Let them know that OA does not want to replace them. We wish only to complement them and act as an adjunct to their services.
- Offer the attendees literature after you have spoken with them. Sometimes literature can be a conversation stopper.
- One of our goals is to develop a mailing list of professionals interested in OA. Ask attendees if they have a business card or swipe their contact card through the lead retrieval system so that additional information may be sent to them. If special follow up is needed (meeting lists, additional information or literature), please indicate next to their name.

## Questions Non-OA Members Frequently Ask

- **What is compulsive overeating?** Compulsive eating is a progressive illness which cannot be cured but can be arrested. Compulsive eaters are “driven by forces they don’t understand to eat more or less than they need, and they eat this food in ways that are not rational.” (Q&A, p. 2)
- **How does OA work?** The Twelve Steps, patterned after the ideas originated in AA, are the heart of the OA recovery program. They offer a new way of life that enables the compulsive eater to live without the need for excess food. The OA program works best for the individual who recognizes and accepts it as a program involving other people. Attending OA meetings and associating with others who suffer in a similar manner brings hope and awareness. (Q&A, pgs. 6 and 10)
- **What are the Twelve Steps?** The Steps embody spiritual principles, which promote inner change and effect physical, emotional and spiritual recovery. (Q&A, p. 10 and To the Newcomer, p. 2)
- **Is OA a religious organization?** “Overeaters Anonymous has no religious requirement, affiliation or orientation. The twelve-step program of recovery is considered ‘spiritual’ because it deals with inner change. OA has members of many different religious beliefs as well as some atheists and agnostics.” (About OA)
- **Does OA recommend a particular diet?** OA does not endorse any particular food plan. OA does have a pamphlet with suggested food plans; however, members may follow the food plan of their choice. It is strongly recommended that the members contact a healthcare professional before embarking on any particular plan of eating. The OA program works, not by following a particular food plan, but by working the Twelve Steps. (Trustee response on current policy; A Plan of Eating: A Tool for Living)
- **Does OA work for everyone?** OA like AA works for those who work the program. (Big Book: “Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path.”)

- **Are all OA groups alike?** The essence of the program is the same, but some groups are more structured and disciplined, while others are more individualized. They vary in size, demographics, recovery profiles and formats. Where possible, newcomers are encouraged to attend several different meetings to find what works best for them.
- **How does a person join OA?** No one “joins” in the usual sense of the word. There are no membership applications to fill out. Those who believe they have an eating problem may join simply by attending meetings. (Q&A, p. 7). “The only requirement for OA membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively...If you feel you are one of us, we welcome you with open arms.” (Many Symptoms, One Solution)
- **What does membership in OA cost? How is OA supported?** There are no membership dues or fees. Most local groups “pass the basket” to cover the group’s expenses and to support our service bodies. (Q&A, p. 8)
- **Why are OA members anonymous?** Anonymity within the group means that OA principles are placed before personalities. It offers members assurance that their confidences will not be revealed. Anonymity at the level of public media ensure that egotism and self-glorification will not be the undoing of the OA Fellowship. (About OA; Q&A, p. 13)
- **Are there many men in OA?** Based on a 2002 survey, 14.5% of members were male, same as in 1992. (Member Survey Report)
- **Can young people join?** Yes. Sometimes they attend meetings open to all who have a desire to stop eating compulsively and sometimes they attend special meetings targeted for teens and young people. Special literature for young people can be obtained from the World Service Office.
- **Is OA affiliated with any other organizations?** No. OA is not affiliated with any other organizations of any sort. While someone’s first contact with the program may come from a treatment facility, OA itself is not affiliated with treatment centers. (Group Handbook, p. 36; Treatment and Beyond, p. 2)
- **How did OA start?** OA was founded in Los Angeles, California, on January 19, 1960, with an initial meeting of three compulsive overeaters. Our founder, Rozanne S., was assisted by the founder of Gamblers Anonymous in applying the principles of Alcoholics Anonymous to our particular compulsion. (Group Handbook, p. 34). From that first meeting, OA has grown until today there are thousands of meetings in the United States, Canada and many other countries throughout the world. (About OA)
- **What is the current membership?** There are over 6,500 registered groups throughout the world. We do not know the precise number of individual members since we do not keep individual membership lists and it is difficult to project from the number of registered groups (group size and attendance varies as well as the number of meetings a week members attend).

- How can professionals, family members or friends of compulsive eaters help? They can provide themselves and the compulsive eater with information and compassionate support regarding the disease and the OA program. In addition to reading the literature, they can attend open OA meetings. Those who think they may be compulsive eaters are welcome at closed as well as open OA meetings. Non-compulsive eaters may be admitted to closed meetings only with the knowledge and consent of the group members. (Group Handbook, p. 18)

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## Suggested List of Literature

The following literature is sent out by the WSO in a professional kit when responding to professional inquiries. A standard kit is composed of the following:

- Cover letter from the World Service Professional Outreach Committee
- *About OA*
- *Compulsive Overeating—An Inside View*
- *Many Symptoms, One Solution*
- *OA is Not a Diet Club*
- *Questions and Answers*
- Literature catalog

Specialty pamphlets, if needed, are added to the standard kit in the front of the packet.

- Fifteen Questions
- Introducing OA to the Healthcare Professional
- Introducing OA to the Clergy
- The Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous
- Treatment and Beyond
- Dignity of Choice

UPDATE: The WSO has created a professional folder which includes a cover letter, the *Courier*, *Introducing OA to Healthcare Professionals*, *Compulsive Overeating—An Inside View* and *Member Survey Report*. This professional folder can be purchased through the reduced cost literature program or applied for through the professional exhibits fund.

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## Volunteer Evaluation Form

Please fill out this form and place it in the envelope provided. Your comments and suggestions are requested for future participation in these types of expos.

Day \_\_\_\_\_

Hours Worked \_\_\_\_\_

What was the general response to OA's exhibit? \_\_\_\_\_

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About how many people did you talk to that did NOT want additional information (did not provide business card or sign mailing list)? \_\_\_\_\_

Would you recommend OA's participation at this event again?  Yes  No

Would you do anything differently if OA participated in this event again? \_\_\_\_\_

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Was sufficient literature available?  Yes  No

In your opinion, did the booth meet the needs of the expo attendees?  Yes  No

If not, what would you suggest as an improvement? \_\_\_\_\_

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Overall comments, suggestions or stories you would like to share: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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