

APPENDIX A

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS REGION 9
Procedures and Suggestions for Hosting Region 9 Assembly and Convention –
(Last updated January 2020)

This document has been prepared by Region 9 members who have helped to organise previous Region 9 Assemblies and Conventions. Whilst it is not intended to cover every eventuality, we hope it will be helpful for service bodies considering taking on this service, so they know what to expect, and for those in the process of organising to be a useful starting point for your committee discussions. This document will mostly concentrate on the Assembly leaving the Convention part more open for your service body to arrange.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section	Page
Bylaws.....	2
Timetable.....	2
Assembly Guidelines & Responsibilities for Region 9 Board.....	3
Finance.....	3
Sub-Committee.....	3
Venue Requirements.....	4
Paper and Audio/electronic/digital needs.....	4
Food	5
Flyers.....	5
Registration.....	6
Speakers.....	6
Voting and Time Keeping.....	7
Visitors.....	7
Convention.....	7
Strategic Plan.....	7
Possible Dates	7
Afterwards.....	7
Checklist.....	8

BYLAWS

Extract from Article V of Bylaws (following 2010 Assembly)

Section 1

Region 9 shall hold one Assembly per year.

A Region 9 Convention may also be held in conjunction with the Region 9 Assembly if the hosting Intergroup or National/Language Service Board is in a position to do so.

Section 2

Notification of this Assembly shall be emailed to all member groups, Intergroups, unaffiliated groups and National Service Boards at least six months prior to the date of the Assembly. The notification will include an invitation to the Assembly from the organising committee, the registration form to send a representative, a blank new business motion, a blank new bylaws amendment motion, an application for financial assistance and a letter from the Region 9 Chair..

Even though the Bylaws state that the notification needs to go out 6 months prior to Assembly, there will be considerable organization beforehand and so it is best for the Region to let the fellowship know about the Assembly arrangements as early as possible to help facilitate travel arrangements and keep costs to a minimum thus encouraging attendance. The following are some suggestions:-

TIMETABLE

2 YEARS IN ADVANCE

- Service bodies need to be thinking about whether they can host the Region 9 Assembly a few years in advance of the Assembly they might host. The service body will need to consider whether they have enough willing members to arrange what is necessary.
- The service body will need to do some research on the venue about times available/ costs/facilities/travel arrangements some two years in advance of the Assembly. The venue needs to accommodate the Assembly room, the committee rooms and representatives' accommodation. It does not need to be lavish. It does, however, need to accommodate OA members' food plans, be clean and functional and reasonably easy to access by public transport.
- The service body will bring this information to the Region 9 Assembly for consideration 2 years in advance of the Assembly they wish to host.
- The Assembly will consider the date and venue suitability as well as the committee arrangements together with proposals to host the Assembly received from other service bodies. The Assembly will, at this stage, discuss and vote on all the proposals received.
- The place and date of the Region 9 Assembly will be, at the latest, established at the Assembly prior to the Assembly the service body wishes to host.
- If successfully elected as Region 9 Assembly host, once the date is confirmed, the committee need to book the venue as soon as possible.

ONE YEAR PRIOR

- Confirm the Convention theme with the Region 9 Board
- The hosting service body committee should begin to put in place the various details of the Assembly and Convention. For the Convention they will need to plan workshops or meetings, in line with the agreed theme, arrange meeting rooms, speakers or facilitators, possibly translators and also consider packs of any necessary materials and the timetable for the weekend.

NINE MONTHS PRIOR

- Begin preparation of the flyer, invitation and registration forms and ensure that these are sent to Region 9 Board at least 6 months in advance of the Assembly.

OA Region 9 Policies and Procedures – Appendix A

- Obtain copy of report from previous year's hosting committee, to learn from their experience.

SIX MONTHS PRIOR

- Over the next few months, work on the finer details of the Assembly and Convention (e.g. meeting room layout and facilities, materials required such as voting slips, name cards, registration badges, handouts for workshops and speakers etc.). Also receive and record registrations, bank fees, finalise an exact timetable and liaise with the venue.

SIX WEEKS PRIOR

- Liaise with the Region 9 Secretary regarding numbers of attendees.

ASSEMBLY GUIDELINES AND REGION 9 BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES

- The Region 9 board are responsible for organising and assembling the materials that the representatives will need for the Assembly itself. The hosting service body do not need to get involved in the details of the Assembly. However, the Chair and some of the workshop organisers will often need various 'handouts' and schedules.
- There are usually 20 – 30 in attendance at the Assembly and to carry 20 – 30 copies of each piece of paper is often not possible due to aircraft weight restrictions etc. In advance of the Assembly, please liaise with the Chair or Secretary to establish whether the hosting committee will be required to print any materials for the Board.
- Accommodation reservations with the host venue will vary from one year to the next. Sometimes the venue will prefer to only deal with the host committee, other times, Board and Reps will communicate directly with the venue. Traditionally members will share rooms whenever possible to save costs.
- The hosting service body decides on the theme for the Convention (to be agreed with the Region 9 Board).

FINANCES

- Region 9 will pay the expenses for attendance of the Region 9 Board (Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and Communications Officer) which will include travel, accommodation and food for the Assembly & Convention (Wednesday – Sunday).
- The Assembly registration fee can either be collected by the Region 9 Treasurer or by the host committee, depending on which is easier that year. This amount belongs to Region 9. This will go towards the various expenses that the Region incurs in its work and will be included in its income as covered in the Region budget.
- The hosting service body will collect the Convention registration fees. This should cover all costs incurred by the Assembly and Convention. The entire surplus, after costs, goes to Region 9. Any Tradition 7 monies collected during Assembly goes towards Region 9. Any Tradition 7 monies collected at the Convention and as a result of fundraising by the hosting service body will be retained by them.
- To keep luggage weight costs down, documents are often are printed by the hosts. If possible, each category of documents should be printed onto a different colour paper to help delegates to easily identify documents.

SUB COMMITTEE

- As the hosts will be working as a Committee and are part of the Fellowship, the Traditions should be followed with all decisions made by group conscience and unanimous agreement wherever possible. Members are expected to liaise closely with each other, consulting with the rest of the Committee when making decisions that affect the Assembly and/or OA as a whole.
- A subcommittee to organize this sort of event is ideally made up of 4-6 OA members (less people means a lot of work for only a few people, if too many are involved it becomes unwieldy).

OA Region 9 Policies and Procedures – Appendix A

- It is useful to have a chair for the committee to oversee the timetable and liaise with the Region 9 Board and a secretary to make notes of all telephone discussions/meetings/decisions made.
- Other committee roles to consider are Treasurer, Registrations, Convention Organisers and Venue Liaison.
- If the committee corresponds by email, it is helpful to keep to one subject per email and to ensure that the subject is clear.

VENUE REQUIREMENTS

- With regard to the room for the Assembly meeting and any ancillary rooms for the committee meetings, it is normal for the hosting service body to try to arrange with the hotel / venue that these rooms will be free as part of the organization of the weekend.
- This needs to be given careful consideration as there are no funds in the Region 9 budget to cover this aspect. We arrange the hotel in the autumn partly to accommodate the fact that it is cheaper than the summer. Hotels often accept that if a group takes their full quota of rooms, that is enough to then grant them use of the necessary meeting rooms to hold the Assembly. If there are costs involved in using additional rooms, this cost should be factored into the overall cost to Reps and guests.
- Establish the number of representatives registered with the Region 9 Secretary approximately 6 weeks before the Assembly. Keep in touch with the Secretary after this date for late registrations (recently this has been as many as 25 attendees to the Assembly plus visitors).
- Organise the Assembly meeting room so that there is a meeting table space and chair available for each representative, arranged in a rectangle so that the Chair, Parliamentarian, Secretary, Treasurer and Communications Officer can be seated at the 'top' of this rectangle and, therefore, see the representatives for voting and recognition purposes.
- Committee meetings are usually held in a different room to the main Assembly room. Ideally there should be several smaller rooms so that each committee can work separately, however, there must be enough space for them to work comfortably.
- The Region 9 Board hold a meeting at the end of the Assembly and will also require a suitable room for up to 6 people.

PAPER NEEDS

- Each representative needs a card in front of them that shows their name and the service body they are representing. This will need to be visible in front of them while they are seated. (It is not a requirement but, in the past, these cards have sometimes, also, had the representative's national flag on them).
- The representatives will also need a name badge that they will be required to wear to all meetings in order to be recognized. This will normally be on a string so that it can be hung around the neck or on a clip so that it can be pinned to the representative's clothing.
- The hosting service body prepares these at the same time as the cards for their places in the Assembly meeting room.
- See also: "General Guideline for the Printing of Name Badges, Place cards and Voting Cards for Assembly", separate document in R9 Dropbox.
- The Chair will normally require a flip chart, a flip chart pad and pens to use at the Assembly. This will need to be organized by the hosting service body.

AUDIO/ELECTRONIC/DIGITAL NEEDS

- Several people may be using laptops and will need access to power points. It's a good idea to have several power boards and extension cords available. Sometimes these are loaned to the Assembly by local OA members.
- We will need at least two microphones depending on the room.
- We will need a projector and screen to present documents.
- We will need a computer for the person projecting documents to everyone.

OA Region 9 Policies and Procedures – Appendix A

- Once again there is not a budget for these items in the Region 9 finances so if there is a charge, the Region 9 Board should be notified ahead of time so that a decision can be made whether to have these services. Often hotels try to raise their revenue/re-coup their expenses by charging for these sorts of services. Region 9 try to avoid this, if possible, and at most pay only a minimum.

Additional requirements for broadcasting Assembly

R9 Assembly in 2019 voted to begin broadcasting Assembly to registered visitors as from 2020. The following requirements relate specifically to this task.

- A computer for communications between the camera feed and the virtual visitors.
- A video camera and tripod
- Cables to connect the video camera to the computer, and to connect the amplifier (microphones) with the computer (so virtual visitors can hear the sound properly).
- A local volunteer, to manage the computer during Assembly and be in contact with the virtual visitors (via Zoom).
- Note – Region 9 will have its own Zoom account to be used to broadcast the Assembly.
- Note – rental of a computer and video camera for 3 days has been budgeted for in the R9 budget (approx. £100).
- Rental of mobile “hotspot” for 3 days of Assembly so video feed does not need to use the venue’s free wifi, which will be used by Reps, visitors and other guests of the venue.

FOOD

- Be very clear from the outset about our specific needs (e.g. people bringing in their own food, dietary requirements, buffet style meals, food labelling etc.) and ask the hotel how they would propose to cater for them.
- Discuss these requirements, first with the committee and then with the hotel (usually sugar-free, most sauces served separately, and some wheat-free, dairy-free, gluten-free and vegetarian options).
- All meals being served buffet style works best. It is helpful if the dishes on the buffet are labelled (e.g. “Chicken Stir Fry, sugar free and wheat free”).
- Outside of meal times, it’s important to provide coffee/tea facilities. If this is not part of the overall costs, it should be budgeted into the costs for Reps and others attending the Convention.
- It is important to give the hotel clear guidelines regarding the food and to monitor this closely, preferably agreeing a menu in the months prior to the Assembly.
- Meal times need to be discussed with venue and Region 9 Board so that the timetable can be worked out.
- It is also useful to provide details to delegates about the venue’s proximity to supermarkets etc.

FLYERS

- Put at least 2 contact numbers on the flyer, ideally one mobile and one landline.
- Create an email account and add this to the flyer to receive electronic registration forms and any enquiries. Region 9 can supply a special email address to be used for Assembly and Convention registration.
- Agree an address to receive paper registrations and cheques but do not add this to the flyer. Instead those who would like to register and/or pay their fee by post should be asked to email or telephone the hosting service body for the agreed postal address.
- On the booking form put in a section where those registering can indicate if they are booking for the Assembly, the Convention or both.
- Put a deadline to receive registrations/book with hotel.
- Put details of the nearest train station and airport, plus the venue postcode for those driving with satellite navigation.
- On the flyer put some directions and, if possible, a map.

REGISTRATION

- It is obviously preferable to get as many registrations in as early as possible, although be prepared for some at the last moment.
- Be prepared for quite a lot of enquiries, (often asking about things that you have carefully written on your flyer!)
- Keep careful records of all the information captured on the registration forms so that you can refer to it easily. A spreadsheet is ideal for this.
- Have a cash box with a float at the Assembly/Convention itself for those registering on the day.
- Name badges should also indicate which service body is being represented or if the member is a Region 9 Board member or a visitor.
- In accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations the registration forms must contain information advising members what the personal information they provide will be used for and how long it will be kept. Please see the following example:
 - IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ALL R9 Assembly Attendees:
 - To all registering for Assembly and/or Convention: The data you have provided will be used for the purpose of communicating with you about the 20xx Region 9 Assembly and Convention and making arrangements for your attendance. In order to do this, your information provided will be shared with members of the organising committee and the Region 9 Board, and will be stored securely. The organising committee will retain this information for three months after the Assembly and Convention in case of any need to contact you and then it will be deleted.
 - Please Tick here if you agree that your contact information may kept and used by the Region 9 Board for conducting the business of the Region following the 20xx Region 9 Assembly. This consent extends to contact by other R9 OA members conducting business as determined appropriate by the R9 Board. Your contact information will be kept securely for 5 years (from the closing date of the assembly) and then will be deleted. You can also request that your contact details be deleted at any time.
 - Please tick here if you would like to be added to the Region 9 weekly announcements email list. You can unsubscribe from the list at any time by clicking the Unsubscribe link at the bottom of each email.

CONVENTION SPEAKERS

- The Board will be on call to take part in and speak at workshops during the Convention. They have been elected as Region 9 Board members and act in that capacity, but they are first and foremost OA members in recovery. Please use that recovery. It is important that service is 'seen' by those attending the Convention, although not in a grandiose way. When OA officers are seen to take part in the business part as well as the Convention it spreads the message of the necessity of service.
- Where speakers need to be timed, have a timer available.
- It is best for speakers to be qualified by the committee prior to confirming their service.
- Please ask speakers to stay within the spirit of the Traditions (e.g. no reference to outside issues such as mentioning by name books, therapies, religions, other weight loss programmes, or undue focusing on such outside issues).
- Some thoughts for speakers when they introduce themselves:
 - 1) How long have you been in programme?
 - 2) How long have you been abstinent?
 - 3) Define this abstinence, what it is for you.
 - 4) Outline your physical recovery, weight loss/(gain if anorexic), how long maintained.
 - 5) Describe the daily actions that you take in order to maintain this recovery.
 - 6) Then move onto the topic, following the format of what you were like, what happened, and what you are like now as it relates to the topic. OA members especially like to

OA Region 9 Policies and Procedures – Appendix A

hear about what you actually did to change in respect of the topic and what you do to keep well.

VOTING AND TIMEKEEPING

- At the Assembly votes will need to be taken, and possibly ballots, which need to be counted by people who are not eligible to vote. Please discuss this with the Region 9 Board to establish whether you need to have any coloured card on hand, voting ballots, boxes to collect ballots in and non-voting members able to assist with this.
- A non-voting member available as a timekeeper is very useful especially during the Assembly.

VISITORS

- Visitors are welcome to attend the Assembly.
- Visitors do not pay to attend the Assembly.
- At the Assembly it is important that they are not seated with the representatives at the table. Preferably they will be in a row of seats behind the representatives or at edge of room.
- Visitors should leave the Assembly room if they wish to talk to one another.

CONVENTION

The Convention is best described by those who have attended a number of Conventions. We recommend speaking to previous organizers. It is worth considering the following:

- Early Bird and Night Owl Meetings (during the Assembly as well as the Convention). The easiest way to arrange these is with a Pocket Reference Guide and a list of topics (see the Strategic Plan if you need inspiration)
- Translating speakers into your local language
- Translating local speakers into English
- Free Time
- Entertainment on Saturday evening. This has been done in many forms (e.g. plays, meetings, celebrations of recovery, free time, dancing, singing, quizzes, all sorts!)

STRATEGIC PLAN

We have a Strategic Plan. Many in OA don't know what it is or what we are trying to achieve in having it. This can be used as the theme of the Convention by incorporating just one aspect of that plan. Please check with the R9 Trustee or WSO regarding the current Strategic Plan focus.

POSSIBLE DATES FOR ASSEMBLY AND CONVENTION

Following are dates where R9 could possibly hold their annual Assembly and Conference, should they wish to do so during September or October, without fear of it taking place during Jewish holidays. Dates suggested are all Wednesday - Sunday. For the years 2021-2025. Unless specifically mentioned otherwise, all of November is OK as well.

2021 - 1-5 September, 29 September - 3 October, All October is OK

2022 - 31 Aug - 4 September, 7-11 September, 14-18 September, 19-23 October, 26-30 October

2023 - 6-10 September, 11-15 October, 18-22 October, 25-29 October,

2024 - All September OK, 30 October - 3 November

2025 - 3-7 September, 10-14 September, 17-21 September, 15-19 October, 22-26 October

AFTERWARDS

Please ensure that if you get feedback from delegates, visitors or your subcommittee that this information is then given to Region 9 Board so that we can offer any suggestions to future hosts, for things that do or don't work.

OA Region 9 Policies and Procedures – Appendix A

CHECKLIST

1	Select a committee of local OA members willing to work on the arrangements for the Assembly / Convention. (4-8 people on average).
2	Approximately 2.5 years before you propose to host the Assembly/ Convention commence organizing items below:
3	Choose a date (Autumn time to benefit from cheaper travel and accommodation, ensuring holidays, dates of BoT/RCC meetings are avoided). Also keep in mind accessibility.
4	Choose a venue accommodating approximately 20 – 40 reps for the OA Assembly and additional numbers for the Convention, also allowing for overnight and day visitors.
5	Prepare a proposal bid to be brought to the Region 9 Assembly two years before the Assembly is due to take place.
6	If the bid is successful book the venue and make final arrangements.
7	Choose a theme for the Convention (refer to local group conscience and the OA Strategic Plan) to be approved by Region 9 Board.
8	Divide tasks amongst the Committee and recruit volunteers.
9	Locate supermarkets within the vicinity of the venue and prepare a map showing them. Finalise travel arrangements to the venue.
10	Prepare a proposed flyer well in advance of the “6 months before Assembly” deadline and send this to the Region 9 Board for approval.
11	Arrange for funds to be available for any advance expenses.
12	Liaise with the venue over accommodation facilities and meals.
13	Plan Convention workshops/meetings and arrange speakers/materials/timers.
14	Oversee registrations and make badges and table name places for reps.
15	Plan Saturday night “entertainment”.
16	Make copies on different coloured paper of various documents (ask Region 9 Board for information).
17	Set up the registration desk and the room for the Assembly (flip charts, place names, posters etc.)
18	Set up the Convention.