

Alateen Safety Committee Recommended Revisions to AFG of Georgia, Inc. Area Safety and Behavioral Requirements (ASBR)

December, 2020

December 2020 Revisions: In 2019, the Board was advised that Alateens, their parents/guardians, and AMIAS need to sign waivers to attend the Alateen Conference, and a pro bono attorney created them for our use, which was to be part of the conference registration packet. In the spring of 2020, the Safety Committee was advised that we need to ask those members to sign waivers at every Area event, so we used the waiver for the conference as a template for other waivers and just changed the title. In November of 2020, the Al-Anon Family Groups of Georgia, Inc. (AFGG) Board of Trustees met with the insurance agent who advised them that every member who attends any Area event should sign a waiver, not just Alateens, their parents and AMIAS. After consulting with a pro bono attorney, who agreed with the agent, she advised that, because the ones we have are so similar, we do not need to have a specific waiver for specific events. Rather, we should use one template where members fill in the name of the event; otherwise, when changes inevitably need to be made there is the distinct possibility that those changes won't consistently be made to each waiver. The Safety Committee has now removed the separate Alateen and AMIAS waivers outlined in earlier versions of this report under the Revised Forms and Waivers section as #5 and #7, and has inserted the one waiver template as #5. Also, as a result of discussions at November's AWSC meeting, the Recommendations section of this report was revised to separate out legal recommendations that require our AFGG Board of Trustee approval and Assembly affirmation, from Traditional recommendations that require Assembly approval.

Background

In March 2019, the Alateen Safety Committee (SC) was charged by the AFGG Board of Trustees to make recommendations on secure retention of Alateen information and documents. Recommendations were made and approved by the Board on November 4, 2019. The recommendations included seeking legal advice for two questions regarding administering medication to Alateens and mandatory reporting. On November 15, 2019, the Board retained assistance from a pro bono attorney in answering them. The attorney edited some existing forms and created others to address the legal liability of administering medication. As a result of our past discussions on information retention and current review of required forms for Rock Eagle, the SC determined a review of all AFGG Area Safety and Behavior Requirements (ASBR) was necessary. Furthermore, by signing the contract to hold the Alateen Conference at Rock Eagle, AFGG is contractually obligated to comply with UGA's policies for Programs Serving Minors. Forms either needed to be edited or created to meet those legal obligations, with the understanding that most, if not all of those forms will be required even if the venue were to change.

Resources

The SC utilized the following resources during its discussions: The AFGG AMIAS Handbook v. 03-11-2019; AFG, Inc. WSO Guidelines G-16 and G-34; required forms from UGA's Rock Eagle facility; a pro bono attorney; our insurance agent; AFG Connects Alateen and AAPP communities; WSO Associate Director—Group Services, Sue P.; and our *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual 2018-2021* version 2.

Scope and Consideration

Pro bono attorney recommendations based on current Georgia law requirements and Rock Eagle's contract requirements resulted in the SC's decision to revise existing Alateen and AMIAS forms and create additional new forms. Revisions to Georgia Area forms would then necessitate updating our Area procedures, guidelines, and service position descriptions (PDs).

One particular area of concern in regard to safety and potential liability for teens, AMIAS, and AFGG that the SC felt was not adequately addressed was in regard to medication administration to Alateens. Currently, there is no Area policy on who holds medication and who can administer it to Alateens. Information obtained from our insurance agent indicated our insurance does not cover liability for volunteers who administer medication to teens. Our pro bono attorney indicated that, while there is currently no state law that regulates medication administration at off-campus events with minors, it is advisable for legal and insurance reasons that AFGG hire a healthcare professional through an agency that carries its own insurance who would securely hold and administer medication to teens during Area events. In addition, WSO Guideline G-16 for Alateen Conferences states, "A registered nurse or certified first aid person should be in attendance at all times." The SC is recommending that a healthcare professional licensed to administer medication - a Designated Medical Administrator (DMA) - be hired through an agency for each Alateen Conference. We recommend the Alateen Work Group be charged with exploring options of hiring a DMA at other Area events comparing feasibility, costs and liability, and present their findings to the Finance Committee for discussion. Based on their findings, the Alateen Work Group may need to amend some of these forms for use at Area events other than the Alateen Conference and present to Assembly for approval. AMIAS who are professional health care providers cannot be hired or volunteer their services for this position as it would negate the insurance and liability reasons for having it.

Many of the following forms were revised or created as a result of this decision to hire a DMA and to provide greater clarity in responsibility for existing guidelines. Instructions for handling and secure retention of these documents were added at the bottom of each form. The AAPP or Area Archivist will store documents in a folder on a secure electronic platform that can also be accessed by the AFGG Board Chair. Instructions for secure retention can be found in the AAPP's PD. Input from the pro bono attorney indicates secure retention needs to ensure integrity, privacy, and password protection of scanned forms, and retention of medical information should be maintained for ten years.

Revised Forms and Waivers:

- 1. Alateen Transportation/Overnight Stay Form**--replaces Georgia Alateen Permission/Medical Form (see Attachment A). This form allows for the parent to specify several people (whether an AMIAS or not) to be responsible for transporting their teen and provides information about teens who transport themselves. It also allows a parent to authorize an AMIAS to stay overnight in a hotel room with their teen. Overnight stays with an AMIAS were not previously addressed in our forms or procedures. Separate procedures for overnight stays in cabins at the Alateen Conference will need to be addressed by the Alateen Conference Committee using WSO guidelines and an informed group conscience. There is currently no Georgia state law that addresses transgender minors in regard to housing. The Area Chair will need to form an Area Task Force this year to explore transgender housing using KBDM so a policy is in place before the next conference. The original of this form will be returned to the parent by the authorized person or transporting AMIAS. Event Registration will be provided a scanner and an electronic copy of this form will be sent to the AAPP for secure retention after the event.

2. **Alateen Health History Form**—The pro bono attorney used a form from the Rock Eagle/UGA website as a resource to create this version to cover the Alateen's health information in greater detail than our previous Alateen Permission/Medical Form, which pertained to a single event (see Attachment B). It provides all necessary information to an emergency room in the event of an illness or injury of a teen. This information also provides clarity to the DMA who may need to administer medication. The original of this form will be returned to the parent by the authorized person or transporting AMIAS, but Event Registration will scan an electronic copy and send to the AAPP for secure retention after the event.
3. **Alateen Medication Authorization Form**—this is a new form created from a template on the UGA website for programs serving minors and replaces our Georgia Alateen Permission/Medical Form (see Attachment C). This form provides a detailed listing of any medication (prescription and over-the-counter) that the DMA may need to administer to the teen. The pro bono attorney specified that this form should include any medication administered, even those routinely found in a first aid kit, since they are all considered the same from the legality of administering medication. This form and any remaining medications will be returned to the parent by the authorized person or transporting AMIAS, but Event Registration will scan an electronic copy of the form and send to the AAPP for secure retention after the event.
4. **AMIAS Code of Conduct**—this is a new form that was developed from a Staff Code of Conduct for programs serving minors on the UGA website and required by Rock Eagle/UGA (see Attachment D).
5. **Event Release and Waiver of Liability**—this is a new form that the pro bono attorney and our insurance agent recommended all participants sign before attending any Area event (see Attachment E).
6. **Alateen Code of Conduct**—this is a new form that was developed from a Participant Code of Conduct for programs serving minors on the UGA website required by Rock Eagle/UGA (see Attachment F).
7. **Alateen Event Sign-In Sheet**—this one form replaces our current three sign-in sheets (see Attachment G). This sign-in sheet provides additional documentation of required new forms. The new Transportation/Oversight Stay Form (Attachment A) allows for multiple AMIAS to be listed to transport the teen to different locations (such as the spaghetti dinner). The parent will need to discuss with accompanying AMIAS prior to the event which other AMIAS may be transporting their teen. All Alateens must register at Assembly before attending the spaghetti dinner. This will require the Alternate Delegate to ensure that there is at least one trained person at the Alateen registration table or close-by while Assembly is in session so they can be contacted to register Alateens and ensure all required forms are completed and available. An AMIAS will need to be stationed at the door of the spaghetti dinner to ensure Alateens have registered. Alateens that have not registered at Assembly first will be required to go back and register before they can attend the spaghetti dinner.
8. **Guidelines for Medication Administration by a Designated Medical Administrator**—this is a new guideline recommended by the pro bono attorney that establishes AFGG policy and procedures on medication administration to Alateens (see Attachment H). This guideline is to be used in conjunction with the Alateen Medication Authorization Form (Attachment C) completed by the parent and with the Alateen Medication Log (Attachment I) completed by the DMA to document each medication given.
9. **Alateen Medication Log**—this is a new form created by the pro bono attorney to be used in conjunction with the new medication administration guidelines (see Attachment I).
10. **Alateen Incident/Illness Notification Form**—this is a revision of our current form (see Attachment J). This form was revised to be completed by the DMA should an illness or incident occur during an Area event. An AMIAS is to complete this form if an illness or incident occurs during transportation to or from an Area event.

Policy for Minors Attending AFGG Events:

The SC recommends adopting an Area policy on unaccompanied minors at AFGG events. Our discussion on this was initiated from an Area Chair discussion thread on AFG Connects. We recommend that this policy be added to the Area Information and Archives Booklet (for the Area Chair to implement) and the Al-Anon Convention Chair guidelines, and be posted on the Events page of our Georgia website. We also recommend that this policy be included on Convention registration forms and that a parent or guardian must check off a box when registering to acknowledge that he or she has read and agree to it.

Policy for Minors Attending AFGG Events: All minors (who are not Alateens) attending Area events are the responsibility of their parents and must be supervised by their parent or guardian throughout the event. AFGG is not responsible for them and does not provide childcare. Minors who wish to attend Alateen events must have all required forms completed. Emancipated teens under 17 years of age attending Area events must present their paperwork from Juvenile Court; they can attend Alateen events once required forms are completed.

Georgia Code for Mandated Reporters:

The SC recommends inserting a procedure for posting a flyer of the Georgia Code for Mandated Reporters in the Alateen Conference Chair information guidelines and PD, the Al-Anon Convention Alateen Sponsor Chair PD, the Al-Anon Convention Chair guidelines and PD, and the Area Information and Archives Booklet (for the Alateen Coordinator to implement at Assembly). This flyer would be posted in Conference housing cabins and Area event Alateen meeting rooms to inform and remind Alateens of this law. It would also serve to make this information readily available to an AMIAS who may need to make a report.

Georgia code O.C.G.A.§ 19-7-5 requires mandated reporters to contact the Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) if they have reasonable cause to believe that a child known to them is suspected of being abused or neglected. Calls should be made to 1-855-422-4453. In the event of an emergency, call 911.

Area Procedures Updates:

Should the Assembly approve and affirm the above recommended forms, guidelines, and policy, the following actions will need to be taken:

1. Area Chair, Delegate, and Archivist to work with respective trusted servants to revise PDs for AAPP, Conference and Convention Chairs, Alternate Delegate, Alateen Coordinator, Georgia A.A. Convention Liaison, and Board Chair to reflect secure handling and retention of forms, waivers, Policy for Minors Attending AFGG Events, and Georgia Code for Mandatory Reporters.
2. Upon approval of revised ASBRs by Assembly, the Georgia Alateen/AMIAS Handbook will need to be updated by the Alateen Work Group to reflect new forms, waivers, procedures, guidelines and Policy for Minors Attending AFGG Events. Once the handbook is updated, the Alateen Coordinator is to send it to the WSO for review (pg 93, 2018-2021 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual version 2).
3. The Alateen Coordinator to work with the Web Coordinator to update the Area website—all approved forms and policies will need to be added with appropriate instructions.
4. Alateen Coordinator / Alateen Work Group to update AMIAS training to reflect new procedures, forms, waivers, and guidelines.
5. Alateen Work Group to conduct research on possible health care agencies and create a form for DMA to sign providing written acknowledgement that they have received and agree to use AFGG Guidelines and forms (see SC Guidelines below and Parking Lot of Questions Attachment K).

6. The Alateen Conference budget will need to be adjusted to reflect the cost of a DMA. The Al-Anon Convention and Assembly budgets will need to be adjusted based on the outcome of the Alateen Work Group's recommendation on feasibility of hiring a DMA.

SC Guidelines:

During our work on reviewing current AFGG forms and ASBRs, the SC realized that there are no guidelines or an outline of SC responsibilities. The SC felt discussion and creation of these guidelines was outside the scope of this report and placed this into a "Parking Lot of Questions, Issues or Concerns Outside the Scope of the Committee" (Attachment K).

Recommendations

Because AFGG is contractually obligated to comply with UGA's policies for hosting the Alateen Conference at Rock Eagle, recommendations 1 and 2 below are legal issues that the Board has reviewed and approved. Assembly is asked to affirm these two recommendations:

1. Replace current 5 Alateen Registration Event Forms with 8 revised or new forms, 1 new medication administration guideline, and 1 new release and waiver of liability form for Alateen Conferences effective 2021. All of these forms are required for Rock Eagle. Some of the forms included in this report may need to be edited based on the findings of the Alateen Work Group for use at other Area events (see #3 below).
2. Hire through an agency a health care professional licensed to administer medication as a Designated Medical Administrator (DMA) for the Alateen Conference.

The following recommendations are actions that the SC recognizes as necessary if Assembly affirms recommendations 1 and 2. Since they are Traditional in nature, rather than legal, Assembly is asked to approve these recommendations:

3. The Alateen Work Group to explore options of hiring a DMA at other Area events comparing feasibility, costs and liability, and present to the Finance Committee for discussion.
4. Adopt the Policy for Minors Attending AFGG Events.
5. Adopt the posting procedure for the Georgia Code for Mandated Reporters in Alateen meeting rooms at Area events.
6. Revise Area trusted servant PDs to reflect new Alateen safety procedures and secure file retention.
7. Revise the Alateen/AMIAS Handbook to reflect new procedures, forms, guidelines, and policy.
8. Revise the Georgia Al-Anon Website Alateen section and Area event listings to reflect new procedures, forms, guidelines, and policy.
9. Revise AMIAS training to reflect new procedures, forms, guidelines, and policy.
10. Adjust the Alateen Conference budget to reflect additional cost of a DMA.

Safety Committee Members

Karen M. (AAPP/SC Chair)
Vicki L. (Board Chair)

Alecia C. (Alateen Coordinator)
Cathy O. (Board Secretary)

Babs T. (Delegate)