

# Should Southern California World Service (SCWS) Accept Permanent Electronic Groups Into Our Geographic Area?



Thought Force Review  
Assembly, May 21, 2022

## Let's Start With a Review!

- A small **Thought Force** (ThF) was formed in 2021 to review the latest information from the **World Service Conference** (WSC) and the **World Service Office** (WSO) regarding **Permanent Electronic Groups**.
- The **Thought Force** presented their initial information at the November 2021 Assembly; further discussion was tabled until the May, 2022 Assembly.
- The November presentation and documents can be found here:  
<https://www.scws-al-anon.org/area-world-service-assembly-meeting-information/>  
Please see: “Permanent Electronic Meetings and Our SCWS Area”; “Electronic Meetings, Al-Anon Family Groups & the WSC Structure”; “Draft Minutes of the November Assembly”.

## What do we know so far?



- **April 2021:** WSC voted to recognize Electronic Meetings as **Al-Anon Family Groups**, and for these Groups to be included in the Al-Anon service structure.
- **January 22, 2022:** Group Representatives (GRs) representing Permanent Electronic Groups attended the Electronic Area Assembly, and elected their first World Service Delegate.
- **April 2022:** The new Virtual Area Delegate attended the WSC and the “**Global Electronic Area**” was admitted to the WSC.
- All “permanent” Electronic Al-Anon Family Groups (AFG) are now placed into the **Global Electronic Area (GEA)**.



## Additional Information from April 2022 World Service Conference:

- There are now two types of Al-Anon groups:
  - **Physical Groups:** belong to a geographic Area and meet at a physical location. These groups may have an electronic “window” into their physical meeting (via Zoom or other virtual platform) so members can join the meeting virtually (aka “Hybrid” meetings).
  - **Electronic Groups:** are not attached to a physical location. They do not have an “in-person” component. They may want to attract a global audience, or prefer to belong to a particular geographic area and keep their attendance more local.

## Additional Information from April's WSC, continued:



- **Electronic Groups (EGs)** will be able to choose the Area they wish to belong to:
  - **The Global Electronic Area**
  - A **geographic Area** that has developed a procedure for admitting Electronic Groups in their Area.
  
- The Board of Trustees and the World Service Office hope that all Geographic Areas will welcome all Al-Anon Groups--Physical and Electronic--into their Areas. Each Area has the autonomy to decide how this will work in their Area.

## Why might we consider admitting EGs into our SCWS Area structure?



### Example:

- Many groups in our Area created **Temporary Electronic Meetings** to take the place of their face-to-face meetings when COVID hit.
- A number of these “temporary” groups are still meeting virtually with the majority of their members residing in CA-South. Their GR currently represents their Group at SCWS Area meetings.
- If SCWS decides to accept Electronic Groups into our Area structure, the **Temporary Electronic Groups** that do not wish to return “in person” would have two choices:
  1. Become a Permanent Electronic Group and join the new Global Electronic Area (with voice/vote in the GEA),
  2. Join the SCWS Area as a Permanent Electronic Group and continue to have a voice and vote in the SCWS Area.



## What are our next steps?

- The Thought Force is recommending that the Area move on to a **Task Force**.
- The **Task Force** (TF) would be responsible for researching the details and **Knowledge Based Decision Making (KBDM)** questions regarding how an Electronic Group could join our geographic Area. They would draft a process as to how this might be possible. This would include the Pros and Cons of including Electronic Groups into our Area service structure.
- The TF would include “members-at-large” and members in Area service beyond the group level (GR, DR, etc.), especially those who have experience with Electronic Meetings.
- The Task Force would present their findings and/or recommendations to a future Assembly.

## *And For Your Information...*

- Many Geographic Areas have formed a Thought Force/Task Force to research these questions. A few Areas have already voted to accept Electronic Groups into their Geographic Areas.
- Geographic Areas have the autonomy...
  - to accept/not accept Permanent Electronic Groups
  - to take as much time as they need before deciding if and when to begin registering groups which meet electronically.
- There is currently **no cutoff date** for **“Temporary” Electronic Groups** to continue to meet virtually. These Groups are still identified by WSO and SCWS by their original WSO ID number connected to their Physical Group.





# Let's start with Questions, then Comments.



## Reminder:

- Only “members” of the Assembly have “voice”
- Raise your Zoom hand (click on “reactions”, “raise hand”)
- 1 minute at the “mic” for Questions; 2 minutes for Comments
- Please lower your hand if another member asks your question or makes your comment.