

COOPERATION WITH RESEARCHERS

Policy

Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. (AFG, Inc.) cooperates with researchers who are studying the effects of alcoholism as a family disease. Under no circumstances will Al-Anon Family Groups' tradition of anonymity be compromised. Outside researchers will not have direct access to Al-Anon's membership information, databases, or mailing lists. Al-Anon will present to members the opportunity to cooperate with researchers, which will be entirely voluntary, at the individual member's discretion. Researchers will never directly solicit members of Al-Anon, either as individuals or members of an Al-Anon group or service arm. While Al-Anon can cooperate with researchers, Al-Anon can never endorse or affiliate with an outside enterprise or appear to be doing so.

Procedures

The Associate Director—Public Outreach (AD—PO) will act as Al-Anon's liaison with researchers. When researchers request Al-Anon cooperation, the AD—PO will provide background and explain Al-Anon's approval process. If the researcher wishes to continue with the request of Al-Anon participation in the project, the WSO staff will evaluate the request to determine if it's appropriate for further consideration.

If the request is deemed appropriate, it will be reviewed by a Policy Committee Ad Hoc Task Force (TF), composed of two Staff and two WSO Volunteers, appointed by the Policy Chairperson. This TF will evaluate whether cooperation with the research project benefits Al-Anon; scientific studies that document the effectiveness of Al-Anon as a recovery program could increase the credibility and perceived relevance of Al-Anon to a wider cross-section of people in need.

After approval by the TF, the staff will negotiate an agreement with the researcher to define boundaries and determine the scope of Al-Anon's participation in the project.

While Al-Anon respects the independence of the outside researcher, Al-Anon expects researchers to check with the organization on the accuracy of any statement made about the program in general, to request copyright permissions when appropriate, and to share the results of the study in advance of publication. Al-Anon will respect embargo limitations prior to publication and copyright restrictions after publication.

In exchange for participation in the project, Al-Anon expects to cooperate with the researcher to make the results of the study widely available to members and potential members of Al-Anon Family Groups.