

July 2026 Chairperson of the Board Letter

Dear Al-Anon and Alateen members:

The purpose of this Chairperson of the Board (COB) letter is to share some of the highlights from our July 2026 Board week. Included are updates from our Treasurer, our Conference Leadership Team Chairperson, and our Policy Chairperson.

The July 2026 Board meeting was held at Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. in Virginia Beach. This Board week was especially meaningful as we welcomed seven new Trustees and one new Executive Committee At-Large member. It was encouraging to witness their enthusiasm, thoughtful questions, and willingness to engage in the work before us. Our mentorship program continues to support new Volunteers as they become familiar with their roles and responsibilities.

As always, our Board week provided opportunities for fellowship, learning, discussion, and spiritual reflection as we considered how best to serve Al-Anon Family Groups worldwide.

Spirituality

The Board continues to place spiritual principles at the center of our work. Throughout the week, we remained mindful that our decisions are guided by our spiritual principles and our responsibility to serve the fellowship as a whole. Once again, an Al-Anon meeting was included in the Board week schedule.

The topic explored by the Envisioned Future Work Group (EFWG) at this Board meeting focused on professional language and how Al-Anon communicates with outside professionals. The discussion centered on the increasing use of the clinical term “Alcohol Use Disorder” (AUD) in professional settings and whether Al-Anon should adopt that terminology more broadly. After thoughtful consideration, the Board supported the continued use of professional language when speaking individually with therapists and other professionals or defining key words for the website, while remaining true to Al-Anon’s spiritual identity and longstanding language in our published materials. We also recognized the value of using language familiar to professionals to help them discover Al-Anon.

Vision and Strategy

Strategic Commitments

The Strategic Leadership Team shared an important update regarding organizational capacity. Staff and Volunteers are currently supporting a significant number of operational and strategic projects while continuing to provide the ongoing services relied upon by the fellowship every day.

After careful evaluation, consensus was reached to defer the annual process for identifying new strategic initiatives for the next two years. This pause will allow Staff and Volunteers to focus their energy on accomplishing current Board-approved strategies and projects before introducing additional commitments.

Additionally, the Board agreed to defer the start of the CAI Education Work Group for the same reasons listed above.

The Board also agreed to hold a special meeting to review the current strategic landscape and evaluate whether any existing Board-approved strategies can be adjusted or mediated to better align with available resources and organizational capacity.

World Service Conference Preparation

The Conference Leadership Team brought forward several recommendations related to future World Service Conferences. The Board approved the theme of the 2027 World Service Conference. The theme itself will be shared later this year. Additionally, after reviewing the work completed by the 2026 World Service Conference Task Forces on the World Service Conference Charter and Applying Step Four to Encourage Area Inventories, the Board agreed that no further action is needed at this time.

Board Development

WSO Alateen Certification Training

WSO Volunteers and Staff who are Al-Anon members involved in working with Alateen participated in the comprehensive WSO Al-Anon Member Involved in Alateen Service certification training during Board week. The training reviewed the foundation of current Alateen safety requirements, certification expectations, and procedures for responding appropriately if safety concerns arise during Alateen events we might be attending on behalf of the WSO.

Through practical scenarios and discussion, Volunteers and Staff strengthened their understanding of how to support Alateen safety while ensuring concerns are directed to the appropriate Area Alateen trusted servants.

Volunteers and Staff were reminded they would need to take Area training to participate in Alateen service in their Area.

Technology Readiness for Trusted Servants

The Board carefully considered how technology skills are evaluated during the Trustee application process. Recognizing that technology continues to evolve rapidly, the Board agreed that changes that shift the focus away from demonstrating mastery of a specific technology tool and toward assessing a candidate's adaptability, willingness to learn, and comfort navigating unfamiliar technology need to be addressed. We look forward to discussing these changes further in a future Board meeting.

Executive Committee for Real Property Management (ECRPM) Resume

As part of a related evaluation of world service-level trusted servant application processes, the Conference Committee on Trustees and Nominating Committees recommended several updates to the ECRPM resume during its joint meeting at the 2026 WSC. While a wholesale ECRPM resume review and update is not currently feasible, these updates were necessary to clarify requirements. The Board approved these changes at the July Board meeting.

January Board Week(s)

The Board reviewed and discussed the schedule for the January Board week(s) in an attempt to make it less taxing. In discussing possible options, the Board decided to extend the second (non-interview) week of January Board to include Friday with an increased number of shorter breaks.

Financial Matters

Revised Budget

The Finance Committee presented a revised 2026 World Service Office operating budget to the Board. During review, significant concern was expressed regarding the continued decline in literature sales, which are approximately eight percent below budget projections. Although contributions remain above budget solely because of bequests, the Board recognized the importance of maintaining a sustainable financial model that does not rely on bequest income.

The revised budget projects a deficit of approximately \$358,390 for the year. As a result, ongoing efforts will continue to encourage both literature purchases and member contributions in support of the services provided by the World Service Office. More details are provided in the Treasurer's July Finance Committee Update.

Reserve Fund Projects

The Board approved funding for two special projects from the Reserve Fund.

The first project provides support for a full SharePoint implementation designed to improve document management, information sharing, and operational efficiency. The second project provides enhanced human re-

sources support, including assistance with performance management, employee development, and retention efforts. Both projects are intended to strengthen the organization and improve the effectiveness of the services provided to the fellowship.

2027 WSC Equalized Expense

The Board approved the Finance Committee recommendation to set the estimated Full Cost for Delegate participation in the 2027 World Service Conference at \$3,300, with an Equalized Expense amount of \$2,310, representing 70 percent of the Full Cost.

Service to the Fellowship

Road Trip! You and Your Board Connect

Preparations are well underway for the upcoming Road Trip! You and Your Board Connect event. Registration is now open, and the Board spent time reviewing plans for presentations and refining content to expand engagement with members. The Board also approved a pricing framework that will guide and streamline the setting of registration fees for future Road Trip events based on event costs.

Trustee Invitations to Regional Delegate Meetings

The process for Trustee participation in Regional Delegate Meetings (RDMs) was clarified. Going forward, RDMs will follow the same invitation process used by Areas and other service arms when requesting Trustee participation using the form available on AFG Connects. This change supports consistency throughout the fellowship and reinforces that Trustees serve the entire fellowship rather than a single Region.

Consistent with WSO onboarding practices, Trustees attending an RDM as a first-time speaker will be accompanied by an experienced WSO Volunteer mentor with the WSO covering mentor travel costs.

International Reprinting CAL

The Board approved the International Coordination Committee's recommendation to grant permission for Chile to reprint Conference Approved Literature.

Looking Ahead

As we conclude another Board week, I am reminded of the dedication of our Staff, Volunteers, Delegates, trusted servants, and members throughout the worldwide fellowship. The work before us is substantial, but so is the commitment demonstrated every day by those who serve.

Thank you for your continued support of Al-Anon Family Groups and for carrying the message of hope to families and friends affected by someone else's drinking.

With gratitude,



Katherine M.

Chairperson, Board of Trustees
Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.