



Resumption of In-Person Meetings within the Santa Cruz Area of Narcotics Anonymous

June 1st, 2020

The Santa Cruz Area of Narcotics Anonymous (SCANA) in conjunction with the Northern California Regional Service Committee (NCRSC) has been dedicated to providing the most updated and accurate information in regards to the current “Stay at Home Order” and future Social Distancing requirements due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and its impact on our fellowship and ability to meet.

The Narcotics Anonymous service structure places the Groups as the highest level of service, and as such neither the Area Service Committee nor Regional Service Committee can direct what a Group can or cannot do. The role of those bodies are to provide additional services to the Area or Region, allowing Groups to focus on their Primary purpose of ‘Carrying the message to the addict who still suffers’.

In that spirit, the SCANA Public Relations and Administrative Committees have developed this document as a guide for groups to follow to resume in-person meetings, what guidelines and protocols would look like in practice, and what would put a group in defiance of the Public Health Order.

The ‘Appendix A: Social Distancing Protocol’ guidelines include measures to:

- Post Signage
- Protect Health
- Prevent Crowds From Gathering
- Keep People at Least Six (6) Feet Apart
- Prevent Unnecessary Contact
- Increase Sanitation

As a result, the SCANA Public Relations and Administrative Committees have reviewed the “Appendix A” protocols for Santa Cruz County and created a Social Distancing Protocol tailored to Narcotics Anonymous meetings that may use to ensure compliance with the State and County Orders.

The protocol must be followed as per the directive for Santa Cruz County, and a record must be kept for every meeting. Public Health Officers will have the right to request, observe, and where violations occur, cite our meetings, or the facility they are held in, ultimately leading to the possibility of fines. If a group is not in compliance with the mandated Social Distancing Protocol and issued a citation or fine, the **Santa Cruz Area of Narcotics Anonymous and Northern California Region Service Committee will not be financially responsible nor be held liable for any and all fines as a result of a group’s non-compliance of the Public Health Order and Social Distancing Protocol.** Financial responsibility and liability will fall to the individual group (e.g. the GSR and other service members of the group) as well as the facility or meeting location.

It's important to note, the company that provides insurance for NA meetings regionally has indicated that our policy covers only the meeting space listed on our schedules and DOES NOT cover the Coronavirus. Groups must be prepared to handle liability for any claims that arise as a result of Coronavirus, or lack of compliance with "Appendix A".

Recommendations and steps for considering if resuming in-person meetings is right for your group:

- Contact meeting facility to determine if they are able to host the group with adherence to the Social Distancing Protocols and advise that the current Narcotics Anonymous insurance policy will not cover the Coronavirus.
 - Items to consider/discuss - Does the facility have extra cleaning charges? Can the group provide cleaning supplies needed for sanitizing twice per meeting and service members to perform such actions? Will the facility be able to accommodate extra time allowed before and after the meeting to allow for social distancing setup and sanitation? Any additional requirements from the facility?
- Conduct a group level business meeting to get group conscience regarding resuming meeting and review the required Social Distancing Protocols to determine if compliance is feasible for the group.
- Complete the "Appendix A: Social Distancing Protocol" which has been modified to suit the needs of NA meetings and return a copy of the completed Social Distancing Protocol to the SCANA PR Committee (santacruznapr@gmail.com) to have the meeting listed on the current meeting schedule.

Please keep in mind that meetings (located inside of a facility) will have a capacity limit in order to be in compliance with the 6-foot social distancing requirement. The governor recently released the "25% rule" for churches and retail spaces, which can be broadly interpreted to apply to our meetings as well, especially those gathering in churches. This rule states that whatever the previous maximum occupancy of a room was, the maximum occupancy is now 25% of that. Therefore, it is encouraged that **groups discuss how they will stay in compliance if more members show up to the meeting than space allows and how they may potentially have to turn members away.**

If groups are considering temporarily meeting in a different location other than their previously listed meeting space at the facility (lawn areas or patios at facility, parks, parking lots, etc.), groups **MUST** get permission from the location and contact the SCANA Public Relations Committee as insurance limitations may apply.

As meetings reach out to Public Relations with a completed "Appendix A: Social Distancing Protocol" form to confirm understanding and compliance with Appendix A of the Public Health Order, they will be added to the SCANA in-person meeting schedule.

In recognition and respect to our 4th Tradition, "Each group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting other groups or NA as a whole." There is ample precedent of not including groups on the meeting schedule who may adversely impact the NA reputation. If at some point it becomes clear that a meeting is no longer in compliance and including it in the meeting guide then endangers NA, it may necessitate removing it.

The following are attached to this document for reference and use by groups is desired:

- “Appendix A: Social Distancing Protocol” for Santa Cruz County (Modified for in-Person Meetings of Narcotics Anonymous). ***This protocol is a tool for groups to use to autonomously determine how they will comply with the orders.***
- Signage that groups may use, if they wish, in order to be in compliance. Groups may choose to create their own signage as long as it meets the requirements by Public Health:
 - COVID-19 Symptom check for anyone that enters the meeting facility,
 - Mask requirement,
 - Social Distancing Signage stating Maximum Capacity Allowed in Facility.

It is recommended to have a copy of this document, the completed original “Appendix A” groups are using, and any other documentation that may be required at each meeting in the event it is requested by Public Health, the facility, or an individual.

The Santa Cruz Area of Narcotics Anonymous Administrative Committee and Public Relations Subcommittee are dedicated to assisting our area and groups safely return to meeting while limiting the risk of public health, controversy, liability, and the protection of our members and fellowship as a whole. We will continue to monitor the progression and re-opening of Santa Cruz County, changes to Public Health Orders, and recommendations from NCRSC. As new information is released we will update the groups and make amendments to this document as needed. We appreciate your patience and understanding as we navigate through these unprecedented times.

Thank you for letting us be of service.

Santa Cruz Area of Narcotic Anonymous