

Using OA's Public Service Announcements (PSAs)

Using Public Service Announcements can be a great way to carry the OA message, raise public awareness, and attract new members. A PSA is usually a 15-, 30-, or 60-second radio or television spot with a short message about OA and the phone number and website of the World Service Office and/or the local service body. Although broadcast stations are no longer required to air PSAs, many stations do so as a community service and to fill space between programs.

Using live copy: Some stations prefer live copy that they record or announce on the air. (See sample live copy PSA scripts in the *Public Information Service Manual*, available at bookstore.oa.org.)

Using the prerecorded radio PSA "Start Living the Life You Deserve": A downloadable audio file is available at oa.org/psa or at oa.org/resources: "Public Information Suggestions." When you contact radio stations, include an emailed cover letter with a link to these resources. Once broadcast or Internet radio stations are interested, send them the audio file separately if they request it. You may also contact the WSO for 15- and 30-second versions of this professionally-produced audio PSA.

Using the video PSA "Many Symptoms, the OA Solution": Provide a link to oa.org/psa when contacting television stations. Once they're interested in airing the video PSA, contact the WSO for broadcast-quality files in 15-, 30-, or 60-second lengths.

Both audio and video PSAs already direct listeners/viewers to oa.org. If you can, encourage local stations to add local information: a website address or phone number to help people find meetings in that area. If you use an answering service, make sure operators are fully informed about meetings and clearly instructed about how to refer people. Give the service a few names and numbers of abstaining members who are willing to take "Help!" calls. If your group or service body has no website or answering service, you can direct PSA responders to Find a Meeting at oa.org.

Make sure your group is ready for an influx of newcomers before using the PSAs. Ask yourselves this question: Are you, as members, abstaining and experienced enough in the program to handle an influx? Experience has shown that groups with little abstinence or a lack of sponsors risk turning off newcomers who may never return. Stock up on Newcomer Packets and other OA literature from bookstore.oa.org.

Quick Reference: please share with your groups

Steps to Getting OA's Public Service Announcements Aired on Radio and Television Stations

1. Call local radio and television stations and ask to speak with the public service or public affairs director at each station. (Don't forget about cable TV stations; many small communities have cable systems that run Public Service Announcements (PSAs). Large metropolitan areas often have a local broadcasters' association. Nonprofit groups may have to go through this association to get a clearance—a special number assigned to each organization—which can be used at all area stations. In areas with few stations, it is important that local meetings coordinate their approaches to avoid confusion.)
2. Tell the public affairs director that you are submitting a PSA on behalf of the nonprofit organization Overeaters Anonymous. (If the station requires further proof of OA's nonprofit status, contact the WSO for a copy of OA's tax-exemption letter. *Note: Groups and service bodies cannot use this letter to establish their own tax-exempt status.*)
3. Send a link to oa.org/psa so the public affairs director can review OA's audio and video PSAs. Include a brief explanation of why the station should air the PSA.
4. Once they're interested, ask whether the station will accept a professionally produced PSA as is, or if they plan to dub over the provided video or audio. Scripts of the PSAs are available from the WSO and are included in OA's *Public Information Service Manual*. If any changes are going to be made to the PSA, request to see it or listen to it before it is aired.
5. If the station is equipped to dub over the provided material, ask that they add your local service body's phone number instead of or in addition to the already-provided WSO phone number; add a local website too. If the station is unable to do so, the PSA as is will direct interested people to call the World Service Office or visit oa.org.
6. Once the station is prepared to air the PSA, ask what format they prefer. Broadcast or online radio stations may request the audio PSA, *Start Living the Life You Deserve*: Download the 60-second version to your own computer or device and attach it to an email, or request 15- and 30-second versions from the WSO. Television and cable stations may contact the WSO to receive broadcast-quality video files of the video PSA, *Many Symptoms, the OA Solution*. Be sure to inform media outlets that all PSAs are available in 15-, 30-, and 60-second spots.
7. Ask the public affairs director to let you know when the PSA will air. After it airs, send thank-you notes to the station and anyone you worked with.
8. Prepare for newcomers to come to your meetings by stocking up on OA literature. If you include a service body phone number in the PSA, prepare for calls by compiling a list of abstaining members who can help callers with questions about OA.
9. Share your success stories about using video and audio PSAs to carry the message. Report at meetings, post on social media and online PI groups, and write an article about your experience for *Lifeline*.