

Secretaries Maintain the Connection

The group secretary is a link in a chain that disseminates important information in two ways: from the World Service Office (WSO) to group members and from the group to the WSO.

Sending current group information or changes to the WSO is a job that usually falls onto the broad shoulders of the group secretary. The secretary also has the responsibility to distribute information from the WSO and service body, such as newsletters, surveys and other mail, to members of the group.

Has this two-way flow of information been running smoothly in your group? If not, the place to start is to make sure your meeting is registered correctly with the WSO. These are some important points to remember when registering or making changes:

- **Use the Group Registration/Change form to make any changes to your group information.** You can make changes on the OA website using the online form or you can download the PDF available at <https://oa.org/groupsservice-bodies/groups/secretary-materials/> and mail in your changes. Click on [Find a Meeting](#), then select Edit an Existing Meeting. If you do not have access to the internet, the WSO will be happy to email, mail, or fax you a copy of the form.
- **When submitting the printed Group Registration/Change form, write legibly and clearly.** If we can't read your writing, we can't pass on accurate information to newcomers!
- **When your group chooses to affiliate with an intergroup or service board, include the intergroup's/service board's number or at least the correct name of the intergroup/service board.**
- **With ANY change it is important to give complete information.** The critical areas to complete are those marked “*required.” Make sure all information is accurate, and check that apartment numbers are included, as these are often overlooked.
- **Use your group number on all correspondence to the WSO.** Once a group is registered, its group number will remain the same, regardless of changes to the meeting information.
- **Update the WSO with meeting detail changes as soon as you can, no matter how small the change.** It is the group's responsibility to do this. Some groups assume the intergroup/service board will pass changes on to the WSO, and this is not always the case.

The group secretary can work with other members to make sure pertinent OA information reaches everyone. For instance, the secretary can make sure someone downloads the WSO newsletter, *A Step Ahead*, from the OA website and makes it available to members in the meeting. A group may also receive mailings from the intergroup/service board with information that needs to be distributed. Each OA group should be sure the secretary receives adequate help and materials to do his or her job. The smooth flow of information between the WSO and the group depends on the secretary.

Other tasks of group secretaries are outlined in the *OA Handbook for Members, Groups, and Service Bodies* (available from the WSO, #120). The secretary's tasks may include presiding at group conscience and/or steering committee meetings or seeing that the meeting place is ready each week.

If you have any questions about registering or recording changes for your group, please call, write, or send an email to the WSO's group registration coordinator (info@oa.org). We are interested in hearing your ideas on how we might improve the group registration process, and on group registrations in general.