

## **REIMBURSED EXPENSES FOR SPEAKERS**

### **Expenses**

It should be clear, when speakers are booked, what terms are being made for expenses. Unless it's otherwise specified, speakers have a right to assume that all their travel, meals, and hotel expenses will be paid for the entire trip. Speakers will expect hotel or motel accommodations as a matter of course; if they are to be guests in private homes, this should be explained before their arrival. Excerpt from AA Guidelines from the General Service Office in New York on Conferences, Conventions and Roundups (Page-4, Section 4-a)

### **Acts of Recovery Opinion**

Acts of Recovery committees completely agree with the adopted AA guideline mentioned above. However, it is our opinion that if we have rules that are so rigid, we will not leave room for the hand of God and will eventually behave in a manner which will likely compromise our primary purpose. However unintentional, a compromised primary purpose could very well mean "no hope" for one or more alcoholics that we could otherwise provide hope for. We do not want to allow our fears to cause us to put "walls of rules" up that eventually serve as prison walls for ourselves.

If there is a registration fee being charged for attendees of a conference, it seems reasonable that those funds should be used to comply with the AA guideline. However, Acts of Recovery is designed, not to compete with other conferences, but to provide a solution to fill a need.

AA conference protocol that evolved over the years was unintentionally excluding single parents and those who could not afford a weekend conference. In order to provide a solution to this unintentional exclusion, we chose to make the conference a mini-conference from noon until 5pm on a Saturday to address the time issue for the single parents and make the conference completely free to address the money issue.

In the spirit of the seventh tradition, we would pass the basket for voluntary contributions in order to determine if the conference was self-supporting and therefore truly was serving a purpose. The seventh tradition is AA's only true measurement as to whether or not we are truly fulfilling a need.

### **Acts of Recovery Guideline for Inviting Speakers**

- Ensure that the potential speaker is informed as to our awareness and understanding of the adopted AA guideline concerning reimbursing expenses for speakers; however Acts of Recovery is an exception in order to make the conference free.
- Ensure that the potential speaker does not feel obligated to accept the invitation, if they cannot afford the expenses.
- Leave room for exceptions. If there is someone who wants to pay a speakers travel expenses as a generous gesture or house the invited speaker as a guest in their home, this is acceptable.