



Any- Lengths Online Group Serving as Chairperson

1 Thank you for agreeing to Chair one of our daily online A.A. meetings! It may seem a
2 little daunting at first glance, but rest assured, once you realize how much help and
3 support you have in this role, you will find it not only easy but also a fun and fulfilling
4 experience, while also being a great way to be of service in the fellowship. The Group
5 has voted that Chairpersons have a minimum of 90 days of sobriety and have some
6 familiarity with the way our meetings run and how a "normal" meeting flows. However,
7 if you have been asked to fill the Chairperson position, we have full confidence in your
8 ability to run a great meeting! So just relax and be yourself.

9 This document is an aid to your preparation to Chair one of our online meetings. It
10 supplements Article IV.4.11 and Article VI, but does not replace the Group
11 consciousness duties as kept updated in the [Constitution, By-Laws, and Job](#)
12 [Description](#).

13 The following are a few key points to remember and review regularly:

- 14 ● Make every effort to follow the script for that meeting. Ensuring it is the most
15 recent version.
- 16 ● Attend the regularly scheduled Business Meetings and relay any Group decisions
17 during the announcements section.
- 18 ● Keep the sharing portion focused on sharing participant experiences, strengths,
19 and hopes.
- 20 ● Mute oneself when not facilitating.
- 21 ● Ensure cross-talk, personal commentary, advice, distractions, and interruptions
22 are to a minimum for participants.
- 23 ● Ensure participants close their share within a reasonable time. Use discernment
24 to extend a participant's time if needed.
- 25 ● Start and end on time.
- 26 ● Leave approximately three minutes at the end of the session to go through the
27 script.
- 28 ● Communicate with fellow Trusted Servants about the meetings so everyone
29 knows what is happening.
- 30 ● Recruit readers from the meeting participants before the Meeting's formal start.
31 Avoid using other Trusted Servants of that day's meeting.
- 32 ● Address issues, such as inappropriate shares, promptly.
- 33 ● Avoid doing another's Service.

34 General Guidelines:

35 Please follow the same etiquette as large in-person meetings (it is understood you may
36 not have experienced one yet) in which meeting Chairpersons do not cross-talk or offer
37 personal commentary to members following their shares. Avoid giving advice or offering
38 suggestions about whatever someone has shared; keep it for after the meeting. The
39 Meeting Chairperson is a facilitator whose primary role is to move the meeting along,
40 keep it on track, and start and end the meeting on time. If asked a question about the
41 meeting or the Group, ask them to stay and ask any questions *after* the meeting.

42 Everything you need is in the script. You will find a link to the most recent meeting
43 script at any-lengths.com under "Service Materials" or in a dedicated [Google Drive](#)
44 folder, which also contains everything for all service positions needed for the meetings.
45 Be aware that meeting scripts are revised based on Group needs, cumulative
46 experience, Group conscience, or decisions made in business meetings. So, if you print
47 out a script, it may no longer be up-to-date. Please ensure you are using the latest
48 version by checking the date of the document against the "revision date" or use the
49 online version when Chairing the meeting.

50 Give audible feedback to other meeting participants. By repeating first names aloud,
51 saying "Hi" and "Thanks" when it feels natural, and following the verbal conventions for
52 which A.A. meetings are famous, you are helping to give the online meeting the feel of
53 a traditional face-to-face A.A. meeting for all participants and also assuring the speaker
54 that they are being heard.

55 You may also have situations where more than one person starts to share. When that
56 happens, it helps if you quickly unmute and interject to suggest who should go first,
57 who should go second, etc. Be quick to unmute when there are periods of silence, if
58 there is an issue with someone unable to get a mic to work, etc. Do not wait for
59 someone else to chime in; they will all be waiting for you to address any issues as the
60 facilitator.

61 Please *minimize* both your and the Group's feedback after and between shares. There
62 has been a tendency in our newer online Group for people to unmute and interject
63 comments between shares, "Great job! Keep coming back! You've got this! We love
64 you," etc. One quickly becomes one of several participants doing it. When a half-dozen
65 to a dozen or more people do this, it becomes disruptive, takes up meeting time, is sure
66 to morph into cross-talk, and can start to feel more like Group therapy than A.A. Group
67 support. members who have been around A.A. for a while also know it is not aligned
68 with traditional A.A. meeting etiquette. Providing a reliable, consistent, structured, and
69 sustainable A.A. meeting, both for newcomers and long-timers alike, will go *much*
70 *further* in supporting members and our overall fellowship than any comments people
71 think might be needed in the moments after someone shares, no matter how supportive
72 they may appear to be. We open the meeting room early and stay late for personal
73 support—the appropriate time and place for giving feedback.

74 Pay attention to body language. You may be able to tell that someone wants (or needs)
75 to share just by watching; if that is your sense of the situation, do not be afraid to call
76 on people. We encourage you to call on members with different backgrounds,
77 experiences, and sobriety lengths.

78 You are not required to use video when you Chair, but the video is an important
79 communication tool and improves the meeting experience for everyone else, especially
80 if you can use it while listening. Some people have poor internet connections (especially
81 during "stay-at-home" with so many people online today) or have other considerations
82 that make it awkward to keep video turned on constantly. If your internet connection is
83 too poor to let you keep your video turned on through the whole meeting, try turning it
84 off while speaking and keeping it on while you are muted and only listening. Feel free to
85 suggest this to others who seem to be having internet connection issues.

86 Please remember to mute yourself when you are not actively talking, i.e., just like
87 everyone else when they are not sharing. Among other things, this prevents background
88 noise from your mic, breathing sounds, or impromptu noise. In the 'speaker view', which
89 many people use, if you are unmuted, your picture will continuously pop in and out
90 while someone else is sharing, which can become very distracting and also confusing for
91 new people. Of course, *remember to unmute* when it's your turn to talk, or else the
92 Group cannot hear your voice directing the meeting.

93 **Time management** is important. Your main job in this area is to ensure the meeting
94 starts on time and ends on time. You have a timekeeper for keeping shares relatively
95 equal for each person, but starting and ending on time are both on you. Important: The
96 closing part of the script takes no less than 3 minutes, *so always end the sharing part of*
97 *the meeting, leaving at least 3 minutes, or one full share, for closing readings and*
98 *announcements.* If you do not, your meeting will constantly run late, which can become
99 problematic.

100 **If there is a newcomer** and it is their first A.A. meeting, or there are several
101 participants in the first days, our usual practice (for topic meetings) is to make the topic
102 Step 1 and Tradition 3. Ensure the newcomer knows the First Step—state it clearly or
103 ask someone to read it aloud. Sometimes it's appropriate to read the first couple pages
104 of More about Alcoholism (also linked to from the any-lengths.com main page) to get
105 a First Step meeting started. The newcomer may feel nervous at their first meeting, so
106 bear in mind that we want to avoid putting the spotlight on them. We want them to feel
107 comfortable. Welcome them and allow them to have their own experience during the
108 meeting. Keep in mind also (and you may need to remind the Group) that addressing
109 someone personally too much during shares, giving direct advice, and minimizing
110 cross-talk. We also suggest they attend our "**Steps 1, 2, and 3**" meeting on
111 Wednesdays.

112 **Communicate with others on the service team** during the meeting. It helps to be
113 familiar with what the people in those service positions are responsible for. If you have
114 not served in those roles, you may want to download and read the Daily Service
115 Positions PDF (available on the any-lengths.com main page). For instance, will you
116 want a special Step 1 or maybe an additional reading at the end of the meeting? If so,
117 verbally tell or private-chat this to your Screen Sharer in advance so they can have it
118 ready. And do not be afraid to private-chat with others (even people not on your service
119 team) if you need something during the meeting. *Do not try to do it all yourself;*
120 *everyone in the room wants to help. Let them be of service if you have a need.*

121 **Always arrive early** so you know that your service team members have made it to the
122 meeting while you still have time to sort things out—20 minutes early is a good time.
123 Work with other Group members before the meeting to make sure any empty service
124 positions are filled for the day. If someone drops or does not show up, work with others
125 in the room to get these positions filled.

126 As a meeting Chairperson, you are expected to attend the monthly business meeting
127 while you are serving so that Group Conscience decisions can be communicated and so
128 that you will know what they are.

129 If someone is having audio technical difficulties, you can:

- 130 1. Suggest that they turn off video while speaking to make sure all their available
131 bandwidth is devoted to audio; suggest that they turn their video back on after
132 sharing.
- 133 2. Move on to another speaker and promise to come back later.
- 134 3. Suggest that they leave the room and come back (provided the meeting is not
135 currently locked).

136 Finally, you are not expected to be a clone of any other Chairpersons. Follow the script
137 and keep true to the intent to have a good A.A. meeting, and all will be wonderful.

138 Thank you very much for being of service to the Any-Lengths Online Group of Alcoholics
139 Anonymous!