

Dear All

Thanks to all who voted your conscience regarding the options on how to run the 55th Alcoholics Anonymous General Service Conference, originally scheduled for April of this year.

As the Steering Committee for Conference we're committed to maintaining the Service, Unity and Recovery of the Fellowship.

The pandemic caused by COVID-19 has had an unprecedented impact across the country and we're grateful for your continued support as we plan how best to fulfil Conference requirements, whilst protecting everyone's safety.

We're writing to you today

- to confirm the outcome of the vote,
- to update you on our plans for running the 2020 Conference, and
- to advise you of our contingency plan, should the pandemic continue to require social distancing into 2021.

Vote

The General Service Office (GSO) contacted the 91 Conference delegates and asked them to choose between a) rolling the 2020 Conference over into April 2021 or b) holding a virtual Conference in October. The result of the vote was

- 53 - in favour of rolling Conference over to April 2021
- 26 - in favour of a virtual Conference
- 12 - abstentions.

Running Conference

Thanks again. This gives us a clear mandate for planning Conference 2020.

We're now planning on the basis that we'll run the 2020 Conference during the dates set aside for the 2021 Conference. We're also looking at whether we can fulfil Conference requirements - Conference questions; Board Updates to the Fellowship; literature & video approval - for both 2020 and 2021 Conferences at the same time. As we do this we're receiving guidance from the GSO to make sure that we continue to operate within our authority. We'll seek approval from you on any further decisions which require delegate approval.

One of the key activities for the General Service Conference is to answer Conference questions. We're currently looking at whether Conference can address questions for both 2020 and 2021 at the same time. With this in mind, we'd ask for your support, and for you to work with your regions, to keep questions submitted for 2021 Conference to a minimum. This will give us a better chance of being able to fulfil Conference requirements without having to organise two separate Conferences in 2021.

Contingency Planning

While we hope that we're all able to come together in York in April next year we must consider the possibility that the impact of COVID-19 will prevent this. We'll continue to monitor the situation and follow government guidance. If it becomes clear that it won't be possible to hold Conference in York in April 2021 then we'll revisit the feasibility of a virtual Conference. There are examples of this having been run by AA in other countries and we're confident that this is something we can organise successfully. If restrictions continue we'd expect to make a decision on this at some point in January.

We'll continue to keep you informed as we make progress with our planning.

Yours in service.

General Service Conference Steering Committee