

SETA Web Guidelines
presented to Area 67 and approved October 2019

1. Background

In 2009 an ad-hoc committee was established to draft and propose guidelines that “address any and all SETA electronically posted and transferred information.” Over the course of yrs 2009 and 2010 the committee reviewed existing SETA guidelines and GSO’s “Guidelines for Internet (MG-18)”. Recommendations have been presented to the Assembly in workshop format on several occasions, resulting in the ratification of the job description for the IT Committee Chair and several “guidelines” recommendations which had yet to be approved.

With the election of a new Chair to the IT committee, and as the ad-hoc committee had already spent a considerable amount of time on this task, the ad-hoc committee was disbanded and their work was passed on to the IT Committee for further review and finalization. Upon review, the IT committee determined that the “guidelines” task should be broken down into smaller sections and addressed over the course of year 2011 with the intention of being able to provide an IT Guidelines booklet going into year 2012.

In 2019 a website migration to WordPress enhanced the functionality of the website and allowed “restricted” or password protected access to “confidential” content, i.e. content that may contain full names or personal contact information. Amendments to the original “prohibited content” section were necessary to allow this by adding a “restricted content” section. Additionally, the committee determined that updates to the “domain naming and registration” section were needed to provide better continuity of service and allow changes aligned with best practices which may need to be updated from time to time. Some other minor changes to remove redundancy, align numbering and reformat the document were also included in this amendment.

This proposal presents the Web portion of such guidelines to the Area Assembly for approval and adoption.

2. Proposal

Move that Area 67 adopt the content of **Section 3**¹, as amended in 2019, in its entirety as recommended guidelines pertaining to the Web:

¹ **Note: The appendices that appear at the end of this document are not part of the formal motion but are intended to be supplemental information only and may be updated from time to time as allowed in the formally approved portion of the document.**

3. Website

This section provides guidance with respect to the SETA Website, including purpose, maintenance and administration, content, and submittal.

Responsibility for SETA website falls under the purview of the SETA IT Committee's Webmaster officer.

a. Purpose

- i. The purpose of the website shall be to assist the Southeast Texas Area (SETA) in the execution of its mission by facilitating the exchange of information about A.A. activity within Area 67 and the general service structure within which it resides. It is intended to be a communication tool for those involved in General Service within the Southeast Texas Area as well as to provide the individual A.A. member with information about our General Services and Area 67 related A.A. activities.

b. Content

i. Allowable Content

1. All posted material shall strictly adhere to A.A.'s 12 Traditions and 12 Concepts and should be in accordance with guidelines provided by GSO (i.e. MG-18) and by the SETA IT Committee.
2. Content should be related to information as outlined in the SETA Website Purpose statement.
3. SETA financial information (including treasurer's reports, budgets, year-end statements, etc.) may be posted on the SETA website so long as it does not contain any personally identifying information or sensitive information such as account numbers.
4. Events occurring at clubs should be clearly sponsored by an A.A. entity.
5. Only SETA position-based e-mail addresses (or similar generic addresses from other A.A. service entities) shall be allowed as content visible on the SETA Website.

ii. Prohibited Content

1. Fundraising Information

2. There shall be no content such as third-party advertising or affiliation programs displayed in the SETA website.
3. Meetings, events, or announcements sponsored by non A.A. entities.
4. Obscene or similarly objectionable material.
5. Advertising or content that appears to imply affiliation and/or endorsement of outside organizations.

iii. Restricted Content

1. Personally identifying information such as personal phone numbers, personal e-mail addresses, last names, etc. must be password protected to limit access to logged in members, otherwise it is prohibited.

iv. Standard Page Features

All pages of the SETA Website shall have the following common features available on them:

1. Date of last update for the current page.
2. Copyright notice.
3. A link back to the SETA home page.
4. A link to the Webmaster so that users may report errors and/or broken links.
5. A link to the SETA Contact page.
6. The following disclaimer:

This page is part of the "Official" Website of the Southeast Texas Area of Alcoholics Anonymous, Area 67. This site is not endorsed nor approved by Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. or any Internet service provider. It is an AA service solely provided by the Southeast Texas Area Assembly. Links to web pages external to this site and event notices for non-SETA events are supplied for information only and do not imply any affiliation with the Southeast Texas Area Assembly or Alcoholics Anonymous. No copyrighted material shall be purposefully posted herein without the express permission of those individuals or institutions possessing ownership of said copyrights. Alcoholics Anonymous®, AA®, and the Big Book® are registered trademarks of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. The Grapevine®, and AA Grapevine® are registered trademarks of The AA Grapevine, Inc.

v. Copyright

As with any other entity, private or public, A.A. is bound by US and International Copyright Law. Therefore, it is SETA policy to avoid posting or publishing material for which SETA, itself, does not own the copyright or have permission.

This applies, too, to A.A.'s printed and online literature. Permission must be obtained from G.S.O. prior to including A.A.W.S. or A.A. Grapevine and La Vina material.

G.S.O. has, however, graciously provided blanket authorization to quote short phrases, sentences, or brief paragraphs as long as the following credit line appears:

"Reprinted from (name of publication, page number), with permission of A.A. World Services, Inc."

Items that are currently available online elsewhere should be linked to, rather than quoted or embedded.

vi. Files

It is frequently convenient to upload files to the website rather than create HTML content. Examples of such files may consist of fliers, minutes, newsletters, financial information, job descriptions, maps, and more.

1. Uploaded files should be of a file format that is freely accessible to all. Whenever possible, files uploaded to the server should be either Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) or images (.jpg, .png, etc.).
2. Files should be linked in such a way so that, when clicked on, they are opened up in a new page/tab rather than the existing window of the SETA website.
3. Files should be cleansed of meta-data. A number of common file formats support embedded data such as personally identifying information and/or location data and applications frequently add this information automatically. Prior to posting, such files should be "cleansed" to eliminate this sort of meta-data so as to ensure members' personal anonymity and confidentiality.

vii. External Links

1. The SETA Website will provide links to other A.A. service entity websites provided they comply with A.A. Tradition and the GSO Internet Guidelines. Some effort should be made to verify that these websites should not include advertising or affiliation with non-A.A. entities. It is acknowledged, however, that policing of such a policy is next to impossible and the external link disclaimer described in section 3, below, should serve to clarify SETA's non-endorsement of such websites.
2. Websites having links to mapping programs which may include imbedded advertising do not imply affiliation. The AA-SETA.org website will continue to provide links to hotels or other facilities where Area events are being hosted.
3. External links should have the following disclaimer/exit statement attached in a form that must be acknowledged by the user, such as a pop-up dialog box or intermediate page:

“ATTENTION – You are now leaving the AA-SETA.org website – We have provided this link to facilitate information about local AA activities. Our links do not constitute or indicate review, endorsement, or approval. Thank you for visiting the AA-SETA.org website. We appreciate your interest and hope that you have found the information you were seeking.”

4. External links should open up a new window/tab rather than in the same window as the SETA website

viii. Accessibility

It is a goal that the SETA Website be available to the largest audience possible. This includes individuals with special needs, those who speak other languages, and those who access the site via alternative devices.

1. Efforts should be made to adhere to industry standards regarding accessibility.
2. Efforts should be made to provide appropriately multi-lingual content.
3. The website should render effectively in most web browsers and should also be accessible via mobile devices.

c. Authorization of Website Modifications

i. The IT Committee has established a "Review Panel" made up of members appointed by the IT Committee Chair and dedicated to the review of proposed website content changes to ensure adherence to the 12 Traditions and to these Guidelines.

1. This was deemed necessary for the following reasons:

- a. To minimize the likelihood of human error by providing "another set of eyeballs" to the review process.
- b. To provide guidance to an acting Webmaster who may not yet be very familiar with A.A.'s 12 Traditions, 12 Concepts, and these Guidelines.
- c. Having a "review panel" can ensure a timely turn-around in that requests are submitted to the entire panel but it only takes approval of a single panel member to authorize a post. This should ensure quick turnaround and eliminate possible delays that might occur due to a reviewer being unavailable.

2. The IT Review Panel shall consist of a subset of IT Committee members who are well versed in the 12 Traditions, 12 Concepts, and the SETA IT Guidelines.

3. The IT Review Panel shall also provide guidance to SETA as a whole in other matters concerning the Area's use of Information Technology and how such use is congruent with A.A. Tradition.

ii. To facilitate timely turnaround, there are several levels at which various types of changes may be authorized:

1. Webmaster:

- a. At-will technical and coding changes at his/her discretion so long as such modifications do not impact software architecture, operational costs, and/or contractual agreements.
- b. At-will content changes to ensure the timeliness, accuracy, and clarity of published information; to improve special needs and multilingual accessibility; and to improve the website styling and layout.

- c. Routine content modifications such as the posting of fliers, announcements, agendas, minutes, financials, etc. However, such updates should be reviewed by the Review Panel to ensure adherence to A.A. Traditions and these Guidelines.
This review may occur before or after posting at the Webmaster's discretion.
 - d. The Webmaster is further charged with the implementation of such changes as outlined in the following sections.
2. Website Section "Owners" (e.g. DCMs, Committee Chairs, and Area Officers): As the SETA Website is divided up into a variety of sections which correspond to different entities within SETA, these section "owners" are authorized to request **whatever** changes they might like within their respective pages. Such changes should be within A.A. Traditions, deemed technically feasible by the Webmaster and/or IT Committee, be approved by the IT Review Panel, and should not conflict with the existing look and feel of the site².
 3. SETA IT Committee: The IT Committee as a whole is authorized to make structural, design, functional, and architectural changes to the website as long as such modifications are within A.A. Traditions and do not impact the operational cost or require contractual changes with our service providers. The IT Committee will assume the right of decision as to whether such change is large enough in scope to require Area approval.
 4. SETA IT Chair: The IT Committee Chair shall be authorized to make any change necessary to address an emergency situation that may occur with respect to the SETA Website. Pending stabilization of the system, such modifications should be reviewed by the IT Committee and brought to the Area Assembly, if necessary.
 5. Area Assembly: Assembly approval is required for the implementation of any changes that impact the normal cost of website operations and/or contractual agreements. Such modifications might consist, for example, of adding additional domain name registrations, increasing storage space, changing hosting/service providers, etc. Furthermore, Assembly approval is required for the implementation of any changes outside the scope of these Guidelines. Any modifications that may affect A.A. as a whole must also have Assembly approval.

² Look and Feel includes (but is not limited to) such items as Font, Color scheme, Header, Footer, Menus, common content (e.g. Area approved job descriptions on each Officer, Committee, and District page), etc.

d. Submittal of Content & Change Requests i. Authorized Contributors

1. Content will be accepted for posting only from voting members of the Assembly and must be representative of those they serve (e.g. GSR's may submit events sponsored by their group; DCM's events sponsored by the district or groups within their district; Committee Chairs events sponsored by their committee.)

ii. Submittal Process

1. The IT Committee shall document, publish, and implement a process by which authorized contributors may submit website change requests.
2. The IT Committee shall also publish a list of guidelines and reminders that, if followed, should improve the likelihood and timeliness with which a change request may be implemented.

e. Domain name & registration, hosting services, and continuity of service

i. The current domain name in use by SETA is aa-seta.org.

ii. All SETA domain names shall be registered in the name of the Southeast Texas Area Assembly.

iii. Domain registrations must use private registration or similar services to protect the anonymity of our members at the public level in alignment with the 11th Tradition.

iv. The IT Committee shall document, publish and implement a service continuity process for SETA domain registration, web, and e-mail hosting services to assure continuity of SETA's IT Services. Such a process may include Non-SETA e-mail accounts (with multiple recovery options), password vaults or similar account and password recovery options to protect against loss of service due to accidental non-payment, loss of account access (through password loss, transition, death, relapse, or any other conceivable reason), or any other risks to continuity of service.

f. Maintenance

i. The SETA Website shall be self-supporting by SETA without receiving services from any source outside the A.A. structure or the A.A. fellowship.

ii. The SETA Website should be developed using currently recognized industry standards. This is necessary to facilitate the widest range of accessibility, to minimize the likelihood of incurring

costs related to proprietary formats and frameworks, and to facilitate the relocation of the website to another hosting provider should the need arise.

- iii. The SETA Website shall be available for review at each quarterly Area Assembly.
- iv. The SETA Website should be accessible from all major web browsers and attempts should also be made to support browsers on mobile devices.
- v. The SETA Website shall be backed up on a quarterly basis for continuity and archival purposes. The IT Committee shall retain such backups for two years, after which, the backups shall be transferred to the SETA Archives.
- vi. In keeping with the 4th tradition of autonomy, the SETA IT Committee shall be responsible solely for the support and maintenance of web resources owned and operated by SETA. SETA IT shall not be responsible for the support and maintenance of external, non-SETA websites such as district, group, and club websites, for example.

4. Appendix A: Submittal Process

(required by SETA Web Guidelines, Section 3.d.ii.1)

- a. A website change request may be submitted by an authorized contributor as described in section (d) of the SETA Web Guidelines. Website change requests shall be submitted to the SETA Webmaster via email or some other form of electronic transmission. In addition to English copy, the contributor should consult with the SETA Multilingual Committee to provide translated versions of the change request.
- b. Upon receipt, and depending on the extent of the requested change, the Webmaster may take one of two actions: a) implement the change and notify the Review Panel of the change; b) forward the request on to the Review Panel.
- c. A member of the Review Panel shall examine either the online change or the content received from the webmaster, as appropriate. A change may have one of three dispositions: a) acceptable as is; b) acceptable with modifications; c) unacceptable. The reviewer can then edit the request and make edits as necessary to eliminate phone numbers, personally identifying information, fundraising information, and the like. The Review Panel may also reject the request.
- d. The Review Panel then responds back to the Webmaster with the edited change request, or else a reason why the change request was rejected.
- e. The Webmaster shall then forward the Review Panel's response on to the original contributor. Approved requests are typically converted to Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) format and then uploaded to the Website and linked appropriately.

5. Appendix B: Submittal Guidelines and Reminders (Required by SETA Web Guidelines, Section 3.d.ii.2)

- a. Remember the 5 Ws: Who, What, When, Why, and Where. Make sure you include the full date & time of your event. Don't forget to include the full street address and zip code. Remember - many people will want to use their GPS to get to your event.
- b. Only electronic content will be accepted. Microsoft Word (.doc) documents are the preferred format as the IT Review Panel may need to edit your document.
- c. Priority will be given to requests submitted from a SETA position-based email address.
- d. Before sending information, remove last names, personal phone numbers, email addresses, and home addresses from any content that will not be restricted to only SETA members logged into the website.
- e. Whenever possible, both English and Spanish versions of content should be submitted. The SETA Multilingual Committee is available to perform translations.
- f. Send it as soon as you create it. Once a file is linked on the site, it is fairly easy to replace or to update it.
- g. Don't expect your file to get on the website in less than a week.
- h. The website search page only searches web pages on the SETA website. MS Word (.doc) and Adobe (.pdf) formats are viewable on the site, but not searchable.
- i. Don't be afraid to ask questions. We are here to help. Contact us at webmaster@aa-seta.org.
- j. No copyrighted material shall be posted.

6. Appendix C: Resources and References

The following documents were reviewed and considered during the drafting of the above guidelines. The content of these documents is available on the IT Committee page of the SETA Website at <http://www.aa-seta.org/itpolicy/>.

- a. (A) July 12, 1997 – Memo from Area Secretary and Records Committee to Finance Committee Chairman
- b. (B) January 6, 1998 – Memo from ad hoc Committee on Computers to SETA Chair regarding results of committee meeting
- c. (C) April 1, 2008 – ad hoc Committee on IT Guidelines
- d. (D) April 12, 2008 – IT Workshop
- e. (E) July 2008 – SETA IT Chair Job Description
- f. (F) October 2, 2010 – ad hoc ET committee workshop – General IT Guidelines
- g. (G) October 2, 2010 – ad hoc ET committee workshop – Guidelines for Website Submittal
- h. (H) June 2008 – GSO AA Guidelines (MG-18)
- i. (I) July 2012– SETA Website Guidelines (currently posted on [aa-seta.org](http://www.aa-seta.org)).