

# *Oxford House*<sup>TM</sup>

## *World Council Manual<sup>©</sup>*

*"Working Together to Foster Recovery by Keeping  
Oxford House True to Its Purpose and Mission"*



*Commemorative Edition*

*26<sup>th</sup> Annual Oxford House*

*World Convention*

**"Count Blessings, Not Grievances."**

-Paul Molloy

Gaylord National Harbor  
National Harbor, Maryland

August 28 – 31, 2024

Oxford Houses are a network of self-run, self-supported recovery houses for individuals recovering from substance use disorder. Each Oxford House is autonomous and holds a weekly democratic house meeting to ensure the smooth operation and financial viability of the house. Local Oxford Houses join together in mutually supportive chapters and annually elect members of a World Council to ensure the continuity of the purpose and mission of Oxford House as a whole.

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The Oxford House World Council continues to stay connected to the network of Oxford Houses globally and is constantly looking for ways to assist and encourage Oxford Houses, Chapters, and Associations to maintain stability and integrity. If you find any errors or have suggestions of ways and means to improve the Oxford House organizations, its manuals, or the forms, let the World Council know. Email: [info@oxfordhouse.org](mailto:info@oxfordhouse.org), [wc\\_chair@oxfordhouse.us](mailto:wc_chair@oxfordhouse.us)

# Oxford House World Council

## Introduction

The primary purpose of the Oxford House World Council is to ensure that all Oxford Houses™ and Oxford House as a whole operate in a way consistent with the Oxford House traditions and system of operations described in the Oxford House Manual©. To achieve that purpose, the World Council serves as an advisory council. It utilizes all levels of Oxford House organization – houses, chapters, state associations, and Oxford House, Inc. As an advisory council, it identifies problems, develops solutions, and makes suggestions to all levels of the organization. The World Council Chairperson is also an ex officio member of the Board of Oxford House, Inc. – the umbrella 501(c)(3) organization for all of Oxford House.

The World Council, which started in 1997, meets regularly to ensure that the self-help legacy of Oxford House is forever secure by keeping the concept, traditions, and system of operations up-to-date and relevant for the members and alumni of Oxford House. This manual describes how the Oxford House World Council is elected and how it is operated and organized.

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**Oxford House World Council**

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**Many Houses. One World**

# *Principles*

The role of the Oxford House World Council is  
Grounded in five fundamental principles:

- Oxford Houses must be self-run and self-supporting.
- Peer coordination and direction of Oxford House at all levels is best assured with oversight by an elected, geographically balanced World Council.
- House members and alumni sharing experiences can provide the best practices to preserve the integrity and foster the expansion of the network of individual Oxford Houses.
- Vigilance in adhering to Oxford House Traditions should be maintained through established practices and procedures across the organization.
- Financial support to expand the network of Oxford Houses must be directed to expansion without compromising the Oxford House concept and the disciplined, democratic, and self-supporting foundation of Oxford House.

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# The Role of the World Council

The unique character of Oxford House is twofold: [1] all homes are rented – not owned – single-family houses, and [2] the disciplined, time-tested, democratically run, and financially self-supported system of operation. These unique characteristics require vigilant review and affirmative action to avoid corruption of the concept or system of operation.

The World Council is made up of both house members and alumni members of Oxford Houses who are elected by their peers. Electing members to staggered three-year terms of office assures continuity of the 12-member World Council. In theory, at least two-thirds of the Council has experience, and experience has validated the theory.<sup>1</sup> Requiring that all House Members and House Member Alternates be from different states and requiring all Alumni Members and Alumni Member Alternates to be from different states assures that the Council represents the entire Oxford House organization and discourages domination by single-state or local interests.

While Oxford House's central office – the operating arm of Oxford House, Inc.– has the sole authority to grant Oxford House charters, the World Council may assist OHI and the local Oxford House network to ensure Oxford Houses are composed of good houses in good neighborhoods. This activity runs the gambit from guidelines to select good houses to rent to procedures that assure expansion and correct application of the methods of the Oxford House Manual<sup>®</sup> and Oxford House Chapter Manual<sup>®</sup>.

The World Council meets regularly and organizes itself into several committees to focus on all the different subjects that enable Oxford House to expand without diminishing quality operations at all levels of the organization. Each committee reaches out to other Oxford House members and alumni, knowing that good ideas, skills, and hard work are available throughout the growing network of Oxford Houses.

The primary principle driving the mission of the World Council is preserving the character of Oxford House, which is the hallmark of its success in helping recovering alcoholics and drug addicts help each other to become comfortable enough in recovery to avoid use recurrence.

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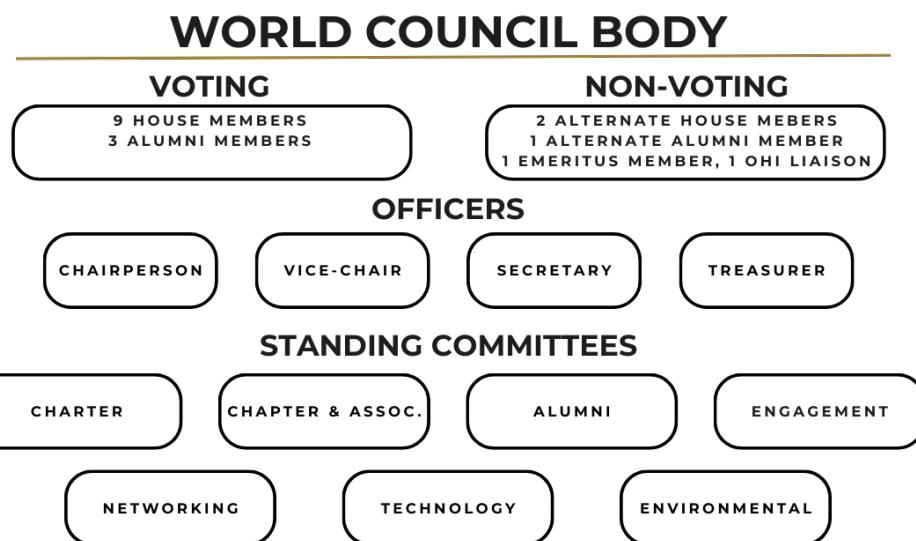
## ***Oxford House Has Unique Characteristics Worth Preserving.***

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<sup>1</sup> Since membership in the World Council is conditioned upon the maintenance of absolute sobriety, it is possible that members will sometimes be asked to resign. Moreover, sometimes, an elected member may resign because of other circumstances in his or her life. Each year, the Convention elects alternate members who fill such vacancies if they occur.

# Structure of World Council

Democracy underlies Oxford House from the bottom to the top. The World Council is elected at the annual Oxford House Convention of members and alumni. Its membership is, by rule, divided between house members [9] and alumni members [3] and has no more than one representative from a state or foreign country. At least three [3] house members and one [1] alumni member are elected yearly for staggered three-year terms to assure continuity on the Council. The Oxford House World Council is the nerve system for keeping the entire Oxford House Network of Houses on track and expanding as quickly as possible. Its members reach out to identify problems or opportunities and to recommend solutions and resolutions to solve problems or to take advantage of opportunities. The following diagram shows the World Council's structure.



*World Council makes suggestions but does not exercise control over the operations of Oxford House, Inc.*

The Oxford House World Council comprises two types of members: house members and alumni members - elected at the Annual Oxford House World Convention. In addition, the Council has one Emeritus Member: James McClain – a member of the original World Council in 1997.<sup>2</sup> A liaison is also part of the World Council. This nonvoting position is an Oxford House, Inc. employee and is assigned by the CEO. The role of the liaison is to provide a direct link between the World Council and Oxford House, Inc., ensuring effective and timely communication and collaboration.

<sup>2</sup> There is only one Emeritus member of the World Council because the primary driver in Oxford House is the democratic election of house members or alumni to effectively represent all Oxford Houses. James McClain's unique position as an original World Council member is intended to provide leadership and training to subsequent Council members.

# Officers and Meetings

The Oxford House World Council meets in person twice a year – once at the Annual World Convention and one additional time during the year. The Council members meet remotely every two months via telephone or video conference. Each member of the Council has one vote, and they use parliamentary procedures like the methods used in house and chapter meetings.

Officers elected from among the members of the World Council include the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer. A Committee chair is elected for the seven [7] standing committees: Charter, Chapters & Associations, Alumni, Engagement, Networking, Technology and Environmental. The officers focus on keeping the workload of the Council on track, and the Committee Chairpersons try to involve others in the Oxford House family in the committee work. Democratic and parliamentary procedures are followed in each World Council meeting and its standing and special committees.

- The **Chairperson** leads each of the scheduled meetings and other meetings the Council may have during the year. He or she may be an ex-officio member of all the Committees authorized by the Council and have an equal vote on both the Council and Committees. Whenever the Chairperson is not available for a meeting, the **Vice-Chairperson** takes over.
- The **Secretary** is responsible for taking minutes during each council meeting, transcribing the minutes, and distributing them to all Council members and the Oxford House Central Office within one week of each meeting. Council members should be notified of any meeting at least two days in advance, except when members are present at the same location, when shorter notice may be given.
- The **Treasurer** establishes a checking account for the World Council. Oxford House, Inc. ensures the checkbook is secure and assigns and monitors any active signers for the account. In advance of each Council meeting, the Treasurer should e-mail a financial report to all members reflecting the balance in the checking account and list of unpaid bills as accounts payable for the Council. The Treasurer's report should be part of every Council meeting. Funding of the World Council should be sufficient to publish and distribute periodic newsletters and to fund the semi-annual face-to-face meetings of Council members.

# Standing Committees

At the first regular meeting of the Council following the Annual Oxford House World Convention, a chairperson and vice chair should be elected for each of the following standing committees:

## Engagement Committee

The Oxford House Member Engagement Committee fosters collaboration, communication, and unity among Oxford House members globally. This committee serves as a vital link between members and the World Council, ensuring that the voices, needs, and perspectives of Oxford House members are not just heard but also considered in the decision-making process. The committee will encourage active participation, feedback, and contributions from Oxford House members and alumni through strategic engagement initiatives. The committee will promote a culture of inclusivity, empowerment, and accountability within the Oxford House network, ensuring that every member's voice is valued and heard.

Duties:

- Foster collaboration, communication, and unity among Oxford House members and Oxford House World Council globally.
- Make the annual Oxford House World Convention successful by actively recruiting local house delegates.
- Developing and screening resolutions for consideration.
- Facilitate the creation of a periodic newsletter.

## Charter Committee

The Oxford House World Council Charter Committee is dedicated to ensuring the strength and integrity of the Oxford House network through the responsible chartering of houses. The Charter Committee is comprised of members and alumni from across the national network. This diverse group ensures a well-rounded understanding of the needs and challenges faced by houses in different regions. Benefits of a Strong Charter System include:

- *Improved Recovery Outcomes:* Adherence to Oxford House principles fosters a safe and supportive environment conducive to long-term recovery.
- *Network Strength and Unity:* A unified network operating under consistent standards strengthens the overall effectiveness of Oxford House.
- *Public Trust and Credibility:* A strong chartering system reinforces the public's trust in the Oxford House model.

Duties:

- *Support New and Existing Houses:* Guide houses through obtaining conditional and permanent charters from Oxford House, Inc. (OHI). This includes providing resources, answering questions, and ensuring houses meet all charter requirements.
- *Promote Charter Education:* Collaborate with chapters and local networks to educate houses on the importance of adhering to Oxford House principles and charter conditions, including the timely transition from conditional to permanent charters.
- *Maintain Standards:* Support chapters investigating potential charter violations and work collaboratively to address and report any issues that may arise to OHI.

## **Chapters & Associations Committee**

The Oxford House World Council Chapter & Association Committee strengthens the network by fostering collaboration and growth within chapters and state/regional associations. The committee will develop and share resources for chapter and association leadership, including best practices and training materials. Facilitate communication and collaboration between chapters and associations across the country. The committee, being a steward of Tradition 5, will maintain a focus on protecting the autonomy of Oxford Houses and reporting any concerns to Oxford House, Inc. (OHI)

Benefits of a Strong Chapter & Association Network:

- *Enhanced Support for Houses:* Chapters and associations provide a vital support network for individual houses, fostering a more robust overall network.
- *Increased Growth and Expansion:* Effective chapter and association leadership facilitates the creation of new Oxford Houses.
- *Empowered Members:* Ongoing education and training equip members to be more effective in servant leadership and in advocating for recovery within their communities.

Duties:

- *Support & Empower Chapters & Associations:* Provide guidance and resources to chapters and state/regional associations, assisting them in effectively serving their local Oxford House communities.
- *Promote New Chapter Formation:* Actively support the creation of new chapters, ensuring they have the tools and knowledge to thrive.
- *Advocate for Continued Education & Training:* Support ongoing educational opportunities for chapters and associations, focusing on the importance of Oxford House principles and effective standard practices.
- *Support Statewide Events:* Collaborate with chapters, associations, and OHI to plan and execute impactful statewide events that promote unity and training for all members and keep a

schedule of statewide events.

- *Express Appreciation and Recognition:* Celebrate the achievements of chapters and associations.

### **Alumni Committee**

The Oxford House World Council Alumni Committee is dedicated to fostering a vibrant and engaged alumni community that strengthens the overall network. We encourage alumni to stay connected with Oxford House at the local and national levels, providing opportunities for continued involvement and support of the Oxford House Model. The committee will promote alumni registration with Oxford House, Inc., fostering a sense of national unity and facilitating communication across regions. This committee will learn from and support existing alumni associations, offering resources and guidance to strengthen their efforts.

The committee will actively encourage establishing new alumni associations, expanding the network's reach and impact. The committee will explore innovative ways to ensure all alumni feel welcome and have opportunities to contribute their unique talents and experiences to the Oxford House model and facilitate the creation of programs and events that promote fellowship and a sense of unity among alumni across the country. The Alumni Committee honors Tradition 9, playing a crucial role in harnessing friendship, support, and example.

Duties:

- Develop and implement strategies to encourage local alumni participation in Oxford House activities.
- Promote national alumni registration through targeted outreach campaigns.
- Collaborate with existing alumni associations, sharing best practices and providing support.
- Offer guidance and resources to facilitate the formation of new alumni associations.
- Explore initiatives to promote inclusivity and diverse alumni involvement.
- With the encouragement and support of OHI, organize national events and programs that foster connections and build a strong sense of community among alumni.

### **Networking Committee**

The Oxford House World Council Networking Committee is dedicated to expanding Oxford House's reach and impact by building solid relationships with other peer-led and peer-driven recovery communities. The committee will honor and respect the Oxford House Traditions, and any traditions or principles implemented by other recovery communities.

The committee will establish connections with non-professional peer recovery groups, mutual aid support programs, and collegiate recovery student organizations. The committee will actively participate in recovery events, sharing information about Oxford House and fostering a spirit of

collaboration within the broader recovery landscape. The committee will encourage Oxford House members to actively participate in their personal recovery journeys. We identify collegiate recovery groups and organizations, working collaboratively to support the expansion of new Oxford Houses near campuses and supporting student enrollment within Oxford House. The committee will collaborate closely with Oxford House, Inc. to ensure consistent messaging and access to appropriate materials when engaging with external recovery communities. By building bridges with other recovery communities, the Networking Committee is vital in attracting new members, expanding access to Oxford House, and strengthening the recovery ecosystem.

Duties:

- Develop and implement strategies to connect with non-professional peer recovery groups and mutual aid support programs.
- Gain a solid understanding of the most common recovery programs and their methodologies.
- Represent Oxford House at relevant recovery events, disseminating information and fostering collaboration.
- Advocate for Oxford House membership as a valuable component of personal recovery journeys.
- Identify collegiate recovery groups and student organizations, exploring opportunities for collaboration.
- Continue to review the traditions and principles of Oxford House and other recovery communities to maintain integrity.

## **Environmental Committee**

The Oxford House World Council Environmental Committee is dedicated to fostering environmental responsibility and enhancing the network's resilience in the face of natural disasters. The committee will champion initiatives focused on going green, sustainability, and conservation, while also developing strategies for emergency preparedness and response. This includes promoting practices that reduce the network's ecological footprint and ensuring comprehensive support for Oxford Houses impacted by national disasters, fires, floods, ice storms, hurricanes, and tornadoes. The committee will collaborate with chapters, associations, and regions to educate members on the importance of environmental stewardship, conservation efforts, and emergency protocols, equipping houses with the knowledge and resources they need to embrace sustainability and navigate potential crises. The committee will also provide guidance and support to areas suffering the loss of livable Oxford Houses due to disasters. By fulfilling these duties, the Environmental Committee plays a vital role in cultivating an environmentally conscious and resilient Oxford House network, where sustainability is a core value and mutual support extends to times of crisis.

Duties:

**Environmental Stewardship:**

- Research and recommend environmentally friendly practices for houses and chapters, promoting resource conservation, energy efficiency, and waste reduction.
- Develop and share educational materials on the benefits of sustainability, conservation, and going green within Oxford House communities.
- Collaborate with Oxford House, Inc. to explore opportunities for implementing national sustainability and conservation initiatives.
- Encourage the adoption of green practices in house operations and maintenance.

**Disaster Preparedness and Support:**

- Develop and share straightforward guidance for houses to create basic emergency plans for different natural disasters (fires, floods, ice storms, hurricanes, tornadoes, etc.).
- Encourage unaffected chapters, associations, and regions to provide support to impacted areas. This could include sharing resources, offering temporary housing options where feasible, or coordinating other forms of assistance.
- Explore connections with local and national organizations that can provide disaster relief and environmental support.

**Technology Committee**

The Oxford House World Council Technology Committee will work with chapters, associations, and regions to educate members on the benefits of relevant software and programs, equipping houses with the tools they need to thrive in the digital age. The committee will assist areas in obtaining and maintaining house computers and other essential hardware, ensuring equitable access to technology across the network. By fulfilling these duties, the Technology Committee plays a critical role in fostering a future-oriented Oxford House network, where technology empowers recovery and sustainability becomes a core value.

Duties:

**Technology Integration:**

- Identify and recommend user-friendly software programs that streamline house operations and communication.
- Collaborate with Oxford House, Inc. (OHI) to develop educational workshops and tutorials on using essential software and technology within the Oxford House model.
- Encourage knowledge-sharing between chapters, associations, and regions on best practices for utilizing technology in recovery support.

**Hardware Support:**

- Assist areas with obtaining house computers and other essential hardware at affordable prices.

- Explore partnerships with technology companies or grant programs to secure discounted equipment for houses in need.
- Establish a system for troubleshooting technical issues.

Membership on the standing committees of the World Council should be geographically diverse. Leaders on the committees should reach out to members and alumni having expertise in the various subject areas examined by the different committees. Accomplishment in most human endeavors depends upon networking. This is also true for recovery. Involving as many individuals as possible expands the network of individuals who can help grow and strengthen the Oxford House movement. Every member of the World Council should make as many contacts with as many individuals as possible. Every contact represents a potential Oxford House good idea, strong supporter, or problem solver.

The committee structure within the World Council helps to focus areas where Oxford House can always use help. It also provides the discipline to solve problem areas effectively or to take advantage of opportunities critical to the existence and expansion of Oxford Houses. More importantly, the World Council committee structure strengthens the grassroots democratic self-help principle, which is crucial to making sure that Oxford House adapts to change without compromising the concept and system of operations that enable recovering individuals to gain the time, peer support, and responsibility essential for long- term recovery.



# World Council Committee Leadership

The Committees of the World Council are the primary link to the national and international Oxford House Network of individual houses, chapters, and state or regional associations. Because Council Committees are the primary link to all parts of the grassroots Oxford House organization, the Chairpersons of each committee must recruit committee members representative of all segments of the Oxford House network of houses.

Some chapters or associations will always be better organized than others, but the well-organized and the less well-organized groups should have representatives on the World Council Committees. How else can the less well-organized be improved? Another difference between various geographic clusters of Oxford Houses is those served by trained outreach workers under the supervision of the Oxford House, Inc. central office and areas where local recovery community members have established houses or have existed without trained outreach workers for many years. These differences should be considered whether collecting information about problem areas or distributing suggested ways to avoid or correct operating problems whenever they occur. Each World Council Committee Chairperson needs to balance committee membership to reflect the different training and support systems underlying Oxford Houses in particular areas. Likewise, suggested solutions should be transmitted in a way that makes certain that all houses have the benefit of the information.

Each time a World Council Committee takes up a problem, it needs first to analyze the nature of the problem and then develop options for solving the problem. The Committee then must decide which option best solves the problem being addressed. Sometimes, several options might be tried to determine which option can work best. The “trial and error” method for determining the best practice has been a hallmark of Oxford House's success and should not be overlooked as a way to achieve a best practice.

Whenever a World Council Committee suggests solutions to problems or new opportunities, it should follow up to make sure that the suggestions are communicated to the entire Oxford House family so that improvements can be implemented. The first step of the two-step process is to bring the proposed solution or options to a meeting of the entire World Council. At that stage, the suggested solution or option can be approved, rejected, or modified. If it is approved or modified, the second step should be to utilize all the assets of the World Council [the membership, all the Committee members, and Oxford House, Inc.] to ensure that information transfer throughout the Oxford House family is effective.

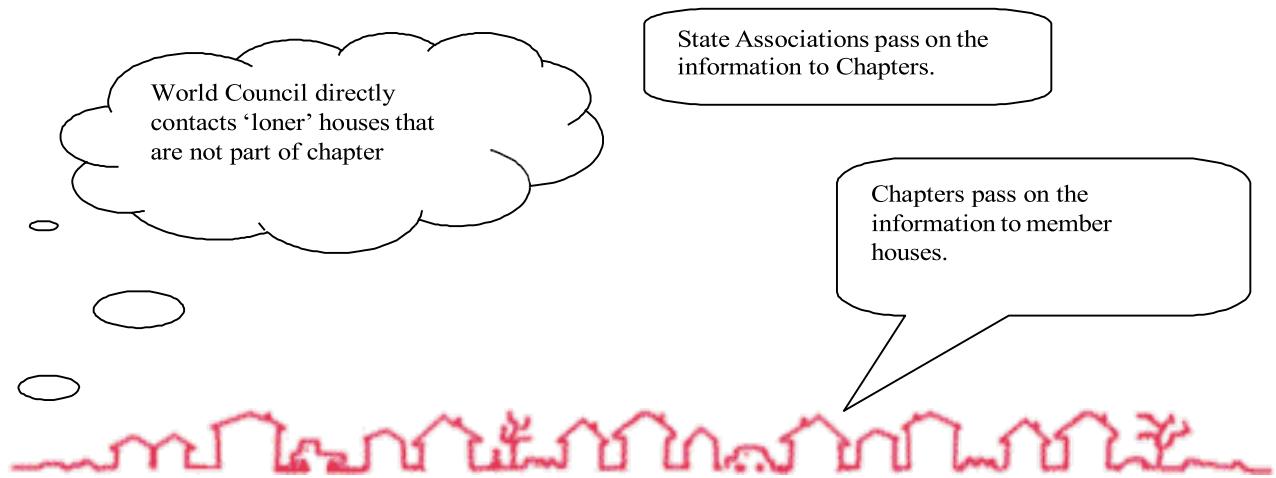
Certain skills help make information transfer effective. The first is to identify an idea. That means the proposal should have a short title that describes its purpose or objective. For example, suppose that the issue involves interviewing recovering individuals who are incarcerated and about to return to society. The suggestion consists in adapting the usual application interview by all house members. Suppose that the Committee recommends that a group of two or three existing house members might interview the incarcerated potential resident and report back to the whole house and that the house might base its approval or rejection on the application and the report by the interview committee. The suggestion should be identified in a way that clearly states its purpose and recommendation. For example, it might

state: Suggested Procedure for Interviewing and Accepting Recovering Incarcerated Individuals. This type of labeling clearly states the purpose of the suggestion. It might include additional information about whether to make accommodation for the upfront money needed to move into a house.

### **Passing On Good Ideas**

The goal of the World Council should be to distribute any agreed-upon proposals or suggestions to all Oxford Houses once those proposals have been reviewed and approved by Oxford House, Inc. All houses should have an e-mail address to simplify distribution – but other devices ranging from notification by posting on the website to articles in newsletters should also be used to make sure that everyone has the benefit of a committee's findings. Sometimes, feedback from houses will uncover weaknesses in an idea, and the appropriate committee should not hesitate to make modifications as needed.

Depending upon the nature of a suggested proposal or corrective action, the Council may choose to utilize chapters or associations to distribute the information to all the individual houses.



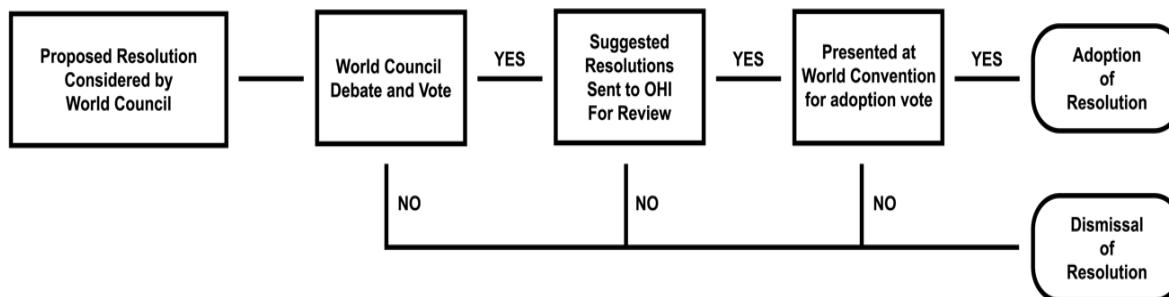
*Working Together to Foster Recovery by Keeping Oxford House  
True to Its Purpose and Mission*

## Promoting and Utilizing the Annual World Convention

The annual Oxford House World Convention provides the forum that gives the World Council its membership. Consequently, members of the World Council must promote and utilize the yearly convention. After all, it is the common ground for the entire Oxford House family and a hallmark of the self-run, self-supported autonomy of Oxford House. Since the first annual Oxford House World Convention in 1999, each convention has proven that “the inmates can run the asylum”. Hundreds of Oxford House members and alumni gather to learn more about addiction and recovery, to share the Oxford House concept and system of operation with others interested in providing people with substance use disorder the opportunity to escape from addiction and to celebrate recovery, friends, and Oxford House.

An essential component of every Oxford House Convention is the election of members to the Oxford House World Council. Candidates representing current house members and alumni are nominated for election and campaign to gain election by their peers. The nomination process creates excitement among convention attendees right from the opening session. Candidates get their petitions signed by delegates of five or more houses from around the country and give campaign speeches before the third general session of the convention. The first eight annual conventions have found a full house. Everyone attends the election speeches and evaluates which candidates will get their votes. Some state delegations aggressively campaign for their favorite son or daughter, and American democracy is demonstrated in its best light. When the votes are counted, one-third of the membership of the World Council has been elected, and the new World Council conducts its first meeting before the convention draws to a close.

The World Council serving at the beginning of the convention performs a vital role by screening resolutions to be voted on by the entire convention. Resolutions from the floor take a 2/3 vote to get it considered. Consequently, individuals or groups wanting a particular resolution should always present it first to the World Council to get it polished and supported by a majority of the Council.



# ***Resolutions***

Active resolutions proposed by the World Council and adopted by Oxford House delegates at each of the World Conventions from 1999 - 2024.

## **Be it Resolved...**

- Houses should voluntarily contribute \$50 per month to Oxford House, Inc. *[Vote 343 to 53]* #1
- The Oxford House family should work with local branches of the National Council on Alcoholism to combat addiction. *[Vote 396 to 0]* #2
- Oxford House Inc. by-laws clearly indicate that only Oxford House Inc. can grant or revoke house charters. *[Vote 372 to 13]* #3
- The federal government should update and reprint the publication “Self-Run, Self-supported Housing for More Effective Recovery from Alcoholism and Drug Addiction.” *[Vote 381 to 0]* #4
- The Board of Directors is encouraged to set up a foundation separate from Oxford House Inc. *[Vote 372 to 13]* #5
- All States that have more than three Oxford House Chapters be encouraged to set up a State Association. *[Vote 342 to 56]* #6
- All Houses should be strongly encouraged to belong to a chapter. *[Vote 355 to 72]* #7
- It is the sense of the Convention that every effort should be made to provide financing for the World Council to meet in person between annual Oxford House World Conventions. *[Vote 407 to 19]* #8
- Each Oxford House having a permanent charter for at least six months shall replicate by having two or more of its residents begin a new Oxford House by renting another house and committing to live in the new house until it has fulfilled the conditions to get a permanent charter. *[Vote 322 to 97]* #9
- Oxford House should be encouraged to establish incarceration committees to work with programs for incarcerated alcoholics and drug addicts. *[Vote 340 to 74]* #10

- Oxford Houses should be encouraged to charge new members a non-refundable move-in or acceptance fee in place of a security/sobriety deposit. [Vote 224 to 117] #11
- Chapters and State Associations encourage houses to provide financial support to the Oxford House, Inc. Central Office [Vote 331 to 4] #12
- The pre-convention Women's Conference to become a permanent part of World Conventions in the Future. [Vote 310 to 6] #13
- The World Council suggests that houses may want to avoid accepting individuals convicted of a sexual offense. The resolution was amended to make certain it is only a suggestion because each House is autonomous. [Vote 268 to 189] #14
- All domain names related to Oxford House should be owned by Oxford House, Inc. to assure the preservation of the good name of Oxford House. [Vote 410 to 4] #15
- Oxford Houses should be considered a “Best Practice” for the therapeutic community and politicians. [Vote 515 to 0] #16
- Oxford House would encourage politicians in all states to reinstate the “Mandatory Revolving Loan Fund.” [Vote 412 to 64] #17
- It is the duty of the secretary of each house to update vacancies on the website once a week for their house. [Vote 539 to 13] #18
- It is strongly suggested that all Oxford House Associations, Chapters, Houses, and Committees use the OxfordHouse.us email system for all Oxford House-related business. [Original 2008 Vote 480 to 22] [AMENDED 2022] #19
- The use of electronic banking shall be limited exclusively to the repayment of revolving loans and/or the monthly donation to Oxford House, Inc. [Vote 550 to 10] #20
- It is encouraged that at any single time, no resident or alumni should be Treasurer of more than one Oxford House entity-House, Chapter, or State Association. [Vote 315 to 23] #21
- It is strongly suggested that each house elect an experienced resident as a housing service representative. [Vote 322 -2] #22
- The organization adopted a State Association Manual, including forms for data collection, based upon final approval of the draft by the World Council. [Vote 364-3] #23
- During September, which is set aside as Recovery Month, we encourage every Oxford House to host open houses for their neighborhood. [Vote 453 – 3] #24
- Houses and chapters should be encouraged to implement Newcomer Orientations for all house newcomers within thirty days. [Vote 486 – 13] #25

- Each Chapter should verify the financial audits of the Chapter member's houses at least once a month, and these audits are retained for a maximum of three years for review. [Vote 600 – 13] #26
- Every State/Regional Associates and Chapters should obtain a PO Box and give the PO Box number to Oxford House, Inc. [Vote 512 –23] #27
- All house members are responsible for answering the phone, and it's the duty of the President to retrieve and respond to voice messages daily and report at the weekly meeting. [Vote 483 - 13] #28
- All houses should conduct interviews with applicants at any time by any means available. [Vote 767- 19] #29
- Members of the house should vote on the issue of “vaping” in houses and each house should establish smoking areas at a minimum safe distance from structures on the property. [Vote 566-132] #30
- Each House should promptly respond to applicants. [Vote 688-9] #31
- In accordance with Tradition 8, the use of social media should be to provide education and share the experience, strength, and hope of Oxford House while remembering principles should be expressed, not personalities. [Vote 754-21] #32
- State/Regional Associations and Chapters are strongly encouraged to have all officer candidates qualify themselves before a vote is held. [Vote 543-108] #33
- Because we are a family and want to avoid isolation, dwelling locks on the outside of individual bedrooms are not to be used. [Vote 769-3] #34
- All residents moving out of Oxford House in good standing register as alumni on the national Oxford website at [www.oxfordhouse.org](http://www.oxfordhouse.org).”[Vote 578-34] #35
- Each Oxford House should be encouraged to adopt the standardized Oxford House Forms, approved and located on the Oxford House national website for purposes of further unification across the Oxford House Network. [Vote 422-87] #36
- In keeping with Oxford House traditions, houses are encouraged to rely on awareness of behaviors during consideration of possible expulsion. [Vote 322-65] #37
- All houses are encouraged to obtain Narcan Opioid overdose Reversal kits and train residents as to use of such kits and conduct a daily wellness check-in with all house members. [Original 2017 Vote 534-88] [AMENDED 2022] #38
- Houses make sure the vacancy update contact person position be filled at all times. [Vote 612 to 18] #39

- State and Regional Associations are encouraged to form Alumni Associations. [Vote 684 to 22] #40
- Chapters include a copy of FEIN in their Chapter Recognition application. [Vote 701 to 12] #41
- The 2020 World Convention be held in Seattle WA and all future conventions not held in the D.C. area to be voted on a minimum of two years in advance. [Vote 688 to 23] #42
- In accordance with Tradition 6 and in order to deter and prevent theft, all Oxford House entities with bank accounts provide monthly audit results to regular business meetings. #43
- It is encouraged to do training specifically for financial security and audits at least twice per year. #44
- In accordance with Oxford House principles of democracy, the houses schedule business meetings to reasonably accommodate all members. #45
- Any Oxford House in operation and in good standing for at least three years prior to the 2019 World Convention should be issued a permanent charter. #46
- The World Council shall study and report to the full membership at the next convention in Seattle, WA, which, if any, of the existing 67 resolutions are obsolete or need to be revised. #47
- It is suggested that all Oxford House entities conduct votes in a properly called meeting with discussions and recorded minutes to ensure the integrity of Parliamentary Procedure and the Democratic Process. #48
- In appreciation of his life of service and as a co-founder of Oxford House, August 3rd will be recognized as Paul Molloy Day. #49
- September 9<sup>th</sup> be recognized as “National Oxford House Alumni Appreciation Day” #50
- All Oxford Houses establish a dedicated home phone for consistent communication and to ensure adherence to Tradition 1. #51

Note: “Votes” are a show of hands, and counting should be considered “best estimates.”

# **Oxford House World Council Bylaws**

The Oxford House World Council is an elected membership subsidiary of Oxford House Inc. [a non-profit Delaware corporation and the §501(c)(3) umbrella organization of all Oxford Houses] whose principal place of business is 1010 Wayne Ave. Suite 300, Silver Spring, MD 20910. The following are bylaws for the Oxford House World Council.

## ***ARTICLE I***

### *Incorporation of Oxford House, Inc. Bylaws*

The bylaws of Oxford House, Inc. are hereby incorporated by reference to Oxford House World Council.

## ***ARTICLE II***

### *Composition of Oxford House World Council*

The Oxford House World Council shall have twelve (12) voting members, with nine (9) house members and three (3) alumni members. Each member shall serve a three-year term of office. In addition, there shall be three alternate council members [two house members and one alumni member], each serving a one-year term of office and determined by the candidate for election to the Council receiving the highest number of votes to the election candidates in the respective class.

## ***ARTICLE III***

### *Election Procedure*

Election of council members and alternates shall be conducted annually at the Oxford House World Convention. Each house in attendance at the convention is entitled to one vote for three house members and one alumni member. Alumni attending the convention can vote for alumni members but not house members. Broad geographic distribution shall be assured for the Council by requiring that all House Council Members and House Alternate Members be from different states. Similarly, all Alumni Council Members and the Alternate Alumni Member shall be from different states.

## ***ARTICLE IV***

### *Member Responsibility*

Council membership is conditioned on the maintenance of sobriety and participation in World Council meetings. Unexcused absences from more than two meetings shall result in termination of membership on the Council. The filling of the vacant position will be determined by the vote count of the current or prior election cycle. A relapse [return to using alcohol and/or drugs] shall result in immediate disqualification from Council membership of a council member or alternate.

***ARTICLE V***  
*Council Offices and Standing Committees*

The council, at its first meeting following the election of new council members, shall elect the following officers for a term to extend until the next annual Oxford House World Convention: Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer. At the following meeting the Council shall elect a chairperson for the following standing committees: Charter, Chapters & Associations, Alumni, Networking, Engagement, and Technology & Environmental. Each committee chairperson may select up to ten committee members, at least two of whom should be council members or alternate council members.

The Chairperson of the Council may establish select committees as he or she may deem to be appropriate. The outgoing Chairperson shall remain on the World Council as a parliamentarian for one year after his or her term of office is complete.

***ARTICLE VI***  
*Coordination with the Oxford House, Inc. Board of Directors*

The Chairperson of the World Council, during his or her term of office, shall also serve as a member of the Oxford House, Inc. Board of Directors. Twenty-five (25) percent of the Oxford House, Inc. Board of Directors shall comprise Oxford House members or alumni members, counting the lifetime alumnus member of the Oxford House, Inc. Board, James McClain. When necessary, because of the number of Oxford House, Inc. Board Directors, the World Council shall by majority vote elect from among its membership one or more representatives in addition to the Chairperson who shall serve during their term of office on the Council.

***ARTICLE VII***  
*Mission of Oxford House World Council*

The primary mission of the Oxford House World Council is to facilitate adherence to Oxford House Traditions, concepts, and system of operation by providing effective means of communication and mission focus between the various organizational structures of Oxford House as a whole. In carrying out its mission, the Council always keeps a focus on expansion of the network of individual Oxford Houses to provide all recovering alcoholics and drug addicts the opportunity to develop comfortable sobriety without relapse. The Oxford House World Council is the guardian of the manuals and traditions.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### *Resolutions Considered at Annual Oxford House World Convention*

The annual Oxford House World Convention, consistent with the bylaws of Oxford House, Inc., and the Oxford House World Council, has the authority to enact resolutions affecting Oxford House policies and procedures. Such resolutions must be approved by a majority vote of the World Council and publicly posted at the Convention at least 24 hours before being presented for vote at a General Session of the Annual World Convention. The World Council shall be guided by the welfare of Oxford House as a whole, taking into account the concepts, traditions, and system of operations of Oxford House.

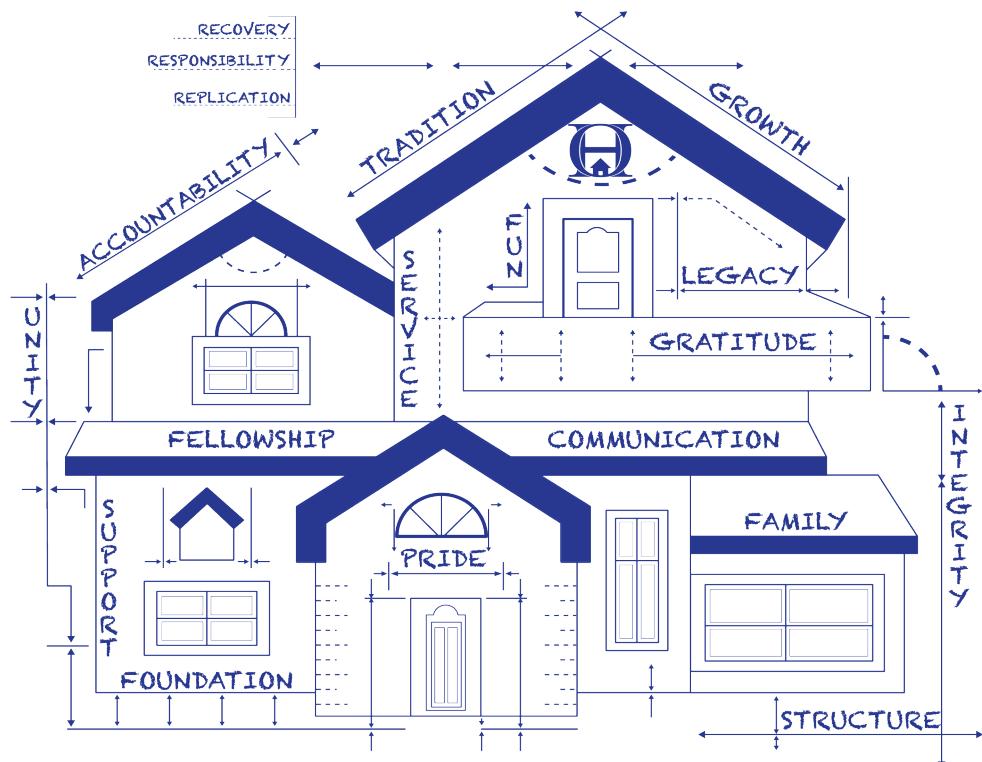
## **ARTICLE IX**

### *Amendment of Bylaws*

The World Council may amend these bylaws by a two-thirds vote at any meeting of the council having a quorum. A quorum shall be at least nine members present at a meeting.

*\*APPROVED THIS SIXTH DAY OF DECEMBER 2000 AT THE 2ND OXFORD HOUSE WORLD CONVENTION*

*\*\*AMENDED THIS 28TH DAY OF APRIL 2025 AT THE WORLD COUNCIL SUMMIT*



# OXFORD HOUSE TRADITIONS

1. Oxford House™ has as its primary goal the provision of housing and rehabilitative support for the alcoholic who wants to stop drinking or using and stay stopped.
2. All Oxford Houses are run on a democratic basis. Our officers are but trusted servants serving continuous periods of no longer than six months in any one office.
3. No Member of an Oxford House™ is ever asked to leave without cause – a dismissal vote by the membership because of drinking, drug using, or disruptive behavior.
4. Oxford House™ is not affiliated with Alcoholics Anonymous, organizationally or financially, but Oxford House members realize that only active participation in Alcoholics Anonymous offers assurance of continued sobriety.
5. Each Oxford House™ should be autonomous except in matters affecting other houses or Oxford House, Inc. as a whole.
6. Each Oxford House™ should be financially self-supporting although financially secure houses may, with approval or encouragement of Oxford House, Inc., provide new or financially needy houses a loan for a term not to exceed one year.
7. Oxford House™ should remain forever non-professional, although individual members may be encouraged to utilize outside professionals whenever such utilization is likely to enhance recovery from alcoholism.
8. Propagation of the Oxford House, Inc. concept should always be conceived as public education rather than promotion. Principles should always be placed before personalities.
9. Members who leave an Oxford House™ in good standing are encouraged to become associate members and offer friendship, support, and example to newer members.

## *Contact Us*

### *Oxford House, Inc.*

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