

Voting and Quorum in Refuge Recovery Business Meetings

Not all members of a Refuge Recovery group are qualified members for voting purposes. All groups in an area should have consistent voting qualifications for Refuge Recovery members. Voting qualifications are based on time attending meetings and time abstinent from substance addiction or process addiction bottom lines. For a member to participate in group level business meeting voting the recommended time attending the meeting is 6 continuous months, while recommended time abstinent is also a minimum of six continuous months.

General Refuge Recovery business meetings have operated on the principle of group unanimity in our voting. This typically requires 65-70% of the quorum to be in favor of a motion for that motion to pass. This does not mean 100% consensus. This also does not mean one person can block any vote. It means that a larger majority than 51% is required to pass motions. In Refuge Recovery, cooperation is assumed, and it is often counterproductive to introduce a main motion before there has been discussion of its subject matter. After every voting member has had a chance to offer input, the intent of the group is usually clearer, and the chair can be of service by attempting to coalesce what he or she has heard into a coherent motion, and ask if anyone will introduce the motion.

This voting method, combined with pre-motion discussion by all voting members present, is the most balanced approach we have found for accomplishing necessary group business while promoting group unity. These methods were presented at the second RR Conference in 2016, and have been practiced successfully in group business meetings, Inter-Sangha meetings and Refuge Recovery service board meetings since that time.

Refuge Recovery Group Business meeting quorums require that the voting officers of the group are present for voting on any motion.

Not all Refuge Recovery meetings in an area will be able to vote at every Inter-Sangha. All Refuge Recovery meetings in an area need to be invited to join local Inter-Sangha. All RR meetings in an area do not need to be a member meeting of the Inter-Sangha for Inter-Sangha to form and to proceed.

Inter-Sangha Membership typically requires:

- That a meeting send a representative to Inter-Sangha for two meetings before voting. Voting requirements require regular attendance by meeting representatives.
- Missing two Inter-Sangha meetings causes a meeting to be unable to vote until they have reinstated themselves by attending two further IS meetings without voting.

Inter-Sangha quorums are based on member groups who fulfill criteria for both membership and voting being present and ready to vote at Inter-Sangha business meetings. Standard practice regarding the establishment of quorum for Inter-Sangha meetings has been that 51% of *qualified* Refuge Recovery group representatives in an area must be present for Inter-Sangha to vote on any motion.