

WHAT KIND OF GROUP?

SELF-HELP GROUP

This sort of group is organised to do exactly what its name suggests: allow people with a similar problem to help each other. Self-help groups usually comprise a few people who meet on a regular basis to give support to each other and help each other with difficulties. Such a group does not need to have a complicated structure, just a few simple organisational rules.

These rules could include such things as:

- ◆ the number of members
- ◆ how to deal with problem members
- ◆ how a membership could be withdrawn
- ◆ how other rules are made
- ◆ the geographical area from which members may come

It might also be useful to have some elected officers such as:

- ◆ Chair
- ◆ Secretary
- ◆ Treasurer

This will establish who is responsible for certain duties of the group such as:

- ◆ speaking on the group's behalf
- ◆ writing letters
- ◆ looking after group funds

If elected officers are needed then some additional rules will be necessary to clarify procedures. These rules should include:

- ◆ how officers are elected
- ◆ who is eligible to vote
- ◆ when the elections take place
- ◆ how many members must be present
- ◆ a bank account in the group's name must be opened
- ◆ cheques must be signed by more than one person

Having agreed these rules and put them down in writing the group will have what is in fact your constitution. A constitution is an agreement between members about what the organisation is for and how it should be run. A set of simple rules under the above headings will be enough for a self-help group to run efficiently and legally.

Links can provide more information, help and advice. Contact us if you need any further assistance

Links believes that this information is correct at the time of publication, however details may change. You are advised to contact Links for the up to date position and seek legal advice where appropriate.

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