

Meeting Finder FAQ

Why are we updating the Meeting Finder?

With more than 72,000 meetings worldwide, we have always been challenged to keep a single database updated and accurate. Linking to local resources ensures better reliability, updated information, and direct access to local contacts.

What kind of system are we going to use?

The new Meeting Finder will use geo-tagging to identify the websites and phonelines of service bodies nearest your search. You will be able to click through to access those local resources and find meetings on their sites.

What is Geo-tagging?

Geo-tagging connects a physical location to a link or text. It allows us to assign a geographic location to a service body and to ensure that you can connect to meeting lists and phonelines closest to the location you search.

Why not use the BMLT?

The Basic Meeting Locator Tool, or BMLT, is a powerful tool used by many service bodies throughout the Fellowship. However, it is not universally used. We cannot require service bodies to use a particular tool, and we don't have the capacity to "translate" worldwide meetings into that format.

What kind of information do we need to give World Services?

We are asking local trusted servants responsible for maintaining meeting information to identify a central location for each service body. This information can be given by name of a city, postal code, or GPS coordinates, or longitude and latitude. We are leaving the decision to each service body on what central location they would like to have us use. The key, however, is that we need to tag a spot that is as close as possible to the *geographic* center of your area, region, or zone. This might not be the place where the most meetings are, but an identified center for the service body.

What about places where several service bodies overlap?

If multiple service bodies overlap in one location, it is important to identify separate and distinguishable center points for each so that they do not have the exact same position on the map. A collaborative discussion between service bodies may be beneficial to have a good strategy for getting those seeking a meeting the best information possible. In some instances it may be helpful to list all the meetings in your geographic community and not just those that participate in your service structure. The introduction to the Basic Text reminds us, "Everything that occurs in the course of NA service must be motivated by the desire to more successfully carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers." We always want to consider these issues from the perspective of someone who needs a meeting.

What about places where there are very few meetings, and they're far from the geographical center?

A. If the service body covers a geographical distance greater than the search radius allows (250 miles or approximately 400 km), we can add separate data points that will allow for the service body to be identified in the search results.

What about places where there are meetings, but no service body yet?

For meetings in a country or locale that has no service body, NAWS will still display a link to the meeting information we have for that country or locale. World Services is not able to identify meetings that are within the parameters of a service body, but for some reason not listed locally. We encourage all NA meetings and local service bodies to work together to provide information for all the NA meetings that exist in their community.

What about virtual meetings?

World Services will list virtual meetings separately on our website. When searching for a virtual meeting, the results will be displayed in the time zone you're in when you're searching regardless of where in the world the meeting is hosted. Please note that local lists may include in-person and virtual meetings, and they will all be listed in the time zone in which they are hosted.

What is the web address for the test page?

You can access the test webpage at www.na.org/phoneweb. Please check to ensure that the information in the geographical area you serve is correct and up to date. Remember this test site is still "under construction," and the information will change as we receive updated data.

Where do we send our information?

Please send any questions or updated information to nadata@na.org. We previously emailed the delegate for each region explaining the information needed for this transition. Make sure you have the committee's permission to change the listing and send it to the above address.

What about registering new groups or updating group information?

With the change to the new meeting finder, it is no longer necessary to submit new group registrations. It is very important to be sure that your local NA service body is aware of new NA groups. Please write to groupupdates@na.org if you need any help contacting your local NA service body. We will continue to take group updates until the new meeting finder goes live.

What is the deadline for this information?

Our goal is to go live with the new meeting finder by the end of 2023, but we will push later if need to in order to make sure we are as ready as we can be. The sooner we can gather the information from all the service bodies, the more accurate our tools will be when they are available for people who need a meeting.