

Best Practices for Digital 7th Tradition for Online AA Meetings

In the age of Covid-19 and AA Groups being forced to meeting online versus in person, “passing the basket” has been made difficult for our AA members to support our service entities including the General Service Office, Area 10, District and Central Office.

Group Contributions received by our Central Office in April 2020 was \$1,392.74 compared to Group Contributions received in April 2019 of \$3,686.00. Individual contributions received by the Central Office however is up with \$3,611.26 collected in April 2020 compared to \$60.00 in April 2019. Central Office revenues are still down \$1,075.00 when you compare April 2019 to April 2020.

Some AA groups have set up digital accounts with services like Venmo and PayPal to encourage AA members attending online meetings to participate in AA’s 7th tradition. Each group holding online meetings are autonomous and should consider taking a group conscience on whether digital contributions are an option and which platform (or mix of platforms) best suits their groups’ needs.

Why Collect 7th Tradition for an Online Meeting?

Your AA Group still have operating expenses...

- Churches and other facilities may still rely on the group’s rent to help pay their rent, utilities and employees.
- Meeting supplies will still be needed when our meetings reopen - coffee, paper products, literature, refreshments. And after an extended closure, we may experience a large influx of people who are motivated to rejoin the fellowship in person.

Central Office and the General Service Office still have operating expenses such as...

- Website - which we may now rely on more than ever!
- Phone lines, rent and insurance on office space.
- Utility and other ongoing expenses.
- Paid special workers who deserve our continued support. Their compensation is crucial to their ability to serve us.

Your District and Area 10 still have expenses...

- Regular expenses to support the work of committees and events that will take place when the crisis has passed are still there.
- Website - which we may now rely on more than ever!
- Expenses for venues for events that have been cancelled may still need to be met, since any income from the event won’t be there to support the pre-payment of reservations, cancellation fees, etc. The expense of re-arranging for venues to reschedule events is very real.

We realize that even though the immediate need for virtual connections is relatively inexpensive, the real expenses of our fellowship continues. Please consider continuing to practice our 7th Tradition and make contributions to the service entities that support your group - your Central Office, your District, Area 10 and the General Service Office.

Central Office of Western Colorado has established a Venmo Account where individual AA members and groups can contribute online @CentralOfficeofWesternColorado. There is no fee to contribute via the Venmo app. The Central Office has also established an Online Donation Form at <https://aa-westerncolorado.com/donations/donation> where individual members and groups can contribute via Credit Card or Check.

Contributions to the General Service Office can be made online at https://ctb.aa.org/contribution/index.ssp?cf=1&n=1&lang=en_US#

Planning for Digital Contributions

Google Pay, Venmo, PayPal, Zelle, Apple Pay, Cash App, and Stripe are all viable options. More about platforms follows below:

Platform	Ease of Use *	Overview	Setup	Support	Security & Privacy	Notes
Apple Pay / Apple Cash	Easy	Apple Pay Overview	Setup Apple Pay	Apple Pay Support	Apple Pay Security & Privacy	Requires Apple hardware.
Cash app (Square)	Moderately Easy	Cash App overview - select vertical navigation bars upper right, next to sign in	Download Cash App to get started	Cash App Help	Cash App Security	
Google Pay	Easy	About Google Pay	Google Pay Setup	Google Pay Help	Google Safety Center	All you need is an email address (doesn't have to be Gmail) or a phone number.
PayPal	Moderately Easy	PayPal Home	PayPal Setup	PayPal Help Centre	PayPal Safety & Security	Cannot transfer a personal PayPal account. You can only transfer PayPal business accounts.
Stripe	Difficult, geared for business	Stripe Homepage	Stripe Getting Started Support	Stripe Support	Stripe Integration Security Guide	Geared toward business.
Venmo	Easy	How Venmo Works	Venmo Signup	Venmo Help	Venmo Security	Due to policy change, PayPal (which owns Venmo) wants groups to use PayPal for these kind of transactions.
Zelle	Moderately Easy	How Zelle Works	Getting started with Zelle	Zelle FAQ	Zelle Security	Easy to use with affiliated bank or financial institution, which Zelle recommends in the Getting Started. Many people are not aware they already have this option.

You Can Select One or Multiple Digital Payment Platforms

A group can agree to use just one service, but larger groups may even want to consider multiple options for their members.

Consider the Costs and Benefits of Each Platform

Each service has varying fees for money transfers depending on the users' chosen method of payment (debit, credit, checking account, etc.). Some may have a more user-friendly interface than others.

Set Up the Digital Payment Platform

Choose a username that is easy and intuitive for the group. If the username is an email, **avoid using your personal email if it reveals your full name** as that will compromise your anonymity.

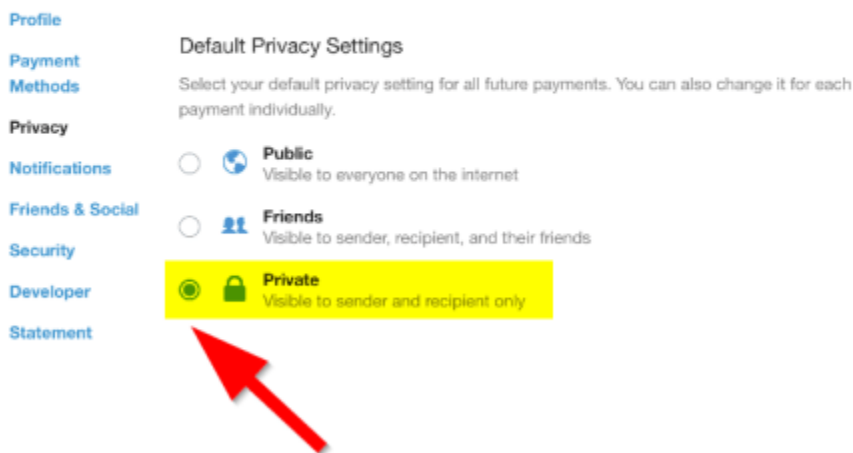
Security

Create a strong password for the app and ensure your mobile device used to access the app also has a passcode. If possible, set up two-factor authentication for added security. Also, be cautious when publishing the username associated with your group's account. We recommend **NOT** placing this information in the meeting information online and, instead, sharing it in the chat text during your online meeting.

Privacy

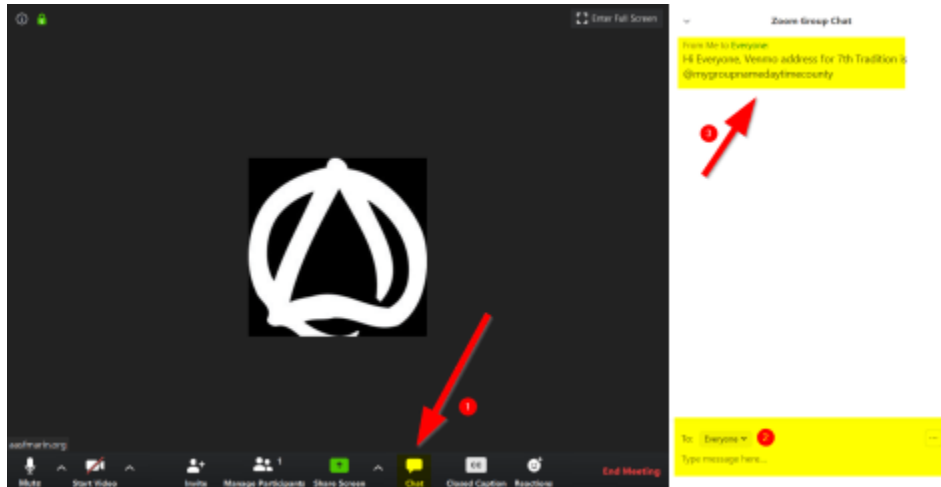
Learn the app's privacy settings! Some digital payment platforms have social components that you may want to disable to protect anonymity. If you use Venmo, we recommend that you set the Default Privacy Settings to Private (visible to sender and recipient only) and every payment, *regardless of the sender's setting*, will remain private.

Settings



Collecting 7th Tradition Digital Contributions

During the 7th Tradition break in a meeting, the treasurer can post the contribution instructions to the meeting Chat window. Usually, it is the selected platform and an ID for that meeting.



At that time, you can use or access the platform if you use it or go to the platform website to register and/or download it.

If you or your AA Group have any questions regarding selection and setup of Digital Payment Platform, please call or email Central Office of Western Colorado Technical Consultant - Gene F (303) 748-7250 gene@interactivewest.com