

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Frequently Asked Questions-Fellowship Intellectual Property Trust (FIPT)

Members and vendors with questions about NA's literature, logos, trademarks, and symbols can use this quick reference list that provides a brief overview of some of the more frequently asked questions regarding the NA Fellowship's property. For a legal and more detailed explanation of each question please refer to *The Fellowship Intellectual Property Trust* and the *NA Intellectual Property Bulletins # 1-5*. These items are also posted at [www.na.org](http://www.na.org).

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### 1. What is the Fellowship Intellectual Property Trust?

FIPT is the legal document that outlines (in detail) the relationship between Narcotics Anonymous World Services, Inc. and the Fellowship as a whole. Basically, NAWS holds the copyrights to the Fellowship's property (recovery literature, the service symbol, the NA symbol, and the original group logo) on behalf of the Fellowship. NAWS is accountable to the Fellowship through elected delegates and ultimately the registered groups of Narcotics Anonymous.

### 2. Why does NAWS protect the logos/trademarks?

This is so all of NA's property remains the property of the Fellowship. One of the responsibilities of NAWS, as defined in the FIPT and mandated by the World Service Conference, is to protect the Fellowship's property on behalf of the Fellowship.

3. What about using the NA symbol/service symbol/group logo?

Only *registered* service bodies, groups, and vendors licensed by NAWS have legal rights to use NA logos and trademarks because they are accountable to the owners of those symbols—the NA Fellowship. This includes the Internet, flyers, merchandise, banners, etc. See *Intellectual Property Bulletin #1*.

4. Can members, groups, areas, or regions post NA literature or readings on the Internet or send literature out via email/list servers?

NAWS is the sole publisher of NA recovery literature and for that reason no other person or group is allowed to produce or post NA literature anywhere. When NA literature is posted by anyone but NAWS it puts the copyright for NA literature at risk. This includes websites/list servers that send out NA literature (or portions of it) via email on a regular basis. NAWS has posted information pamphlets on its official website, [www.na.org](http://www.na.org), so registered service bodies can provide links from their own websites and do not need to post the actual literature on their own site. NAWS also provides a daily subscription to the *Just for Today Daily Meditations*: [www.na.org/subscribe](http://www.na.org/subscribe)

5. But if I am a member then don't I own the symbols? Can I use them where I want or on my personal website?

No. If you are an NA member you do *not* own the symbols or NA's literature. The Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous owns the symbols, and you are a member of that Fellowship. In essence, you own a piece of "stock" in NA—you do not own NA. That stock gives you the ability to participate with the entire Fellowship in making decisions about the use of NA's property. Individual members are not accountable to the Fellowship, but they are allowed to create one or two items using an NA symbol for personal use. See *Intellectual Property Bulletin #2*.

6. Can we use NA symbols along with other organization's trademarks?

No. It is generally against the law to use any of the NA logo/trademarks with other organization/company trademarks, artworks, slogans, etc. (e.g., Harley Davidson®), Looney Toons™, Dream Catchers© etc.). First, in order to use the other trademarks, you would need to get written permission from the company (which most companies will not give you) and second, it goes against NA traditions to affiliate NA with any other organization. For example, placing the NA symbol in artwork that “resembles” a certain motorcycle company's logo is against NA traditions *and* against the law.

***Did you know?*** You may have seen the NA symbol being used in a Dream Catcher©. Yeah, it looks cool, but the Indian Nation contacted NAWS and asked us not to use their property. The Indian Nation owns the copyright to the Dream Catcher©, and they do not grant permission for its use.

7. Why does NAWS give vendors a license to use NA's property?

There is a "use-it-or-lose-it" policy when it comes to trademarks. If NAWS does not use the trademark on a particular type of item (e.g., jewelry, apparel, etc.), then the Fellowship will lose ownership of the trademark on that type of product. Since NAWS does not produce all the various items that our members want, NAWS licenses vendors to produce those items instead. The licensing program allows the Fellowship to maintain ownership of the trademarks and to ensure that these trademarks are used appropriately. Licensing a vendor to use NA logos and trademarks is *not*, in our opinion, a violation of the Sixth Tradition.

8. Do we have to let a registered vendor sell merchandise at our NA event just because they have a license from NA World Services?

No. As stated in *NA Intellectual Property Bulletin #3*, a vendor license from NAWS does not grant access to NA events or functions. A vendor license simply grants a vendor the right to use NA trademarks on its items, not the right to sell those items at an NA event. Only the NA service body responsible for the event can give permission to a licensed vendor. Just because you have a vendor license does not mean the service body has to let you sell anything at their event/function/convention/learning day/marathon/dance/etc.

***Did you know?*** Many vendors get a license from NA World Services believing that it gives them the right to sell their merchandise at the world convention. The only vendors currently used at a world convention are one tape and one jewelry vendor. They are both selected through a formal Request For Proposal process. Many licensed vendors are disappointed to find that the license is not an all-access pass to NA events.

9. If a group or registered NA service body wants to create merchandise for its event, do they need to obtain a license from NAWS?

All groups and *registered* NA service bodies have the right to use the NA logos without permission from NAWS within the boundaries laid out in the *NA Intellectual Property Bulletin #1*. This is because they are directly accountable to the owner's of that property-the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous. Groups have a slightly different relationship with the Fellowship that is outlined in detail in *IPB #1*.

10. Does a vendor need to be licensed by NAWS to produce merchandise for an NA event?

A vendor does not need to be licensed by NAWS as long as the service body responsible for hiring the vendor retains the rights and ownership of any and all artwork created by the vendor.

**Did you know?** There have been cases where vendors design merchandise for a service committee and because the committee did not make sure that the vendor turned over the ownership of the artwork, the vendor was able to reproduce the t-shirts and sell them for their own profit.

11. Does NAWS license tape vendors?

No. NAWS does not license tape vendors because NA is not giving up ownership of any artwork when hiring tape vendors. Generally, tape vendors do not own the artwork that is on a tape (if applicable); the committee that created it owns that artwork and the audio of the speaker.

12. Does NAWS make any money/profit from licensing vendors?

Vendors pay NAWS an annual fee to obtain a license. The licensing fees are designed to offset the expenses incurred by NAWS on an annual basis for administering the FIPT. That is the extent of the financial relationship between NAWS and licensed vendors. NAWS receives no commission, kickback, incentive, or percentage of revenue by virtue of the issuance of a license to a vendor.

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