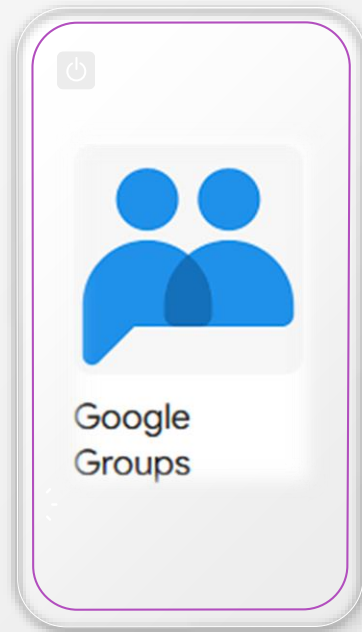




Google Forums

On Google Groups



Workspace Help vs. Groups Web Forums

A search for *Google Forums* is likely to show Workspace Help Forums on various topics first.

Workspace Forums

Get answers to your questions and share your knowledge about Google Workspace.

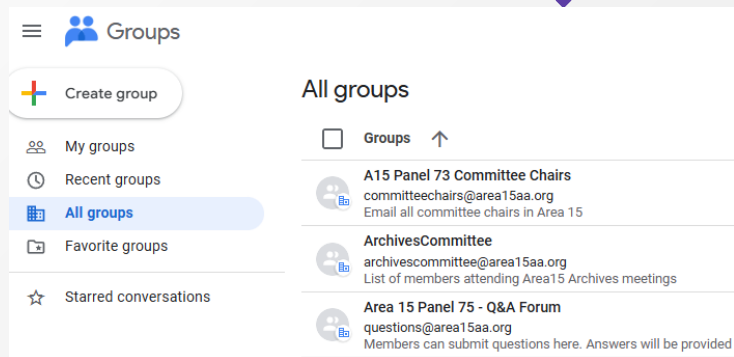
Workspace Q&A

- Workspace General
- Admin
- Gmail
- Drive
- Shared Drive
- Calendar
- Google Chat
- Other
- Groups
- Google Meet
- View more

Workspace Developer

- APIs
- Add-ons
- Marketplace
- Scopes
- Chat Apps
- Apps Script
- No-Low Code
- Card Framework
- Developer Preview
- Developer Portal
- View more

This presentation focuses on Google Groups, which can be used to create web forums.



"Google Forums" is commonly used as a colloquial term to refer to the service provided by Google, which is officially known as "Google Groups." Over time, the term "Google Forums" has been adopted due to its association with online discussion platforms where users can create, manage, and participate in discussions on various topics."

CONTENTS



01

GETTING STARTED

Accessing Groups

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CREATE A GROUP

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03

SETTINGS

Different settings for different types of Groups

04

MODERATING

Setting permissions for members

05

APPENDIX

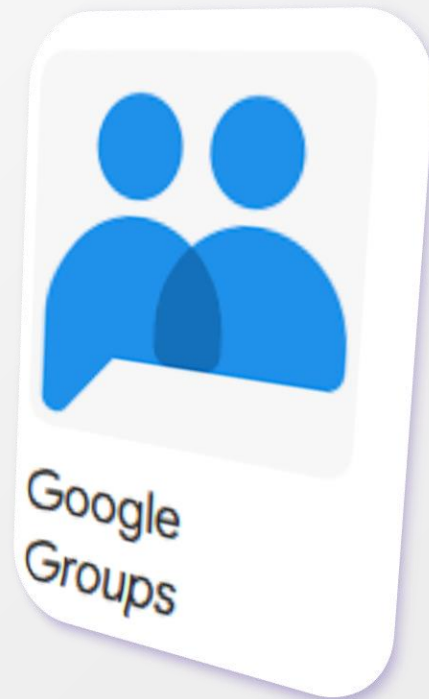
Desktop shortcut
Detailed settings



01

GETTING STARTED

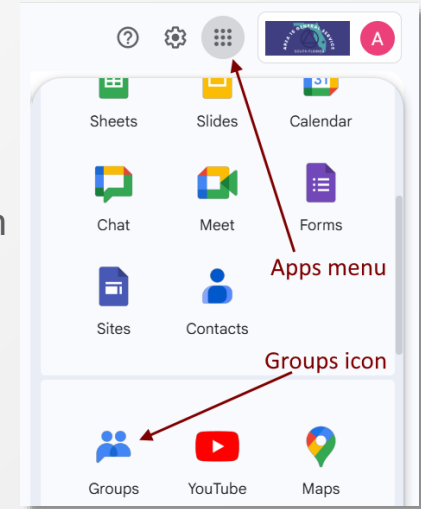
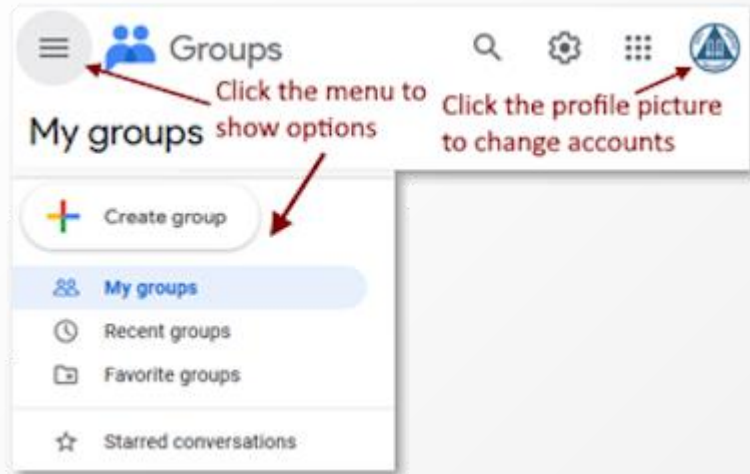
Accessing Google Groups



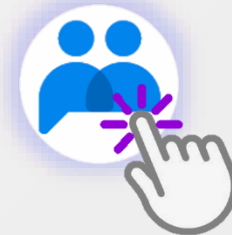
groups.google.com

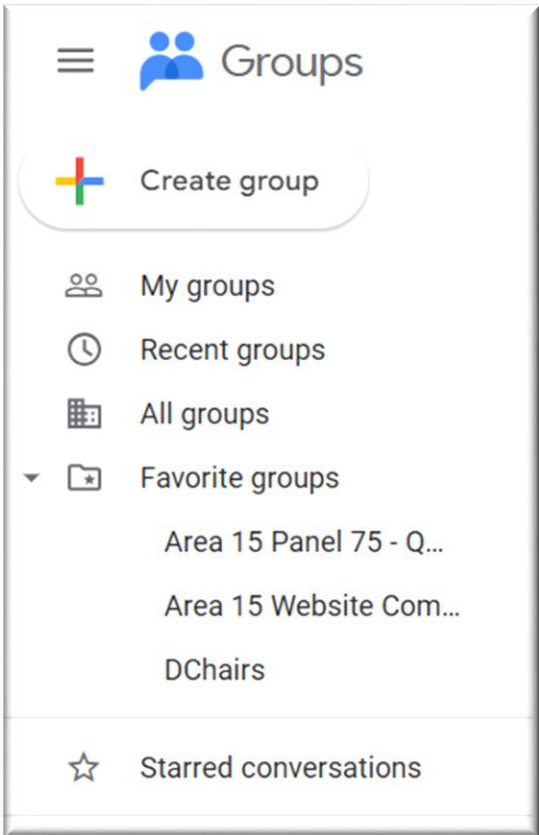
- No dedicated app
- No integration with Gmail
- Sign in to a Google account
- Go to groups.google.com in a browser

- In an organization (non-profit or paid) account, such as Area 15, Groups appears in the apps list... it sends you to groups.google.com










- You can create a desktop or home screen icon to simplify access (see appendix for Instructions)





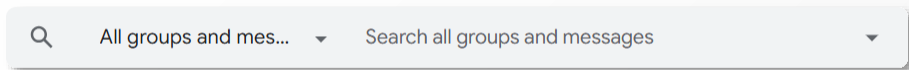
Navigation - Main Menu

-  Show/hide the main menu
-  Create a new group OR if you have selected a group, create a new conversation
-  Groups you are a member of
-  Groups where you have been active recently
-  All groups may not appear if not in an organization account. It shows all Area 15 groups in the Admin account.
-  Groups you have starred
-  Conversations you have starred



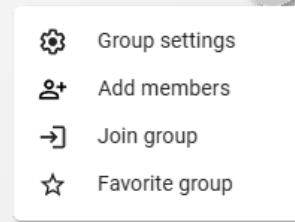


Search and Group/Message tools



In the search bars:

- Use the down arrows (▼) to select between My groups, All groups and messages, Recent groups, etc.
- In a free account, searching “All groups and messages” should search all publicly searchable groups/messages
- In an organization account, default settings likely limit searches to being within the organization

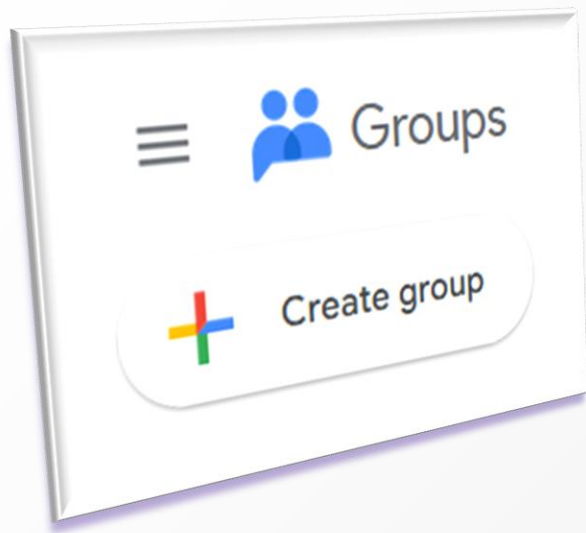


Tools appear to the right of groups or messages:

- On a narrow screen use the three-dot menu (⋮) to access options
- ⚙️ 👤 Group settings and Add members appear if you are the group owner or manager
- ➡️ Join a group* or ⬅️ leave a group
- ★ Favorite or ★ unfavorite a group/message

* While some groups are open for membership, others may indicate “Ask to join group”





02

CREATE A GROUP

Start your own Group or Forum



pg.1 Group Information

- Choose a descriptive group name
- The group email will use the group name (if available) by default


Group email
webservant

This email is already taken
- You can edit the group email
- In a free account, the email domain will be @googlegroups.com – organization emails default to org's domain
- Consider how potential members will search for the group when choosing a description (or name)



1 of 3 ×

Enter group info



Group name
Google Groups Forum

Group email
google-groups-forum

@area15aa.org ▼

Group description
A forum for discussing setting up and managing different types of Google Groups

79 / 4,096

Next

2 of 3 ×

Choose privacy settings

Who can join group

Anyone in the organization can join ▼

Who can view conversations

● ● ● ●

② ① ② ③

Entire organization

Who can post

● ● ● ● ●

② ① ② ③ ④

Group owners Group managers Group members Entire organization Anyone on the web

Who can view members

● ● ● ●

Back Next

Only invited users

Anyone in the organization can ask

Anyone in the organization can join

Anyone can ask

Anyone can join

pg.2 Privacy Settings

Settings are discussed in the next section of this presentation

- Preferred settings depend in the type of group you want
- Text descriptions appear when hovering over of each section
- There is also a drop down for who can search for a group, which is disabled by default in organization accounts
- “Anyone on the web” options are disabled by default in organization accounts



pg.3 Add Members

- Add members' and managers' email addresses in the appropriate boxes
- By default, the group's creator is an owner, but others can be added
- Write a message which will be sent to all members and managers
- Set contact level which determines how often members are notified about group activity
 - Contact levels can be changed or individualized later
- Create the group

3 of 3

×

Add members

Group members

technology@district6aa.org

×

website@district7area15aa.org

×

tech@dist4gsaa.org

×

techchair@district1aapinellas.org

×

literature14a15@gmail.com

×

Web Chair

×

Web Secretary

×

Alt Web Chair

×

Webservant Area 15 (you)

Each email






Directly add members

Add members to the group directly

Back Create group

03 SETTINGS

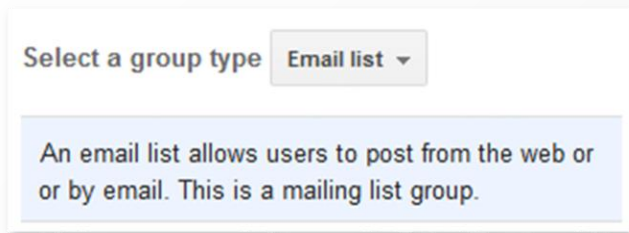
Defining Group Functionality

	 Group Owners	 Group Managers	 Group Members	 Entire Organization	 External
Access settings					
Who can contact group owners	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Who can view conversations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Who can post	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Who can view members	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Who can manage members Add, invite, approve	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Who can join the group Choose how to add people to the group	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Anyone in the organization can ask People in the organization must ask and then be approved before they can join the group					



Pre-configured Settings

Once upon a time Google Groups had pre-configured settings available during setup.



Options included:

- Email List
- Web Forum
- Q&A Forum
- Shared Inbox

These settings are no longer available.

- If anyone knows the formerly pre-configured settings for these group types please post them to technology-topics@area15aa.org

There are preconfigured access types in the Admin section of organization accounts. These are shown in the appendix of this presentation and may help to gain an understanding of access settings.

- Public
- Team
- Announcement only
- Restricted





Preconfigured Group Types



Old type	<i>These types are not necessarily directly comparable</i>	Admin type
Email	Email or announcement groups are generally restricted to Owners/Manager sending and no reply from members. Email groups might not allow members to view previous “posts.”	Announcement
Web Forum	A web forum allows a group of people to initiate and respond to conversations. In this type of group, ideally, multiple people can both make posts and reply to them.	Team
Q&A Forum	The Q&A forum works like a web forum but is focused on members answering questions.	Public
Shared Inbox	A shared inbox is used, for example, in a customer service or sales situation where multiple agents are sharing out requests sent to one address.	Restricted

THE TWELVE TRADITIONS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

(SHORT FORM)

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
6. An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

Copyright © 1952, 1953, 1981 by A.A. Grapevine, Inc. and Alcoholics Anonymous Publishing (now known as Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc.)
All rights reserved.

A summary of the Twelve Traditions can be found in the [appendices of the book Alcoholics](#)

[Anonymous](#).

www.aa.org


A.A. Principles

Group Settings may be affected by our goals or principles, specifically anonymity and our position in the upside-down triangle.

- Default configurations in organization accounts typically limit group membership to individuals in the organization. At Area 15 we would like to consider Group and District participation.
- Default configurations in organization accounts typically allow group members to view other group members. We may need to consider anonymity protection in terms of external member emails.




Suggestion: Consider all principles and be transparent about your reasoning to get feedback.

Email list/Announcement Group

-  Owners/managers
-  Members
-  Organization
-  Public

An email or announcement group is generally the most restrictive.

- In an email group, each member receives an email for every post. A weekly digest might suffice for an announcement group if it includes only advance announcements.
- Only owners and managers can post.
 - Unsubscribe may be the only available response.
- Members don't have access to view previous posts in an email group, but might in an announcement group.



				
View conversations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Post messages	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
View members	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			

Who can join: Anyone can ask
Subscription: Each email for all members
Published on web? Announcements only*

* In an A.A. setting, publishing would restrict certain content based on anonymity and CP restrictions







Shared inbox / Q&A Forum

-  Owners/managers
-  Members
-  Organization
-  Public

Generally, a Q&A forum is the most permissive (such as Quora, Reddit, Stack Overflow). However, in A.A. it might be used more like a shared inbox for CSRs.

- While organizations might have internal Q&A forums, in A.A. public posting would allow GSRs to post to district or area groups (using email rather than posting to a group) - *questions@area15aa.org*.
- Membership might be restricted to invite only.
- Members might be able to view each other to collaborate on a response, or questions might be assigned.
- Responses would feed into a public FAQ with a direct response sent to the person who asked.

				
View conversations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Post messages			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
View members	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

Who can join: Invitation only
Subscription: Manager notifications only
Published on web? Contribute to FAQ

Web Forum

-  Owners/managers
-  Members
-  Organization
-  Public

Technology-Topics is configured to be an A.A. Forum.

- Anyone can ask to join, making it inclusive of District and Group participants in the website committee.
- Notifications are set to “digest,” but members can request the level they want.
- Members can post and respond to messages and view conversations.
 - We might consider giving the same permissions to anyone with an area15aa.org account.
- We could consider making this a true web forum, but only if name and email address masking is automated.*

				
View conversations		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Post messages		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
View members	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

Who can join: Anyone can ask
Subscription: Digest
Published on web? With PW and
anonymity protections?

* To publish this Google Groups forum, the web address would be sites.google.com/area15aa.org/technology-topics

Allow External Members

Under Group Settings

- Turn ON **Allow external members**.
- Set who can join the group to a setting which allows external members. **Invited users only** may be the safest setting for an A.A. group.
- At this point, external members can only participate by email. Make the **Group address** the default sender, so their email reply button defaults to the group rather than directly to the author of a message.

Allow external members

People outside the organization can be members



ON



OFF

Who can join group

Invited users only



Default sender

The default address used in the by-line for messages to the group



Author's address



Group address





Allow External Members to View the Group

Accessing groups from outside this organization

Choose whether people outside your organization can access your groups. Group owners can further restrict access as needed.

- ☒ **Public on the internet** ↓
Anyone on the internet can view, search for, and post to groups
- ☐ **Private** ↓
No one outside your organization can view or search for your groups. External users can email the group if group settings allow.

Who can see group

Anyone on the web

Making a group public enough to allow full GSR and DCM participation must be an organization decision. Specific ground rules might be needed and searchability investigated.

Under Admin Settings

External group members cannot view the group unless the **Public on the internet** is selected.

Under Group Settings

Organization members is the only option until Public on the internet is selected in Admin settings. Set who can see the group to **Anyone on the web**.



People also ask :

How to moderate Google Groups?

1. Sign in to Google Groups.
2. Click the name of a group.
3. On the left, click Group settings.
4. Select your moderation option

Spam message handling
Choose how to handle spam

☐ Collaborative Inbox
Create custom role

☒ **Shared labels**
Enable shared labels for this group

New member restrictions
New member posts are moderated

Message moderation
Choose whether to moderate messages before delivery

04

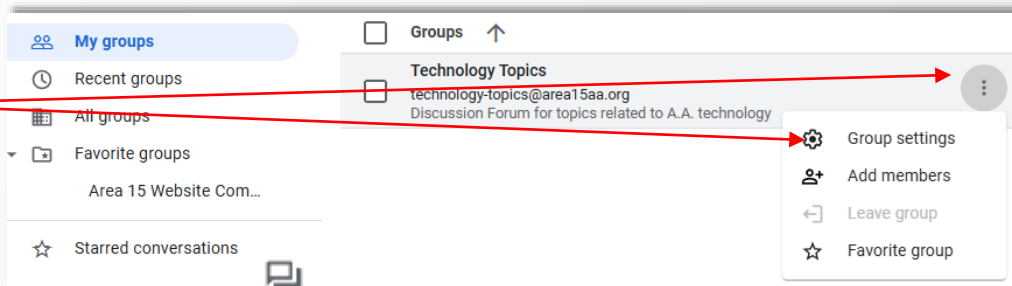
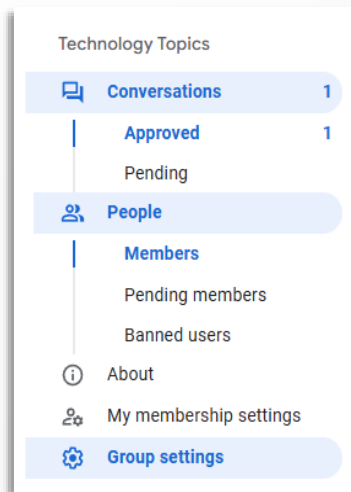
MODERATING

Managing members and messages
...there are too many for
more than a sampling here



Where to Moderate

Click on my groups to access
⚙️ Group settings for groups
you own



IN the main menu, click on any group you own or manage to
access navigation options in the main menu for:

 **Conversations**

 **Members**

 **Group settings**

- Investigate settings options – only a few are presented here

Protect Anonymity on “Public” Accounts

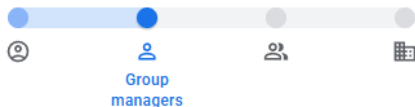
Message moderation

Choose whether to moderate messages before delivery

Moderate all messages

Search Content unique to my group

Who can view member email addresses



Under Member Settings

- Change individual members' subscriptions to **Abridged**.

Under Group Settings

- Moderate all messages to ensure no last names appear. This also provides an opportunity to protect other traditions.
- Search for content unique to your group to see what appears. Use Google as it is likely to more quickly index context from Groups.
- Restrict who can view email addresses as personal addresses often reveal last names.

Subscription

Abridged



Manage Q&A Groups



Enable additional Google Groups features







☒ Collaborative Inbox ☐ No additional features

Under Group Settings

Enable **Collaborative inbox**.

Under Conversations select a conversation to reveal the collaborative inbox toolbar

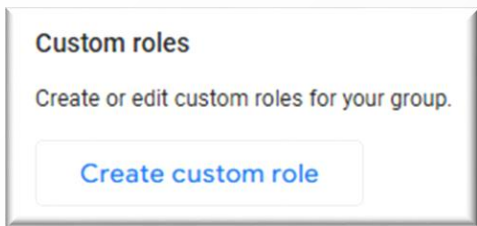


-  Assign the conversation to yourself
-  Assign to someone else
-  Remove assignment (if already assigned)
-  Mark as complete
-  Mark as duplicate
-  No action needed



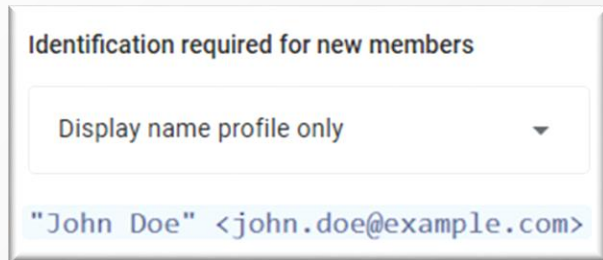
Report, Delete, Lock and Pin are available with or without the Collaborative inbox

Additional Considerations



Under Group Settings

Create custom roles to assign tasks to members without giving them full manager privileges.



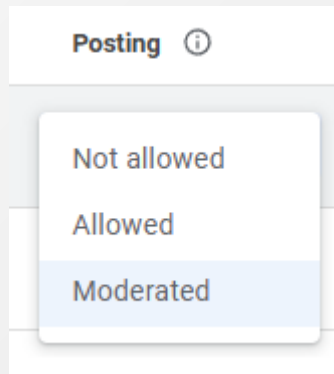
Under Group Settings

Set Identification required to **Display name only**.

Under Members

Add new members using the above

Display name format



Under Members

Set posting to **Moderated** for members whose email addresses are not anonymity protected. Re-post their posts through a protected email.

05

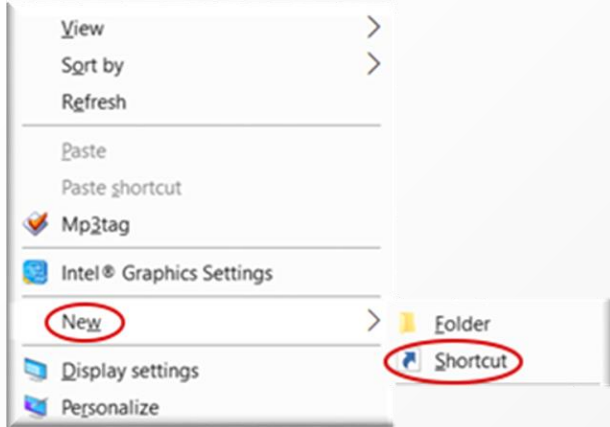
APPENDIX

Defining Group Functionality



Appendix – Add a Desktop shortcut (Windows)

Right Click on your desktop
Select New, then Shortcut



Follow prompts in the shortcut wizard:

- For Location use <http://google.groups.com/>
- For Name use Groups or Google Groups

After creating the shortcut, you may want to add a custom icon.

- Right Click on the shortcut and select Properties
- Click the “Change icon...” button, then click “browse”
- Here is the link for



Get This icon at

<http://area15aa.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Groups-Logo.ico>

(you may need to download the icon to your device first)



Appendix – Settings For “Public”

Settings available in the Administrator account of an organizational account



Public
Anyone in your organization can post to and join the group

- ☒ Public
- ☐ Team
- ☐ Announcement Only
- ☐ Restricted

Access settings

Who can contact group owners

Who can view conversations

Who can post

Who can view members

Who can manage members
Add, invite, approve

Who can join the group

Choose how to add people to the group



Group
Owners



Group
Managers



Group
Members



Entire
Organization



External

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

- ☐ Anyone in the organization can ask
People in the organization must ask and then be approved before they can join the group
- ☒ Anyone in the organization can join
People in the organization can add themselves to the group directly
- ☐ Only invited users
People can join the group only if they're invited

Appendix – Settings For “Team”

Automatic settings available in the Administrator account of an organizational account



Team
Anyone in your organization can post, but they must ask to join

- ☐ Public
- ☒ Team
- ☐ Announcement Only
- ☐ Restricted

Access settings

Who can contact group owners

Who can view conversations

Who can post

Who can view members

[Who can manage members](#)
Add, invite, approve



Group Owners



Group Managers



Group Members



Entire Organization



External



Who can join the group

Choose how to add people to the group

- ☒ **Anyone in the organization can ask**
People in the organization must ask and then be approved before they can join the group
- ☐ **Anyone in the organization can join**
People in the organization can add themselves to the group directly
- ☐ **Only invited users**
People can join the group only if they're invited

Appendix – Settings For “Announcement”

Automatic settings available in the Administrator account of an organizational account



Announcement Only
Only owners and managers post, anyone in your org can join

- ☐ Public
- ☐ Team
- ☒ **Announcement Only**
- ☐ Restricted

Access settings

Who can contact group owners

Who can view conversations

Who can post

Who can view members

Who can manage members
Add, invite, approve

Who can join the group

Choose how to add people to the group



Group Owners



Group Managers



Group Members



Entire Organization



External

✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
✓	✓	✓	✓	
✓	✓			
✓	✓			
✓	✓			

- ☐ Anyone in the organization can ask
People in the organization must ask and then be approved before they can join the group
- ☒ **Anyone in the organization can join**
People in the organization can add themselves to the group directly
- ☐ Only invited users
People can join the group only if they're invited

Appendix – Settings For “Restricted”

Automatic settings available in the Administrator account of an organizational account



Restricted
Only members can post, people must ask to join

- ☐ Public
- ☐ Team
- ☒ Announcement Only
- ☐ Restricted

Access settings

Who can contact group owners

Who can view conversations

Who can post

Who can view members

Who can manage members
Add, invite, approve

Who can join the group

Choose how to add people to the group



Group Owners



Group Managers



Group Members



Entire Organization



External

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

- ☒ **Anyone in the organization can ask**
People in the organization must ask and then be approved before they can join the group
- ☐ **Anyone in the organization can join**
People in the organization can add themselves to the group directly
- ☐ **Only invited users**
People can join the group only if they're invited



THANKS!

**Do you have any questions?
Have you found better answers?**

webservant@area15aa.org

