

General Service Representative Handbook

Western Washington Area 72



This is meant to be a guide only. Most of the information contained herein may be found, in greater detail, in *The A.A. Service Manual*, the Handbook for the Western Washington Area Committee, and other A.A. literature. In no manner is this handbook intended to supersede the aforementioned, or any General Service Conference approved literature.

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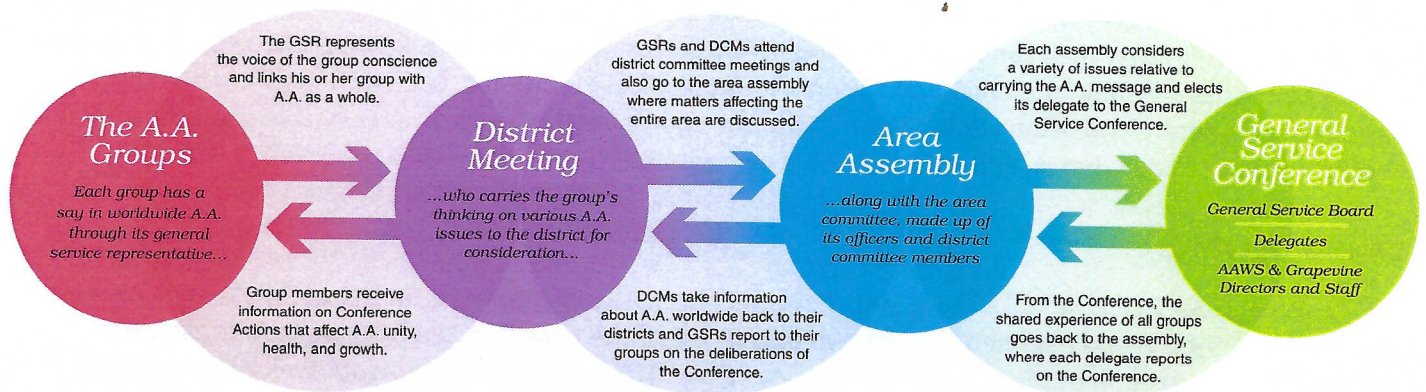
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SECTION I INTRODUCTION

WELCOME TO GENERAL SERVICE



"Our Twelfth Step – carrying the message – is the basic service that the A.A. Fellowship gives; this is our principal aim and the main reason for our existence. Therefore, A.A. is more than a set of principles; it is a society of alcoholics in action. We must carry the message, else we ourselves can wither and those who haven't been given the truth may die.

Hence, an A.A. service is anything, whatever that helps us to reach a fellow sufferer – ranging all the way from the Twelfth Step itself to a ten-cent phone call and a cup of coffee, and to A.A.'s General Service Office for national and international action. The sum total of all these services is our Third Legacy of Service.

Services include meeting places, hospital, cooperation, and intergroup offices; they mean pamphlets, books and good publicity of almost every description. They call for committees, delegates, trustees and conferences. And, not to be forgotten, they need voluntary money contributions from within the Fellowship.

These services, whether performed by individuals, groups, areas or A.A. as a whole, are utterly vital to our existence and growth. Nor can we make A.A. more simple by abolishing such services. We would only be asking for complication and confusion.

Concerning any given service, we therefore pose but one question: "Is this service really needed?" If it is, then maintain it we must, or fail in our mission to those who need and seek A.A."

("A.A.'s Legacy of Service", *The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Services*, p. 1)

GSR Preamble

While A.A. does not have an official GSR preamble, the following, which was written around 1974-75, and was printed in the Aug-Sept 1989 issue of Box 4-5-9, is suggested in the request as the GSR preamble:

"We are the General Service Representatives. We are the link in the chain of communication for our groups with the General Service Conference and the world of A.A. We realize the ultimate authority in A.A. is a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. As trusted servants, our job is to bring information to our groups in order that they can reach an informed group conscience. In passing along this group conscience, we are helping to maintain the unity and strength so vital to our Fellowship. Let us, therefore, have the patience and tolerance to listen while others share, the courage to speak up when we have something to share, and the wisdom to do what is right for our groups as a whole."

General Service

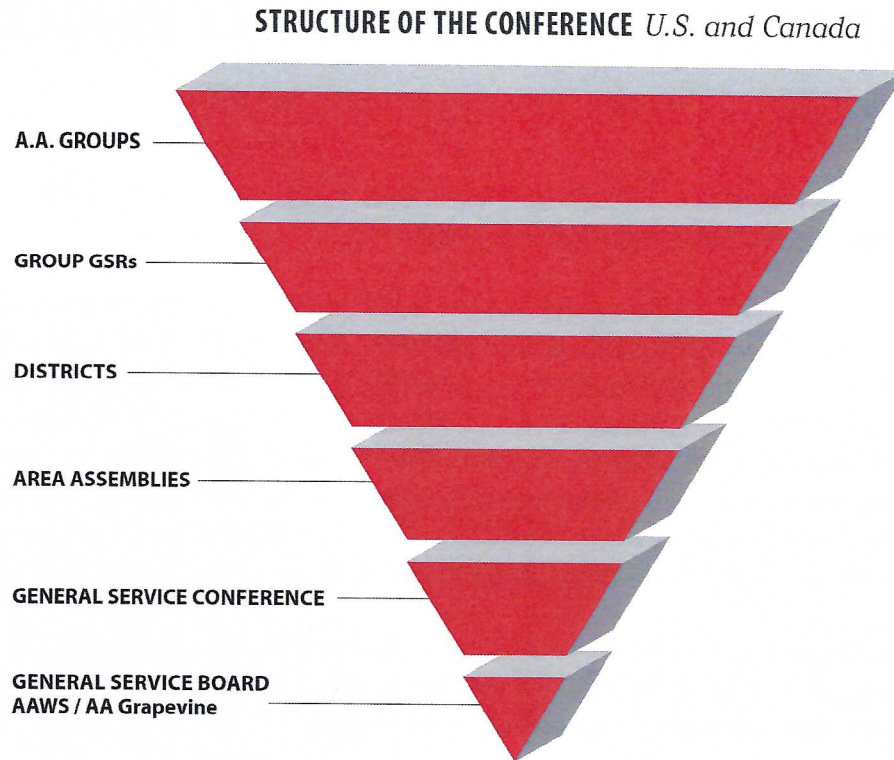
"In the General Service structure, the groups have final authority. But how do the groups make their thoughts and wishes — their group conscience — known to the rest of the triangle? General service is organized to do exactly this. Each section of the triangle has a role to play." (*The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Services*, p. 3)

The Twelve Traditions suggest that A.A. should never be organized, that there are no bosses and no government in A.A. Yet, the Traditions recognize the need for some organization to carry the message in ways that are impossible for the local groups — such as publication of uniform literature, helping new groups get started, communicating with outside entities, professionals and organizations, and carrying the message in other languages and to other countries. The General Service Conference structure is the framework in which these 'general services' are carried out. It is the service structure that takes the place of government in A.A. and ensures that the full voice of A.A. will always be heard.

The General Service Representative's (GSR) job is to link their group with A.A. as a whole. The GSR represents their group conscience, reporting the group's thoughts to the District Committee Member (DCM) who works on such issues with the Area Committee and to the Area Delegate who carries them to the General Service Conference. This communication is a two-way street; making the GSR responsible for bringing Conference Actions that affect A.A. unity, health, and growth back to the group. Only when the GSR keeps the group informed, and communicates the group conscience, can the Conference truly act for A.A. as a whole.

As a GSR, you are your A.A. Group's link with Western Washington Area general service, the General Service Office (GSO), and the General Service Conference.

The “Upside-Down Triangle”



- **Group:** The communication process focuses on the Group, which lets its Group Conscience be known to its elected GSR.
- **Districts:** Groups are geographically organized into Districts. The GSRs of these Groups select District Committee Members (DCMs), who become part of the Area Committee.
- **Area:** Area 72 is comprised of 44 Districts (one virtual district and three linguistic districts) and covers the Western portion of Washington state. The Cascade mountains west to the Puget Sound and from the Canadian to Oregon borders. The Area Delegate is elected at the annual Area Assembly on even numbered years and attends the annual General Service Conference meeting in New York.
- **Conference:** The U.S./Canada Conference is divided into 93 Areas. Membership in the Conference consists of Area Delegates, Trustees, Directors of A.A. World Services and the Grapevine, and A.A. staff members of the General Service Office and the Grapevine.
- **The General Service Board** is made up of 21 Trustees. It reports to the Fellowship through quarterly reports and also in the Final Conference Report. The board's two operating corporations, A.A. World Services, Inc. and A.A. Grapevine, Inc., report to the Fellowship in the same way.

SECTION II

THE GROUP AND THE GENERAL SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE

THE GROUP

The fundamental unit in Alcoholics Anonymous is the group. The Long Form of Tradition Three and a section of Warranty Six, Concept 12 describe what an A.A. Group is:

- *“Any group of alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves and AA group provided that as a group, they have no other purpose or affiliation.” (Tradition Three, Long Form)*
- *If the members are all alcoholics and if they open the door to all alcoholics who seek help, regardless of profession, gender or other distinction and meet all the other aspects defining an AA group, they may call themselves an AA group. (The A.A. Group...Where It All Begins, p. 12)*
- *“The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking. Thus group membership requires no formal application. Just as we are members of AA if we say we are, so are we members of a group if we say we are – and we keep coming back.” (The A.A. Group...Where It All Begins, p. 13)*

The group affords individual A.A.s the ability to consider and create a group conscience on issues that affect the group, District, Area, and the Fellowship as a whole. *The pamphlet The A.A. Group provides extensive information on group organization and opportunities for service.*

THE GENERAL SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE (GSR)

“For most A.A.s, membership in a home group is one of the keys to continuing sobriety. In a home group, they accept service responsibilities and learn to sustain connections with other recovering alcoholics. The home group affords individual A.A.s the privilege of voting on issues that affect the Fellowship as a whole; it is the very basis of the service structure. While many A.A. members attend other groups as well, the home group is where they participate in business meetings and cast their vote as part of the group conscience of the Fellowship as a whole. As with all group conscience matters, each member has one vote.

The role of the general service representative, or GSR, is essential to the purpose of general service. Bill W. wrote in Concept I of *The Twelve Concepts for World Service*: “The A.A. groups today hold ultimate responsibility and final authority for our world services.” The role of the GSR is essential to ensuring that groups can fulfill that responsibility. Only when a GSR keeps the group informed and communicates the group conscience can the Conference truly act for A.A. as a whole. This communication is a two-way street, making the GSR responsible not only for bringing forward the group’s voice, but for taking back to the group Conference actions that affect the Fellowship’s unity, health and growth.

So what is the role of a GSR?

The GSR is the link between the group and “A.A. as a whole.” This link becomes a channel through which news, information, opinions and ideas can flow back and forth. Importantly, this also gives the group a voice in the affairs of the Fellowship. The GSR is that voice.

There is more than one way for GSRs to express their group’s thoughts and wishes — their conscience — in general service.

When the GSR is present at assemblies, the group’s voice is heard. The presence of a GSR says their group cares about what’s going on in the Fellowship and wants to learn and make its concerns and suggestions known.

When the GSR participates, the group’s voice is heard. It can be through a GSR sharing the group’s concerns across a conference table from other GSRs in a district meeting. It can be through questioning a budget item or proposing an idea important to the group at an area assembly. It can be through making an impassioned plea about an agenda item to the delegate on the eve of the annual General Service Conference meeting.

When the GSR votes, the group’s voice is heard. The GSR votes on the trusted servants to lead the district and the area as well as the delegate to represent the area at the annual General Service Conference meeting. The group’s voice is heard when the GSR votes on how best to use Seventh Tradition contributions to carry out Twelfth Step services.

What’s important is to participate. This manual is intended to help.” (*The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Services*, p. 7)

Qualifications for a GSR (from *The A.A. Service Manual*)

Experience of the Fellowship suggests that the most effective GSRs:

- Have at least two years of continuous sobriety
- Are familiar with their group’s history, priorities, traditions and procedures
- Are able to listen to all points of view
- Have the time to regularly attend district meetings, area Assembly, and the group’s business meetings
- Have a working familiarity with the Twelve Traditions and A.A. recovery and service literature
- Have an email address or other easy way of maintaining contact with group members
- Are familiar with the GSO and area websites
- They have the confidence of the group.

GSR Duties & Responsibilities (from *The A.A. Service Manual*)

1. Regularly attend the Area 72 Assembly.
 - a. Your group is in one of the 93 areas that make up the U.S./Canada General Service Conference. (See Map A, pg. 92, for a map of the General Service Conference areas.) Area 72 holds 1 Assembly, annually. GSRs are asked to attend and participate in these assemblies. You have a voice and a vote.
2. Regularly attend district meetings.

- a. Your group is part of a district (which is in one of those 93 areas mentioned above). Your district likely holds regular meetings. How frequently your district meets will vary by district. GSRs are asked to attend district meetings. You have both a voice and a vote.
3. Regularly make reports to the group.
 - a. These reports serve as an important link to A.A. as a whole. Your reports may concern information about what's happening in general service that you think will be of interest to the group. You are asked to convey any thoughts, concerns or wishes from your group's members back to the district. (See the section "Making Reports" in Chapter 1 of *The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Services*)
4. Participating in district and area service meetings is a great way to learn about all that A.A. and general service have to offer to help carry the A.A. message. What the GSR learns can be shared with the group in a report, either oral or written.
5. Work with the group treasurer to develop Seventh Tradition support for the General Service Board, the area and the district. You can find suggestions for group contributions to A.A. service entities in the Conference-approved pamphlet "Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix." This includes contributions to your local intergroup/central office. Groups may veer from these suggestions as they see fit, or not contribute at all. (See also the pamphlet "Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix" for information about the practical application of the Seventh Tradition.)
6. Keep the group up to date on the latest A.A. literature and service material. The AAWS and Grapevine literature catalogs are excellent resources. GSRs are asked to help make their groups aware of:
 - *New literature.* This includes new books, formats or other products published by A.A. World Services and Grapevine.
 - *New applications of technology.* As technology continues to alter how many people receive information, A.A. is exploring applications that are intended to help the Fellowship carry its message to alcoholics.
 - *Literature and service material to increase accessibility in A.A.* While there are no special alcoholics, there are alcoholics who experience access barriers to receiving the A.A. message. General service is always looking for ways to help A.A. and ultimately the groups minimize and ultimately remove those barriers.
7. Supply the DCM or district registrar with up-to-date group information, in order to keep contact information current for GSO mailings, the Area 72 newsletter and possible Twelfth Step opportunities.
8. Serve as the email contact with the General Service Office; receive the GSO bulletin *Box 4-5-9*; and keep groups abreast of A.A. activities all over the world.
9. Keep the alternate GSR informed and involved with all the latest information for the group.

Meetings to Achieve GSR Duties

Key meetings to attend to achieve the duties and responsibilities of the GSR.

- Attending, or facilitating, your group's business meeting.
- Attending your District's monthly District meeting to represent your group and act as a member of the district.
- Attending an Area 72 Pre-Conference Assembly (held annually to prepare the Delegate for the General Service Conference) and Delegate conference report back.
- Attending an Area 72 regional Pre-Assembly (held annually as preparation for the Assembly).
- Attending the annual Area 72 Assembly to represent your group and contribute to the Area group conscience.
- Bringing information, flyers, announcements, etc. back to your group from these events.

**Read The A.A. Service Manual and the pamphlet "GSR: Your group's link to A.A. as a whole" for further information on GSR job description and duties.*

ALTERNATE GENERAL SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE

The alternate GSR is elected by a group to serve on those occasions when the GSR is not available and is usually elected to the same two-year term as the GSR. This is especially important should the GSR, who has a vote, be unable to attend a district meeting or area assembly. The alternate might also be asked to step in to give reports to the group.

Some alternate GSRs are interested in more opportunities to serve. They might attend district meetings and area assemblies along with GSRs (although an alternate may vote only when the GSR is not present). Alternate GSRs may also get more involved in general service by attending and volunteering at workshops and other service events in the district and area." (*The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Services*, p. 11)

SERVICE SPONSORSHIP

"The same impulse that drives some new people to try to "do A.A." alone drives some new GSRs to try to "do general service" alone. There's no reason to. In fact, there's every reason not to.

As rewarding and enjoyable as general service can be, you might find yourself feeling overwhelmed at times. A service sponsor can make the difference between struggling in your service position and feeling a sense of purpose and accomplishment (and having some fun along the way!).

A service sponsor is there to answer your questions about your responsibilities, the structure of general service, the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts and how to apply them, and making reports to your group. They can share experiences on managing time and expectations. Simply put, the service sponsor is there to help. A service sponsor can be defined as one alcoholic who has made some progress in recovery and/or performance in service and who is willing to share this experience with another alcoholic who is just starting the journey.

Service sponsors often introduce newer members to the various aspects of service: setting up a meeting, working on committees, participating in conferences, etc. In this matter it is important for the service sponsor to help individuals understand the distinction between serving the needs of the Fellowship and meeting the personal needs of another group member.

The basis of all sponsorship is to lead by example. Service sponsors can impart to their sponsees the pleasure of involvement in the work of Alcoholics Anonymous. This is best done by stressing the spiritual nature of service work and by pointing out the usefulness of simple footwork and faith.

When considering potential service sponsors, experience of the Fellowship suggests looking for an A.A. member who is:

- Knowledgeable in A.A. history and the service structure
- Well acquainted with the various service positions and the principles and concepts that guide general service
- Familiar with the Twelve Traditions
- Familiar with *The A.A. Service Manual* and the Twelve Concepts

To find someone with this kind of experience and knowledge, you might consider some of the people you meet or hear at area assemblies and service workshops.

For additional information, there is a section on the service sponsor in the A.A. pamphlet "Questions & Answers on Sponsorship."

(*The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service*, p. 9)

Responsibility Statement:

I am responsible when anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help. I want the hand of AA always to be there and for that I am responsible.

SECTION III

THE DISTRICT

STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION

Groups are organized into districts; generally collections of groups located near one another. Western Washington Area 72 is made up of forty-four districts. There are four non-geographic districts: three linguistic districts (which serve the Spanish Speaking groups) and one virtual district without geographic boundaries. Most district meetings are held once a month. District meetings days and times may be found in the Area Directory and often on local intergroup and central service office websites. Typically, the meetings are attended by the DCM, Alternate DCM, GSRs (and their alternates), District standing committee chairpersons and sometimes an Intergroup or Central Service Office representative.

There are few new and original problems that develop in groups, so the continuity of experience provided by monthly district meetings is extremely valuable. Here, the GSRs share with their fellow GSRs how they deal with such matters and with what success. Their experience may be helpful to another group.

Agenda items that require action and consensus at the Area Assembly can be discussed. This is the arena where GSRs can become better informed and be able to take back to the groups any business in which a group conscience is needed. The GSR/DCM then takes this back to the Assembly or Area Committee, for each group's conscience to can be heard.

THE DISTRICT COMMITTEE MEMBER (DCM)

The District Committee Member is a vital link between the district's groups, the Area and the Fellowship as a whole. By maintaining active contact with the A.A. groups in the district, the DCM ensures that all groups are aware of the importance of their total participation in local, district, area and world services.

Each district elects a DCM who conducts the District meetings and is a member of the Area Committee. The role of the DCM is to facilitate District meetings, and encourage as many groups as possible to be an active part of A.A. as a whole, through representation and participation. They assist the efforts of the GSRs, schedule Pre-Assemblies, Pre-Conferences and Delegate's Reports jointly with surrounding district's DCMs. Additionally, the DCM is the voice of the district and therefore tasked with representing the conscience of the district as a voting member of the Area Committee at the Quarterly Area Committee meetings in January, April and July. Districts may assign additional duties to the DCM and the Alternate DCM.

Please see The A.A. Service Manual for a more complete description of DCMs and their duties.

SECTION IV

WESTERN WASHINGTON AREA 72 AND AREA EVENTS

THE AREA

The Areas hold an important position in the U.S./Canada General Service Conference structure. The Areas are directly connected to the A.A. groups and their members through DCMs and GSRs. At the same time, they participate in the decision-making of A.A. through Area Delegates.

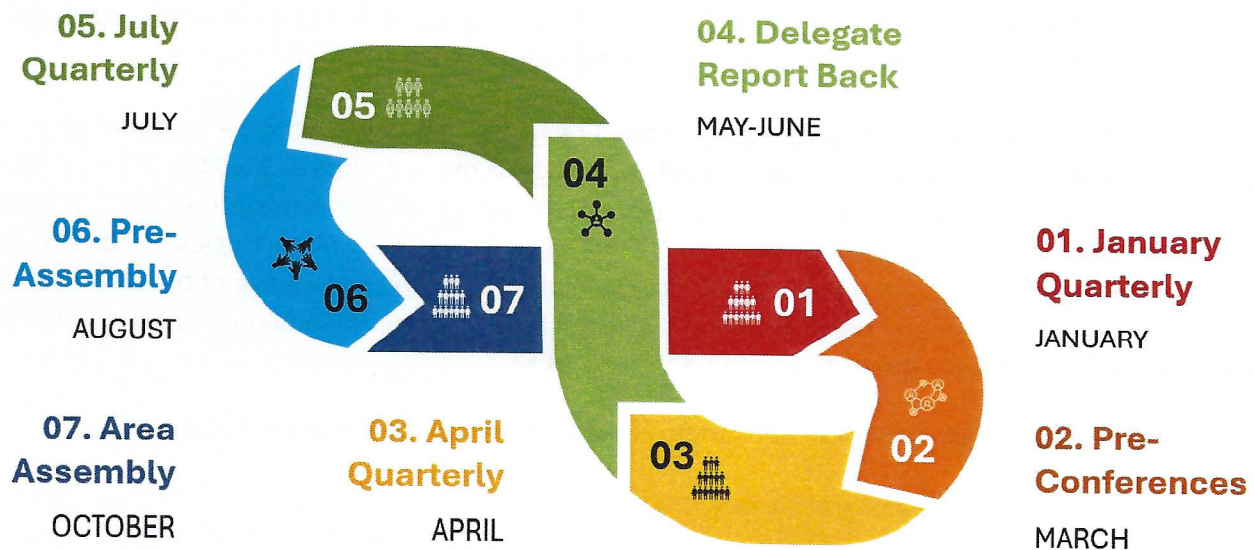
Generally speaking, Western Washington Area 72's purpose is threefold:

1. To elect a delegate who will represent the area's conscience at the annual General Service Conference, where decisions are made that affect A.A. throughout the U.S. & Canada.
2. To form a local decision-making structure so groups can collectively decide on matters that affect their area.
3. To carry out Twelfth Step work that may not be practical for groups, districts or intergroups to take on by themselves.

The U.S. and Canada are divided into 93 geographic areas. Conference delegates come from each area. Normally there is one area to a state or province, except in heavily A.A.-populated places, where there may be two, three or more areas in a state or province. Some areas include portions of more than one state or province.

Washington is divided into two Areas: Western Washington Area 72 and Washington State East Area 92. Western Washington Area 72 includes all of Washington state west of the Cascades.

Calendar of Area 72 Business Events



Specific calendar of events for the year can be found on the Area 72 website.

THE AREA COMMITTEE AND COMMITTEE QUARTERLY MEETINGS

The Area Committee is comprised of Area Elected officers, Area Appointed officers, DCMs, and Past Delegates. Voting members of the Area Committee include Area Elected officers, Appointed officers and DCMs (or Alternate DCMs, in the absence of the DCM). Past Delegates are ex-officio non-voting members. The Area Committee meets three times per year at Quarterly meetings (held in January, April and July of each year) at which GSRs are welcome to attend.

The Area Committee is tasked with creating the agenda for the annual Assembly, reviewing the work of the Area's standing committees, archives, newsletter, website and other Area housekeeping matters on an ongoing basis.

Events may be held in-person, on a virtual platform, or hybrid. It's up to the hosting group or district(s) to determine the meeting location and platform. Panel 71 (2021-2022) quickly responded to the changing needs of our Area due to the pandemic. Area 72 invested in hybrid equipment and created a Technology Steering Committee to meet the technical needs of our Area; including but not limited to making Area business meetings hybrid, managing the Area email/cloud storage system, online meeting platforms, and assisting with technology education/workshops.

Area 72 is not formally a hybrid Area. Some facilities may not have the capability for hybrid technical requirements. For example, rural districts might not have the appropriate wifi, room needed, etc. It's important all Districts are given the same opportunity to host Area related events regardless of location. Hosting committees generally look for facilities that can accommodate hybrid requirements.

The agenda for an Area Quarterly typically includes:

- Presentations by Area Officers or standing committee Chairpersons
- Discussion and sharing by DCMs regarding current district events and issues
- Deliberation and review of discussion topics and motions
- Reports from Area Officers and standing committee Chairpersons
- An Area Committee inventory is also conducted at an Area Quarterly once per two-year rotation

VARIOUS AREA MEETINGS

Pre-Conference Assemblies

A Pre-Conference is a meeting of GSRs and the Delegate held in late February or March. The purpose is for the Delegate to communicate with the GSRs (and through them, the groups) about issues which will be addressed at the General Service Conference. This way the GSRs can inform the Delegate about their groups' thoughts on the issues so that the Delegate has a sense of our Area while attending the General Service Conference.

Delegate Report Back

The Delegate gives a report to the groups/districts following the General Service Conference. These are gatherings held upon the Delegate's return from the General Service Conference. Districts join in hosting the Delegate's presentation in-person, on a virtual platform, or hybrid. All A.A. members are welcome and encouraged to attend a Delegate's Report.

Pre-Assemblies

Pre-Assemblies are held in August prior to the annual Western Washington Area Assembly. The purpose of a Pre-Assembly is to prepare GSRs (and through them, their groups) for the annual Assembly. Generally, several adjoining districts will share the responsibility of organizing and hosting these gatherings. Pre-Assemblies are attended by the Area Chairperson and the GSRs of the hosting Districts. The GSRs are provided background information and answers to questions regarding the motions and discussion topics on the Assembly agenda. The GSRs then carry this information back to their groups for discussion. Through thorough discussion, the group comes to an informed group conscience which the GSR carries to the annual Area Assembly.

Area Committee Meeting Quarterly

The Committee meets quarterly (January, April and July) with attendance at the Area Assembly counting as the fourth meeting. It is general practice for districts to host quarterly meetings of the Area. The purpose of these meetings is to discuss the business of the Area, maintain an open line of communication within our Area through sharing sessions and reports, and formulate and approve motions to be added to the agenda of the Area Assembly.

Copies of the minutes of each Quarterly are distributed to DCMs for distribution to their GSRs. These minutes are also included in the Area Newsletter.

Area Assembly

The Annual Area Assembly occurs the first full weekend of October. This is a large event attended by all GSRs in the Area, the Area Committee, guests and volunteers. Our Area Assembly is a three-day event. Friday's program usually includes workshops and panel discussions, a GSR orientation, a GSR sharing session, and a Past Delegates panel. Area business begins Saturday morning and typically includes: Area Elected and Appointed trusted servant's reports, a GSR sharing session, discussion of motions or discussion topics on the agenda, and a DCM sharing session. In even years, elections are conducted concurrently with Area business. On non-election years, our Area sometimes has a Saturday evening speaker. The Assembly weekend concludes on Sunday morning with a spiritual breakfast and speaker meeting.

Copies of the minutes of each Assembly are distributed to DCMs for distribution to their GSRs. These minutes are also included in the Area Newsletter.

Area Standing Committee Quarterly

Service committees are vital to the health and growth of A.A. Standing committees have quarterly meetings to share ways to reach the newcomer and inform the public and the fellowship. In addition to the committee quarterlies and various workshops each committee, Area Archivist, Area Registrar and Newsletter Editor or others, may hold round-table discussions for any interested A.A. member who would like to attend.

AREA DECISION MAKING PROCESS

Western Washington Area 72 uses both discussion topics and motions as decision making vehicles. The purpose of a discussion topic is to allow the Area (groups, GSRs, DCMs, Appointed and Elected servants) time to fully reflect on and explore an issue so that the right motion, if any, is developed. The purpose of a motion is to formalize a decision, via vote, to which the Area is then bound. Most Area decision making focuses on issues which are internal to Area 72. For example, funding for services, expansion of services, A.A. events we support, or requests from our Area to the General Service Conference. At times a request will come to our Area from the General Service Conference by way of our Delegate.

Process

- Our Area process includes three quarterly Area Committee meetings and one annual Area Assembly meeting.
- Discussion topics and motions can originate with any group, member, GSR, DCM, or Area officer. They are presented and reviewed at any or all of the Area Quarterlies. With Area Committee consensus, may subsequently be added to the annual Assembly Agenda.
- Once agenda items are set after the July Quarterly, the Area Chairperson prepares and distributes the background information for each motion and discussion topic
- Pre-Assemblies are used to aide in the preparation and education of members. Discussion at Pre-Assembly is intended to assist members leading home group discussion to bring a fully informed group conscience to the Area Assembly.
- Final decision making about motions and Area actions occurs at the Assembly with participation from GSRs, DCMs, Elected and Appointed officers.
- This process provides time for deliberation and review at the home group level, which is essential to forming a healthy group and Area conscience.

A scenario:

- A GSR brings a discussion topic or motion to their district
- The DCM brings the issue to the Area Chair to be added to the agenda at the next Area Quarterly
- At the Quarterly, the Area Committee reviews the issue and arrives at one of several responses:
 - The issue may be voted to be placed on the Assembly agenda
 - Tabled to the next Area Quarterly for continued review and discussion
 - Referred to an ad-hoc committee for review and recommendation making
 - Discussed with no action

Please note: discussion topics and motions passed at the Area Quarterly are placed on the Area Assembly Agenda; they are not decided/implemented at Quarterlies. Final decision making takes place at the Assembly.

In any of the above scenarios it is the DCM's responsibility to fully inform their district's GSRs of what transpired at the Quarterly meeting regarding the discussion topic or motion. It is the GSR's responsibility to subsequently inform their group.

By following this process, the groups and GSRs stay continually informed and included in Area discussion by the DCM and through the Area newsletter. If a discussion topic or motion is later acted upon at the Assembly, the group is already cognizant of the issue and their GSR is able to fully participate in helping reach an informed group conscience.

Motions

A motion is a formal proposal suggesting that the Area, collectively, should take or refrain from taking a particular action. The result of a motion is either to be passed or failed. Motion 82.8 states that "any actions established by the Washington Area Assembly cannot be changed except by Washington Area Assembly action."

Example motion – *"We move that Area 72 take **x** and **y** actions."*

Discussion Topics

A discussion topic brought to a Quarterly or Assembly does not require being passed or failed. Instead, it is a chance for sharing thoughts and ideas on the issue, examine root causes and consider alternative solutions. The results of that conversation are then shared back with groups. A discussion topic may continue and if action is required it may evolve into a motion. In recent rotations, several motions at the Area Assembly were crafted as a result of the discussion topic process.

Using discussion topics prior to formalizing motions, we are able, if needed, to create thoughtful and conscientious motions, which include feedback from groups during the Quarterly cycle. It has been our experience that when a discussion topic gives birth to a motion, that motion is informed by both groups and the Area Committee. In this way our group conscience is part of creating the motion itself.

Lastly, discussion topics sometimes require no action and instead provide an opportunity for our Area to communicate and learn from each other.

Example discussion topic: *"It seems that there is a problem with **z**, which **x** and **y** could be possible solutions to. Is **z** really a problem? Is there a component of **z** which we are unaware of? Are **x** and **y** the only solutions? If not, what else is there?"*

Floor Motions

A floor motion is a motion presented to the Chair after the July Quarterly which has not been seen at the Area Quarterlies. Area 72 allows floor motions, however, it is suggested they be reserved for emergency actions. The primary reason for this restraint, is that floor motions are requests for decision making on matters which have not gone through the Quarterly process and have not been taken to the groups, and thus they cannot result in an informed group conscience.

If a floor motion is presented, Motion 06.4 directs the Chairperson on how to proceed. (Motion 06.4: "We move that the Western Washington Area Assembly deal with floor motions in the following manner. Prior to formally discussing and voting on floor motions, the Area Chairperson will determine by simple majority vote whether the Assembly wants to a) Address, discuss, and vote on the floor motion at that time or b) refer the floor motion to the Quarterly process to be considered for addition to the agenda for the following Assembly.")

AREA BUSINESS: VOTING PROCEDURES

Voting members of the Area Quarterly are DCMs, Area Appointed and Elected officers. Voting members of the Area Assembly are GSRs, DCMs, Area Appointed and Elected officers. Past Delegates are ex officio non-voting members of the Area Committee. Proxy votes are not allowed at our Area Assemblies. Your group must have a representative present to vote (in person or online). The sole exception is for groups that are located inside correctional facilities; these groups may exercise their vote by proxy.

Motions generally require a two-thirds majority (substantial unanimity) to pass.

The Third Legacy Procedure is a special type of electoral procedure. "It is considered to be unique to A.A., and at first glance, appears to introduce a strong element of chance into a matter that should depend solely on the judgment of the majority. In practice, however, it has proved highly successful in eliminating the influence of factions or parties that seem to thrive on most political scenes. The railroading of a candidate for election is made difficult, if not impossible, since voters have a wide selection of candidates to choose from. More importantly, a second-place candidate who may be extremely well qualified but without early popular support is encouraged to stay in the balloting rather than withdraw." (*The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service*, p. 114)

A description and diagram of the Third Legacy voting procedure can be found in Appendix G of *The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service*.

BUDGETING PROCESS

Western Washington Area 72 Current Budget Process

- A proposed annual budget is created by the Treasurer using the following guidelines:
 - ⇒ Forecast contributions based on previous years trends.
 - ⇒ Review of area motions to ensure that activities directed by the Area are accounted for in the budget.

- ⇒ Consult with existing Committee Chairs on financial needs for the year.
- ⇒ Review of previous year's expenditures to determine requirements, and current pricing with assistance and guidance from the Area Alternate Treasurer.
- ⇒ The Treasurer may solicit input, review and proposed changes from the Area Finance Committee, past Area Treasurers, outside accountants, etc., for assistance in the creation of the final proposed budget.
- The proposed budget is presented, discussed and approved at the January Quarterly.
- Budget limits are disseminated to Committee Chairs to communicate annual spending limits.
- As Area business takes place, transactions are entered and reviewed by Area Treasurer and Alternate Treasurer.
- ⇒ The Treasurer records incoming contributions and receipts of funds, the Alternate Treasurer records expenses and disbursements.
- ⇒ If the budget needs to be adjusted, then it is brought forth to the Area Committee at the next Quarterly and reported upon.
- At each Quarterly the Treasurer and Alternate Treasurer report on actual results, and provide guidance on remaining year, including any adjustments determined.
- The Area Committee receives the treasury report at each Quarterly.
- Annually, the Treasurer determines excess funds and working reserve needs. These calculations are reviewed and agreed upon by the Treasurer, Alternate Treasurer and Finance Committee.
- Excess funds are contributed to GSB and are reported in the January as part of the Treasurers Report.

The Area budget, contributions by group, and financial reports can be requested from the Area Treasurer or Alternate Treasurer and found on the Area 72 website.

*****This is only a reference summary of the budget process. Reach out to the Area Treasurer or Alternate Treasurer for more information or questions.***

AREA TRUSTED SERVANTS

Area Elected Officers: Panel 75 (2025 & 2026)



Area Delegate: Courtney S. (delegate@area72aa.org)

Provides leadership to the Area by being involved in Area functions to the fullest extent possible, and by keeping an open line of communication between the General Service Office (GSO), the General Service Conference and the groups. Distributes Conference agenda items to groups for their discussion and input, holds regional Pre-Conferences, and then carries our Area's collective conscience to the General Service Conference in April of each year. Returns from the Conference and reports back to the groups. For a complete listing of Delegate's duties, refer to *The A.A. Service Manual*, Chapter Five.

Alternate Area Delegate: Lupita Y.M. (altdelegate@area72aa.org)

Receives all correspondence from the General Service Office on the Conference that is sent to the Delegate so he/she can be informed in the event it becomes necessary to assume the Delegate's duties. Coordinates with the Delegate on Area issues. Is available to chair or work on special projects as needed or requested by the Area.

Area Chairperson: Derek S. (chair@area72aa.org)

Assumes a leadership role within the Area by organizing, setting the agenda, and chairing three Western Washington Area 72 Quarterly business meetings and the Western Washington Area 72 Assembly. Also chairs the meeting for the selection of Appointed trusted servants. Keeps Alternate Chairperson informed. Corresponds with the Districts regarding their problems and concerns. A further description of duties is outlined in *The A.A. Service Manual*, Chapter Four.

Alternate Area Chairperson: Lisa S. (altchair@area72aa.org)

Communicates with the Chairperson on information pertinent to the Area. Facilitates the DCM sharing and report session at Area Quarterly meetings and the Western Washington Area 72 Assembly. Acts as liaison between the Area Committee and the Host Committee for Area Quarterlies and the Area Assembly. Participates in Host Committee meetings and the planning of the Area Committee business meetings. Coordinates and plans the Assembly workshops and facilitates the Assembly sharing sessions.

Area Treasurer: Theresa H. (treasurer@area72aa.org)

As the guardian of Area 72's Seventh Tradition, the Treasurer keeps the Area informed of financial matters with regular reports to the Committee. Stays abreast of the Area's needs, including annual budget and income needed to carry out service work. Surveys and points out all money-related issues as they arise. Receives and records contributions from groups by district. Is available to participate in service functions to discuss our Seventh Tradition, explain our regular contribution plan and to provide information on Area finances. The Area Treasurer serves on the Finance Committee.

Alternate Area Treasurer: Derek N. (alttreasurer@area72aa.org)

Writes all checks approved by the Western Washington Area 72 Assembly. Is responsible for balancing the Area checkbook and bank balance. Lists check register, expenses and credit lines on a quarterly basis. Coordinates with the Treasurer in encouraging contributions at the group level. Keeps abreast of the financial needs of the Area and the financial problems of the groups. Is available to participate in service functions to discuss the Seventh Tradition, explain our regular contribution plan and to provide information on Area finances. Serves as the Area Finance Committee chairperson.

Area Appointed Trusted Servants



Accessibility Committee Chair: (accessibility@area72aa.org)

Follows the guidelines as outlined in the Accessibilities Committee Workbook from G.S.O. Schedules and facilitates four quarterly meetings with District Accessibility Committee chairs to share experience in this service area. Addresses accessibilities needs and issues for Western Washington Area 72. Coordinates services as outlined in the Area Accessibilities Committee guidelines.

Archives Committee Chair: (archiveschair@area72aa.org)

Follows the guidelines as outlined in the Archives Committee Workbook from G.S.O. Facilitates quarterly Archives Standing Committee meetings and chairs monthly Archives Steering Committee meetings. Facilitates repository site-selection decisions.

Area Archivist: (archivist@area72aa.org)

Maintains a portable display of historical materials which is to be made available to A.A. service functions. Works closely with the Area Archives Steering Committee to collect, organize, store, maintain, and display historical files and materials pertinent to the Area and to A.A. in general. The Archivist relies upon the advice and counsel of the Steering Committee in carrying out the duties of the Archivist, which include management of the archives repository. Serves as a member of the Archives Steering Committee. (The Area Archivist is selected by the Archives Steering Committee and submitted to Area Elected Officers for addition to the appointed officer slate.)

Cooperation with the Professional Community Chair: (cpc@area72aa.org)

Follows the guidelines as outlined in the Cooperation with the Professional Community Workbook from G.S.O. Schedules and facilitates four quarterly meetings with District CPC Committee Chairs to share experience in this service area. Coordinates and supports district efforts to provide information to the professional community and to those who have contact with alcoholics through their profession.

Correctional Facilities Committee Chair: (corrections@area72aa.org)

Follows the guidelines as outlined in the Correctional Facilities Workbook from G.S.O. Schedules and facilitates four quarterly meetings with District Corrections Committee chairs to share information on A.A. meetings in correctional facilities. Acts in an advisory capacity to the District Corrections chairpersons and DCMs on corrections work. Appoints the "Corrections Pre-Release Program" and Corrections Literature coordinators. Seeks to understand facility regulations and explains them to those who will be in direct contact with the groups. Coordinates with the Area Alternate Treasurer to manage Grapevine subscriptions and literature purchases for correctional facilities in Western Washington.

Grapevine & Literature Chair: (gvlit@area72aa.org)

Follows the guidelines as outlined in the Grapevine Workbook and in the Literature Committee Guidelines from G.S.O. Facilitates four Area-wide Grapevine and Literature quarterly meetings per year. Educates the fellowship about A.A. literature, related service material, and how to obtain it. Maintains a comprehensive literature display consisting of items from A.A.W.S., G.S.O., A.A. Grapevine, Inc., and other A.A. materials. Is available to take this display to various service workshops, Quarterlies and the Area Assembly. Encourages groups to have Grapevine Representatives and stresses the Grapevine as a valuable tool for groups and individual members.

Language Chair: (languagechair@area72aa.org)

Serves as chair of Language Steering Committee and cooperates with the Area Accessibility Committee. The Language Steering Committee coordinates all interpretation and translation needs for Western Washington Area business. Guidelines for this Committee can be found in the Language Committee Guidelines in the back of the Area handbook.

Newsletter Editor: (newsletter@area72aa.org)

Publishes, on a monthly basis, a newsletter that serves as our principal communication tool within the Area. May appoint a working committee to assist in the format, content and distribution of the newsletter. Receives, formats and edits articles received from the Area committee and other members and prepares for bulk mailing. Selects a local printer for the newsletter. Provides Spanish-language editions of the Area newsletter.

Public Information Chair: (pi@area72aa.org)

Studies and follows the A.A. Guidelines for Public Information, the P.I. Workbook and all A.A. literature pertinent to Public Information work. Schedules and facilitates four quarterly meetings with District PI Committee Chairs to

share experience in this service area. Reports anonymity breaks that occur to the Area Delegate and encourages District P.I. chairpersons to do the same. Serves on Web Steering Committee.

Registrar: (registrar@area72aa.org)

The Registrar position is to help facilitate communication between groups, the Area Committee and the General Service Office by maintaining an accurate roster of all GSRs and Area Committee members. Maintains a current address list of all subscribers, GSRs and other trusted servants for newsletter distribution.

Secretary: (secretary@area72aa.org)

Assists Area Chairperson in preparing agendas and meeting notices of Area meetings and distributes to the Area Committee. Attends Area Quarterly meetings and Assemblies and records the proceedings for the minutes, using notes, digital recorders and written reports. Emails minutes to the Area Committee and ensures a copy is in the Area newsletter and the Area Archives. (The Area Secretary for is appointed by the Area Chair.)

Sound System Operator: (sound@area72aa.org)

Transports and operates Area sound and video conferencing equipment, as needed, to the following Western Washington Area 72 events only: Pre-Conferences, Delegate's Reports, Pre-Assemblies, Area 72 quarterlies (3), and Area 72 Assembly. Serves as Co-Chair of the Technology Steering Committee.

Treatment Facilities Committee Chair: (treatment@area72aa.org)

Uses the guidelines as outlined in the Treatment Facilities Workbook from G.S.O. Schedules and facilitates four quarterly meetings with District Treatment Committee chairpersons in the Area. Encourages participation in the "Bridging the Gap" program and keeps a list of temporary contacts for individuals preparing to leave treatment facilities. Coordinates with Area Alternate Treasurer to manage Grapevine subscriptions to the districts for treatment facilities.

Web Servant: (webservant@area72aa.org)

Follows the A.A. Guidelines for the Internet and other A.A. literature pertinent to our online presence. Chair of the Area Website Steering Committee, and Co-Chair of the Technology Steering Committee. The Webmaster is responsible for the input of content, maintenance, and security of the area website and mobile applications. Is also responsible for the maintenance of and support for the Area email, online document system, video conferencing services. (Area website is www.area72aa.org)

Web and Tech Committee Chair: (webchair@area72aa.org)

Facilitates quarterly Area Web Standing Committee meetings. Follows the A.A. Guidelines for the Internet and all A.A. literature pertinent to our online presence. Encourages web related workshops, individually or in conjunction with other committees. Reports online anonymity breaks that may occur to the Area Delegate and Area P.I. Chair and encourages District Webservants to do the same. Serves on Area Web Steering Committee.

Young People's Chair: (ypchair@area72aa.org)

Schedules and facilitates quarterly meetings with District Young People Committee chairpersons. Communicates with the Area Committee the needs of the districts and groups regarding service opportunities for young AA members. Collaborates with other Area Committees where there is a need for young person participation (high school panels, juvenile corrections facilities, youth treatment centers, etc.).

See the Area Directory for complete contact information

SECTION V

BEYOND THE AREA

THE GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

Why Do We Need a Conference?

The late Bernard B. Smith, nonalcoholic, then chairperson of the board of trustees, and one of the architects of the Conference structure, answered that question superbly in his opening talk at the 1954 meeting: "We may not need a General Service Conference to ensure our own recovery. We do need it to ensure the recovery of the alcoholic who still stumbles in the darkness one short block from this room. We need it to ensure the recovery of a child being born tonight, destined for alcoholism. We need it to provide, in keeping with our Twelfth Step, a permanent haven for all alcoholics who, in the ages ahead, can find in A.A. that rebirth that brought us back to life.

"We need it because we, more than all others, are conscious of the devastating effect of the human urge for power and prestige which we must ensure can never invade A.A. We need it to ensure A.A. against government, while insulating it against anarchy; we need it to protect A.A. against disintegration while preventing overintegration. We need it so that Alcoholics Anonymous, and Alcoholics Anonymous alone, is the ultimate repository of its Twelve Steps, its Twelve Traditions, and all of its services.

"We need it to ensure that changes within A.A. come only as a response to the needs and the wants of all A.A., and not of any few. We need it to ensure that the doors of the halls of A.A. never have locks on them, so that all people for all time who have an alcoholic problem may enter these halls unasked and feel welcome. We need it to ensure that Alcoholics Anonymous never asks of anyone who needs us what his or her race is, what his or her creed is, what his or her social position is."

(The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service, p. 40)

"While the General Service Conference operates all year round, the annual meeting, usually held in April, is the culmination of the year's activities, the time when the collective group conscience of U.S./Canada A.A. comes together to take actions that will guide the groups in the years that follow.

The Conference comes closer to a governing body than anything else in A.A., but as Bill W. put it in the first edition of this manual: 'Of course it cannot be too often said that while the Conference can issue orders to the General Service Office, it can never mandate or govern the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous which it serves. The Conference represents us, but cannot rule us'." *(The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service, p. 39)*

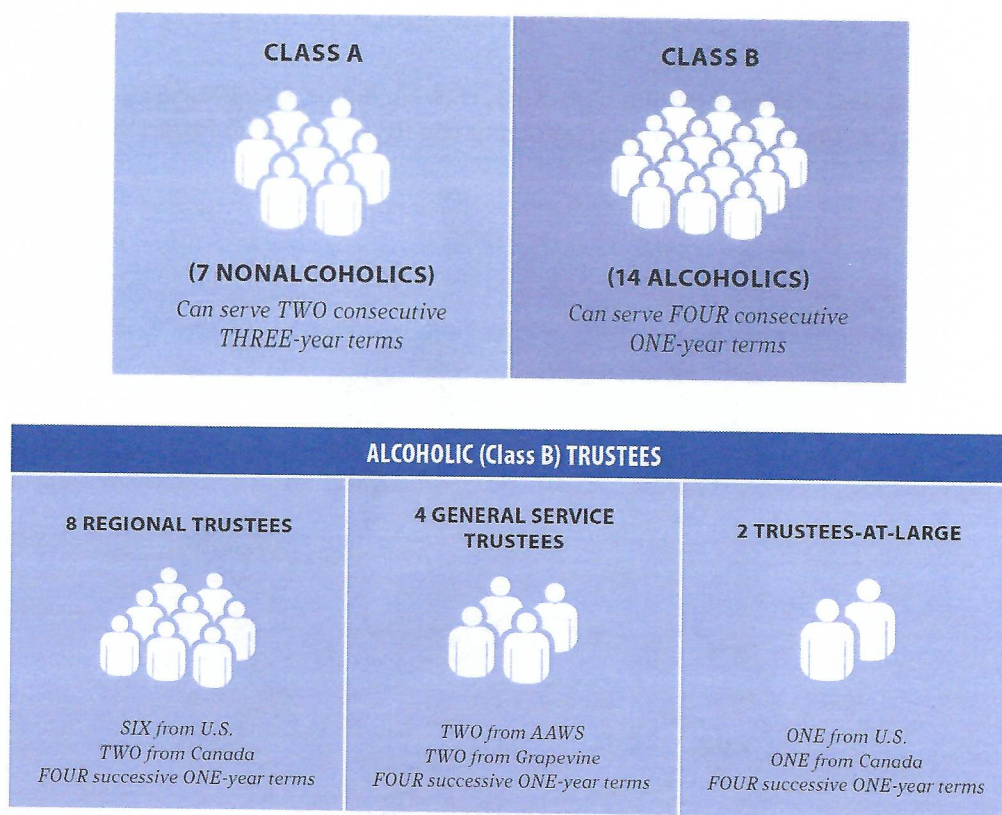
There are a total of 93 Delegates, one for each Area throughout the US and Canada. The Delegates are elected for a two-year term with about one half elected each year to provide both continuity and rotation. The Area 72 Delegate serves in odd numbered panels.

Each year, there are approximately 135 voting members of the General Service Conference acting together as guardians of A.A. and of the Steps and Traditions. They are composed generally as follows:

- 93 area delegates (who make up at least two-thirds of the Conference body)
- 21 or 22 trustees of the General Service Board
- 6 nontrustee directors from AAWS and Grapevine

15 A.A. Staff at the General Service Office (AAWS, Grapevine and La Viña)

THE GENERAL SERVICE BOARD



Regional Trustee

Reason for Regional Trustees: These trustees are selected for their service experience and familiarity with A.A. principles. While no trustee can be said to “represent” a geographical section — all trustees represent only the Fellowship as a whole — regional trustees bring to the board’s discussions a regional A.A. point of view and experience that is invaluable.

General Service Board Trustee

Reason for General Service Trustees: The general service trustees are A.A. members who serve on the respective boards of AAWS and Grapevine. They are available at any time for the solution of problems on which GSO or Grapevine staff members need help. Traditionally, they have been selected for their business or professional backgrounds in order to provide the boards with particular expertise that may be needed or requested by each of the corporate boards.

At-Large Trustee

Reason for Trustees-at-Large: These trustees are selected for their service experience and familiarity with A.A. principles. They bring to the board's discussions a broad perspective informed by their ongoing contact with the international A.A. community.

REGIONS

The Areas in the United States and Canada are sorted into eight Regions. Area 72 is in the Pacific Region.

The Pacific Region includes: Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Washington. There are 15 Areas in the Pacific Region. A map showing the Regions can be found in *The A.A. Service Manual*, section titled Maps.



PACIFIC REGION ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS SERVICE ASSEMBLY (PRAASA)

PRAASA is held annually, the first weekend of March. The purpose of PRAASA is to develop greater unity among the members, groups and Areas of the Pacific Region. Through panels, presentations and roundtables, the exchange of ideas and experiences is encouraged among attendees. PRAASA seeks to provide an opportunity for members to discuss pertinent aspects of Alcoholics Anonymous. It consists of presentations concerning our Three Legacies and matters of the full agenda for the upcoming General Service Conference. A different Area hosts this assembly each year. Area 72 funds the Delegate to attend PRAASA each year. More information is available at www.praasa.org.

PACIFIC NORTHWEST CONFERENCE (PNC)

In February of 1948, Bill W. was in Seattle, WA, and spoke to a standing-room-only crowd of A.A.'s and their families. Following the meeting, Bill and some other members from Seattle were driving to Vancouver B.C. when Bill elaborated on his plan for a world conference.

The first Pacific Northwest Conference (PNC) convened in Vancouver, BC, Canada Area 79 in May of 1948. The oldest continuing conference in A.A. still provides an opportunity for A.A.'s from all over the Pacific Northwest to gather together and share, learn, reach out and have fun. The conference typically includes speakers, panels and workshops. More information is available at www.pnc1948.org.

REGIONAL FORUMS

These forums are weekend-long sharing and informational sessions that provide unique opportunities to share and exchange valuable experience, ask questions and spark new ideas. They are also intended to help the General Service Board, A.A. World Services, and AA Grapevine, and GSO and Grapevine staff members stay in touch with A.A. members, trusted servants and newcomers throughout the A.A. service structure. Regional Forums carry A.A.'s message of love and service by improving communication at all levels of our Fellowship. Forums are held on a rotating basis, at the request of each region. There is no registration fee for Regional Forums. The General Service Board covers the expenses of meeting rooms.

As all Forums are intended to be sharing sessions, no formal actions result. Sharing is captured in Forum Final Reports, which are distributed to all attendees, and are available on GSO's website.

A.A. WORLDWIDE

Alcoholics Anonymous is a worldwide organization. There are General Service Offices in many countries, each of which is autonomous. Our General Service Office for the United States and Canada is located in New York City. No attempt is made to have this office be the world capital of A.A. Rather, the New York office is available to share experience, strength and hope with offices in other countries, mainly because it has been in existence the longest. Every two years, a World Service meeting is held with the Trustee-At-large each from the United

States and Canada attending as our delegates. This meeting serves as the way that Alcoholics Anonymous establishes and maintains its worldwide communication links.

After the Conference, reporting to groups, districts and the Area back home is a big part of the Delegate's job. They are provided with the "early bird" edition of "Box 4-5-9", a bulletin that summarizes outstanding Conference actions, to assist them with their reports. The "Final Conference Report" comes off the press during the summer and provides a complete record of reports, discussions, workshops and actions. It is not a verbatim account, but no significant aspect of the Conference is omitted. Delegates continue to receive information regarding GSO, Grapevine and General Service Board activities throughout the year and regularly report to the Area on pertinent issues.

SECTION VI

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

THE PRINCIPLE OF ROTATION

The principle of rotation flows from Tradition Two: “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.” In addition, Concepts IX and XI reference the principle of rotation in General Service.

From *The A.A. Group* (pamphlet):

Traditionally, rotation ensures that group tasks, like nearly everything else in A.A., are passed around for all to share.

Many groups have alternates to each trusted servant who can step into the service positions if needed.

To step out of an A.A. office you love can be hard. If you have been doing a good job, if you honestly don't see anyone else around willing, qualified, or with the time to do it, and if your friends agree, it's especially tough. But it can be a real step forward in growth — a step into the humility that is, for some people, the spiritual essence of anonymity.

Among other things, anonymity in the Fellowship means that we forgo personal prestige for any A.A. work we do to help alcoholics. And, in the spirit of Tradition Twelve, it ever reminds us “to place principles before personalities.”

Many outgoing service position holders find it rewarding to take time to share their experience with the incoming person. Rotation helps to bring us spiritual rewards far more enduring than any fame. With no A.A. “status” at stake, we needn't compete for titles or praise — we have complete freedom to serve as we are needed.

Additional resources: *Twelve Concepts for World Service*; *Twelve Concepts Illustrated* (pamphlet); *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*.

(*The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service*, p. 111)

In most groups, the GSR is elected to a two-year term, which (ideally) coincides with the Area rotation. DCMs and Area officers likewise serve two-year terms.

In any one year, about half of the A.A. groups are busy electing GSRs and half of all area assemblies are electing qualified delegates to the annual Conference meeting, depending on whether the area is an “odd” or “even”

panel. (A panel refers to a group of delegates elected to begin serving at the General Service Conference in a particular year.) Each panel is numbered for the Conference at which the area's delegate will first serve. For example, delegates attending the 75th General Service Conference as their first Conference are Panel 75 delegates.

COMMITMENT AND PRINCIPLES

As members of the general service structure, principles that we must now demonstrate as a trusted servant include willingness, self-sacrifice, honesty, consideration of others, thoughtfulness, love, tolerance and, most of all, basic etiquette.

- Do we mark our A.A. commitments on the calendar and work around them, or do we attend only if it doesn't interfere with our own pleasure?
- Do we attend service activities in order to become better informed, or do we do the least possible required?
- When we are unable to make an event that the GSR should attend, do we arrange for our alternate to be there?
- Do we keep our alternates well informed and involved?
- Are we able to offer criticism lovingly and based on the application of our three legacies, or do we let personalities get in the way?

THE INFORMED GROUP CONSCIENCE

Concept XII, Warranty Four:

"That all important decisions should be reached by discussion, vote, and whenever possible, by substantial unanimity."

"Here on the one hand we erect a safeguard against any hasty or overbearing authority of a simple majority; and on the other hand it takes notice of the rights and the frequent wisdom of minorities, however small. This principle further guarantees that all matters of importance, time permitting, will be extensively debated, and that such debates will continue until a really heavy majority can support every critical decision that we are called upon to make..." (The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service, p. C-53)

The Group Conscience strives for unanimity through enlightenment, spirituality, and the practice of our principles. To be fully informed requires a willingness to listen to minority opinions through full discussion. On sensitive issues, the group works slowly, discouraging formal motions until the group has a clear sense of its views. Placing principles before personalities, the group is wary of dominant opinions. The group conscience is the aggregate of experience a group develops after applying the Traditions and Concepts to a question. The difference between a group conscience and a majority vote or group opinion is that one or more of the elements described above are missing.

LOCAL INTERGROUPS AND CENTRAL OFFICES

A central or intergroup office is an A.A. service entity that involves partnership among groups in a community — just as A.A. groups themselves are partnerships of individuals. An intergroup/central office is established to carry out certain functions common to all the groups — functions which are best handled by a centralized office — and it is usually maintained, supervised, and supported by these groups in their general interest. It exists to aid the groups in their common purpose of carrying the A.A. message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

A.A. experience has demonstrated that intergroup/central offices are helpful, particularly in populous areas. The following suggestions outline the basic services an intergroup/central office might offer:

- Receiving, arranging, and following up Twelfth Step calls.
- Answering inquiries about A.A.
- Establishing local Public Information committees.
- Maintaining information about local hospitals and recovery facilities for alcoholics.
- Publishing local A.A. meeting lists.
- Providing a newsletter.
- Ordering, selling and distributing AA Conference-approved literature.

For further information, reference Appendix S of *The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service*.

SECTION VII

TIPS AND TOOLS

REFERENCE TOOLS FOR THE GSR

The GSR Kit List is available on AA.org [here](#).

- *The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service* ([BM-31](#))
- The A.A. Group...Where it all Begins ([P-16](#))
- GSR: Your group's link to A.A. as a whole ([P-19](#))
- Circles of Love and Service ([P-45](#))
- A.A. Tradition - How it Developed ([P-17](#))
- Inside A.A. ([P-18](#))
- The Twelve Concepts for World Service Illustrated ([P-8](#))
- *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* ([B-2](#))
- *A.A. Comes of Age* ([B-3](#))

USEFUL LINKS

- Click **this link** to see [information for new trusted servants](#). Although it is possible to update contact information directly with GSO, to ensure you receive Area communications and Area 72 records are updated timely, please complete the [District trusted servant update form](#) from the Area 72 website.
- The [A.A. Service Committees page](#) enables interested members to obtain specific, additional, resources for various kinds of AA service work. Use the links below to get digital versions of available committee workbooks from GSO:
 - [Accessibilities Workbook](#)
 - [Archives Workbook](#)
 - [Cooperation with the Professional Community Workbook](#)
 - [Corrections Workbook](#)
 - [Literature Committee Guidelines](#)
 - [Public Information Workbook](#)
 - [Treatment Workbook](#)

Note: Printing/saving a single copy of these items is permitted in accordance with the AA World Services, Inc [Content Use Policy](#).

- Click the following link to get a digital copy of the [current literature catalog](#).

TIPS / SUGGESTIONS FOR A GSR

At the Home Group meeting

- Attend your home group regularly
- Give regular reports to your group regarding the district, Area (Area newsletter) and GSO (Box 4-5-9)
- Explain issues to be voted upon and through discussion, develop group conscience (on matters at the District, Area and General Service Conference levels).
- Write down questions and comments from group members and bring to district meetings and Area Assembly meetings.
- Ensure your group is informed of updates at the General Service Office, A.A. World Services and the Grapevine, including updates/new editions of pamphlets and books

At the District Meeting

- Bring up issues or concerns from your group for discussion with other GSRs.
- Prepare and give GSR report.
- Bring your home group conscience to the district meeting.
- Take notes to report back to your group.
- Communicate with the DCM to put items on the agenda for district meeting – when you have something.
- Supply the DCM with up-to-date group information.

WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE DISTRICT MEETING

Before the meeting

- Receive and distribute flyers for upcoming events in your District/Area.
- Review agenda and/or any preparatory materials

During the District meeting

- Have reports available to you for reference during the meeting (meeting agenda, Treasurer report, DCM report, etc.). This may be an electronic version or hard copy.
- The majority of the District meeting consists of verbal and written reports from the various trusted servants.
- Give your GSR report. (See example, or use district prompts)
- Take notes:
 - During reports as to what you think your group will find important
 - Of what positions are open to add to your group announcements
 - On what is said during open forum
 - On business (old, new, motions)
- Pay close attention to any topics that are sent back for group feedback.

- At the next District meeting you will need to share the conscience of your group.
- If possible, sit with someone new or reach out to another GSR you see at the virtual meeting.

After the Meeting

- Follow up and ask questions, if needed.
- Go back to your group and update the flyers or other event information you may have received at the District meeting. Provide your group copies for distribution either electronically and/or hardcopy.

REPORTING BACK TO YOUR HOME GROUP

It's important to get your group used to hearing a GSR report. Ask your group how they would like the information presented. Some groups prefer a short presentation with high level information and others prefer a detailed report from the District meeting.

It can be helpful to use the District meeting agenda as a starting point for your GSR report. Take the District agenda and update to meet the needs of your group.

When giving your report:

- Be prepared! Don't wing it.
- Be positive!
- Ask for feedback from the group.
- Make District and group event announcements at your meetings when there is a call for A.A. related announcements.
- During the group's regular business meeting, break down the information into short bullet points.
- Your report should consist of highlights from reports given at the District meeting:
 - Financial reports (keep it simple),
 - Motions voted on at the District
 - New topics to be discussed by the group
 - Recap/discussions from Quarterlies
 - District activities (committee quarterlies, service opportunities, Fellowship activities)
 - Anything else that you think is noteworthy
- If an informed group conscience is needed so that you can vote on behalf of your group, then you will need to give more in-depth information.
- It is suggested you have more detailed reports you collected at the District meeting available if someone would like to review them at the business meeting.
- Email a more detailed report if the group prefers the information in this format.

SAMPLE GSR REPORT

Report to Home Group

My name is _____ and I'm an alcoholic. I am honored to serve as your General Service Representative. A GSR is the link between an A.A. group and A.A. as a whole. It is my responsibility to bring you news and issues that concern A.A., and to bring this group's vote and opinions on issues being decided by the whole of A.A.

The District meeting occurred on _____ at _____ (location).

Items of interest discussed: _____

Items needing group conscience: _____

Upcoming events: _____

Other information: _____

Thank you for letting me be of service.

Report to the District

My name is _____ and I'm an alcoholic. I serve as the GSR for _____.

Service positions filled within the group: (Report openings or if they are all filled)

_____ + _____

Concerns, challenges or things that are going well: _____

Upcoming group events:

Other Information:

Thank you for letting me be of service.

GROUP CONSCIENCE PROCESS

(Written from the perspective of the person chairing the meeting)

Before you start:

Thoroughly explain the voting process: who may vote, how the vote will be cast, how many votes to pass, etc.

Then: Present the issue

When presenting an issue or topic it's recommended to remain neutral.

Sometimes the issue will be presented by the maker of the topic or by the DCM; there is no rule.

Then:

Allow time for discussion (Listen: is there a balance of viewpoints?)

When you start hearing people repeating the same information ask the following question, "Does anyone have any new information?"

Next:

Call for a vote.

Substantial unanimity (two-thirds) is the standard employed for most votes.

If your group conscience calls for something other than substantial unanimity, then go with the group conscience.

After the Vote:

Ask for the minority opinion and if they would like to speak

If no one from the minority wants to speak then the vote is over.

or

If someone or multiple people speak from the minority opinion. Someone who voted in the majority can call for a reconsideration of the vote if they have been swayed by the minority position.

If a reconsideration is requested, then facilitate a vote on whether to reconsider (and therefore reopen the discussion of) the original motion. This vote is passed with a simple majority.

If the majority votes to reconsider, full debate is resumed.

BRIEF ROBERT RULES OF ORDER GUIDE

Generally speaking, we follow Robert's Rules of Order loosely! They are not to be used so rigidly we cannot communicate from the heart.

"It is important to remember that the purpose of rules of order is to make it easier for the Conference to conduct its business; rules exist to allow the Conference to do what it needs to do to carry out the will of the Fellowship by reaching an informed group conscience." (*The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service*, p. 173)

MOTION		REQUIRES A "SECOND"?	IS DEBATABLE?	VOTE REQUIRED FOR APPROVAL	MINORITY VOICE HEARD?
Committee Recommendation	Presented in the committee report.	Automatically seconded	YES	Two-thirds	YES
Amending a Motion	A motion on the floor is owned by the entire Conference body, no longer by the Committee that recommended it. The committee is not asked to vote on the motion to amend; any motion to amend a main motion depends on the approval of the Conference.	YES	YES	Two-thirds	YES
Tabling a Motion	Made without comment.	YES	NO	Simple Majority	NO
Moving to Recommit	Made without comment.	YES	YES	Two-thirds	NO
Calling the Question	Made without comment.	YES	NO	Two-thirds	NO
Reconsidering a Vote	May only be made by a member who voted with the prevailing side. No action may be reconsidered twice.	YES May be seconded by either side.	NO	Simple Majority	NO
Making a Floor Action	Made without comment. Introduced any time during the Conference except at the Sharing Sessions. Is submitted in writing by the maker to the Conference secretary.	YES	YES	Two-thirds	YES
Declining to Consider a Floor Action	Made without comment. May be made after the maker of a floor action is provided time to state the rationale for it.	YES	NO	Two-thirds	NO

GLOSSARY OF COMMON A.A. TERMS

- **Alternate:** A service worker who, at group, district, or area level, assists, supports and participates in service responsibilities, and stands ready to step into the service position if the person occupying it is no longer able to serve.
- **Archives:** A collection of A.A. memorabilia. The Archivist's functions might include collection, indexing, storing and exhibiting original and reproduced local, national and international A.A. material.
- **Area:** A geographical division within a state or Province. Normally there is one Area for each state or Province. Where there is high population, a state or Province may divide into two or more Areas.
- **Area Assembly:** A meeting of GSRs and committee members to discuss area affairs and, every other year, to elect a delegate and committee officers. The Assembly is a basic unit of the general service structure and conducts or helps coordinate most of the business for the Area.
- **Box 4-5-9:** The quarterly newsletter from the U.S./Canada General Service Office. This newsletter includes information about A.A. service, literature, events, sharing from groups, service committees and individual members.
- **Conference:** The General Service Conference; this can mean either the structure involving committee members, GSRs and delegates in an area, or the annual meeting of Conference delegates each spring in New York.
- **Concepts:** The twelve principles of service that have emerged from A.A.'s service accomplishments and mistakes since its beginning, as set forth by Bill W. in *The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service*.
- **Delegate:** The A.A. member elected every other year to represent the area at the annual Conference meeting in New York and to bring back to the area the results of that meeting.
- **District Committee Member (D.C.M.):** District committee member. An experienced GSR elected by other GSRs to represent the groups of their district in area committee meetings and to coordinate service activities in the district.
- **General Service Representative (G.S.R.):** An A.A. member who is elected by a Group to represent that Group's conscience in discussions at the District and Area levels. The GSR also keeps the group as informed as possible of important decisions, discussions and events occurring within A.A. at the district, Area, Regional, national and international levels.
- **Region:** A grouping of several areas from which a regional trustee comes to the board of trustees. There are six regions in the U.S., two in Canada.
- **Third Legacy:** Recovery and unity are our first two legacies. Our Third Legacy is Service: the sum total of all A.A. services, from the twelfth step call to A.A.'s coast-to-coast and worldwide activities.
- **Third Legacy Procedure:** Method by which delegates to the General Service Conference as well as area officers are typically elected by their area's assemblies.
- **Trustee:** A member of A.A.'s General Service Board. Fourteen trustees are A.A. members (Class B); seven are nonalcoholic (Class A).
- **Warranties:** The Twelfth Concept of World Service consists of The Six Warranties that are also Article 12 of the Conference Charter. Some consider these Warranties to be the A.A. Bill of Rights