

# General Service Representative Handbook Western Washington Area 72



This handbook 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 the other A.A. literature. In no manner whatsoever is this handbook intended to supersede the above-mentioned references or any A.A. General Service Conference approved literature.

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## SECTION I - Introduction

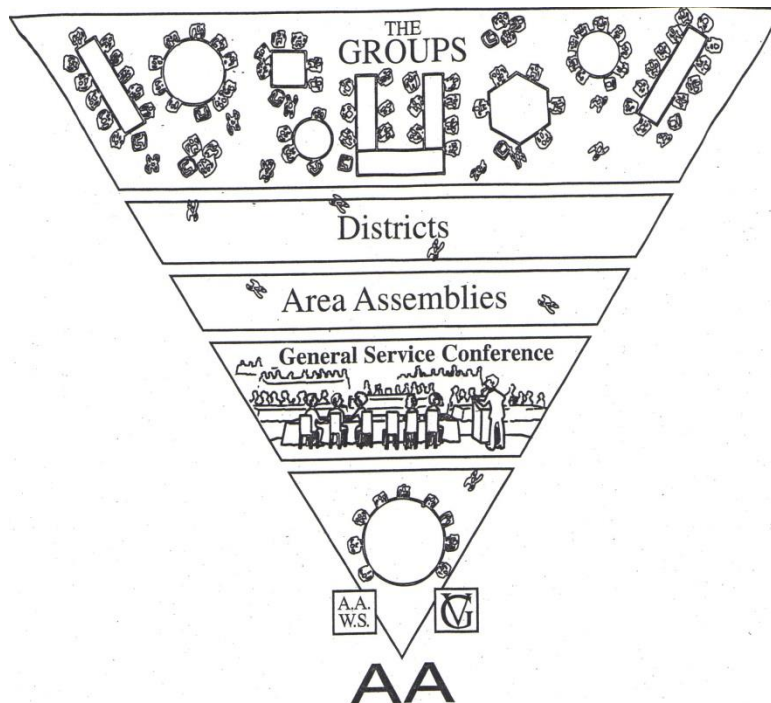
### WELCOME TO ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS GENERAL SERVICE

The Twelve Traditions make clear the principle that A.A., as such, should never be organized, that there are no bosses and no government in A.A. Yet at the same time, the Traditions recognize the need for some kind of 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 at the Area Committee and to the Area Delegate who passes them on to the 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.**

### AN UPSIDE-DOWN ORGANIZATION



Alcoholics Anonymous has been called an upside-down organization.

- **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 42 Districts (and two Spanish speaking language Districts) and covers the western third of Washington state. 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.

The GSR makes sure the Group's wishes are heard and considered at the District and Area levels, and that they are part of the Delegate's thinking at the Conference.

## SECTION II – The Home Group

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### 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.*
- *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 only requirement for 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 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.*

## **GSR DUTIES**

In broad terms, the GSR is responsible for:

- Linking their Group with AA as a whole
- Representing the voice of the Group's Conscience
- Reporting their Group's Conscience to the DCM and the Delegate
- Bringing the Area and District suggestions, as well as the Conference Advisory Actions, back to their Group

The above is accomplished by:

- Attending, or facilitating, your Group's Business Meeting
- Making sure your Group is registered with General Service Office (and up to date)
- Attending your District's monthly District Meeting to represent your Group and act as a member of the District
- Attending the Area 72 Annual Assembly to represent your Group and act as a member of the Area
- Attending an Area 72 regional Pre-Conference Assemblies (held annually as preparation for the General Service Conference) and Conference Reports
- Attending an Area 72 regional Pre-Assembly (held annually as preparation for the Assembly)
- Bringing information, flyers, announcements, etc... back to your Group from these events

## **ACCOMPLISHING GSR DUTIES**

The relationship of a GSR with the Group is very important.

- Attend the meetings of your home Group on a regular basis.
- Becoming acquainted with home Group members and their ideas.
- Attend or facilitate your Group's business meeting.
- Give regular reports on service activities and issues discussed at the District and Area meetings.
- Encourage and help organize an annual group inventory.
  - *A good starting format for this inventory may be found in the pamphlet *The A.A. Group*.*
- As a GSR registered with the General Service Office, you will receive a copy of Box 4-5-9, our meeting in print. Share it with your Group.
- The GSR also works with the Group to develop practical plans for Group support of GSO, Area and District committees, and local central offices or intergroups.
- A GSR should learn everything they can about the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts and be familiar with The A.A. Service Manual and other A.A. service materials.
- Make sure your Group elects and Alternate GSR and that you include that Alternate in District and Area meetings.

*Read The A.A. Service Manual, Chapter Two, and the pamphlet GSR: Perhaps the most important job in A.A. for further information on GSR job description and duties.*

## SECTION III – The District

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### STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION

Areas are divided into Districts, which are ideally comprised of from six to twenty Groups. Western Washington Area 72 is currently divided into forty-two districts. There are two non-geographic linguistic districts, which include all the Spanish speaking Groups.

GSRs are members of their local District. District Meetings are usually held once a month. Typically the meetings are attended by, the District Committee Member (DCM), GSRs (and their alternates), District Standing Committee Chairpersons and sometimes an Intergroup or Central Office representative. Although each District determines the format for the order of business autonomously a meeting generally includes:

- Reports to the GSRs from the DCM
- Reports from the Groups via the GSRs
- Discussion of Group problems
- Discussion of the agenda of the previous or upcoming Assembly
- Discussions of special events such as workshops, Pre-Assemblies, Pre-Conferences and Delegate's Reports that the District may be organizing for the general fellowship
- Reports from District Standing Committees

### THE DISTRICT COMMITTEE MEMBER (DCM)

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. Also, they assist the efforts of the GSRs, schedule Pre-Assemblies, Pre-Conferences and Delegate's Reports jointly with surrounding district's DCMs. The other major role of the DCM is representing the conscience of the Groups in the district as a voting member of the Area Committee and attending Quarterly Area Committee meetings in January, April and July. Many districts assign additional duties to the DCM and the Alternate DCM. DCMs are typically elected by the GSRs in a District for a two-year term beginning in January of the odd year, though many Districts elect their DCMs in the fall of the even year.

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

## **SECTION IV – The Area and Area Events**

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### **THE AREA**

Most general service Areas follow the broad geographical division of a state or Province. Due to the size and/or population of some states, they are divided into two or more Areas. Washington is divided into two: Western Washington Area 72 and Washington State East Area 92. Our Western Washington Area 72 includes all of Washington State west of the Cascades. The US and Canada are currently made up of 93 Areas.

### **THE AREA COMMITTEE AND COMMITTEE QUARTERLY MEETINGS**

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

The Area Committee is tasked with creating the agenda for the Annual Assembly (held in October of each year), coordinating the outreach activities of its special committees, reviewing the work of the Area's archives, newsletter, website and other Area housekeeping matters on an ongoing basis.

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 Area Quarterlies once per rotation

### **PRE-CONFERENCE ASSEMBLIES**

A Pre-Conference is a meeting of GSRs, the Delegate and Alternate Delegate held in late February or March. The purpose is for the Delegate to communicate with the GSRs (and through them the Group) about some issues which will be addressed at the General Service Conference (held in April). This way the GSRs can inform the Delegate about their Groups on the issues so that the Delegate has a sense of our Area while attending the General Service Conference. Several Districts in a geographic region of the Area generally share the responsibility of organizing and hosting these gatherings, of which there are four per year (for geographic ease).

### **DELEGATE REPORTS**

The Delegate gives a Conference report to the Groups. Delegate's Reports are gatherings usually held in May or June. The dates of these gatherings are frequently agreed on at the April Quarterly and can take place at a central location where several Districts can join in hosting the Delegate's presentation. 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, Alternate 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 all the information back to their Groups for full discussion. Through thorough discussion, the Group comes to an informed Group Conscience which the GSR carries to the Annual Area Assembly.

## **AREA ASSEMBLIES**

The Annual Area Assembly is a large event attended by all GSRs in the Area, the Area Committee, and many 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 (and Quarterly) are distributed to DCMs for distribution to their GSRs. These minutes are also included in the Area Newsletter.

## **AREA DECISION MAKING PROCESS – Process, Discussion Topics, Motions**

Western Washington Area 72 uses both discussion topics and motions as decision making vehicles. The purpose of a motion is to formalize a decision, via vote, to which the Area is then bound. 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. Most Area decision making focuses on issues which are internal to WWA72. For example, funding for services, A.A. events we support, expansion of services, 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. Discussion topics and motions are presented and reviewed at any or all of the Area Quarterlies, and may subsequently be added to the Annual Assembly Agenda. Final decision making about motions and area actions occurs at the Assembly with GSRs DCMs, and Elected and Appointed officers participating. This process provides time for deliberation and review at the home Group level, which is essential to forming a healthy Group and Area Conscious.

A scenario:

- A GSR brings a discussion topic or motion to their District
- The DCM subsequently brings the issue to the next Area Quarterly



- The Area Committee, at the Quarterly, reviews the issue and arrives at one of several responses:
  - The issue may voted to be placed on the Assembly Agenda
  - Tabled to the next Area Quarterly for continued review and discovery
  - Referred to an Ad-Hoc Committee for review and recommendation making
  - Removed with no action (this would be the case if the issue had a clear and evident conflict with a concept (please read the 12 concepts for world service) or tradition, for example)

*Please note: discussion topics and motions passed at the Area Quarterly are placed on the Area Assembly Agenda; they are not finalized at Quarterlies. Final decision making (Group Conscious) 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 all that transpired at the Quarterly meeting regarding the discussion topic or motion, and it is the GSR's responsibility to subsequently inform their Group.

By following this Quarterly process the Groups and GSRs stay continually informed and included in the Area's discussion. 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 Conscious.

### **Motions**

A motion is a formal proposition that the Area, as a whole, should do or not do a specific thing. The result of a motion is either to be passed or failed.

### **Discussion Topics**

A discussion topic brought to a Quarterly or Assembly does not require being passed or failed directly. Instead, it is a chance for sharing thoughts and ideas on the issue, examine root causes and consider alternative possible solutions. The results of that conversation are then shared back with Groups. If there are strong feelings, the discussion topic may continue and if action is required it may evolve into a motion. During recent rotations we have seen several motions at the Area Assembly which were crafted during the discussion topic process.

It has been our experience that when a discussion topic gives birth to a motion, that motion is highly informed by both Groups and the Area Committee. In this way our Group Conscious 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:

*Motion – “We move that Area 72 take **x** and **y** actions”*

*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?”*

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.

### **Floor Motions**

A floor motion is a motion presented at the Assembly which was not been seen at the Area Quarterlies. We allow floor motions in Area 72, however they should be restrained to emergency actions only. The primary reason for this restraint is that floor motions are requests for decision making on matters which were not taken to the Groups, and thus they cannot result in an informed Group Conscious.

### **AREA BUSINESS: VOTING PROCEDURES**

Voting members of the Area Assembly are GSRs, DCMs, Area Appointed and Elected officers. Area Past Delegates are members of the Area Committee but do not vote. With one exception, proxy votes are not allowed at our Area Assemblies. Your Group must have a representative present to vote. The only exception is for Groups that are located inside correctional facilities (prisons). Those Groups, if registered, may appoint a proxy to carry their votes.

Motions generally require a 2/3 majority (substantial unanimity) to pass.

The Third Legacy Procedure is a special type of electoral process, which Area 72 uses primarily for the election of officers. A description and diagram can be found in Chapter One of The A.A. Service Manual.

### **AREA ELECTED TRUSTED SERVANTS**

Panel 67 (2017 & 2018)

Area Delegate: Steve C. (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) 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, please refer to The A.A. Service Manual, Chapter Six.

Alternate Area Delegate: Alan F. (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 Chair: Geene F. (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 in addition to the Western Washington Area 72 Assembly. Also chairs the meeting for the selection of Appointed trusted servants. Keeps Alternate Chairperson informed. Receives District minutes and corresponds with the Districts regarding their problems and concerns. A further description of duties is outlined in The A.A. Service Manual, Chapter Five.

Alternate Area Chair: Heather C. ([altchair@area72aa.org](mailto: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 the Western Washington Area 72 Assembly. Participates in Host Committee meetings and the planning of the Assembly agenda. Coordinates and plans the Assembly workshops and facilitates the Assembly sharing sessions.

Area Treasurer: Josie S. ([treasurer@area72aa.org](mailto:treasurer@area72aa.org))

Is the guardian of Tradition Seven. Informs the Area of financial matters. Has the ability to project increased costs of the Area, what is possible as far as future spending, and cost comparisons with past spending. 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 coordinates with the Alternate Treasurer.

Alternate Area Treasurer: Crystal S. ([alttreasurer@area72aa.org](mailto: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 our 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**

Panel 67 (2017 & 2018)

Accessibility Committee Chair: Keri S. ([accessibility@area72aa.org](mailto:accessibility@area72aa.org))

Chairs the Area Accessibilities Committee. Schedules and chairs four quarterly meetings with Districts to share experience in this service area. Addresses accessibilities needs and issues for Western Washington Area 72, and coordinates services as outlined in the Area Accessibilities Committee guidelines.

Archives Committee Chair: Courtney S. ([archiveschair@area72aa.org](mailto:archiveschair@area72aa.org))

Chairs quarterly Archives Standing Committee meetings and chairs monthly Archives Steering Committee meetings. Facilitates repository site-selection decisions and produces articles for the Area Newsletter.

Area Archivist: Dean T. ([archivist@area72aa.org](mailto:archivist@area72aa.org))

Maintains and schedules 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. (The Area Archivist is selected by the Archives Steering Committee)

Cooperation with the Professional Community Chair: Craig C. ([cpc@area72aa.org](mailto:cpc@area72aa.org))

Follows the guidelines as outlined in the Cooperation with the Professional Community Workbook from G.S.O. Schedules and chairs four quarterly meetings with the Districts to share experience in this service area. Coordinates efforts to provide information to the professional community and to those who have

contact with alcoholics through their profession regarding where we are, what we are, what we can do, and what we cannot do.

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

Follows the guidelines as outlined in the Correctional Facilities Workbook from G.S.O. Acts in an advisory capacity to the District corrections chairpersons and DCMs on corrections work. Schedules and chairs four quarterly meetings with the Districts to share information on A.A. meetings in correctional facilities. Appoints and oversees the "Corrections Bridge Program" Coordinator. Seeks to understand facility regulations and explains them to those who will be in direct contact with the Groups. Coordinates Grapevine subscriptions to correctional facilities in the Area.

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

Follows the guidelines as outlined in the Grapevine Workbook and in the Literature Committee Guidelines from G.S.O. Exists primarily to educate 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. Gives informed talk on A.A. literature when asked, encourages Groups to have Grapevine Representatives (GVR) and stresses the Grapevine as a valuable tool for Groups and individual members. Holds four Area-wide Grapevine and Literature quarterly meetings per year.

Newsletter Editor: Carina W. (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 news received from the Area and prepares for bulk mailing. Selects a local printer for the newsletter. Maintains a current address list of all subscribers, GSRs and other trusted servants for newsletter distribution. Provides Spanish-language editions of the Area newsletter for those months that contain Area Quarterly and Assembly minutes.

Public Information Chair: Lupita Y-M. (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. Attends and co-presides with the host District P.I. chairperson at four quarterly meetings per year. Reports anonymity breaks that may occur to the Area Delegate and encourages District P.I. chairpersons to do the same.

Registrar: Kris B. (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.

Secretary: Carol H. (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 DCMs, Area Elected and Appointed officers and others on the mailing list.  
(The Area Secretary for is appointed by the Area Chair.)

Sound System Operator: Tony F. (soundsystem@area72aa.org)

Transports and operates Area sound equipment at the following Western Washington Area 72 events only: Pre-Conferences, Delegate's Reports, Pre-Assemblies, Area 72 quarterlies (3), and Area 72 Assembly.

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

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

Web Master: Mary T. (webmaster@area72aa.org)

Serves on the Area Website Steering Committee with the Public Information Chair and three volunteers. Is responsible for the input of content and maintenance of the Area website and Area email system. (Area Website is [www.area72aa.org](http://www.area72aa.org))

Web Committee Chair: Eddy H. (webchair@area72aa.org)

Chairs 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.

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## SECTION V – Beyond the Area

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### THE GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

Each General Service Area elects a Delegate to serve them at the annual General Service Conference in New York, usually in April, where the broad issues of A.A. as a whole are addressed. 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. Our Area 72 Delegate serves in odd numbered panels.

The voting members of the Conference are:

- The 93 Area Delegates
- The 21 Trustees of the General Service Board,
- The staffs of the General Service Office and Grapevine
- The Directors of AA World Services, Inc.
- The Directors of the AA Grapevine, Inc.

The 93 Area Delegates constitute more than two thirds of the voting members of the Conference.

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 459", a printed 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.

## **THE REGIONS**

The Areas in the United States and Canada are sorted into eight Regions. Our 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 (from The A.A. Service Manual, Chapter 9) can be found on the following page.

## **THE REGIONAL TRUSTEE**

Each Region has its own Trustee, called a Regional Trustee, who serves a four year term on the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous. There are twenty one non-paid Trustees on the General Service Board all of whom perform tremendous amounts of service for Alcoholics Anonymous. These Trustees are elected or approved by the General Service Conference. Seven are non-alcoholic, called Class A Trustees, and fourteen are alcoholic, called Class B Trustees. Eight of these fourteen Class B trustees are the Regional Trustees.

## **PACIFIC REGIONAL 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 and to encourage the exchange of ideas and to provide an opportunity for members to discuss pertinent aspects of AA Recovery, Unity and Service. It consists of two days 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. Our Area Delegate attends PRAASA each year and all other members are welcome.

## **REGIONAL FORUMS**

Regional Forums originated in 1975. They are weekend sharing sessions designed to enhance and widen communication between A.A. members and representatives of the General Service Board, GSO staff and Grapevine staff. A Regional Forum is held every other year in a particular Region, on a rotating basis. There is no registration fee for a Regional Forum. Many Areas, Districts, or Groups cover or defray the transportation and hotel room expenses of the trusted servants representing them at a Forum; however, anyone may attend. Regional Forums provide a unique opportunity to share valuable experience, ask questions and spark new ideas.

## **AA 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 AA. 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.

## SECTION VII – Additional Considerations

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### ROTATION

In most Groups, the GSR is elected to a two-year term, which usually runs concurrent with the Area rotation. DCMs and Area officers likewise serve two-year terms. Rotation is frequently referred to as “anonymity in action” because it is one vital method we have of avoiding power, prestige and personal recognition from distorting our best intentions.

### 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 show up, on time, when we say we will?
- Do we mark our A.A. commitments on the calendar and then work around them, or do we attend only if it doesn’t interfere with our own pleasure?
- 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?
- Do we attend as many service activities as possible in order to become better informed, or do we do the least possible required?
- 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 ...”*

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.

## SPONSORSHIP IN SERVICE

A service sponsor is an alcoholic who has made some progress in recovery and performance in service, who shares this experience with another alcoholic who is just starting this journey (or possibly with someone that has been around a while). A service sponsor is someone knowledgeable in A.A. history and who has a strong background in the service structure. A service sponsor's duty is help their service sponsee learn about A.A. service, the traditions, the concepts, and help the service sponsee think though critical issues affecting their Group.

A new GSR should have a service sponsor whom they can speak with about any of their service related activities, interests, and challenges.

## LOCAL INTERGROUPS AND CENTRAL OFFICES

Intergroups and Central Offices provide services for local A.A. Groups and members and are supported by the Groups in the communities they serve. If the Group does not have an Intergroup or Central Office Liaison, the GSR should consider keeping in touch with their local Intergroup/Central Office.

These offices provide such services as:

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

## REFERENCE TOOLS FOR THE G.S.R

- The A.A. Service Manual Combined With The Twelve Concepts for World Service (booklet)
- The A.A. Group (pamphlet)
- A.A. Comes of Age (book)
- A.A. Tradition - How it Developed (pamphlet)
- Supporting The A.A. Support System (pamphlet)
- Circles of love and Service (pamphlet)
- Inside A.A. ( pamphlet)
- The GSR May Be The Most Important Job In A.A. (pamphlet)
- The Twelve Concepts For World Service Illustrated (pamphlet)
- The "White Sheet," What A.A. Does and Does Not Do (one page flyer)
- A.A. Literature Catalog
- Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions (book)

## GLOSSARY OF COMMON A.A. TERMS

- **Alternate:** A general service worker who, according to local autonomy and needs, is elected at the Group, District or Area levels to participate with, assist in and, in appropriate circumstances, assume the duties of a principal office holder, i.e., alternate GSR, alternate Delegate.



- **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 periodic meeting of the GSRs, DCMs, Area service committee chairs and Area officers. All A.A. members are encouraged to attend, but only the above listed members of the Assembly are entitled to vote. The Assembly elects the Delegate and other 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:** A bimonthly publication of the General Service Office, the title of which is also the New York mailing address of G.S.O. (Grand Central Station, New York, NY. 10136). The masthead of this informative mini-magazine consists of the words "News and Notes from the General Service Office of A.A." It includes such items of interest as: a calendar of important local, national and international events; questions and problems about A.A.; vignettes and anecdotes from A.A. people, history and events; as well as much other information of interest to the dedicated and/or curious member.
- **Conference:** Delegates, the Board of Trustees, A.A.W.S. and Grapevine Directors, and the G.S.O. and Grapevine Staff make up the Conference. This meeting keeps the individual A.A. member and G.S.O. in close, supportive contact with each other through the general service chain. This chain is made up of several links: the Trustees' Committees working closely with the comparable Delegates' committees (such as P.I., C.P.C., Treatment Facilities, Finance, etc.), the Delegate from and back to the Area; and the individual A.A. member through the G.S.R. In the Conference, each Area has one representative Delegate who confers with the ninety-three other Delegates, twenty-one Trustees, G.S.O. staff members and directors from the two corporations — A.A. World Services, Inc. and the A.A. Grapevine, Inc.
- **Delegate:** The person elected, for a two-year term, at the Area general assembly to represent the Area at the annual meeting of the General Service Conference in New York.
- **District Committee Member (D.C.M.):** The D.C.M. is primarily responsible for coordinating and assisting the efforts of the G.S.R.s in the District and being a member of the Area Committee.
- **General Service Representative (G.S.R.):** An AA member who is elected by a Group to represent that Group's conscience in discussions at the District and Area levels. The G.S.R. also keeps the Group as fully 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 states or Provinces from which a Regional Trustee is elected to the Board of Trustees. There are eight Regions in the conference — six in the United States and two in Canada.
- **Third Legacy:** Recovery and unity are our first two legacies. Our Third Legacy is Service: the sum total of all AA services, from the twelfth step call to AA's coast-to-coast and worldwide activities.
- **Third Legacy Procedure:** A voting procedure, unique to A.A, designed to help reduce some of the negative aspects of elections — such as personality clashes, ego battles and dissatisfied minorities. See "What is 'Third Legacy Procedure?' " in The A.A. Service Manual.
- **Trustee:** The usual term, or name, for a member of A.A.'s General Service Board of Trustees. Currently the board is made up of twenty-one trustees including eight Regional Trustees.
- **Twelve Concepts:** As the Twelve Traditions are to the preservation and unity of Alcoholics Anonymous; so are the Twelve Concepts to General Service. They are a set of principles and practices intended to preserve service to A.A. and the still suffering alcoholic. They also protect the structure by which such service is made possible. (See The Twelve Concepts for World Service in the back portion of The A.A. Service Manual.)
- **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

**USEFULL LINKS** (for electronic version)

- Click this link to see [information for new trusted servants](#) . Although it is possible to update contact information directly with GSO through the GSO records department, our best practice is engage the area registrar to update those records.
  
- Click these links to get digital versions of available committee workbooks and kits from GSO:
  - [Archives Workbook](#)
  - [Corrections Workbook ... Corrections Kit](#)
  - [Cooperation with the Professional Community Workbook ... CPC Kit](#)
  - Literature Workbook and Kit ... (these items are not identified online at [aa.org](#); but, they are listed here to let you know that effort was made to find them)
  - [Public Information Workbook ... PI Kit](#)
  - [Special Needs/Accessibilities Workbook ... SN/Accessibilities Kit](#)
  - [Treatment Workbook ... Treatment Kit](#)

**Note 1:**The [AA Service Committees](#) page enables interested members to obtain specific, additional, [resources](#) for various kinds of AA service work.

**Note 2:** Printing a single copy of these items is permitted in accordance with the AA World Services, Inc [FAIR USE POLICY](#)

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