

General Service Representative TOOL KIT

Area 5



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This booklet is meant to be a supplement to the Service Manual. All GSRs should read the Service Manual and the Twelve Concepts of World Service.

Approved on July 22, 2012

Welcome to General Service!

You are now the voice of your groups' conscience and their link to A.A. General Service. You will represent your group within your District and at Area level functions. You will be a conduit between your group and the General Service Office in New York.

"The strength of our whole A.A. service structure starts with the group and with the general service representative (GSR) the group elects. I cannot emphasize too strongly the GSR's importance." –Bill W.

"Remember, Bill, let's not louse this thing up. Let's keep it simple!" –Dr. Bob



Common Terms and Acronyms

Area – A geographic division within a state or province made up of Districts. (There are 6 Areas within California and 93 Areas in the US and Canada. We are in Area 5).

Area Assembly – A periodic meeting with all representatives to discuss A.A. affairs of the Area.

ACM - Area Committee Meeting – A quarterly meeting of all DCMs, Area committee chairpersons and officers to discuss AA affairs of the Area.

Area Committee Member – Members of the Area Committee: DCM, DCMC, Committee Chairs, Area Officers, Past Delegates, or, in their absence, their alternates.

Area and District Officers – Elected officials of the Area and District

Area Committee Chairperson – Appointed position that conducts business of the respective committee.

Delegate – An AA member of the Area Assembly who is elected every other year to represent the Area at the annual General Service Conference in New York.

District – A geographical division of AA groups within an Area (There are 34 Districts in our Area, called Area 5).

DCM – District Committee Member – An experienced GSR elected by the GSRs of that District to represent the groups of the District at ACMs and Area Assemblies. DCMs coordinate service activities within their Districts.

DCMC – District Committee Member Chairperson – The head of a group of Districts that have combined to adequately perform service functions.

GSO – General Service Office – Our AA Headquarters in New York City.

GSR – General Service Representative – An individual elected by an AA group to represent the group in AA General Service.

GSC – General Service Conference – An annual meeting of 93 Delegates from Areas in the US and Canada, Trustees and GSO representatives, to discuss and vote on approved agenda items.

GSB – General Service Board – A group of 21 Trustees who oversee the two non-profit corporations, AA World Services, Inc. and AA Grapevine, Inc.

Pacific Regional Forum – A regional meeting with GSO and AA members.

PRAASA – Pacific Regional AA Service Assembly – A yearly meeting of all representatives held in different parts of the Pacific region of AA.

SCAAN – Southern California Area Assembly Newsletter

Trustees – Regional elected representatives to the GSB. There are 8 regions within the US & Canada.

Third Legacy Procedure – The election voting process. See Page S21 in The A.A. Service Manual for more details

Twelve Concepts of World Service – An interpretation of A.A.'s world service structure.

The GSR's Duties

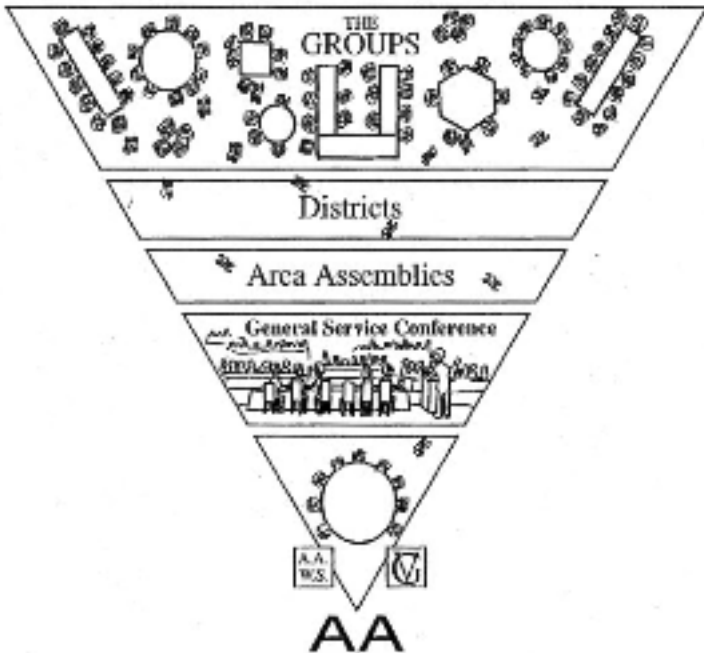
- 2-year commitment.
- Attend your regularly scheduled General Service District (or combined Districts) meeting. Some districts meet more than once a month.
- Join a District committee and an Area committee (see page 5).
- Attend our quarterly Area 5 Assemblies.
- Report back the information from these General Service meetings to your group (see page 10).
- Conduct a group conscience (see page 9 on how to take an informed group conscience) on General Service items and pass on your group's vote to your District or to the Area.
- Make announcements to your group that require no vote but informs them of what is happening in AA General Service.
- Bring information about workshops, conferences and District and Area activities back to the group to invite them to participate.
- Advise your group's secretary and treasurer in matters concerning group monetary contributions.
- Act as a mail contact to GSO.

Note: See Page S26 in The A.A. Service Manual for more details

How the AA Service Structure Works

- Your individual AA Group is part of a District.
- Your District is one of 34 Districts in Area 5.
- Area 5, also called the Southern California Area Assembly (SCAA), is part of 93 total Areas in the US and Canada.
- Each of these 93 Areas elects a Delegate who attends the General Service Conference, which occurs annually in New York City.

“The Inverted Triangle”



The General Service organizational chart is represented by an inverted triangle. (See page S16 in The A.A. Service Manual)

The delegation of authority starts at the top with the groups, then to the Districts, then to the Area. The Area elects a Delegate to represent the Area at the annual General Service Conference in New York City.

At the bottom of the triangle are two non-profit corporations: AA World Services, Inc. and AA Grapevine, Inc. They are overseen by the General Service Board, which is comprised of 21 trustees.

Area 5 Committees*

Archives

Audio Visual (AV)

Cooperation with the Elder Community (CEC)

Cooperation with the Professional Community (CPC)

Corrections

Finance

Grapevine/La Vina

Guidelines and Policies (GAP)

Literature

Newsletter (SCAAN)

Public Information (PI)

Registration

Translation

Treatment Facilities (TFC)

Website (aascaa.org)

*Also, your District may have many of these committees.

Note: See Area Guidelines and Policies for details regarding Area 5 Committees, which is located on the Area website.

Websites

aa.org - General Service Office in New York (GSO, AA World Services)

aascaa.org – Southern California Area Assembly (which is our Area 5)

aagrapevine.org - AA Grapevine (AA's monthly magazine)

aagrapevine.org/espanol - AA La Vina (AA's Spanish - Language magazine)

What You Will Receive from the General Service Office

After your GSR registration is received, you will be mailed an information packet from the AA General Service Office (GSO). We suggest you read through these items. The packet contains the following:

AA General Service Manual and Twelve Concepts for World Service

GSR: General Service Representative pamphlet

The AA Group pamphlet

Box 459 newsletter

The AA Western Regional AAWS Directory (when available)

The Twelve Concepts Illustrated

Note: Alternate GSR's do not receive the information packet from GSO.

General Service Conference Timeline

The Conference Process continues all year long. GSRs, DCMs and Committee Chairs play an active and important role throughout the process. An abbreviated version of the process is below:

January - By January 15th Members, Groups, Districts, and Areas have submitted requests for a change in AA Literature or Policy.

February - The Delegate presents a list of agenda items with background material. These are items about which the Delegate needs an informed group conscience from your group. GSR's can start presenting items to the Groups to begin forming an informed group conscience.

March - At our Area Pre-Conference Workshop, GSRs and DCMs need to be ready to share their informed group conscience.

April - Our Delegate attends the week long Annual Meeting of the General Service Conference together with the Trustees and GSO staff to discuss the Agenda Items in Committees and then to vote together on matters of policy affecting A.A. as a whole.

May - Delegate's Report to the Assembly is a meeting at which you will be informed about what Actions were taken at the Annual Meeting of the Conference. GSRs are to report back these Actions to their Groups and listen to their reactions.

September - Final Conference Reports delivered to the Delegate who presents them at the ACM. Bring your copy to your Group and make it available to every Member.

October - Agenda Item requests can be sent to the Delegate or the GSO Conference Coordinator. In even years the Assembly elects a new Delegate from the current Area Committee members.

Informed Group Conscience Guidelines

Before you start:

Put the process of voting on a poster board, on paper or explain it thoroughly.

Ask for a motion.

Allow time for discussion:

You may want to limit it to 3 pro's, 3 cons, but the goal is for an **informed group conscience**.

Call for a vote:

The vote should result in **substantial unanimity** (all or almost all in agreement, usually two-thirds).

After the vote:

Ask the Minority if they would like to speak.

Motion to reconsider:

Must be made by a member who voted with the prevailing side, but may be seconded by anyone.

All vote on whether to re-vote:

If a simple majority votes for a re-vote, a second vote on the motion is taken. The re-vote is only done once.

If time does not allow:

Announce that the issue will be voted on at the next meeting and consider bringing in someone with more information on the issue to speak at the next meeting.

How to Make a GSR Report

It's important to get your group used to hearing a GSR report. We suggest your report should be weekly and brief.

Break down the information you get from the monthly General Service District meetings and quarterly Area Assemblies into short bullet points. Commonly, you'll only need to report one or two of these bullet points each week.

If there are items that require an informed group conscience, we suggest you hold a separate business meeting to discuss them and vote. It is best to plan for and announce this business meeting, as well as the topics to be discussed, at least 2-3 weeks beforehand, so members can think about them and plan to attend.

The suggestions above are guidelines to help you be successful. Use the approach that best suits you and your group's needs.

For More Guidance - Service Sponsorship

It is highly recommended that each GSR find a "Service Sponsor" to help with additional questions and problem solving. Ask an experienced individual in General Service to be your Service Sponsor or for their suggestions on who would be a good Service Sponsor for you.

Note: More information on Service Sponsorship can be found in A.A.'s Questions & Answers on Sponsorship pamphlet: P-15

Together we can handle the commitment easier than alone.

I am Responsible.

When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help,

I want the hand of A.A. always to be there.

And for that:

I am Responsible.