



**THE
BALTIMORE AREA
SERVICE
COMMITTEE**

**THE GROUP SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE
(GSR)
SERVICE GUIDE**

*Revised and Submitted by:
The Policy Committee
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The idea behind this proposed service guide is to put all information regarding what a Group Service Representative is, and their responsibilities in one place.

The Policy Committee of the Baltimore Area Service Committee put much of this information together. This guide of information was a compilation of documents from The Northeast Freedom Area of the Freestate Region of the NA Group Service Representative (GSR) Service Guide.

Our 3rd Concept of Service states, "Delegating authority can be risky business unless we do so responsibly. To make Concept Three work, other concepts must also be applied consistently. Most importantly, we must give careful attention to the selection of trustworthy trusted servants. We cannot responsibly delegate authority either to those who are fundamentally incapable of administering that authority, or to those who are not willing to account fully for their actions. However, if we select our leaders carefully, choosing those who can be trusted to responsibly exercise delegate authority in fulfilling the tasks we've given them, we can feel much more comfortable with the concept of delegation." The GSR is one of these selected servants.

Simple Definitions to Remember

- A) **Any Addict** can be a member—the only requirement is a desire to stop using. The services that each of us provide are the most important in NA. It is the member who carries our message of recovery and works with others. The member is the first level of the NA service structure. There would be no NA.
- B) The gathering of **two or more member addicts** for the purpose of learning how to live a drug free life by practicing the principles of NA constitutes a **NA meeting**. When such a meeting is held regularly it can become a group.
- C) **An NA Group** is any meeting which meets regularly at a specific place and time, providing that it follows the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions (has no outside affiliations and receives no outside financial support). Groups should register with the World Service Office of Narcotics Anonymous to better facilitate communications and unity, and to better serve NA as a whole. The group is the second level of our service structure.
- D) A **designated area** within NA is any local area, community or town with a significant number of NA groups. Any set of groups within definable geographic boundaries that need to function together as an area can be a designated area.
- E) An **Area Service Committee (ASC)** is a committee made up of representatives (GSR's) from groups within a designated area. This ASC meets regularly on a monthly basis for the express purpose of serving its' member groups.

The Primary Purpose

- A) Of an **NA member** is to stay clean, one day at a time and carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers, by working with others.
- B) of an **NA group** is to carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers by providing a setting for identification, and a healthy atmosphere for recovery, where addicts can come for help if they have a desire to stop using.
- C) Of an **Area Service Committee** is to be supportive of it's area and groups and their primary purpose, by associating a group with other groups locally, and by helping a group deal with it's day to day situations and needs.

WHAT IS A GROUP SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE?

**" Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on NA unity."
NA unity is the GSR's first priority. He or she is the link of communication between
the Area and the Group.**

Group service representatives bear great responsibility. While GSRs are elected by and accountable to the group, they are not mere group messengers. They are selected by their groups to serve as active members of the area service committee. As such, they are responsible to act in the best interests of NA as a whole, not solely as advocates of their own groups priorities.

As participants in the area committee, GSRs need to be as well informed as they can be concerning the affairs of the committee. They study the reports of the committee's officers and subcommittee chairpersons. They read the various handbooks published by Narcotics Anonymous World Services on each area of service. After carefully considering their own conscience and what they know about how their group members feel, they take active, critical parts in the discussions, which form the group conscience of the entire committee.

Please remember that the Area Service Committee is a business meeting, there is a lot more going on here than in a regular meeting. Please refrain from having personal or extended conversations because it is disruptive to the Chairperson and other GSRs trying to hear what is being stated during the meeting. If you have a question, please raise your hand to be acknowledged. No question is a dumb question.

It is the GSRs responsibility to keep the group informed of all Area, Regional and World activities. He or she votes on the Group's behalf at the Area level. Sometimes this vote is a decision reached through discussion at Group conscience and other times it is simply a decision made by the GSR carrying the Group's **vote of confidence**.

The GSR usually calls for a group conscience at a convenient time following Area Service, although any Home Group Member may call for a group conscience at any time.

Group service representatives link their groups with the rest of the NA service structure, particularly through the information conveyed in their reports to and from the area committee. At group business meetings, the GSR report provides a summary of area committee activities, often sparking discussions among group members that provide the GSR with a feel for how the area can better serve the group's needs.

After information is presented to the Group, the GSR asks for the Group's input regarding the issues, or issues discussed, and seeks the Group's guidance and counsel. The GSR should always try to maintain order during the course of group discussions and attempt to keep the discussions on track. After motions, nominations have been discussed; the GSR should call for a vote and carry the Group's decision back to the Area.

Any Group announcements, schedule changes, anniversaries or other news should be gathered by the GSR and brought to the ASC meeting to be presented during Group News. GSRs also make available at the Homegroup fliers announcing Area and Regional activities.

It is also the responsibility of the GSR (or designated person) to bring the Group's donation to the Area Service Committee meeting.

ALTERNATE GSR

Groups also elect a second representative called an alternate GSR. Alternate GSRs attend all Area Service Committee meetings (as non-voting participants) with their GSRs so that they can see for themselves how the committee works. If a GSR cannot attend an Area Committee meeting, that group's Alternate GSR participates in the GSR's place.

Alternate GSRs, along with other members, may also serve on Area Subcommittees. Subcommittee experience gives Alternate GSRs added perspective on how Area Services are actually delivered. That perspective helps make them more effective Area Committee participants if their groups later elect them to serve as GSRs.

As stated in A Guide to Local Services under section The Area Service Committee

Group Service Representatives link their groups to the rest of Narcotics Anonymous. Most groups also elect an Alternate GSR who can fill in for the group representative when needed. GSRs serve a dual role. As our fellowship's Second Concept for Service indicates, GSRs take part on their groups' behalf in the Area Committee and the Regional Assembly, conveying a sense of their group's wishes to the service structure and bringing back information on what's happening in the larger world of NA. Yet our Twelve Concepts also suggest that GSRs are delegated the authority to serve in their own right as ASC and Regional Assembly participants, exercising their own conscience and best judgment in the best interests of NA as a whole.

YOUR JOB BEFORE THE AREA MEETING STARTS

1. Sign-In
2. New Group Starting
See Public Information Subcommittee
3. Group News
See Special Events Subcommittee
4. Group Donations
Give to Treasurer
Get receipt
5. Group Changes
see Literature Subcommittee

(Note: Anniversaries should be submitted two months in advance. This allows time to be printed in the Newsletter.)

6. Meeting begins at 1:00 PM, a time of 5 hours will be set to an ACR meeting, but it can be adjusted according to how much new business is added to the agenda. It is strongly suggested that you stay until the end of the meeting.

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO TAKE NOTES SO THAT ACCURATE INFORMATION CAN BE PRESENTED WHEN YOU RETURN TO YOUR GROUP.

A) Group News

GSR's Announcement made by Special Events Committee

B) Subcommittee Reports

All Subcommittee Chairpers give reports. Information is presented regarding upcoming activities, literature to be reviewed, dances, workshops, etc. **NOTE SHOULD BE TAKEN.**

C) Regional Committee Member's report

Regional and world business matters are discussed, and the Area's vote is given to the RCM.

D) Treasurer's Report

Treasurer informs the groups of the Area's financial status-cash on hand, donations this month, donations previous month, expenses, amount of our donation to the Region.

E) Old Business

Any business remaining from the previous month's ASC meeting is acted on. If request for nominations were sent back to the Groups the previous month, those elections are held. Motions sent back to the Groups for consideration are voted on.

F) New Business

Any new motions are considered and voted on. Generally speaking, business not previously presented to the ASC is considered.

SUBCOMMITTEES

In NA anyone can participate in the service structure. The Subcommittees announce the date, time and place of their meetings, and whoever shows up on that date, time and place is considered a participating member of the committee.

It is suggested that each GSR participate in the activities of one of the Area Subcommittees.

LITERATURE COMMITTEE

The Literature Subcommittee keeps the Area inform of World and Regional literature news; and holds workshops, when needed, to review and input literature. This Subcommittee also assembles a monthly, "Together We Can" newsletter and a schedule of meetings in booklet form.

HOSPITALS & INSTITUTIONS

carries the message of recovery to those who cannot get it otherwise. They take speakers, literature and the NA message of recovery into hospital, jails and other institutions.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Provides entertainment alternatives to the members and also provides support for the other Subcommittees when they hold events such as workshops and learning days.

PUBLIC INFORMATION

Public Information is to inform the general public that NA exists and recovery from addiction is possible through the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous.

POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE

The Policy Subcommittee serves to provide research and guidance in better understanding the Narcotics Anonymous Traditions. This subcommittee is also responsible for compiling and maintaining guidelines for the ASC. These guidelines will define the purpose of the ASC and its subcommittees, the duties and responsibilities of the ASC Officers, and will include procedures of the ASC. Will have on hand listed motions made policy.

HOTLINE SUBCOMMITTEE

The Hotline Subcommittee sets up a direct telephone connection between the suffering addict and a recovering addict to help the still suffering addict to reach the rooms of Narcotics Anonymous by carrying the message of Narcotics Anonymous.

SOME COMMON QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS REGARDING MOTIONS

QUESTION: What is a motion?

ANSWER: A motion is an idea or concept that a voting member of the Area Service Committee wishes to put into action. A motion is the means by which the ASC makes a decision and sets policy.

QUESTION: Who can make a motion?

ANSWER: Any voting member.

QUESTION: Who are the voting members?

ANSWER: Any GSR (or GSR Alternate in his/her absence); The RCM (or RCM Alternate in his/her absence); the Area Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson in the event of a tie.

QUESTION: Who can second a motion?

ANSWER: Any of the previously listed persons.

QUESTION: How does a motion become Area Policy?

ANSWER: When a motion is approved by a 2/3 majority of the voting members present at the time a vote is taken, it is then considered Policy.

QUESTION: Who decides whether the motion should go back to the Groups?

ANSWER: The body of voting members by a simple majority.

QUESTION: What happens after a motion passes?

ANSWER: If a motion passes, it is then considered part of the Area Policy.

WHAT'S A REGIONAL ASSEMBLY AND WHY DO I HAVE TO ATTEND?

Regional Assembly

At least one time per conference cycle, usually two or three months prior to the meeting of the World Service Conference, the regional committee organizes an assembly of group service representatives. Regional assemblies bring representatives of NA groups together with RCMs and the regional delegate for the purpose of developing a collective conscience concerning issues affecting Narcotics Anonymous worldwide. That direct contact between the groups and the conference helps keep our world services attuned to the needs of our fellowship. Without the kind of primary foundation provided by the regional assemblies, it would be much more difficult for the World Service Conference to effectively address the concerns of the NA groups. Regional assemblies are a key ingredient in the maintenance of the NA groups' final responsibility and authority for our fellowship's services, spoken of in our Second Concept.

Most regional assemblies start with all participants—GSRs, RCMs, and the regional delegate gathered together for an opening address. Then the assembly usually divides into smaller groups of between seven and fifteen people each so that everyone can take a meaningful part in discussions. These discussion groups, led by RCMs, consider a variety of issues related to world service. Some of these are issues covered in pre-conference mailings from world services, including the approval of new NA literature and other proposals that would affect NA as a whole; some of subjects of RSC has raised for discussion; others come from individual GSRs in each group. When panel discussions conclude, all the GSRs and RCMs gather in a large group to hear reports from spokespersons selected by each panel. A sharing session, in which all participants are encouraged to speak their mind, follows the reports. These discussions give the delegates clear indications of the region's collective conscience concerning world issues, indications that will guide the delegate when participating in the world conference. If the assembly wishes, it can formalize its conscience regarding world service affairs by passing resolutions on issues of particular concern,