

GSR

General Service Representative

**May be the Most
important Job in AA**

**By choosing its most qualified man or woman as GSR,
a Group helps secure its own future
and the future of AA as a whole.**

This packet can be downloaded from Area 36 website: www.area36.org.

Table of Contents

	<u>Page</u>
Welcome to AA General Service	1
The 3 Legacies	1
36 Spiritual Principles	1
A Word about Commitment	2
Structure of the Conference Diagram	2
Tools for the GSR – Some Vital Aids	3
A Declaration of Unity	3
What is a Group Conscience and Why Is It Important?	4
Responsibility Statement	4
Do you Know or Information You Should Know?	5
GSR Reports	5
Suggested Format for a GSR Report	6
Concepts Checklist	7
Group Inventory Norms	10
Group Inventory Questions	11
Overview of the Southern Minnesota Area 36 Assembly	12
Diagram of the Southern Minnesota Area 36 Assembly Structure	14
Voting at Assemblies	15
AAs Third Legacy Procedure	16
Flowchart of an Area 36 Agenda Item	17
Evolution of a Conference Advisory Action	18
Makeup of the General Service Conference	19
Southern Minnesota Parliamentary Procedure	20
A Short Guide to Parliamentary Procedure	21
Southern Minnesota Area Assembly Events Calendar	22

Welcome to Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) General Service!!

As an elected **General Service Representative (GSR)** you now represent the voice of your AA Group's Conscience to the AA General Service Conference held in April of each year in New York. Through your elected District Committee Member (DCM) and the Area 36 Delegate, you will become the two-way link between your Group and the world of AA as a whole. As such, you and your fellow GSRs all over the world have become the key to the unity of AA.

Qualifications*

- Experience shows that the most effective GSRs have been active in Group, InterGroup, or other service, where they have developed a desire to serve and encountered situations in which the Twelve Traditions have been called upon to solve problems.
- Usually, prospective GSRs have at least two years of continuous sobriety.
- They have time available for District meetings and Area Assemblies.
- They have the confidence of the Group, and an ability to listen to all points of view.

*Reprinted from *The AA Service Manual Combined With Twelve Concepts For World Service*, Page S26, with permission of AA World Services, Inc.

The Three Legacies

1. **Recovery**, as outlined in the Twelve Steps.
2. **Unity**, as outlined in the Twelve Traditions.
3. **Service**, as outlined in *The AA Service Manual Combined With Twelve Concepts For World Service*.

36 Spiritual Principles

Please take care to protect the right of the individual AA member to have their voice acknowledged and heard no matter how much in the minority they may be.

You should, unless you direct otherwise, have your name, street address, email address, and telephone number listed with your Area 36 Group Records Registrar (grouprecords@area36.org) as the official contact for your Group.

By your active presence in General Service you will be helping to insure that AA will still be here for future generations of suffering alcoholics.

You are now engaged in one of the finest forms of Twelfth Step Work.

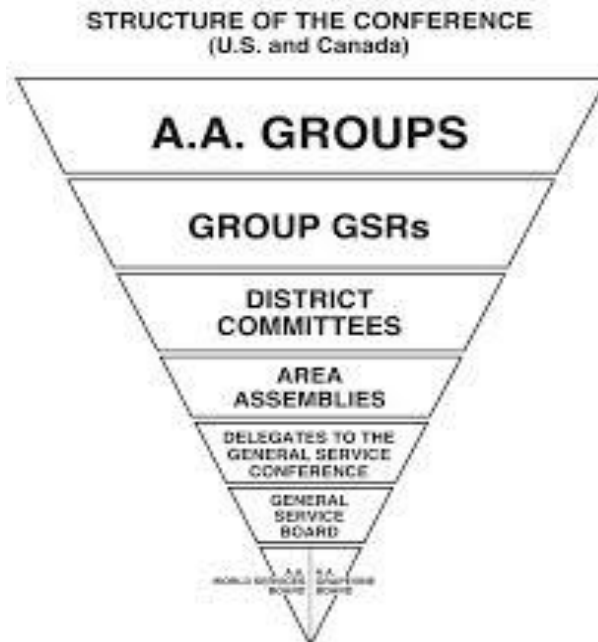
A WORD ABOUT COMMITMENT

Commitment, in terms of recovery, means recovering some of those basic principles which all of us were taught as children, but which we lost somewhere in pursuit of self.

As members of the general service structure, those 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 when we say we will?
- Are we on time?
- Do we mark our AA 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?
- Do we tend to our responsibilities cheerfully or portray them as a drag?
- 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?

All of these things are important to being committed to service in AA, but the bottom line is: Are we giving in proportion to what has been given to us? Gratitude is an action word. It is something we show, not just something we talk about. If we give only a tenth of what has been given to us, we should all be shining examples of service and commitment in AA.



Reprinted From *The AA Service Manual Combined With Twelve Concepts for World Service*.
Page S15, with permission of AA World Services, Inc.

TOOLS FOR THE GSR – SOME VITAL AIDS

Some of the reading material seems tough at first; but study it, discuss it, and see how it relates to other parts of the program. It will surprise you someday soon when it comes alive and becomes a part of you and your message. All AA literature is important but those pieces most directly related to service include the following. All the listed flyers and pamphlets are included in this packet.*

The Group Handbook (Folder M-36)

The AA Service Manual Combined With Twelve Concepts For World Service (Book BM-31)

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions (Book B-2)

Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age (Book B-3)

*AA At A Glance (Flyer F-1)

*Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix (Flyer F-3)

*Your AA General Service Office (Flyer F-6)

*Your DCM – District Committee Member (Flyer F-12)

*The AA Group Treasurer (Flyer F-96)

*The AA Group... Where It All Begins (Pamphlet P-16)

*Inside AA – Understanding the Fellowship and its Service Agencies (Pamphlet P-18)

*GSR – General Service Representative (Pamphlet P-19)

*AA's Legacy of Service (Pamphlet P-44)

*Circles of Love and Service (Pamphlet P-45)

Final Conference Report

A detailed report from the General Service Conference held in New York City in April of each year. The report is generally available in August of each year following the Conference.

Using these, you get both a good overview of the service structure and enough detail to deal in specifics.

A DECLARATION OF UNITY

**This we owe to AA's future;
To place our common welfare first;
To keep our fellowship united;
For on AA unity depends our lives, and the lives of those to come.**

WHAT IS A GROUP CONSCIENCE AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

What is a Group Conscience?

Most generally, this is a decision reached by discussion and vote of 2/3^{rds} majority of the Group members. The vote is designed to inform the GSR of the Group's opinion regarding its feelings, approval or disapproval, for or against change.

The Informed Group Conscience.

In arriving at a Group Conscience, many Groups in our Area find it beneficial to do some research concerning the question at hand. This can be done in a variety of ways. Each member can study AA's experience with the problem, through reading our literature. Another method may be to have an individual member do the reading and give a short report on what was found.

Perhaps this is where our Twelve Traditions can be applied most effectively. In discussing a problem, it may be well to ask other Members to share their opinions on how the Traditions can be applied or how they affect a particular problem.

The vital function of the GSR is in sharing the experience of other Groups with respect to a problem. The developing of an informed group conscience is always a thoughtful process, involving more than just the raising of hands!

Why do we need one?

Our Traditions clearly inform us that the group conscience is our ultimate authority. The less a Group Conscience is expressed, the greater potential that a small minority may exert its power over the Group or AA as a whole.

Each of us, well intentioned as we may be, ought never be the final authority. Our experience is full of examples of those who either attempted to become authorities, or those who were given responsibility, becoming unhappy or, even worse, getting drunk. The Group Conscience, while insuring AA's continuing survival, also insures the continuing sobriety of each Group member.

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.**

DO YOU KNOW ?

1. What does GSR stand for?
2. What is your Group service number?
3. Name the Area you belong to.
4. What is your District number?
5. How many Groups are in your District?
6. Name three other GSRs in your District and their Groups.
7. What is a DCM?
8. Can your Group place an agenda item on the General Service Conference agenda?
9. Why does your Group offer financial support to District, Area, and the General Service Office?
10. Approximately how much does it cost for a Group to receive GSO services each year?
11. When is the next Area Assembly?
12. What AA event is happening the first weekend in March?

Contact your DCM or Area Records Registrar (grouprecords@area36.org) for your Group information. Information can also be found at www.aaminnesota.org and www.area36.org.

GSR REPORTS

In your role as GSR, you would provide the following reports, which may include the following information...

To the District or Area

- Who is your Group Secretary?
- Who is your Alternate GSR?
- Group Conscience actions.
- Comments or concerns about cooperation with landlords, etc.
- Successful meeting topics your Group has used.
- Group finances.
- Group problems.
- Upcoming Group events.
- Current AA issues being discussed by your Group.

To Your Group

- Who are the District Committee Members?
- When are the District Committee Meetings?
- Financial needs of the District Committee Meetings.
- Financial needs of the District and Area.
- Upcoming District, Area, and Regional events.
- Actions taken at District, Area, Regional level.
- Current AA issues from AA as a whole.
- Keep it brief and provide written copies. See the Suggested Format for a GSR Report forms in this packet.

SUGGESTED FORMAT FOR A GSR REPORT

The next Area function will be _____, 2015 from _____ pm. to _____ pm and held at _____.

Some of the items discussed at the District/Area were:

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

The following actions have been taken at the District/Area:

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

We as a Group need to discuss and come up with a Group conscience on:

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

Opportunities for our Group to be of service are:

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

You, as Members, are encouraged to become involved with one of the many service committees and projects sponsored throughout the General Service structure. Please see me after the meeting if you need information or if you have any questions concerning my report.

CONCEPTS CHECKLIST

A service piece for Home Groups, Districts, Areas

Some of these discussion points were originally developed by an AA group and further developed by the trustees' Literature Committee to be distributed by the General Service Office. While this checklist is intended as a starting point for discussion by Groups, Districts or Areas, individual AA members may find it useful along with our co-founder Bill W.'s writings, a service sponsor if you have one and reflection on your own service experience. Additional information about the Concepts can be found in The AA Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service and "The Twelve Concepts Illustrated" pamphlet. (The Concepts stated here are in the short form.)

CONCEPT 1: Final responsibility and ultimate authority for AA World services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.

- Does our Group have a General Service Representative (GSR)? Do we feel that our Home Group is part of AA as a whole and do our Group's decisions and actions reflect that?
- Do we hold regular Group Conscience meetings encouraging everyone to participate?
- Do we pass that Group Conscience on to the District, Area, or the local Intergroup meetings?
- Is the "collective conscience" of Alcoholics Anonymous at work in my Home Group?
- In my Area?
- Where do we fit in the upside-down triangle of AA?
- Are we willing to do what it takes to insure that our democracy of World service will work under all conditions?

CONCEPT II: The General Service Conference of AA has become, for nearly every practical purpose, the active voice and the effective conscience of our whole Society in its World affairs.

- Do we have an understanding of the history of the General Service Conference (the "Conference")?
- What is a Conference Advisory Action? Does our Home Group's GSR, DCM, Area Delegate report back to the Group on the highlights of the Conference and Conference Advisory Actions?
- Is our Group meeting its wider Seventh Tradition responsibilities?

CONCEPT III: To insure effective leadership, we should endow each element of AA - the Conference, the General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives - with a traditional "Right of Decision."

- Do we understand what is meant by the "Right of Decision"? Do we grant it at all levels of service or do we "instruct"?
- Do we trust our trusted servants –GSR, DCM, Area Delegate, the Conference itself?

CONCEPT IV: At all responsible levels, we ought to maintain a traditional "Right of Participation," allowing a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.

- Do we understand the spiritual principles underlying the "Right of Participation"?
- What does "in reasonable proportion" mean? Do we understand when it is appropriate for AA paid staff to have a vote at the General Service Conference or in our local service structure?
- Do we expect that, because we are AA members, we should be allowed to vote at any group, even if we are not active members of that group?

Cont'd.

CONCEPTS CHECKLIST (Cont'd.)

CONCEPT V: Throughout our structure, a traditional "Right of Appeal" ought to prevail, so that minority opinion will be heard and personal grievances receive careful consideration.

- Do we encourage the minority opinion, the "Right of Appeal", to be heard at our home group, district committee meetings, area assemblies and the Conference?
- What does our group accept as "substantial unanimity"?
- Has our group experienced the "tyranny of the majority" or the "tyranny of the minority"?
- Does our group understand the importance of all points of view being heard before a vote is taken?

CONCEPT VI: The Conference recognizes that the chief initiative and active responsibility in most world service matters should be exercised by the trustee members of the Conference acting as the General Service Board.

- Are we familiar with how our General Service Board (G.S.B.) Class A and Class B trustees serve AA? Are we familiar with how our other trusted servants serve AA?
- Are we clear about the terms, "chief initiative" and "active responsibility"? Can we see a direct link to our home group?

CONCEPT VII: The Charter and Bylaws of the General Service Board are legal instruments, empowering the trustees to manage and conduct world service affairs. The Conference Charter is not a legal document; it relies upon tradition and the AA purse for final effectiveness.

- Do we act responsibly regarding the "power of the purse?"
- Do we realize that the practical and spiritual power of the Conference will nearly always be superior to the legal power of the G.S.B.?

CONCEPT VIII: The trustees are the principal planners and administrators of overall policy and finance. They have custodial oversight of the separately incorporated and constantly active services, exercising this through their ability to elect all the directors of these entities.

- Do we understand the relationship between the two corporate service entities: AA World Services, Inc., the AA Grapevine and the General Service Board?
- How can the business term "custodial oversight" apply to the trustees' relationship to the two corporate service entities?
- Does my home group subscribe to GSO's bimonthly newsletter *Box 4-5-9? The AA Grapevine?* Do I?

CONCEPT IX: Good service leadership at all levels is indispensable for our future functioning and safety. Primary world service leadership, once exercised by the founders, must necessarily be assumed by the trustees.

- Do we discuss how we can best strengthen the composition and leadership of our future trusted servants?
- Do we recognize the need for group officers? What is our criteria for election?
- Do we sometimes give a position to someone "because it would be good for them?"
- Do I set a positive leadership example?

Cont'd.

CONCEPTS CHECKLIST (Cont'd.)

CONCEPT X: Every service responsibility should be matched by an equal service authority, with the scope of such authority well defined.

- Do we understand "authority" and "responsibility" as they relate to group conscience decisions by GSRs, DCMs and our Area Delegates?
- Why is delegation of "authority" so important to the overall effectiveness of AA?
- Do we use this concept to define the scope of "authority?"

CONCEPT XI: The trustees should always have the best possible committees, corporate service directors, executives, staffs, and consultants. Composition, qualifications, induction procedures, and rights and duties will always be matters of serious concern.

- Do we understand how the roles of non-trustee directors and non-trustee appointed committee members help serve and strengthen the committee system?
- How do we encourage our special paid workers to exercise their traditional "Right of Participation?"
- Do we practice rotation in all our service positions?

CONCEPT XII: The Conference shall observe the spirit of AA tradition, taking care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds and reserve be its prudent financial principle; that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others; that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote, and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; that it never perform acts of government, and that, like the Society it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action.

- How do we guard against becoming a "seat of perilous wealth or power?"
- How do we practice prudent use of our Seventh Tradition contributions and literature revenue?
- Do we insure the spiritual liberties of all AA members by not placing any member in the position of absolute authority over others?
- Do we try to reach important decisions by thorough discussion, vote and, where possible, substantial unanimity?
- As guardians of AA's traditions, are we ever justified in being personally punitive?
- Are we careful to avoid public controversy?
- Do we always try to treat each other with mutual respect and love?

GROUP INVENTORY NORMS

Facilitator's role:

The facilitator is neutral with no opinion; experienced with conducting this type of meeting; and is here to keep the meeting on its desired track.

Level set items:

- All agree on the inventory questions to be used.
- Set an end time and agree on it.
- All agree to the following — Norms of Behavior.
- It's best to direct comments to the facilitator to avoid personalizing discussion.

Norms (Normative Behavior):

- No decisions will be made.
- This is not a business meeting.
- Decisions should be made at a regularly scheduled business meeting.
- A consensus is possible but is not necessary.
- The Group agrees to keep the facilitator in their role.
- Titles should be checked at the door.
- All members agree to work together to complete the agenda.
- Members do not interrupt when someone else is talking.
- Members agree to raise a hand to be recognized.
- There is no such thing as a bad opinion.
- Members agree to treat one another with dignity and respect.
- Members agree to keep AA's primary purpose uppermost in mind at all times.
- We need a timekeeper and someone to record the inventory. Have fun!

NOTE TO MODERATORS/REPORTS:

It is not necessary to report all discussion - only the subject and the "sense of the meeting" need be recorded.

The notes above represent the format of the workshops that are held each year at the General Service Conference. There are other ways, of course, to conduct workshops.

For instance, if a series of workshops is being held on the *AA Guidelines* or *The AA Service Manual combined with Twelve Concepts for World Service*, participants might be asked to read the Guidelines or a chapter in the Manual and come prepared with their questions. In some cases the portion to be discussed is read aloud, with each participant taking his turn to read a few paragraphs and then informal discussions on the subject take place.

However, when a report is needed or wanted, it is important to have the subject recorded, as well as the "sense of the meeting" on the subject.

If a District Committee Member or Delegate, for instance, is trying to interest GSRs in the *AA Guidelines* or *The AA Service Manual combined with Twelve Concepts for World Service*, it is helpful sometimes to prepare questions in advance, giving each participant a list of the questions to be discussed. The best method is always the one that suits your own purpose best.

AA GROUP INVENTORY

1. What is the basic purpose of our Group?
2. What more can our Group do to carry the message?
3. Is our group attracting alcoholics from different backgrounds? Are we seeing a good cross-section of our community, including those with special needs?
4. Do new members stick with us, or does turnover seem excessive? If so, why?
5. What can we as a Group do to retain members?
6. Do we emphasize the importance of sponsorship? How effectively? How can we do it better?
7. Are we careful to preserve the anonymity of our Group Members and other AAs outside the meeting rooms? Do we also leave what they share at meetings behind?
8. Does our Group emphasize to all Members the value of keeping up with the kitchen, set-up, clean-up and other housekeeping chores that are essential for our Twelfth Step efforts?
9. Are all members given the opportunity to speak at meetings and to participate in other group activities?
10. Mindful that holding office is a great responsibility not to be viewed as the outcome of a popularity contest, are we choosing our officers with care?
11. Are we doing all we can to provide an attractive and accessible meeting place?
12. Does our Group do its fair share toward participating in the purpose of AA – as it relates to our Three Legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service?
13. What has our Group done lately to bring the AA message to the attention of professionals in the community – the physicians, clergy, court officials, educators, and others who are often the first to see alcoholics in need of help?
14. How is our Group fulfilling its responsibility to the Seventh Tradition?

Reprinted from The AA Group (P-16), pages 27-28, with permission of AA World Services, Inc.

OVERVIEW OF THE SOUTHERN MINNESOTA AREA GENERAL SERVICE STRUCTURE

THE AREA ASSEMBLY is defined by *The AA Service Manual combined with Twelve Concepts for World Service* as any meeting of Area General Service Representatives (GSRs) and the Area Committee - it is further described as - the democratic voice of the movement expressing itself. (See: Chapter 4 of the *The AA Service Manual Combined With Twelve Concepts For World Service*, Page S36, with permission of AA World Services, Inc.) Voting members of the Assembly are all currently serving GSRs (or Alternates) and all members of the Area Committee. Among other things, the Area Assembly hears reports from our Area Officers and takes action on proposals presented by our Standing Committees.

The Area Assembly meets three times a year, at different locations around the Area (see the Area Calendar at www.area36.org). Assembly agendas are printed in the Area Newsletter, *The Pigeon*, which is mailed six weeks prior to an upcoming Area Assembly. Any items for inclusion on the agenda should be given to the Area Chairperson at the previous Area Committee Meeting. The Area Secretary will keep a copy of all Area Assembly meeting minutes on file.

THE AREA COMMITTEE consists of the Area Officers, the District Committee Members (DCMs) from all 27 Districts, and the Area Standing Committee Chairpersons. Past Delegates also participate in the Area Committee, if they so wish, but are not included in the quorum count for voting. The primary function of our Area Committee is operational - it has been directed by the GSRs to act for the Assembly in routine and custodial matters. The Area Committee hears reports from our Area Officers, sets the agenda for the Area Assembly and reviews Standing Committee proposals to be presented to the Area Assembly. (For more information about the Area Committee, see Chapter 5 in *The AA Service Manual Combined with Twelve Concepts for World Service*).

The Area Committee meets in conjunction with Standing Committee meetings in Mankato. The Area Secretary will keep a copy of all Area Committee meeting minutes on file.

AREA OFFICERS are the Delegate, Alternate Delegate, Area Chairperson, Alternate Chairperson, Area Secretary, and Area Treasurer. Our Area Officers must provide AA experience and leadership, as well as carrying out the responsibilities of their particular service positions (see the Area 36 **Trusted Servant Guidelines**).

The Area Officers meet monthly, in addition to attending all regular and special Area functions.

DISTRICT COMMITTEE MEMBERS (DCMs) are responsible for the 27 districts of the Southern Minnesota Area. *The AA Service Manual Combined With Twelve Concepts For World Service* (Chapter 3) describes the DCM as an essential link between the group's GSR and the Area's Delegate. As Area Committee Members, DCMs should, of course, contribute their experience as well as their respective District's collective conscience to the current issues being considered by the Area.

Cont'd.

OVERVIEW OF THE SOUTHERN MINNESOTA AREA GENERAL SERVICE STRUCTURE (Cont'd.)

In addition to their responsibilities as Members of the Area Committee, DCMs are the cornerstone of our Area Committee's relationship with our Area's GSRs. In their respective Districts, the DCMs arrange for and chair the District meetings, work with District Standing Committees, coordinate projects with other Districts, distribute the Conference Agenda Items along with pertinent background information, and in general provide for the flow of information and ideas to and from the Groups.

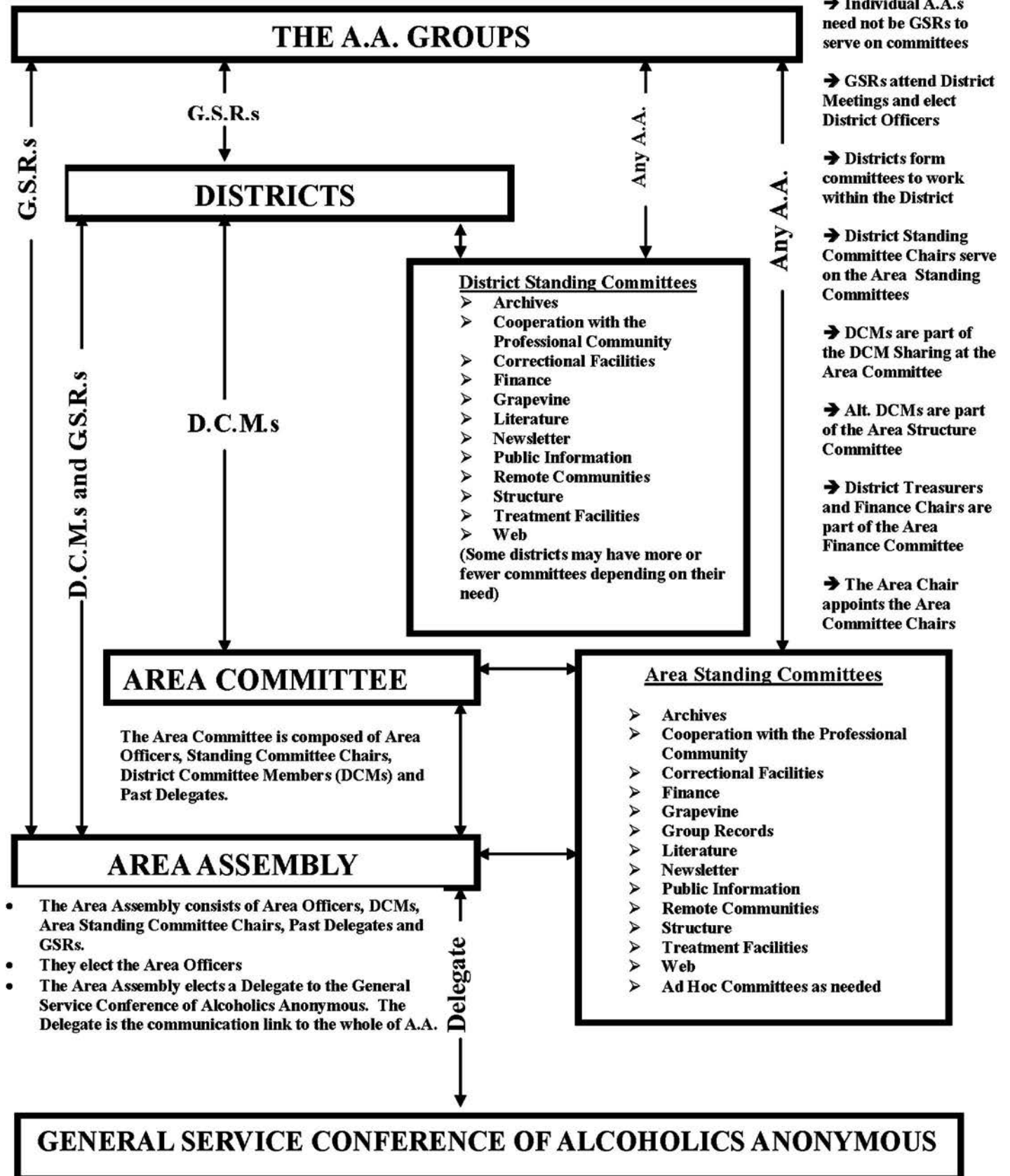
AREA STANDING COMMITTEES are the 13 service committees of the Southern Minnesota Area. They consist of the Area 36 Standing Committee Chairperson, an Alternate, District Standing Committee Chairperson, and *any AA members who wish to participate*. Each committee has a clearly defined *purpose* by our Area 36 **Trusted Servant Guidelines**.

The Standing Committees do three basic things: 1) they *provide a clearinghouse of information and ideas*; 2) they *develop projects in their area of concern*; and 3) they *develop ideas to recommend* to the Area Assembly for our Area or inclusion as Agenda Items for the General Service Conference. The Standing Committees meet quarterly in Mankato in conjunction with the Area Committee Meetings.

All Area Committee Members are responsible for:

- Attending all Area functions (including the Delegate's workshop, the Area Recovery, Unity and Service Conference, the Area Inventory, the West Central Regional Service Conference, and the West Central Regional Forum) (See: www.area36.org);
- Submitting an article to the Area Newsletter, *The Pigeon*, at newsletter@area36.org, each quarter regarding their current activities (articles should be submitted to the Newsletter editor at each quarterly Area Committee Meeting);
- Becoming acquainted with our Area's structure, function, and procedures;
- Participating in our Area's efforts to keep communication flowing in a timely manner.

Structure of the Southern Minnesota Area Assembly of Alcoholics Anonymous



VOTING AT ASSEMBLIES

Who is eligible to vote at an Area Assembly? The following trusted servants in the Southern Minnesota Area 36 General Service Structure:

GSRs, DCMs, Officers
Standing Committee Chairs
Past Delegates

Who is not eligible to vote at an Area Assembly?

Alternate GSRs*, Alternate DCMs**, District Officers
District Standing Committee Chairs
Alternate Area Standing Committee Chairs***, Archivist
Corrections Contact Program Coordinator
Pink Can Coordinator
Treatment Facilities Temporary Contact Desk Coordinator
Webmaster

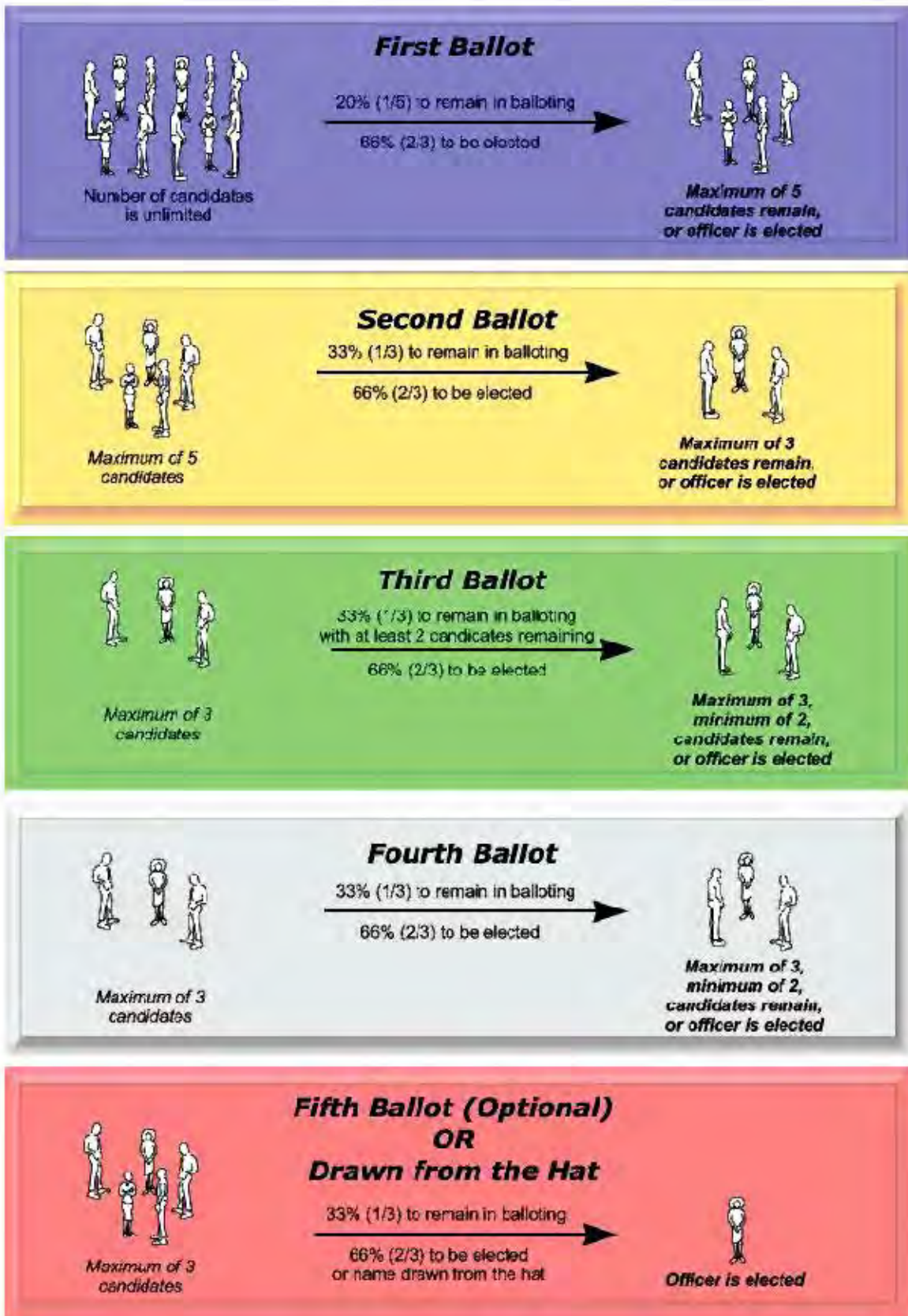
*Alternate GSRs vote *if and only if* their GSR is not present

**Alternate DCMs vote *if and only if* their DCM is not present

***Alternate Area Standing Committee Chairs vote *if and only if* their Area Standing Committee Chair is not present

This outlines who is eligible to vote. All AA members are welcome to attend and participate in all other aspects of the Area Assembly.

A.A.'s Third Legacy Procedure



FLOWCHART OF AN AREA 36 AGENDA ITEM

An idea, suggestion, question, concern, or subject comes from ...



AA members, GSRs, DCMs, Area Committee Members, or Delegates ...



And is shared or discussed at the Group or District level and then is sent to ...



The Area Chairperson who will assign the item to an Area Committee for review and possible action as a








If the item comes to the Assembly floor as a Recommendation then ACTION by the Assembly is required.



If the item comes to the Assembly floor as a Report then NO ACTION by the Assembly is required.

EVOLUTION OF A CONFERENCE ADVISORY ACTION

1	An idea, suggestion, question, concern, or subject comes from AA members, GSRs, DCMs, Area Committee members, Delegates, Trustees or GSO / GV Staff, and may be shared at the Group, District and Area Assembly and sent to the		Conference Coordinator GSO
2	The idea is reviewed by the GSO / GV Staff and forwarded to the		Appropriate Trustees' Committee
3	Which then may refer the matter to the		Appropriate Trustees' Committee
4	Which meets during the General Service Conference week and makes recommendations that are presented in the Committee Report to the		General Service Conference
5	If a Conference Committee recommendation is approved, after full floor discussion, it becomes a Conferenced Advisory Action , which becomes binding when approved by the		General Service Board

“Without Committees, it is doubtful that any Conference would be able to function effectively.” (Reprinted from *The AA Services Manual Combined with Twelve Concepts For World Services*, Page S59, with permission of AA World Services, Inc.)

MAKEUP OF THE GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

There are 134 members of the General Service Conference Annual Meeting: Ninety-three delegates elected by the service Areas of the US and Canada comprise 69 percent of the voting body. Delegates always make up more than two-thirds of the voting members.

General Service Board of Trustees and Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. (AAWS) and Grapevine directors, totaling 27, comprise 20 percent of the voting members.

The General Service Office (GSO) staff, general manager, senior advisor to the general manager and Grapevine executive editor, senior editor and director of circulation and operations totaling 15, comprises 11 percent of the total.

The General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous is made up of twenty-one trustees. Originally, the majority of trustees were nonalcoholic, but now seven, known as Class A Trustees, are nonalcoholic. Class A Trustees bring to the Board

special expertise in areas such as business, medicine, and law, and may serve up to two consecutive three-year terms.

The fourteen alcoholic (Class B) trustees serve four-year terms. Eight are elected to serve regions of the U.S and Canada. Two are elected as trustees-at-large, one representing the U.S. and one representing Canada. The remaining four general service trustees are selected based on their expertise in areas of finance, publishing, or other fields that would be helpful to the General Service Board and its corporate boards. Two general service trustees serve on the AAWS Board, and two serve on the Grapevine Board.

The AAWS Board oversees the publishing activities of Alcoholics Anonymous (except for Grapevine material and the General Service Office). The board is composed of nine directors: two general service trustees, three non-trustee directors, the general manager of GSO and the GSO staff coordinator.

The Grapevine Board oversees the operation of the AA Grapevine, and is composed of nine members, including one Class A trustee, two general service trustees, two regional trustees, three non-trustee directors and Grapevine executive editor.

A SHORT GUIDE TO PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

This information has been assembled due to frequent requests from members of the Area Assembly regarding the method of conducting the assembly business. However, it should be stressed that studying and utilizing the principles in AA's Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts can provide the most useful guide to assembly protocol. We use parliamentary procedure, when necessary, to ensure that courtesy is given to assembly members, and to promote the orderly exchange of ideas. These procedures were developed to *serve* the assembly - not to stifle it. *When we are at our best, we function almost entirely by using thoughtful consideration of our basic principles.*

Step by Step

1) MOTION

- a) An Area Service Committee recommendation is considered a seconded motion, and will be restated as such by the Committee Chairperson, after he/she presents the recommendation to the Area Assembly. (This is due to a recommendation that passes a committee already has more than one voting member who agrees with it.)
- b) A motion can be made from the floor on any issue by any voting member of the Assembly when there is no other issue being considered.

2) **SECOND** (to demonstrate that more than one voting member is in support of the motion)

3) **CHAIR STATES:** — has been moved and seconded that

4) DISCUSSION (also refer to **THINGS THAT CAN HAPPEN TO A MOTION**)

- a) If every comment is in favor of the motion, the Chair may ask - **Is** it the sense of the meeting that this motion be adopted? If there is no opposition, it can be recorded as a passed motion.
- b) A reasonable opportunity is given to all to speak on the motion, and then...
- c) Chair says: -**There** being no further discussion we will vote on ... and restates the motion.

5) **VOTE** (All in favor of the motion ..., and then - all opposed ...
A two-thirds majority is required to adopt the motion.

Cont'd.

A SHORT GUIDE TO PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE (Cont'd.)

6) MINORITY OPINION, MOTION TO RECONSIDER

- a) Chair asks: "Does anyone in the minority wish to speak?" Only those who voted in the minority may speak at this time.
- b) Chair asks: "Do I hear a MOTION TO RECONSIDER?" Only someone who voted in the majority may make a motion to reconsider. If this motion is made, it must be seconded.
 1. The motion to reconsider is debatable. After reasonable debate, the Chair will ask for a vote. A simple majority, rather than a two-thirds majority decides this vote. If won ...
 2. Discussion on the Main Motion resumes (same rules as before).
 3. VOTE (same rules as before).
 4. THERE IS NO MINORITY OPINION ON THE SECOND VOTE.

Things that can happen to a motion:

- 1) It can be seconded, debated, voted on, etc, as outlined above.
- 2) The following subsidiary motions can be made regarding it (all of these must be seconded, and require a two-thirds majority to carry):
 - a) It can be AMENDED. The amendment is debated and voted on; then discussion of the original motion resumes.
 - b) It can be POSTPONED (tabled) either *definitely* (time or place stated or *indefinitely* (basically, "killed").
 - c) It can be REFERRED TO COMMITTEE, either with or without additional assembly instructions.
- 3) At any time during the discussion, a motion can be made to VOTE IMMEDIATELY ("calling the question"). A second is required. This motion is not debatable. The Chair will immediately ask for a vote on the motion to "vote immediately", and if adopted, the assembly votes immediately on the motion under consideration.