

# HANDBOOK FOR THE A.A. GROUP

GROUP NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

GSO GROUP NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

*Revised Fall 2012*

# HANDBOOK FOR THE A.A. GROUP SECRETARY

Welcome To The Group Secretary.....	3
The Group Secretary - Responsibilities And Additional Information .....	5
The Meeting Format .....	7
Sample Meeting Format.....	8
Other Ideas on Meeting Format.....	9
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ).....	10
What is an A.A. Group?.....	10
What is the difference between “Open” and “Closed” A.A. meetings?.....	10
What is a Home Group? .....	10
What about Phone Lists? .....	11
What is a Steering Committee?.....	11
What is a Business Meeting? .....	12
What is an “informed group conscience”?.....	12
Where does the money go and how often should a financial report be given?.....	13
What is the Valley Service Center? .....	13
What is Intergroup?.....	14
How is an A.A. Group organized?.....	14
How do new A.A. Groups get started? .....	14
Job Descriptions.....	15
The Third Legacy Election Procedure.....	21
Financial Information .....	23
Group Contributions Toward A.A. Services .....	23
Valley Service Center General Information .....	25
The A.A. Hotline and 12-Step List.....	27
General Service Representative .....	28
NCCAA Delegates .....	29
What About Court Slips? .....	30
Conference-Approved Literature .....	31
Group Inventory Format .....	33

## ATTACHMENTS

A.A. Preamble  
The 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous  
The 12 Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous  
The 12 Concepts Of A.A. World Service  
Sign-In Sheet  
Treasurer’s Report  
12-Step/Hotline Volunteer form  
Glossary

## WELCOME TO THE GROUP SECRETARY

Congratulations on being elected Secretary of your group.

This handbook is designed to answer questions you may have about your responsibilities as group Secretary and about A.A. in general. Never hesitate to ask for help from more experienced A.A. members or the Service Center, and remember Tradition 2, which reads:

*"For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority — a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern."*

The guidelines in this handbook are suggestions. Each group is autonomous and, as a group, decides on the format and customs of each meeting.

In the spirit of rotation, please help the next Secretary of your group transition into this service position by explaining the duties and responsibilities expected of them, especially any that may be unique to your group. Pass this handbook along; inform them of any group conscience decisions that may affect their new commitment, and make yourself available to answer future questions.

*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.*

The Valley Service Center is located at

6990 Village Parkway, Suite 214  
Dublin, CA 94568

Office phone number 925-829.3160

Email: [info@valleyservicecenter.org](mailto:info@valleyservicecenter.org)  
URL: <http://www.valleyservicecenter.org>

**24-hour A.A. Hotlines**

925-829-0666 (Valley Service Center)  
888-859-3230 (Valley Service Center Toll Free)

925-939-4155 Contra Costa County Hotline  
510-839-8900 East Bay Hotline

General Service Office in New York

A. A. World Services, Inc.  
11<sup>th</sup> Floor  
475 Riverside Drive at West 120<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, New York 10115

212-870-3400  
URL: [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org)

## THE GROUP SECRETARY - RESPONSIBILITIES AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

It is the Group Secretary's responsibility to assure that the meeting is opened, conducted, and concluded in accordance with the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous. Every AA group is just a little bit different from other AA groups. Depending on the conscience of your group, the Group Secretary's responsibilities may include:

- Preparing the meeting place (and refreshments, if applicable).
- Arranging for and introducing a chairperson.
- Welcoming visitors and newcomers.
- Managing seventh tradition and H&I contributions, in the absence of the Group Treasurer.
- Providing A.A. approved literature in the absence of a Group Literature Chairperson.
- Assuring that time for announcements from Intergroup, General Service, and NCCAA Representatives is available at each meeting.
- Assuring that other A.A.-related announcements are made, as appropriate.
- Assuring that non-A.A.-related announcements are not made during the regular meeting time (this would include announcements for other 12-step recovery programs, etc.).
- Contacting the Valley Service Center (925-829-3160) when a regularly scheduled meeting will NOT be held (e.g., holidays, facility events, or other).

AA meetings start and close on time.

A chairperson is invited, if appropriate at your group, to share their experience, strength, and hope with the group. It is suggested that the chairperson be invited at least a week or more in advance. The recommended length of sobriety for a chairperson is at least six months. Inviting A.A. members from outside your own group is vital for a fresh viewpoint.

Inform your chairperson about the length of the meeting and the recommended time they should share their story with the group (usually 10-15 minutes for a discussion meeting, 30 - 45 minutes for a speaker meeting — whatever is appropriate with the format established by the conscience of your group). If your group is a step, traditions, concepts, or book study, advise the chairperson if they are to speak specifically to a reading.

If appropriate to your group, pass around the sign-in sheet ("hit list") for use by the chairperson to call on people to share during the discussion portion of the meeting. Before passing it around, you may want to make a note of newcomers and visitors from out-of-town. Some groups use a spiral notebook for signing in, some groups use a sign-

in sheet. A sample sign-in sheet has been provided in the back of this handbook. Sign-in sheets do not need to be saved. Individual sheets may be thrown out at the end of the meeting, spiral notebooks may be thrown out when they are full.

Depending on the group conscience, it may be included in your meeting's format that members should "share briefly," "only once," "raise your hand to be acknowledged," etc.

No individual, drunk or sober, should be permitted to interrupt repeatedly or otherwise disturb an A.A. meeting. Anyone who tends to monopolize the discussion should be tactfully discouraged, perhaps by interrupting gently and saying "Thank you - to allow everyone a chance to speak, does someone else also want to share?" or "It sounds as if it would be helpful if you stayed after the meeting to meet and talk with some of the men/women in our group", and going on to the next person. If the Chairperson seems unable to do this, it is the responsibility of the Group Secretary to shoulder this (albeit uncomfortable) responsibility. This also applies if someone, especially a newcomer, seems to be disclosing information that he/she may later regret having shared with the whole group.

If your group does not have a literature chairperson, make sure that A.A. books and literature are available. Conference approved A.A. books, pamphlets and literature are available from the Valley Service Center.

## THE MEETING FORMAT

The meeting format is the Secretary's guide for conducting the A.A. meeting for a Group. It is a set of directions on how to conduct the meeting that has been adopted by the group. Every group should have a written format for the Secretary to follow.

The meeting format is generally put together by the group Steering Committee and then presented to the group for its approval (or modification). There are no set rules on how a group should conduct its meetings (each group is autonomous). Group formats are as individual and as different as the people who attend A.A. meetings. Changes to meeting formats are discussed and approved by a group conscience. No single member should take it upon themselves to change a meeting format.

In this area, groups frequently read "How It Works" and the "Twelve Traditions" from the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous. Some groups may also choose to read "The Promises from pages 83 and 84 of the Big Book, the first two pages of Chapter Three from the Big Book, etc.) Readings are NOT required as a part of any group's meeting format. Each group is autonomous.

The format lets the Group Secretary know when readings take place, when the group has chosen to have the basket passed for the Seventh Tradition (i.e., beginning of the meeting, during group announcements, at the end, after the break, etc.), when to ask for newcomers, visitors, A.A. birthdays, etc.

The meeting format should be reviewed by the Group Conscience from time to time (annual group inventory?) to assure that the format is up-to-date and continues to meet the group's needs. Via the group conscience, the format can be modified as necessary.

On the following pages is an example of a meeting format. Each group is encouraged to adopt a format that suits those who regularly attend that group.

The meeting format establishes when the seventh tradition basket(s) are passed (i.e., beginning of the meeting, after the chairperson's share, at the end, with announcements, etc.). Many groups in this area choose to make announcements during the seventh tradition so that the baskets are not passed while members are sharing. The pink H&I can should be passed separately from the seventh tradition baskets (i.e., in a different direction, delayed from the basket(s), etc.)

Many groups find it helpful to keep a list of group conscience decisions that have been made (i.e., chairperson calls on people, use the hit list, when the Secretary makes announcements, how chips are paid for, etc.). This assures that as people join or leave the group, the decisions that have already been made do not need to be revisited.

## SAMPLE MEETING FORMAT

This is the regular meeting of the \_\_\_\_\_ group of Alcoholics Anonymous. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am an alcoholic, and your secretary.

This is an (open/closed) meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous. We are glad you are all here - especially newcomers. In keeping with our singleness of purpose and our Third Tradition, which states that "The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking," we ask that all who participate in this meeting to confine their discussion to their problems with alcohol.

Let us open the meeting with a moment of silence to do with as you wish, followed by the Serenity Prayer.

\_\_\_\_\_ will read the **A.A. preamble**.

\_\_\_\_\_ will read "**How It Works**" from **Chapter Five** of the Big Book of **Alcoholics Anonymous**. (Many groups choose to have How It Works read from the Big Book (so that newcomers know that it comes out of the book and not off a piece of paper). The Group may choose to have a Big Book for this regular reading and any other readings that are customary read at the meeting.

\_\_\_\_\_ will now read the "**Twelve Traditions**."

This is not to embarrass anyone, but so we may get to know you after the meeting. Is there anyone attending their first, second, or third A.A. meeting that would like to introduce themselves? Is there any one in their first 30 days of sobriety that would like to introduce themselves? Do we have any visitors from outside the area that would like to introduce themselves?

Introduce the chairperson and turn the meeting over to them (as appropriate to the format of your particular meeting).

Seventh tradition: "We will now practice our seventh tradition. Each group is self-supporting through our own contributions. This money is used to pay the expenses of this meeting and to support our General Service Office and our Local Service Structure. **(Please pass the pink can separately.)** The pink can is to provide A.A. literature to individuals in hospitals and institutions who otherwise may not have it available.

During the seventh tradition is a good time for the regular announcements. **Ask for announcements from Intergroup Representative, General Service Representative, and**

**H&I Representative, Grapevine Representative, NCCAA Delegate, etc.** Any other A.A. announcements?

Introduce the chairperson and turn the meeting over to them (as appropriate to the format of your particular meeting).

(optional: 2. you may pass the sign-in sheet at this point.)

At the conclusion of the meeting, thank the chairperson, the coffee maker, and the greeters. Request help with cleanup. If your group has greeters, you may want to ask for two volunteers to greet at next week's meeting. Your group may choose to ask if anyone has celebrated an A.A. birthday in the past week.

Close the meeting in the manner determined by the group conscience. Generally this is with The Lord's Prayer, The Serenity Prayer, or "I am Responsible" statement. (Some groups may choose a different way of closing.)

## **OTHER IDEAS ON MEETING FORMAT**

Each group is autonomous. Through the group conscience each group decides on the meeting format for their meeting. Whatever your group conscience decides, it is suggested that a meeting format be followed to maintain a good meeting environment. Here is a list of other meeting formats.

- Reading just the 12 steps (rather than all of "How It Works")
- Reading the long form of the 12 traditions (sometimes just once a month, or the long form of the tradition for the month)
- Reading the 9<sup>th</sup> step promises on pages 83 and 84 of the Big Book (or other promises from the Big Book (i.e., 5<sup>th</sup> Step promises on page 75, etc.)
- Reading promises other than the 9<sup>th</sup> step promises
- Reading the first two pages of Chapter 3
- Reading the first three paragraphs of Chapter 11
- Reading the last four paragraphs of Chapter 11
- Reading the "Spiritual Experience" (Appendix II in the back of the Big Book)
- Reading a short story from the Grapevine
- Reading a short portion of any other A.A. approved literature

Closing the meeting: In this area most meetings choose to close meetings with The Lord's Prayer, The Serenity Prayer, or "I am Responsible" statement. Your group may choose to close however the group conscience decides. Some other ideas are closing with the 3<sup>rd</sup> step prayer, 7<sup>th</sup> step prayer, or the 11<sup>th</sup> step prayer — or no prayer.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

### **What is an A.A. Group?**

(From the pamphlet A.A. Group - Revised) The long form of Tradition Three states, "Our membership ought to include all who suffer from alcoholism. Hence we may refuse none who wish to recover. Nor ought A.A. membership ever depend upon money or conformity. Any two or three alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an A.A. group, provided that as a group, they have no other affiliation."

### **What is the difference between "Open" and "Closed" A.A. meetings?**

(From the pamphlet A.A. Group - Revised) The purpose of all A.A. meetings, as the Preamble states, is for A.A. members to "share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism." Toward this end, A.A. groups have both open and closed meetings.

*Closed meetings* are for A.A. members only, or for those who have a drinking problem and "have a desire to stop drinking."

*Open meetings* are available to anyone interested in Alcoholics Anonymous' program of recovery from alcoholism. Nonalcoholics may attend open meetings as observers only.

At both open and closed meetings, the A.A. chairperson may request that participants confine their discussion to matters pertaining to recovery from alcoholism. Whether open or closed, A.A. group meetings are conducted by A.A. members who determine the format of their meeting.

### **What is a Home Group?**

When members are new to Alcoholics Anonymous, they are shown many different meetings in a variety of different formats. The meetings are filled with a blur of different faces. In the beginning, this is okay, but most of us reach the point where we find it necessary to identify with one place and one group of people on a regular basis, the Home Group. A Home Group is a place where we let people get to know us and we begin to feel comfortable with our new way of life. The faces are no longer a blur; they belong to real people.

Time passes, and before you know it, you find yourself at a business meeting. A member begins to experience the unorganized organization of Alcoholics Anonymous. It becomes apparent that the members of your Home Group are willing to be responsible for the happenings of their group. Almost immediately, new members may find themselves with service commitments as a coffee maker or greeter. It can happen so fast and it is at this moment that most of us began to realize that the group has put

faith and trust in us and is willing to give us a chance. The first chance many of us have had in awhile. As we make a commitment to our Home Group we find that we are now able to begin to reach out to help others.

The Home Group reinforces the fact that A.A. is not just about stopping drinking and attending meetings. It fosters sharing and identifies the needed steps and traditions. The Home Group introduces service and the service structure to its' members and shows us a new pathway to walk. It is in our Home Group that we vote on matters concerning A.A. as a whole. (Also see the Home Group on page 18 in the pamphlet A.A. Group - Revised and the book, published by the Grapevine, "Home Group: The Heartbeat of A.A.")

### **What about Phone Lists?**

The members of your group might like to have a list of members who regularly attend the meeting and their phone numbers. A group conscience decision is made to decide if your group should maintain a phone list. Questions for the group to discuss should include whether to include last names (if the individual permits), sobriety dates, email addresses, etc. Participation in being listed on any group phone list is, of course, voluntary. Many groups include not only the name of the group on the phone list, but also the place, day, and time the meeting meets, and contact information for the AA Service Center and even the General Service Office.

### **What is a Steering Committee?**

A.A. Groups and Fellowships that hold more than one meeting a week (i.e., Tri-Valley, Crossroads, etc.) usually have a Steering Committee; a group made up of an experienced cross-section of the Group's membership. A Steering Committee does not represent management of a group, as no individual or committee may do that. The Steering Committee serves the group by providing an experienced cross section of group membership to whom problems of the group can be referred, and may consider decisions about group activities (i.e., new meetings, meeting changes, activities, etc.).

The members holding service commitments in the group (i.e., Secretary, Treasurer, Coffee Person, Program Chair, Literature Chair, Intergroup Rep, GSR, H&I Rep, etc.) are usually the foundation of a group's Steering Committee but any member who wishes is welcome (and usually encouraged) to attend Steering Committee meetings.

The Steering Committee handles "policy questions" that may arise within a group. In many groups a Steering Committee meeting is the same as a business meeting. However, within the Valley Intergroup area, there are some fellowships and umbrella groups that hold Steering Committee meetings separate from group conscience meetings.

It is suggested that the Steering committee meet once a month and no less than once a quarter. The Steering Committee may explore solutions for group problems or concerns. The ideas or suggestions are then taken back to the group(s) for discussion and decisions. Steering Committee meetings are announced well in advance. Members

are reminded that any interested person is welcome to attend a Steering Committee meeting.

See Business Meeting below. Also see the Steering Committee on page 29 in the A.A. Group - Revised.

### **What is a Business Meeting?**

In this area "Business Meeting" and "Group Conscience" are often two different things, but in other areas the terms are sometimes synonymous.

A business meeting (or Steering Committee meeting) is where the group's business gets accomplished. Reports from the group Treasurer, Intergroup Reps, GSRs, H&I Reps, NCCAA delegates, Grapevine, Coffee person, etc. are usually made at the Group business meeting. In addition to reports, any issues, problems, ideas, etc. are discussed at business meetings. A sense of humor, cooling-off periods, patience, courtesy, willingness to listen and wait, a sense of fairness, and trust in a Power greater than ourselves has been found to be more useful than legalistic arguments or personal accusations.

Business meetings are generally attended by A.A. members that consider the Group their "home group," or that regularly attend the meeting and have a vested interest in how the Group and its meetings are run.

Many groups have found that they can apply some of the ideas in Bill W.'s "Twelve Concepts for World Service" in their group conscience.

It is recommended that A.A. groups hold a business meeting on a regular, established basis. Some groups have a monthly business meeting, some quarterly, and some only once or twice a year.

See "Informed Group Conscience" below. For more information, refer to the A.A. World Services publication "The A.A. Service Manual combined with Twelve Concepts for World Service". Your GSR will be a good resource for this book. (Also, see Group Problems on page 37 of the pamphlet "A.A. Group - Revised".)

### **What is an "informed group conscience"?**

Decisions made in a group conscience are more than arithmetic, or a "yes" and "no" count. It is not just a vote. A.A. is a spiritual movement, and so the "ultimate authority" is the spiritual concept of the "group conscience".

The voice of the group is heard when all points of view of an item of discussion are heard, including the minority opinion. All available information on a given subject is presented, and all ideas, including those of the minority, get thoughtful attention. The group conscience should express a comfortable majority, as opposed to a "simple

majority" opinion within the group, so that most of the group's members support the final decision.

Each member who wishes to do so should be given the opportunity to express an opinion. Gifted speakers can sometimes sway others, so the minority voice must always be heard. A group conscience decision is a process that may take time (weeks or even longer). The greatest enemy of the group conscience is apathy. The group that listens to all its voices with an open mind and has a good understanding of the principles of A.A. is guided in its decisions by principles and not personalities. It is suggested that members remember to ask their Higher Power for direction.

(Also see Informed Group Conscience on page 34 of the A.A. Group – Revised and The Group Conscience section of this Handbook.)

### **Where does the money go and how often should a financial report be given?**

Group contributions first pay group expenses, which may include: rent, A.A. literature, refreshments, equipment, and supplies. After basic group needs are met, the remainder in excess of the prudent reserve (usually 3 months expenses) of the contributions goes to help support A.A. as a whole through Intergroup, Area, District, and General Service.

Funds collected for H&I are always separate and are not used to help pay for group expenses.

Each group decides (by an informed group conscience) how their seventh tradition monies will be distributed. The distribution of seventh tradition monies in this area is recommended as follows:

VSC Intergroup 60%  
California Northern Coastal Area 5%  
District 70 5%  
General Service Office (New York) 30%

Treasurers should maintain a record and keep their group informed about how much is taken in and how it is spent. Monthly reports should be made to the group. Any member putting money in the basket may ask where the money goes. See additional information on Finances later in this Handbook. (Also see Treasurer on page 25 of the A.A. Group - Revised.)

### **What is the Valley Service Center?**

The Valley Service Center is located in Dublin and is responsible for the following:

- Maintaining a twenty-four hour hotline for alcoholics seeking to speak to another alcoholic and for individuals interested in obtaining information about A.A.

- Providing A.A. World Services literature and books for groups and individuals. Pamphlets are free, books, CDs, calendars, and chips are available for purchase.
- Maintaining and publishing meeting schedules for the area served by the Valley Service Center.
- Acting as a communication center for local groups.
- Providing other services that may be needed to support meetings and groups within the TriValley area.

## **What is Intergroup?**

Intergroup for the area served by the Valley Service Center is a gathering of AA members representative of the groups, meetings, and Fellowships within the Tri-Valley area.

Intergroup is where the voice of the group conscience is heard in matters affecting other groups in the local A.A. community, where each group's questions, needs, and concerns are heard, and where representatives are informed about A.A. activities and events.

Valley Intergroup meetings are held on the first Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran Church in Pleasanton. Each group gets one Intergroup Representative and one vote at Intergroup meetings (for elections, motions to Intergroup, etc.).

## **How is an A.A. Group organized?**

Since each A.A. group is autonomous, there are as many ways to set up an A.A. group as there are A.A. Groups.

The "officers" of an A.A. group are determined by group conscience. Each group should review the list of positions and determine for themselves the positions that are needed/desired for each group, the term of service for each position, and any sobriety requirements for different positions.

Some groups have Secretary's serve for 6 months, some serve for one month at a time, and in some groups, the Secretary's position is for one year. It is generally recommended that there be a specific sobriety requirement for the group Treasurer and that the individual in that position serve for at least one year. The terms for GSR, H&I Rep, Intergroup Rep, and NCCAA Delegates are recommended by those service structures and are discussed elsewhere in this handbook.

## **How do new A.A. Groups get started?**

It is often said in Alcoholics Anonymous that all it takes to start a new meeting is "resentment and a coffee pot." The resentment isn't necessary! Often new meetings get started because members in an area would like a meeting that is more conducive to their schedule, located closer to their home, focuses on some piece of A.A. literature, is a women's meeting, or a men's meeting, or a step meeting, or . . . we could increase the list ad infinitum!

## JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Position	Recommended Term	Recommended Sobriety Requirement	Filled By
Secretary or co-secretary	6 months*	1 year	Election/Volunteer
Treasurer	1 year*	2 years	Election/Volunteer
Literature	6 months*	90 days	Election/Volunteer
Key Pick Up	1 year*	90 days	Election/Volunteer
Greeters (2)	6 months*	30 days	Volunteer
Coffee Maker	6 months*	30 days	Election/Volunteer
Grapevine Representative	1 year*	6 months	Election/Volunteer
Clean Up (Inside and Outside)	6 months*	30 days	Election/Volunteer
General Service Rep	2 years	2 years	Election/Volunteer
H&I Rep	2 years	1 year	Election/Volunteer
Intergroup Rep	1 year	1 year	Election/Volunteer
NCCAA Delegates (2)	1 year	Determined by group	Election/Volunteer

- *Terms to be determined by the group. See discussion in the descriptions below.*

The group conscience of the \_\_\_\_\_ Group has determined that this is how our trusted servants will be decided and serve:

Position	Recommended Term	Recommended Sobriety Requirement	Filled By
Secretary or co-secretary			
Treasurer			
Literature			
Key Pick Up			
Greeters (2)			
Coffee Maker			
Grapevine Representative			
Clean Up (Inside and Outside)			
General Service Rep			
H&I Rep			
Intergroup Rep			
NCCAA Delegates (2)			

The following is a *brief and generic* description of the duties and responsibilities of service positions for an A.A. Group. Each Group decides, through group conscience, which positions or responsibilities to include, change, add, or subtract. Individuals with a service commitment to the Group should be reminded that they are responsible for finding someone to replace them if they will be unable to attend a meeting.

Groups may fill these positions in any manner they choose (i.e., volunteer, group conscience, etc.) Larger groups may choose to follow the “Third Legacy Procedure” to fill positions for their group. A description of the Third Legacy Procedure is provided later in this handbook.

- Secretary:** This position may be held by one or two people (as is determined by Group Conscience). The Secretary is responsible for:
- Registering with the Service Center as a new Secretary.
  - Attendance at a Secretary’s Workshop is suggested but not required.
  - Contacting the Valley Service Center (925-829-3160) when a regularly scheduled meeting will NOT be held (e.g., holidays, facility events, or other).
  - Selecting chairpersons with experience in recovery.
  - Making sure the meeting room is open at least one half hour before the start of the meeting.
  - Starting and ending the meeting on time.
  - Suggesting that the chairperson call on visitors from out-of-town, even if those individuals do not volunteer.
  - Requesting volunteers for greeters for next week’s meeting, if appropriate.

Groups determine the length of service for their Secretary. Some groups may choose to have a new Secretary each month, some rotate every six months, and some group’s Secretaries hold their position for one year.

- Treasurer:** The Treasurer is responsible for:
- Collecting seventh tradition contributions, including H&I pink cans.
  - Making distributions every month (including: Rent, Valley Service Center (60%), GSO (30%), CNCA (5%), District 70 (5%), and H&I.) See the Tri Valley meeting directory for addresses or the glossary page of this handbook.
  - Reimbursements for coffee and literature expenses.
  - Collecting money for literature sold.

It is recommended that Treasurers for Groups have at least one year of sobriety. Treasurers of groups generally serve for one to two years. It is recommended that Treasurers rotate out of the position after two years.

- Literature:** The Literature person is responsible for:
- Purchasing books from the Valley Service Center and picking up pamphlets and meeting schedules (reimbursed by treasurer).
  - Setting up and taking down the literature at each meeting.
  - Assuring that Literature supplies are kept with the Literature person, or in storage at the meeting facility, if appropriate.
  - Giving literature sales money to the Treasurer.
- Key Pickup:** The Key Pickup person, if needed, is responsible for picking up the key and being at the meeting place to unlock the door for the coffee maker. For some meetings this position may be the Secretary, Coffee Maker, or Set-Up person.
- Greeters:** In some groups there may be a permanent greeter(s) that serve for a specific time period (one month, six months, etc.), other groups ask for volunteers at the end of each meeting for the meeting the following week. Groups are encouraged to have greeters at their meetings. Greeters are responsible for:
- Making sure that everyone is welcomed to the meeting.
  - Introducing newcomers and visitors to other group members.
  - Showing people where the meeting is located, if appropriate.
  - For closed meetings, letting newcomers and visitors know that the meeting is only for those with a desire to stop drinking.
- Each group decides if there is a sobriety requirement for this commitment.
- Coffee Maker** The Coffee Maker is responsible for:
- Arriving early to start coffee (regular, decaf, hot water).
  - Assuring that coffee supplies are maintained.
  - Set-up and clean up of coffee supplies.
  - Cookies or treats, if appropriate to your Group.
- “Sweetie” or Cookie Lady** Some Groups may choose to have “goodies” available at their meeting. This may be treats each week, or cake for a special monthly “birthday meeting.” Each group decides what is appropriate for the group, and whether or not the person with this commitment will be reimbursed for what they bring. There is generally no sobriety requirement for this commitment.

- Grapevine Rep:** Some groups choose to have copies of the Grapevine available for their members to either purchase or borrow and bring back. The group pays for the Grapevine subscription. The Grapevine Representative is responsible for:
- Subscribing to the A.A. Grapevine and having it delivered to their home (or the Group mailbox). This expenditure is reimbursed by the Group.
  - Bringing the copy(ies) to the meeting and announcing that the magazine is available for purchase or to take home and read and return.
  - Occasionally reading a brief excerpt from the current issue to the group, if appropriate.

**Set-Up/Clean-Up:** The Inside Clean Up person is responsible for helping with coffee cleanup and making sure the chairs are stacked, or put away and the room is cleaner than we found it. In some locations this may involve mopping or sweeping.

Outside Clean Up (sometimes called the “butthead”) is responsible for making sure that cigarette butts and trash are not left around the outside of the meeting room. Remember that we are guests of the facilities where we hold our meetings.

- GSR (and Alternate):** The General Service Representative has the job of linking their group with A.A. as a whole. The GSR represents the voice of the group conscience, reporting the group's wishes to the District Committee Member and to the Delegate, who passes them on to the General Service Conference in New York. The General Service Representative is responsible for:
- Attending monthly sub-district and District General Service meetings and local assemblies.
  - Reporting back to the group on items of interest and carrying the group conscience to the General Service meetings, when appropriate.
  - Bringing “agenda topics” to the Groups business meeting for discussion and Group Conscience, and taking the results back to the Delegate at the Pre-Conference Assembly.

You will find more about the GSR later in this handbook.

- H&I Rep:** The Hospitals and Institutions Representative is responsible for:
- Attending the H&I Committee meeting (first Wednesday of the month for Alameda County)
  - Reporting back to the Group on H&I needs and requirements.

- It is recommended, but not required, that the H&I Rep have an H&I commitment.
- Having a copy of the [pink] H&I handbook available for reference at the meeting.

**Intergroup Rep:** An Intergroup Representative represents their group in the responsibilities undertaken jointly with other groups in the A.A. community and tries to keep their group well informed of Intergroup and other local area A.A. activities. The Intergroup Representative is the voice of the group conscience in matters affecting other groups, reporting the group's wishes to Intergroup as a whole. The Intergroup Representative also brings back to the group any information, questions or problems from Intergroup.

Valley Intergroup meetings are held on the first Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran Church in Pleasanton. Intergroup Representatives usually serve for one year. The Intergroup Representative is responsible for:

- Attending the monthly Intergroup meeting (1<sup>st</sup> Monday of the Month for Valley Intergroup).
- Carrying the questions, needs, and group conscience to the Intergroup meeting.
- Making a regular report to the Group on the monthly meetings, including Intergroup's needs, events, etc.

Some groups in San Ramon may also participate in the Contra Costa County Intergroup (which meets at 7:30 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday of the month at the Mayhew Service Center). If your group participates in both Intergroups, it is suggested that there be two separate Intergroup Representatives.

**NCCAA Delegate:** NCCAA (Northern California Council of Alcoholics Anonymous) conferences are held three times a year in different areas of Northern California. Each AA group is entitled to two delegates to attend the NCCAA Delegates meeting on the Saturday afternoon of those conferences (2:30 p.m.). NCCAA Delegates vote on bid packages that have been forwarded on from the NCCAA Steering Committee, pick up flyers for the next NCCAA conference, and conduct other NCCAA business, as appropriate. NCCAA Delegates are not reimbursed for their travel to NCCAA conferences or any expenses incurred at those conferences.

This is a volunteer position. Some groups may decide to see if any of their members will be attending the next NCCAA conference, and make two of those people the NCCAA Delegate for that period

of time. Some individuals may be willing to take on a longer-term (1 to 2 year) commitment for their group.

You will find more about NCCAA later in this handbook.

## THE THIRD LEGACY ELECTION PROCEDURE

Many members of Alcoholics Anonymous hear about “the third legacy,” but aren’t always familiar with what is being discussed. Bob K., a former Delegate for our area, wrote up this brief introduction.

The three legacies of Alcoholics Anonymous (symbolized by the circle and triangle) are Recovery, Unity, and Service. We are guided in these three legacies by the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts (*see pages 30 through 33 of this handbook*). While the first two (Recovery and Unity) are indeed the first and second legacies, it is generally only the third, “Service,” that carries the moniker of legacy, “The Third Legacy.”

Service, and the Concepts as addressed in the text of the Service Manual to General Service, refers to all avenues of AA service: General Service, Intergroup, H&I, at the group level, conferences, etc.

The lessons the Concepts teach us are related to how we conduct ourselves while doing service work. It goes beyond the 9th Tradition of being directly responsible to those we serve. It helps us to form committees, etc., but shows us the specifics of how we conduct ourselves within those service commitments.

While small groups may find that their election/selection process for trusted servants is simple, larger groups and Fellowships may find that following the process laid out in the A.A. Service Manual for selection of Area Delegates is helpful.

In many groups, any A. A. member meeting the groups established minimal requirements (*see page 12 of this handbook*) may make themselves available to hold a service position within a group.

These names are posted. It is generally suggested that the individuals having made themselves available leave the room.

All members present (or those pre-determined by the group as being eligible to vote) cast written ballots, one choice per ballot.

The tally for each person is posted. The first candidate to receive two-thirds of the eligible vote is elected.

If no one candidate receives the necessary two-thirds vote on the first ballot, a second ballot is held, identical to the first.

After the second ballot, if no one candidate has the necessary two-thirds vote, any candidate having less than one-fifth of the vote is withdrawn, except that the top two candidates must remain and a third ballot is held.

After the third ballot Candidates with less than one third of the vote, are withdrawn, except that the two top candidates remain and a fourth ballot is held.

After the fourth ballot, if no candidate has two thirds of the vote the chairperson asks for a motion, a second, and a majority of hands on conducting a fifth and final ballot. The fifth and final ballot is conducted the same as the third and fourth ballot.

However, if the motion for a fifth and final ballot is defeated, balloting is over and the remaining names go "to the hat." If the fifth and final ballot is held and no one person is elected by two-thirds, the top two candidates go to the hat. If there is a tie for second place, the top candidate and the second place candidates go to the hat.

The names of the remaining candidates are written on paper and placed in the hat (i.e., basket, paper bag, etc.) and one name is pulled. This is the newly elected individual.

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

It is suggested that each A.A. Group have a Treasurer to maintain records of the seventh tradition and H&I contributions received, the Group expenses paid out, and the support donations made to Intergroup, the Area (CNCA), District 70, and the General Service Office in New York.

If your Group does not have a Treasurer, the Secretary will most likely handle the money for the Group.

Records do not have to be complicated and are helpful when making a financial report to the group. A brief summary on the group's money (income, expenses, etc.) should be given to each A.A. group at least once a month. A sample Treasurer's Report is in the back of this handbook.

### **Group Contributions Toward A.A. Services**

To Support A.A.'s essential services, the General Service Conference suggests that individual groups adopt a specific plan that is suitable to their particular situation. (Also see the pamphlet "Self-Supporting Through our own Contributions.") It is suggested that group contributions should be as follows:

Valley Service Center (60%)  
6990 Village Parkway, Suite 214  
Dublin, CA 94568

The monies sent to the Valley Service Center pays the rent for the service center, and supports the 24-hour hotline for 12-step calls and other inquires; provides groups with books, literature, chips, and meeting schedules; allows the center to be a communication center for local groups; publishes our monthly newsletter (the Valley View), and provides any other local service(s) that may be needed.

California Northern Coastal Area (CNCA) (5%)  
P.O. Box 884222  
San Francisco, CA. 94188-4222

Monies sent to CNCA support Area Assemblies, Delegates expenses, Public Information/Cooperation with the Professional Community and Contact Service.

District 70 (5%)  
P.O. Box 3412  
Hayward, CA 94544

Monies sent to the District support work of communicating with Groups, provide District Group Conscience for the Assembly, and serve as a link between the Area Delegate and the GSR's.

General Service Office (GSO) (30%)  
P.O. Box 459, Grand Central Station  
New York, New York 10163

Monies sent to the General Service Office in New York support group services throughout the U.S. and Canada and the General Service Conference.

Hospitals and Institutions (H&I)  
P. O. Box 192490  
San Francisco, CA. 94119-2490

Monies collected in the pink can goes to provide literature for those who would not otherwise have it (generally because they are institutionalized). All the money collected in the pink can goes to H&I, regardless of the group's other expenses or needs. Groups that would like a receipt for their donation to H&I should include a stamped, self-addressed envelope with their donation.

A.A. World Services pamphlet, "Self-Supporting Through our own Contributions" outlines several suggested plans for group contributions toward all A.A. services. Groups can get a copy of this pamphlet from your Intergroup Representative.

It is the right of any group member to receive a regular report and a quarterly accounting of the donations through the group.

# VALLEY SERVICE CENTER GENERAL INFORMATION

6990 Village Parkway, Suite 214, Dublin, CA 94568

## What's the difference between a "Service Center," "Central Office," and "Intergroup Office"?

There is no difference between these different monikers. Within the A.A. community, these names are often used interchangeably. In the Tri-Valley area, we have a "Service Center," Oakland, San Jose, and San Francisco call themselves a "Central Office." There is no difference in the services offered.

## What is the Valley Service Center?

The Valley Service Center involves partnership among the A.A. groups in our community, similar to A.A. groups being partnerships of individuals. The Valley Service Center was established to carry out certain functions common to all the groups in our area --- functions that are best handled by a centralized office --- and it is maintained, supervised, and supported by these groups. The Valley Service Center exists to aid the A.A. groups in our community in our common purpose of carrying the A.A. message to the alcoholic who still suffers. Functions of the Valley Service Center include, but are not limited to:

Office Facilities: The Valley Service Center is located at **6990 Village Parkway, Suite 214, Dublin, CA 94568**. The phone number is **925-829-3160**. Call for office hours. The email address is [Info@ValleyServiceCenter.org](mailto:Info@ValleyServiceCenter.org)

12-Step Calls: In conjunction with the Intergroup Hotline Coordinator, the Valley Service Center receives requests and coordinates responses for 12-step calls by voice, snail mail, and email.

Information Exchange: Provides a local contact with Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole — the General Service Office in New York, other Service Centers, Central or Intergroup offices around Northern California and contact with Alcoholics Anonymous in other states or countries. The Valley Service Center serves as a central location for information about meetings, the annual Anniversary dinner, picnics, our local service structure, general AA information, and information about meetings in other parts of the United States or world etc.

Meeting Lists: At regular intervals, the Valley Service Center publishes and distributes up-to-date lists of meetings and other information about local A.A. services.

Valley View: The Valley Service Center prepares a monthly publication (The Valley View) for monthly distribution to A.A. members. To subscribe to the Valley View in

hard copy, contact the Valley Service Center at [925-829-3160](tel:925-829-3160). Subscribe to an electronic copy of the Valley View at [www.ValleyServiceCenter.org](http://www.ValleyServiceCenter.org).

Literature: The Valley Service Center is a local source of A.A. literature including books, pamphlets, meeting schedules, birthday chips, flyers of local events, meeting schedules for most of the United States, foreign language literature, meeting schedules for some foreign countries, tapes, videos, CDs, literature for deaf and blind, other area newsletters, we could increase the list ad infinitum.

Public Information and Cooperation With the Professional Community: The Valley Service Center is an ideal contact with those in the community seeking information about Alcoholics Anonymous.

## THE A.A. HOTLINE AND 12-STEP LIST

The Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous reminds us that “practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics” (page 89).

The Valley Service Center maintains a “Hotline” and a list of individuals willing to take those phone calls, as well as a list of people willing to go on 12-step calls. The phone number for the Valley Service Center “hotline” is 925-829-0666. The toll free number for the hotline is 888-859-3230.

Calls made to the “hotline” for the Valley Service Center are routed through a “phone tree” so that callers can obtain meeting information or speak to an alcoholic. The hotline has been set up so that callers to the hotline will have the opportunity to speak with an A.A. member.

We are always looking for A.A. members who are willing to take hotline calls or go on 12-step calls. There is a form in the back of this handbook for your group to use to add names or to correct information for our hotline or 12-step list.

Remind members to never go on a 12-step call alone. It is recommended that at least one of the A.A. members going on any 12-step

## GENERAL SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE

The General Service Representative (GSR) links his/her group with A.A. as a whole. The GSR represents the voice of the Group Conscience, reporting the group's wishes to the District Committee Member (DCM) and the Delegate, who passes them on to the General Service Conference in New York. We realize whatever "authority" there is in A.A. resides in the Group Conscience. Because of this, a GSR can determine what a Group thinks about a situation, and can pass this information along to where it will be most useful in policy-making. This is a two-way street, allowing the GSR to bring back to the Group the problems and remedies that affect A.A. unity, health, and growth.

To the extent that a GSR keeps the group informed and then expresses that group conscience can the General Service conference feel it is acting for A.A. as a whole.

GSR's serve their group and Alcoholics Anonymous:

- GSRs are the mail contacts with the General Services Office in New York, and are listed in the A.A. Directories as contacts for individual groups. They receive the GSO Bulletin "Box 459" and keep their Group abreast of A.A. activities all over the world.
- GSRs are familiar with the materials available from GSO - guidelines, kits, bulletins, filmstrips, videos, tapes, etc.
- GSRs learn what they can about our vital traditions and concepts. GSR's are able to help their Group's Secretary and other officers by becoming familiar with A.A. books and pamphlets, such as:
  - A.A. Tradition - How it Developed
  - The A.A. Group
  - Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions
  - A.A. Comes of Age.
- As part of the activities with their own Groups, GSRs are equally interested in encouraging the Groups to support the Area and District Committees and the local Intergroup. They usually serve on the Group Steering Committee.
- GSRs participate in District and Area Service Meetings, often helping with planning, advance registration, and information for Area and District get-togethers and Assemblies. Following these affairs, they make reports to their Groups for the benefit of those who could not attend.

Experience shows the most successful GSR's are the A.A. members who have been active as Group Officers, Intergroup Representatives, H&I, or PI/CPC Committee members. From such work, they have already learned that A.A. offers "growth through service" and they become aware of the meaning of our traditions to A.A.'s future.

## NCCAA DELEGATES

Bill Wilson visited San Francisco in 1945 and suggested to some A.A. members that they consider a gathering of all of the A.A. groups from the Northern California area. In 1946 a gathering of AA members from nearly all (at that time 145) of the AA groups in Northern California met and the Northern California Council of Alcoholics Anonymous (NCCAA) is a product of that meeting.

NCCAA sponsors three conferences each year (spring, summer, and fall) giving AA members around Northern California the opportunity to come together for fun, sobriety, and fellowship. The conferences include speakers meetings on Friday and Saturday evenings, Sunday morning, and a young people's speakers meeting on Saturday afternoon. Speakers meetings are interpreted for the deaf community. Additionally, NCCAA conferences also include marathon meetings, hospitals and institutions workshop, a general service workshop (our General Service Delegate gives a conference report at the NCCAA summer conference), and meetings for the Spanish-speaking AA community. AA communities are given the opportunity to have an AA conference "in their own backyard" as NCCAA conferences are held in different cities throughout Northern California.

NCCAA has a steering committee that meets on Saturday mornings at each NCCAA conference, and in between conferences in Stockton, California. In addition to the NCCAA officers, the steering committee includes a representative from each Intergroup in Northern California and a representative from each county in Northern California.

**Each AA group is allowed two delegates to NCCAA.** Each group makes the decision on requirements for their delegates. Six months sobriety is recommended, but not required, and a service commitment of one year is suggested. Delegates should be available to attend each of the three NCCAA conferences held during the calendar year. Delegates are not reimbursed for travel to NCCAA conferences or steering committee meetings.

A meeting for the delegates is held at 2:30 p.m. on the Saturday of each conference. Delegates vote on bid packages submitted for upcoming conferences, learn more about NCCAA, pick up packets of flyers for the next NCCAA conference, and, when applicable, vote on other NCCAA business. Any sober member of Alcoholics Anonymous may serve as a Delegate to NCCAA for their AA Group.

Areas wishing to have an NCCAA conference brought to their area may submit bid packages at the steering committee meetings. If the steering committee determines that the bid package is viable, the package is forwarded to the next Delegates' meeting for a vote.

## WHAT ABOUT COURT SLIPS?

It is up to each Group to determine their group's policy for signing court slips.

Whatever the policy is, it must be made clear to the Secretary. Write the policy down and add it to the Group Secretary's handbook/notebook.

Each group should decide, by group conscience, whether or not the group will sign court slips?

If the group decides against doing this, that information should be made clear at the beginning of the meeting, so that those who wish to, can attend another meeting.

If the group decides that they will sign court slips, the following questions may also apply:

- When will the slips be signed - beginning or end of meeting?
- Does the group wish for those with court slips to stay for the entire meeting? If so, this should be made clear at the beginning of the meeting.

Our sole purpose is to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. Remember to be gentle with those who are forced to attend meetings. Many are angry, afraid, and confused. A little love and caring may keep them coming back long after their legal obligation is fulfilled.

# CONFERENCE-APPROVED LITERATURE

## **“Conference-approved” — What It Means to You**

The term “Conference-approved” describes written or audiovisual material approved by the Conference for publication by G.S.O. This process assures that everything in such literature is in accord with A.A. principles. Conference-approved material always deals with the recovery program of Alcoholics Anonymous or with information about the A.A. Fellowship.

The term has no relation to material not published by G.S.O. It does not imply Conference disapproval of other material about A.A. A great deal of literature helpful to alcoholics is published by others, and A.A. does not try to tell any individual member what he or she may or may not read.

Conference approval assures us that a piece of literature represents solid A.A. experience. Any Conference-approved booklet or pamphlet goes through a lengthy and painstaking process, during which a variety of A.A.s from all over the United States and Canada read and express opinions at every stage of production.

## **How To Tell What Is and What Is Not Conference-approved**

Look for the statement on books, pamphlets and films:

“This is A.A. General Service Conference-approved literature”

## **Not All “A.A. Literature” Is Conference-Approved**

Central Offices, Service Centers, and Intergroups may write and distribute pamphlets or booklets that are not Conference-approved. If such pieces meet the needs of the local membership, they may be legitimately classified as “A.A. literature.”

There is no conflict between A.A. World Services, Inc. (A.A.W.S. — publishers of Conference-approved literature), and Central Offices, Service Centers, or intergroups — rather they complement each other. The Conference does not disapprove of such material.

G.S.O. does develop some literature that does not have to be approved by the Conference, such as service material, Guidelines, and bulletins.

## **Copyright**

Conference-approved literature is copyrighted with the Copyright Office, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., U.S.A. To insure the continued integrity of A.A. literature, and to make sure the A.A. recovery program will not be distorted or diluted, permission to reprint must be obtained from A.A.W.S. in writing.

However, A.A. newsletters, bulletins, or meeting lists have blanket permission to use the material, providing proper credit is given to insure that the copyrights of A.A. literature are protected.

The A.A. Preamble is copyrighted by The A.A. Grapevine, Inc. (not by A.A. World Services). Beneath it, these words should appear: Reprinted with permission of the A.A. Grapevine, Inc. The Steps and Traditions should be followed by these words:

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## GROUP INVENTORY FORMAT

It is suggested that each Group take a Group Inventory on a regular basis . . . some groups do this annually, some biennially, and some only when problems seem to arise. It is recommended that the questions that appear in this section be made available to each member of the group a couple of weeks before the Group Inventory so that members may read through, think about them, and come to the Group Inventory meeting prepared to discuss them.

Welcome to the \_\_\_\_ Group inventory. My name is \_\_\_\_ and I'm an alcoholic. We will start by reading a passage from page 63 and 64 of the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous:

*"Next we launched out on a course of vigorous action, the first step of which is a personal housecleaning, which many of us had never attempted. Though our decision was a vital and crucial step, it could have little permanent effect unless at once followed by a strenuous effort to face, and to be rid of, the things in ourselves which had been blocking us. Our liquor was but a symptom. So we had to get down to causes and conditions. Therefore, we started upon a personal inventory."*

I will now read a couple of paragraphs on "Group Inventory" from the pamphlet, "The A.A. Group."

*"Many groups periodically hold a "group inventory meeting" to evaluate how well they are fulfilling their primary purpose: to help alcoholics recover through A.A.'s suggested Twelve Steps of recovery. Some groups take inventory by examining our Twelve Traditions, one at a time, to determine how well they are living up to these principles.*

*"Groups interested in taking inventory will find a review of the Tenth Step helpful. The following questions, compiled from A.A. shared experience, may be useful in arriving at an informed group conscience. Groups will probably wish to add questions of their own."*

No motions for changes to the meeting will be presented during this inventory process, and there will be no voting on new issues. The group inventory is a process of arriving at an informed group conscience. May we have a volunteer to take notes of what comes up that needs to be brought to our next regular business meeting for discussion? Each of us may also individually take notes. Everyone present will have the opportunity to be heard on each question that is discussed. Individuals are asked to speak only once on a topic until everyone that wishes to be heard has had the opportunity to speak.

The following questions, compiled from A.A. shared experience, may be useful in arriving at an informed group conscience. Your group may wish to add questions of its own.

1. What is the basic purpose of the group?
2. What more can the group do to carry the message?
3. Is the group attracting alcoholics from different backgrounds? Are we seeing a good cross-section of our community?
4. Do new members stick with us, or does the turnover seem excessive? If so, why? What can we as a group do?
5. Do we emphasize the importance of sponsorship? How effectively? How can we do better?
6. Are we careful to preserve the anonymity of our group members and other A.A.'s outside the meeting rooms? Do we also leave the confidences shared at meetings behind?
7. Do we take the time to explain to all members the value to the group of keeping up with the kitchen/housekeeping chores and other essential services that are part and parcel of our Twelfth Step efforts?
8. Are all members given the opportunity to speak at meetings and to participate in other group activities?
9. 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?
10. Are we doing all we can to provide an attractive meeting place?
11. Does the group do its fair share toward participating in the purpose of A.A.— as it relates to our Three Legacies of Recovery, Unity, and Service?
12. What has the group done lately to bring the A.A. 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?
13. How is the group fulfilling its responsibility to the Seventh Tradition?

Does anyone have any questions to add for consideration?

# **Attachments**

**A.A. Preamble**

**The 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous**

**The 12 Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous  
(short form)**

**The 12 Concepts of A.A. World Service**

**Sample Sign in sheet (“hit list”)**

**Sample Treasurer’s Report**

**12-Step/Hotline Volunteer Sign-up form**

**A Glossary of A.A. terms**

## **A.A. PREAMBLE**

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength, and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for A.A. membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. A.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization, or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy, neither endorses nor opposes any causes.

Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

# The 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol — that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

## THE 12 TRADITIONS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

*(short form)*

1. Our common welfare shall come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority — a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants' they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose — to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
6. An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

# THE 12 CONCEPTS OF A.A. WORLD SERVICE

*(Short Form)*

The 12 Concepts for World Service provide the framework within which AA as a worldwide organization functions. For a detailed explanation on how they operate, obtain a copy of the AA book, The A.A. Service Manual combined with Twelve Concepts for World Service by Bill W., 1999 -2000 edition.

- I Final responsibility and ultimate authority of A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.
- II The General Service Conference of A.A. has become, for nearly every practical purpose, the active voice and the effective conscience of our whole Society in world affairs.
- III To insure effective leadership, we should endow each element of A.A. -- the Conference, the General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives -- with a traditional "Right of Decision."
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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 A.A. purse for final effectiveness.
- 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.
- 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.

- X Every service responsibility should be matched by an equal service authority, with the scope of such authority well defined.
- XI The trustees should always have the best possible committees, corporate service directors, executives, staffs, and consultants. Composition, qualification, induction procedures, and the rights and duties will always be matters of serious concern.
- 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.

*Reprinted from The AA Service Manual Combined With Twelve Concepts for World Service, 1999-2000 edition, with permission of A.A. World Services, Inc.*



# TREASURER'S REPORT

Group #: \_\_\_\_\_

Month: \_\_\_\_\_

**Income**

Date	7th Tradition	H&I	Literature	Total
Total for Month				

**Payments/Expenses**

	Date	Check #	Amount
Distribution to H&I, Group ID#			
Rent			
Coffee & Supplies			
Literature			
Other			
Total Payments/Expenses			
Income Less Payments/Expenses			

**Distribution to AA Service Organizations**

	%	Date	Check #	Amount
Valley Service Center	60%			
GSO NY	30%			
District 70	5%			
CNCA	5%			
Total Distribution				

Previous Month's Prudent Reserve	
Income	<b>+</b>
H&I Distribution	<b>-</b>
Expenses	<b>-</b>
Distribution	<b>-</b>
Current Month's Prudent Reserve	

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

Treasurer: \_\_\_\_\_

## GLOSSARY

*Please note that most of the terms found in this Glossary are of reference to the General Service structure.*

**Area** — *For the purpose of General Service, “area” refers to a geographical division within a state or province. A Conference delegate comes from an Area. Normally, there is one area to a state or province, except in heavily A.A. populated places, where there may be two, three or more areas in the state or province. California has five General Service areas, the Valley Service Center is in the California Northern Coastal, Area 06.*

**Area Committee** — *For the purpose of General Service, an “area committee” is a committee made up of district committee members, elected by the general service representatives (GSR’s) in each district and the area committee officers. The area committee is a vital element of the general service structure.*

**Area Delegate** — Area representative to the General Service Conference.

### **Area Officers:**

**Chairperson** — Conducts the Area Meeting

**Delegate** — Elected from District Committee Members by the General Service Representatives to represent the area at the General Service Conference in New York each April.

**Alternate Delegate** — Serves also as Area PI/CPC Chairman.

**Recording Secretary** — Takes minutes of area meetings and assemblies.

**Treasurer** — Maintains financial records. Pays all bills.

**Literature/Grapevine Chair** — Provides service literature and Grapevine information to the Area.

**Registrar** — Maintains a list of groups and their officers.

**Assembly Coordinator** — Responsible for arranging Area Assemblies four times a year.

**Assembly** — A meeting of GSR’s, Dams, Dams and committee members to discuss the affairs and biennially to elect a delegate and committee officers.

**Autonomy** — The right or condition of self-government. In keeping with our Tradition of autonomy, accept in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole, most decisions are made by the group conscience of the members involved.

**Bridging the Gap** — Assists the A.A. member newly released from prisons, institutions, detox centers, and hospitals to get to a meeting in their hometown or area. Contact Service is a sub-committee of CNCA.

**California Northern Coastal Area (CNCA)** — We are in Area 06. The entire local area from Monterey to the Oregon border; currently consists of 19 Districts. The Valley Service Center is in District 70.

**Central Office/Service Center** — A local office, formed by Intergroup, to take care of A.A. meetings in the area, i.e., literature, hotline, public information, etc. May have different names in different areas (i.e., Central Office, Service Center, Intergroup Office, etc.)

**Conference** — The General Service Conference. This can mean either the structure involving committees, GSR's and delegates in an area or the annual meeting of Conference delegates each April in New York.

**Conference-Approved Literature** — Pamphlets, books and films which the appropriate Conference committees have reviewed and reported favorably to the Conference meeting for its approval and which have been approved by the General Service Conference. Not all literature is "conference-approved."

**Delegate** — The individual elected at the electoral assembly every other year to represent the area at the annual meeting of the Conference in New York and to bring back to the area the results of the Conference meeting (See Chapter V of the Service Manual.)

**District** — A division with an area to be represented by a committee member chair, often a county or two counties, but in more populous areas can be part of a county.

**District Committee Member (DCM)** — sometimes called a committeeman or committeewoman. An experienced GSR elected by the other GSR's to represent the groups of their district in area committee meetings - and to coordinate service activities in the district (See Chapter iii).

**District Committee Member Chair (DCMC)** — Chairperson to the District Committee. Chairs the District meetings, attends the Area Committee meetings and all area assemblies.

**District Meetings** — The meetings of the district committee member and the GSR's of the groups within the district.

**Filmstrips** — Presentations made up of slides-on-film, accompanied by recorded voices, showing work of the General Service Office (GSO), general service activities and A.A. history; available for area, group and Intergroup meetings.

**General Service Alternate** — A service worker who, at group, district or area level, assists, supports and participates in service responsibilities where feasible, depending on local autonomy and local needs.

**General Service Office (GSO)** — In New York, seat of public relations and custodians of the Twelve Traditions.

**General Service Representative (GSR)** — An A.A. member elected by their group to voice the group's opinion in discussions at the area level. GSR's, in turn, vote for the district committee member and for the delegate and other area officers.

**Grapevine Chair** — Provides Grapevine information for the district. The Grapevine is the official magazine (publication) of A.A.

**Guidelines** — Information available from the General Service Office in New York that represents the shared experience of A.A. members and groups throughout the U.S. and Canada. The purpose of the guidelines is to assist in reaching an *informed* group conscience.

**Hospitals & Institutions (H&I)** — A service structure, not a part of General Service, created to provide meetings and free literature to A.A.'s who are incarcerated in local institutions. H & I historically has been functioning in Northern California since before General Services. H & I in Northern California is unique in all of A.A. In other parts of the U.S. and Canada, H&I work is carried on as a part of General Service.

**Intergroup** — Service committee created to handle the local needs of groups. Our Intergroup is called the Valley Intergroup and we are served by the Valley Service Center.

**Intergroup Representative** — An A.A. member elected by their group to take the groups concerns, questions, and group conscience to the local Intergroup meeting and keeps their group informed of Intergroup business and other A.A. activities. Intergroup members elect our local committee Chairpeople (i.e., Hotline, Workshop, Special Events, PI/CPC, H&I, etc.), Board Members, and confirm our local Intergroup Treasurer.

**Liaison** — Reports information to and from the District or other entities (i.e., NCCAA liaison, District 70 liaison, etc.).

**Literature Chair** — In the General Service structure, provides A. A.-approved literature for the district (primarily service related literature). At a meeting level is responsible for assuring that a meeting has literature (i.e., Big Books, Twelve and Twelves, pamphlets, etc.).

**Northern California Council of Alcoholics Anonymous (NCCAA)** — came about as a result of a visit by Bill Wilson to the San Francisco Bay area in 1943. Representatives from the Northern California groups gathered to meet with Bill. Bill later wrote to one of the men he met on that visit to suggest that an area council be developed to facilitate communication between all groups in Northern California. NCCAA holds three conferences a year in different parts of Northern California. Our area has hosted the conference in even numbered years since Spring 2000. More information can be found at [www.ncc-aa.org](http://www.ncc-aa.org)

**Pacific Region Alcoholics Anonymous Service Assembly (PRAASA)** — The area includes Alaska, Washington, Oregon, California, Hawaii, Arizona, and Nevada. An opportunity for A.A.'s service structure to meet and share with each other. The assembly is held annually.

**Public Information/Cooperation with the Professional Community (PI/CPC)** — Generally a co-chair position. Helps direct our contact with the community at large. Helps inform the public and the professional community about A.A. as a whole and how we can be of service to them.

**Region** — A grouping of several states or provinces from which a Regional Trustee comes to the Board of Trustees. There are six Regions in the United States and two in Canada.

**Registrar** — Maintains records of names and addresses of GSRs and forwards the information to the Area Registrar and General Services Office.

**Service Center/Central Office** — A local office, formed by Intergroup, to take care of A.A. meetings in the area, i.e., literature, hotline, public information, etc.

**Sharing Session** — A kind of group, district, area or conference meeting where everyone is invited to contribute ideas and comments on A.A. matters.

**Third Legacy** — Recovery and Unity are A.A.'s first two Legacies. Our Third Legacy is Service, the sum total of all A.A. services, from a Twelfth Step call to A.A.'s coast-to-coast and worldwide service activities.

**Trustee** — The usual term for a member of A.A.'s General Service Board. Some trustees are A.A.'s, some are non-alcoholic.

**Word Service Office** — Center for A.A. General Services, located at Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, N.Y. 10163