

Area 75 Proposal Form
Used for Documenting Proposals for Consideration by Area 75

Proposal Sponsor(s): Charlie K

Sponsor's Phone: 414-975-1960

Sponsor's Service Position (if any): GRS, Dist 29 Alternate DCM

What is your proposal?:

That the diagram on page 17 in the pamphlet 'The A.A. Group...Where It All Begins' (revised 2005) be revised to mirror the diagram on page S27 of The A.A. Service Manual 2010-2011 Edition.

How did this proposal originate?:

When explaining to my group the position of GSR from the A.A. Service Manual, it was brought to my attention that the diagram in the pamphlet does not match the diagram in the A.A. Service Manual. Further research indicated that the term GROUP is being used in a number of published materials within our vicinity with no clear explanation of why this term is being used.

List any supporting documentation or background material attached to this proposal (if any):

A.A. Group Pamphlet reads: GROUP Service Representatives make up the District Committee.

This is not the diagram that is printed on page S27 in the Service Manual.

List the primary benefits of your proposal to the area. What will happen if we adopt this proposal?

The word Group used in the pamphlet is confusing and is not the proper identification of this position, which is clearly identified in the A.A. Service Manual as General Service Representative.

What will happen if this proposal is not adopted?

Whenever the question comes up in the future no one will have an answer to the simple question of "What is a Group Service Representative?" and the confusion remains.

Estimate any costs to the area. Outline where funding would come from. Explain whether this is a one-time or ongoing expense.

No cost to Area 75. Cost of changing the pamphlet would be the responsibility of A.A. World Services Inc.

Final comments (optional):

Words do mean things. Wherever names or titles appear in our literature, the correct term or title should consistently appear. This is especially important in the case of names and titles of A.A. service positions and committees because each has specific duties, responsibilities, and authority. See Concept X (ten).

itself something quite different. This makes it clear that the A.A. group is not affiliated with the hospital, church, prison, treatment facility, or whatever, but simply rents space there for meetings.

Our A.A. group conscience, as voiced by the General Service Conference, has recommended that "family" meetings, "double trouble" and "alcohol and pill" meetings not be listed in our A.A. directories. The use of the word "family" might also invite confusion with Al-Anon Family Groups, a fellowship entirely separate from A.A.

The primary purpose of any A.A. group is to carry the A.A. message to *alcoholics*. Experience with alcohol is one thing all A.A. members have in common. It is misleading to hint or give the impression that A.A. solves other problems or knows what to do about drug addiction.

There has also been a recommendation by the A.A. General Service Conference suggesting that no A.A. group be named after any actual person, living or dead, A.A. or non-A.A. That is one way we can "place principles before personalities."

What Do A.A. Group Members Do?

"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." In short, when newcomers walk into our meeting rooms, we want A.A. to be there for them as it was for us—something we can do continuously only if we function as a group.

But, for a group to keep going, all kinds of service must be done. It is through the combined efforts and ongoing commitment of group members that:

- A meeting place is provided and maintained.
- Programs are arranged for the meetings.
- Seventh Tradition contributions are collected, and properly allocated and spent.
- A.A. Conference-approved literature is on hand.
- A.A. Grapevine/La Viña literature and lists of local group meetings are available.
- Refreshments are available.
- Assistance in finding A.A. meetings is given to alcoholics in the area.
- Calls for help are answered.
- Group problems are aired and resolved.
- Continuing contact is sustained with the rest of A.A.—locally, through the intergroup (central office), district and area's general service structure; and nationally and internationally, through the General Service Office in New York.

What Trusted Servants (Officers) Do We Need?

It takes member participation to ensure that group service work is done. Most of us agree that A.A. ought

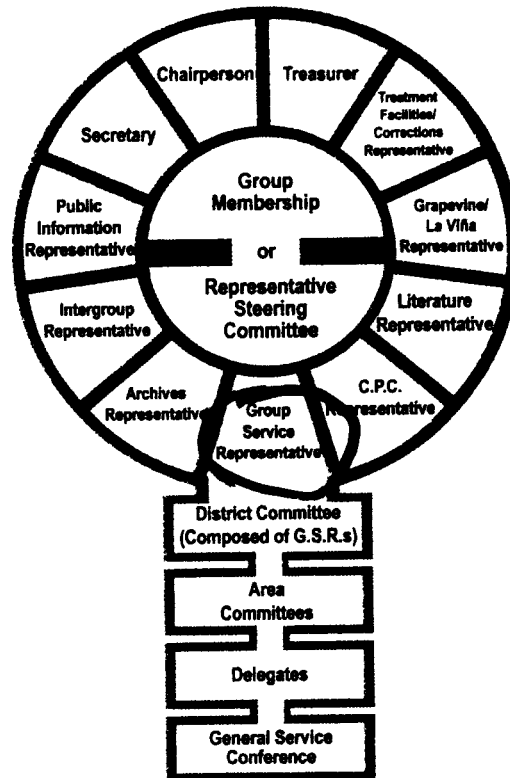
never be "organized." However, endangering our commitment to preserve our spiritual and democratic Fellowship, we can "create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve." (Tradition Nine) In A.A. groups, these trusted servants are sometimes called "officers" and usually are chosen by the group for limited terms of service. As Tradition Two reminds us, "Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern."

Each group determines the minimum length of sobriety for A.A. members to be eligible for any position (or office). The general guideline might be stable sobriety of six months to a year, or longer.

These service positions may have titles. But titles in A.A. do not bring authority or honor; they describe services and responsibilities. And it has generally been found that giving members service positions solely to help them stay sober does not work; instead, the group's welfare is of primary concern in choosing officers. At election time, a review of Traditions One and Two can be helpful.

Individual groups have many ways of making sure that the necessary services are performed with a minimum of organization. The chart below shows possibilities for service at the group level.

SERVICE STRUCTURE INSIDE THE A.A. GROUP



General Service Representative (G.S.R.)

The general service representative has the job of linking his or her group with A.A. as a whole. The G.S.R. represents the voice of the group conscience, reporting the group's thoughts to the district committee member and to the delegate, who passes them on to Conference. This communication is a two-way street, making the G.S.R. responsible for bringing back to the group Conference Actions that affect A.A. unity, health, and growth. Only when a G.S.R. keeps the group informed, and communicates the group conscience, can the Conference truly act for A.A. as a whole.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT: Current experience indicates that many groups provide financial support for their general service representatives to attend service functions.

A.A. GROUPS

**GROUP
G.S.R.s**

Qualifications

- Experience shows that the most effective G.S.R.s 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 G.S.R.s 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.

Duties

- G.S.R.s attend district meetings.
- They also attend area assemblies.
- G.S.R.s serve as the mail contact with the General Service Office, and they are listed in the A.A. directories as contacts for their groups. They receive the G.S.O. bulletin Box 4-5-9, and keep their groups abreast of A.A. activities all over the world.
- They serve as mail contact with their district committee member and with the area committee.
- G.S.R.s supply their D.C.M.s with up-to-date group information, which is relayed to G.S.O. for inclusion in the directories and for G.S.O. mailings.
- They are knowledgeable about material available from G.S.O.—new literature, guidelines, bulletins, videos, tapes, kits, etc.—and they are responsible for passing such information on to the groups.
- They learn everything they can about the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts and are familiar with this manual, the books *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* and *A.A. Comes of Age, Twelve Concepts for World Service*, and the pamphlets "The A.A. Group," "A.A. Tradition - How It Developed," "The Twelve Traditions Illustrated," and "The Twelve Concepts Illustrated."
- They usually serve on group steering committees.
- They work with group treasurers to develop practical plans for group support of G.S.O., such as the Regular Contribution Plan and the Birthday Plan. They encourage the group to support the area and district committees and local central offices

or intergroups, and they are familiar with the leaflet "Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix."

- They participate in district and area service meetings, and often help with planning for area get-togethers and conventions. Following these events, they make reports to their groups for the benefit of those who could not attend.

Service Structure Inside the A.A. Group

