

WESTERN
PENNSYLVANIA
AREA 60

GENERAL SERVICE
REPRESENTATIVE

HANDBOOK



[Revised December 2013]

GSR - GENERAL SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE

The GSR (General Service Representative) has the job of linking his/her group with AA as a whole. The GSR represents the voice of the group conscience, reporting the group's wishes to the District Committee Member (DCM) and to the Delegate, who passes them on to the Conference and to the movement.

For this, GSRs need the confidence of their group. They also need a good ear for listening. We all realize whatever "authority" there is in AA resides in the group conscience. Because of this, a GSR can determine exactly what their group needs or what their 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 their home group the problems and remedies that affect AA unity, health and growth. To the extent that a GSR keeps the group informed and expresses the group conscience, can the Conference feel it is acting for AA as a whole. This becomes more evident each yearwhether a GSR speaks for a group of two, three or for a 250 member group.

Experience shows the most successful GSR's are AA's who have been active as group officers, Intergroup Representatives, or Public Information/Institution Committee Members. From such work, they have already learned that AA offers growth through service and they become aware of the meaning of our Traditions to the movement's future.

Prospective GSR's have had two or three years of continuous sobriety in AA and have time available for District and Assembly Meetings. Eventually, they may become District Committee Members (DCM's) or Area Delegates.

GSR's serve for a period of two years. It is suggested that the GSR hold no other office in any group while serving their two-year term as GSR.

In case a GSR is unable to attend all District Meetings and Area Assemblies, an alternate GSR is needed. Alternates should be encouraged to assist, participate and share in responsibilities of the GSR.

As soon as a GSR is elected, notify your DCM, Western PA Area 60 and the General Service Office in New York. If you have a Central Office, the Secretary of the group should notify them.

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Duties of the General Service Representative

- G.S.R.s attend their District and Area Meetings and 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. newsletter *Box 4-5-9*, and keep their groups informed about A.A. activities.
- They serve as mail contact with their District and Area.
- 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 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.

Financial Support

Current experience indicates that many groups provide financial support for their General Service Representatives to attend service functions.

Term and Method of Election

G.S.R.s serve for two years and the term frequently runs concurrently with those of committee members and the delegate. They represent their home group and are nominated and elected by group members.

Notification: As soon as a G.S.R. is elected, the group should provide the district and area committees and G.S.O. with the following information: 1) group name and service number, 2) the new G.S.R.s name, address, and telephone number, and 3) the previous G.S.R.s name (so it can be removed from the mailing list). While local, area and national offices communicate regularly, they have different purposes and different mailing

lists.

G.S.R. Kit: When G.S.O. has been notified, the new G.S.R. receives a kit containing useful information to help in the position.

Alternate G.S.R.: An alternate should be elected at the same time, in case the G.S.R. is unable to attend all district and area meetings. Alternates should be encouraged to assist, participate, and share in the responsibilities of the G.S.R., attending district and area meetings when feasible, depending on local needs.

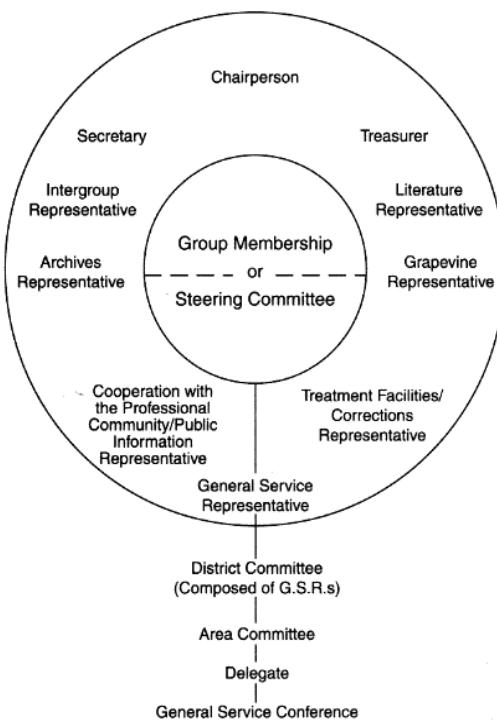
Group Information

Two simplified forms (available on the web site or from the Area 60 Registrar) have been developed to facilitate transmittal of information to G.S.O.: 1) *Alcoholics Anonymous New Group Form* is for one-time use only, when a new group is started; 2) the *Group Information Change Form* is to be filled in whenever a group changes its name or meeting address, elects a new G.S.R., reports a change of address and/or phone number, reports the designation of a new second contact, or reports a change of address or phone number for the second contact.

To assure direct and regular communication between the group and G.S.O., each group is assigned a service number. It is helpful to refer to this number when writing to G.S.O. and when sending contributions.

If a group wishes to be listed in the appropriate U.S. or Canadian A.A. directory, this can be indicated in filling out the Group Information Change Form.

Service Structure Inside the A.A. Group



Area 60 - What Is It? What Does It Do?

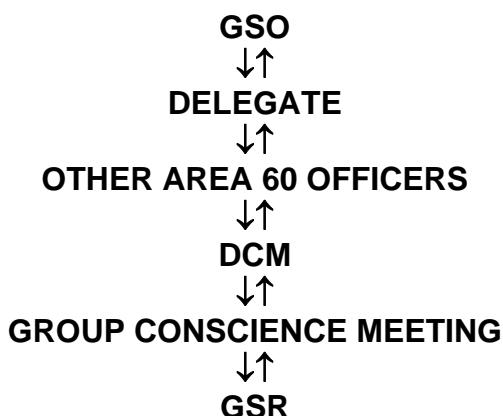
Area 60 is a non-profit corporation formally called Area 60 of Western Pennsylvania General Service, Inc. Its primary purpose is to be a body of trusted servants to serve the needs of the AA groups within its geographical area and to function as a constituent part of the annual General Service Conference of AA. Area 60 was formed exclusively for the charitable and educational purpose of furthering knowledge and access to the Twelve-Step Program of recovery of Alcoholics Anonymous. The bylaws of Area 60 state: "it is our aim to maintain services and activities for those who seek, through Alcoholics Anonymous, the means of arresting the disease of alcoholism through the application to their own lives, in whole or in part, of the twelve steps which constitute the recovery program upon which the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous is founded, as well as to other interested parties who desire education information about AA's recovery process. Participation of Area 60 AA groups shall be encouraged to enable Area 60 to be the true voice and group conscience of western Pennsylvania AA. AREA 60 IS **YOUR RESOURCE!!!**

Area 60 consists of 45 Districts with approximately 800 groups encompassing 26 counties in Western Pennsylvania. The flow chart on the next page explains the structure of the Area.

The Area Committee meets quarterly. Eligible voting members are the elected officers, appointed officers, coordinators, DCM's, and past Delegates. Alternates serve and vote only in their absence. The Area Committee is responsible for attending to the business affairs and activities of the Area.

The Area Assembly meets three times per year. Eligible voting members are the elected and appointed officers, coordinators, DCM's, past Delegates, and GSR's. Alternates serve and vote only in their absence. The Area Assembly is responsible for attending to any action that would alter the structure of the Area and that would change "leadership". The Assembly elects a new panel of officers to begin service in every odd year of the calendar.

AREA 60 LINE OF COMMUNICATION OF AA IN THE AREA AND IN THE WORLD



Definition Of Terms Used In General Service Activities

A.A.W.S.—Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc., one of the two operating corporations of the General Service Board; oversees the operations of the General Service Office and serves as the publishing company for the Conference-approved and service literature.

Alternate—A service volunteer who at Group, District or Area level, assists, supports and participates in Service responsibilities where feasible, depending on local autonomy and local needs.

Anonymity—The act of being anonymous.

Anonymous—With no name or acknowledged, i.e., given, written, etc., by a person whose name is withheld.

Area—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 populated places, then there may be two, three or more Areas in the state or province. PA has two Areas; Area 60 Western PA and Area 59 Eastern PA.

Assembly—A meeting of GSRs and Area Committee Members to discuss Area affairs and to elect a Delegate and Area Officers every other year; even numbered years in Area 60.

Autonomy—The quality or condition of being autonomous; self-government.

Autonomous—Having self-government; can function independently of other parts.

Conference—The General Service Conference. This is the annual meeting of Conference Delegates each April in New York.

Conference—Pamphlets, books, videos and films, produced under the auspices of **Approved Literature**—various Conference Trustees' Committees which the appropriate Conference Committees have reviewed and recommended to the **Videos**—Conference for its' approval, and which have been approved by the Conference.

D.O.S.—Day of Sharing

Delegate—The man or woman elected at the election Assembly in even numbered years to represent the Area at the annual meeting of the Conference in NY and to bring back to the Area the results of the Conference meeting.

D.C.M.—An experienced GSR elected by the other GSRs to represent the groups of their District in Area Committee meetings (Quarterly Meetings) and to coordinate service activities in the District.

District Meeting—The meetings of the DCM and the GSRs of the groups in the District.

G.A.W.—The Get Away Weekend; an annual Spring event to educate the members of Area 60 about the Conference agenda items and to prepare the Delegate with the group conscience of Area 60.

G.S.O.—The General Service Office, which provides services to groups in the U.S. and Canada and publishes A.A. literature.

General Services—Services performed by anyone in the General Service Structure (G.S.R., D.C.M., Delegate, etc.)

G.S.R.—The General Service Representative is the group contact with the General Service Office and a voting member of the Area Assemblies.

N.E.R.A.A.S.A.—Northeast Regional Alcoholics Anonymous Service Assembly is held the last weekend of February. This is a pre-conference event sponsored by the Northeast Regional Delegates (N.E.R.D.s) and hosted by the individual Area by formal bid.

N.E.R.D.—Northeast Regional Delegates

N.E.R.F.—the Northeast Regional Forum is held in odd-numbered years. This event is sponsored by the Northeast Regional Trustee (N.E.R.T.) and the General Service Office, but hosted by the individual Area in the Northeast Region who bid for this opportunity. NERF is usually held in June.

Quarterly Meeting—Quarterly business meeting for the Area Committee.

Region—A group of several Areas from which a Regional Trustee comes to the board of trustees. There are six regions in the U.S. and two in Canada.

Sharing Session—A group, district, area or Conference meeting in which everyone is invited to contribute ideas and comments on A.A. Matters, and during which no actions are taken.

Third Legacy—A.A.'s Third Legacy is Service, the sum total of all A.A. services, from a twelve-step call to coast-to-coast worldwide service activities. The first two legacies are recovery and unity.

Trustee—A member of A.A.'s General Service Board. Fourteen trustees are A.A. members (Class B); seven are nonalcoholic (Class A).