

American River Area Narcotics Anonymous
“Group Service Representative (G.S.R.) Orientation Packet”

“This packet was created as an informational resource to help GSRs to more effectively serve their groups. It is not meant to be the final word or complete description of their duties, but merely a suggested guide and should not override any group autonomy. We hope that this will be an inspiration to help you more effectively serve in the GSR position.”

Reproduced from “A Guide to Local Service in NA” pages 47 and 52

Group Service Representative (GSR)

Each group elects one group service representative; even those groups hosting more than one recovery meeting elect just one GSR. These GSRs form the foundation of our service structure. GSRs provide constant, active influence over the discussions being carried on within the service structure. They do this by participating in area service committee meetings, attending forums and assemblies at both the area and regional levels, and sometimes joining in the work of an ASC subcommittee. If we are vigilant in choosing stable, qualified leaders at this level of service, the remainder of the structure will almost certainly be sound. From this strong foundation, a service structure can be built that will nourish, inform, and support the groups in the same way that the groups nourish and support the structure.

Group service representatives bear great responsibility. While GSRs are elected by and accountable to the group, they are not mere group messengers. They are selected by their groups to serve as active members of the area service committee. As such, they are responsible to act in the best interests of NA as a whole, not solely as advocates of their own groups’ priorities. As participants in the area committee, GSRs need to be as well informed as they can be concerning the affairs of the committee. They study the reports of the committee’s officers and subcommittee chairpersons. They read the various handbooks published by the World Service Office on each area of service. After carefully considering their own conscience and what they know about how their group members feel, they take active, critical parts in the discussions, which form the group conscience of the entire committee.

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

At area committee meetings, GSR reports provide perspectives on group growth vital to the committee’s work. If a group is having problems, its GSR can share those problems with the committee in his or her reports. And if the group hasn’t found solutions to those problems, the area chairperson will open a slot on the committee’s “sharing session”² agenda so that the GSR can gather the experience others have had in similar situations. If any helpful solutions arise from the sharing session, the GSR can report those back to the group.

The ASC is responsible not only to develop and maintain subcommittees in each field of service but also to coordinate the work of each of those subcommittees with the work of the others. For these reasons, all area committee participants need to become as informed as they can possibly be about subcommittee activities. Area committees devote significant portions of their meetings to reports from subcommittee chairpersons and discussions of subcommittee activities. Handbooks are available from the World Service Office for most of the subcommittees listed below. Specific directions for subcommittees in your area can be found in your log of policy actions and (if applicable) your area guidelines.

Most newly formed area service committees will probably not be able to support the same wide range of subcommittee services as a longer-established committee. Rather than attempt to set up all their subcommittees at once, it’s recommended that new area committees take their time. Make sure the responsibilities of new subcommittees are well coordinated with those of existing ones. Bring subcommittees on line one at a time and give a great deal of attention to developing each subcommittee before bringing on another.

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What is a GSR?

- A trusted servant of their group.
- The voice of their group at the Area Service Committee (ASC).
- The voice of the ASC at their group.
- The financial link between their group and the ASC.
- The group’s main source of information about service, activities and events.
- The group’s source of information on how to get involved in service work.
- An important source of information for the group about the traditions.
- The trusted servant who attends to the specific needs of the group including questions regarding Traditions, Policy and the 12 Concepts.

How do they do it?

- Attend the group meeting regularly.
- Attend the ASC meeting monthly.
- Report to the ASC the group status, donations, problems, concerns, change of meeting time/place to update phonenumber and meeting lists.
- Bring issues from the ASC to the group for discussion and report back to the ASC with that group’s conscience.
- Learn about the subcommittees of the ASC.
 - What the subcommittees do.
 - When they meet.
 - Learn which subcommittees need support.
- Attend subcommittee meetings.
- Learn the service structure.
- Learn what the ASC, RSC, WSC, WSO, etc. are.
- Study the “Guide to Local Service” and the ASC Policy guidelines.

Qualifications for a GSR.

- Is an addict
- Attends the group they represent.
- Has a willingness to serve.
- Has knowledge of the service structure of NA or the willingness to study it.
- Has an understanding of or the willingness to learn the duties of a GSR.

What is a Group Conscience?

- An informed vote taken by the group as a whole.
- An expression of God’s will.
- Is best for the group and NA as a whole.
- Is the practice of placing “principles before personalities.” (Tradition 12)

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How does the Area donation get from the group to the Area?

- The group decides at their regular monthly business meeting if and how much of a donation they can make to the ASC. A check or money order is prepared and sent with the GSR or group representative to the regular monthly ASC meeting.

GSR report to the group may include:

- Attendance of groups and Elected trusted servants of the ASC.
- Open positions at the ASC and Region.
- Motions that have been “referred to groups.”
- Points of discussion made during the ASC.
- Open positions within the subcommittees.
- Announce Area/Regional Activities during the regular meeting.

Points the GSR should be mindful of at the ASC:

- The GSR orientation is designed to help GSR’s better understand the purpose of the ASC.
- Does the GSR feel comfortable at the ASC?
- Is the ASC fulfilling the your groups needs?
- How would their group want them to vote?
- Are NA funds being used responsibly?
- Are we in accordance with the 12 steps, 12 traditions and 12 concepts of NA?
- Are the trusted servants fulfilling their obligations to the Area?

List of suggested tools for area service work:

- A “Guide to Local Service in NA” book.
- A copy of the ASC Guidelines/Policy.
- Area “minutes” from prior ASC found in agenda packet.
- Attendance to “Trusted Servants Workshops” and “NA 101’s” which are regional Learning Days.
- Mentorship (Reaching out to the experienced members of the ASC for help/guidance.)
- Any other spiritual, creative action you can think of.
- Please remember that all material, guides, service pamphlets belong to the group. Please return them to group when your term is over.

American River Area Service Committee “Standing Rules of Order”

Seating Arrangements: (so all voting members can hear and tallies of votes can be taken easily)

- Voting members of ASC should sit towards front of the room.
- Spectators or non-voting members should sit towards the back of the room.
- Voting members should remain seated during all votes.

Subcommittee Reports: (limited to 5 minutes, without interruptions.)

- If the person making reports wants to take longer than five minutes, they should inform the chairperson and ask for an extension before giving their report.

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- Questions pertaining to ASC business or matters covered in their reports will be allowed once report has been completed.
- Answers should be kept brief when possible.
- Any motion that is made concerning a subcommittee's report will be made during "New Business."

Making and Disposing of Motions:

- A motion is made: This starts the process of bringing a matter before the ASC. The wording should be clear and concise.
- A "second" indicates that another member wishes the matter to come before the ASC. It does not necessarily mean that the seconder is in favor of the motion.
- The maker of the motion may speak to the intent of the motion, when seconded.
- Debate is of the motion, not of the member making it. Members should address each other through the chairperson and should use titles or descriptions of duties, not names (e.g. vice chair, not Kathy). The Chairperson addresses members by name. Discussion (debate) is not generally between two members but through the Chairperson.
- There shall be a time limit on debate by any member. No member may speak longer than three(3) minutes on a motion for each time they are recognized by the Chairperson to speak (Chairperson may extend limit if warranted.)
- No member may speak on a motion more than once, unless others desiring to speak on the motion have exercised their opportunity.
- In cases where there seems to be little or no opposition to a motion, the Chairperson will call for any objections and if there is none, announces that it will be "Passed by Acclamation (PBA)."

Example of ASC Motion Form:

ARANA – MOTION FORM

MOTION # _____

MOTION : _____

MAKER : _____ **2ND :** _____

FOR : _____ **AGAINST :** _____ **ABSTAIN :** _____

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MOTION TABLE

| TYPE OF MOTION | PURPOSE | INTERRUPT | SECOND | DEBATABLE | VOTE |
|-------------------------------|--|------------------|---------------|------------------|-------------|
| Adjourn | To end the committee meeting. | No | Yes | No | Simple |
| Amend | To change part of the language in a main motion. | No | Yes | Yes | Simple |
| Amend by substitution | To alter a main motion by completely rewriting it, while preserving its intent. | No | Yes | Yes | Simple |
| Appeal ruling of chair | To challenge a decision the chair has made about the rules of order. | Yes | Yes | Yes | Simple |
| Information, point of | To be allowed to ask a question about a motion being discussed, <i>not</i> to offer information. | Yes | No | No | None |
| Main motion | An idea a committee member wants the committee to put into practice. | No | Yes | Yes | Varies |
| Order of the day | To make the committee return to its agenda if it gets onto another track. | Yes | No | No | None |
| Order, point of | To request clarification of rules of order when it appears they are being broken. | Yes | No | No | None |
| Parliamentary inquiry | To ask the chair about how to do something according to rules of order. | Yes | No | No | None |
| Previous question | To stop debate and vote right now on whatever motion is at hand. | No | Yes | No | Two-thirds |
| Privilege, personal | To make a personal request of the chair or the committee. | If urgent | No | No | None |
| Reconsider | To reopen for debate a motion previously passed. | No | Yes | Yes | Simple |
| Refer, commit | To halt debate, send motion to subcommittee or ad hoc committee before vote. | No | Yes | Yes | Simple |
| Remove from the table | To resume consideration of a motion previously tabled before the time set. | No | Yes | No | Simple |
| Rescind, repeal | To void the effect of a motion previously passed. | No | Yes | Yes | Two-thirds |
| Table | To put off further consideration of a motion until a later date and time. | No | Yes | No | Simple |
| Withdraw a motion | To allow a motion's maker to take back that motion after debate has begun. | Yes | No | No | Unanimous |

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ASC Voting Procedures

- **Show of Hands:** With rare exceptions, votes will be taken by a request from the Chairperson to see the hands of all in opposition. If no member opposes a motion, it will be recorded as “Passed by Acclamation” (PBA). If one member or more oppose, the Chair will ask for people to count the votes. Then the Chair will ask for votes in favor and votes to abstain. The counts will then be announced to the members.
- **Roll Call Vote:** A member may request a vote be taken via the roll call by saying, “I call for a roll call vote.” This is generally done when a motion is on an important or controversial issue. This request must be honored whether or not it is made after a show of hands vote has already been taken. The Secretary calls out the group name of all the voting members and asks for their voice vote (yes or no). Each vote is then recorded in the minutes by group.
- **Vote Count:** For the purpose of determining the outcome of a vote on motions before the ASC, the yes votes must total the required majority of yes and no votes cast for the motion to pass.