



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 more effectively serve in the GSR position.

Group Service Representatives (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 sub-committee. 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 that 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 interest of NA as a whole, not solely as advocates of their 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 sub-committee 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 groups need. In group recovery meetings, GSRs make available flyers announcing area and regional activities.

At area committee meetings, GSR's can get support from other groups about issues or challenges taking place in their group. If a group is having problems, its GSR can share those problems with the committee in his or her report. This is generally done during the "group concerns" section of the ASC meeting so that the GSR can gather the experience others have had in similar situations. If any helpful solutions arise from the discussion, the GSR can report those back to the group.

NA Acronyms

The list of acronyms used locally and in NA as a whole can be confusing for members new to service. Here are some of those that are most commonly used.

- ASC** Area service committee: Local service body consisting of GSRs and other elected trusted servants.
- CAR** *Conference Agenda Report*: A publication that consists of business and issues that will be considered during the WSC.
- CAT** *Conference Approval Track*: A collection of additional material for discussion and decision at the WSC.
- CBDM** Consensus-based decision making: Decision-making process where members work together to find or create solutions.
- FD** Fellowship development: NA service devoted to starting and nurturing new NA communities and helping existing communities to continue growing.
- FIPT** *Fellowship Intellectual Property Trust*: A legal trust that serves as custodian for NA's literature and logos.
- GLS** *A Guide to Local Services in NA*: A service handbook intended to serve as a resource for NA groups, areas, and regions.
- GSF** Group support forum: A discussion-oriented body focused on the needs of the groups.
- GSR** Group service representative: Trusted servant elected by an NA group to participate on its behalf at the ASC or other local service body.
- H&I** Hospitals and institutions: NA service devoted to carrying the NA message primarily to correctional inmates and treatment facility patients.
- IDT** Issue Discussion Topic: Specific topics selected for discussion that concern the Fellowship as a whole.
- IP** Informational pamphlet: Short piece of recovery literature.
- LSB** Local service board: Administrative body of the LSC.
- LSC** Local service conference: A strategic, planning-oriented local service body.
- NAWS** Narcotics Anonymous World Services: Service body that deals with the problems and needs of NA as a whole.
- PI** Public information: NA service devoted to sharing information about NA to government and private agencies, the public media, community leaders, those in the helping professions, and the community-at-large. (In many communities, this work is now done by a PR workgroup or committee.)
- PR** Public relations: NA service devoted to creating and maintaining relationships with members, potential members, and the general public.
- RCM** Regional committee member: Trusted servant elected by an ASC to participate on its behalf at the RSC.
- RD** Regional delegate: Trusted servant elected by an NA region as a voting participant at the WSC.
- RSC** Regional service committee: Service body consisting of ASCs and/or other types of local service bodies.
- RSO** Regional service office: Local NA service center or literature distribution point.
- SP** Service pamphlet intended for use as a resource for groups and service bodies.
- WB** World Board: The service board of the WSC, dedicated to the continuation and growth of Narcotics Anonymous by providing support to the Fellowship and oversight of the WSO.
- WCNA** The World Convention of NA: Celebration of recovery and unity held every three years in a different part of the world.
- WSC** World Service Conference: Service meeting that brings all elements of NA World Services together.
- WSO** World Service Office: The main service center for the NA Fellowship.
- ZD** Zonal delegate: Trusted servant elected by a zonal forum that is eligible for seating at the WSC as a voting participant. (Note: A zonal forum is a service body consisting of multiple regions.)

Copyright © 2020 by Narcotics Anonymous World Services, Inc.
All rights reserved.

World Service Office
PO Box 9999
Van Nuys, CA 91409 USA
TEL (818) 773-9999
FAX (818) 700-0700
WEB www.na.org

World Service Office—Canada
Mississauga, Ontario

World Service Office—Europe
Brussels, Belgium
TEL +32/2/646-6012
WEB www.na.org

World Service Office—Iran
Tehran, Iran
WEB www.na-iran.org



This Is Board-approved service material.

Narcotics Anonymous,  and The NA Way  are registered trademarks of
Narcotics Anonymous World Services, Incorporated.



What does the GSR do?

The Group Booklet states that GSRs “form the foundation of our service structure.” The basic function of a GSR is to participate in service meetings on behalf of their group. At one time, this only meant attending area service committee (ASC) meetings. As NA has grown, different communities have adapted the GSR’s role and the service system to better suit their needs. Serving as a GSR may involve participation at an ASC, a local service conference (LSC), a group support forum (GSF), or a regional assembly. In newer communities, the service structure may consist of just a regional service committee (RSC) and GSRs. Whatever the local structure consists of, the main roles and responsibilities of a GSR are the same. As *The Group Booklet* tells us, the role of the GSR is far more than a “mere group messenger,” and the responsibilities are more than just attending committee meetings.

In the Eighth Concept, we are reminded that “Our service structure depends on the integrity and effectiveness of our communications.” At the local service meeting, the GSR serves as the communication link between the group and the rest of the NA service system, and “... they take active, critical parts in the discussions which form the group conscience of the entire committee” (*The Group Booklet*). Most local service meetings also provide the opportunity to ask for help with group problems if needed.

The Second Tradition offers a process for groups to gather any concerns and questions for the local service body, and to provide input regarding any questions the service body may have for the group. The GSR is often asked to provide relevant information in these discussions. This involves the GSR consistently attending the group’s business meeting, and possibly also leading it. The GSR also usually provides a written or verbal report on the activities of the local service body during the group’s recovery or business meeting. Many GSRs create a short list of bullet points to capture the highlights from service meetings they attend to help with this.

Discernment is an important quality for a GSR. It can help in deciding what information to report, and in making decisions at service meetings on the group’s behalf. We take care to discern the short- and long-term impact of our decisions—what they mean for NA services today and how they can help us to reach more addicts. Considering carefully how our decisions might move us toward the goals in A Vision for NA Service is a key part of the GSR service position.

Some other common tasks for GSRs may include:

- * Delivering the group’s financial contribution
- * Purchasing literature at the service meeting on behalf of the group
- * Collecting event flyers and meeting directories
- * Ensuring the group’s meeting information is up to date on the local meeting list or website
- * Providing a report about the group to the area
- * Participating in local subcommittees and workgroups according to their skills and interests

Service is not a position in a committee; it is a posture in the heart. It’s a way of life we can practice in all our affairs.

Living Clean: The Journey Continues, Chapter Seven

Helpful hints

Ask for help from the group. Seeking support and direction from the group can increase the resources available to a GSR.

Many service bodies offer a new GSR orientation session prior to the meeting. Attending this to better understand the procedures at a local service body is highly recommended.

Don’t expect to understand everything at your first meeting. Begin where you are and don’t be afraid to ask questions.



Who can be a GSR?

It is common practice to have a cleantime requirement for the GSR position, although this may vary depending on the maturity of the NA community. *The Group Booklet* offers this guidance:

There are a couple of things to think about when looking for a group officer. One is maturity in recovery.

When those new in recovery are elected to a position, they may find themselves deprived of the time and energy they need for their early recovery. Group members with a year or two clean are probably already well-established in their personal recovery. They are also more likely than new members to be familiar with NA's traditions and service concepts as well as group procedures.

A year or two may seem like an acceptable cleantime requirement where NA has existed for many years, but this may be an unreasonable requirement if the local NA community is newly formed. Groups are encouraged to consider a member's personal qualities and abilities when selecting their GSR, as well as their cleantime. For example, *The Group Booklet* also discusses the importance of commitment:

A second thing to consider is consistent participation in your group. Do the nominees attend your group's recovery meetings regularly? Do they take an active part in your group's business meetings? Have they lived up to previous service commitments they've made?

In communities where the GSR is expected to handle the group's funds by bringing its contribution to a service meeting, or purchasing its literature, particular care when electing a GSR may be needed to ensure those funds are managed responsibly. Serving in the alternate GSR position before becoming GSR can offer the benefit of mentorship and knowledge from an experienced member. Attending service meetings consistently in this position will help to prepare a new GSR for their roles and responsibilities. Many experienced GSRs view mentoring an alternate as an important part of their commitment.

What does a GSR need to know?

Members with local service experience can often be a good resource to find out more about the local service body. Locally developed guidelines and policy, as well as minutes and agendas from previous service meetings, may also be helpful. Many of these are posted on local websites, along with information about local events and service workshops.

These are some questions that new GSRs are encouraged to ask about their local service body:

- * The basics: When and where is it, how long does it last, and what do I need to bring?
- * Who are the trusted servants at the local service body, and what do they do?
- * What subcommittees or workgroups are there at the local service body?
- * Where can local guidelines and resources be found?
- * What decision-making and discussion procedures does the local service body use?
- * How are Seventh Tradition contributions and literature orders handled?

Helpful resources

Our personal recovery resources—Step work, sponsorship, friends in recovery—are as much a part of success in service as anything else. It is not unusual to encounter some challenges during a service meeting, and many members look to friends and experienced members for support and advice. Attendance at workshops, learning days, and other service events can help us connect with other members involved in service, and become better informed about relevant issues.

In some communities, private social media groups, email, or text lists are used to communicate with other trusted servants.

Some helpful printed resources include *The Group Booklet*, the Traditions essays from NA literature (especially *It Works: How and Why* and *Guiding Principles: The Spirit of Our Traditions*), *Twelve Concepts for NA Service*, *A Guide to Local Services in NA*, and other service material such as service pamphlets, handbooks, service basics, and bulletins. Many of these are posted on www.na.org/lps and www.na.org/servicemat.

NAWS News provides a report of the services provided by NA World Services and may be of interest to GSRs wanting to know more about NA as a whole: www.na.org/naawsnews.



GSR Basics

This tool is intended to help NA members better understand the group service representative (GSR) commitment and to more effectively participate in the work of a local service body. NA communities have the ability to organize their services in the way that best serves them locally, and the responsibilities of the GSR may vary accordingly. This tool tries to capture some of our common experience and outline the basic tasks of the GSR position. It does not contain specifics about the policies adopted in individual service bodies as it is intended to be used in any NA community.

What is a GSR?

The GSR is an active member of an NA group and its representative at local service meetings. Groups and their members rely on their GSRs to stay connected with other groups in an NA community and to the rest of NA. As one member put it: "For most newcomers in a meeting, NA will be as big or as small as the information the GSR provides to the group."

The Second Concept states that NA groups have "final responsibility and authority" for the service bodies they create. An active and prepared GSR makes it possible for this principle to be a reality.

Why be a GSR?

A Vision for NA Service reminds us that our commitments should offer "spiritual growth and fulfillment." A GSR commitment is where many of us first begin to learn how NA services are structured outside of our groups. We come to understand how spiritual principles guide our service work and support our primary purpose. We may learn skills and discover abilities during the course of our service, and we learn to use those abilities in other areas of our lives. This is part of the reason why some of us talk about the privilege of being of service. Being a GSR is one way to express the gratitude we have for NA and the life that it has given us.

As with all NA service positions, a wide range of spiritual principles can be applied when serving as a GSR. Four that appear most important for success are:

Humility—Knowing who we are, when to ask questions, and that we do not have all the answers can help us to stay "right-sized" when serving as a GSR. This principle supports our ability to remain patient and teachable, and encourages active listening when working with others.

Commitment—The GSR is a critical connection between a group and the rest of NA. Without a GSR's commitment to participate fully in both the group's business meetings and the local service body, this connection is broken.

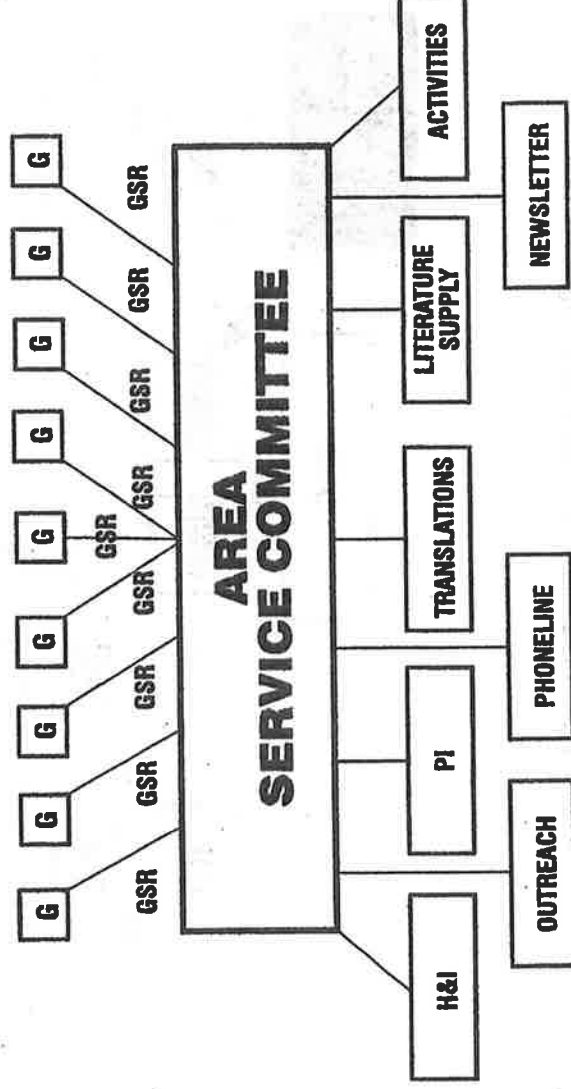
Accountability—Trusted servants in NA are accountable to the groups we all serve. One way to practice accountability is to communicate fully with our group, and share our group's experience and concerns in service meetings. The Third Concept essay advises that the authority delegated to service boards and committees "...is not a blank check...the groups still bear final authority."

Anonymity—Placing principles before personalities allows us to create a solid spiritual foundation for NA service. Anonymity also guides us to serve selflessly rather than by our own opinions, and without expectation of a reward.

Some of us come into recovery with no sense of personal responsibility, as if it was someone else's job to take care of us. Others of us experience self-obsession as a belief that we are responsible for everything around us. The reality is usually somewhere in between. We find peace of mind when we are able to trust others to carry out responsibilities without constantly looking over their shoulders, and they show the same courtesy to us.

Guiding Principles: The Spirit of Our Traditions, Tradition Nine

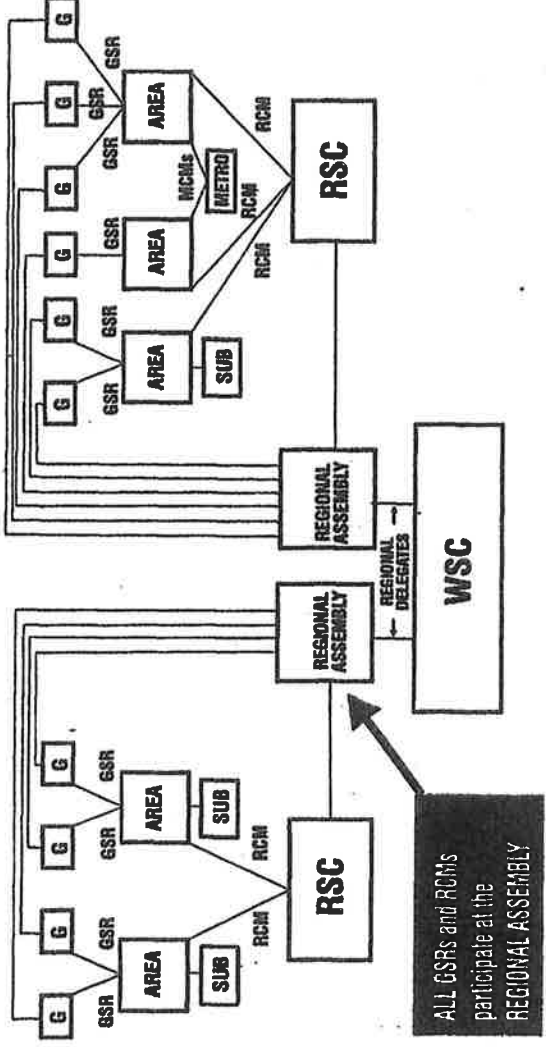




The ASC is responsible not only to develop and maintain subcommittees in each field of service but to coordinate the work of each of those subcommittees with the work of the others. For these reasons, all area committee participants need to become as informed as they can possibly be about subcommittee 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.

NA SERVICE STRUCTURE



Reproduced from unknown origin.

INSERT CAPITAL AREA SERVICE RESUME

MOTION TABLE: Who votes when and how...

TYPE OF MOTION*	ALL VOTE	GSRs ONLY	Must go back to home groups first**	OTHER
Simple	☒			
General Elections		☒		
Subcommittee Chair Election			☒	
Policy***			☒	This refers to any policy change, financial policy adjustment, or budget change
Financial allocation or expenditure	☒ 2/3			
Removal of Officers/Sub-committee Chair	☒			

*NOTE: In the event of a Tie vote on any Motion, the Area Chair breaks the tie.

**NOTE: ANY motion required to go back to home groups is a "GSR ONLY" vote once it comes back to Area for the actual vote

***Any FINANCIAL POLICY change includes budget allowances for PR, H&I, and Outreach

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



Capital Area Service Committee
Motion Form

Date: _____

Motion made by: _____

Second: _____

Motion reads as follows: _____

Intent: _____

Carried _____

Failed _____

Tabled _____

Amended _____

Back to
Home Group _____

Policy
Change _____

Yes _____

No _____

Abstain _____