

GSR Handbook

# GSR HANDBOOK

aka

GSR SURVIVAL  
GUIDE

aka

SUPPLEMENT TO  
THE AA  
(SECRET)  
SERVICE  
MANUAL

**Revised, January 2021 (Adapted from Alaska Area 2 GSR  
Survival Guide)**

**THE GSR PREAMBLE**

*We are the General Service Representatives. We are the link in the chain of communication for our groups with the General Service Conference and the world of A.A.*

*We realize the ultimate authority in A.A. is a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. As trusted servants, our job is to bring information to our groups in order that they can reach an informed group conscience. In passing along this group conscience, we are helping to maintain the unity and strength so vital to our fellowship.*

*Let us, therefore, have the patience and tolerance to listen while others share, the courage to speak up when we have something to share, and the wisdom to do what is right for our groups as a whole.*

**AREA 39 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

*Area 39 of Western Missouri Assembly of Alcoholics Anonymous is a service body. It protects and respects the autonomy as well as the privilege of dissent of any or all AA groups in the Area and of any voting members of the Area Assembly. In the course of its deliberations and discussions, the Assembly will be ever mindful of the ideals expressed in the Twelve Steps, the Twelve Traditions, the Twelve Concepts, and the AA Service Manual. It shall strive to be the true voice and group conscience of AA unity in the Western Area of Missouri. Service will be the primary purpose of the Assembly. It will encourage all AA groups to participate in the business conducted at the Assembly and to support it in its efforts to cooperate with General Service Office, AA World Services, the A.A. Grapevine Inc. and the AA General Service Conference.*

*The Assembly is specifically charged with the duty of electing a Delegate to the General Service Conference and to provide the Delegate with the support to assist in the duties of this office. The Assembly is further charged with electing such other Officers as it deems necessary to conduct the business of the Assembly. There are no ruling bodies in Alcoholics Anonymous, only trusted servants. It should, therefore, be recognized that the suggestions set forth here are guidelines for the Assembly, the Area Committee, Standing Committees, and District Committees.*

*The Area 39 guidelines have been ratified by a two-thirds majority of the Western Area of Missouri Assembly. These guidelines are, to the best of our knowledge, compatible with the Twelve Steps, the Twelve Traditions, the Twelve Concepts, and the AA Service Manual.*

## WELCOME TO ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS GENERAL SERVICE

As an elected General Service Representative (GSR), you now represent the voice of your A.A. group's conscience at the level of your group's district, at the level of Area 39 and to the A.A. General Service Conference held annually in New York. Through your elected District Committee Member (DCM) and the Area 39 Delegate, you will become the two-way link between your home group and the world of A.A. as a whole. As such, you and fellow GSRs worldwide have become the key to the unity of the fellowship. Your general service work aids in maintaining and strengthening the service structure.

This handbook's purpose is to provide you with a quick, broad-brush picture of the basics. The information is drawn from many sources: Conference-approved literature, Western Missouri Area 39 Guidelines and the experiences of many who have gone before. The handbook gives an overview of the various layers of the service structure. It looks at the qualifications and the responsibilities of a GSR and the GSR's importance to the group. Lastly, the handbook lends a quick peek at the things you might encounter at district meetings and at those of Area 39.

There is a great deal of literature which relates to service. **This handbook is intended to supplement available texts, not to replace them.** The reading materials may seem dry or dull at first, but with study and discussion, their relevance will become apparent. As the material comes to life it will become a part of you and your message. Further resources include, but aren't limited to:

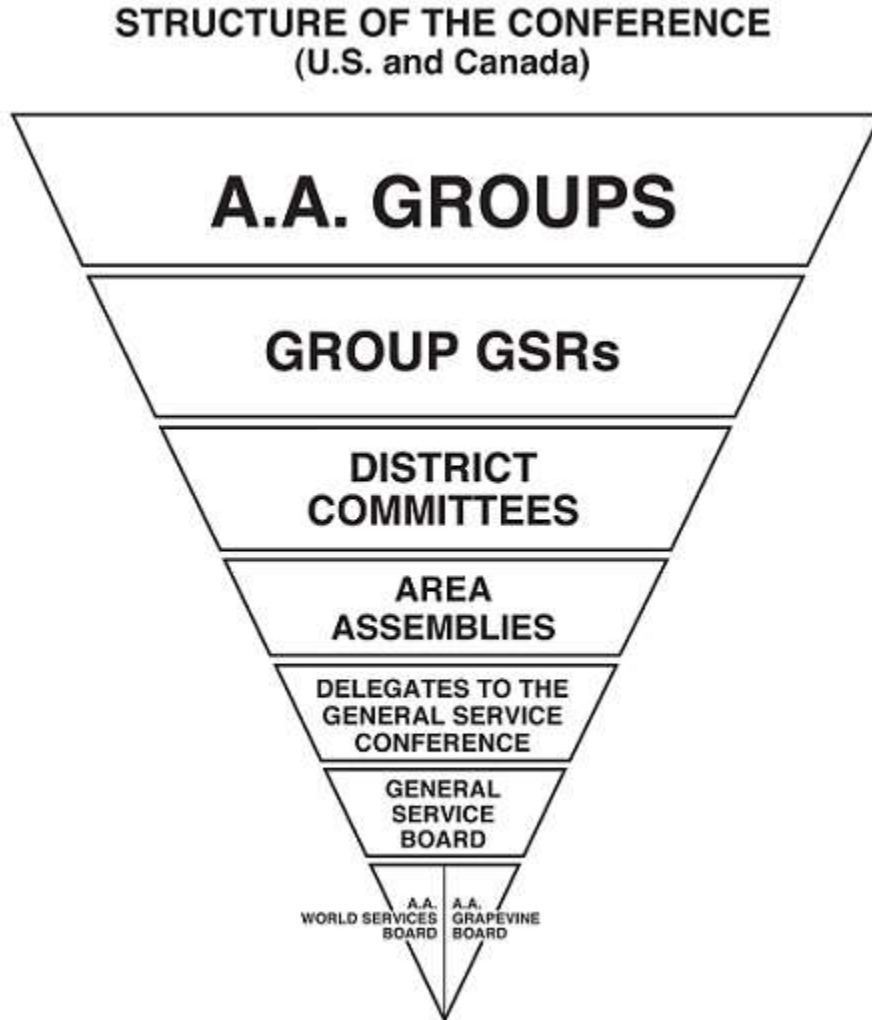
- [The A.A. Service Manual and Twelve Concepts for World Service](#)
- [A.A. Comes of Age](#)
- Western Area of Missouri 39 Guidelines (available online at wamo-aa.org)
- Pamphlets:
  - [The A.A. Group](#)
  - [A.A. Tradition - How it Developed](#)
  - [Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix](#)
  - [Circles of Love and Service](#)
  - [Inside A.A.](#)
  - [General Service Representative \(GSR\)](#)

As our literature says, the GSR "may be the most important job in A.A." GSRs carry the voice of their group conscience to their Area Delegate, who in turn relays that to the General Service Conference. The GSR is the primary conduit to relay information between the groups, district, area all the way down to GSO and from GSO on back up to the members of your home group. These materials will provide you with a good overview of the General Service Structure, as well as enough detail to enable you to deal in specifics.

## THE GENERAL SERVICE STRUCTURE

The organizational structure of A.A. may seem complicated and bureaucratic at first, but it is in genuine accordance with our principle of least possible organization. Over time, it has proven itself as the most balanced way to arrive at the only recognized authority in A.A., the informed group conscience.

From the level of highest authority to the level of least authority, the General Service Structure is often shown as an inverted triangle. The structure is organized as follows:



At the top is the fundamental unit of Alcoholics Anonymous, the group and, in accordance with Tradition Two, the only recognized authority the group conscience. On matters affecting A.A. as a whole, an informed group conscience must be sought. The GSR then communicates the conscience of the group to the appropriate service level, be that the district, the area or GSO itself.

Beneath the groups, we find districts. A district is simply a geographical unit which contains a number of groups. There are 17 Districts in Western Missouri, including District 5, which was created as a special district to help facilitate the participation of Spanish-speaking AA groups in Western Missouri. Every group has the opportunity to

directly participate at the district level through its GSR.

The GSRs of each district elect a District Committee Member (DCM). The DCM encourages participation by the district's groups and conducts the district meetings. The DCM is another information conduit, helping to link the GSRs with the rest of the service structure. Typically this includes facilitating a recurring District-wide meeting for the local groups to participate in. Some Districts meet as frequently as monthly to as infrequently as quarterly, depending on the needs of that particular District. If you are unsure what District you belong to, you can consult the map we have on the WAMO website, or ask the Area Chair or other officers for clarification. In most cases, District boundaries are determined by the county where you meet.

Below the districts, we find General Service Areas. Most of these areas follow broad geographical divisions of a state or province. The western half of Missouri is Area 39, composed of 17 districts (16 active). There are a total of 93 Areas throughout the U.S. and Canada.

Each General Service Area, in addition to conducting area business, elects a Delegate to represent it at the annual General Service Conference in New York. In this way, the Area Delegate can voice the informed group conscience of their area. Each Area Delegate serves a two-year term, with about half of them elected each year to provide both continuity and rotation. Area 39 is an "odd" panel, meaning Area 39 Delegates begin their term on January 1 of odd numbered years.

The level of regions lies beneath the General Service Areas in the structure. As shown in The A.A. Service Manual, the United States and Canada are divided into eight Regions. Canada is composed of two regions (Eastern and Western Canada) and the United States composed of six (Northeast, Southeast, East Central, West Central, Southwest and Pacific). Area 39 falls within the Southwest Region, which includes 11 Areas: Area 4 – Arkansas, Area 10 – Colorado, Area 25 – Kansas, Area 38 – Eastern Missouri, Area 39 – Western Missouri, Area 46 – New Mexico, Area 57 – Oklahoma, Area 65 – Northeast Texas, Area 66 – Northwest Texas, Area 67- Southeast Texas, and Area 68 – Southwest Texas. On even-numbered years, an Area hosts the Southwest Regional AA Service Assembly (SWRAASA).

Each region nominates a slate of qualified candidates from which one Regional Trustee is elected to a four-year term on the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous. The Trustees' terms are staggered and balanced geographically so that two Trustees are elected each year, providing both continuity and a smooth flow of rotation. Unlike the Area Delegate, a Regional Trustee does not represent any definable section of the country. Rather, the office holder represents the fellowship as a whole.

The body holding the least authority is the General Service Conference. This deliberative body meets each April/May in New York City to decide the policy of Alcoholics Anonymous in the US and Canada. At this week-long assembly, the voting members include the 93 Area Delegates, trustees, and directors from the A.A. World Services and Grapevine boards. Other voting members are drawn from the GSO and Grapevine staffs. As the largest voting bloc, the Area Delegates express the collective conscience of US and Canadian A.A. groups. In this sense the Conference can feel it is acting for A.A. as a whole, though *only to the extent that the GSR keeps the group informed and can gather and communicate the group conscience.*

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**A.A. WORLDWIDE**

Because A.A. is a worldwide organization, there are autonomous General Service Offices in many countries. The US/Canada General Service Office in New York is by no means the final authority on matters relating to Alcoholics Anonymous. The New York office is available to share experience, strength and hope with offices in other countries, mainly because it has been in existence for much longer.

A World Service Meeting is held every two years to maintain and solidify the worldwide communication links within the fellowship. At this gathering, the US and Canada are represented by two delegates, one drawn from Canada and the other from the US. These representatives are generally the trustees-at-large, elected to four year terms by the General Service Conference.

### **THE GENERAL SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE**

While you may be very familiar with service work (making coffee, cleaning up, 12th Step calls, etc.), "general service" is work of a different sort. General Service is based solidly upon the Three Legacies: Recovery, as outlined in the Twelve Steps; Unity, as outlined in the Twelve Traditions; and Service, as detailed in The A.A. Service Manual and the Twelve Concepts for World Service. General Service refers to activities within the Conference structure, activities which are carried on by Area Committees, Delegates, Trustees and GSO staff. General Service usually has an effect on the fellowship as a whole.

Those active in general service, though particularly the GSRs, are frequently called the Guardians of our Traditions. The Twelve Traditions are to the service structure as the Twelve Steps are to the recovering alcoholic. The GSR is ever-mindful of the necessity and wisdom of the guidance expressed in the Traditions.

As a trusted servant elected by the members of your home group, both the responsibilities and the rewards of a General Service Representative are far-reaching. As GSR, you are your home group's best connection with the service structure and the General Service Conference. You ensure that your group is well informed and that the voice of your group's informed group conscience is heard.

The GSR has the responsibility of linking his or her home group to A.A. as a whole. This responsibility necessitates clear, two-way communications with your group, with your district and with the Area 39 Assembly. Full participation in these dialogues and discussions require that you be informed and that your group is equally informed.

The qualifications of a GSR are not complex. Active group membership, an interest in the Twelve Traditions and the service structure, and the suggested two to three years of continuous sobriety are a sound start. Beneficial character qualities include patience and understanding as well as a commitment to placing principles before personalities in all matters relating to the fellowship. Prior service experience is helpful, whether as a group officer, an Intergroup Representative, or service on a group- or district-level committee. A qualified candidate will also have time available to attend district meetings and area assemblies. A final consideration is a candidate's capability and time for other positions to which they may be elected in the future, such as an area-level office.

As suggested in the Service Manual, GSRs are commonly elected to serve a term of two years. It is important that this general service commitment be kept. An active GSR will maintain the home group's connection to the fellowship as a whole. An Alternate GSR, typically elected at the same time as the GSR, holds virtually the same responsibilities as the GSR. Should the GSR be unable to meet the responsibilities of the position for any

length of time, or at any given service function, the Alternate can smoothly step forward to serve the home group and the fellowship.

As GSR or Alternate, you may find the wisdom of a service sponsor invaluable. Much in the way that a sponsor assists in an individual's recovery, a service sponsor can be tremendously helpful to those active in any service work. Such a person can refer you to appropriate literature, share their own experiences with you, and help you gain a better understanding of the application of the Twelve Traditions.

It is equally important to observe the spirit of rotation. Having served two year terms, both the GSR and the Alternate step aside. Rotation gives one the opportunity to move into other service positions. Rotation allows others the privilege of serving and demonstrates to newcomers that no member should hold a position of trust long enough to feel a proprietary interest in that position.

## **YOUR HOME GROUP**

The relationship of the GSRs with their home groups is probably the most important and, hopefully, the most fluid and open one. The best way to become effective is to regularly attend the meetings of your home group. This provides the opportunity to acquaint yourself with the group's members and their ideas. It gives you some credibility when you make suggestions and reports. If the group structure includes a steering committee, the GSR should be a member of that committee. In groups which function without a steering committee, the business and/or group conscience meetings might be chaired by the GSR. Whatever the group's structure, the GSR is given regular opportunity to report on service activities and issues relating to A.A. as a whole.

The information you pass on to your home group can come from a variety of sources. Some will come from the district level, such as announcements of upcoming workshops or other district-sponsored events, open service work positions at the district level, approaching newsletter deadlines. You may have information on agenda items for an upcoming Area Assembly and can express to group members the considerations of each one in order to arrive at an informed group conscience.

A sure source of information will be the Area 39 Assemblies. Expecting to remain informed, group members are likely to be interested in which motions passed or failed, the health of the standing committees, the highlights of the district reports and those of the Area 39 officers. Following an Election Assembly, your group is sure to be interested in the roster of newly-elected Area Officers. After the Pre-Conference Assembly each March, a well-informed group will likely be eager to hear the area's conscience on the Conference agenda items.

You may also be passing along information which has come directly to you from GSO. On a quarterly basis, GSO sends out a report on GSO affairs. They also send out, on a quarterly basis, contribution statements for the current fiscal year. These statements may prompt a re-evaluation of the group's Seventh Tradition split.

As the mail contact of record for your group, you will also receive Box 4-5-9 from GSO. Published on a bimonthly basis, it contains many articles of general interest to the entire fellowship and should be read and shared with your home group. You can also sign up to receive an emailed copy of Box 459 via the [AA.org website](http://AA.org). It can be a valuable resource for group discussion.

## **THE INFORMED GROUP CONSCIENCE**

The importance of an informed group conscience cannot be stressed enough. An informed group

conscience involves as many members of the group as possible; all pertinent information is presented simply, fully and fairly; members are entitled to free expression of the widest range of viewpoints on the issue; group members are allowed enough time to take all the information into consideration before any final decision is made. On sensitive issues, the group works slowly, allowing a clear sense of its collective view to emerge. Placing principles before personalities, the membership is wary of domineering opinions.

A group's conscience is the collective conscience of its members and should reflect substantial unanimity on an issue before definitive action is taken. The group's conscience is heard when a well-informed group reaches substantial unanimity on an issue. In one way or another, most healthy groups seem to have learned that this is the best way to arrive at an informed group conscience. The result is the spiritual expression of the group conscience, and it rests on more than a "yes" or "no" opinion. An informed group conscience is only reached through the full sharing of information, the expression of individual points of view and the practice of A.A. principles. Should any of these elements be absent from the process, the group has arrived at a group opinion or majority vote, not at an informed group conscience.

Decisions affecting your home group are best made by the informed group conscience as, again, it is the only recognized authority in Alcoholics Anonymous. GSRs make district-level decisions based upon the informed conscience of the groups within the district. Area-level decisions are made based upon the conscience of the groups as expressed by the GSRs. Annually, you will hold one or more group conscience meetings on agenda items for the General Service Conference. In turn, this will be expressed to the Delegate who carries the Area 39 conscience to the Conference. In this way, the fellowship as a whole - at every level of the service structure - is guided by the conscience of the groups.

You may not personally agree with the group conscience your group arrives at. However, if you have done your job well and the matter has been thoroughly discussed, you will rightly feel good about the decision and have no problem in abiding by it.

As GSR, there are a number of ways you can encourage the health of your home group. One ingredient for a healthy group is having its members involved, and all willing members should have a job or position at the group level. Service work and general service work can foster a sense of responsibility and strengthen members' sense of belonging.

Another element found in healthy groups is an awareness of what happens beyond the group level. As GSR, you may want to invite or bring a few members to a district meeting, an Area 39 Assembly, or any sort of service gathering. Encourage their curiosity about the service structure and its various levels and offices. Having a well-informed and experienced group can only benefit A.A. as a whole by helping to strengthen groups, and often results in generating better future GSRs.

A useful tool in maintaining group health is a group inventory. Just as a personal inventory helps each of us maintain a healthy sobriety by revealing our strengths and weaknesses, an annual group inventory can reveal areas that may need some focused group attention. The pamphlet "The A.A. Group" provides a starting format for such an inventory.

## **CONTRIBUTIONS**

Another area in which the GSR can be of service to the group is in the area of group finances. Our Seventh Tradition holds that every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting through their own contributions. The



Seventh Tradition is practiced at all service levels of the fellowship through contributions made by the groups.

It is suggested that a group retain a prudent reserve, enough money to offset a drop in Seventh Tradition contributions or to cover any extraordinary costs that may be incurred. Under normal circumstances, this amount is genuinely "in reserve," set aside and not included in funds available for the paying of group expenses. Group funds are disbursed after basic expenses for the group have been met. These group expenses include rent, literature, coffee, etc. As a group expense, some groups regularly include supporting the GSR in expenses directly related to the position.

Most groups disburse their contributions on a monthly basis, but this matter is dependent on the conscience of the group. The pamphlet "Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix" shows several options for distribution of contributions toward A.A. services. While some expenses may be fixed, contributions to the various services are typically a set percentage of the remaining amount. A group conscience will determine the services the group wishes to support, as well as the percentages to be used in the split. The following list briefly explains the service levels which are supported by Seventh Tradition funds:

- **Group:** All group expenses are paid first and include rent, literature, coffee, and GSR travel expenses.
- **District:** District expenses include DCM travel funds and may include as well expenses incurred by the DCM in execution of district duties. Districts may also allocate funds for service committees such as CPC, Treatment Facilities, PI and Grapevine.
- **Interdistrict:** Some cities with more than one district may support an interdistrict body. This organizational level encourages communication between the districts, can strengthen the local committee system and can bolster service work in all participating districts.
- **Local Intergroup or Central Office:** While outside the formal General Service Structure, intergroup offices tend to be tremendously valuable in carrying the message. Fully autonomous and self-supporting, they often provide meeting directories, answering services, sales of literature. There are two Central Offices located in Area 39, one in North Kansas City and one in Springfield. The Kansas City Central Office has a regular meeting with delegates from groups on both the Kansas and Missouri side of the state line.
- **Area 39:** The primary purpose of Area 39 is to send the Area 39 Delegate to the General Service Conference. Beyond that, the Area provides funds for a number of service initiatives, workshops, events and other functions. Through the financial support of the Districts, the Area also maintains the website WAMO-AA.org.
- **General Service Office:** Provides funds to enable our Trustees and the General Service Conference to carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous worldwide. GSO makes it possible for US/Canada groups to guide their fellowship. GSO supports a committee system, maintains records, and disseminates information to the fellowship as a whole via the mail and at forums and mini-forums. Free of charge, GSO distributes a great deal of information and literature to registered groups. GSO also makes available annual Conference Reports and directories.

Contributions to GSO and to Area 39 should reference your group number. This nine-digit number is assigned by the General Service Office and can be found on your group information sheet or on the quarterly statement mailed to you by GSO. Your group's number is also given in the Western US A.A. Directory as the first line of information beneath the group name. The string of numbers is actually three different numbers, divided parenthetically: the group number, the area number (39) and the district to which your group belongs.

Because all levels of the general service structure are self-supporting, your group's contributions are vital to each. It is very important that your home group contribute what it can on a regular basis, be that monthly, bimonthly, or quarterly.

Your District Committee Member will gladly provide you with the names and address of the specific persons to whom your group's contributions are to be sent.

## **DISTRICT MEETINGS**

As mentioned previously, a district is usually composed of six to twenty A.A. groups and is represented by a district meeting of GSRs from each of the groups within the district. These meetings are typically held once a month. The format is decided autonomously by district and might include:

- Group reports from the GSRs, (preferably typed.)
- Secretary's and treasurer's reports
- Reports from district-level committee chairs
- District report from the DCM
- Discussion of the business of the previous or upcoming Area Assembly or General Service Conference
- Discussion and planning of special events such as workshops or fellowship gatherings which the district may be organizing for the general fellowship
- A presentation on some aspect of service

The group report you give at the district meeting might include some or all of the following ways in which your group is carrying the A.A. message:

- Location and times of meetings
- Type of meeting (open, closed, literature study, special interest, etc.)  
Meetings' attendance levels
- Topics and decisions of the group's most recent business and/or group conscience meeting  
Functions or workshops your group is organizing
- Problems your group may be facing

District meetings provide GSRs with a forum for sharing information and solutions. It is rare for a group to encounter a completely original problem, and a district meeting gives an ideal opportunity for tapping into the experiences other groups have had in solving similar difficulties. At these meetings, your own experiences as a GSR are certain to be helpful to others.

Agenda items which require action at an upcoming Area Assembly might also be discussed at district meetings. Discussion of General Service Conference agenda items is equally beneficial. The end result is that GSRs are better informed on all aspects of the issues. In turn, an informed group conscience can be had at the group level.

A district's GSRs elect their District Committee Member (DCM) who conducts district meetings and reports on the district as a voting member of the Area Committee. Each DCM serves a two-year term. When a GSR is elected to serve as DCM, that GSR's home group will need to elect a new GSR. The primary purpose of the DCM

is to stimulate as many groups as possible to take an active part in A.A. as a whole through representation and participation.

## **AREA COMMITTEE AND AREA ASSEMBLIES**

As stated in the Area 39 guidelines, the Assembly is specifically charged with the duty of electing a Delegate to the General Service Conference and to provide the Delegate with the support to assist in the duties of this office. The Assembly is further charged with electing such other Officers as it deems necessary to conduct the business of the Assembly.

Each area acts as a unit at its assemblies. Every year, Area 39 four assemblies quarterly in January, March, June and September. The March Assembly is designated as the Pre-Conference Assembly to prepare the Delegate for the General Service Conference. In even years, an Election Assembly is held in September.

By attending Area Assemblies, you will become familiar with things happening in the larger world of A.A. through the reports given by Area Officers and District Committee Members. You'll actively participate in the handling of Area 39 affairs. You are sure to find opportunity to discuss issues with others who are willing to share experience, information and objectivity. At the area level the conscience of the groups is heard, voiced by those GSRs in attendance. All matters affecting Area 39 finances and those which have a direct impact on the groups are presented and ratified, rejected, or revised at the assemblies.

Also at assemblies, reports are delivered by the chairpersons of the standing committees. Area 39 supports a committee system quite similar to that of GSO. As listed in the Area 39 Guidelines, the standing committees are:

- Archives
- Accessibilities
- Bridge The Gap (a subcommittee of both the Treatment and Corrections Committees)
- Cooperation with Professional Communities (CPC)
- Corrections
- Grapevine
- Institutions Forum (annual event hosted by a District that combines elements of Treatment, Corrections, Bridge The Gap, Public Information and CPC)
- Literature
- Missouri State Convention (a joint conference put on between members of Western and Eastern Areas of Missouri)
- Public Information
- Treatment
- WAMO Convention (responsible for organizing the Colors of Fall convention)

In addition to those the committees, Area 39 also has support committees, with chairs who are non-voting members. Those committees are:

- Finance Committee (made up of five members of the Assembly who are not Area Officers or Standing Committee Chairs and Alternates).
- WAMYPA (Western Area of Missouri Young People in AA)
- Website (a subcommittee of public information)

Committee chairs and alternates are elected during committee meetings in the September Assembly on even-

numbered years and serve two-year rotations. Qualifications for Committee Chairs, including lengths of sobriety requirements, may be found in the Area 39 Guidelines.

The committee system was established at the area level, in part, to help disseminate the information related to the General Service Conference agenda items. Any interested member of the fellowship may serve as a committee member. In this way, an area-wide network can be maintained, enabling the fellowship to carry the message consistently and responsibly.

While all A.A. members are encouraged to attend the assemblies, only the GSRs, DCMs, Area Committee Chairpersons, our Area Archivist, Past Delegates and Area Officers are allowed to vote. Alternate GSRs, Alternate Committee Chairs and Alternate DCMs may vote if the GSR, DCM or Committee Chair is absent. Each voting member is only allowed one vote, and Area 39 Guidelines recommend that no one person hold more than one voting position. At these assemblies, these service positions are also encouraged to share a written report of the activities in their group, district or committee.

At the Election Assembly (September, even years), we elect trusted servants who will begin their two-year terms of office on January 1 of the following year. The roster of Area Officers includes Delegate, Alternate Delegate, Area Chairperson, Alternate Area Chairperson, Treasurer, Alternate Treasurer, Secretary and Alternate Secretary. The Area Guidelines include a listing of the duties of each office.

The election of Area 39 officers is one of the most important things that you will participate in as a GSR. If you have been actively involved, you are likely to have developed some perspective to enable you to make decisions about who, of those standing for a given office, would best serve the area.

The election of Area 39 officers is conducted by secret ballot using the [Third Legacy Procedure](#). Following a roll call of voting members, the election process begins. As described in The A.A. Service Manual, the names of willing, eligible candidates are posted on a whiteboard.

The first ballot is conducted and tallied on the board as the votes are counted. The first candidate to receive two-thirds of the total vote is elected.

Should no candidate receive two-thirds of the votes cast, a second ballot is conducted. If, again, no candidate receives the necessary two-thirds vote, any candidate with less than one-fifth of the total vote is withdrawn, except the two top candidates. If there is a tie for second place, all tied candidates remain on the ballot.

A third ballot is conducted and tallied. If no candidate receives a two-thirds majority, those with less than one-third are withdrawn, except for the top two candidates. Again, all those in a tie for second place remain on the ballot.

A fourth ballot is conducted. If no candidate receives a two-thirds majority, the Chairperson will entertain a motion for a fifth ballot. With a second and a majority of hands in favor, a fifth ballot is conducted.

If no candidate is elected with a two-thirds majority on the fifth ballot, or if the motion for a fifth ballot is defeated, balloting is over and we immediately go “to the hat” to choose the winner by lot. If the second place tie has been broken, the candidate with the fewest votes is dropped. The top candidate and any candidates still tied for second remain. Their names go into the hat and the candidate whose name is drawn becomes the office holder.

## **PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

As you continue to participate at the group, district, and area levels, you will find the position of GSR increasingly rewarding. At first it may seem boring or overly complicated. Remembering that you are a newcomer to this side of A.A. may make it easier. Each person involved was once a newcomer to General Service as well. Ask questions, seek out resources. As you become more and more familiar with your responsibilities as a GSR, the processes will come to make sense and the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts will take on a new meaning and vitality.

Service work takes every bit as much time and energy as learning and working the Steps, and is probably more difficult to explain and share with other members. It is easy, at times, to become discouraged. Your diligent efforts will pay off as you become better able to communicate the issues in the spirit of the Twelve Traditions. Your own rising enthusiasm will be contagious and the members of your home group are likely to express genuine interest in the information you report to them and the guidance you can offer the group.

As noted by Bill W. in The A.A. Service Manual, “Good service leaders...are at all levels indispensable for our future functioning and safety.” You have been given a great responsibility as GSR. In order to meet this responsibility, you must become as knowledgeable as possible. A willingness to learn and keep an open mind will reveal the great benefits of general service.

**CONDENSED ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER (For reference)**

*When you wish to be heard:*

1. Please go to the floor mic and wait in line until recognized by the Chair.
2. If you're participating online, please raise your hand and wait to be called on. If you cannot raise your hand, please send a private message to one of the online meeting hosts.
3. Please speak clearly and slowly.
4. Do not repeat what others have said prior to you just for the sake of being heard. This will save a great deal of time!
5. Be concise and to the point. Keep your sharing at the mic to 2 minutes or less.

You want to:	You say:	Second required	Debatable	Vote
<b>Introduce</b> a matter of business (have this motion written down)	I move that.....	Yes	Yes	Majority
After discussion of a matter of business (have motion written down)	I move that.....	Yes	Yes	Majority
<b>Amend</b> a motion (write down proposed amendment)	I move this motion be amended to read.....	Yes	Yes	Majority
<b>Complain</b> about the meeting environment	<b>Point of Personal Privilege</b> – ex. I can't hear or the room is too cold.	No	No	No vote
<b>What's going on?</b> I'm lost.	<b>Point of Information.</b> Ask Chair to clarify where we're at.	No	No	No vote
<b>End</b> discussion <u>after thorough debate</u> and move to the vote	I move to <b>call the question.</b>	Yes	No	2/3
<b>Reconsider</b> an earlier vote. (You must be on the prevailing side on the original motion)	I move we <b>reconsider the vote</b> on _____.	Yes	Yes	2/3
<b>Unsure</b> how something fits in	<b>Point of Parliamentary Inquiry.</b> After Chair acknowledges you, ask question.	No	No	No vote
<b>Withdraw</b> a motion. Must be the motion-maker to withdraw.	I move to <b>withdraw</b> the motion about__.	No	No	If no objection, withdrawn and move on.
<b>End</b> discussion but <b>refer</b> to a committee for further review	I move we <b>refer</b> this subject to the _____ committee for further review.	Yes	Yes	Majority
<b>Table</b> a matter	I move we <b>table</b> this matter until _____ meeting.	Yes	No	Majority
Delay action <b>indefinitely</b>	I move to <b>postpone indefinitely</b> the matter concerning_____.	Yes	Yes	Majority
Take up a <b>previously tabled</b> issue.	I move we <b>take from the table</b> _____.	Yes	No	Majority
I'm <b>Overwhelmed!</b>	Remember <b>Rule 62!</b>	No	No	No vote

GSR Handbook

Want to <b>rescind</b> or void the effect of an earlier vote. (You must be on the prevailing side on the original motion and have additional information). Can be from this Assembly or last.	I move we <b>rescind</b> the vote on _____ topic at _____ Assembly.	Ye s	Yes	2/3
<b>Adjourn</b>	I move we <b>adjourn</b> .	Ye s	No	Majorit y
Consider item <b>out of sequence</b> .	I move we <b>suspend the Guidelines</b> and consider_____.	Ye s	No	2/3
Propose something <b>out of line</b> with the Guidelines	I move we <b>suspend the Guidelines</b> and consider_____.	Ye s	No	2/3
<b>Object</b> to an error in procedure	<b>Point of Order.</b> When asked by Chair, state question and ask for clarification in process.	No	No	No vote
If feel that Robert's Rules suggest <b>handling</b> a little <b>differently</b>	<b>Point of Appeal.</b> I appeal the decision of the chair based on_____.	Ye s	Yes	Majorit y