

Why have a GSR?

Just as “an addict alone is in bad company”, the NA group that does not participate in the service structure will most likely struggle without the spiritual support that the Area Service Committee (ASC) has to offer. The participation of the Group Service Representative and the GSR-Alternate at the ASC meeting can make a big difference in the chances of a group’s survival.

Shared experiences and services are key to helping the group carry the message. Your GSR is the bearer of that experience and service. As long as each group carries out its responsibilities by being an active part of the local area, choosing a GSR and supporting the service structure, the area will sustain itself and provide services to the addict that a group cannot provide on its own.

Some of the services provided by an ASC may include: operating a phone-line, providing literature distribution, speaking to the public about NA, reaching out to addicts in isolation and in institutions, printing a newsletter, and organizing functions such as workshops and unity activities. These services vary from area to area. Your GSR is your group’s voice in how these services are delivered.

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 actively take part 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 need. In group recovery meetings, GSRs make available flyers 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 report. And if the group hasn’t found solutions to those problems, the area chairperson will open a slot on the committee’s open forum 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.

What is a GSR ?

- A trusted servant of their group.
- The voice of their group at the Area Service Committee. (ASC)
- The voice of area at their group.
- The financial link between their group and the Area Service Committee.
- 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, problems, concerns, change of meeting time/place to update phone and meeting lists
- Bring issues from the ASC to the group for a group conscience and report back to the ASC.
- Learn about the subcommittees of the ASC.
 - What do the subcommittees do?
 - When do they meet?
 - Who may attend?
 - 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 one year clean time. (suggested only)
- 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.

Before each Area meeting:

- Take the previous Area minutes to your group's business meeting. Discuss anything that interests your Group, and anything that your Group was asked to provide feedback on at the previous Area meeting, and vice versa.
- Find out if there is anything your Group wants you to raise at the Area meeting.
- If required prepare a report on how your Group is going and note any issues that your Group would like discussed.

At the Area meeting:

- **Bring pen and paper!**
- Be prepared to deliver your GSR report
- Make suggestions from your Group
- Discuss ideas
- Engage in the Area decision making process about issues affecting NA in the Area, based on your Group’s conscience
- Ask questions – how else will you find out, if you don’t know?
- Take note of: Area actions, Requests from the Area for your Group to consider, and NA Announcements. Take these to your Group meetings

- You may be asked by the Area to get feedback from your Group conscience on certain issues or proposals. Take note of these to discuss with your Group.

After the Area meeting:

- Report back to your Group on what was discussed. Minutes of the previous Area meetings are sent out before the next meeting, but it's easier to have your own record as well.
- Please keep your Group informed of upcoming events and service opportunities. The GPA Events page produces an events calendar with this information; there may also be other pamphlets to display at your meeting.

ASC Meeting Format

- Introductions and GSR reports: At this time GSRs introduce themselves, report on any votes brought back to groups, and inform the Area about any information their group wants brought to the Area as a whole
- Executive committee and subcommittee reports: At this time the chairperson, vice chairperson, treasurer, and secretary make their reports as well as subcommittee chairperson reports. During this time anyone can ask questions, but only about the substance of the report. If anyone has comments, suggestions, or more general thoughts to share the chair will direct those people to speak to the sub-committee chairperson after the meeting or will set aside time in open forum.
- Old Business: During this time the Area Service meeting takes up any old business that is left over from previous meetings and conducts elections. Sometimes, ideas put to the group (also called motions) are set aside (or tabled) for a later meeting.
- New Business: This is the time when new ideas are presented to the Area meeting in

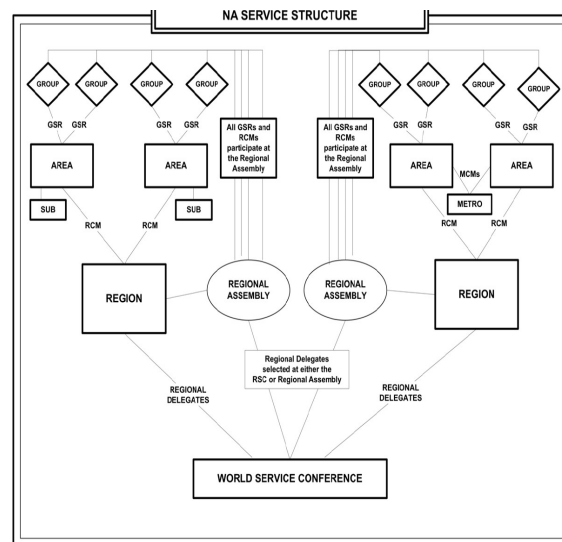
the form of motions. These proposals should be written down on a standard form that can be obtained from the ASC Secretary. If you, or your group would like to make such a proposal, you should fill out the motion form and give it to the secretary prior to the start of the meeting.

- Open Forum: This is the time for an open discussion of problems, thoughts, and ideas for the good of NA as a whole.

Rules of Order

- Once a motion has been introduced, the chair will make a determination about how the motion should be dealt with. Some motions will be voted on immediately, while others will be sent back to groups.
- Motions that change the way the Area (ASC) deals with the groups, other areas, Region, or any other outside entity, are normally sent back to groups. Motions that primarily affect the internal workings of the ASC are normally decided by a vote of the ASC meeting.
- As a GSR, you can vote and debate any issue presented to the ASC. If a motion is sent back to your group, you are to carry the conscience of your group, however your group decides that conscience.
- All votes require a 2/3 majority to pass. Everyone voting on a motion can vote yes, no, or abstain (step aside). Abstentions do not count towards the vote total, but if more than 1/3 of those voting abstain, then the vote is automatically tabled to the following month.
- Example: If 15 people are eligible to vote on an issue, three abstain eight vote yes and four vote no, then the motion passes ($8 = 2/3$ of 12), but if 5 abstain, 6 vote yes, and 4 vote no, then the motion is tabled to the following month (because $5 = 1/3$ of 15).
- Other types of motions:

- Call for a vote: This is a motion to end debate and bring the proposal under debate to a vote
- To table: This is a motion to set aside a question until a later date (usually to allow more time for reflection)
- To take off the table: This is a motion to take a motion that has been set aside at a previous session and bring it back to the committee for discussion.
- To amend: This is a motion to alter a proposal under consideration
- To adjourn: This is a motion to close the meeting
- To limit or extend debate: this is used to either set a time limit for debate on a specific item on the agenda or to extend a limit already established



Greater Providence Area



Service Committee

GROUP SERVICE

REPRESENTATIVE

(G.S.R.)

ORIENTATION PAMPHLET

This pamphlet 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 a 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.

Beneficent Congregational Church
300 Weybosset Street
Providence, RI 02903

4th Sunday of every month

New GSR Orientation 3:00–3:20pm
Area Service Main Meeting 3:30–5:30pm