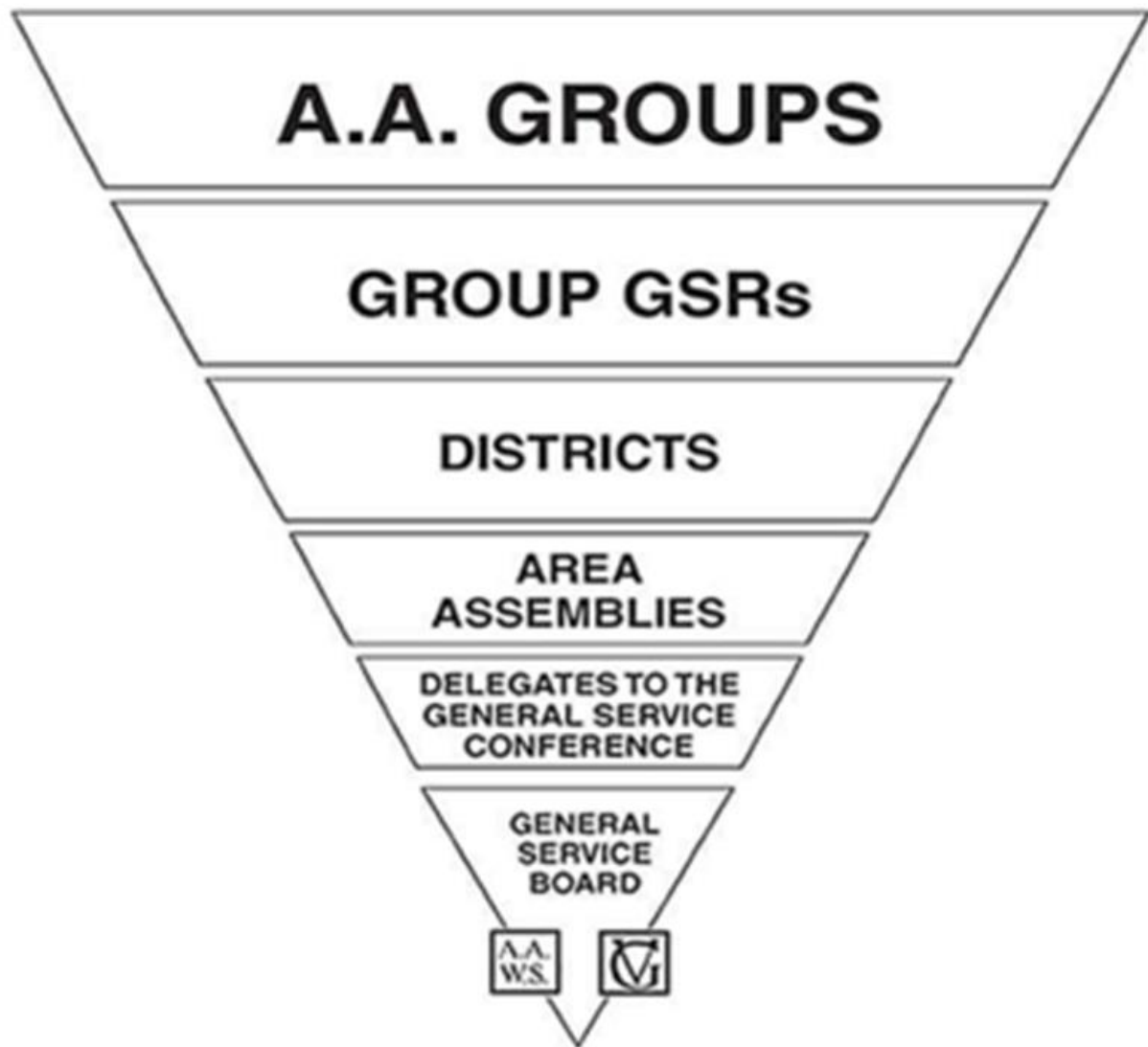


District 18 Handbook

General Service Structure



INTRODUCTION

Purpose of Handbook:

The main purpose of this handbook is to serve as a guide to the practices and procedures of service within District 18.

AA Service Manual

In the absence of specific instruction in the District 18 Handbook, the direction of the AA Service Manual shall apply.

Rotation

All positions, either elected or appointed, are entered into with the Spirit of Rotation based on Tradition Two, "Our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern". The principle of a rotating committees/officers was formed to limit authority, to encourage trusted servants to move on in service, and to allow opportunities for newcomers to engage in service within the district. Remaining in a position for too long can be detrimental to those involved and for those seeking an opportunity to serve.

Guiding Principles

The Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts are principles that guide the service structure within District.18. It is expected that every General Service Representative (G.S.R.) and/or anyone that does service within District 18 to be familiar with these principles. The penalty for disobeying these principles can result in death to the individual member, the group, or A.A. as a whole.

D18 should operate in a spirit of fellowship, love and service, respect, humility, acceptance, and tolerance.

Service Structure

A.A. service can be defined as any action that helps us carry the message to the alcoholic that still suffers. These services can be performed by individuals, groups, areas, or AA as a whole, and are utterly vital to our existence and growth. The sum total of these services is our Third Legacy of Service.

The service structure starts with individual members of A.A. groups within District 18. G.S.R.s are elected from each A.A. group within the district and serve as the voice of their group based on decisions made by their group conscience. To facilitate information transfer from the groups to the district and from the district to the groups, monthly G.S.R. meetings are held. Any decision made within the district is voted on by G.S.R.s within the district. As such,

District 18 is a service body only in its organization. Our Twelfth Step, “carrying the A.A. message,” is the basic service that the A.A. Fellowship gives. This is our principal aim and the main reason for our existence.

District:

A district is a geographical area containing A.A. groups. Refer to the D18 map on the website.

District Meeting:

Business meetings are conducted in order to ensure groups are being heard throughout the service structure and coordinate funds necessary to facilitate the carrying of the A.A. message within the district. Typically, district meetings are held on the third Sunday of each month. They are generally held at the Central Service Office. Occasionally, rescheduling is necessary to accommodate holidays, area assemblies, etc.

G.S.R. (General Service Representative):

Refer to the AA Service Manual for the Responsibilities of the GSR.

District Officers:

- **D.C.M. (District Committee Member):** Refer to the AA Service Manual for the Responsibilities of the DCM.
- **Alt. D.C.M. (Alternate District Committee Member):** Refer to the AA Service Manual for the Responsibilities of the Alternate DCM.
- **District Secretary:** This secretarial position asks for the clear and accurate recording of district meeting minutes. A sense of order and an ability to capture essentials of what is happening at the district meeting is a preferable attribute. A suggested sobriety time of 2 years is preferred. Clarity of minutes is essential since secretary reports require a “vote of acceptance” either as originally read or after amendments (corrections) are added, when applicable.
- **District Treasurer:** The treasurer prepares, provides, distributes and presents financial reports concerning district funds, activities and committee funds. At each District meeting, the treasurer should have a copy of the checking account bank statement, information about sources of income and expenditures. A copy of the bank statement along with the treasury report shall be presented at the district meeting. If requested, the treasurer will furnish a copy of the treasurer’s report if requested by the G.S.R. of a group. A breakdown of monthly group contributions by individual groups can be done if requested.
 - The treasurer will collect and deposit group contributions made to the district via group representatives or personal donations from individual members. The treasurer should maintain close communication with district committees/officers concerning their respective budgets and disbursement of operating funds to committee chairs & district officers. (See Finance: District Officers and Reimbursements).

- The DCM shall appoint an independent random audit of the bank balance shall be made by District 18 personnel annually.
- It is most preferable to change signatures on the district checking account after district elections. The Treasurer, DCM and Alternate DCM shall be the authorized signatures on the D18 checking account. It is highly recommended that the incoming treasurer have some familiarity with excel spreadsheets.
- Final establishment of annual budgets is essential and is most effective when done so during the December district meeting every year. The November district meetings should begin discussions surrounding the following year's budget. Presentation of the previous year's spending trends is very beneficial. Proposed budget must be approved through a substantial unanimity (2/3) vote of voting members. If within the course of the fiscal year, there is a "one-off" expense which was not included in the budget, a vote must be taken during the next district meeting to approve the expense. Approval is contingent on a two-thirds majority. *Any unapproved expenditures will be the responsibility of the person making the purchase.*
- Requests for funds in excess of preapproved budgets for committees and officers, must be subjected to voting procedures during a district meeting and require a two-thirds majority vote "in-favor" for approval. Prior to any and all events requiring district funds, the treasurer will use the district debit card or checkbook. Alternatively, committee members should keep receipts for any district purchase and submit them to the treasurer to be reimbursed, along with who should be reimbursed for the purchase(s). It is highly recommended to work with the D18 treasurer for depositing money obtained by the committee, purchases and reimbursements to ensure transparency. Committees conducting monetary transactions independent of D18 is frowned upon as there is no way to ensure transparency or account for incoming or outgoing purchases to groups within the district.
- In emergency situations involving the absence and/or event of the treasurer being incapacitated for any reason, the alternate D.C.M. will temporarily assume duties and responsibilities associated with district treasury.

Elections:

Elections should be conducted through the use of the **Third Legacy Procedure** (See *A.A. Service Manual*). District 18 elections are held every two years (**November**) and are concurrent with Southern Illinois Area 21 elections. It is suggested that groups hold their respective group elections sometime prior to scheduled district elections. By doing so, members are afforded an opportunity to serve at the top of the service structure, first.

- Votes are cast by written ballot or voting via Zoom.

Eligible voters for district elections are as follows:

- Current GSRs or their Alternate
- Current District Officers

- Current District Committee Chairpersons
- Current Local Committee Members (LCM)
- A person only gets one vote no matter the number of service positions held.

Removal Procedures:

1. The district may remove any officer or committee chairperson from office.
2. Removal shall be by written ballot. A two-thirds majority of voting members is required.
3. In the event the D.C.M. or any officer should be absent from two consecutive District meetings, without adequate cause for such absence, they may be asked to resign.
4. A loss in sobriety shall automatically terminate current officer membership/eligibility to vote.

District 18 Committees:

District 18 Committee Chairs are elected by the district. There are five committees which are exclusive to District 18, as are the duties and responsibilities associated with those respective committees. Committees in District 18 are as follows: Newsletter, Activities, Technology/Website, Public Information, Contact with the Professional Community, Workshops, and Grapevine.

Newsletter: The newsletter should release a monthly newsletter and typically meets monthly to discuss the upcoming newsletter. To encourage participation from the district, a submission deadline should be contained within each newsletter for the upcoming month's newsletter. The Newsletter committee should strive to maintain a neutral viewpoint on anything contained in the Newsletter based on Tradition 10. A sincere attempt should be made to present facts. If an error is made and it is pointed out to the publisher, a correction should be placed with an apology in the next published Newsletter.

Corrections: Responsible for carrying the message to alcoholics behind the walls.

CPC (Cooperation with the Professional Community): Responsible for sharing information about the A.A. program with professionals and individuals who may have contact with alcoholics.

Grapevine: Tasked with encouraging subscription and distribution of Grapevine's monthly publication and other Grapevine publications.

PI (Public Information)/Literature: Primarily concerned with recovery literature related to specific areas of service, e.g., Corrections; disseminate guidelines, pamphlets and audio/ visual resources. Responsible for creating greater understanding of — and preventing misunderstandings of — the A.A. program through the public media, electronic media, P.I. meetings and speaking to community groups.

Activities: Provide activity events for D18 AA members, friends and family to support recovery from alcoholism. The monthly events are sustained by group donations and participant contributions. The activities committee is also responsible for organizing and carrying out D18's annual picnic.

- The activities committee will be operated by a board consisting of the following: chairperson, secretary and volunteer members.
- The activities chairperson is elected by D18. Other activity offices and specific event chairpersons are elected by the activities committee. Each position is a recommended two-year commitment.

- Each election year will be announced for all interested parties to participate.
- Activity committee funds are held and accounted for by the D18 treasurer.

Technology/Website: This committee is responsible for updating and maintaining the D18 website including management of the website registration. Other responsibilities include: communicating meeting changes for groups in the district, communicating events that are occurring in the district, regularly updating the D18 website plug-ins to maintain site security, respond to emails in the district, respond to: newsletter subscriptions, birthday celebrations, and events submitted to the newsletter and forwarding content to appropriate committees such as the newsletter committee, ensure that information being communicated by the website is current and relevant. It is highly recommended to have the ability to effectively trouble-shoot. (spamming, plug-in functionality changes, update crashes website). It is also highly recommended to be highly familiar with the traditions as issues related to them do come up and are highly relevant (e.g. making sure member's anonymity is protected).

Treatment & Bridging the Gap: Coordinates the work of individual A.A. members and groups who carry the A.A. message of recovery to alcoholics in treatment facilities. Is a liaison for treatment patients released back into their community.

Finance:

The district, its officers and committee chairpersons will conduct all district-related financial affairs in a transparent fashion.

Prudent Reserve: Any suggested prudent reserve for the district should be dependent on our needs. Its principal purpose is to provide the financial resources to continue the essential services of the district for up to a year, in the event of an unexpected and substantial reduction in the normal revenues generated from the membership.

Although the prudent reserve should not be used except in the above stated purpose; it should be accessible by the appropriate trusted servants.

It is suggested that the prudent reserve be any minimum balance which may be required by the district's selected banking institution, or one half of the current budget, whichever is greater. If the balance is less than what is needed for half a year, options should be discussed for cutting spending or requesting a special group contribution to the district.

Excess Funds: District 18 funds should be spent for D18 purposes. However, should the district balance be in excess of the annual budget for an extended length of time, and it is reasonably clear that the district does not have specifically defined uses for the money, the district should consider how to distribute the overage; i.e. for a new stated district purpose such as workshops or to make a contribution to C.S.O., Southern Illinois Area 21, and or G.S.O. Substantial unanimity (2/3rds major or greater) is required for disbursement of overages. It is highly recommended that any overage goes to support 12-step work.

The subject of prudent reserve and excess funds should be reviewed annually.

District Officers and Chairpersons Reimbursements:

- Chairpersons and officers requesting disbursement/reimbursement shall provide documentation and receipts regarding the types and the amounts the expenses.
- Expenses beyond the previous 31 days will not normally be considered for reimbursement. Expense reports must be submitted in a timely manner.
- There should never be the transfer of monies within or between committees.

- Given the spiritual connection associated with self-support; reimbursement of officers and chairpersons is strongly suggested, regardless of an officer's/chairperson's personal financial ability and willingness to absorb the associated costs.
- In the event, a district officer/chairperson is unable to secure a hotel room, registration, etc., due to foreseen/unforeseen financial circumstances; a coordination of efforts between the district treasurer and the officer/chairperson should take place to secure necessary means.
- District 18 fuel reimbursement/disbursement calculations are based on a minimum travel of 100-mile round-trip @ \$0.45/mile.
- Reimbursements/disbursements to area assembly for the D.C.M. and alternate D.C.M. are left to the discretion of how they wish to use their travel funds.
- Possible airfare reimbursements/disbursements should be discussed with the district prior to purchasing tickets or attending the event.

Unless otherwise specified above, travel expenses are not reimbursed by District 18. Should a committee desire to participate in activities that would require reimbursement, that reimbursement should be approved by the full body of District 18 prior to the purchase and prior to the event.