

Chapter 4 of the AA Service Manual

The Area Committee

Overview

- Purpose of the area committee
- Who makes up the area committee
- Positions/Qualifications/Duties
- What about the past delegates?
- Financial support & expenses

What purpose does the area committee serve?

“The area committee is especially focused on the health of the area and thus on growth and harmony in the A.A. Fellowship.” - The AA Service Manual, page 26



Composition of the area committee

- **District chairpersons**
- **DCMs**
- **Area officers**
- **Area committee chairs**



Many of the districts that are a part of Area 15 have subdistricts and a DCM for each of those subdistricts. They also have a district chairperson, which is included in the composition of the area 15 committee.

Our Service Manual does not refer to this as an “alternate service structure”, a term you may hear at quarterly assemblies and district meetings, but Appendix F on page 108 gives a great explanation of why some districts have subdistricts, DCMs for each of those subdistricts, and a district chairperson (district committee member chairperson/DCMC).

District Committee Member Chairperson (DCMC): A large district in a city or county may hold regular meetings led by a DCMC, who serves as the link between the district and the area. Within this large district, there are as many district subdivisions as needed to adequately serve the groups. Each of these may be called a subdistrict, local district, or zone. Each is served by a DCM, who may hold regular meetings of GSRs. In some areas, these DCMs are voting members of the area committee and assembly; in some, they are not.

Area officers: Chair - who is qualified?

CHAIR

Qualifications: The qualifications for area chair are, of course, up to the conscience of that area.

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- A solid period of sobriety (minimum three to five years)
- Experience in group, intergroup/central office, institutional and/or area affairs
- A sound understanding and appreciation of the Steps, the Traditions and the Concepts, along with a wealth of experience gained through applying these guiding principles successfully to local problems
- Communication skills
- Leadership qualities
- Sensitivity to the wishes of the local area



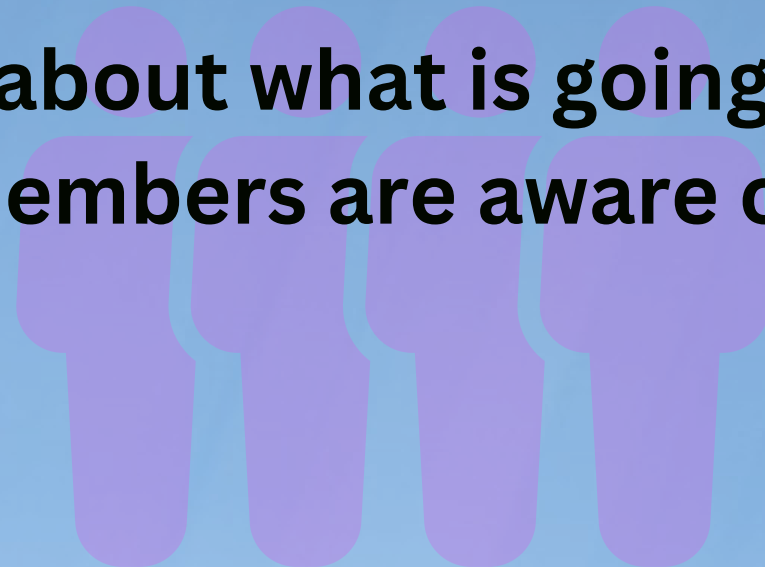
Area officers: Chair - what do they do?

CHAIR

Duties: The duties and responsibilities for area chair are, of course, up to the conscience of that area. These may include:

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- **Preside over the area assembly meetings**
- **Consult with the area committee before setting the date and time of assemblies**
- **Make sure members of the area assembly are notified about the dates and times of assemblies**
- **Consult with officers and committee members on the program/agenda**
- **Keep the delegate informed about what is going on in the area**
- **Make sure that committee members are aware of what goes on in world services**



Area officers: Secretary - who is qualified?

SECRETARY

Qualifications: The qualifications for area secretary are, of course, up to the conscience of that area.

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- Some service in group, intergroup/central office or general service affairs; some background in general office work
- A level of computer knowledge and information technology skills that reflect the area's needs
- Ability to create a record of a meeting that captures the essentials of what happened
- A solid period of sobriety



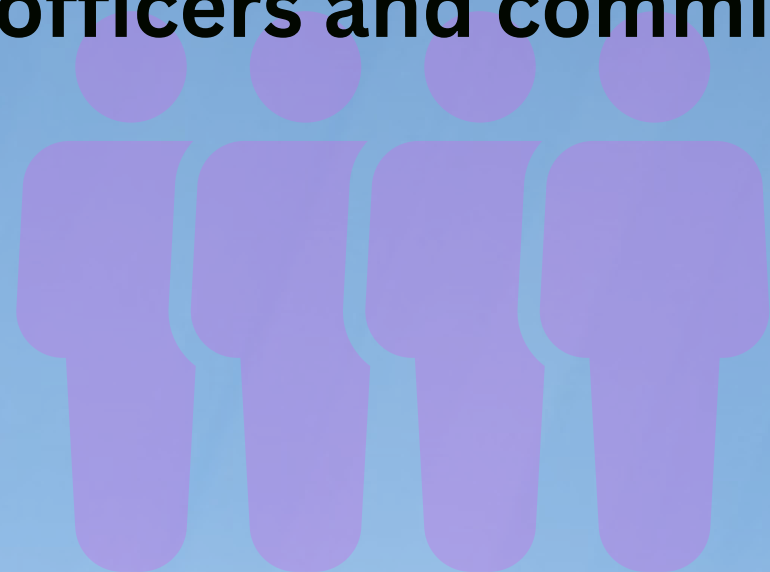
Area officers: Secretary - what do they do?

SECRETARY

Duties: The qualifications for area secretary are, of course, up to the conscience of that area. These may include:

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- Records and distributes minutes of area meetings
- Keeps mailing lists up to date and sends out area mailings
- Prepares lively bulletins that will encourage attendance at committee meetings and assemblies, assuming the area conscience has asked for this
- Can act as a liaison between officers and committee members



Area officers: Registrar - who is qualified?

REGISTRAR

Qualifications: Duties of a registrar vary by area, but area registrars will require training on Fellowship Connection, a user-friendly interface that facilitates information sharing between areas and G.S.O. Familiarity with computer systems and spreadsheet tools and an understanding of data stewardship is helpful, as registrars will be entering data, updating information, using search filters, and downloading custom and standard reports.

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- Familiarity with the area and district structure, and ability to communicate throughout it
- Ability to organize, communicate and manage detailed information
- Ability to relay information via email to G.S.O., locally and within the area
- Ability to responsibly handle and protect personal information
- A solid period of sobriety



Area officers: Registrar - what do they do?

REGISTRAR

Duties: The duties of the registrar have evolved with the implementation of Fellowship Connection. Registrars often are a crucial first point of contact for A.A. groups and trusted servant's data. Although the registrar's duties will vary by area, the need for accurate information and clear communication is the foundation of this role.

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- Develops and maintains records of all groups in the area, including group name, meeting location, and GSR or group contact
- Works with trusted servants to maintain accurate and up-to-date names, addresses, email addresses and phone numbers of the GSRs, DCMs, district and area officers, and area committee members
- Works locally with delegates and DCMs on verifying the accuracy of the data submitted and wherever necessary following up communication for corrections
- Works with the G.S.O. Operations department in keeping area information up to date



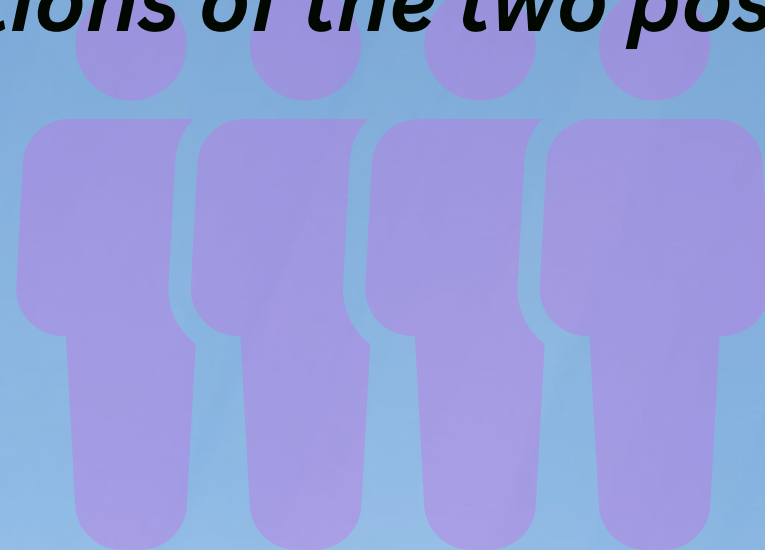
Area officers: Treasurer - who is qualified?

TREASURER

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- A solid period of sobriety
- Organizational skills for good record-keeping; accounting or bookkeeping experience
- Computer skills appropriate for the duties of the position
- Ability to speak about financial matters to an audience that does not have the same financial skills

Some areas have the position of Finance chair in addition to the treasurer. If so, the respective duties and qualifications of the two positions would need to be established by the conscience of the area.



Area officers: Treasurer - what do they do?

TREASURER

Duties: The duties of the treasurer vary by the needs and conscience of the area; these may include:

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- Keeping financial records for the area
- Reporting regularly to the assembly
- Receiving and managing the area's Seventh Tradition funds
- Encouraging contribution support for area and G.S.O. services
- Staying abreast of any tax or legal considerations



OTHER AREA OFFICERS

An area committee usually has other officers who are responsible to the committee for special activities. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following committee chairs:

- Public Information
- Cooperation with the Professional Community
- Correctional and Treatment Facilities
- Literature
- Grapevine and La Viña
- Archives
- Area Convention
- Accessibilities/Remote Communities
- Finance
- Liaison (to Intergroup/Central Offices)
- Translations

What about the past delegates?

A.A. has a wealth of experience in the form of past delegates that is sometimes integrated formally within the area structure and sometimes not. While the A.A. practice of rotation prevents delegates from succeeding themselves or from returning later as delegates, a role for past delegates can often be found that does not interfere with the responsibilities of the current delegate or area committee.

What about the past delegates?

Past delegates are typically asked not to hold office as GSRs and DCMs, but are instead encouraged to find other ways to become involved in area service. At the request of area committees in some areas, past delegates have been asked to:

- Provide leadership on researching and developing answers to various service or Traditions issues as needed
- Assume special assignments, such as:
 - Chairing area sharing sessions
 - Speaking at special meetings designed to inform members about A.A. worldwide
 - Conducting workshops or orientation meetings for new GSRs
 - Serving as Grapevine Representative (multiple Conference Advisory Actions have suggested that past delegates get involved with Grapevine, encouraging members to support the magazines)
- Serve as chair of an area's convention committee
- Serve as chair of an area's P.I. committee
- Serve as chair of a state or provincial convention

What about the past delegates?

Several regions hold annual meetings that invite past and current delegates and their alternates. These have proven to be a valuable way of passing on experience to new delegates. In some regions, such meetings now span a full weekend. Their purpose is typically to help new delegates prepare for the Conference, and to strengthen the lines of communication among the General Service Conference, G.S.O., the General Service Board, Grapevine Board and A.A. as a whole, rather than to focus on any one specific area-wide issue or General Service Conference concern.

Financial support & expenses

Typical of most financial undertakings in A.A., the cost of supporting an area committee is small in relation to comparable activities in business firms and other organizations. Nonetheless, sufficient funds are needed, or the work of the committee will be hampered. Most areas today maintain solvent treasuries and report regularly to their GSRs on the financial picture.

What kind of expenses does the area have?

Expenses vary, reflecting the needs and the conscience of each area.

However, listed below are typical expenses:

- Administrative
- Literature
- Assembly Meetings
- Committee Travel
- Delegate Travel: The delegate will need money for the trip to the Conference meeting in New York, which is typically held in April, as well as travel expenses when they report to groups following the Conference meeting.
- Conference: In addition to delegate travel expenses, each area is asked to send at least \$1,800 to G.S.O. to help defray the cost of the annual meeting of the Conference. Some send less and some send more. It is important to note that no delegate will be denied attendance at the Conference if their area cannot afford the full amount.

How does area get this money?

Here are methods that some areas have used to help them remain solvent and effective:

- Taking Seventh Tradition collections at area assembly and district meetings
- Being included in the distribution plan (in addition to G.S.O., districts and intergroup/central offices) that groups may have to support A.A. service entities. (See also the pamphlet “Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix.”)
- Receiving contributions from area and state convention treasuries

FAQs

1. Must an area assembly have a certain percentage or number of members in attendance in order to conduct business?

Generally speaking, each area decides for itself what constitutes a quorum, meaning the minimum number of members that must be present to make the proceedings of that meeting valid. Some areas have a specific number of DCMs to be present. Alternate DCMs are typically counted toward a quorum only when their principals are not present.

2. When a new area committee is elected, who notifies G.S.O.?

The outgoing delegate is requested to provide G.S.O. with contact information for all incoming area officers and committee chairs. This information is stored in G.S.O.'s database, which is also accessible to the area registrar, and is used to communicate with these officers and committee chairs throughout their rotations.

3. What is the relationship between the area chair and the area delegate?

Generally speaking, the area chair runs an assembly and is the “administrative leader” of the area, focused on the business of the area. The delegate could be described as the area’s “communications leader” and is focused on the general service structure and serving as the link between the area, the Conference and A.A. as a whole.