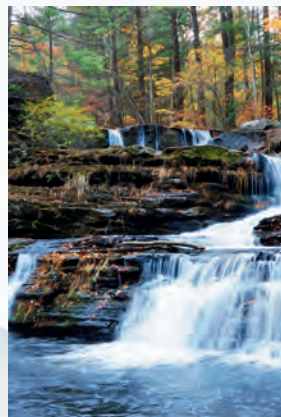
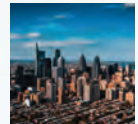
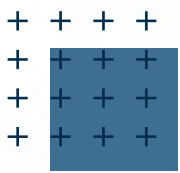


EASTERN
PENNSYLVANIA
GENERAL SERVICE
ASSEMBLY
STRUCTURE
MANUAL



2025
EDITION



AA's Legacy of Service

Our Twelfth Step – carrying the message – is the basic service that the AA Fellowship gives; this is our principal aim and the main reason for our existence. Therefore, AA is more than a set of principles; it is a society of alcoholics in action. We must carry the message, else we ourselves can wither and those who haven't been given the truth may die.

Hence, an AA service is anything whatever that helps us to reach a fellow sufferer – ranging all the way from the Twelfth Step itself to a ten-cent phone call and a cup of coffee, and to AA's General Service Office for national and international action. The sum total of all these services is our Third Legacy of Service.

By Bill W.

Welcome to the Area Committee!

www.area59aa.org

Eastern Pennsylvania Area Committee adheres to the principles and the traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous. As a general rule, we follow the suggestions for an Area committee as outlined in the AA Service Manual. However, in the more than fifty years of our existence, the Area committee has developed practices and procedures appropriate to the specific needs of Eastern Pennsylvania. These activities, by now customary, have served us well.

Our Growth Is Rapid. As a direct result of AA's Twelfth Step work, the membership in our Area and the number of new groups forming continued to increase. Experience has taught us that we can no longer effectively scan through those fifty-plus years of Area meeting minutes looking for a relevant motion passed, nor can we retain in our collective memories all the experience and knowledge that has been passed on to us orally. Responding to issues with "...that's part of our Area structure!" has become insufficient and unsatisfactory. Therefore, we have collected in this manual all that has become basic to our Area structure.

No Action By A Prior Area committee is binding on an incoming panel. Each newly elected delegate may make recommendations for the incoming committee's consideration. This manual, then, is for use as a guide; a reference and a resource for what has worked in the past. It is subject to change, and we hope it will be amended as better ways are found to carry our primary purpose, to help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

The Original Structure Text on pages 17 through 27 (through the section "Area 59 maintains a Prudent Reserve") was adopted by the Eastern Pennsylvania General Service Assembly Area committee at its quarterly Area meeting, September 13, 1987. To all the GSRs, DCMs and Area officers who led the way, making this Structure Manual possible, we express our appreciation and gratitude.

The Area Committee, Panel 37

Past Delegates

*1951-52	George R.	*1989-90	Reba W.
*1953-54	Aaron B.	1991-92	Marcia G.
*1955-56	Richard C.	*1993-94	Hugo M.
*1957-58	Horace H.	*1995-96	Joe Q.
*1959-60	Ed H.	1997-98	Clay R.
*1961-62	Ted R.	1999-00	Gary C.
*1963-64	Paul O.	2001-02	Martin S.
*1965-66	Gail J.	*2003-04	Nancy K.
*1967-68	Louis R.	2005-06	J. Gary L.
*1969-70	Monroe B.	2007-08	Sheila D.
*1971-72	Lenore M.	2009-10	Lowell L.
*1973-74	Joseph D.	2011-12	Hugh H.
*1975-76	Francis A.G.	2013-14	Stephen O.
*1977-78	Lenore V. J.	2015-16	Patricia F.
*1979-80	Ambrose M.	2017-18	Paul M.
*1981-82	Lee B.	*2019-20	Ken D.
*1983-84	Dorothy G.	^2019-20	Caroline N.
*1985-86	Robert N.	2021-22	Caroline N.
*1987-88	William G.	2023-24	Pete B.

* Deceased

^ Completed Panel 69

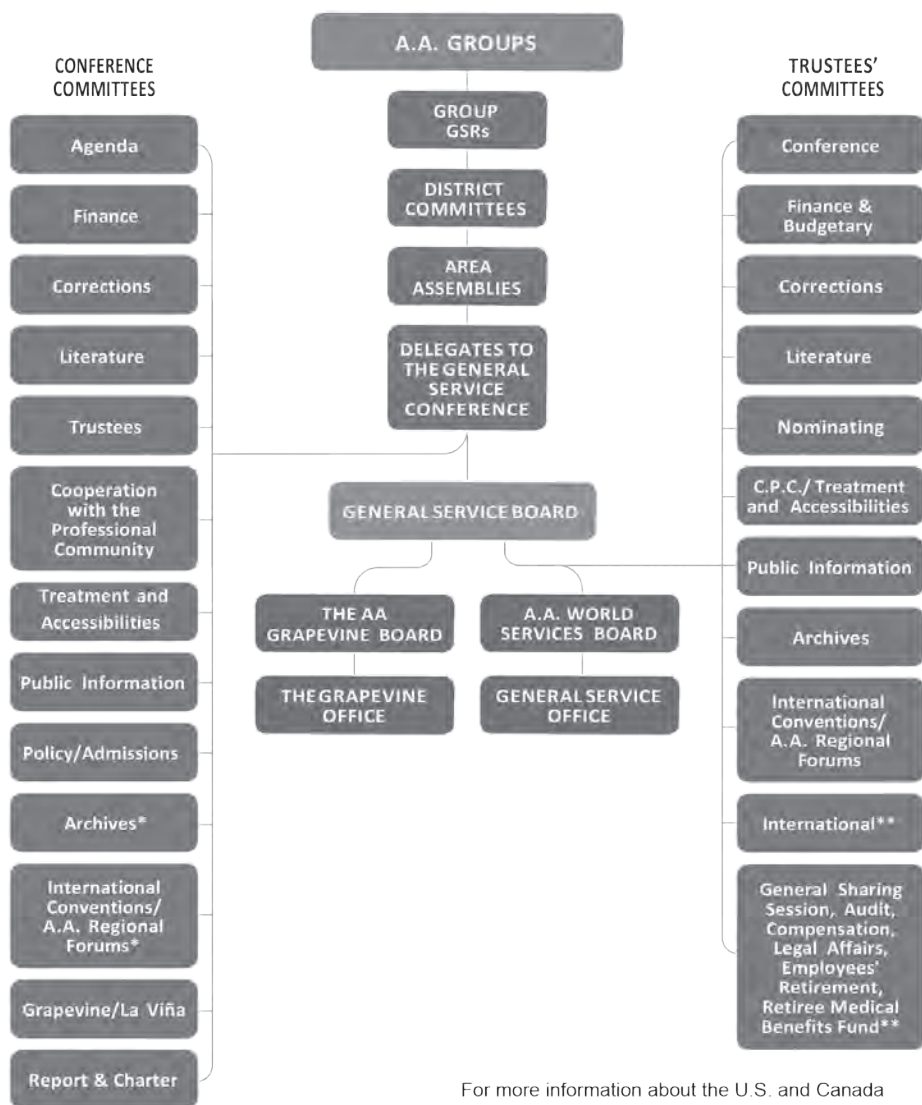
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THE GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE STRUCTURE *U.S. and Canada*



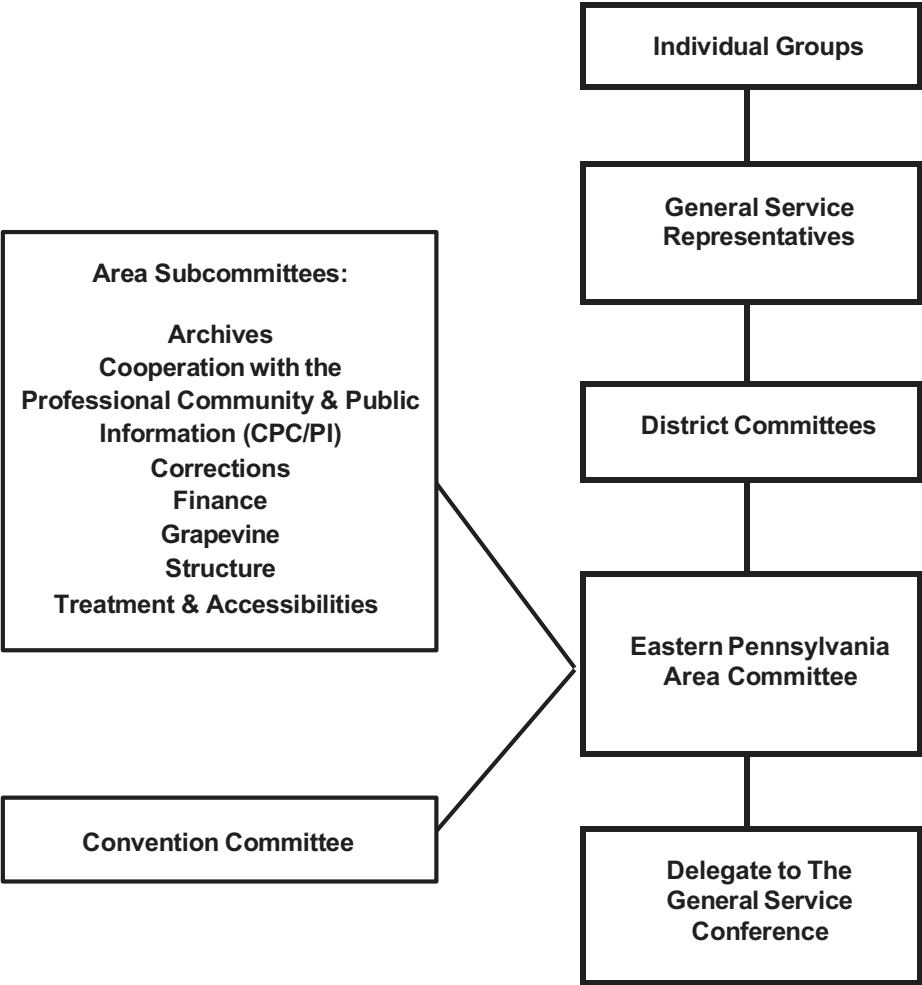
* Secondary committee

** No corresponding Conference committee.

For more information about the U.S. and Canada General Service Conference Structure please see *The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service (BM-31)*.

Eastern Pennsylvania General Service Assembly

Service Structure Chart



Area 59 Eastern Pennsylvania History

- 1940** In March 1940, AA began in Philadelphia. The first open meeting of the Philadelphia Group of AA was held on March 6th at the home of George S. Seventeen people attended, including the wives of the alcoholics, and Bill and Lois W. from New York. Attendees talked together informally with Bill W. over coffee and donuts. The hat was passed and the group decided to be on its own from the very start. The meeting ended around 12:30 am – everyone was happy with this new Fellowship. By November, the membership had grown to seventy-five, including three women.
- 1941** In March 1941, Roger B. transferred from Philadelphia to Harrisburg; in June 1941, AA started in Harrisburg.
- 1943** In October 1943, Horace H. was tired of traveling from his home in Williamsport to Harrisburg for a weekly meeting and thus began the Williamsport Group. During 1943, George L. brought AA to Reading.
- 1945** In June 1945, Yvelin G. was transferred from Philadelphia to Allentown and began AA in the Lehigh Valley.
- 1946** In August 1946, the Scranton Group was formed. The group relocated a number of times – once because the meeting site was located above a bar and newcomers made it to the bar and not the meeting. Also in 1946, a meeting in Pottstown was started by two men from Pottstown who had been attending the Reading meeting. Marshall J. started a group in Stroudsburg. The Morrisville meeting in Lower Bucks County began. Philadelphia AA expanded. In December 1946, Wilkes-Barre AA began with 5 members.
- 1947** Harold F. and Bill H., who had been attending meetings in Altoona and Pittsburgh, founded a group in the western-most part of Area 59 in Philipsburg. In July 1947, the Chambersburg Group made the front page of the local newspaper the day after their first meeting: “Local unit of Alcoholics Anonymous effected yesterday.”
- 1948** Arthur R. and “Shorty” Z. founded the Bellefonte meeting. Five members of the Scranton Group formed a group in Clarks Summit.
- 1949** The Clearfield Group was started by members who used to attend the Philipsburg meeting.
- 1950** Alcoholics Anonymous began to spread throughout Pennsylvania. Radio stations, newspapers, schools, hospitals, prisons and other institutions requested literature and information. Alcoholics Anonymous meetings were started in several institutions.
- 1951** Area 59 Delegate, George R., attended the first AA General Service Conference in New York. [*George R., the first Area 59 Delegate, was said to be appointed by Bill W., as was the second Delegate, Aaron B.*]

- 1954** Dick C. held an election and was voted the third Area 59 Delegate, suggesting the beginning of Area 59 structure.
- 1956** There were 13 “Areas” in Eastern Pennsylvania with a total of 122 groups: 7 in Philadelphia with 53 groups; 6 in the outer areas with 52 groups; 6 hospital groups and 11 prison groups. Each Area elected an “Area Committeeman” to represent them at the “State Meetings.” “State Officers” were elected: Delegate, Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary.
- 1958** Past Delegate, Dick C., organized the first annual “State Convention.” It was held in Galen Hall, Wernersville. Fewer than 100 people attended but interest in service was awakened.
- 1961** Delegate, Ted R., along with Dick C. (1955-56) and Lou R. (later to become the first African American Delegate in North America, 1966-67), traveled to the groups and spoke about the importance of having a General Service Representative (GSR). Their efforts helped make the state structure a reality.
- 1968** State meetings previously held in Dick C.’s office were moved to a garage on the same grounds.
- 1971** The State Officers began what were called “rap sessions.” These were meetings with the GSRs, District Committee Members (DCMs) and all AA members interested in service. Held at strategic locations in Eastern Pennsylvania, the purpose of these sessions was to hear the Delegate give a report on what happened at the General Service Conference followed by an open question and answer period. These daylong sessions of sharing and discussion took place in a rented hall with food donated by the members and their spouses. The sessions were later called “Caucuses” and later still “Mini-Assemblies.”
- 1972** A “Convention Committee” was started to utilize the informed experience of the Past Delegates and to establish continuity. This Committee organized the Annual State Convention held that year at Pocono Manor with 600 people in attendance.
- 1976** Each group was asked to contribute \$7.50 to \$10.00 (or whatever they could) to the State Committee from which the following expenses were to be paid: expenses for the Delegate to attend the Conference and the Convention; area calendars; xeroxing; travel; meeting room rent. Expenses totaled \$1,210 that year. Several State Officers and DCMs attended the first Northeast Regional Forum (NERF) in West Springfield, Massachusetts. Since this was a “service weekend,” the committee paid the expenses for the Officers to attend. Districts could send their DCMs. The 18th annual State Convention was held at the Sheraton Picasso Inn, White Haven, Pennsylvania. The caucuses held in various “Conference Areas” became known as “Conference Workshops.” The office of “Alternate Area Officer” was established to assist the other Officers with the workload or to step in when one became ill.

1977 With increasing participation of DCMs, the State Meetings were moved from the garage to a larger hall at the same location, Chit Chat Farms. The 12 conference areas became “Districts” and the State Committee became the Area Committee. The State Convention was held at the Tamiment County Club in the Poconos.

6 in the outer areas with 52 groups; 6 hospital groups and 11 prison groups, making a total of 122. Each area elected an “area committeeman” to represent them at the “state meetings.” “State Officers” were elected: delegate, chairman, treasurer and secretary.

1978 Eastern Pennsylvania had grown too large in numbers to continue with one person holding the offices of Chairman and Alternate Delegate. A separate position of Alternate Delegate was established by vote of the Area Committee. The Annual State Convention was renamed the “Eastern Pennsylvania General Service Assembly Convention” and the Conference Workshops were renamed “Mini-Assemblies.”

1980 The Area formed a Structure Subcommittee.

1981 All members of the Area Committee became participants in the annual Assembly Convention: one year, each one had a service work position; the alternate year, a workshop assignment. The Districts in Eastern Pennsylvania were renumbered to be compatible with the computer system. The 23 areas (1A through 12B) became Districts 21 through 43. An Archives Committee was formed and a Public Information Committee to handle P.I. in the rural areas, not to interfere with any existing committees.

1983 The Structure Committee began work on a map of Eastern Pennsylvania to clarify district boundaries. The committee also presented an Area Meeting Format which became part of our structure. Registered groups in the Area totaled 640. A public address system was purchased for area functions.

1984 The first DCM Area workshop was held sponsored by the Structure Committee. The Assembly Convention was at the Pocono Hershey Resort, White Haven with 802 attending and 350 gallons of coffee consumed. The election of Area Officers took 6½ hours! The Area voted to change the title of Alternate Area Officer to “Officer-at-Large.” A motion was passed that when a district was not represented at an Area Meeting, the Chairman would make contact with the district.

- 1985** Storage space was rented to house the Area's equipment. The Area Committee voted to pay all Officers' expenses to attend Mini-Assemblies, the Assembly Convention, and NERF, including travel at 15 cents per mile plus tolls, meals at \$4 per, and overnight accommodations, when necessary. Districts are to fund their DCMs. The DCMs were given a listing of their groups at each quarterly Area Meeting showing group contributions to the Area Committee and also a financial statement of area income and expenses. Expenses were \$25,000 that year. For better communication, subcommittee minutes and district meeting minutes were to be mailed to each Area Officer. At the annual Assembly Convention, the "Committee System" was adopted as area structure. There, on display for the first time, were the Eastern Pennsylvania map, showing the districts' boundaries, and the Area Archives exhibit.
- 1986** GSO literature discount of 6% (which was started in 1980) was discontinued in May due to lack of group contributions to support group services. In response to this, the Area Finance Subcommittee presented a DCM Information Kit to each member of the Area Committee. "The Challenge of the Seventh Tradition" became the topic of many Area, District and Group workshops. The total attendance at the Area's four Mini-Assemblies was 665.
- 1987** Due to the response from the groups to "The Challenge," GSO reinstated the literature discount at 12% in August. The Area Committee voted to purchase a computer/printer to handle the increasing clerical work and also voted to change the Institutions Subcommittee to "correctional and treatment facilities". The Grapevine Subcommittee was formed and held the first Area Grapevine workshop. Other subcommittee workshops held were: Institutions, Public Information, and Structure. Within the 33 Districts, many combined efforts called "cluster workshops" were held. The Area Chairperson became ill and the Area Officer-at-Large assumed her duties for the remainder of the year. The first printing of the "Area Structure Manual" was distributed at the Annual Convention Assembly.
- 1988** The year was saddened by the passing of two Area Delegates, Fran G. and Dorothy G. The Area sent a letter to all new and/or "seldom heard from" groups to inform them of the Area Committee functions, activities, and services available to the AA groups it serves.
- 1989** At the start of the new panel, each member of the Area Committee received a "DCM Kit" of information and Area literature. Another loss to Eastern Pennsylvania was the sudden passing of Bill G. who had just rotated out as Delegate and onto the Convention Committee. His many years of dedicated services remain a spiritual guide to the Area. This led to the making of the first amendment to the Area Structure Manual. (See item c under Review the Election Procedure.) The Area Meeting Agenda was revised to allot more time for District reports and concerns. The Archives Subcommittee actively solicited Group and District histories. District archive notebooks were displayed at each Mini-Assembly and at the annual Assembly Convention along with displays and literature tables of other subcommittees: Grapevine, Correctional/ Treatment Facilities; Public Information. Two Districts were added bringing the total to 36 Districts. A new procedure was introduced: the

DCMs sent new group registrations and group changes to an Area Officer who then sent them to GSO. The results benefited the entire Area and the year ended with nearly 1,100 registered AA groups and 25,000 AA members.

- 1990** An anniversary meeting was held in Philadelphia to celebrate “50 years of AA in Eastern Pennsylvania.” After nine years at the same location, the Annual Assembly Convention moved to a larger facility at Mount Airy Lodge – 1,100 people attended, including 530 voting members. Almost 1,200 AA members attended the four Mini-Assemblies to hear the Delegate’s report. The Area’s expenses for the year totaled \$65,000 and were funded by the groups it served. Because the Area doubled its groups (1,325 registered groups with 34,104 members), an “Ad -hoc Committee to study the need for a new delegate area” was appointed.
- 1991** The “Ad-Hoc Committee to study the need for a new Delegate Area” traveled throughout the Area to gather information about communications and interaction between the Districts and the Area, and to get a sense from the Fellowship about “splitting” the Area in two. After much discussion, an Area-wide vote failed to reach substantial unanimity and the issue was dropped. Area 59 participated in discussions with the other 17 Areas in the Northeast Region about starting a “Northeast Regional AA Service Assembly” (NERAASA) where the fellowship could be informed about upcoming Conference Agenda items.
- 1993** The Area moved its quarterly meetings for the first time to the four quadrants of Eastern PA. The subcommittee for Cooperation with the Professional Community was added. The first Area Day was held on October 24, 1993 in Collegeville, PA. This came about from the Ad-Hoc Committee asking, “What is the Area?” It was an open forum/symposium to discuss Area issues.
- 1994** August 5, 6 & 7, 1994, the “First Annual Pennsylvania State Convention” was held at Days Inn, State College, PA. Over 300 members, family and friends attended. A bridge with a sturdy foundation was built to unify Eastern and Western Pennsylvania AA. On October 7 & 8, 1994 the first Hispanic AA Convention was held in Philadelphia, PA. These members voted to see if they wished Area 59 to adopt them as an all-Hispanic boundless District.
- 1997** The Area voted to change from four Mini-Assemblies to three per year. The DCM orientation workshop was re-established. The third Area Day was held in Collegeville. The fourth annual West/East Convention was held. Two computers were purchased by the Area.
- 1998** The first DCM forum was held in February. The fourth Area Day was held in Collegeville. Revisions were made to the Area map and the Area Structure Manual. Area 59 was given the privilege of hosting NERAASA ’99 in Carlisle, PA.
- 1999** An Ad-Hoc Committee was established for Special Needs and Remote Communities. The Correctional/Treatment Facility committee was divided into two separate committees for the duration of the panel.

- 2000** The first Area Pre-Conference Sharing Session was conducted.
- 2001** The Bridging the Gap and First Contact Programs were established by the Area. The site of the EPGSA Convention/Assembly was moved to Split Rock Resort. ADCMs met regularly at quarterly Area Meetings. Past Delegates, Lenore M. and Robert N., passed away. The Ad-Hoc “Special Needs/Remote Communities” Committee continued to grow.
- 2002** A prudent reserve policy formulated by the Finance Subcommittee was formally adopted. An Area toll-free number was implemented for Bridging the Gap and First Contact Programs. The 4th edition of the Structure Manual was published and made available in “electronic” format for the first time.
- 2003** The Area Committee returned to the original Mini-Assembly format which included the Delegate’s Conference Report of the 2003 General Service Conference, workshops presented by the DCMs, and a hot meal shared by all. The Public Information Committee launched the Area website: www.area59aa.org. The Area Structure Manual and the Area Map were posted to the website. The Area Officer-at-Large resigned early in the panel, making the appointment of a new Officer-at-Large necessary. A special election to approve the appointment was held at the 2003 Convention Assembly.
- 2004** The Area was saddened by the death of Area Secretary, Wilma W. The first Reading/Berks Intergroup Share-A-Day was held. In addition, the Special Needs/Remote Communities Committee sponsored the first bilingual Share-A-Day workshop. EPGSA purchased simultaneous translation equipment to be used for language translations and assisted listening for the hearing-impaired.
- 2005** Area 59 hosted a telecast of the 2005 International Convention’s Opening Flag Ceremony.
- 2006** Area 59 hosted a Special Forum in Philadelphia. The name of the Correctional Facilities Subcommittee was changed to Corrections Subcommittee. A procedure was put in place to replace the Officer-at-Large. Area 59 was saddened by the death of Past Delegate, Reba W.
- 2007** Area 59 hosted the Northeast Regional Forum (NERF) in Lancaster, PA. An Area Day in the Park was held at Lower Perkiomen Valley Parks, Audubon, PA. The Area was saddened by the death of Past Delegate, Hugo M. The Finance Subcommittee distributed business sized cards depicting group contribution percentages and explaining gratitude month.
- 2008** The total number of groups in the Area was 1,528. The Linguistic District was formed, District 68. Area events were provided with the services of a Spanish interpreter. An Ad-Hoc Literature Committee was formed.
- 2009** A procedure was established to fill the position of Alternate Delegate in the event of a vacancy. An Assistant Archivist was appointed by the Delegate.

- 2010** Area 59 was awarded NERAASA for 2013 in Lancaster, PA. For the first time, the Delegate's Conference Report was posted on the Area 59 website. We updated and redesigned the website to include a Spanish language page. Area 59 hosted two Mini-Assemblies.
- 2011** Past Area 59 Delegate, J. Gary L., our nominee, was elected as Northeast Regional Trustee at the 61st General Service Conference. Area 59 decided to gift subscriptions of the Grapevine and La Vina to treatment and correctional facilities within Eastern PA. The Area Committee reaffirmed the right of past Delegates to vote in elections at EPGSA.
- 2012** For the first time, Area 59 held Share-A-Day events with six intergroup associations in Eastern PA. The Area Committee changed the title of "Mini-Assembly" to "Delegate's Conference Report and Mini-Assembly" and held three geographically dispersed events. Area 59 continued efforts to attract a robust cross-section of people of diverse origin and experience to provide an attractive long-term opportunity of experience, strength and hope for those yet to find our Fellowship.
- 2013** Email: archivist@area59aa.org obtained for Area 59 Archivist. Two Delegate's Conference Reports/Mini-Assemblies were held. A Treatment/Special Needs/Accessibilities Committee was formed and submitted an agenda item to the GSO Conference Coordinator for consideration. The Area Committee approved a recommendation from the Structure Committee to dissolve the Ad-Hoc Literature Committee. The Grapevine Committee conducted several writing workshops submitting over sixty stories with seven published to date. We obtained a general liability policy to provide insurance for all Area 59 events. Area 59 and YPAA (Young People in AA) continued to strengthen relations with each other, with YPAA electing a Liaison to Area 59. For the first time, YPAA committee members led workshops at EPGSA.
- 2014** The Public Information Committee redesigned the content and graphics of the Area 59 website, which was launched by the Area Committee. Some enhancements included committee and officer reports, rotating archives items, interactive forms, as well as links to YPAA service committees, conference approved pamphlets, and the AA Grapevine. Seven Share-A-Day events were held with eight Intergroups and, for the first time, with Hanover, ABE and York. Area 59 participated in the third annual Combined Intergroup Workshop hosted by Northeast PA Intergroup. The first YPAA Share-A-Day was held in Bethlehem with participation from eight YPAA Committees. At the Saturday night meeting of EPGSA, the Area reaffirmed that the collection of EPGSA Seventh Tradition be distributed entirely to GSO.

- 2016** The Literature Subcommittee was reestablished as an Ad-Hoc Committee. Our Archivist and Archives Subcommittee continued to digitize archival materials and instituted a digital library including voice recordings of Area 59 longtimers. New sound equipment, a laptop and a printer were purchased. The Area's non-geographical linguistic district, District 68, was included on our Area map. EPGSA was moved to Gettysburg. Collaboration with Intergroups and Young People in AA resulted in nine Share-A-Day events throughout Eastern PA, an Area Assistant Web Servant was added to our Area resources, and DCM reports went digital.
- 2018** The Area began holding a Subcommittee Chairperson Orientation at the beginning of the panel. All General Service Conference agenda items and background information were made available to the Fellowship as anonymity-protected PDFs in advance of the annual Pre-Conference Sharing Session. The *We...* newsletter was introduced and an online 7th Tradition contributions portal was launched on the Area 59 website. An Ad-Hoc Workspace Subcommittee was formed to research a new office and storage unit for the Area. A Technology Servant position was created to assist with A/V and other technology-related tasks.
- 2020** In 2019, the charter of the Convention Committee was rewritten to allow the current Delegate to have a voice and a vote at the Committee meetings, and to allow past DCMs to be appointed as voting members by the Committee Chair. The Finance Subcommittee created a survey to inventory the banking and 7th Tradition practices of the Groups within Area 59. In 2020, Area 59 was deeply saddened by the sudden loss of our Delegate, Ken D. Our Alternate Delegate, Caroline N., assumed his responsibilities. Perhaps the biggest impact of this Panel was how Area 59 responded to the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic. Beginning in mid-March, in-person meetings were mainly put on hold, and virtual meetings became the primary mode of communication. All Area functions were conducted using a virtual platform. For the first time in history, EPGSA conducted elections for the next Panel online.
- 2022** At the start of Panel 71 in 2021, two new Ad-Hoc Subcommittees were added, Digital Communications and Technology. A Bridging the Gap Coordinator was elected. For the first nine months of the Panel, Area 59 conducted business and held events on a virtual platform due to COVID-19. The first in-person Area 59 Quarterly Meeting since March 8, 2020 was held on September 15, 2021, hosted by District 48 in Williamsport. Our 2022 Mini-Assemblies were held in a hybrid format for the first time, allowing the Delegate to reach more Area members through these General Service Conference report-backs. The Panel also updated and redesigned the Area 59 website. Lastly, Area 59 was awarded NERAASA 2024 and began planning for this Regional Assembly in Hershey

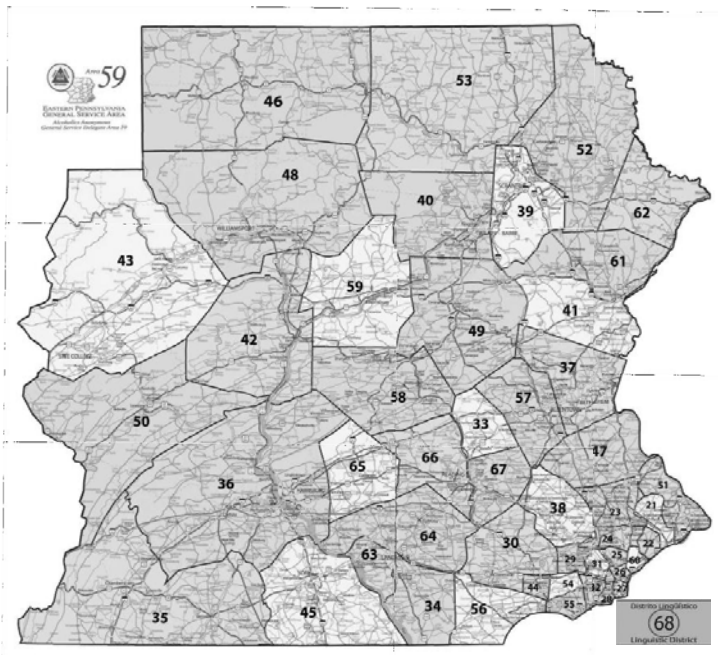
2024 Area 59 hosted NERAASA 2024 in Hershey, PA, with record attendance and incredible support from Area 59. The Ad Hoc Technology Subcommittee was discontinued. The Area Committee approved the creation of an Alternate Technology Servant. The Technology Servant and Assistant have carried out the necessary responsibilities of the discontinued Ad Hoc Technology subcommittee. The Ad Hoc Literature Subcommittee was also discontinued. The necessary responsibilities of this subcommittee have been carried out by the Ad Hoc Digital Communications Subcommittee. The Structure Subcommittee put forward a recommendation, which was adopted, to combine the Public Information and Cooperation with the Professional Community Subcommittees. Area 59 held two Mini Assemblies / Delegate's Conference Reports in each year of Panel 73. The Area Committee approved a 2-year trial period for a virtual Delegate's Conference Report to begin in 2025, and to be held in addition to traditional methods of reporting on the General Service Conference.

The Formation of Districts in Area 59

In the beginning, what were referred to as “areas” are now known as “districts.” This change came about through many years of progression. In 1951, the structure of Pennsylvania took place at the First AA General Service Conference. In 1956, Pennsylvania was divided into 12 areas. Times were tough and this showed in the low attendance of the First Annual State Convention in 1958. In 1977, the 12 areas became known as “districts.”

As the years progressed, the 12 districts became 23 districts known as Districts 1A to 11A – 1B to 12B. In 1981, those districts became known as Districts 21 through 43 so the information could be listed in a computer. In 1981, District 30 split to form District 44, District 35 split to form District 45, District 37 split into District 47, and District 46 was created. In 1982, District 48 was created and District 49 was formed from the fringes of Districts 37, 40 and 41. In 1983, District 50 was formed from a split in District 43. In 1985, District 51 formed from District 21. In 1987, Districts 52 and 53 formed from District 39. In 1988, District 32 formed from District 54. In 1989, District 44 split to form Districts 55 and 56.

District 57 was formed from District 37 in 1990. 1992 saw the formation of Districts 58 through 65. In 1998, Districts 66 and 67 were formed from District 33. In 2008, District 68 was formed as a linguistic district encompassing all of Area 59. We presently have a grand total of 48 districts.



1980	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	46	48	68
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*District 49 was formed from the fringes of Districts 37, 40 and 41.

In Boxes indicating multiple districts, the top number represents the original district.

Area Structure

The Text of the Area Structure for Eastern Pennsylvania begins on page 17 and ends on page 27 after the section beginning “**Area 59 Maintains a Prudent Reserve.**” An amendment or revision to the text is incorporated at the subsequent reprinting of the manual and follows this procedure:

Process for Area Structure Amendments

- 1. All Proposed** amendments or revisions to the area structure are submitted in writing by a member of the area committee to the chairperson with a copy to the delegate, three weeks prior to the next quarterly area committee meeting.
- 2. The Chairperson** shall include the proposed amendment, as submitted, on the agenda for the area meeting. A two-thirds vote of the area committee qualifies the proposed amendment to be considered.
- 3. The Secretary** mails copies of the proposed amendment along with the area meeting minutes to the area committee. DCMs will hear the groups’ opinions at their district meetings and reach a consensus which will be heard at the following quarterly area meeting.
- 4. A Two-Thirds** approval by the area committee shall constitute the adoption of the amendment.

Eastern Pennsylvania Area

The Basic Unit in Alcoholics Anonymous is the group, which is autonomous, except in matters affecting other AA groups or the Fellowship as a whole. These groups are divided into districts. Each group elects a General Service Representative (GSR) to attend the monthly meeting of the district in which it is geographically located. The GSRs elect a District Committee Member (DCM) to represent the collective “group conscience” of the district and to participate in service activities of the area committee.

The Area Committee consists of the DCMs and six area officers: delegate, alternate delegate, chairperson, secretary, treasurer, and officer-at-large. The officers are elected bi-annually at the General Service Assembly Convention in the fall in accordance with the AA Third Legacy Procedure. The officers serve for a two-year term and along with the DCMs comprise a panel. Rotation of officers takes place at the December area meeting following the election assembly. Whenever possible, the area follows the AA Service Manual in regard to concurrent terms for area officers, DCMs and GSRs.

The Voting Members of the area committee are the officers and the DCMs. At the General Service Assembly Convention, the GSRs are also voting members. All important decisions in the area are reached by discussion, vote and whenever possible, by substantial unanimity. Business needing the GSRs' approval is carried by the DCM to their district meeting where a sense of group conscience is taken and its consensus presented at the following area meeting. When necessary, an assembly is scheduled within the convention weekend where a majority of GSRs is assured so that business can be conducted and a vote taken. In such a case, the issue is to be presented to the area committee by its September meeting.

Area Resources/Assets include past delegates and area archivists. Past delegates of Area 59, are voting members only at the election assembly (or if they are members of the Convention Committee, they may vote within that committee); however, we seek their wisdom and experience on many occasions. Upon approval of each panel the area retains the voluntary services of an area archivist. The Archivist serves to receive, assimilate and maintain records of information about Eastern Pennsylvania's groups, districts and the Area - their beginnings, progress and growth – through our documents, like the minutes of the quarterly area meetings and up-to-date group histories. To provide continuity and security to this valuable resource, the Archivist is a non-rotating position. The Archivist, Assistant Archivist, Web Servant, Assistant Web Servant, and Technology Servant are non-voting positions.

“The Bridging the Gap (BTG) Coordinator serves the area committee by working with the Treatment/Accessibilities and Corrections Subcommittees to coordinate BTG Services within the Area. This includes acting as point of contact and distribution for BTG referrals, record keeping and educating members and groups about BTG.”

Area Officer Duties

The Delegate attends the week-long General Service Conference in New York as well as other regional, state, area and local AA functions; carries to each of these the collective group conscience and considerations of Eastern Pennsylvania and reports to the area the news and information of Alcoholics Anonymous worldwide; also serves as a member of the Area Convention Committee, nominates special servants for Area 59; cosigner on Area bank account with Treasurer. The delegate's other primary duties are outlined in the AA Service Manual.

The Alternate Delegate assists the delegate and helps keep informed of Conference and area activities; assumes the delegate's duties in their absence; serves as area liaison to intergroups and central offices.

The Chairperson chairs the quarterly pre-area meetings at which the agenda is planned; organizes area quarterly business meetings with DCMs selected to host; chairs the area committee meetings; updates the Area 59 service calendar; and keeps informed of all area activities through close contact with other officers, chairpersons, and DCMs.

The Secretary records the minutes at the area meetings and functions; prepares the minutes and distributes them to the area committee and past delegates; maintains current records of DCMs, ADCMs, Past Delegates, and Special Servants on the area roster; is the custodian of the area's audiovisual library.

The Treasurer records and acknowledges group contributions; maintains the area's bank accounts; pays all of the bills incurred by the area committee; submits "group contributions" lists to each DCM, and financial statements quarterly/annually to the area committee; reviews expenditures for Area meetings; files tax or regulatory reports utilizing the help of a professional; places orders for A.A. literature or Grapevine materials for Area officers, subcommittees, and Area events.

The Officer-At-Large updates GSO's database of group contacts for new, existing, or closed groups and works with the DCMs to keep accurate group records of GSRs in each district. Assumes the duties of the chairperson, the secretary or the treasurer if and when it becomes necessary; is chairperson of the Area's Mini-Assemblies/Delegate's Conference Report Back.

In addition to these duties, each officer is named by the delegate to serve as an advisor to an area subcommittee. As the fellowship continues to expand, it may be necessary to reassign duties or appropriate individual ones in order to maintain a balance of service among the officers.

District Committee Members Area Duties

The DCM carries the collective group conscience of the AA groups in their district to every area committee, subcommittee meeting and the annual General Service Convention Assembly. In the DCM's absence, the ADCM or an appointed member of the district represents and votes for the district.

The DCM sends copies of the district meeting minutes to each area officer. For good communication and manageability, it is suggested a district consist of not more than fifteen to twenty groups. District duties are outlined in the AA Service Manual.

The DCM informs the designated area officer of all district and group changes, including new groups. The area officer then informs the General Service Office in New York so the group may receive a registered service number, free group literature, and be listed in the AA Directory. The group service number is to be used on all correspondence and contribution checks.

The DCM submits brief report (a paragraph or two) outlining district activities at the quarterly area committee meeting to the area secretary; informs the district of the area and conference activities; informs the area of district and group changes; and serves on an area subcommittee.

The DCM's Expenses are funded by the district they represent except when they are incurred from services performed for the area committee (submitted to the area treasurer) or its subcommittees (submitted to the subcommittee's chairperson.)

Delegate's Conference Report & Mini- Assemblies

Delegate Conference Reports & Mini-Assemblies are held each year in Eastern Pennsylvania primarily to hear the Delegate's General Service Conference Report. These events provide an opportunity for fellowship and to meet area officers and district committee members. They may also include workshops of interest to members. An area officer selects the host district, dates and housing chairpersons. Each DCM is assigned to one of the Delegate Conference Report & Mini-Assembly planning meetings to plan formats and agendas. Most groups make it financially possible for GSRs to attend these functions.

The Committee System

Eastern Pennsylvania operates by the Committee System. Subcommittees are created by, and are responsible to, the full area committee. They do not set policy or decide issues but they make recommendations to the area committee by way of reports at the quarterly area meetings. Each subcommittee is strongly suggested to provide a display to all area events.

Each DCM is named to a subcommittee by the delegate; such responsibility runs concurrently with the DCM's term of office. Only current DCMs serve and vote on subcommittees. An area officer serves in an advisory capacity, as a non-voting member, and is consulted on all decisions and recommendations.

Each Subcommittee's general charter and the need to exist are stated at the area meeting that creates the subcommittee. The newly created subcommittee then defines its specific goals and submits them along with a projected operating budget for approval. Both the goals and the budget are the first order of business for the new subcommittee.

After Each subcommittee meeting, minutes are mailed to the subcommittee members and to the area officers. The subcommittee chairperson submits a brief written report to the area officers before each pre-area meeting. The same report is then distributed to the DCMs and given orally at the area committee meeting. The subcommittee maintains minutes and other pertinent records to be passed on to the next subcommittee to ensure continuity of tasks accomplished.

The Area Committee may form "ad hoc" committees, responsible to the area, to address specific concerns on an as needed basis.

Standing Subcommittees

Archives encourages fellow DCMs to collect ongoing updates on group and district histories, requesting those histories if none currently exists. In conjunction with the area archivist, collects historical information about Eastern Pennsylvania's groups, districts and the area.

Cooperation With The Professional Community and Public Information (CPC/PI) assists the districts to inform the general public and the AA membership of ways to carry the message, such as workshops, literature kits, and radio and television announcements; studies ways to cooperate with professionals while keeping within AA traditions, cooperates with other area subcommittees when communication with professionals in specific subjects needs to be addressed, is responsible for communicating directly with professionals when required, and is responsible for staffing exhibit booths in certain circumstances.

Corrections provides sharing on the challenges which arise in carrying the AA message into correctional facilities in the area; facilitates Corrections facility's pre-release programs such as First Contact and Bridging the Gap and encourages the districts' interest in this form of Twelfth Step work.

Finance assists the area committee, districts and groups on matters of finance and shares on the principles of the Seventh Tradition, and may assist the area treasurer in preparing the annual budget proposal.

Grapevine/La Viña develops awareness of the spiritual benefit derived from the Grapevine/La Viña publication as an aid in recovery and Twelfth Step work; maintains current contact list of district Grapevine/La Viña chairpersons and keeps them informed of ongoing Grapevine/La Viña activity.

Structure addresses matters of area structure referred by the area committee; explores ways in which continuity and communication between the various services entities in Eastern Pennsylvania might be improved such as coordinating DCM workshops and, when necessary, updating the area structure manual and area map indicating district boundaries.

Treatment and Accessibilities provides assistance on the challenges which can arise in carrying the AA message into treatment facilities in the area, works with Bridging the Gap, and encourages interest in this form of Twelfth Step work. It also assists groups and districts with practical solutions for those who need facilitating accessibility to the program.

Area Funding

Funding For the area committee is provided by voluntary contributions from the AA groups and members in Eastern Pennsylvania. Fixed expenditures include: sending the area delegate to the annual General Service Conference in New York, and to other regional, state or local AA functions; the area officers' travel, phone, mailing and printing expenses; and additional budgeted expenses of the subcommittees.

Area Committee Meeting Agenda

Open Meeting:

Chairperson:

Welcome and moment of silence.

Roll Call and DCMs Report:

Secretary: Calls the area officers and DCMs or persons representing the districts. Only these will be recognized by the chair during remainder of the meeting. Each DCM introduces the ADCM and guests; indicates any summaries or actions; and submits a brief written report to the secretary.

Convention Committee Report:

Officers' Reports:

Concise reports:

Officer-at-Large

Chairperson

Treasurer

Alternate Delegate

Secretary

Delegate

Break

Summaries and Actions:

DCM issues needing discussion

Subcommittee Reports:

Brief verbal summary of written reports:

Archives

Cooperation with the Professional Community and Public Information (CPC/PI)

Corrections

Finance

Grapevine

Structure

Treatment and Accessibilities

Ad Hoc Committee Report:

Any ad hoc committee

Unfinished Business:

Issues previously addressed but not resolved

New Business:

Issues from pre-area meeting and/or issues from DCMs

Close Meeting

General Service Assembly Convention

The Assembly Convention is held annually in the fall of the year. Full assembly attends, i.e. general service representatives (GSRs), district committee members (DCMs), area officers and past delegates. Expenses for these members are funded by the entity each one represents.

Convention Committee operates with full transparency and is responsible to the Area Committee. Its membership is comprised of past delegates and the delegate for the current panel, who provides a voice for the Area Committee. The Committee strives to be financially self-supporting, receiving its funding from the annual General Service Assembly, and Convention registrations. The Convention Committee Chair has the option of inviting previous Area 59 DCMs to serve as appointed members with full privileges, on an as-needed basis. Such past DCMs should have the expertise, time, and ability to fulfill Convention Committee service and are to have a majority affirmation vote by the Convention Committee. All members have a voice and a vote on the Convention Committee, but only the current delegate has a voice and a vote on the Area Committee. The Convention Committee is expected to act in the Area's best interest as they plan and execute all business concerning the Convention.

An Election Assembly takes place every even year within the convention weekend for the purpose of electing a new panel of officers: delegate, alternate delegate, chairperson, secretary, treasurer, officer-at-large. The panel's term of office shall be two years beginning with the pre-area planning meeting after the election.

The Election Assembly uses the format of the area committee meeting agenda with these adaptations:

Roll Call: Secretary calls each DCM's name and district. In turn, the DCM gives the total number of district members present to vote, including the DCM. Seating is designated by district numbers and non-voting members are seated behind the roped-off area.

Review the Election Procedure: Delegate

- a. All current area officers (except the delegate) and the DCMs are eligible for candidacy. Nominations from the floor will not be recognized.
- b. Those eligible to vote are the GSRs, DCMs, area officers and past delegates. Each member of the assembly present has one vote. Absentee votes or proxies are not valid.

- c. Past delegates serve as tellers. Current delegate assigns one as head teller and assigns several districts to each teller for ballot-counting. In the event there are an insufficient number of past delegates to perform the duties of tellers, the current delegate, in consultation with the convention committee, shall designate additional tellers. The additional tellers shall be people who are not eligible to vote or stand for office. They shall be chosen from past district committee members, other trusted servants, or other members of our fellowship.
- d. A sufficient number of non-voting members serve as ushers. Each usher services several districts by supplying ballots and pencils to the DCMs, collecting the ballots and giving them to the tellers.
- e. A recorder, also a non-voting member, lists the names of the candidates on the screen; records the total votes for each given by the head teller; and erases the names of the eliminated candidates.

Conduct The Election: The Election Assembly Chair as designated by the Delegate (e.g. Regional Trustee or G.S.O. General Manager.)

Each office is elected separately, starting with the delegate. The Election is conducted in accordance with the AA Service Manual “Third Legacy Procedure” adapted for Eastern Pennsylvania as follows:

Third Legacy Procedure*

- a. The Election Assembly Chair calls each officer and DCM by name. Each responds with “accept” or “decline.”
- b. The names of those accepting are listed on the screen.
- c. Written ballots are cast, collected and given to the tellers to count.
- d. Total number of votes for each candidate is written on the screen.
- e. The first candidate to reach two-thirds of the vote is elected.
- f. After the second ballot (assuming no candidate receives the necessary two-thirds on the first ballot), any candidate having less than one-fifth of the total vote will be withdrawn automatically, except that the two top candidates must remain. (For ties in second place, the top candidate and the tied second place candidates remain.)
- g. After the third ballot, candidates with less than one-third of the total vote will be withdrawn automatically, except that the top two candidates must remain. (In case there are ties for second place, the top candidate and tied second-place candidates remain.)

- h. A fourth ballot is conducted.
- i. After the fourth ballot, if no candidate has two-thirds of the total vote, the chairperson asks for a motion, second, and majority of hands on conducting a fifth and final ballot. (If this motion is defeated, balloting is over and we go to the “hat” immediately. In case there are ties for second place, the top candidate and tied second-place candidates remain. If not, the candidate with the smallest total is dropped. If the motion carries, a fifth and final ballot is conducted.)
- j. At this point, the two top candidates remain. In case there are ties for first place, all tied first place candidates remain. In case there are no ties for first place, the top candidate and any tied second place candidates remain.
- k. If no election occurs by this time, the chairperson announces the choice will be made by lot “from the hat.”
- l. Lots are then drawn by a teller, and first one “out of the hat” becomes the delegate.

The alternate delegate and the remaining officers are elected by the same election procedure. (Two-third substantial unanimity.)

Replacement of Alternate Delegate - In the event that the alternate delegate position is vacated the chairperson will assume the duties of the alternate delegate.

Replacement of Officer-at-Large – In the event that the officer-at-large position in the first year of the panel is vacated this procedure would be followed. The delegate should offer the position of officer-at-large to candidates who stood for that office in the last General Assembly election in descending order of vote received until one of these candidates accepts the position. If no candidate accepts, the area committee would elect a person to fill this position at the next area meeting.

Eastern Pennsylvania Area Committee Works Together With Local Intergroups /Central Offices

Area Committees and local Intergroups/Central Offices traditionally have had different functions. The Area committee maintains the link between the AA groups and the AA General Service Board by means of the General Service Conference. Intergroups and central offices provide local AA services. These separate, but vital, service structures co-exist in Eastern Pennsylvania in mutual cooperation and harmony to the benefit of the entire Fellowship. Central offices and/or Intergroups are the following: ABE (Allentown, Bethlehem, and Easton) Intergroup; Hanover Intergroup; Harrisburg Intergroup; Intergrupo Hispano de Pa; Lancaster AA, C.S.O., Inc; Northeastern Pennsylvania Intergroup; Pocono Intergroup; Reading/Berks Intergroup; SEPIA (Southeastern Pennsylvania Intergroup Association); and York Intergroup. The Area participates in, and encourages, Share-A-Day activities with these Intergroups.

These Service Entities along with the General Service Office in New York are created as a result of the AA groups' needs and requests. They carry the Twelfth Step work impossible for the groups to handle. They also provide services to the groups enabling them to carry the message. These entities are funded by the AA groups' contributions and, in some cases, literature sales. While most of the groups request their services, less than half the groups registered in the Eastern Pennsylvania contribute financially to their support. The demand far exceeds the supply and makes it difficult to maintain the Seventh Tradition, "Every AA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions."

Each AA Member as a part of their recovery program, is encouraged to develop a sense of being responsible and a sense of being a part of the whole of AA by making contributions which will help carry the AA message. This is expressed by the First Tradition, "Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on AA unity." Without this support, our service offices would soon close and the alcoholic seeking help would have nowhere to turn for assistance.

What Do Our Dollars Provide?

When A Member drops money into the meeting basket, that person is actually carrying out the Twelfth Step of the AA program. And because that money belongs to AA, not solely to that group, and because all AA activity is itself self-supporting, it will ultimately be spread in many directions to help carry the AA message.

A Large Portion of the group's contribution supports the various meetings and communities of each service entity: local, district, state, national and worldwide. Another portion is used to produce information and literature to keep AA unified and of a single purpose. In this way, your dollars benefit many, not only the present groups and individual members. Today's contributions secure a sound fiscal future for us, for those yet to reach AA and for those unable to attend face-to-face meetings. For example, our dollars pay for a subscription to the newsletter "Loners, Homers and Internationalists." This is a "meeting in print" which is mailed at no charge to members of that "group." There are over 600 members who are living in isolated places – on islands and ships at sea – or who are housebound, unable to go to a meeting.

Area 59 Maintains a Prudent Reserve. Expenditures from the Prudent Reserve are limited to expenses necessary to the continued operation of the area. The delegate and treasurer consent to any expenditure from the Prudent Reserve. If this occurs, action should be taken to replenish funds available to the area. Ideally, the target amount of the Prudent Reserve will be 30% of the average annual expenses of the prior Panel.

Area 59 Maintains A Reasonable Operating Account, with the ideal amount suggested as 20% of the average annual expenses of a *typical* panel at the end of the fiscal year. The

Finance Subcommittee will review the operating balance in consultation with the Area Treasurer and the entire Area Committee, and as needed make recommendations to the entire Area Committee.

Where to Send Group Contributions

The General Service Pamphlet “Self Support, Where Spirituality and Money Meet” suggests that after a group pays its basic expenses such as meeting room rent, AA literature, refreshments, and retains a prudent reserve “emergency fund,” the group divides the remaining funds on a regular basis toward essential AA services. It further suggests several options for the division of these remaining funds depending on the group’s local needs which is arrived at through its *group conscience*. (See chart on next page.)

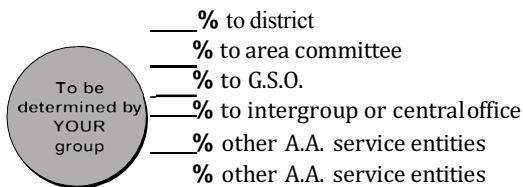
Group contributions to Area 59 can be mailed to the Area Treasurer’s address which can be found on the website: www.area59aa.org. Please put the G.S.O. group service number on contributions and/or correspondence to the General Service Office or to Area59. Checks should be made payable to EPGSA. Online contributions may be made through the website: www.area59aa.org.

Samples of Group Contributions to A.A. Service Entities*

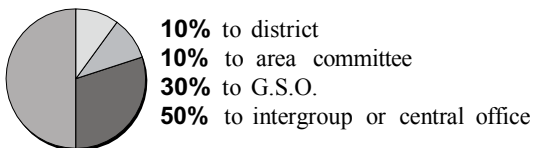
Distribution Plan of _____
(YOUR GROUP NAME)

Your Group Service # _____

(Be sure to write group name and service # on all contributions.)

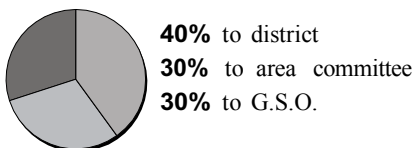


OR



OR

If you have no intergroup/central office:



For contributions to G.S.O., make checks payable to “General Service Board” and send to:
General Service Office, P.O. Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163 or
visit Contributions online at www.aa.org.

For contributions to other A.A. service entities, contact your district committee, area committee, and local intergroup/central office for addresses. And remember that these addresses may change when a treasurer rotates.

For More Information, an A.A. member can attend service meetings and workshops and subscribe to publications such as the G.S.O. newsletter “Box 459,” and “AA Grapevine.”

The Twelve Steps

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol – that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles on all our affairs.

Steps and Traditions

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The Twelve Traditions (short form)

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon AA unity.
2. For our group purpose, there is but one ultimate authority – a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose – to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
6. An AA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the AA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every AA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. AA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the AA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

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The Twelve Concepts (short form)

1. Final responsibility and ultimate authority for AA world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.
2. The General Service Conference of AA has become, for nearly every practical purpose, the active voice and the effective conscience of our whole society in world affairs.
3. To insure effective leadership, we should endow each element of AA – the Conference, the General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives – with a traditional “Right of Decision.”
4. At all responsible levels, we ought to maintain a traditional “Right of Participation,” allowing a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.
5. Throughout our structure, a traditional “Right of Appeal” ought to prevail, so that minority opinion will be heard and personal grievances receive careful consideration.
6. The Conference recognizes that the chief initiative and active responsibility in most world service matters should be exercised by the trustee members of the Conference acting as the General Service Board.
7. The Charter and Bylaws of the General Service Board are legal instruments, empowering the trustees to manage and conduct world service affairs. The Conference Charter is not a legal document; it relies upon tradition and the AA purpose for final effectiveness.
8. The trustees are the principal planners and administrators of overall policy and finance. They have custodial oversight of the separately incorporated and constantly active services, exercising this through their ability to elect all the directors of these entities.
9. Good service leadership at all levels is indispensable for our future functioning and safety. Primary world service leadership, once exercised by the founders, must necessarily be assumed by the trustees.

10. Every service responsibility should be matched by an equal service authority, with the scope of such authority well defined.
11. The trustees should always have the best possible committees, corporate service directors, executives, staffs and consultants. Composition, qualifications, induction procedures, and rights and duties will always be matters of serious concern.
12. The Conference shall observe the spirit of AA tradition, taking care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds and reserve be its prudent financial principle; that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others; that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote, and whenever possible, substantial unanimity; that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; that it never perform acts of government, and that, like the Society it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action.

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A Declaration of Unity

This we owe to A.A.'s future;
To place our common welfare first;
To keep our Fellowship united.
For on A.A. unity depend our lives,
And the lives of those to come.

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Preamble

* Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of people who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for AA membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. AA is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy, neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

** Delegates of the 71st General Service Conference passed a series of votes, in a sequence of events that culminated with the final advisory action to change "men and women" to "people"*

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