



**BYLAWS
OF THE
SOUTH SUBURBAN
FIRESIDE AREA
OF
NARCOTICS
ANONYMOUS**

AS AMENDED ON AUGUST 1ST, 2002



South Suburban Fireside Area

P.O. Box 565

So. St. Paul, MN 55705-0507

www.ssfa.naminnnesota.org



SOUTH SUBURBAN FIRESIDE AREA

The South Suburban Fireside Area, Minnesota Region, Narcotics Anonymous was founded in 1987 to support the N.A. groups generally, but not exclusively, in the southern suburbs of the Minneapolis\St. Paul metro area. It is our goal and primary purpose to support those groups and individual recovering addicts by uniting as an Area. Just as an individual addict will eventually realize that with his or her N.A. group they are never alone, so the South Suburban Fireside Area would like to let each group, large or small, know that we are there for them.

The South Suburban Fireside Area Service Conference (A.S.C.) is held on the first Thursday of each month at 7pm at the First Presbyterian Church, 535 20th Avenue North, South Saint Paul, MN

Some acronyms you will hear:

ASC	Area Service Conference	MNRSC	Minnesota Regional Service Conference
SSFASC	South Suburban Fireside Area Service Conference	RSR	Regional Service Representative
GSR	Group Service Representative	TCASC	Twin Cities Area Conference
GSRA	Group Service Representative Alternate	AHASC	Area of Hope Area Service Conference
RCM	Regional Committee Member	UMSO	Upper Midwest Service Office
H & I	Hospitals and Institutions Committee	WSC	World Service Conference
PI	Public Information Committee	WSO	World Service Office

World Service Office

PO Box 9999
Van Nuys, CA 91409

Helpline # 612-939-3939

Websites:

South Suburban Fireside Area:
Minnesota Region:
World:

Upper Midwest Service Office

Sabathani Community Center
310 38th Street, Suite 115
Minneapolis, MN 55409
Phone: (612) 822-9472
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South Suburban Fireside Area 's mailing address

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www.na.org

The Area Service Conference

This conference is ultimately responsible to the groups it serves. N.A. groups send GSRs (Group Service Representatives) to serve at the Area conference and its subcommittee levels.

Area Service Conference Participants

There are three groups that participate in most area service conferences:

1. GSRs and their alternates
2. General officers
3. Subcommittee chairpersons

Definitions and Responsibilities

1. GENERAL SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE – is the person who links the rest of the group with N.A. Most groups elect an alternate GSR who can fill in when needed. Further definitions and responsibilities will follow.

2. GENERAL OFFICERS – most areas have six general officers: Chairperson, a Vice Chairperson, a Treasurer, a Secretary, an Regional Committee Member (or RCM), and RCM alternate. Further definitions and responsibilities will follow.

3. SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS – deliver the direct services of the Area Service Conference. They are Hospitals & Institutions (H & I), Public Information (PI), Activities, Outreach, and Pig committee chair. Further definitions and responsibilities will follow.

The information below should make it quite clear each participant's responsibilities as we define them within our service structure. They are as follows:

General Service Officers

GSR - is responsible for the communication between the group they represent and the Area. They are one of the most important parts of the service structure, without them, we do not know the needs of the group and how we can best serve them.

Voting rights: Yes, one vote/group

Area Chairperson - is responsible for conducting the Area meeting, preparing the agenda and various administrative duties, primary tools are previous service experiences, knowledge of Robert's rules of order, a firm hand, a calm spirit, clear mind, and a good understanding of how to conduct a well ordered, productive business meeting.

Suggested clean time: 2 years

Suggested length of position: 1 year

Voting rights: only as a tie breaker

Area Vice Chairperson - is responsible for working closely with the GSRs and contacting their respective groups in their absence, also coordinating subcommittees' efforts within the Area, primary tools are problem solving and communication skills. The Vice Chairperson is also responsible for conducting the Area meeting in the Chairperson's absence. It is also the Vice Chairperson's responsibility to collect the mail from the Area's post office box prior to each Area meeting.

Suggested clean time: 1 year

Suggested length of position: 1 year

Voting rights: Yes

Secretary - is responsible to take clear, accurate minutes of the Area meeting and to distribute those minutes to all Area service participants within a reasonable period of time (10-14 days) after each meeting. The Secretary is also responsible for producing and regularly updating a log of all the Area policy actions. The log should consist of all the motions the Committee has passed regarding the general officers or subcommittee they effect. The Secretary should periodically distribute an updated log of all these policy actions to all Area service participants. The Secretary should also keep an updated list of all participants' addresses and phone numbers. A copy of this list should be sent once or twice a year to the World Service Office. This will make it possible for World Service to provide the groups, subcommittee, and committee officers with current information.

Suggested clean time: 2 years

Suggested length of position: 1 year

Voting rights: Yes

Treasurer - it is recommended that the Area elect people to this position who are financially secure, are good at managing their personal finances, who inspire the trust of the committee, and who have substantial clean time. The Treasurer receives contributions from groups, reimburses officers and subcommittee chairs for their budgeted expenses, keeps careful records of all transactions, and reports the financial condition of the Area Service Committee at each of its meetings. Other responsibilities include maintaining the Area's post office box, and submitting a written report to the Secretary the Area meeting

Suggested clean time: 3 years

Suggested length of position: 1 year

Voting rights: Yes

Regional Committee Member - is the communication link between the Area and the Region. The RCM is responsible for attending both Area and Regional meetings. They should present the Area and Region with a written report of the pertinent actions and activities of both service bodies.

Suggested clean time: 1 year

Suggested length of position: 1 year

Voting rights: Yes

Hospitals and Institutions - carries the message of N.A. directly to addicts held in medical, psychiatric or correctional facilities. The general mission of the H & I Committee is to coordinate H & I activities. The chairperson is responsible for keeping an up-to-date log of all H & I meetings being held by the Area groups. The list should be updated and distributed to the GSRs at the Area meeting so they can inform their groups and help spread the word of Narcotics Anonymous to the individuals in the Hospitals and Institutions. The H&I committee is responsible for supplying literature to each H & I effort. The chairperson also acts as the communication link to the H & I facilities and their administrators. Committee members can also be the communication link as long as they keep the chairperson updated on any and all changes that occur in the relationship between the facility and the Area. It is very important to do so, so that we maintain a good reputation with the facility and its administrators. The chairperson should also submit a written report to the Secretary at the Area meeting.

Suggested clean time: 2 years

Suggested length of position: 1 year

Voting rights: Chairperson only

Public Relations - is N.A. 's friend in government, medicine, the clergy, community organizations, the public media, and other twelve step fellowships to carry the message that NA exists. The general mission of the Public Relations committee is to inform any addict in the community, and others who might refer addicts, of the availability of recovery in Narcotics Anonymous. The chairperson is responsible for keeping the Area meeting lists updated, and should have copies of the list available to every Area meeting for distribution to GSRs and Area participants. The chairperson is also responsible for making sure that the groups within our Area are registered with the Region and World Service Office so that the Regional and World meetings are updated also. The chairperson will also be called upon to support Public Relation events such as booths at C.D. seminars or recovery related events. The chairperson should submit a written report to the Secretary at the Area meeting.

Suggested clean time: 2 years

Suggested length of position: 1 year

Voting rights: Chairperson only

Activities - The general mission of the Activities Committee is to coordinate events that are held on an Area level, such as dances, picnics, campouts, pig roasts, hayrides, parties etc. It is the Chairperson's responsibility to coordinate the Committee that will kick off the event. Activities like the above listed can provide a greater sense of community in the N.A. fellowship that produce additional income. It should always be kept in mind that these functions are designed to enhance N.A. 's primary purpose, not replace group contributions in funding Area services.

Suggested clean time: 1 year

Suggested length of position: 1 year

Voting rights: Chairperson only

Pig Roast Chairperson - is responsible for bringing together everything needed to put on our Area's Pig Roast. Duties include holding monthly committee meetings, delegating authority, monitoring funds and making sure they are being spent appropriately, allocating logistical needs for the actual weekend (rental equipment, food supplies, speakers, and participants), communicating with the campground, building good relationships with outside businesses, reasonable outreach work, overseeing and trouble-shooting during the actual event. Previous and extensive service work is a must. The Pig Roast chairperson should be a person who can remain calm and collected in high stress times, and be firm when needed. The following are the subcommittee's the Pig Roast Chair oversees and helps when needed: Treasury, Gate/Registration, Merchandise, Security, Breakfast/Dinner, Adult and Children's Activities, First Aid, Volunteer Coordinators, Runners, and Cleanup. With a good committee the Chairperson's job can be very easy, and vise-versa. This is not position for a person with a full plate who is unable to commit hours before and during the event. This position should always be succeeded by the previous Pig Roast Co-Chairperson.

Suggested clean time: 2-3 years

Suggested length of position: 1 year

Voting rights: Chairperson only

Pig Roast Co-Chair- Unlike the other co-chair positions, this is a two year commitment because the current co-chair automatically assumes the duties of the Chair position for the following year. The Pig Roast Co-Chair should assist the Chairperson and be involved in every aspect of planning beforehand and be available the entire weekend of the event. The smooth transition from one year to the next and accurate transfer of information depends on this involvement.

Suggested clean time: 2-3 years

Suggested length of position: 1 year

Voting rights: Only in the Chairperson's absence

Outreach Chair - The main purpose of Outreach is to help overcome the isolation that hinders the growth and survival of our groups. The focus tends to be on groups geographically isolated, but may also include assistance to groups isolated by things such as personal choice, language, culture differences, or location within a locked facility not served by a Hospitals and Institution Committee. Outreach efforts range from supporting groups that are far away to informing members that local groups are in need of support. This can be done simply through attendance and sharing recovery. Outreach committees work closely with H & I and Public Information Committees because each type of service has some areas of overlap.

Suggested clean time: 2 years

Suggested length of position: 1 year

Voting rights: Yes

Alternates and Co-Chairs - are responsible for taking the responsibilities of their respective positions when necessary. They should work closely with them so they can pick up where the last person left off.

Suggested clean time: 3 months

Suggested length of position: 1 year

Voting rights: Only in their respective positions absence.

Other Area Information

Elections and Rotations - General Officers and Subcommittee Chairpersons usually serve one year terms, and generally serve no more than two year terms consecutively in the same position. This allows for the rotation of a variety of individuals through an Area's trusted servant positions, providing a diversity of viewpoints and a freshness of perspective that would be lacking were these positions held year after year by the same individuals.

Area Policy And Guidelines - We must approach the area of Policy and Guidelines with extreme caution. Up until now, everything has been fairly straight forward. We need to keep a few things in mind when we enter into policy discussion. These points should keep confusion to a minimum and the discussion on track. N.A. 's Twelve Concepts for Service will be of great value in interpreting policy questions. This Committee should take the time to learn the concepts or look for advice of those who know and understand them. Another tool in this area is to simply reflect on N.A. 's primary purpose. This Area's primary purpose is to attract addicts to meetings, provide material for use in meetings, conduct activities designed to strengthen meetings, or perform the administrative functions needed to do these things. If these tools don't work, simply ask oneself: what does this discussion have to do with carrying the message? We must have a regularly updated log of Area policy actions. This log will make it unnecessary to rehash any discussions over again. This development of Area policy should be something we grow into. We should not try to sit down and write it all at once. For now, this document will act as our policy guidelines until such a time as a Policy committee is formed.

Area Inventory - As addicts, we learn to stop every once in awhile and take our inventory; "Why do we do this" one might ask? Well, we find that we must stop, consider our actions and attitudes and rededicate ourselves to our ideas. As an Area, we should take the time to do the same. Our inventory should cover three general topics:

1. How well has the Area done this year at serving the groups? How can we do it better next year?
2. How well has the Area served the community? How can we serve it better?
3. How well has the Area served the region? How can we serve the region better?

(Area Inventory continued on next page)

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Our Area Inventory will help us grow. Its should give Officers and Chairpersons a better perspective of what we should be focusing on now and in the future. It is suggested that the Area Chairperson complete this inventory prior to completing his\her term.

Participation - Areas lacking in support probably have one or more of the following problems:

1. The Area is new or sparsely populated.
2. Group members in the Area are not sufficiently informed concerning the role of Area service and the kind of work being done by Subcommittees.
3. The Area is not providing services that attract member's support.
4. Members are simply not interested in supporting Area services.

There is not much one can do about problem number one. However, two, three and four can be turned around with the help of a Subcommittee.

Ad Hoc Committees - are generally formed to research and comprise a plan to deal with problems or situations that might arise in the Area or the service structure. They usually consist of N.A. members who have had experience within the service structure, who have good insight and can keep the Area's best interest in focus. The Committee works with the Area. However, its job is to report its findings to the Area in away without upsetting the balance of the service structure.

The Area Service Meeting - The monthly meeting is open to any N.A. member. It is the event at which the work of the Subcommittee and the well-being of the groups all come into focus. Officers, GSRs, and Subcommittee chairs give reports on what's happened since the Committee last met. The Sharing Session gives all participants the opportunity to engage in a wide open discussion of issues raised by the reports. After the Sharing Session the committee is ready to go straight into business.

SHOULD WE REQUIRE WRITTEN REPORTS? IF SO, BASIC FORMS CAN BE DRAWN UP.

The Sharing Session - Usually takes two forms. The first being discussion after each report is given where motions and voting should take place. The second session is usually related to any issues relating to the goals of the Area service and old and new business, where again motions and voting will take place after each issue is discussed.

SHOULD WE ALLOW VOTING IN THE SHARING SESSION?

Group Problems - Groups are encouraged to seek their own solutions to the challenges they face, but sometimes groups face problems beyond any of its member experience. When that occurs, the group can send their GSR to the Area Service Sharing Session with a request for help. Help usually comes in the form of shared experience form other groups that have already dealt with a similar situation.