

South Dade Area A GSR Guide

I. WELCOME

Welcome to the South Dade Area Service Committee of Narcotics Anonymous, open to any NA member. If you have never attended an Area Service Committee meeting before, you may be feeling a bit confused. You may be asking yourself questions like: "What is going on here?" and "What am I supposed to do?" At this point, we suggest you sit back, relax, and take a deep breath.

It may take you some time and effort to digest the information in this packet. NA service is a growing and learning experience for all who perform it. No one learned how to be an effective GSR all at once. So, easy does it! At first, you may find it helpful to sit with a more experienced GSR so that, as the meeting progresses, you can get immediate answers to your questions. You may also raise your hand and ask the ASC Chairperson to assign an experienced GSR to guide you.

An Area Service Committee (ASC) meeting is nothing more (and nothing less) than a long and complicated business meeting. Once you become familiar with the meeting format and procedural guidelines, what is happening here should soon start to make sense.

You are holding in your hands *A GSR Guide* and the *ASC Procedural Guidelines* designed to answer many of your questions. It contains the basic tools you will need to be an effective Group Service Representative. You should also obtain a copy of the minutes of the last ASC meeting from the ASC Secretary or Assistant Secretary.

Keep Coming Back and Keep It Simple

Don't let this packet overwhelm you. Some of these procedures might sound complicated, but they do become simpler with practice. Show up at the monthly ASC meeting, ask questions, (we never stop learning), share what you have learned and enjoy your term as Group Service Representative. Remember that the ASC is here to be of service to you and your group. Without your active participation, this cannot happen. IT WORKS!

II. AREA SERVICE COMMITTEE

A. What is an "Area"?

The South Dade Area of Narcotics Anonymous is one of thousands of NA areas throughout our worldwide fellowship. This area covers part of Miami-Dade County. Throughout this territory, there are many individual NA groups. These individual groups come together to form what is called an Area.

B. What is an Area Service Committee?

An Area Service Committee provides services for the groups that would be difficult for those groups to provide without taking away from the time and resources they need to focus on carrying the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers.

C. Why do we need an Area Service Committee?

South Dade Area A GSR Guide

One part of the Area Service Committee is the Helpline Subcommittee. This subcommittee manages a rather extensive list of NA volunteers who field calls that come into the Area Helpline and works closely with the answering service that routes these calls. As you can see, this big task could take away from the time and resources of an NA group. It is also important to know that the ASC is accountable to the groups when it comes to all of the services it provides.

D. How does an Area Service Committee work?

Narcotics Anonymous groups send GSR's to serve on the Area Service Committee. While still maintaining final responsibility and authority for area services, they invest enough delegated authority in their GSR's -and through them, in the area service committee- for the necessary work to be done.

The references we use in conducting business at the South Dade ASC are in the following order: the *Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous*, the *South Dade Area Procedural Guidelines*, and *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*.

III. GROUP SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE

A. What does a GSR do?

A Group Service Representative (GSR) is the first line of communication between a group and Narcotics Anonymous as a whole. They are the links that bind the groups together in the performance of our primary purpose, to carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers. It is their responsibility to keep a group informed of area goings-on and to express a group's conscience in all matters. In other words, they are the voice of their group. Electing GSR's who will take an active part in the business of NA is probably the most important thing we can do to improve the unity of the fellowship. Active representation, more than any other thing, can strengthen the ties that bind us together and promote common welfare. The active participation of each group representative is essential for a successful ASC.

B. Why does a group need a GSR?

The GSR attends the monthly ASC meetings and *speaks for their group* at these meetings. The GSR takes part in the planning and implementation of many ASC functions, which affect the members of their group. As a result of their participation they can keep their group informed about what is happening in NA.

In addition to this, members of a group should always be able to go to their GSR and find out about activities, other groups, how our NA service structure works, and how they can become more involved. One resource to find out more about how the service structure works is "A Guide to Local Services in NA."

C. How does the ASC help Personal Recovery?

Ask yourselves how many of us found NA through a hospital or institution—How many of us found the fellowship through the helpline or as a result of public information work at schools or elsewhere? How many of us have been helped by having a meeting list to let us know where a meeting was when we needed one *now*? How many of us have their recovery enhanced

South Dade Area A GSR Guide

because of the widespread availability of NA literature, including our Basic Text, or by participating in activities or conventions?

None of these would have happened had there not been an Area Service Committee. Without the ASC, Narcotics Anonymous in South Dade would not be as organized and effective as it is today.

III. A GSR BEFORE AREA

A. New GSR Orientation

The New Group Service Representative (GSR) Orientation is held at 9:00am prior to the ASC meeting. Arrive prior to 9:00am and find the ASC Vice Chairperson, the person who conducts the New GSR Orientation.

B. Group Contribution

One of the first things a GSR does at the ASC Meeting is to give the ASC Treasurer your group donation. You will be given a receipt. Please give the receipt to your group treasurer for their records.

C. Literature Order

Now it is time to place your group literature order. Make sure you put the name of your group and your name on the form. When your order is ready, the Literature Liaison will call your group's name during the ASC meeting.

D. Group Report

After getting a donut and cup of coffee-, it is time to fill out a Group Report Form. These forms are on the flyer table, or ask the ASC Secretary or Assistant Secretary. Please include your last name on the Group Report. This will ensure delivery of the minutes by the Post Office. In observation of our principle of Anonymity, your last name will only be used for mailing purposes, on un-marked envelopes.

Even though you might feel unnecessary to write this information every time you come to Area, you must remember that this form has several purposes:

1. Indicates the correct name and address of the GSR and Alternate GSR the Area Minutes are to be sent to.
2. Indicates the language the Area Minutes are to be sent in.
3. Indicates that your group has been represented at Area, in case you have missed roll call.
4. Provides perspectives on group growth vital to the committee's work. If a group is having problems, its GSR can share those problems with the committee in his or her reports.

E. Meeting List Changes

After filling out your Group Report Form, you may need to fill out a Meeting List Changes Form. This form allows groups to indicate any changes or additions they want the Dade County Meeting

South Dade Area A GSR Guide

List to show. It is *very important* that you fill in *ALL* of the boxes of this form, if you want all information about your meeting to be reflected in the Meeting List.

F. Motions / Motions Forms

A Motion must be submitted in writing, and comes up for discussion during New Business. This motion, before it can be considered by the other participants at the ASC Meeting, must be seconded by another participant of the ASC. A "second" is an indication by the participant making the second that the idea deserves consideration by the participants of the Area Service Committee.

It is recommended that you read "*Motion Procedures*" (Procedural Guidelines) to become familiarized with this important process, the mechanism of our 2nd Tradition at the Area level.

1. Motions may ONLY be submitted on this form.
2. Please print clearly.
3. You may seek an ASC member to second your motion and write it down on the form, or you may leave the "second" blank and let the ASC Chairperson ask for a second to the motion at the time the motion comes to the floor.
4. Once you have filled out your Motion Form, you may give it to the Vice-Chairperson.

G. Flyers

Flyers are also located on the flyer table. Use your best judgment on the number of flyers to pick up. Many times there is only enough for one flyer for each group. Occasionally, there is mail for each group (The NA Way Magazine, etc.). Be sure to pick this up as well.

IV. A GSR DURING AREA

A. Minutes

Make sure to check the Minutes of the previous month, including your name, address and phone number shown in the "*Group Attendance*" form at the end of the minutes. If any information is not correct, please make sure to include the correct information in the *Group Report* and mark it 'NEW'. Don't forget that the Minutes are mailed to these addresses. Also check and verify that your attendance to ASC meetings has been reflected correctly on the Group Attendance of the Minutes.

Remember that approving the Minutes at the end of the Secretary's report means agreeing that ALL that has been printed in the Minutes is correct.

B. Agenda

The ASC meeting follows an agenda; the ASC Chairperson always brings extra copies left at the flyer table. The majority of the ASC meeting consists of verbal and written reports from the various ASC, Subcommittees, Liaisons, and Administration. Take notes during each report as to what you think your group will find important. Also, make a note of what positions are open and add them to your group announcements to be read in your group. Take notes on what is said during "Open Forum" to add to your GSR report to the group. Take notes on all motions under

South Dade Area A GSR Guide

old and new business. Pay close attention to any motions that are sent back to the groups to vote on. At the next ASC, you will need to vote the conscience of your group.

C. Group Conscience

At the ASC, we express group conscience by taking a show of hands. Many times the agenda of the meeting will have old business, new business, and open positions. These issues can be taken to group business meetings directly and carry their conscience back to the ASC. There are times when a GSR won't get a chance to take the information back to the group and they will be asked to express a group conscience at the moment. Our Twelve Concepts suggest that GSR's are delegated the authority to serve in their own right as ASC participants, exercising their own conscience and best judgment in the best interests of NA as a whole.

D. Roll Call

You can only represent one group. Only respond to Roll Call for the group you represent. If you come in after Roll Call, please see the ASC Secretary or Assistant Secretary. After two (2) consecutive absences, your group will be removed from the Roll Call, and the mailing list of the ASC minutes.

E. Voting

If an issue comes up where you need to vote, be sure you understand what is going on; if not, ASK. *Don't base your vote on what everyone else does.* Think for yourself!

V. SERVICE MATERIALS

Booklets

The Group Booklet
Twelve Concepts for NA Service

Handbooks

A Guide to World Services in NA
A Guide to Local Services in NA

Information Pamphlets

"Hey! What's the Basket for?"
Self-Support; Principle and Practice
An Introduction to NA Meetings
Group Business Meetings
Group Trusted Servants: Roles & Responsibilities
Disruptive and Violent Behavior
NA Groups & Medication

COFFEEMAKER

GROUP

South Dade Area
A GSR Guide

