

GSR Orientation Packet

Created February 2022



PREPARED FOR THE GREATER PENSACOLA AREA OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS (GPANA)

This packet was created as an informational resource to help GSRs to more effectively serve their home groups in the GPANA. It is not meant to be the final word or complete description of their duties but merely a suggested guide and should not override any group autonomy. We hope that this will be an inspiration to more effectively serve in the GSR position.

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ARTICLE I: GROUP SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE

(Reproduced from A Guide to Local Services in NA Page 36)

Each group elects one Group Service Representative (GSR); even those groups hosting more than one recovery meeting elect just one GSR. These GSRs form the foundation of our service structure. GSRs provide constant, active influence over the discussions being carried on within the service structure.

They do this by participating in Area Service Committee meetings, attending workshops, and assemblies at the Area level and sometimes Regional levels. If we are vigilant in choosing stable, qualified leaders at this level of service, the remainder of the structure will almost certainly be sound. From this strong foundation, a service structure can be built that will nourish, inform, and support the groups in the same way that that groups nourish and support the structure. Group Service Representatives bear great responsibility. While GSRs are elected by and accountable to the group, they are not mere group messengers. They are selected by their groups to serve as active members of the Area Service Committee.

As such, they are responsible to act in the best interest of NA as a whole, not solely as advocates of their groups' priorities. As participants in the ASC, GSRs need to be as well informed as they can be concerning the affairs of the ASC. They are informed of the reports of the ASC's officers and Sub-committee chairpersons. They have access to the various handbooks published by the World Service Office on each area of service. After carefully considering their own conscience and what they know about how their group members feel, they take active, critical parts in the discussions which form the group conscience of the entire ASC. Group Service Representatives link their groups with the rest of the NA service structure, particularly through the information conveyed in their reports to and from the ASC.

At home group business meetings, the GSR report provides a summary of ASC activities, often sparking discussions among group members that provide the GSR with a feel for how the Area can better serve the group's needs. At ASC meetings, the GSR reports provide perspective on group growth vital to carrying out our primary purpose. If a group is having problems, its GSR can share those problems with the ASC in their report. And if the group hasn't found solutions to those problems, the Area Facilitator will allow discussions during Open Forum so that the GSR can gather the experience others have had in similar situations. If any helpful solutions arise from the experience, strength, and hope of other members, the GSR can report those back to the group.

1) What is a GSR?

- a) Group Service Representatives form the foundation of our NA service structure. They provide constant, active influence over the discussions being carried on within the service structure. *A Guide to Local Service in NA. Page 35.*
- b) A Trusted Servant of their home group.
- c) Represents their home group's group conscience at ASC.
- d) Conveys the group conscience of ASC at their home group.
- e) Relays ASC minutes and any business that needs voting on.
- f) The financial link between their home group and the ASC.
- g) A source of information about service, activities, and other events within the Area for their home group.
- h) Group Service Representative Alternate (GSRA)
 - i) The GSRA represents the home group in the absence of the GSR at ASC. However, it is recommended that the GSRA's attend the ASC meetings even if their GSR is in attendance so that the guidelines and processes of Area are familiarized. Each home group will only have one vote in proposals or other voting matters even if both GSR and GSRA are in attendance.

- 2) How does a GSR do this?
 - a) Attends their home group's group conscience regularly.
 - b) Attends ASC meeting regularly.
 - c) Reports to the ASC their home group's status: upcoming birthdays, changes to meeting location/times, donation, problems/concerns, etc.
 - i) This is easily done by completing the GSR Report form found on the [GPANA Website. https://pensacolana.org/gpasc/](https://pensacolana.org/gpasc/) and turned in or emailed to the Area Secretary.
 - d) Reports business that needs voting on to their home group, or if voting taking place at ASC, the GSR will vote how their home group's group conscience see fit.
 - i) Please refer to [Appendix 2](#) (Consensus Based Decision Making) for decision making policy.

- 3) General Qualifications for a GSR
 - a) Is an addict in recovery.
 - b) Regularly attends the home group they represent and its group conscience.
 - c) Has the willingness to serve.
 - d) Has one year clean time. (Suggestion only, please refer to your home group's guidelines.)
 - e) Has a basic knowledge of the NA service structure and/or is willing to learn it.
 - f) Has an understanding of and/or the willingness to learn the duties of a GSR.

ARTICLE II: GSR DURING GROUP CONSCIENCE

- 1) How does a home group take care of its business?
 - a) At the monthly group conscience, the GSR should give a report of what happened at the last ASC meeting, by reviewing ASC minutes and any notes taken.
 - b) Takes notes during group conscience so that any matters that need to be brought back to the ASC can be relayed effectively, such as new proposals or voting on old business.
 - c) Takes note of upcoming birthdays, changes to meeting location/times, donation, problems/concerns, etc.so that the GSR Report form can be filled out prior to ASC and turned in (emailed to the Area Secretary to be included in ASC Minutes).
 - i) The GSR Report form is found on the [GPANA Website https://pensacolana.org/gpasc/](https://pensacolana.org/gpasc/)

- 2) What is group conscience?
 - a) Home groups monthly business meetings are often referred to as group conscience.
 - b) The purpose of group conscience is to conduct the business of the group in such a way that the group remains effective in carrying the NA message of recovery.
 - c) Group conscience is achieved when we invite a loving Higher Power to influence our decisions.
 - i) Group Conscience is the means by which we bring the spiritual awakening of the Twelve Steps to bear in making service-related decisions. It is fundamental to our fellowships decision-making process. It is not, however, merely a euphemism for "voting" and is not *itself* the decision-making process.
 - d) An informed decision made by the group as a whole.
 - e) Is dependent upon the practice of placing principles before personalities. *Tradition Twelve*

Sixth Concept

Group conscience is the spiritual means by which we invite a loving God to influence our decisions.

- 3) GSR Report to the home group from ASC may include:
 - a) A review of the ASC minutes from the Area Secretary.

- b) Elected trusted servants of the ASC
- c) Open positions at ASC and Region
- d) Proposals carried back to the group.
- e) Points of discussion made during the ASC.
- f) Open positions with-in the Subcommittees.
- g) Sharing new meetings or meeting changes.
- h) Sharing Area/Region/World upcoming activities.

ARTICLE III: GSR DURING AREA

- 1) Acknowledge that their home group is present during roll call.
- 2) Gives a verbal report of the GSR Report form during the Home Group Reports section of ASC.
- 3) Represents their home group's group conscience during any discussion or voting that takes place at the ASC.
 - a) Please refer to [Appendix 2](#) (Consensus Based Decision Making) for decision making policy.
- 4) GSR Report to the ASC may include:
 - a) upcoming birthdays
 - b) changes to meeting location/times
 - c) donation
 - d) problems/concerns
 - e) newly elected trusted servants
 - f) upcoming activities

ARTICLE IV: OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

- 1) Can a GSR hold more than one home group trusted servant position?
 - a) Please refer to your home groups guidelines. However, it is suggested that members only hold one position so that as many members as possible are encouraged and given the opportunity to be of selfless service.
- 2) Can a GSR hold more than one trusted servant position at the Area level?
 - a) GPANA's Guidelines do not allow for any position at the Area level to hold another Area level position simultaneously. Please refer to GPANA Guidelines for more information.
- 3) How does a home group communicate concerns to the GSR?
 - a) The home group or any member may bring concerns to the GSR at group conscience.
- 4) What about ad-hoc committees?
 - a) An ad-hoc committee may be formed to take care of special, not regular, business for an Area, Subcommittee, or home group (i.e., a Budget Ad-Hoc Committee for budget revisions or a Guidelines Ad-Hoc Committee for guideline revisions, or Financial Audit Ad-Hoc Committee) They meet outside of the regular ASC time. GSRs are not required to be a part of any Ad-Hoc Committee but may volunteer to be involved.
- 5) ASC Meeting Agenda (from GPANA Guidelines)
 - a) The sequence of items on the ASC meeting agenda consists of:

- i) Call to Order
 - ii) Serenity Prayer
 - iii) Service Prayer
 - iv) Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous
 - v) Twelve Concepts of Narcotics Anonymous
 - vi) Group roll call
 - vii) Welcome any new Groups/GSRs
 - viii) Secretary Report reads, amends, and approve minutes from previous meeting
 - ix) Facilitator report
 - x) Co Facilitator report
 - xi) Treasurer report
 - xii) Regional Committee Member (RCM) report
 - xiii) SUB reports (alphabetical order)
 - xiv) Group Reports
 - xv) Open Forum – Other NA related announcements
 - xvi) Old Business – Consensus for previous Proposals
 - xvii) Final Proposal requests submitted
 - xviii) New Business – Consensus for new Proposals
 - xix) Open Forum – Other NA related announcements
 - xx) Adjournment and Closing Prayer
- b) The sequence of items on the agenda may be changed by the ASC Facilitator if deemed appropriate.

ARTICLE V: AREA SERVICE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- 1) Administrative Committee
 - a) Facilitator
 - b) Co-Facilitator
 - c) Secretary
 - d) Treasurer
 - e) Vice-Treasurer
 - f) Regional Committee Member (RCM)
 - g) Regional Committee Member Alternate (RCMA)

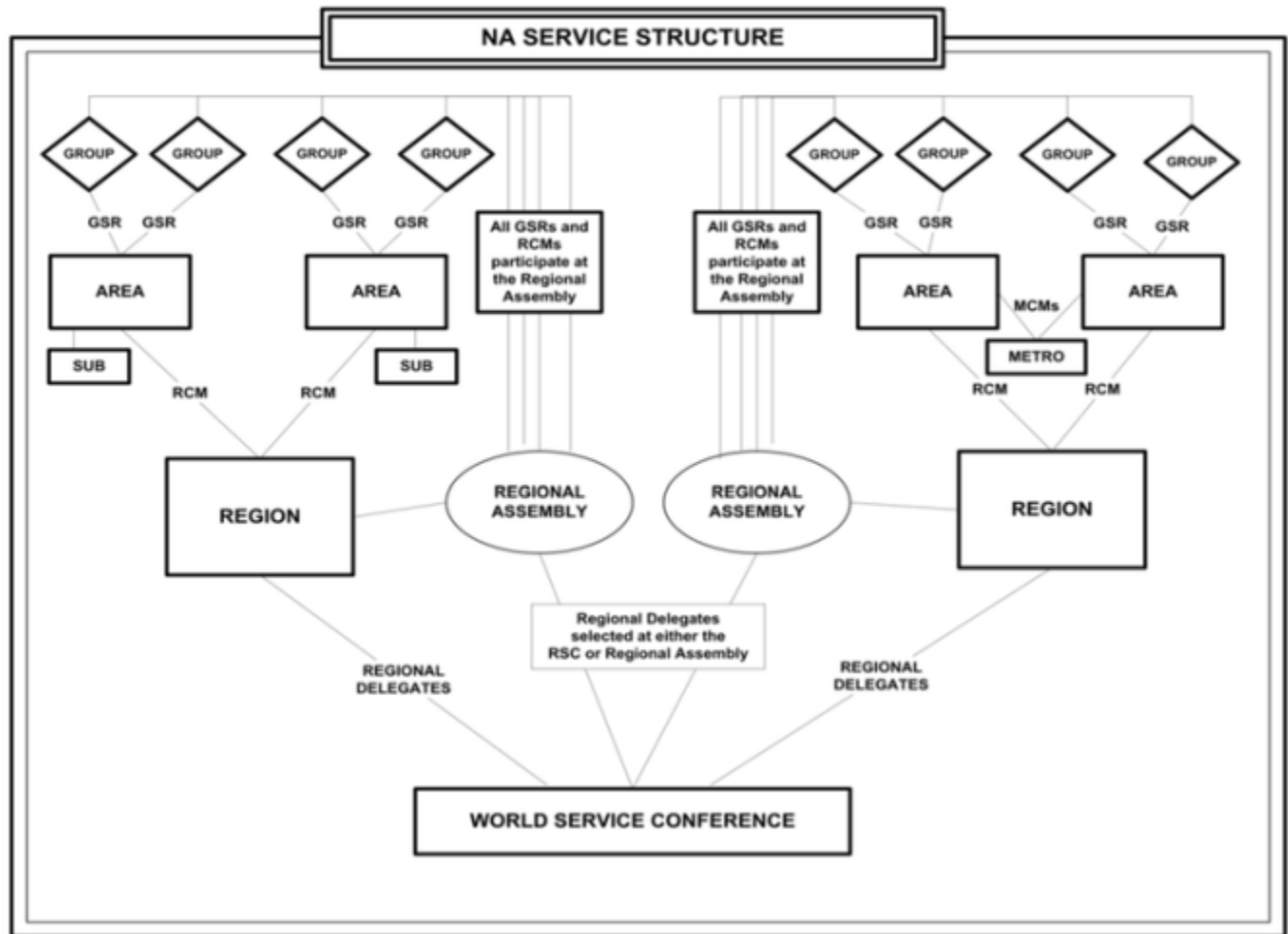
- 2) Subcommittees
 - a) Activities
 - b) Guidelines
 - c) Hospitals & Institutions (H&I)
 - d) HOWL
 - e) Public Relations (PR)
 - f) Website

- 3) Decision Making Members
 - a) The Decision Making Members (DMM) of the ASC are made up of the Group Service Representatives (GSR) or, in the GSRs absence, the Group Service Representative Alternate (GSRA) of each active NA group within the Greater Pensacola service area.

ARTICLE VI: NA SERVICE STRUCTURE

1) NA Service Structure

- a) As stated in the chapter titled Our Symbol of the Narcotics Anonymous Sixth Edition Basic Text, “Good will is best exemplified in service; proper service is ‘Doing the right thing for the right reason.’” Our literature says that our primary purpose in Narcotics Anonymous is to carry the message to the addict who still suffers. We do this by being of service in many ways because we only keep what we have by giving it away. The ultimate tool for carrying out our primary purpose is the NA group, and without any addicts being of service, the NA group would not survive. In the Basic Text, it says that ‘our survival is directly related to the survival of the group and the fellowship’. We have learned that service is a fundamental component of personal recovery and allows us to obtain the full benefits that this program has to offer. ‘The therapeutic value of one addict helping another is without parallel’. NA Service can be carried out on many levels. Our service structure starts with the Group then reaches the World.

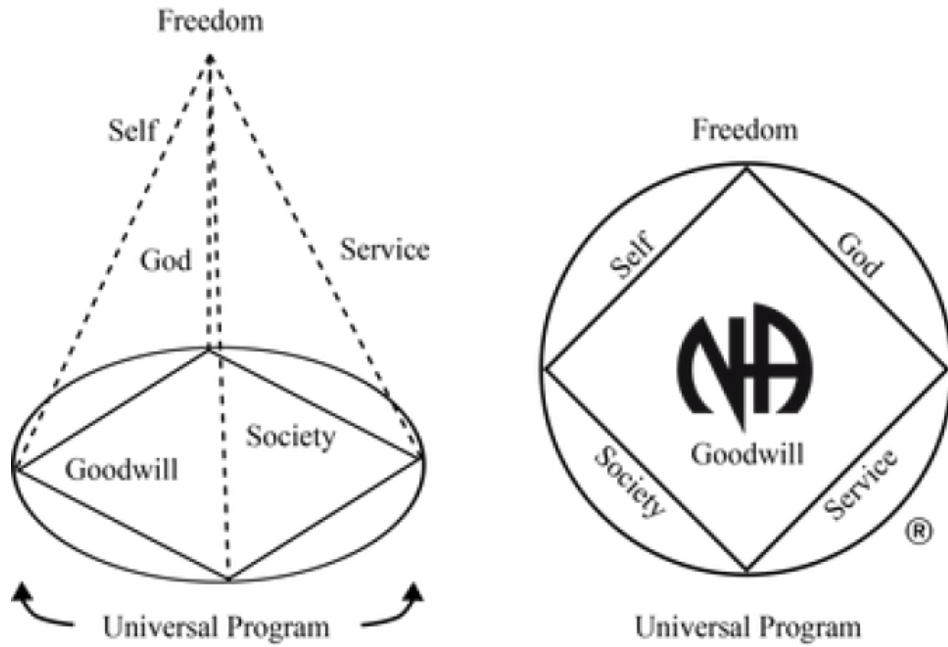


Definitions of service structure levels outlined in “A Guide to Local Services”, NAWS; 2002 version

2) NA Service Structure

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component of personal recovery and allows us to obtain the full benefits that this program has to offer. 'The therapeutic value of one addict helping another is without parallel'. NA Service can be carried out on many levels. Our service structure starts with the Group then reaches the World.



The NA Symbol

APPENDIX 1: GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS/TERMS

ACM – Administrative Committee Member

Ad Hoc – Temporary Committee appointed for a specific time and purpose, usually by a standing body chair

ASC – Area Service Committee, comprised of active homegroup Group Service Representatives (GSRs), Administrative Committee Members (ACM), and Subcommittee (SUB) Chairpersons

CBDM – Consensus Based Decision Making process, guidelines for making decisions on behalf of NA

DMM - Decision Making Member

GPANA – Greater Pensacola Area of Narcotics Anonymous; serves Northwest Florida Groups

GPASC – Greater Pensacola Area Service Committee; serves Northwest Florida Groups

GSR – Group Service Representative; serves the Home Group Members

GSRA – Group Service Representative Alternate; serves the Home Group Members

IP – Informational Pamphlet, published by Narcotics Anonymous World Service Office

NAWS – Narcotics Anonymous World Service

Proposal – Idea or request brought to the ASC; suggestions and intent

RCM – Regional Service Committee Member; serves Area at RSC level

RCMA – Regional Service Committee Member Alternate; serves Area at RSC level

RD – Regional Delegate; serves Region at WSC level

Regional Assemblies – Held primarily by Regional Committee for all interested NA membership discussions

RSC – Regional Service Committee, comprised of local Areas/RCMs

PDF or Word DOC – Printable electronic formats for minutes and reports

Special Election – Held at request of NA trusted servants in case of unscheduled vacated positions

SUB – Subcommittee; serves the body it was designed for

WSC – World Service Conference; serves the Worldwide Fellowship

WSO – NA World Service Office; located in Chatsworth, CA

www.na.org - NA World Website

www.alnwfl.org - NA Website for Alabama/Northwest Florida Region

www.pensacolana.org - GPASC Website

APPENDIX 2: CONSENSUS BASED DECISION MAKING

- 1) Consensus-Based Decision Making
 - a) Though the use of Consensus-Based Decision Making admittedly takes longer to achieve an outcome, the results are understood by all in attendance at a more significant level. In addition, any proposal can be easily modified as discussion progresses. Making a motion, requiring a second and so forth are no longer needed. Decision Makers become a single point of accountability to those that they represent (12 Concepts of NA Service). We try to achieve consensus as it ensures we follow our Ninth Concept, “All elements of our service structure have the responsibility to carefully consider all viewpoints in their decision making process.”

- 2) Consensus-Based Decision Making Process
 - a) Bring proposals to the ASC that are formulated in advance with as much collaboration as possible to facilitate the consensus decision process.
 - b) Maker of the proposal speaks first to the intent.
 - c) Open up the floor for clarifying questions about the proposal (not a debate on the merits but a brief session to be sure everyone understands the proposal).
 - d) Facilitator asks whether anyone has reservations about the proposal. These are heard and they may be answered or the proposal may be modified.
 - e) Once all reservations have been heard and answered in this way, Facilitator asks, "Do we have consensus?"
 - f) For a proposal to pass, a consensus greater than or equal to 70% of DMMs must agree.
 - g) **Participants respond in one of four ways:**
 - i) **Assent.** This means that the DMM fully supports the proposal. The DMM has heard the discussion, has had a chance to participate in the process of finalizing the proposal and is in agreement with every aspect.
 - ii) **Assent with Reservations.** This means that the DMM is going along with the group so that the ASC can move forward, but not fully on board with the proposal. The DMM is willing to let a proposal pass but wants to register concerns. Supports the proposal but continues to have reservations. If there are significant reservations about a proposal the ASC may choose to modify or reword it. i.e., “I think that may be a mistake but I can live with it.”
 - iii) **Stand Aside.** This means the DMM has a serious personal disagreement with a proposal, but are willing to let the proposal pass. The concerns of group members standing aside are usually addressed by modifications to the proposal. i.e., “I personally can’t do this, but I won’t stop others from doing it.” A sizable number of stand asides (for example, 33% or more, will indicate that a consensus to adopt a proposal is too weak. The proposal is then either dropped or delegated to the maker of the proposal or an Ad-Hoc Committee for rewording.
 - iv) **Block.** Given that a proposal can be defeated by a sufficient number of Stand Asides, the Block should be an extremely rare step taken only when participant honestly believes that one or more of the principles in our Steps, Traditions, or Concepts is directly violated by this proposal. A DMM who blocks must be able to articulate which Tradition or Concept or Spiritual principle fundamental to NA is violated by the specific proposal. i.e., “I cannot support this or allow the group to support this. It is against our principles.” If consensus is blocked or no reasonable consensus can be reached, the group stays with the previous decision on the subject or does nothing.

APENDIX 3: TWELVE TRADITIONS

We keep what we have only with vigilance, and just as freedom for the individual comes from the Twelve Steps, so freedom for the group springs from our Traditions. As long as the ties that bind us together are stronger than those that would tear us apart, all will be well.

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on NA 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 membership is a desire to stop using.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or NA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.
6. An NA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the NA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, or prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every NA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Narcotics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. NA, as such, ought never be organized, but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Narcotics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the NA 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.

APENDIX 4: TWELVE CONCEPTS FOR NA SERVICE

The Twelve Traditions of NA have guided our groups well in the conduct of their individual affairs, and they are the foundation for NA services. They have steered us away from many pitfalls that could have meant our collapse. Our various service units serve, for example, they do not govern; we stay out of public debate; we neither endorse nor oppose any of the many causes that our members may feel strongly about; our approach to addiction is a nonprofessional one; we are fully self-supporting. The traditions have provided our fellowship with essential guidance throughout its development, and they continue to be indispensable.

The Twelve Concepts for NA Service described here are intended to be practically applied to our service structure at every level. The spiritual ideals of our steps and traditions provide the basis for these concepts, which are tailored to the specific needs of our Fellowship's service structure. The Concepts encourage our groups to more readily achieve our traditions' ideals, and our service structure to function effectively and responsibly.

These Concepts have been crafted from our experience. They are not intended to be taken as the "law" for NA service, but simply as guiding principles. We find that our services are stabilized when we conscientiously apply these Concepts, much as our Steps have stabilized our lives and our Traditions have stabilized and unified our groups. The Twelve Concepts guide our services and help ensure that the message of Narcotics Anonymous is available to all addicts who have a desire to stop using and begin practicing our way of life.

1. To fulfill our Fellowship's primary purpose, the NA groups have joined together to create a structure which develops, coordinates, and maintains services on behalf of NA as a whole.
2. The final responsibility and authority for NA services rests with the NA groups.
3. The NA groups delegate to the service structure the authority necessary to fulfill the responsibilities assigned to it.
4. Effective leadership is highly valued in Narcotics Anonymous. Leadership qualities should be carefully considered when selecting trusted servants.
5. For each responsibility assigned to the service structure, a single point of decision and accountability should be clearly defined.
6. Group conscience is the spiritual means by which we invite a loving God to influence our decisions.
7. All members of a service body bear substantial responsibility for that body's decisions and should be allowed to fully participate in its decision-making processes.
8. Our service structure depends on the integrity and effectiveness of our communications.
9. All elements of our service structure have the responsibility to carefully consider all viewpoints in their decision-making processes.
10. Any member of a service body can petition that body for the redress of a personal grievance, without fear of reprisal.
11. NA funds are to be used to further our primary purpose, and must be managed responsibly.
12. In keeping with the spiritual nature of Narcotics Anonymous, our structure should always be one of service, never of government.

APENDIX 5: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR LOCAL SERVICE

This material is presented to assist NA service bodies in their efforts to carry the NA message to the addict who still suffers. These materials are either approved by NA World Services or in some cases, the World Service Conference. All WSC-approved material is clearly indicated as such.

A Guide to Local Services–

<https://www.na.org/admin/include/spaw2/uploads/pdf/GLS.pdf>

Twelve Concepts for NA Service-

https://na.org/admin/include/spaw2/uploads/pdf/litfiles/us_english/Booklet/Twelve%20Concepts.pdf

Group Trusted Servants Booklet –

https://www.na.org/admin/include/spaw2/uploads/pdf/servicemat/Group_Trusted_Servants_en.pdf

Principles and Leadership in NA Service –

https://www.na.org/admin/include/spaw2/uploads/pdf/servicemat/Principles_and_Leadership_in_NA_Service_en.pdf

Group Business Meetings (Group Conscience) –

https://www.na.org/admin/include/spaw2/uploads/pdf/servicemat/2012Jun_Group_Business_Meetings.pdf

The Group Booklet –

https://www.na.org/admin/include/spaw2/uploads/pdf/litfiles/us_english/Booklet/Group%20Booklet.pdf

12 Traditions & 12 Concepts Sheet –

<https://www.na.org/admin/include/spaw2/uploads/pdf/FTP/English/Workshop%20Resources/12%20Traditions%20&%2012%20Concepts%20Sheet-%20NAWS%20-%202006.pdf>

Consensus Based Decision Making (CBDM) Basics –

https://www.na.org/admin/include/spaw2/uploads/pdf/servsys/CBDM%20layout_final.pdf

CDBM Presentation by ALNWFL Region of NA –

<https://pensacolana.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/CONSENSUS-BASED-DECISION-SLIDE.pdf>