

**Northeast Georgia
Area Service Committee**

**Group Service
Representative
Orientation Package**

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Welcome to Northeast GA Area Service Committee

Welcome! We hope that you will find Group and Area Service as rewarding as some of us have over the years and that your service will enhance your recovery and growth in Narcotics Anonymous. What we have learned in our service is to always remember that Unity is our Primary Concern and Carrying the Message to the still suffering addict our Primary Purpose. We attempt to remember the HOW of the program, Honesty, Open-mindedness and Willing in our service.

We meet 9 times a year at various Group Locations. This time together allows us to conduct area business in conjunction with the Georgia Regional Business. Just as the individual member of a group has a voice in the group's workings, the GSR carries that group's voice to the ASC so the Regional Committee Member (RCM) can carry the collective voice of the Area to the Region. Then the Regional Delegate (RD) carries the collective voice of the State of Georgia to the World Service Conference every 2 years.

Administration Committee

Chair
Vice Chair
Secretary (and Alternate)
Treasurer (and Alternate)
Web Facilitator
Policy Chair

Subcommittees

Convention Planning Committee
Hospitals and Institutes (H&I)
Literature
Public Relations (PR)
Ad-Hoc Committee (as needed)

Bullet Points:

- Primary Purpose
- Decision Making for NA as a whole
- Objective and Openminded
- Group Conscious not Personal Conscious
- NA Service is not a burden but a Privilege
- We come to make decisions through Spiritual Guidance
- Learn to take notes and communicate to your group
- Link between Group and Greater NA
- Participate in ASC, ASC Subcommittees, Area Forums and Assemblies
- Inform your group of what is going on
- Come to the ASC from beginning to end
- Learn about the 12 Steps, Traditions and Concepts
- Learn to complete all forms

What is a GSR Mentor?

A GSR Mentor is an experienced Committee Member who is willing to greet new GSRs and introduce and explain the workings of the ASC. They are available for guidance and assistance in all matters. They are basically Service Sponsors to all new members of the ASC. They are an individual resource for all members. All experience members of the ASC should be willing to become a GSR Mentor when they come to their first ASC. This is a learning process and no one is expected to know everything at any given time.

“GSR’S, WHAT TO EXPECT”

I. Introduction

Welcome to the Northeast Georgia Area Service Committee of Narcotics Anonymous.

“In Narcotics Anonymous, we apply the principle of anonymity in the way we structure our service organization. Our fellowship has no authoritarian hierarchy. We create boards and committees solely to serve us, not to govern. The various elements of our service structure are guided by the primary purpose and collective conscience of our fellowship and are held directly accountable for the service they do on our behalf. Those who serve on our various boards and committees are expected to do so not to seek power, property or prestige for themselves, but to selflessly service the fellowship that has made their recovery possible.” (It Works How and Why, p. 213)

II. Why be a GSR?

“Service to the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous has its own rewards. When we practice spiritual principles in our daily lives, a stronger relationship with our Higher Power develops. Our relationship with our group and the fellowship grows stronger, too. Service in NA is a learning experience that allows us personal growth. We begin to look beyond our own interests, setting aside our self-centered view of life in order to better serve the whole. We benefit spiritually in return for our unselfish service.” (It Works How and Why, p. 143)

Second Concept: The final responsibility and authority for NA services rests with the NA Groups.

When reading the Second Concept, it becomes very apparent why the Group Service Representative (GSR), is so important to the service structure of Narcotics Anonymous.

“The most important resource contributed to the service structure by an NA group is almost exclusively spiritual: its ideas and its conscience. Without the voice of the groups, the service structure may not know what kinds of services are needed, or whether the services it provides are ones the groups want. The groups provide the ideas and direction needed to guide the service structure in fulfilling its responsibilities. By voicing their needs and concerns, the groups also exercise their authority for the service structure they have created.

*The people who give their time to service work are a vital resource; without them, our service boards and committees would not exist, much less be able to serve. The group’s responsibility to the service structures is to elect a group service representative who will serve the best interests of the group and the entire NA Fellowship. By carefully selecting its GSR, then providing that person with regular support and guidance, the group exercises its ability to impact NA services, both directly and indirectly. In choosing a qualified GSR, then sending him or her out to serve on the group’s behalf, the group fulfills a large part of both its responsibility and authority for NA services.” (*A Guide to Local Services in Narcotics Anonymous*, Second Concept, pg. 3)*

III. GSR Description & Responsibilities

Group Service Representative (GSR): Elected by an NA group to participate on the group’s behalf in the ASC and the regional assembly. (*A Guide to Local Services in Narcotics Anonymous*, glossary)

“Each group elects one group service representative; 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 forums and assemblies at both the area and regional levels, and sometimes joining in the work of an ASC subcommittee. 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 the 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 interests of NA as a whole, not solely as advocates of their own groups’ priorities.

As participants in the area committee, GSRs need to be as well informed as they can be concerning the affairs of the committee. They study the reports of the

committee's officers and subcommittee chairpersons. They read the various handbooks published by Narcotics Anonymous World Services 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 committee.

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 area committee. At group business meetings, the GSR report provides a summary of area committee 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. In group recovery meetings, GSRs make available fliers announcing area and regional activities.

At area committee meetings, GSR reports provide 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. And if the group hasn't found solutions to those problems, the area chairperson will open a slot on the committee's "sharing session" agenda so that the GSR can gather the experience others have had in similar situations. If any helpful solutions arise from the sharing session, the GSR can report those back to the group." (A Guide to Local Services in Narcotics Anonymous, pg. 37)

"Basic equipment for group representatives usually includes copies of A Guide to Local Services in Narcotics Anonymous, area guidelines (if the area has them), and the log of area policy actions (available from the area secretary). Qualifications and terms of service for GSRs are determined by the groups which elect them." (A Guide to Local Services in Narcotics Anonymous, pg. 49)

NEGA Policy regarding GSR responsibilities:

"Each GSR must keep their own group informed and must represent that group's conscience in all committee decisions. GSRs should evaluate each vote in terms of the needs of those they serve. In addition to this, a GSR participates in helping to carry out the ASC's other specific functions. The attracting of new members, the planning and implementation of activities, and the aid given to the groups with specific situations are services which require much more effort than a monthly meeting."

General Policy:

- (4) GSRs are the only voting members at the A.S.C. meetings (or their alternates in their absence).
- (5) All A.S.C. Meetings are open to NA members who do not have a voice on the floor. However, only those listed below can make a topic or second one.

- (a) GSR or their alternate
 - (b) RCM and their alternate
 - (c) Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and Sub-Committee Chairpersons
- (10) Each trusted servant should acquaint themselves with Area Service Policy, the NA Guide to Local Service, and the Twelve Concepts for NA Service.
- (11) Reports from a GSR should be typed or written so the Secretary can have accurate notes. The reports should contain: (a) Name of Group; (b) Day(s) of the week it meets; (c) Meeting place(s); (d) Meeting time(s); (e) Number of members; (f) Number of people attending; (g) Situations, problems, or difficulties; and (h) Group Conscience decisions.
- (12) GSRs should give their Area contributions to the Area Treasurer at the beginning of or before the opening of the meeting.

IV. Service Structure

“In order to serve well, each element of our service structure must make an earnest effort at effective communication. As groups, as trusted servants, as service boards and committees, we must share fully with others, and listen carefully and respectfully to their words to us. Others may use language to divide the strength of their opponents, so that they may rule them; in NA service, we share with one another so that we may combine our strength, the better to fulfill our fellowship’s primary purpose. To maintain our accountability to those we serve, we are bound to inform them in a complete, accurate, and concise fashion of our activities. The non-governing nature of our service structure dictates that we seek others’ advice in our own decisions affecting us all. Open, honest, and straightforward communication nurtures the spirit of service in our fellowship and poisons the impulse to govern.” (A Guide to Local Services in Narcotics Anonymous, Twelfth Concept, pg. 21)

“Together, we recover; and together, we serve – this is the spiritual core of our program, the foundation of our fellowship. A structure based on that foundation could only be one of service, never of government.” (A Guide to Local Services in Narcotics Anonymous, Twelfth Concept, pg. 21)

V. Attending Area & Home Group Business Meeting

“There are three groups of participants in most area service committees: GSRs and their alternates, administrative officers, and subcommittee chairpersons. The Seventh Concept for NA Service says that “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.” Group service representatives provide a “grass roots” perspective to the area decision-making process, helping ensure that the committee’s feet are planted firmly on the ground.” (A Guide to Local Services in Narcotics Anonymous, pg. 49)

“Groups are encouraged to seek their own solutions to the challenges they face—and, most of the time, they find them. But sometimes a group faces a problem that is beyond any of its members’ experience. When that occurs, groups can send their GSRs to the area committee sharing session with a request for help.” (A Guide to Local Services in Narcotics Anonymous, pg. 67)

Most groups require the GSR to provide a GSR report which consist of information obtained from the most recent area meeting regarding the activities at the area, regional and world level. The GSR will also need to provide any topics that the group needs to address. Each group will be different in their individual needs from their GSR. To understand your home group GSR requirements, please see your group policy or group secretary for information.

As stated earlier, the A.S.C. requires the GSR to provide a handwritten or typed report at each area. The A.S.C. has a report form that may be used for convenience. In addition, the GSR needs to be prepared to vote on any “old business” and “new business” topics. It is highly suggested that the GSR take notes during the area meeting to provide the most accurate and complete information to their home group.

“Unity is the spirit that joins members around the world in a spiritual fellowship that has the power to change lives. By striving to see beyond our individual ideas and the interests of our own group, we come to understand that the common welfare of all NA must come first.”
(It Works How and Why, pg. 133)