



Southern Fairfield County Area
Group Service Representative
(GSR)
Orientation Guide

SFCASC meets the Third (3rd) Wednesday of each month at:
Saugatuck Congregational Church
265 Post Road East
Westport, CT.
6:30pm ~ 9:00pm

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What is a GSR

Group service representative (GSR)

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 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 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.

Alternate GSR

Groups also elect a second representative called an alternate GSR. Alternate GSRs attend all the area service committee meetings (as nonvoting participants) with their GSRs so that they can see for themselves how the committee works. If a GSR cannot attend an area committee meeting, that group's alternate GSR participates in the GSR's place.

Alternate GSRs, along with other members, may also serve on area subcommittees. Subcommittee experience gives alternate GSRs added perspective on how area services are actually delivered. That perspective helps make them more effective area committee participants if their groups later elect them to serve as GSRs.

Welcome to Area Service

What is an Area Service Committee?

An Area Service Committee (ASC) refers to the volunteers and committees as defined by a collection of neighboring groups. Each ASC provides services for the groups and the community, allowing each group to focus on its primary purpose.

In Connecticut, there are nine Area Service Committees,

Central Connecticut Area (CCA)

Greater Danbury Area (GDA)

Greater Hartford Area (GHA)

Greater New Haven Area (GNHA)

Greater Waterbury Area (GWA)

Mid State Unity Area (MSUA)

Tunxis Valley Area (TVA)

United Shoreline Area (USA)

And of course....

Southern Fairfield County Area (SFCA)

Each Area of them has committees/subcommittees that perform specific tasks. Some of these tasks include organizing activities, distributing literature, bringing NA meetings into treatment centers and jails, and helping inform the public about Narcotics Anonymous in their Area.

Why do we need an ASC?

- ◇ It is the vital link in the chain between the individual recovering addict in the group and the rest of the worldwide fellowship. Without it the groups would be isolated.
- ◇ It provides a forum of information to help co-ordinate groups and subcommittees
- ◇ The area receives donations from groups, in accordance with tradition 7, to maintain our services and further our primary purpose - to carry the message of recovery.

What the GSR needs to do at the ASC

- ◇ The GSR is selected by their group to serve as an active member of the ASC and is committed to attend each ASC meeting which is held on the Third (3rd) Wednesday of the month from 6:30pm – 9pm
- ◇ The GSR gives a report on the current status of the group and brings any donations from the group to the Area.
- ◇ The GSR may be asked to place the group's literature order or to pick up the group's literature at the ASC and return with it at the group's next meeting.
- ◇ Keep in mind Tradition 12, particularly during any voting, and carry the group's conscience "Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities."

Who's Who at the ASC?

The Administrative Committee

- ◇ Chairperson – facilitates the ASC meeting and ensures that the ASC keep to the agenda of business.
- ◇ Vice Chairperson – supports the Chairperson, liaises with the area sub-committees and stands in if the Chairperson is absent.
- ◇ Secretary – records what happens at the ASC in the form of minutes, which are posted to the SFCA website (www.ctna.org/sfca.cfm) prior to the next ASC meeting.
- ◇ Treasurer – keeps the bank account in order, receives donations, pays the bills, ensures that the subcommittees have the funds they need and keeps a record of all transactions.
- ◇ Regional Committee Member (RCM) – the link between the Area and the CT Region of NA.

The Sub-Committee Chairs

- ◇ Area Sub-committees – include Hospitals & Institutions (H&I), Public Relations (PR) and Activities.

Resource Positions

- ◇ Area Resources – Include GSR Liaison, Policy Coordinator, Literature and Web Servant.

And of course...

Group Service Representative (GSR) or Alternate GSR – The link between the groups and the ASC.

What the GSR needs to do outside the ASC

- ◇ Relay information from the ASC back to the group. Flyers, written reports, motion sheets, group reports, and the previous months ASC meeting minutes are available at each meeting. GSRs are encouraged to bring this information back to their groups.
- ◇ Report on what happened at the ASC at your group's business meeting at least once a month. The group's donations and literature stock are usually discussed along with any other issues affecting the group and/or ASC at that business meeting.
- ◇ Keep the regional scheduling committee informed of meeting changes to avoid addicts being misdirected.
- ◇ Become familiar with the 12 Traditions and the 12 Concepts of NA service.

Carrying the Group's conscience

From time to time issues arise at the ASC that needs the input from all the groups within the area. In this case the GSR needs to give the group all the relevant information at a business meeting and hold an open discussion. The group will eventually reach a conscience on that issue. This is the Group's conscience that the GSR will carry to the next ASC.

Motions from Groups

The accuracy of the group's intent. Once brought to area, the GSR obtains a motion sheet from the ASC Secretary, copies the motion and the intent, obtains a second and returns the completed motion sheet to the secretary to be brought up in New Business.

Voting

This can be confusing so it is important to ask if you need something explained. All remarks and questions made in a committee meeting such as the ASC, must be directed through the chairperson. This involves attracting the Chairperson's attention via a raised hand. The general rule is that only GSR's may vote on ASC elections and NA business. If, however, the vote is tied, the Chairperson has the "casting" vote.

Another exception is where the vote is on matters such as date/time of ASC or whether to extend the meeting to conclude business. In this case **all** in attendance may vote.

There is only ONE vote per group. If a GSR or alternate cannot attend the ASC, the group does not get a vote.

The three voting options are "FOR", "AGAINST", "ABSTAIN".

If a proposal is made it Must Be Seconded by A GSR before a vote can be taken. For this motion to then be carried more than 50% of the GSRs must vote FOR it. If the "ABSTAIN" and "AGAINST" votes together are more than 50% of the vote, the motion fails. You do not need to consult your group before voting to elect members at the ASC. As a trusted servant you can make an informed decision on which way to vote unless your group has instructed you otherwise. In matters affecting policy the vote must be a $\frac{3}{4}$ majority in order to change policy.

The "Order of Business" at the ASC

1. Call to Order

The ASC Chair will begin the meeting with a Call to Order. A reading of the 12 Concepts for NA Service (corresponding month) is read and discussed. After which, the ASC recognizes any new GSRs or Alt. GSRs, New Groups and Visitors.

2. Roll Call

The Chair will ask for the attendance of the administrative/subcommittee chairs and a count of the voting members (GSRs or their Alt.) present at the meeting. At this point there is an Attendance/Contact Sheet passed around.

3. Agenda

Along with the Attendance/Contact sheet, the Agenda Sheet is also passed around. The agenda sheet should contain any items to be brought up during new business.

4. Open Forum

The portion of the meeting that gives GSRs the opportunity to discuss information and issues that may affect the group, the area, the region or NA as a whole. This is also an opportunity to discuss any upcoming NA related events.

5. Reading of the Minutes and Reports (including BOD)

The previous months ASC Meeting Minutes are submitted and read by the secretary. Monthly status reports are submitted and read by the Administrative, Subcommittee Chairs and the CT Regional Convention of NA, Board of Directors seat.

6. Group Reports

Each GSR submits a report of the group they are representing including any group announcements, concerns and group donations. GSRs should complete a Group Report even if there is no group activity/concerns or monthly group donation being made.

7. Old Business

Old Business was the new business from the previous month that needs to be brought back to the current meeting for further discussion/resolution.

8. New Business

Motions and agenda items that need to be discussed and perhaps voted on or tabled back to groups.

9. Elections

Area committees hold elections for all their administrative and subcommittee chairpersons. If there is a vacant position, a position that is "Out to the Fellowship" (OTF), the Chair will call for Nominations or Volunteers to fill the open position.

Helpful Hints

Group Donations

ASC Policy prohibits accepting CASH in excess of \$25.00 - Group Donations or purchases from the ASC Literature Resource in excess of that amount (\$25.00) should be made by check or money order. (made out to: S.F.C.A.N.A.)

Literature Purchases

NA books and pamphlets can be purchased by local groups at the monthly ASC meeting. Literature Orders forms are available at:

https://ctna.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/sfca_LitOrderFormRev25Oct16.pdf

Order can be placed by contacting the Area Literature Resource by phone or email at: sfca-lit@ctna.org

RESOURCES

- NA World Website: <http://na.org/>
- CT Regional Website: <https://ctna.org/>
- SFCA Website: <https://ctna.org/areas/sfca/>
- CTNA Calendar: <https://ctna.org/calendar/>

