

Rhode Island Area Assembly Guidelines

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I. Purpose

The purpose of the Rhode Island Area Assembly Guidelines is to document procedures used by the Rhode Island Area Assembly that are not otherwise clearly defined in the AI-Anon / Alateen Service Manual. These guidelines supplement, but do not replace, the AI-Anon / Alateen Service Manual.

II. Amendments to Guidelines

Area Assembly Guidelines may be amended by two-thirds of voting members at an Area Assembly.

III. Frequency of Assemblies

- A. Rhode Island (Area 49) holds two Assemblies per year, typically in June and November.
- B. The November Assembly is also an Election Assembly. The terms for the Area Officers and Coordinators are staggered so that approximately 1/3 of the positions are elected each year. Every 3rd year, when the Delegate and Area Chair are elected, it is Area 49's tradition that a WSO Trustee is invited to attend and address that Assembly, as our guest and at Area cost.
 - 1. Elections may also occur at the June Assembly, as necessary, to fill Area trusted servant positions that are vacant for any reason between Election Assemblies.

IV. Eligible Voters

- A. Voice:
 - 1. Every active AI-Anon and Alateen member has a voice at Assembly.
- B. Voting members of Area Assembly:
 - 1. One vote for each registered AI-Anon or Alateen group in Area 49 (Rhode Island).
 - 2. Current Group Representatives are voting members of Assembly.
 - 3. If both the incoming and outgoing Group Representative of a group attends an Assembly, the group decides who will vote at Assembly (one vote per group).
 - 4. If a Group Representative cannot attend Assembly the Alternate GR may vote on behalf of the group.
 - 5. If both the Group Representative and Alternate GR are unable to attend Assembly, or if a group does not have an elected Group Representative, a member may be elected by the group as a Proxy Vote to attend Assembly on behalf of the group, to vote on behalf of the group and bring information back to the group.
 - a. In such cases, the member must bring a note from the group that he/she is authorized to vote for the group during the Assembly.
 - b. Member serving as proxy may not also be a member of Alcoholics Anonymous.
 - 6. A member may vote on behalf of only one group at Assembly.
- C. Abstentions are not considered as votes. Therefore, the number of voting members will vary from motion to motion.

- D. Because the number of members present in the Assembly room will vary from time to time, the phrase “two-thirds vote” is taken to mean two-thirds vote of Assembly members voting, not counting abstentions or those that have left the room.

V. Progression of a Motion

- A. Information is presented and fully discussed (Knowledge Based Decision Making).
1. Where possible, information is provided in advance of Assembly.
- B. Motion is made and seconded.
1. Only voting members of the Assembly may make motion or second motion.
- C. Discussion by all members, voting and non-voting.
1. All members have the right and responsibility to express their opinion. However, if someone else has expressed a member’s perspective, it is not necessary to say it again.
 2. Members, voting and non-voting, may speak once on a topic.
 - a. Exception: asking or answering a question.
 3. Discussion is limited to the Motion before the Assembly.
 4. The member who made the motion may speak first.
 - a. Following the discussion, the member who made the Motion may vote against the Motion they made.
 5. Avoid side conversations, so that all members may participate and hear the discussion.
 6. The Chair facilitates the discussion, but does not enter into the discussion at Assembly.
 7. Out of respect to those holding a minority viewpoint, applause is discouraged when a member expresses an opinion with which others may agree.
 8. Remember: Principles above personalities.
- D. At the close of discussion, Chair will ask “are you ready for the vote?” If no one objects, the Chair proceeds to take the vote.
1. If there is an objection, discussion may continue if time permits (see Section V.C. above).
 2. If the Assembly determines additional footwork is required for a fully informed group conscience, the motion may be tabled until later in the day or until the next Assembly.
 - a. Only voting members of the Assembly may move to table a motion.
- E. Vote on a motion may be taken by show of hands, unless a voting member of the Assembly calls for a written ballot.

VI. Election Assembly

- A. Supplies/equipment for election assembly.
1. Display board and markers.

2. Paper for ballots.
3. Containers for collecting ballots.

B. Voting procedure.

1. Introduction of candidates:
 - a) Each candidate may address the Assembly and briefly share about his/her service experience and interest in the position for which he/she is standing.
 - b) Members of the Assembly may ask questions or comment with regard to each candidate, with the candidates present in the Assembly room.
 - c) Following this discussion, all candidates shall leave the Assembly room prior to paper ballots being distributed for voting.
2. Balloting procedure for positions elected by written ballot:
 - a) See “Election of World Service Delegate” in Al-Anon / Alateen Service Manual.
 - b) On any written ballot, a candidate who receives two-thirds vote is elected.
 - c) Any ballot that is illegible will not be counted.
3. If two-thirds majority is not obtained on first ballot:
 - a) If there are only two candidates:
 - i. If no candidate receives two-thirds vote, a second vote is taken.
 - ii. If two-thirds majority is not obtained on second ballot, a third vote is taken.
 - iii. If two-thirds majority is not obtained on the third ballot, choice will be made by lot between the two candidates.

C. Rotation of leadership.

1. Rotation gives all members the privilege of serving. Officers/leaders are trusted servants; they do not govern.
2. Wherever possible, a member who previously served a full three-year term in any Area-level service position is encouraged not to stand for the same service position during the following term (i.e. not succeed him/herself).

D. Election of Group Representatives.

1. Eligibility: Members who meet the following 2 criteria are eligible to serve as Group Representative:
 - a) Member is an active Al-Anon / Alateen member, preferably with a basic understanding of the Al-Anon / Alateen program, and
 - b) Member is not also a member of Alcoholics Anonymous.
2. A Group Representative may repeat his/her term, provided the members of the group re-elect him/her.
 - a) Rotation of leadership is recommended wherever possible.

3. Voting procedure:
 - a) See “Election of Group Representative” in Al-Anon / Alateen Service Manual.
 - b) Each group may choose its own method of electing its Group Representative.

E. Election of District Representatives.

1. Eligibility: Members who meet the following 3 criteria are eligible to serve as District Representative:
 - a) Member is an active Al-Anon member, and
 - b) Member preferably is an incoming, outgoing, current, or active past Group Representative, or if not, otherwise has service experience of sufficient scope that they possess the qualifications for this position.
 - c) Member is not also a member of Alcoholics Anonymous.
2. A District Representative may repeat his/her term, provided the Group Representatives in his/her district re-elect him/her.
 - a) Rotation of leadership is recommended wherever possible.
3. Voting procedure:
 - a) District Representatives are elected by Group Representatives; election takes place at Assembly (see “caucus” in Al-Anon / Alateen Service Manual).
 - b) Each district may choose its own method of electing its District Representative.
4. Vacated position:
 - a) See “Election of District Representative” in Al-Anon / Alateen Service Manual.
 - b) If a vacancy occurs the Area Chair with input from the Area World Service Committee may appoint a temporary District Representative until another election takes place.

F. Election of Area Delegate and Alternate Delegate.

1. Eligibility: Members who meet the following 3 criteria are eligible to serve as Delegate or Alternate Delegate:
 - a) Member is an active Al-Anon member, and
 - b) Member is an outgoing or current Area World Service Committee member or former Area World Service Committee member who has remained active in service at the Area level, and
 - c) Member is not also a member of Alcoholics Anonymous.

A past delegate who has served a full three-year term may not succeed him/herself as Delegate or Alternate Delegate, but may be re-elected after an interim three-year term provided he/she has remained active in service at the Area level.
2. Voting procedure: Delegate and Alternate Delegate are elected via written ballot (*see procedure above*).

3. Vacated position:

- a) See “Election of World Service Delegate” in Al-Anon / Alateen Service Manual.
- b) If a vacancy occurs the Area Chair with input from the Area World Service Committee may appoint a temporary Delegate until another election takes place.

G. Election of Area Chair, Area Secretary, and Area Treasurer

1. Eligibility: Members who meet the following 3 criteria are eligible to serve as Area Officers:
 - a) Member is an active Al-Anon member, and
 - b) Member is an outgoing or current Area World Service Committee member or former Area World Service Committee member who has remained active in service at the Area level, or otherwise has service experience of sufficient scope that they possess the qualifications for this position.
 - c) Member is not also a member of Alcoholics Anonymous.
2. Voting procedure: Area Chair, Area Secretary, and Area Treasurer are elected via written ballot (*see procedure above*).
3. Vacated position: If the Area Secretary or Area Treasurer position(s) become vacant, the Area Chair with input from the Area World Service Committee may appoint a temporary successor until an election can be held. If the Area Chair position becomes vacant, the Delegate will serve as temporary Area Chair until an election can be held.

H. Election of remaining Area World Service Committee.

1. Eligibility: Members who meet the following 2 criteria are eligible to serve as Area Coordinators:
 - a) Member is an active Al-Anon member, and
 - b) Member is not also a member of Alcoholics Anonymous. (* see exceptions below).
2. Voting procedure: Each coordinator may be elected by show of hands, unless a voting member of the Assembly calls for a written ballot.
3. List of positions to be elected:
 - a) Alateen Coordinator– must be an Al-Anon Member in Alateen Service (AMIAS)
 - b) Alateen Process Person *– must be an AMIAS; also may be a member of AA as well as Al-Anon
 - c) Archives Coordinator
 - d) Email Coordinator *– may be a member of AA as well as Al-Anon
 - e) Forum Coordinator
 - f) Group Records Coordinator
 - g) Lifelines Editor
 - h) Literature Coordinator
 - i) Office Coordinator

- j) Public Outreach Coordinator
 - k) Website Coordinator
 - l) AA Liaison
4. Vacated position: If a vacancy occurs among Area Coordinators, the Area Chair, with input from the Area World Service Committee, may appoint a temporary Coordinator until another can be elected.

VII. Finances and Area Expenses

A. Assembly Expenses:

- 1. The Area World Service Committee will suggest a reasonable Seventh Tradition donation per group, based upon the expected expenses for each Assembly.
 - a. Assembly expenses may include meeting location and supplies.
- 2. No members should be put in the position of not being able to serve because of finances. It is an act of humility to accept reimbursement for all our expenses and aids in allowing a trusted servant to accept whom he/she is representing and to whom he/she should report.
 - a. A Group Representative is reimbursed by his/her group for Assembly-related expenses.

B. Area Budget:

- 1. The Area Treasurer initially prepares the proposed annual budget, with assistance from the Area Finance Committee.
- 2. The Area World Service Committee reviews and may amend the budget before recommending it to the Area Assembly.
- 3. The Area Assembly reviews and may amend the budget before giving final approval by a majority vote.
- 4. The annual budget is traditionally reviewed and approved at the November Assembly each year.

VIII. Assembly Planning Task Force

A. Establishing Task Force.

- 1. Prior to the conclusion of each Assembly, an Assembly Planning Task Force will be established by requesting volunteers from those present at the Assembly.
- 2. The Task Force may be made up of Group Representatives, District Representatives and Area World Service Committee members.
- 3. Where possible, a District Representative will chair the task force.

B. Duties of Assembly Planning Task Force.

- 1. Facility:
 - a. Investigate and reserve a suitable facility for Assembly.

- i. Ample table seating in main Assembly room, with other rooms/locations for breakout sessions.
 - ii. Appropriate heat, air conditioning or ventilation.
 - iii. Handicap accessibility.
 - b. Where possible, Assemblies rotate between three districts in Rhode Island.
- 2. Catering:
 - a. Breakfast and a selection of beverages will be provided by the host district and/or the AWSC.
 - b. Past options for lunch include: contributions brought by attendees, bag lunch, or catered for an additional cost.
- 3. Staffing and supplies:
 - a. Registration table, name tags, and volunteers to staff registration table.
 - b. Display tables:
 - i. Delegate, with handouts and/or love-gifts from WSC.
 - ii. Literature Coordinator, service and other literature.
 - c. Volunteers to assist with set-up and cleanup.
 - d. Projector and/or PA system, if necessary.
- 4. Report to Area World Service Committee with recommendations as to location, catering and staffing for Assembly.
 - a. Task force recommendations will be finalized by the April AWSC meeting for the June Assembly, and by the September AWSC meeting for the November Assembly.

IX. Assembly-Related Responsibilities of Area Trusted Servants

A. Area Chair

- 1. Before: Ensure AWSC plans Assembly agenda at least 30 days in advance of each Assembly.
- 2. During: Chair Assembly.

B. Area Secretary

- 1. Before: Provide Assembly agenda to District and Group Representatives.
- 2. During: Take minutes at Assembly.

C. Area Treasurer

- 1. Before: Prepare budget for AWSC review for November Assembly.
- 2. During:
 - a. Present report of Area income and expenses.
 - b. Present budget at November Assembly for the following year.

D. District Representatives:

1. Before:

- a. Remind groups of date, time and location of upcoming Assembly.
- b. Ensure Group Records Coordinator has correct names and contact information for each group's GR or Alternate GR.
- c. Encourage groups without GR or Alternate GR to send Proxy.

2. During:

- a. Identify voting members present for each group in district and provide count to Chair during roll call.
- b. Answer any questions GRs may have during the day, especially new GRs.
- c. If there is not time to answer all questions during the day, GRs can write down questions for DRs.