

Al-Anon Family Groups  
Northern NSW  
**Area Service Guide**





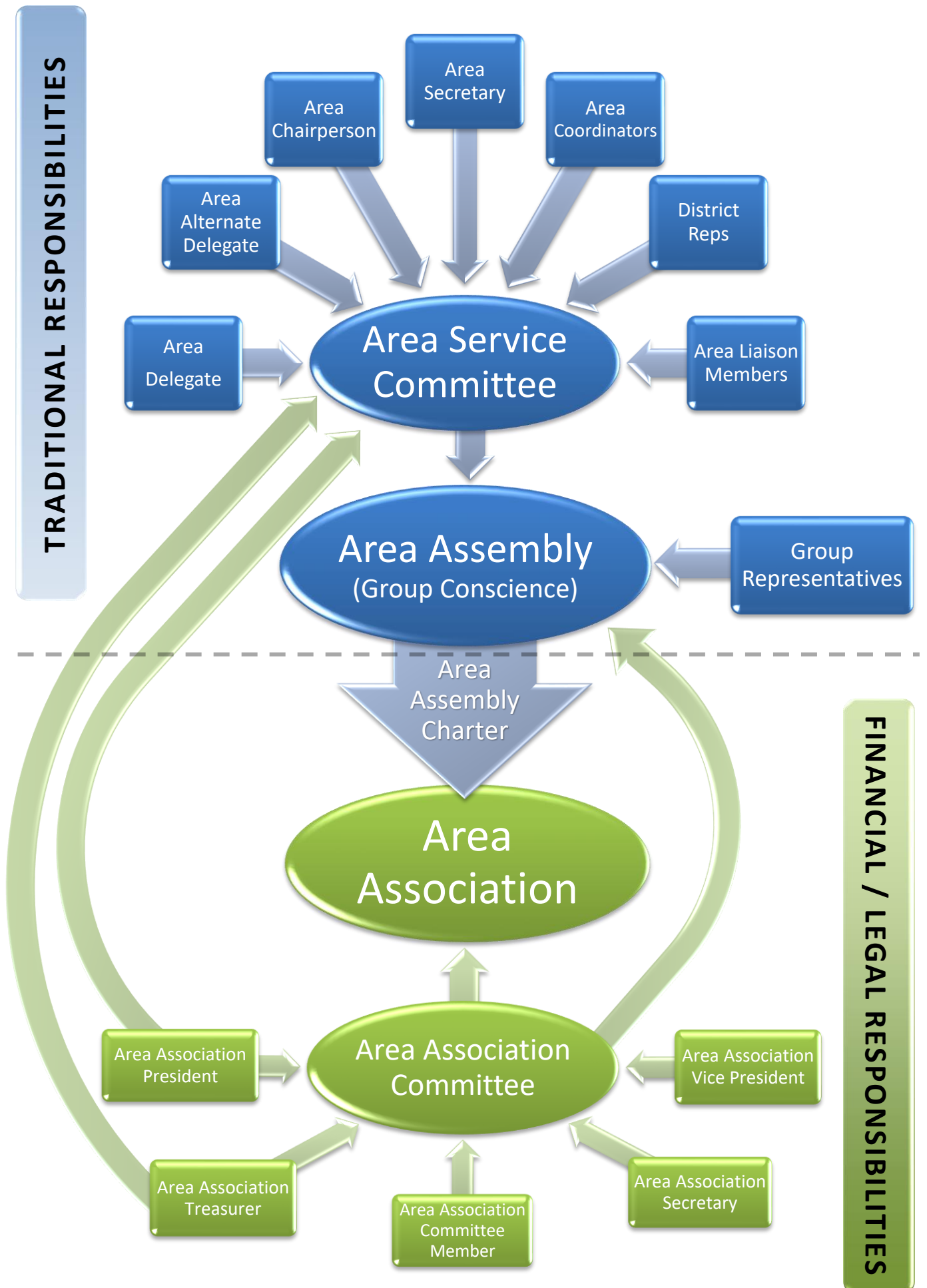
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## 1. Overview

- a) The Area Service Guide documents the relationship between the Assembly and Service Committee (fellowship) and the Association and Association Committee (legal body). It also includes the principles and suggested procedures for the operation of the Assembly and the Service Committee. The Area Service Structure Diagram outlines the new relationships and the Committee compositions.
- b) The Assembly represents the Group conscience of all the Groups in the Area and remains the primary decision-making forum for the Fellowship in the Area.
- c) The Service Committee and the Association Committee manage the traditional and legal affairs respectively between Assemblies.
- d) The Association is the incorporated body legally responsible for Al-Anon Family Groups in the Area. The members of the Association Committee also participate in the Assembly.
- e) The Area Service Guide is composed of three sections:
  - i. Assembly Charter
  - ii. Assembly Procedures
  - iii. Service Committee Procedures
- f) This Service Guide is intended to function in conjunction with the Northern NSW Area Guides and Information sheets (NAGs and NAIs). The NAGs are designed to provide concise details of each Area Service Committee role. The NAIs are intended to provide supplementary Group, District and Area information.





## **2. Assembly Charter**

### **2.1 Purpose of this Charter**

The Assembly Charter documents the principles and relationships through which AI-Anon can function in the Area. The provisions of the charter are not legal, but traditional, since the Assembly is not incorporated. It is an informal agreement between the Assembly and its Association.

### **2.2 Assembly Composition**

- a) Group Representatives (GRs) from AI-Anon and Alateen Groups in the Area.
- b) District Representatives (DRs) from Districts in the Area
- c) Members of the Service Committee
- d) Members of the Association Committee
- e) Members of AI-Anon Family Groups in the Area
- f) Members of AI-Anon Family Groups from other Areas and the Australian General Service Office (AGSO) as invited by the Service Committee

Each AI-Anon Family Group member present at Assembly has a voice and can participate in all discussions but only the GRs are entitled to vote.

### **2.3 Relationship to AI-Anon Family Groups in the Area**

- a) The Assembly acts for AI-Anon in the Area and for guidance of its Association services.
- b) The Assembly enables AI-Anon in the Area to express its views on policy and note deviations from Traditions.
- c) At Assembly and in their Districts the GRs are free to vote as their conscience dictates and not necessarily as instructed by their Groups.
- d) The Assembly Charter may be changed by the vote of three quarters of the GRs in attendance at an Assembly.

### **2.4 How the Assembly Functions**

- a) The Assembly will follow the principles contained in the General Warranties of the Australian Service Conference Charter. In all its proceedings the Assembly shall observe the spirit of the Traditions that:
  - i. only sufficient operating funds, including an ample reserve, be its prudent financial principle
  - ii. no Assembly member shall be placed in unqualified authority over other members
  - iii. all decisions be reached by discussion, vote, and whenever possible by unanimity
  - iv. no Assembly action ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy
  - v. though the Assembly serves AI-Anon in the Area it shall never perform any action of government
  - vi. like the fellowship of AI-Anon Family Groups in the Area which it serves, it shall always remain democratic in thought and action
- b) The Assembly meets annually, and special meetings may also be called on important and urgent matters that must be addressed between these meetings.
- c) The Assembly hears reports on fellowship activities from Service Committee members and business affairs from the Association Committee.
- d) Assembly members consider all matters affecting AI-Anon in the Area as a whole, engage in debate, appoint necessary committees and pass suitable motions for the direction of the Service Committee and Association.
- e) The Assembly may recommend action respecting serious deviation from AI-Anon Traditions and Concepts of Service in the Area.



- f) Every three years at an Election Assembly, in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Australian Service Handbook and additional procedures approved by the Assembly, Assembly members are elected as members of the Service Committee.
- g) Every year in June, suitably qualified AI-Anon members can be elected by the Assembly and nominated for membership of the Association. Once admitted to the Association, these members are then available for election to the Association Committee.
- h) The Assembly may adopt procedures and election processes by a method of its choosing.
- i) After each Assembly the Service Committee will make available a full report of its proceedings to all Assembly members.

## 2.5 How the Service Committee Functions

- a) The Service Committee is composed of qualified members of AI-Anon Family Groups in the Area.
- b) Two-thirds vote of GRs present at Assembly is binding upon the Service Committee.
- c) The Service Committee is the traditional (spiritual) service arm of the Assembly. The Service Committee has responsibility to:
  - i. Apply the policies published in the "Digest of AI-Anon and Alateen Policies" and any additional Australian policies as approved by the Australian Service Conference.
  - ii. Provide the fellowship with services to meet the needs of the AI-Anon Family Groups in the Area. It may appoint suitable sub-committees.
- d) The legal and financial integrity of any fellowship services provided by the Service Committee remain the responsibility of the Association Committee
- e) The Service Committee Procedures and any amendments thereto are subject to ratification by two-thirds vote of Assembly.

## 2.6 Purpose of the Association

The purposes of the Association are:

- a) To support the AI-Anon Family Groups in the Northern NSW Area, with reference to Tradition 9: Our groups, as such, ought never be organised; but we may create service boards and committees directly responsible to those they serve.
- b) To align with the 12 Traditions of AI-Anon
- c) To enact (a) and (b) by implementing the decision of the Assembly wherever possible, providing they:
  - i. Are legal
  - ii. Will not tend to bankrupt the Association
  - iii. Are in accordance with the Constitution
- d) To receive and administer funds which have been gathered by the AI-Anon Family Groups in Northern NSW Area and to disburse those funds according to the decisions of the Assembly as represented by the Northern NSW Area Service Committee.

## 2.7 How the Association Functions

- a) Two-thirds vote of GRs present at Assembly is binding upon the Association and any related service. This does not affect legal obligations of the Association in conducting business.
- b) In accordance with the provisions of the Constitution of AI-Anon Family Groups Northern NSW Area Incorporated, three quarters of voting members present at the Assembly may bring about a reorganisation of the Association if or when it is deemed essential and may request the resignation of the whole Association Committee and nominate new members to the Association Committee including the positions in the Committee those members are to hold.



## 2.8 How the Association Committee Functions

- a) The Association Committee is the legal arm of the Assembly.
- b) The Association Committee manages the business affairs of the Association. It may appoint suitable sub-committees.
- c) The Association Committee is composed of suitably qualified members of Al-Anon Groups in the Area, who have been endorsed by the Assembly. All Association members are members of the Association Committee.
- d) The Association Committee has responsibility to apply Al-Anon policies as published in the Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies and any additional Australian policies as approved by the Australian Service Conference.
- e) The Association Constitution and any amendments thereto are subject to ratification by two-thirds vote of the Assembly.
- f) Except in great emergency the Association Committee ought never take action liable to greatly affect Al-Anon in the Area as a whole, without consulting the Assembly. However, it is understood that the Association Committee shall reserve the right to decide which of its decisions may require referral to the Assembly.



## 3. Assembly Procedures

### 3.1 Introduction

These procedures grew out of the Area's previous Constitution for an Incorporated Association, registered July 1 2013, and now form the guidelines for the Fellowship to serve the Districts, Groups and members. They are to be read in conjunction with the Australian Service Handbook.

- a) There are nine Areas in Australia and each is divided into Districts as determined by each Assembly. Each District consists of the Al-Anon and Alateen Groups meeting in that District. Each Group consists of members who have been affected by someone else's drinking.
- b) Each Group elects a GR and an Alternate GR for a three-year term using any election procedure it chooses. The GR has a voice and a vote at their District meetings and Assembly. The Alternate GR or an Acting GR may attend the District meetings and Assembly if the GR is unable to attend. Each Group has one vote.
- c) In accordance with the Australian Service Handbook, the GRs in each District elect from among themselves, a DR for a three-year term. The DR becomes a member of the Service Committee with a voice and a vote at Service Committee meetings. The GRs also elect an Alternate DR to attend meetings if the DR is unable to attend and to complete the DRs term if the DR resigns. If the Alternate DR does not want to complete the term, the GRs elect another DR.
- d) To maintain separation between the traditional and legal entities of Al-Anon, a member elected as a GR, DR, Delegate, and their Alternates may not stand for nomination to the Association. Similarly, members of the Association may not become GR, DR, Delegate or their Alternates.
- e) If neither the DR nor the Alternate DR can attend a Service Committee meeting, the District may ask any GR from that District to attend the service Committee meeting with a voice and a vote.

### 3.2 Notice of Assembly

- a) The Service Committee shall convene Assemblies annually within six months after the close of the Associations financial year, on such date and at such time and place as the Service Committee thinks fit.
- b) The Chairperson shall, at least ten (10) days before the Assembly, cause notice to be given to each GR of the place, date and time of the Assembly and the agenda items to be discussed.
- c) If the nature of the business requires a special resolution of the Assembly, the Chairperson must, at least twenty-one (21) days before the date fixed for the holding of the Assembly, cause notice to be given to DRs, GRs and Service Committee members, specifying the intention to propose the resolution as a special resolution.

### 3.3 Special Assembly

- a) The Service Committee may, whenever it thinks fit, convene a Special Assembly
- b) The Service Committee must, on the requisition in writing of at least one-third of the total number of Groups, convene a Special Assembly.
- c) A requisition of Groups for a Special Assembly:
  - i. Must state the purpose or purposes of the meeting; and
  - ii. Must be signed by the GRs making the requisition; and
  - iii. Must be lodged with the Chairperson; and
  - iv. May consist of several documents in a similar form, each signed by one or more of the GRs making the requisition.
- d) If the Service Committee fails to convene a Special Assembly to be held within one (1) month after that date on which a requisition of GRs for the meeting is lodged with the Chairperson, any one or more of





the GRs who made the requisition may convene a Special Assembly to be held not later than three (3) months after that date.

- e) A Special Assembly convened by a GR must be convened as nearly as practicable in the same manner as Assemblies are convened by the Service Committee.
- f) All reasonable expenses incurred in convening the meeting shall be refunded to the persons incurring the expense.

### 3.4 Proceedings at Assemblies

- a) The Chairperson, or the Alternate Delegate in his/her absence, shall preside as Chairperson at each Assembly. In the absence of the Chairperson or the Alternate Delegate, the Delegate may chair the Assembly.
- b) Assemblies are general meetings of the Fellowship. All members are able to attend and have a voice. However, only GRs are able to vote.
- c) The ordinary business of the Assembly is to:
  - i. Confirm the minutes of the previous Assembly.
  - ii. Receive from the Delegate the report of the Australian Service Conference of AI-Anon Family Groups Australia.
  - iii. Receive reports from the Service Committee and Association Committee of relevant activities that have occurred since the last Assembly.
  - iv. Review the decisions of the Service Committee and the Association Committee.
  - v. Fill casual vacancies for positions elected by the Assembly.
  - vi. To receive and consider any financial report required to be submitted to members.
  - vii. Elect AI-Anon Group members to the Association.

### 3.5 Quorum at Assembly

- a) One-third of all GRs being personally present at the meeting, constitute a quorum for the transaction of the business of the meeting.
- b) No item of business is to be transacted at an Assembly or general meeting unless a quorum is present during the time the meeting is considering that item.
- c) If within half an hour after the appointed time for the commencement of the meeting a quorum is not present, the meeting;
  - i. If convened on the requisition of members, is to be dissolved; and
  - ii. In any other case, is to stand adjourned to a date and place determined by the Service Committee.
- d) If at the adjourned meeting a quorum is not present within half an hour after the time appointed for the commencement of the meeting, the members present are to constitute a quorum.

### 3.6 Voting at Assembly

- a) The GRs are the voting members at Assembly. Each Group has one vote only and all votes shall be given personally.
- b) If a GR is unable to attend, the Alternate GR may vote for the Group.
- c) If neither the GR or the Alternate GR is unable to attend, the Group may elect an Acting GR from its members to attend and vote for the Group.
- d) Any question arising at an Assembly for determination shall be put to a motion.
- e) Each motion shall be determined by a show of hands and the numbers voting for, against and abstaining shall be recorded in the minutes.
- f) If before or on the show of hands a written ballot is requested by the Chairperson or five (5) or more voting members present, a written ballot will be conducted in accordance with the directions of the Chairperson.
- g) A majority of two-thirds of the voting members present is required to pass any motion.



### 3.7 Election of Service Committee Members

- a) Election of Service Committee members will be held every three years usually in June (election Assembly), and not later than December. Elections are in accordance with the provisions of the Australian Service Handbook and this Service Guide.
- b) The Service Committee is comprised of:
  - i. Delegate
  - ii. Alternate Delegate
  - iii. Officers of the Committee
    - Chairperson
    - Secretary
    - Treasurer (elected by the Assembly and confirmed by the Association)
  - iv. Association President (elected from Association members by the Association)
  - v. Coordinators
  - vi. Liaison Persons (e.g. Chair of any Convention Planning Committee, TEAM Event, etc.)
  - vii. District Representatives (elected by GRs in their District)
- c) Each Service Committee member elected by the Assembly holds office until 31 December of the year in which the next Election Assembly is held but is eligible for re-election.
- d) A former Delegate can be re-elected as long as there has been a break of at least three (3) years since he/she last filled the position and provided he/she has remained active in service at Area level.
- e) The position of any Service Committee member elected by the Assembly becomes vacant if he/she fails to attend three consecutive Service Committee meetings without a reasonable explanation or no longer attends AI-Anon meetings on a regular basis.
- f) If a casual vacancy occurs in a Service Committee position the Service Committee may appoint a member to the vacant office up to and including the next Assembly at which time the Assembly will be asked to elect a member following the procedure for an Election Assembly.
- g) In the event of the failure to elect the Delegate, Alternate Delegate, or Officers of the Committee in the manner designated in the Australian Service Handbook, any member who has served as a District Representative or has served on a previous Service Committee for a three (3) year term and is still active in service in any position may be eligible for election as an Officer of the Committee, Delegate or Alternate Delegate.
- h) Election of coordinators – At the Election Assembly, the Chairperson will ask for nominations from the floor. The accepting nominee(s) are asked to provide a written and/or verbal Service Profile.
- i) Casual vacancies – coordinators. When the Chairperson receives notification of the resignation of a coordinator, he/she alerts the rest of the Service Committee. DRs are requested to ask for interest in the position in their District. Nominees are asked to send a written Service Profile to the Chairperson. The Chairperson will notify the membership in the Area News Sheet. Nominations can be considered by the Committee by email between Service Committee Meetings and voted on by a method and within a time limit set by the Chairperson, unless it is practicable to consider the Service Profile and suitability of the nominee and make the decision at the next Service Committee meeting.
- j) The GRs present vote for all Service Committee positions that are elected at Assembly. A vote is held if there is only one candidate. GRs have the option to vote for a candidate, or to abstain, or to state that there are no suitable candidates.

### 3.8 Alteration of these Assembly Procedures

These Assembly Procedures shall not be altered except as approved by a two-thirds majority vote of GRs at the Assembly.



## **4. Service Committee Procedures**

### **4.1 Purpose of the Service Committee**

The affairs of the Fellowship are managed by the Service Committee between Assemblies: The Assembly delegates full authority for routine management between Assemblies to the Area Service Committee.

### **4.2 Registers**

- a) A register of Groups shall be maintained, containing details of their meeting venue, mailing address, GR or Group contact.
- b) A register of the contact details of the Service Committee members shall also be maintained.

### **4.3 Resignation and Vacancies**

- a) A GR advises their AI-Anon or Alateen Group that they have resigned. The Group may then elect another member as GR.
- b) A GR advises all service levels of any changes to Group details, including the appointment of a new GR, using the form and the method supplied by the Area Service Committee.
- c) A DR advises their District that they have resigned. The District then elects a new DR in accordance with the Australian Service Handbook and advises the Service Committee of this change.
- d) The position of any Service Committee member will become vacant if he/she fails to attend three consecutive Service Committee meetings without a reasonable explanation or no longer attends AI-Anon meetings on a regular basis.
- e) A Service Committee member may resign from the Service Committee by giving written notice to the Chairperson.

### **4.4 Composition of the Service Committee**

The Service Committee is comprised of:

- a) Delegate
- b) Alternate Delegate
- c) Officers of the Committee
  - i. Chairperson
  - ii. Secretary
  - iii. Treasurer (elected by the Assembly and confirmed by the Association)
- d) Association President (elected from Association members by the Association)
- e) Coordinators
- f) Liaison Persons (e.g. Chair of any Convention Planning Committee, TEAM Event, etc.)
- g) District Representatives (elected by GRs in their District)

### **4.5 Committee Meetings and Quorum**

- a) The Committee must meet at least three (3) times in each period of twelve (12) months at such place and time as the Committee may determine.
- b) A majority of the Committee members personally present or, if necessary, via approved technology constitute a quorum for the transaction of the business at a Service Committee meeting.
- c) No business is to be transacted by the Committee unless a quorum is present and if, within half an hour of the time appointed for the meeting, a quorum is not present, the meeting is to stand adjourned until the Committee agrees on a new time and date for the meeting.



- d) If at the adjourned meeting a quorum is not present within half an hour of the time appointed for the meeting, the meeting is to be dissolved.
- e) At a meeting of the Committee:
  - i. The Chairperson or, in the Chairpersons absence, the Delegate or the Alternate Delegate is to preside; or
  - ii. If the Chairperson, Delegate or Alternate Delegate are absent or unwilling to act, one of the remaining members of the Committee may be chosen by the members present to preside.
  - iii. The Treasurer and Association President attend and report. They have a voice and a vote.

#### **4.6 Voting and Decisions**

- a) Liaison persons do not have a vote at Service Committee meetings unless they are also Service Committee members.
- b) Questions arising at a meeting of the Committee or of any sub-committee appointed by the Committee are to be determined by a show of hands and a simple majority of the votes of members of the Committee or sub-committee present at the meeting. If demanded by a Committee member, the vote may be taken in such a manner as the person presiding at the meeting determines.
- c) Each voting member present at a meeting of the Committee or of any sub-committee (including the person presiding at the meeting) is entitled to one vote only.

#### **4.7 Annual Reports of the Service Committee**

- a) An annual report, covering the calendar year, shall be prepared by each Service Committee member and provided to the Delegate by the 5<sup>th</sup> of January for preparation of the Area's annual report to the Australian Service Conference.
- b) An annual report, covering the period April to March, shall be prepared by each Service Committee member and provided to the Area Communications Coordinator for reporting to the Assembly.

#### **4.8 Sub-committees**

- a) The Committee may form one or more sub-committees, for e.g. A Convention Host Planning or TEAM Event, consisting of members of the Committee and other Al-Anon members as the Committee sees fit.
- b) The Committee will elect a Liaison Officer who will report on the activities of the sub-committee at each Service Committee meeting in person, or by a written report to the Chairperson.
- c) Any decisions made by a sub-committee will require approval by the Service Committee.
- d) A sub-committee may meet and adjourn as it thinks proper.

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