



Al-Anon Family Groups

Victorian Southern Area

Area Service Guide

[Version 3.3 November 2021]



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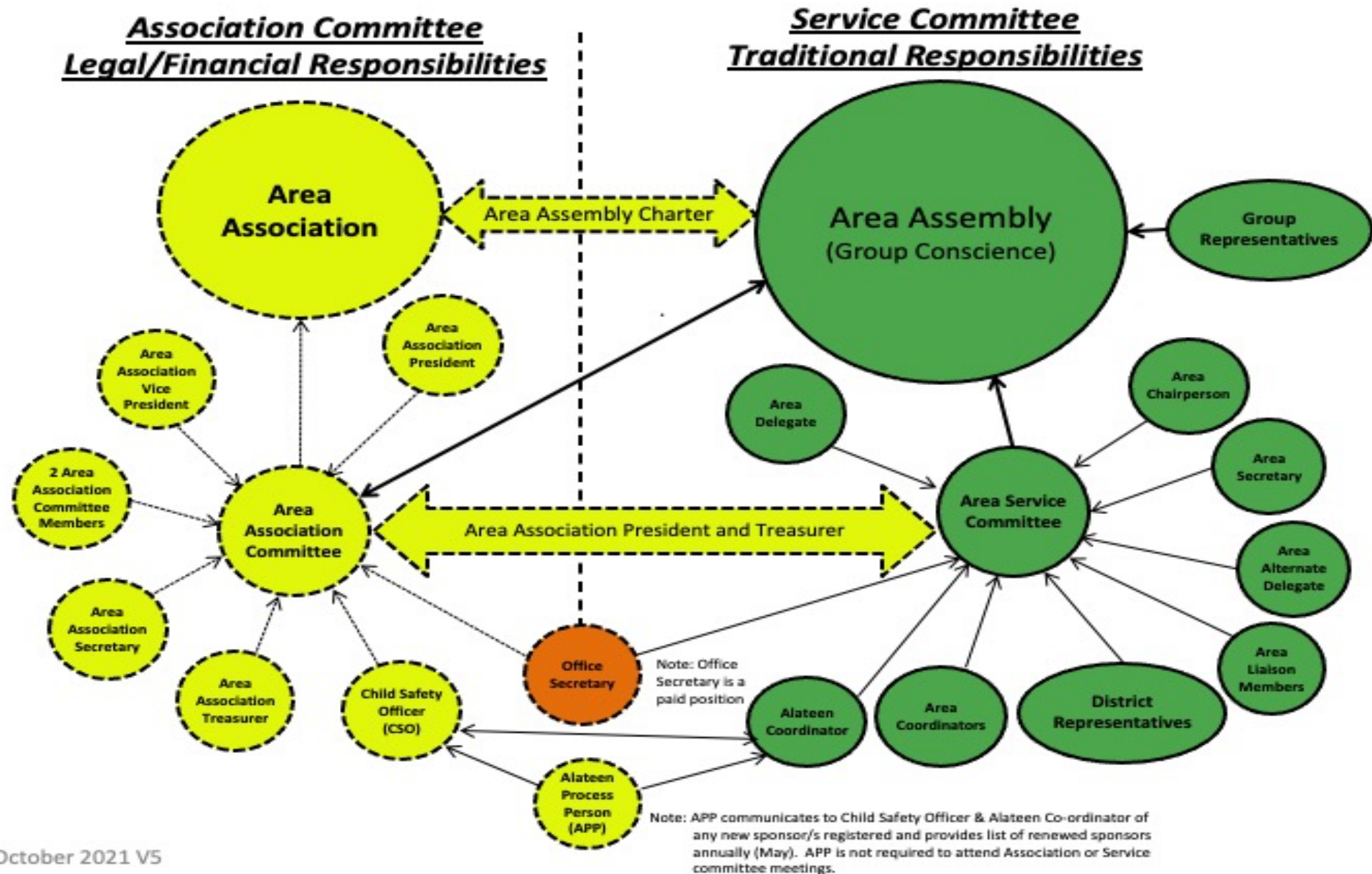


1. Overview

- 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 committee compositions.
- b. The Assembly represents the group conscience of all 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 Procedure



Victorian Southern Area Service Structure



October 2021 V5



2. Assembly Charter

2.1. Purpose of the Charter

The Assembly Charter documents the principles and relationships through which Al-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

The Assembly is composed of:

- a. Group Representatives from Al-Anon and Alateen groups in the Area
- b. District Representatives from districts in the Area
- c. Members of the Service Committee
- d. Members of the Association Committee
- e. Association Administrative Staff
- f. Members of Al-Anon Family Groups in the Area

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

2.3. Relationship to Al-Anon Family Groups in the Area

- a. The Assembly acts for Al-Anon in the Area in perpetuation and for guidance of its Association services.
- b. The Assembly enables Al-Anon in the Area to express its views on policy and note deviations from Traditions.
- c. At Assembly and in their Districts the Group Representatives 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 Group Representatives 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 Al-Anon in the Area it shall never perform any action of government
 - vi. like the fellowship of Al-Anon Family Groups in the Area, which it serves, it shall always remain democratic in thought and action



- b. The Assembly meets bi-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 on financial 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, Assembly members are elected as members of the Service Committee.
- g. Every year in November, suitably qualified AI-Anon members are 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 Group Representatives 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 subcommittees
- 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 approval by a two-thirds vote of Assembly.
- f. Matters requiring urgent decisions in between Service Committee meetings may be referred to the executive members (Delegate, Alternate Delegate, Chairperson and Service Secretary) and if applicable, to Association Committee members (President, Vice President and Treasurer) to make decisions based on the Group Conscience of the Service Committee. The outcome of any such decisions is to be reported at the next Service Committee meeting.



2.6. How the Association Functions

- a. Two-thirds vote of Group Representatives 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 Rules of Al-Anon Family Groups Victorian Southern Area Incorporated, three-quarters of all 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.

2.7. How the Association Committee Functions

- a. The Association Committee is the legal service arm of the Assembly.
- b. The Association Committee manages the business affairs of the Association. It may appoint suitable subcommittees.
- c. The Association Committee is composed of suitably qualified members of Al-Anon Groups in the Area. The Association Committee is chosen from Association members who have been nominated following approval by the Assembly.
- 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. If any subsidiary services are later formed, the Association Committee will be primarily responsible for their activities and financial integrity.
- f. The Association Rules and any amendments thereto are subject to ratification by a two-thirds vote of the Assembly. All Rule amendments will be presented to the first Assembly to be held after their adoption by the Association.
- g. The Association By-laws and any amendments thereto are not subject to approval by the Assembly. However, they will be presented to the first Assembly to be held after their adoption by the Association Committee.
- h. 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.
- i. Association membership process and selection
A member of the Area Association Committee suggests a person deemed to be appropriately qualified to become a member of the Association. The Chair of the Nominating Subcommittee then approaches that person and provides them with the Association Membership Application Information Sheet together with an Application form for Consideration for Association Membership for completion.
Upon receiving the completed forms the Association considers the application and if approved, the application is forwarded to the Victorian Southern Area Service Committee, on the recommendation of the Association, for approval.
Subsequent to the Service Committee approval, the application is presented to the next Al-Anon Assembly for final Approval."

2.8. Area Service Guide Review

- a. A review of the Area Service Guide by the Area Service and Association Committees is undertaken every 3 years in the 3rd year of the Area Service Committee term.



3. Assembly Procedures

- 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 Group Representative (GR) who has a voice and a vote at their district meetings and at Assembly. The group also elects an Alternate Group Representative who may attend the district meetings and Assembly if the GR is unable to attend. Each group has one vote.
- c. The GRs in each district elect from among themselves a District Representative (DR) who becomes a member of the Service Committee with a voice and vote at Service Committee meetings. The GRs also elect an Alternate District Representative to attend meetings if the DR is unable to attend and to complete the DR's term if the DR resigns. If the Alternate DR does not want to complete the term, the GRs elect another DR.
- d. 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.
- e. Group Representatives and District Representatives are elected for a maximum of three years and may stand for re-election.
- f. As well as the DRs, the Service Committee consists of the Delegate, Alternate Delegate, Officers, Coordinators and Liaison Persons who are elected by the Group Representatives at Assembly. The Association President, Treasurer and Office Secretary are also members of the Service Committee.

3.1. Introduction

These procedures grew out of the Rules for an Incorporated Association 2004 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 (Handbook).

3.2. Notice of Assembly

- a. The Service Committee shall convene Assemblies as outlined in the Handbook. Two Assemblies are held each year, usually in June, to hear the Delegate's Report and in November, which includes the Election Assembly every three years.
- b. The Chairperson shall, at least 10 days before the Assembly, advise each Group Representative of the place, date and time of the Assembly and the agenda items to be discussed.

3.3. 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 move and second motions and to vote.
- c. The day of the next Assembly is determined by the prior Assembly.
- d. The ordinary business of the Assemblies is to:
 - i. Confirm the minutes of the previous Assembly
 - ii. Receive reports from the Service Committee and the Association Committee of relevant activities that have occurred since the last Assembly
 - iii. Review the decisions of the Service Committee and the Association Committee
 - iv. Fill casual vacancies for positions elected by the Assembly
 - v. Elect Al-Anon group members for nomination to the Association



- e. Suggestions for additional agenda item topics are listed in the Handbook.
- f. The Assembly may transact special business of which sufficient notice is given.

3.4. Quorum at Assembly

- a. Twenty Group Representatives (GRs) personally present or, if necessary, via approved technology constitute a quorum.
- b. No item of Assembly business shall be transacted unless a quorum of GRs is present during the time when the meeting is considering an item. If within half an hour of the appointed time for the commencement of the Assembly a quorum is not present, the Chairperson shall schedule a further half hour delay in proceedings while GRs are contacted electronically to determine if they can attend the meeting, either in person or via approved technology. If after one hour of the appointed time for the commencement of the Assembly a quorum is not present, the Chairperson shall:
 - i) adjourn the meeting to a date within 28 days;
 - ii) specify the proposed date, time and place to which the meeting is to be adjourned; and
 - iii) subsequently, confirm the actual date, time and place to all eligible Assembly members as soon as practicable after the meeting

3.5. Voting at Assembly

- a. The Group Representatives are the voting members at Assembly. Each group has one vote and all votes shall be given personally or, if necessary, via approved technology. If both the GR and the Alternate GR are present at an Assembly, only one of them may vote.
- b. Any question arising at an Assembly for determination shall be put to a motion. Each motion requires a mover and a seconder from among the GRs. Each motion shall be determined on a show of hands and the numbers voting for, against or abstaining shall be recorded in the minutes. However, if before or on the show of hands a secret ballot is requested by either a GR or the Chairperson, the motion shall be determined by a secret ballot. A majority of two-thirds of the voting members present is required to pass any motion.
- c. To maintain the traditional authority of the Assembly as the spiritual conscience of the groups, three-quarters of all voting participants present at the Assembly may request in writing that the entire Association Committee resign, and nominate in writing the persons to become replacement committee members and the positions in the Association Committee those persons are to hold.

3.6. Election of Service Committee Members

- a. The Handbook sets out the procedure for an Election Assembly to be held every three years usually in November and outlines the method of nomination and election of candidates.
- b. The Service Committee is comprised of:
 - i. Delegate
 - ii. Alternate Delegate
 - iii. Officers of the Committee:
 - i. Chairperson
 - ii. Secretary
 - iii. Association Treasurer (elected by Association)
 - iv. Association President (elected by Association)
 - v. Coordinators
 - vi. Liaison Persons



- vii. District Representatives (*elected by GRs in their district*)
- viii. Office Secretary (*appointed by Association Committee*)
- 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 in accord with the practices and traditions of Al-Anon.
- d. The position of any Service Committee member elected by the Assembly will become vacant if he/she fails to attend three consecutive Service Committee meetings without a reasonable explanation or no longer attends Al-Anon on a regular basis.
- e. 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.

3.7. Registration of Groups

- a. The Assembly will accept registration of:
 - i. any Al-Anon or Alateen group in Victoria, south of the east-west line passing through Bendigo and in Tasmania, and
 - ii. any other Al-Anon or Alateen group that applies for registration as long as the Assembly votes in favour of that Al-Anon or Alateen group being accepted.
- b. The Assembly will assign the newly-registered Al-Anon or Alateen group to an appropriate district.

3.8. Alteration of these Assembly Procedures

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

4.2. Registers

- a. A register of Groups shall be maintained, containing details of their meeting venue, mailing address, group officers and contact details for each group.
- b. A register of the contact details of Service Committee members shall also be maintained.

4.3. Resignation and Vacancies

- a. A Group Representative (GR) is able to resign by advising their Al-Anon or Alateen group that they have resigned. The group should then elect another member as GR and advise the Service Committee of this change.
- b. A District Representative (DR) is able to resign by advising their district that they have resigned. The district should then elect another member as DR and advise the Service Committee of this change.
- c. 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 Al-Anon on a regular basis.
- d. A Service Committee member may resign from the Service Committee by giving written notice of their resignation 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. Association Treasurer (elected by Association)
- d. Association President (elected by Association)
- e. Coordinators
- f. Liaison Persons
- g. District Representatives (elected by GRs in their district)
- h. Office Secretary (appointed by Association Committee)

4.5. Notice of Service Committee Meetings

Written notice of each Service Committee meeting shall be sent to each member of the Service Committee by email or post, a reasonable time before the meeting arriving at least two business days before the date of the meeting.

4.6. Quorum at Service Committee Meetings

- a. Six Committee members (three of whom must be District Representatives) personally present or, if necessary, via approved technology constitute a quorum for the transaction of the business at a Service Committee meeting.
- b. No business shall be transacted unless a quorum is present and, if a quorum is not present within half an hour of the time appointed for the meeting, the Chairperson shall schedule a further half hour delay in proceedings while committee members are contacted electronically to determine if they can attend the meeting, either in person or via approved technology. If, after one hour of the appointed time for the commencement of the meeting a quorum is not present, the meeting stands adjourned to the same place, time and day in the following week.

4.7. Voting at Service Committee Meetings

- a. The voting members are:
 - i. Delegate
 - ii. Alternate Delegate
 - iii. Chairperson
 - iv. Secretary
 - v. Association Treasurer
 - vi. Association President
 - vii. Co-ordinators (or Assistant Co-ordinators in their absence)
 - viii. Liaison Persons (or Assistant Liaison Persons in their absence)
 - ix. District Representatives (or Alternate District Representatives in their absence)
 - x. Office Secretary
- b. Questions arising at a meeting of the Service Committee or of any subcommittee appointed by the Service Committee shall be determined on a show of hands or, if requested by a Committee or subcommittee member, by a written ballot.



- c. Each Service Committee member present at the meeting is entitled to one vote and a two-thirds majority of the voting members present is required to pass any motion.

4.8. Proceedings of the Service Committee

- a. The Service Committee shall meet at least every two months at a place and time determined by the Service Committee.
- b. At Service Committee meetings the Chairperson will preside. In their absence one of the members of the Service Committee may be chosen to preside.

4.9. Special Meetings of the Service Committee

- a. Special meetings of the Service Committee may be convened by the Chairperson.
- b. Notice of any special meeting shall be given to members of the Service Committee specifying the general nature of the business to be transacted and no other business shall be transacted at that meeting.

4.10. Annual Report of the Service Committee

An annual report for the year ending 31 December shall be prepared by each Service Committee member and provided to the Delegate for preparation of the Area's annual report to the Australian Service Conference.

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