



QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

For **GROUP REPRESENTATIVES & OTHERS “SERVING” IN THE AREA**

“Anybody can start something, but carrying it out is the real challenge. And all the rest of you are doing that job. You’re all founders in your own right”

~ Lois W.

SERVICE REFERENCE TOOLS

WORLD SERVICE OFFICE

Website address: www.al-anon.org/public and www.al-anon.org/members

Documents Available in Print: order from WSO or your local AIS Literature Distribution Center

1. *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual (P24/27) A must have resource!
2. Twelve Steps and Traditions (P-17)
3. Illustrated Traditions (P-60)
4. The Concepts – Al-Anon’s Best Kept Secret (P-57)
5. The Al-Anon Focus (P-45)

Documents available to download from the WSO website:

1. Al-Anon/Alateen Guidelines (G1 – G-41)
2. Annual Conference Summary (P-46)
3. Links of Service (S-28)
4. Joy of Service (S-57)
5. 7th Tradition Suggests (S-21)
6. Service Sponsorship (P-88)

AREA 24

Area 24 Website Address: www.marylanddc-alanon.org

Area 24 Website Content Highlights:

Find a meeting near you +

1. About Al-Anon – introduction to our Fellowship
2. Special Events (local and Area) with flyers
3. Business Meetings & Trainings (Districts and Area)
4. Resources

GROUP REPRESENTATIVES

SURVIVAL TOOLS FOR GRS AND OTHERS IN SERVICE

- The GR is the link between the group and worldwide Al-Anon
- Information flows in a circle - from group to district to Area to World Service and back again
- GR and Alternate GR are elected for a 3 year term
- GR has a service sponsor who is active in Al-Anon and has served as a GR
- GR has a Service Manual + reads and uses it
- The DR is your first link of service for questions and concerns
- GR and Alternate GR represent the Group at District meetings
- The Alternate GR represents the Group at the local AIS meetings and has a vote there
- GR or Alternate GR or a willing group member represent the Group at the Area Assembly – each Group represented has 1 vote
- No one is a perfect GR
- Ask questions – No question is stupid
- Be patient with yourself and others when you are overwhelmed
- Be patient with others who are pushing or digging in their heels
- Communicate – talk to each other and reason things out
- Your HP does not call the qualified, but qualifies the called

YOUR RIGHTS AS A GROUP REPRESENTATIVE

- You have the right to be reimbursed by your group for any expenses you incur in serving as their GR.
- You have the right to your group’s time and attention when giving reports and making announcements
- At District Meetings and Area Assemblies, you have the right to vote according to your own conscience even if other members of your group do not agree with you.
- Life happens. If for any reason you are not able to continue as GR, you have to right to resign your position and you do not have to explain why.

AREA ASSEMBLIES/AWSC MEETINGS

AREA ASSEMBLY:

An Area Assembly is an Area-wide business meeting. Groups send their GR (or another representative) to express a voice and vote on behalf of the group. Districts host these meetings so they are held all over the MD and DC area and usually on Saturday, from 10:00 am – 3:00 pm, with a lunch break. Our Area holds Assemblies in May and October with the following formats:

May – Delegate’s Assembly – an opportunity for all members to support and encourage our Delegate and to hear about the 5 day World Service Conference. GR’s share information from the Delegate’s Report (and Coordinators reports) with their groups – keeping Al-Anon information flowing to members.

October – At this meeting: 1) Lots of information is shared and we conduct Al-Anon Area 24 business; 2) The Area budget is approved annually; and 3) GR’s elect Area Officers and Coordinators every 3 years.

AWSC (AREA WORLD SERVICE COMMITTEE):

Prior to Assemblies, Area World Service Committee (AWSC) meetings are held, attended by the Area Officers, District Representatives, Al-Anon Information Service Liaisons, and the Area Coordinators – each one has a vote. All Al-Anon members are welcomed to attend but do not have a vote. At these meetings, the Assembly agenda is planned, information and reports are conveyed, and decisions may be made that cannot wait until the next Area Assembly.

ACRONYMS

AFG	Al-Anon Family Groups	HFT	Hope for Today
AAPP	Area Alateen Process Person	HAW	How Al-Anon Works
AIS	Area Information Service	HP	Higher Power
AMIAS	Al-Anon Member Involved in Alateen Service (Alateen meeting sponsors are AMIAS)	KBDM	Knowledge Based Decision Making
AWSC	Area World Service Committee	LDC	Literature Distribution Center
CAL	Conference Approved Literature	NERD	North East Regional Delegates
CMA	Current Mailing Address (for a Group w/o a GR)	ODAT	One Day at a Time
CTC	Courage to Change	PO	Public Outreach
DR	District Representative	TEAM	Together Empowering Al-Anon Members
GR	Group Representative	WSC	World Service Conference
		WSO	World Service Office

KEY CONTACTS

My WSO Group # is _____

My District # is _____

My District Representative (DR) is:

Name _____

Phone _____

Email _____

My District Meetings:

Where and When _____

My Term Began (year/month) _____

My Term Ends (year/month) _____

MARYLAND AND DC - AL-ANON AREA 24

Our Area Delegate is:

Name _____

Phone _____

Email _____

NOTES:

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How can we encourage members to volunteer for service, in the Group, District or Area? Tap someone on the shoulder and invite them personally. Ask if Al-Anon has helped them – would they like it to continue? Tell them you'd like to work with them and you think they would add so much to the group. Remind them that service aids their recovery. Be clear and don't minimize what is being asked.

How do we deal with someone who keeps the same service job for years? The bottom line is that if someone does not step down, then no one else can pick it up. Trust the process. If the group is not strong enough to continue until a new person steps forward, then maybe, as Lois W. often reminded us, that group isn't meant to be.

How do we encourage members to speak up when someone is not following Al-Anon principles? All members of the group are equally responsible to maintain a healthy group. Speak to members who are not following Al-Anon, (e.g. referring to outside literature, religion, counseling terms, other Twelve Step programs, etc.). Make gentle suggestions. It may be helpful to raise the issue in a group inventory or at a business meeting. Utilize Conference Approved Literature.

How do I avoid feeling responsible for everything? Whatever your service position is, that's your job but you are not in charge – this is a WE program. Continue to involve others. If they refuse, accept that not everything happens the way you would like it to.

What do I do if the Group doesn't want to hear my GR report or other Al-Anon announcements? Be enthusiastic and organized, and act as if you think the information is interesting. If there is a lot of information to pass along, spread it over two or three meetings. Remember that if you do not share the information that you learned at Assemblies or District meetings, you take away the Group's ability to express their opinions on important matters. Thank the Group for their attention and support for your service commitment!

What is a Group Inventory? Why is it recommended? Healthy Groups regularly conduct inventories. Some think of it as a Fourth Step for the Group – a chance to take a look at what is working well and asking members if they would like to do anything differently. It is a rededication of the group to its primary purpose. There are WSO Guidelines (G-8a and G-8b) that provide excellent outlines for conducting a group inventory; making sure every member feels free to express an opinion without judgment.

How do we encourage members to find and use sponsors? Make sure your meetings make sponsorship a regular topic and utilize the many pieces of CAL available on sponsorship.

What is a Service Sponsor and do we encourage members to find and use them? A Service Sponsor is someone who has served in the position previously. Trying to do a service job without a service sponsor is like taking a road trip without a map or guide!

What are the duties of Officers and Coordinators? There is a good outline in our Service Manual for most Area service positions and the duties for each. Our Area also has job descriptions (for all levels of service) posted on the Area Website.

The Al-Anon Declaration

Let It Begin with Me.

When anyone, anywhere reaches out for help,

let the hand of Al-Anon and Alateen

always be there and

Let It Begin with Me.