

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

for District 54 of the Northeast Texas Area 65 of Alcoholics Anonymous

District 54 is a geographical unit made up of AA groups in the northern section of the Dallas Metroplex. District 54 is part of the North East Texas Area (NETA). Our district includes approximately 20 groups and includes most Dallas groups north of Forest Lane and groups located in Carrollton, Garland, Richardson, Rowlett, and Sachse. All AA members are welcome to attend the meeting and provide input; however, each group designates one representative (General Service Representative) to vote on behalf of the group conscience. The meetings are generally the first Sunday of every month at 2:00 PM. The meeting is hosted by a different group each month.

PREFACE

This Guiding Principles document contains information about the suggested manner in which District 54 goes about conducting its service work and is intended in the spirit of the 2nd Tradition, which states that “For our group purpose, there is but one ultimate authority – a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.”

It is not the intention that this document should replace or supersede any AA conference approved literature or service material, such as the *AA Service Manual*¹, the books *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, *AA Comes of Age*, and the pamphlets *The AA Group*, *AA Tradition – How It Developed*, *The Twelve Traditions Illustrated*, and *The Twelve Concepts Illustrated*. Rather, this document is intended to describe how this district has traditionally gone about its business of trying to make 12th Step work possible so that the AA message may reach the next suffering alcoholic. This document is not intended to be a rigid set of rules, but rather a set of generally used methods for going about district business, a template that can act as a compass for future actions.

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¹ In this document, all references to the AA Service Manual are from the 2016-2018 edition.

I. District Trusted Officers

A. Officers

1. District Committee Member (DCM)
2. Alternate District Committee Member (Alt-DCM)
3. Secretary
4. Treasurer

B. District Committee Chairs

1. Cooperation with the Professional Community (CPC)
2. Correctional Facilities
3. Grapevine / La Viña
4. Literature / Intergroup Liaison
5. Public Information
6. Special Needs / Accessibilities
7. Treatment Facilities

C. Alternates

1. Secretary (non-voting)
2. Treasurer (non-voting)
3. District Committee Chairs (non-voting)

D. Method of Selection: See "Selection of Trusted Servants" under "Panel Rotation", §IV, Part C.

E. Service Responsibilities

1. Common Duties and Qualifications
 - a) The home group of each district trusted servant will be a group within District 54.
 - b) It is suggested that district officers be past GSRs.
 - c) Each district trusted servant should attend all District meetings. DCM, Alternate DCM, and Standing Committee Chairs should also attend Area Assemblies, Southwest Region AA Service Assemblies and Southwest Regional Forums.
 - d) On rotating out of their respective offices, each trusted servant should assist the incoming trusted servant with information and suggestions for fulfilling the responsibilities of the service position. Meeting minutes and other documents (workbooks, pamphlets, workshop documents, etc.) should be turned over to the incoming trusted servant.
 - e) Each district trusted servant should submit receipts with a report detailing expenses for reimbursement, within 30 days of the expense, or no more than 2 District meetings afterwards.
 - f) Expenses not budgeted require prior District approval.
2. General Service Representative (GSR) Responsibilities
 - a) Each group is autonomous and elects its own GSR. It is suggested in the *AA Service Manual* (p. S26) that each GSR have at least 2 years of sobriety.

- b) The GSR's responsibilities include attending monthly District meetings and Area Assemblies. Other duties are described in the *AA Service Manual* on pages S25-S28.
3. District Committee Member (DCM) Responsibilities
- a) The duties of the DCM are described in the *AA Service Manual* on pages S31-S33.
 - b) In addition, the DCM schedules District meetings and sets the agenda in accordance with the conscience of the district.
 - c) The DCM shall ask each GSR and District Committee Chair present at the District meeting for a verbal report. Each GSR will be given a chance to speak even if to say there is nothing to report.
4. Alternate DCM Responsibilities
- a) The main duties of the Alternate DCM are described in the *AA Service Manual* on page S33.
 - b) Maintains a District Speaker List for the sole use of District GSR's. (District Speaker List is made up of the following: District 54 GSRs, Alt. GSRs and other District 54 Trusted Servants.)
 - c) Encourages groups to provide the Secretary with a copy of their group history.
 - d) Actively arranges car-pooling and ride sharing to AA service functions.
5. Secretary Responsibilities
- a) Should be computer literate and have email access to receive and print meeting minutes and related materials.
 - b) Records the minutes of each District meeting.
 - c) Distributes copies of the monthly District minutes via US postal service and email, within 10 days following the District meeting, to the following:
 - i. any District 54 Trusted servants, GSRs, and Alternate GSRs who have requested to receive district communications via US postal service.
 - ii. all District 54 members having email.
 - d) Maintains a confidential list of all district trusted servants, GSRs, Alternate GSRs, and groups within the district.
 - e) Assures that copies of historical documents of records are submitted to the Webservant for digital retention.
 - f) Maintains this Guiding Principles document, assuring that incremental versions are clearly distinguishable.
 - g) Maintains a calendar of service events including District meetings, assemblies, Forums, state conventions, and any others as appropriate.
6. Alternate Secretary Responsibilities (non-voting, appointed position)

- a) Should be computer literate and have email access to receive and print meeting minutes and related materials.
- b) Assumes Secretary's duties in his/her absence.

7. Treasurer Responsibilities

- a) As directed by the district, conducts all financial activities of the district.
- b) Chairs the budget committee and participates in the year-end process of preparing the next year's budget to be presented for approval and voted on in December of each year (see "District Budgetary and Financial Procedures", §III, Part D).
- c) Maintains a business banking account for the deposit and disbursement of district funds.
- d) Secures a Post Office Box for receiving contributions.
- e) Collects 7th Tradition donations from groups and members, and regularly deposits the funds in the district checking account.
- f) Provides monthly reporting to the district, including the current balance sheet, a summary of group contributions, and budget vs. actual income and expenses.
- g) Maintains forms and procedures for expense reimbursement and should be available to district trusted servants to show how they should be used.
- h) Makes certain that all the district's financial activities are in compliance with bank, IRS and any other appropriate business guidelines.
- i) Should be computer literate and has access to a computer to prepare district reports.
- j) Ensures that the Alternate Treasurer is familiar with district financial reporting and procedures and with the Treasurer's responsibilities.

8. Alternate Treasurer Responsibilities (non-voting, appointed position)

- a) Should be familiar with the district financial reporting and budgetary procedures and with the Treasurer's responsibilities. Should be prepared to step in for the Treasurer if the Treasurer is unable to perform his responsibilities.
- b) Sits on the budget committee and participates in the year-end process of preparing the next year's budget.
- c) Should be computer literate and have access to a computer.

9. District Committees Chairs

- a) A general description of committee chairs and the duties of committee chairs can be found in the *AA Service Manual* on pages S61-62.
- b) Cooperation with the Professional Community, Correctional Facilities, Grapevine / La Viña, Literature/Intergroup, Public Information, Special Needs / Accessibilities, and Treatment Facilities committee chairs should hold committee meetings with the respective committee representatives from groups within the district.
- c) District committee chairs should attend the appropriate NETA committee meetings for their area of service. It is also desirable that committee chairs participate in Intergroup level activities for their area of service, wherever possible and appropriate.

- d) District committee chairs should provide a report to all District members by email prior to the monthly meeting.
10. Resignation of Service Workers
 - a) In the event that a Trusted Servant has to resign, this should be done in writing to the DCM.
 - b) Filling vacancies due to resignations during the panel:
 - i. In the case of an Officer, if multiple candidates express interest in a service position, elections based on Third Legacy Procedures will be held. See the *AA Service Manual*, pages S21-S23.
 - ii. If there are not multiple candidates for a vacant position, the DCM shall appoint a suitable replacement to complete the panel subject to District disapproval.
 11. Inactive Service Workers
 - a) The *AA Service Manual* discusses Inactive Service Workers on page S37.
 - b) The district should consider replacement of trusted servants in the event that they miss two consecutive District meetings or are not fulfilling their duties.

II. The Process of Making and Passing a Motion

A. General Information

1. Meetings may be fairly informal, but attention should be on one motion at a time without the disruptive influence of private conversations.
2. On simple matters a majority vote is enough – even ‘a sense of the meeting’ can take the place of a vote at times. In such a case the DCM asks “Is it the sense of the meeting that...?” If there are no nays, it is apparent that there is accord.
3. A District establishes its own guidelines, and the DCM should be sure that all members are aware of current suggested procedures in the District 54 Guiding Principles. As suggested by the *AA Service Manual*, p. S45, if members want to make a procedural change, it should be done before a vote is taken, or before an election is conducted.

B. Eligible voters are defined as the following:

1. Any GSR from a group within District 54.
 - a. If a group’s GSR is not present, then the Alternate GSR may vote.
 - b. If neither a group’s GSR nor Alternate GSR are present, anyone present whose home group is within District 54 may vote, if designated by their group to do so.
2. District Officers (see “District Trusted Officers”, §I, Part A). If the DCM, Secretary or Treasurer is not present, the corresponding Alternate may vote.
3. District Committee Chairs (see “District Trusted Officers”, §I, Part B). If a District Committee Chair is not present, the Alternate Chair for that committee may vote.

C. The process of a motion is as follows:

1. A motion is made from the floor by the original presenter who can be any eligible voter.
 - a. The motion should be made in writing and given to the Secretary.

- b. Only one motion at a time may be on the floor.
2. The motion is seconded (If not, the motion dies for lack of a second).
3. The motion is then read back by the Secretary.
4. The floor is opened for the purpose of allowing those present to ask questions for clarification of the motion, and the presenter may reword, modify, withdraw, or postpone the motion. (The merits of the motion are not yet discussed.) At this point, the District Committee Member may recommend that the motion be postponed and put on the agenda for the following District meeting. Some of the factors that a DCM may consider when making this request might be:
 - a. Could the motion break one of the Traditions or Concepts?
 - b. Will it affect the groups, other districts, or AA as a whole?
 - c. Does it go against the district's current policies?
 - d. Should the motion be tabled until all pertinent information has been gathered for a well-informed group conscience?
 - e. Should the GSRs have the opportunity to get feedback from their groups before proceeding?
5. If modified, the Secretary reads back the modified motion.
6. The DCM opens the floor for discussion of the motion.
7. Discussion may be halted by anyone with a request to close discussion by "calling the question".
8. A vote is then taken to close discussion. If it passes, a vote is taken on the actual motion as it stands on the floor. If it does not pass, then discussion continues. Repeat from 6.
9. The DCM then calls for any minority voice.
10. After hearing the minority voice, anyone who voted in the majority may call for a revote.
11. If a member in the majority moves for a revote, those present vote on whether to reopen the floor for voting on the motion.
 - a. If the motion to revote passes, the original motion is then read back again by the Secretary a revote is taken.
 - b. Upon the second vote, if the motion does not pass, it may not return to the floor during the current meeting.

III. District Budgetary and Financial Procedures

- A. The district shall maintain a line item budget for all trusted servants of the district.
- B. The purpose of the budget shall be:
 1. To substantiate to any group within the district what the plan of the district is for the expenditure of group contributions.
 2. To insure that there are adequate funds available to allow all trusted servants to participate in all district, area and regional functions.
 3. To allow trusted servants to plan their expenditures within their budget.
 4. To define what expenses are reimbursable.
- C. The district shall maintain a prudent reserve of funds, the amount of which to be determined each panel. This amount shall not exceed three months of projected expenses.

D. The DCM will designate a budget committee in July of each year, chaired by the district Treasurer to prepare the budget for the following year. The first draft shall be presented to the district in September, thereby allowing adequate time for all trusted servants to have input into the final budget. The proposed final budget will be presented in November for the district's final review, to be voted in December.

E. If it is determined during the final quarter of the year that funds allocated in the budget for a particular committee or expense item will not be used, those funds may be reallocated between different committees at that time with the district's approval. In the event of reallocation between committees, it is suggested that both committee chairs be consulted before any reallocation is considered.

F. If the district has sufficient funds available, standing committee chairpersons may request special funding to be approved by the district.

G. At the end of each panel rotation, any funds held by the district in excess of the budget-defined operating expenses plus prudent reserve should be contributed to other AA service entities, such as GSO or NETA 65.

H. All checks are disbursed by the Treasurer. In an emergency, if the Treasurer is not available, the DCM is authorized to disperse funds.

I. It is suggested that each district committee should have a distinct account through the Dallas Intergroup for the purposes of buying literature.

J. Any time funds are paid in advance, such as for Assemblies, receipts and unused funds should be returned no later than within 30 days after the expense is incurred or no more than two District meetings afterward.

K. The DCM should perform a quarterly review of the districts bank balances.

L. If a contribution is received for a specific committee, it should not be included in the district budget as general revenue.

IV. Panel Rotation

A. District 54 will follow the same panel rotation cycle as Area 65. (See the *AA Service Manual*, S109-S110.)

B. The outgoing DCM should schedule a meeting for incoming and outgoing officers to share experience. This meeting would have the dual purpose of facilitating the process of handing off service materials and responsibilities, as well as being a Sharing Session (as described in the *AA Service Manual* on page S40).

C. Selection of Trusted Servants

1. District Officers are elected in a District meeting no less than 30 days prior to the Area 65 Election Assembly in even numbered years, using The Third Legacy Procedures outlined in the *AA Service Manual* on pages S21-S23.
2. The eligible voters for district elections are the same as those defined in the section "The Process of Making and Passing a Motion", §II, Part B.

3. Eligible candidates must be present and indicate their willingness and ability to serve.
4. District Committee Chairs are to be selected by the incoming and outgoing DCM, and presented for disapproval before the district.
5. The Secretary, Treasurer, and Committee Chairs may select their own alternates and present them for disapproval before the District meeting.

D. Inventory

1. A district inventory should be held near the end of the panel rotation.
2. The DCM will select a moderator and schedule a district inventory to take place in November prior to the panel rotation.
3. The Secretary will take notes during the inventory.
4. The DCM will form an ad hoc committee to review the inventory and make suggestions as it finds appropriate in January.
5. The Secretary will send a copy of the inventory and any ad hoc committee recommendations to the Area 65 Delegate and the General Service Office.

V. District Website

A. The District 54 website will serve as a place for District 54 members to become informed about District 54 Officers, Standing Committees, District meetings, District minutes, and other events as appropriate.

B. The District website is a function of the Public Information Committee.

C. The Public Information Committee chair is responsible for the maintenance of the District 54 website (same as NETA and GSO) and may establish a District 54 website committee (including a Webservant) to assist with this task.

D. The website will preserve the anonymity of AA members.

E. Any suggested changes will be brought to the District 54 Public Information chair for review. The Public Information chair will bring changes to the District for consideration and approval.