

# District 23

**Structure**

**Manual**

***“I am responsible...  
when anyone, anywhere reaches out  
for help, I want the hand of A.A.  
always to be there.  
And for that, I am responsible.”***

# **District 23 Service Manual**

## **Introduction**

District 23 is comprised of groups primarily in Central Bucks and Montgomery Counties. The District Committee is made up of District Officers and General Service Representatives (GSR), of each district 23 group that chooses to participate.

No Action by a prior District Committee is binding on an incoming panel. Each newly elected District Committee Member may make recommendations for the incoming committee's consideration. Each panel may add to or update this manual as it sees fit. This District 23 Structure Manual is intended for use as a guide; a reference and a resource for what has worked in the past.

## **Statement of Purpose**

The purpose of the District committee is to facilitate communication between the groups, the District, the Area, and the General Service Office by means of the General Service Conference. District meetings provide an opportunity for fellowship and are our forum for discussion of group problems and experiences. We seek to become knowledgeable through the study and discussion of AA's traditions and concepts. We are responsible for encouraging a spirit of unity, service, and fellowship within our groups and the District.

## **District Roles**

The District Officers include the District Committee Member (DCM), the Alternate District Committee Member (ADCM), the Treasurer, and the Secretary.

**The DCM** is an essential link between the group's GSR and the Area's Delegate to the General Service Conference. As leader of the District Committee, the DCM is exposed to the group conscience of that district. As a member of the Area Committee, he or she is able to pass on this thinking to the Area Delegate and the Area Committee.

### ***Qualifications:***

*The DCM has typically served as a General Service Representative (GSR) and is elected by other GSRs at a district election to take responsibility for district activities. If the person elected is currently serving as a GSR, the home group should elect a new GSR to fill the vacated position. The DCM should have enough sobriety, generally four or five years or more, to be eligible for election as an area officer.*

### **District level duties:**

- Chairs the monthly district meetings. Gives DCM report.
- Invites guest speakers for educational purposes, when appropriate.
- Coordinates service activities in the district.
- Keeps group information up to date for AA directory.
- Coordinates the forming of subcommittees and advises them.
- Visits groups regularly.
- Oversees the election of new district officers.

### **Area level duties:**

- Participates in the Area 59 quarterly meetings and submits a District report.
- Carries the collective group conscience of the AA groups in District 23 to the Area Committee.
- Submits updated group information to the appropriate Area Officer.
- Participates in an Area Subcommittee as determined by the Delegate.
- Attends other Area Activities such as the DCM Orientation, the Pre-Conference Sharing Session, Area Day, NERAASA, NERF, Mini Assemblies, and the Area Convention/Assembly.
- Votes in the election of new officers who will serve Area 59.

\*\*\*\*\*

**The ADCM** serves as a backup for the DCM. If the latter resigns – or for any reason is unable to serve – the alternate steps in.

### ***Qualifications:***

*The ADCM's qualifications are generally the same as the DCM's.*

### **District level duties:**

- Attends monthly district meeting. Gives ADCM report.
- Advises subcommittees as needed.
- Is encouraged to assist, participate, and share in the DCM's responsibilities, attending district and Area functions whenever possible.
- Attends yearly Area Convention/Assembly.
- Chairs District meeting when area chair is unable to attend.

**Area level duties:**

- Attends Area Meetings with the DCM, if possible.
- Is encouraged to attend other Area Activities such as the DCM Orientation, the Pre-Conference Sharing Session, Area Day, NERAASA, NERF and Mini Assemblies.

\*\*\*\*\*

**The Secretary** can add great vitality and drive to the District.

***Qualifications:***

*Secretaries are generally elected at the District election.*

**District level duties:**

- Attends monthly district meetings and calls roll.
- Records the meeting minutes.
- Distributes meeting minutes to members.
- Sends District meeting minutes to all Area Officers.
- Maintains and updates confidential list of the current GSRs.
- Advises subcommittees as needed.

\*\*\*\*\*

**The Treasurer** should be a responsible person, who can keep good records.

***Qualifications:***

*The treasurer is generally elected from present GSRs at the District election. Basic accounting skill is beneficial.*

### **District level duties:**

- Attends monthly district meeting and gives financial report. (Oral and written.)
- Collects and records group contributions.
- Maintains the District bank accounts and pays for District expenses.
- Advises subcommittees as needed.

**NOTE:** The Secretary and Treasurer are encouraged to attend Area functions whenever possible, especially The Pre-Conference Assembly and the Mini-Assembly. This allows them to experience how the Conference structure works and meet the Area Officers and other DCMs.

\*\*\*\*\*

**The GSR** has the job of linking his or her group with AA as a whole. The GSR keeps the group informed, and then expresses the group conscience to the Committee Member at the district meeting. A GSR shares knowledge of AA's traditions and concepts thereby providing vital information for helping groups make informed decisions.

***“By choosing the most qualified man or woman as GSR a group helps secure its own future and the future of A.A. as a whole.”(GSR Service pamphlet P-19)***

### ***Qualifications***

- *Desire to serve*
- *Confidence of group and ability to listen and learn.*
- *Usually have at least 2 years of sobriety*
- *Time available for attendance at district meetings, events, and at the annual Area Convention/Assembly.\**

### **District level duties:**

- Participates in monthly district meeting and reports back to his or her group.
- Serves on a district subcommittee as assigned by the DCM.
- Keeps the district informed about group changes.
- Participates in the election of new District Officers.
- Informs the District Committee of group problems and experiences.

### **Area level duties:**

- Attends yearly Area Convention/Assembly.
- Votes in the election of new officers who will serve Area 59.
- (Many groups are now financially supporting their GSR to attend service functions.)

**NOTE:** GSRs are encouraged to attend Area functions whenever possible, especially The Pre-Conference Sharing Session and the Mini-Assembly. This allows GSRs to experience how the Conference structure works and meet the Area Officers and other DCMs. It is beneficial to meet the Officers and DCMs because these are the people that the GSRs will probably be voting for at election time.

### **\*What is the Area Convention/Assembly?**

The Area Convention/Assembly is held annually in the fall of each year. This event is open to the general membership and, in addition to hosting the Area Assembly, provides informative workshops, meetings and fellowship for all. The Assembly meeting convenes on Saturday and, although all members are welcome, only Area and District Committee members may participate in the discussion. Most groups make it financially possible for GSRs to attend this function.

An Election Assembly takes place every even year within the convention weekend for the purpose of electing a new Area Panel of officers: Delegate, Alternate Delegate, Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, and Officer-At-Large.



## **District Committee Vacancies (If someone vacates their position during their regular term)**

\*Please note that an officer cannot serve in the same position twice.

### **DCM**

Typically a “move-up” procedure is used whereby the ADCM automatically fills the position. If this is not feasible the position can be filled by any current district officer or GSR by election.

### **Other Officers (ADCM, Treasurer, Secretary)**

The position can be filled by any current officer or GSR by election.

## **Default of District Officers**

District Officer positions will be considered vacant after three missed meetings in a row.

## **Removal of Officers**

If someone should find cause to recommend that an officer be removed from office, a motion should be made during the new business portion of the meeting. Normal voting procedures are followed.

District inventories can also be used as a vehicle to open discussion about issues that arise in this category. The current panel is free to choose what they consider the best course of action.

## **District 23 Meetings**

District 23 meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month at 7:30 PM at St. John's Lutheran Church, York Rd, Hatboro.

All members of AA are welcome to attend the monthly District meeting. Only GSRs or designates may make motions at district business meetings. It is expected that visitors not enter into discussion during the regular meeting.

### **Typical Meetings**

- Roll call
- Secretary's Report- review of the last meetings minutes
- Treasury's Report- financial report
- Group Concerns- Group will discuss any concern presented by a GSR
- Study the AA Traditions and Concepts
- DCM's Report
- Sub Committee's report
- Old business
- New business

### **Committee System**

These are examples of committees that district 23 has utilized in the past.

1. Grapevine- This committee purchases Grapevine materials and makes them available at meeting anniversaries and other district events.
2. Workshop- Committee members will organize district workshops. This committee may cooperate with other districts for a combined event.
3. Visitation – This committee will visit groups that do not have representation at the district meeting. They encourage all groups to have a GSR participate.
4. Structure – This committee develops and updates the manuals and other district reference materials.

5. Long-timers Brunch – This committee organizes this annual brunch with speaker presentations. Speakers have 30 years or more of sobriety. It is an open event.
6. Archives – This committee contacts and collects group histories and materials in a binder. The committee makes the binders available at meeting anniversaries and other district events.
7. GSO Bus Trip – This committee organizes a bus trip to the General Service Office in New York. This can be coordinated with other districts.

### **Voting Member**

Voting at District Meetings is limited to one vote per group present, whether by the group's GSR, Alternate GSR, or designated representative.

All important decisions in the district are reached by discussion, vote, and by substantial unanimity (2/3 present majority vote.) Business needing the GSRs approval is carried by the GSR to his or her group where a sense of the group conscience is taken and its conscience is presented at the following District Meeting.

### **Term, Eligibility and Election Procedures**

All District 23 Officers serve a term of office of two years, coinciding with the terms of the delegate and committee officers of Area 59. Therefore, all District 23 officers are elected at the business meeting held on the first Wednesday of November during even numbered years.

District 23 elections are conducted according to the third legacy procedure outlined in the A.A. Service Manual. **\*Please refer to Appendix A**

District officers are elected from persons who are currently serving as a GSR or District Officer. The chair of the election meeting calls for qualified persons to stand for election. An Officer cannot hold the same position twice.

All A.A. group GSRs are eligible to vote in elections. If the GSR is not able to attend the election, the group's alternate GSR or designate may vote in the GSR's place.

The method used to determine nominees varies and should be decided by the current panel.

Each current GSR or alternate (if GSR is not present) designated officers in attendance at business meetings shall have one vote. In matters judged to affect groups or A.A. as a whole, a substantial unanimity vote is called for by the DCM and voted upon by voting members in attendance. Only GSRs or alternate (if GSR is not present) may make motions at district business meetings.

District officers may request that a GSR make a motion. The chair may recognize the motion and call for a second to the motion. After a second to the motion is made, discussion on the motion will be entertained. Discussion may be offered by a voting member of the meeting only after being recognized by the chair. It is expected that discussion be limited to the motion on the floor. It is expected that those participating in the discussion limit their remarks to content different from previous remarks on the motion so as to avoid deviation or repetition.

The chair will determine the method of casting votes: show of hands, or paper ballot. After the final vote, in keeping with Concept V, minority opinions will be heard, and the chair will ask if there is anyone who wants to change their vote.

Only eligible voters may question, or appeal. The chair will use the number of votes cast to determine the number of votes necessary for approval and be responsible for vote recording and counting.

- **Refer to flow chart in Appendix B**

### **Substantial Unanimity**

The group conscience is the collective conscience of the group membership and thus represents substantial unanimity on an issue before definitive action is taken. This is achieved by group members through the sharing of full information, individual points of view, and the practice of AA principles. To be fully informed requires a willingness to listen to minority opinions with an open mind. The term “*informed group conscience*” implies that all pertinent information has been studied and all views have been heard before the group votes.

## **Expenses**

Reimbursement for legitimate expenses by District Officers is allowed, to permit anyone, regardless of financial status, to run for office without concern for money.

Guidelines for reimbursement are as follows:

1. Area Meetings (quarterly): DCM (or alternate) will be reimbursed for mileage, tolls and food depending on distance.
2. Area Functions, as "required" by the Area Committee: DCM will be reimbursed for mileage, tolls and food depending on distance. The DCM will announce these functions at the beginning of each year.
3. Annual Area Convention/Assembly: The DCM and ADCM will be reimbursed for registration fees, accommodations, food, and mileage/tolls.
4. Mini Assemblies: DCM (or alternate) will be reimbursed for registration fees, mileage tolls and food depending on distance to attend one Mini Assembly.
5. NERAASA (Northeast Regional Alcoholics Anonymous Service Assembly) (yearly): The DCM and/or ADCM may be reimbursed for registration fees, accommodations, food, and mileage/tolls.
6. NERF (Northeast Regional Forum) (every other year): DCM may be reimbursed for registration fees, accommodations, food, and mileage/tolls.
7. Routine Business Expenses: All officers may be reimbursed for postage, copying and/or printing expenses.

Expenses will be reimbursed at the same rate as the Area Committee.

## **The Prudent Reserve**

The prudent reserve is a financial reserve which is drawn upon in the event of any unforeseen circumstances. The District will maintain a prudent reserve of \$750.00.

## **Budget Surplus**

Any surplus over the prudent reserve will be distributed as determined by the current district panel.

## **A Declaration of Unity**

This we owe to A.A.'s future;  
to place our common welfare first:  
to keep our Fellowship united.  
For on A.A. unity depend our lives,  
and the lives of those to come.