



# District 18 General Service Committee Structures and Guidelines

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### Preamble

“Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength, and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for AA membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. AA is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization, or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics achieve sobriety.”

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Ever mindful that the reason for the General Service Structure is to be of service to the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous, the District shall always observe the spirit of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts for World Service. In the absence of specific indications in the Guidelines of District 18, the latest edition of the AA Service Manual may be relied upon.

The District shall continually be guided by the General warranties contained in Concept XII of the Twelve Concepts, namely that the District shall observe the spirit of the AA Traditions, taking great care that the District never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds, plus an ample reserve, be its prudent financial principle; that no District member ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority over any others; that all important decisions be reached by discussion, vote, and whenever possible by substantial unanimity; that no District action be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; that it shall never perform any acts of government; and that it always remain democratic in thought and action.

### **The Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous**

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on AA unity.
2. 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.
3. The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose - to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
6. An AA group ought never endorse, finance or lend the AA name to any related facility or outside enterprise lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every AA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. AA as such ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the AA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

## Definitions

1. SERVICE MANUAL is a manual of guidelines/ suggestions provided by the General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous for AA Service organizations under the auspices of the General Service Conference. The manual is updated yearly.
2. AA DISTRICT 18, herein "District 18", is comprised of the AA Groups in parts of Jefferson and Orleans parish
3. AA GROUP is defined in the AA Service Manual as follows: An AA group consists of two or more alcoholics who gather together for meetings on a regular basis. These meetings are the basic source of recovery for the alcoholic who wants to stop drinking. As a group they are fully self-supporting, have no outside affiliations, and no opinions on outside issues. Because of AA's public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion, the group members maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, TV and films.
4. GENERAL SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE (GSR) is defined in the AA Service Manual as follows: " The General Service Representative is an AA member so elected by the group to voice the group's opinion in discussions at the District 18 level. GSR's, in turn, vote for the district committee member and for the delegate and for other officers at the Area 27 levels."
5. DISTRICT 18 is one of the medium geographical regions that comprise Area 27.
6. DISTRICT COMMITTEE MEMBER (DCM) is defined, in part, in the AA Service manual as follows: " He or she is an experienced GSR elected by the other GSR's to represent the groups of their district in District 18 committee meetings - and to coordinate service activities in the district."
7. BUSINESS MEETING refers to the time when the business of District 18 may be conducted.
8. District 18 BUSINESS MEETING refers to the time when the business of District 18 may be conducted. This meeting is normally conducted on the first Tuesday of each month.

## GUIDELINES

### ARTICLE I      **MEMBERSHIP**

**Section 1.00** General Membership in District 18 of Alcoholics Anonymous is open to all persons who have a desire to stop drinking. (See Tradition 3.)

**Section 2.00** Voting Membership at District 18 business meetings, is limited to the following:

**Section 2.01** Group GSR's or Alternate GSR's, such that each AA Group in the District 18 is afforded one vote.

**Section 2.02** District Committee Member (DCM) or Alternate DCM, such that each of the Districts of the District 18 is afforded one vote.

**Section 2.03** District 18 Officers, namely the DCM, the Alternate DCM, the Secretary / Registrar, and the Treasurer are each afforded one vote. The Co-Treasurer and Co-Secretary / Registrar may vote in the absence of the Treasurer.

**Section 2.04** District 18 Standing Committee Chairpersons, such that each Chairperson, recognized by District 18, is afforded one vote.

**Section 2.05** Past District Committee Member (DCM) of District 18, such that each former DCM from the District 18 is afforded one vote.

**Section 2.06** In the event that the same person qualifies to vote under two or more of the above provisions he or she shall be afforded one vote only. In the event that a GSR or a DCM qualifies to vote in another capacity, their duly elected alternate may vote in their place.

### ARTICLE II      **REPRESENTATIVE OF THE GROUPS AND DUTIES**

**Section 1.00** The General Service Representative (GSR) is defined in the AA Service Manual as follows: "the General Service Representative is an AA member so elected by the group to voice the group's opinion in discussions at the District 04 level. GSR's, in turn vote for the district committee member and for the delegate and for other officers at the District 18 level." (See Chapter II of the Service Manual.)

**Section 2.00** The ALTERNATE GSR is described in the AA Service Manual, in part, as follows: "In case a GSR is unable to attend all Area and District 18 meetings, an alternate is needed- elected at the same time, by the same procedures. Alternates should be encouraged to assist, participate, and share in the responsibilities of the "GSR".

**Section 3.00** Both the GSR's and Alternate GSR's serve their respective groups, and thus the group has sole responsibility and authority to provide the Area and District 18 with a representative, as it sees fit.

### ARTICLE III      **DCM's, DISTRICT 18 OFFICERS and DUTIES**

**Section 1.00** The District Committee Member (DCM) is defined in part, in the AA Service Manual as follows: "He or she is an experienced GSR elected by the other GSR's to represent the groups of their district in Area 27 committee meetings - and to coordinate service activities in the district." (See Chapter III of the Service Manual.) Serves as a member of the Area 27 Committee passing on the District's thinking to the Committee and Delegate.

**Section 2.00** The Alternate DCM is defined, in part, in the AA Service Manual, as follows: "The alternate is a backup for the regular district committee member. If the latter resigns - or for any reason is unable to serve - the alternate steps in. Alternate committee members should be encouraged to assist, participate, and share in the DCM's' responsibilities.

**Section 3.00** Both the DCM's and Alternate DCM's serve their respective districts, and thus the district has sole responsibility and authority to provide the Area with a representative, as it sees fit.

**Section 4.00** The District 18 Secretary keeps the minutes of all District 18 business and District 18 Committee meetings. Maintains District 18 group/contact information, District 18 Officers, Committee Chairs, DCM, Past Delegate addresses and phone numbers. Mails the District 18 "Welcome" letter to newly registered groups in the Area. Keep information updated for Area 27. If the guidelines are amended notes the updates and retypes the guidelines. All approved minutes and Guidelines are to be given to District 18 Archivist or DCM.

**Section 5.00** The District 18 Treasurer keeps an up-to-date record of District 18 finances, including the current and previous balances, and identifies all revenues and expenses since the last accounting. The Treasurer shall present at every business meeting a current Treasurer's report to the voting membership. The treasurer issues drafts in the name of District 18 cover the expenses of the District.

**Section 6.00** The District 18 Archivist will be a non-rotating member of the District 18 Archives Committee. Will be responsible for the collection, the documents, and artifactual items of District 18. Takes care of and maintains the physical integrity or condition of the collection. Develops finding aids, so as to add to the collection. Is responsible for ensuring the protection of members and the confidentiality of all AA records. An AA Archivist is "keepers of the past". The Archives Committee using the Archives workbook as a guide will select the Archivist and recommend to District 18 for approval.

**Section 7.00** The District 18 Webmaster will be a standing member of the District 18 Public Information Committee and will be responsible to administer and maintain the District 18 Website. The Public Information Committee will select the District 18 Webmaster and recommend to the District 18 Business Meeting for approval.

#### **ARTICLE IV**

#### **DISTRICT 04 STANDING COMMITTEES AND DUTIES**

**Section 1.00** The District 18 Committee consists of current DCM, Alternate DCM, District 18 Officer's, Standing Committee Chairs, and GSR's. The purpose of the District 18 Committee, (From the Service Manual Chapter V), "To maintain the health of the Conference Structure and further growth and harmony in our beloved fellowship". The District 04 DCM presides over the District 18 Committee meetings.

**Section 2.00** Literature/Archives/Grapevine Committee -The Literature Committee assures that a supply of literature (approved by the AA General Service Conference in New York) is available to the District and sets up a Distribution network for the District's Meetings; undertakes and maintains final responsibility and authority for the use of the archives and exercises its group conscience in regards of general policy; and relays information about the "Grapevine" magazine to the individual groups. The chairperson of the Committee shall prepare an annual budget for the Finance Committee and request additional funds from the Finance Committee as needed, and submits reasonable documentation of expenses to the Treasurer for reimbursement. Core membership of the committee will consist of the chair, one GSR and members wishing to serve.

**Section 3.00** Corrections & Treatment Committee - The Committee provides coordination and support for groups wishing to carry the message to alcoholics in jails,prisons and treatment centers and those who are transitioning back to normal life within their communities in District 18. The Chairperson of the Corrections & Treatment Committee shall prepare an annual budget for the Finance Committee and request additional funds from the Finance Committee as needed, and submits reasonable documentation of expenses to the Treasurer for reimbursement. Core membership of the committee will consist of the chair and three GSR's/members who wish to serve.

**Section 4.00** Public Information/Cooperation with the Professional Community - The Public Information (PI) Committee provides information about Alcoholics Anonymous to the general public and professional community within District 18. The Committee is responsible for the District 04 Web Site activities. The Public Information/Cooperation with the Professional Community Committee Chair shall request funds from the Finance Committee as needed, and submits reasonable documentation to the Treasurer for

reimbursement. Core membership of the committee will consist of the chair, District 04 Webmaster, and three GSRs/members who wish to serve.

**Section 5.00** The Finance Committee shall consist of the District 18 Treasurer, District 18 DCM, and three GSR's. Two of the GSR's will be elected on even numbered years and one GSR will be elected on the odd numbered years. The term of each committee person will be for two years. The Finance Committee will be responsible for the preparation of the annual Revenue and Expense Budget, propose Financial Policies for the District and review all non-emergent extra-budgetary requests. The committee will study and make recommendations for District 18 finances as directed and address other matters as directed.

**Section 6.00** The Audit Committee shall be appointed at a District Business Meeting and consist of a GSR Chair, the District Treasurer and one or more members from the local meetings. The Audit Committee shall review the operations and the financial transactions of the District and prepare a report for the meetings in the District and publish to each meeting and on the District Website.

## **ARTICLE V DISTRICT MEETINGS**

**Section 1.00** District Meetings shall be held on the first Tuesday of the month unless the meeting falls on a holiday. The District shall set the calendar and venue of all District Meetings for the year in October.

**Section 2.00** District Meetings shall be chaired by the District Committee Member (DCM) in accordance with the published agenda and Robert's Rules of Order.

**Section 2.01** Voting shall be as outlined in Article II.

**Section 2.02** A Quorum for the District Business meeting is 25% of GSRs from the registered meetings in the District that have elected and registered their GSRs with the GSO and District 18 Secretary.

## **ARTICLE VI ELECTION OF DISTRICT OFFICERS AND CHAIRPERSONS**

**Section 1.00** Terms of Office: District 18 Officers and Chairpersons of the standing committees shall serve terms of two years. All terms of office will begin on October 1st of odd years except District 18 Secretary/Alt DCM that will begin in October of even years. Officers are chosen by those eligible to vote, at the September business meeting in odd numbered years. Positions, which are not subject to membership vote, are noted on Sections 3.00, 4.00 and 5.00.

**Section 1.01** Officers rotate (may not serve again in any previously held position after serving one full term (until two (2) full rotations (four (4) years after previous service). In the event that an officer has held a position for less than a full term, that person may serve a second full term.

**Section 1.02** Chairpersons are encouraged to rotate, and are subject to election by the membership every two years.

**Section 1.03** Nominations for District Committee Member (DCM), Alternate DCM and District Officers will be open at the July and August District meetings. Unless there is no contest for a specific office, nominations will be closed after the August District Meeting.

**Section 1.04** Elections shall be held at the September District Meeting.

**Section 2.00** Eligibility: All members of District 18 are eligible to serve as District 18 Officers and Chairpersons. The District 18 DCM shall normally have served as a GSR or District 18 Officer. In addition, all candidates should have had a substantial period of continuous sobriety in AA, and have had experience in service work at the group and district levels. Persons nominated for election shall be present at the meeting to confirm acceptance of the nomination prior to voting. (Substantial period is suggested as a minimum of 4 (4) years for a DCM and two (2) years for a GSR)

**Section 3.00** District 18 Officer election procedure: District 184 follows the Third Legacy Procedure, as described in the current AA Service Manual, for elections of District 18 Officers.

**Section 4.00** Committee Chairperson election procedure: Nominations are taken from the floor and a slate of candidates is established. A single ballot is cast, and the person with the most votes (a majority if there are only two, a plurality if there are more) is the winner. In the event that the top two vote receivers are tied, the contest is determined by choosing from a hat..

**Section 5.00** Exceptions to the election procedure stated above:

**Section 5.01** The District 18 Archivist and Webmaster are selected by their respective Committees and approved at a District 18 Business Meeting. These are non-rotating positions.

**Section 6.00** Replacement: If District 18 officers or Chairpersons are unable to serve their full terms, the District 18 may, at its discretion, appoint replacements by majority vote at any District 18 business meeting.

## **ARTICLE VII FINANCIAL STRUCTURE**

**Section 1.00** As described in the Seventh Tradition, District 04 is self-supporting through contributions of those AA Groups and Districts contained in its geographical area, as well as from individual members.

**Section 1.01** The Finance Committee will request budget requirements from the Standing Committees and District Committee Member during the November Meeting and present a proposed Budget to the District Meeting in December.

**Section 1.02** The District will review and vote upon the proposed Budget in December. The Budget will be effective January 1 of each year.

**Section 1.03** The District will conduct its financial affairs in a transparent fashion informing the meetings in the District on a periodic basis but not less than 4 times per year of the District's Financial Status.

**Section 1.04** The District will conduct annual audits of all financial processes and transactions to insure financial integrity.

**Section 1.05** Once the Budget has been approved by the District Committee, Committees and persons with Budget Allocations may designate and spend the funds to accomplish their missions and tasks by submitting quotes or invoices for the expenditures to the District Treasurer for disbursement of the funds. In the event the approved Budget is exceeded the Committee must request the District Committee to approve additional funding.

## **ARTICLE VIII AMENDMENTS TO THE GUIDELINES**

**Section 1.00** The Guidelines may be amended at any District 18 Business Meeting, by a majority vote of the voting membership voting on each ballot.