



# District 51 Service Structure Guidelines

Revised July 2021

## SECTION 1 -INTRODUCTION

1. The “District 51 Committee” is the entity within the Service Structure of Alcoholics Anonymous; responsible for serving local A.A. 12th Step work needs, issues, and concerns Carrying the Message; and assisting the Fellowship link between the Groups, Area 20 and our Delegate, and the General Service Conference. District 51 serves primarily Will and Grundy Counties, IL
2. For purposes of definition: District 51 Committee Members are the Voting Members. (*See Section 3, Voting, for composition*). “District Trusted Servants” are any A.A. Members who conduct Service Work for District 51.
3. The District 51 Committee is accountable to the Groups in the District via their GSR’s.
4. We are Guided by the Experience, Strength, and Hope handed down to us by previous District 51 Service Work; the A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service; the Area 20 [NIA] Service Handbook; and the GSO/GSC manuals, literature, and workbooks.

## SECTION 2 - DISTRICT COMMITTEE MEETINGS

DCM or their Alternate, Secretary and Treasure or their Alternates respectively must be present for the District meeting to convene

1. Any Sober Member of Alcoholics Anonymous may participate in the Service Work of District 51.
2. ALL AA Groups and Meetings in our District are encouraged to send a GSR; and to have an Alternate GSR.
3. The District 51 District and GSR Meeting is scheduled for the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 7PM.
4. The Secretary, in conjunction with the DCM, shall prepare the Monthly Meeting Agenda and
  - If deemed necessary, distribute 1 week prior to Monthly Meeting for Informed Group Conscience,
  - And also made available at the Monthly Meeting.
5. The Secretary shall have a Sign-In Sheet for each meeting.
6. Officers and District Committee Chairs, shall submit monthly Reports (preferably both verbal and written), even if absent or “no activity/no report”; as part of our Accountability to those who’ve entrusted us a Responsibility.
7. Committee Alternate Chairs are encouraged to submit a Written Report.
8. Attendance:
  - a) GSR Attendance requirements are under the purview of their individual Groups.
  - b) Any time an Officer, Committee Chair, or their Alternates cannot make the District GSR Monthly Meeting, a call or text to the DCM or alternate DCM would be appreciated.
  - c) In the interest of effectively carrying the message and the District fulfilling its Service Work Responsibilities and Accountability; Officers or Standing Committee Chairs who are unable to attend for three (3) consecutive District GSR Meetings; should be replaced with love, and the position declared vacant.
  - d) Alternates who are unable to attend for three (3) consecutive District GSR Meetings; should be replaced with love, and the position declared vacant.

## SECTION 3 - VOTING

1. DISTRICT COMMITTEE ELIGIBLE VOTING MEMBERS:

- a) All District 51 GSR's (or their Alternate if GSR is not present)
  - b) All District 51 Service Committee Chairs and Alternates
  - c) The DCM, the Treasurer, and the Secretary and Alternates
2. If a GSR represents more than one Group [*strongly not recommended*], they still may only cast 1 Vote. Rule of Thumb: One Person equals One Vote.
  3. No one may vote by proxy for an absent eligible District Committee Member.

**4. VOTING PROCEDURES:**

- a) The District 51 Committee Meeting Format is an informal, simple mix of information presentation, discussion, and vote. However, if dissension threatens the order and unity, the Chair may invoke procedure or simplified procedure from "Robert's Rules of Order"; or another procedure previously approved by Group Conscience.
- b) "Robert's Rules of Order" guides our parliamentary procedure, but procedure(s) may be substituted for, if Group Conscience so decides.
- c) **QUORUMS:** *Two thirds of eligible voting Members, (District 51 Service Committee Chairs and/or Alternates, DCM, Treasurer, and the Secretary and/or Alternates) must be physically present. A two-thirds vote carries a Motion or Election; a simple majority vote may be requested by a Voting Member; however, it must be requested prior to the vote.*
- d) **Minority Voice**  
*When one or more Member Votes are opposed to a Motion Vote Outcome; each and every Member casting the "losing" Votes will be given an opportunity (suggested: two-minute time limit each) to state their 'minority voice' thoughts about the matter at hand. Those who have voted with the majority may not further speak nor rebut. If no one speaks for the Minority Opinion, then the Vote carries. If even one individual speaks for the Minority Opinion, then once all who have spoken for the Minority Opinion have finished, another vote is then taken. The outcome of the Second Vote Carries the Motion. As suggested in our Literature, the Secretary will be reminded to make note in the Minutes of Minority Vote opinions.*

**5. NORMAL MONTHLY ISSUES and AGENDA ITEM VOTING**

- a) The following are Guides, not rules, in conducting our business affairs.
- b) While accountable to the Groups in District 51, normal District Committee business and motions do not require GSR's to consult their Groups. As the GSR is entrusted with decision-making authority, so too is the District Committee entrusted by the Groups to make decisions. However, if at least a few GSR's request to consult with their Groups on a matter, or a sense of the District Committee is to consult the Groups for guidance, then it is strongly suggested the matter be tabled for consultation. Nothing has to be decided immediately.
- c) Motions that
  - affect our District as a whole or in part;
  - or involve a larger number of District resources (i.e. funding or larger projects);
  - or that may be controversial in nature; and/or directly affect other District 51 Committees and Affairs in Carrying the Message
  - or resulting from requests from Area 20 or the General Service Conference for Group Conscience on issues being considered;
  - or that may be controversial in nature or require more input for an informed Group Conscience,
  - **MUST** be:
    - i. Prepared in writing, along with background and supporting materials.
    - ii. Given to the DCM at least 2 weeks before the District GSR Meeting the matter is to be addressed - for placement on that Agenda; and to the Secretary for copying for prompt and appropriate distribution.
    - iii. If deemed necessary, the GSR's be given sufficient time to take back to their Groups in order to garner an Informed Group Conscience to bring back to the District for the District Informed Group Conscience.
- d) GSR's retain the Right of Decision.

#### **SECTION 4 - SCHEDULED DISTRICT AGENDA ITEMS**

1. In November of every “odd numbered year”; District 51 will hold Elections for Officers, Committee Chairs, and Alternates. If more than one person is interested in a position- the “spirit of rotation” shall be one of our considerations.
2. Every second year, to “Be of Service as a District”, District 51 shall consider submitting a bid to Host an Area 20 Service Function: i.e. Assembly, Committee Meeting, Conference, or Workshop.

#### **SECTION 5 - FINANCIALS**

1. **REPORTING** - For purposes of Reporting, a financial reporting “month” is defined as beginning on the first day of the calendar month and ending at the close of the last day of the same calendar month
  - a) The District Checking Account will have 2 persons as authorized signatures. There is no requirement that 2 people sign checks.
  - b) The signatories shall be 1) the Current Treasurer; and 2) either the DCM, immediate past Treasurer, or Alternate Treasurer - or another District Member approved by Group Conscience.
  - c) The Treasurer, Alternate Treasurer, and DCM will have the Password to view the Account Online.
  - d) District Group Conscience [April, 2006] determined to set aside 10% of total monthly donations each month until a \$2,000 Prudent Reserve is reached.
  - e) At the end of every quarter (Jan/Feb/Mar - Apr/May/June - Jul/Aug/Sep - Oct/Nov/Dec) 5% of the contribution total for that quarter shall be sent to NIA (aka Area 20 - Norther Illinois). Additional amounts or contributions to NIA (Area 20 - Norther Illinois) may be made when deemed necessary.
  - f) At the end of every quarter (Jan/Feb/Mar - Apr/May/June - Jul/Aug/Sep - Oct/Nov/Dec) 5% of the contribution total for that quarter shall be sent to the A.A. General Service Office (GSO). Additional amounts or contributions to the A.A. General Service Office (GSO) may be made when deemed necessary.
2. **CONTRACTS:**
  - g) The only District 51 Trusted Servants that may sign legal contracts for Services provided to/for the District, are the District Officers (Treasurer, Secretary, or DCM); the Standing Service Committee Chairs; or their Alternates.
  - h) No District 51 Committee Member shall enter into any contract or financial commitment of any amount, or otherwise, with any entity; that legally binds District 51 for a period of more than 1 month, without first:
    - Providing a copy of the proposed contract in its’ entirety, to each of the District Committee Members attending the District and GSR meeting the contract is initially presented at; **and allowing one month for the District Committee Members to consider the Contract, and For the GSR’s and Group Contacts to take back to their Groups/Meetings for any input.**
  - i) Once approved by District 51 Committee Vote and signed by all signatories; the Signed Contract Original will be delivered to the Secretary; a copy delivered to the Treasurer; and a copy retained by the originating Committee Chair or District Officer.
  - j) For any current contracts with an expiration date coming due, the District Officer (Treasurer, Secretary or DCM); the Standing Service Committee Chairs; or their Alternate or Designated District 51 Member, shall submit at least 1 month in advance to the District Committee to prudently consider.
3. **COST REIMBURSEMENTS:**
  - a) As Trusted Servants, Prudence and Responsibility are our watchwords when utilizing 7th Tradition donations.
  - b) Mileage reimbursement shall be \$0.55 per mile for travel to Service-related responsibilities and activities at Area Assemblies, Forums, Conferences, and Workshops. Mileage reimbursement for general travel to local AA meetings will not be reimbursed by the District. Travel to AA meetings within Will County is not reimbursable. Travel to other meetings in neighboring counties may be reimbursable depending on the purpose, and voted and approved at District 51 meeting.
  - c) For travel, car-pooling is suggested when reimbursements are being considered.
  - d) All Expenses for Reimbursement will be consistent to their Service-related responsibilities and/or activities for that Committee/Officer/GSR/Volunteer carrying the message within our Primary Purpose.

- e) All District Expenses shall have a paid receipt and reimbursement shall be made within 7 business days upon Treasurer receiving the paid receipt. Home addresses should be provided with receipt.
- f) Printing expenses will be reimbursed at \$0.10 per copy for black and white copies, and \$0.20 per copy for colored copies to cover the cost of ink, paper and copier usage. Committee members should keep track of the number of copies they are making and submit for reimbursement on Committee Reports.
- g) Any one-item reimbursement over \$100 is to be brought to the District for Group Conscience Approval – and noted in your Report. [It is recommended prior approval be sought to avoid any hard feelings].
- h) When in doubt, consult with the DCM and the Treasurer.
- i) Service Committee and District Officer month-to-month expenditures consistent to their Service responsibilities [not already approved by District Committee Group Conscience that exceed \$100 will be reported and verbally noted to the District Committee.

**4. PINK CAN CONTRIBUTIONS:**

- a) Pink Can Placement and Contributions should be solely the responsibility of the Groups who place them.
- b) Pink Can Contributions given to the District will be turned into the District 51 Treasurer and placed in the District Checking Account, but all Pink Can Contributions and Expenditures are to be accounted for separately from District 51 finances.
- c) All Pink Can Contributions may only be spent by the Corrections Committee for literature for those incarcerated in correctional facilities; receipts for all expenditures shall be turned into the Treasurer with the Corrections Committee Monthly Report and will be reimbursed solely from Pink can funds.
- d) An accounting of Pink Can Donations and Expenditures shall be provided by the Treasurer with the monthly Treasurer Report.
- e) In the event that the Pink can fund is depleted, District 51 reserves the right to vote to donate general funds to the Pink Can fund.

*As the District grows and Service Work Patterns emerge, specific Officer or Committee Budgets may be considered.*

**SECTION 6 - PRE-AUTHORIZED MONTHLY and ANNUAL EXPENDITURES**

- 1. All renewals, changes, or new contracts shall be approved by District Committee Group Conscience.
- 2. Meeting Space Rent (Monthly)
- 3. P.O.Box Rental (Annual)
- 4. Answering Service costs (Monthly)
- 5. Web Domain and Website Costs (Annual)
- 6. ZOOM or virtual meetings for District when necessary. (March 2020)
- 7. Storage Unit (currently Annual for cost savings)

**SECTION 7- GENERAL ASSIGNED RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 1. The Treasure; and one of either the [secretary, or DCM] shall each have a key to the P.O. Box.
- 2. The DCM, and one of either [Secretary or alternate DCM] as approved by District Group Conscience; shall have a key to the District Meeting Facility (where appropriate)
- 3. The Archives committee chair and the DCM, and/or one other member as approved by Group conscience shall have a key to the District storage facility.

**SECTION 8 - GSR**

**1. GSR's:**

- a) The District Committee and its Service Committees, are committed to assisting our District 51 Groups, via their GSR's, with their Primary Purpose Needs, Issues, and Concerns in their efforts to more Effectively Carry the Message.
- b) All District 51 Groups and Meetings are encouraged to elect and send a GSR to represent their Group's Voice and maintain their link to the Fellowship; and to also elect an Alternate GSR.
- c) GSR Accountability and Sobriety Requirements are up to the Group you represent.
- d) It is STRONGLY suggested that an individual represent only 1 Group/Meeting as a GSR. 1 individual serving as GSR for 2 or more Groups still only has 1 vote, and deprives the other Groups of having their Voice.

- e) GSR's are not required to serve on District Service Committees (although always welcome and encouraged to).
- f) It is **STRONGLY** suggested that individuals serving as a District Officer or Service Committee Chair **NOT** serve as a GSR, and allow another from their Group to serve. Again, by serving both, this also deprives a Group of a Vote and a Voice.
- g) Group GSR's are also automatic Voting Members of the Delegate Area 20 (NIA) Assembly and encouraged to fulfill those responsibilities.

### **SECTION 9- OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **1. OFFICERS:**

- a) It is suggested that District Officers (DCM, Treasurer, and Secretary) have two (2) years or more of continuous Sobriety. The District Group Conscience may waive these suggestions.
- b) It is suggested that all other chair positions have a minimum of 6 months continuous sobriety.
- c) The District Group Conscience may waive these suggestions.

#### **2. DCM:**

- a) The DCM is our "District Committee Member" for Delegate Area 20 (NIA) with all commensurate duties and responsibilities.
- b) The DCM Chairs the District 51 District and GSR Meetings.
- c) Is Responsible for Carrying the Message of Service Work to all the Groups and Meetings in District 51.

#### **3. SECRETARY:**

- a) Responsible for recording the Monthly District Committee and GSR Meeting Minutes; and sending copies to the appropriate District 51, Area 20, and GSO Postal Mail or email lists.
- b) Responsible for District Group, Meeting, and GSR Information Updates
- c) Responsible for maintaining the current records (and backups) for the District.
- d) Responsible as the "central communications point"; gathering and disseminating AA information to and from and between our AA's, GSR's, Groups, Committees, Officers, NIA 20 Area, and GSO/GSC, etc.
- e) Prepares the District 51 GSR Meetings Agenda, in conjunction with the DCM.

#### **4. TREASURER:**

- a) Keeps an eye on the money
- b) Should maintain accurate and current records, as well as appropriate past financial documentation for tax and auditing purposes.
- c) Responsible for preparing and presenting to the District Committee a Monthly Report of the Group and Pink Can Contributions and Expenditures to the District and to have copies available at each District Meeting.

#### **5. OFFICER ALTERNATES:**

- a) Encouraged to be responsible for at least one task within your Officer Category
- b) Encouraged to submit a Written Report
- c) Sobriety Requirements same as Officers [unless waived by Group Conscience]

### **SECTION 10- COMMITTEE and COMMITTEE CHAIR RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **1. District 51 currently has 10 Standing Service Committees:**

- 1. Accessibilities – Special Needs
- 2. Answering Service (AS)
- 3. Archives (AR)
- 4. Cooperation with the Professional Community (CPC), Public Information (PI)
- 5. Corrections (CO)
- 6. District Meeting List (DML)
- 7. Literature/Grapevine (LIT)
- 8. Treatment Facilities (TF)
- 9. YPAA Liason
- 10. Webmaster (WM)

2. **COMMITTEES** are directly Responsible and Accountable for the Service Work they've been entrusted with.
3. Any Sober Member of Alcoholics Anonymous may be a Member of a District 51 Service Committee. No minimum length of Sobriety is required.
4. You do not have to be a GSR to participate on a Service Committee.
5. Committees should consistently strive for [as best they can]:
  - a) Additional ways of effectively Carrying the Message.
  - b) Read the documentation of the service work done by previous D51 Chair and Committees in your service function; the Area 20 [NIA] Service Handbook; the A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service and the GSO/GSC manuals, literature, and workbooks.
  - c) Inevitably there will be overlap; Service Committees should be aware of other Service Committee's responsibilities (District and Area) - and double-check/communicate with them when their Service Work overlaps.
  - d) Any District Committee expending District Funds, or collecting contributions or income on behalf of a District Service Work Event as Trusted Servants, is responsible for and shall submit at least a basic flyer of the event, and an event Financial Summary Report to the District Treasurer and to the District. It's the right thing to do.
6. **SERVICE COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS**
  - a) Strive to find and have an involved Alternate.
  - b) Follow-up on Service Committee Work already in place for your Committee.
  - c) Hold Service Committee Meetings- working out the planning details of your Service Work.
  - d) As an accountable trusted servant, are expected to submit a monthly Oral and Written Report.
  - e) Actively seek out A.A. Members in the District to serve on your Service Committee. Don't do it alone!
  - f) Actively encourage and communicate with the District 51 DCM and Secretary; and other Service Committee Chairs and Members when possible. They can be a great source of strength and support!
  - g) Actively communicate with your Service "counterparts" (e.g. other Treatment Chairs, etc.) in other Districts and Area 20. They ARE a Treasure trove of Experience!
7. **ALTERNATES**
  - a) Encouraged to be responsible for at least one task within your Committee.
  - b) Encouraged to submit a Written Report as to your Activities or task that is agreed upon with the respective Committee Chair.
8. District Officers, Chairs, and Service Committee Members are certainly encouraged to participate, when they can, on any of the other Service Committees, however: no District Committee Member may hold more than one "official" service position (whether Chair, Alternate, or Officer) on the District Committee at any given time, except in a very short-term temporary capacity. In no case may they be listed on the trusted servants list more than once. "Listing" subtly conveys that the position is filled and prevents others from the stepping forward to be of service; denying them the opportunity.

**District 51 Serves**

*Beecher, Braceville, Braidwood, Carbon Hill, Channahon, Coal City, Crest Hill, Crete, Cullom, Custer Park, Diamond, Dwight, East Brooklyn, Elwood, Frankfort, Gardner, Godley, Goose Lake, Homer Glen, Joliet, Kinsman, Lemont, Lockport, Manhattan, Manteno, Minooka, Mokena, Monee, Morris, New Lenox, Peotone, Plainfield, Posen, Peotone, Preston Heights, Rockdale, Romeoville, Seneca, Shorewood, South Wilmington, Steger, Symerton, University Park, Verona, Wilmington, and surrounding Communities  
in Will and Grundy counties.*

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#### **RESOURCES/ ADDITIONAL DATA**

District 51 web site: <https://aadistrict51.org/>  
General Service Office (GSO) web site: <https://aa.org/>  
Grapevine - <https://www.aagrapevine.org/>  
GSO - The AA Service Manual - [https://www.aa.org/assets/en\\_US/en\\_bm-31.pdf](https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/en_bm-31.pdf)  
NIA 20 - Calendar of events: <https://aa-nia.org/calendar-3/>  
NIA 20 - Map - [https://aa-nia.org/wp-content/uploads/AA\\_Map-1.png](https://aa-nia.org/wp-content/uploads/AA_Map-1.png)  
NIA 20 - History - <https://aa-nia.org/wp-content/uploads/History-of-NIA-20.pdf>  
NIA 20 - Service Manual - <https://aa-nia.org/wp-content/uploads/NIA-20-Service-Manual-web-201908.pdf>  
Northern Illinois Area 20 (NIA 20) web site: <https://aa-nia.org/>

