

# Information for the new GSR

From District 15

District 15 includes all AA groups in the cities of Brea, Anaheim Hills, Yorba Linda, and Placentia, and some AA groups in La Habra.

District 15, P.O.Box 12, Atwood, CA 92811  
To visit the District 15 webpage on our Area 9 website, go to: [www.msca09aa.org/Area/d15.html](http://www.msca09aa.org/Area/d15.html)

Greetings to our new District 15 GSRs! Being a new GSR is a wonderful experience, though sometimes overwhelming at first. Hopefully this will help answer some of the many questions you may have about General Service.

Here are a few of the most commonly asked questions, and some brief answers:

## Question: Who runs AA worldwide?

**Answer:** The AA groups do. Each issue that affects AA as a whole gets voted on by AA groups throughout the U.S. and Canada. Each group's vote is carried by its GSR (General Service Representative) to their Area Delegate. The Area Delegates from all 93 of the Areas in the U.S. and Canada then meet once a year to discuss the issues and the opinions of the AA groups in their respective Areas. A group conscience is taken, and the resulting recommendations are made on each issue.

## Questions: How can our AA Group help run AA worldwide?

**Answer:** Your group can help by electing a GSR, discussing and taking group consciences on the issues your GSR brings to your group for discussion, and sending your GSR to your District's monthly meetings and to your Area Assemblies (which meet 3 or 4 times a year) and to the workshop that meets in March of each year where votes of the Groups (via their GSRs) are taken.

## Question: Are there committees that help run AA worldwide?

**Answer:** Yes, there are several committees that operate at the National level. They include such committees as PI (Public Information), CPC (Cooperation with the Professional Community), Corrections Facilities, Treatment Facilities, etc.

## Question: What is the difference between the General Service Office and our Central Offices?

**Answer:** There are many Central Offices, and each one services the needs of AA groups in their local vicinity. Their services usually include storing and having available for purchase various AA literature items (e.g. books, pamphlets, tapes, videos, forms, magazines, etc.) , making 12th Step Calls, Maintaining lists of times and places of local AA meetings. Our local Central office is located at 133 West Chapman Ave., Suite C, Fullerton, CA 92832.

## Question: What kind of services does the General Service Office offer?

**Answer:** They provide many services to AA at both the National and International level. These services include the following:

- Helps new AA Groups to get started
- Stays in contact with each registered AA group via the groups GSR or contact person
- Publishes and stores conference approved AA literature. Some of this literature is available in over 50 languages.
- Provides conference approved literature to AA individuals, Groups, and Central Offices.
- Maintains AA's Archives
- Hosts the yearly General Service Conference
- Handles all public relations
- Publishes the AA Grapevine & La Vina monthly magazines
- Puts on International Conventions
- Maintains Committees for:
  - Cooperation with the Professional Community,
  - Public Information,
  - Corrections Facilities
  - Treatment Facilities

The General Service Office can be reached at, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115, (212) 870-3400. They have a website at [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org)

## Question: What are some of the issues that the AA groups (through its GSRs) have previously had to discuss, take group consciences on, and send via their GSRs?

**Answer:** One of the issues has been whether or not to revise the wording in the Big Book to bring it into more up-to-date language. This issue has been hotly debated many times (in many years) and, so far, the group conscience of AA as a whole has been to leave the language the same as what Bill W. wrote. The stories at the end of the Big Book are updated (some new ones added, some old ones deleted) in each edition of the Big Book.

Another issue was whether or not AA should defend its copyright to the book "Alcoholics Anonymous" in a court of law. Such defense would involve expenditure of AA funds, and hence had to be decided by AA as a whole. After much discussion, the decision was to go ahead and spend the money needed to defend this copyright, so that others could not re-issue and perhaps change our book.

## Question: What are “The Twelve Concepts” and why did Bill W. come up with them?

**Answer:** The Twelve Concepts were written by Bill W. in 1962 as a guide to how AA groups could run AA as a whole, even after its founders had passed on. The short form of these concepts are printed below:

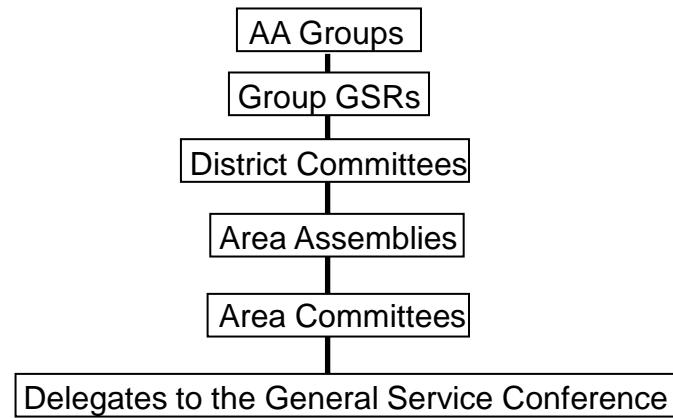
### The Twelve Concepts (Short Form)

- I Final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.
- II The General Service Conference of A.A. has become, for nearly every practical purpose, the active voice and the effective conscience of our whole Society in its world affairs.
- III To insure effective leadership, we should endow each element of A.A. - the Conference, the General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives - with a traditional “Right of Decision”.
- IV At all responsible levels, we ought to maintain a traditional “Right of Participation,” allowing a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.
- V Throughout our structure, a traditional “Right of Appeal” ought to prevail so that minority opinions will be heard and personal grievances receive careful consideration
- VI The Conference recognizes that the chief initiative and active responsibility in most world service matters should be exercised by the trustee members of the Conference acting as the General Service Board.
- VII The Charter and Bylaws of the General Service Board are legal instruments empowering the trustees to manage and conduct world service affairs. The conference Charter is not a legal document; it relies upon tradition and the A.A. purse for final effectiveness.
- VIII The trustees are the principal planners and administrators of overall policy and finance. They have custodial oversight of the separately incorporated and constantly active services, exercising this through their ability to elect all the directors of these entities.
- IX Good service leadership at all levels is indispensable for our future functioning and safety. Primary world service leadership, once exercised by the founders, must necessarily be assumed by the trustees.
- X Every service responsibility should be matched by an equal service authority, with the scope of such authority well defined.
- XI The trustees should always have the best possible committees, corporate service directors, executives, staffs, and consultants. Composition, qualifications, induction procedures, and rights and duties will always be matters of serious concern.
- XII The Conference shall observe the spirit of A.A. tradition, taking care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds and reserve be its prudent financial principle; that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others; that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote, and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; that it never perform acts of government, and that, like the Society it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action.

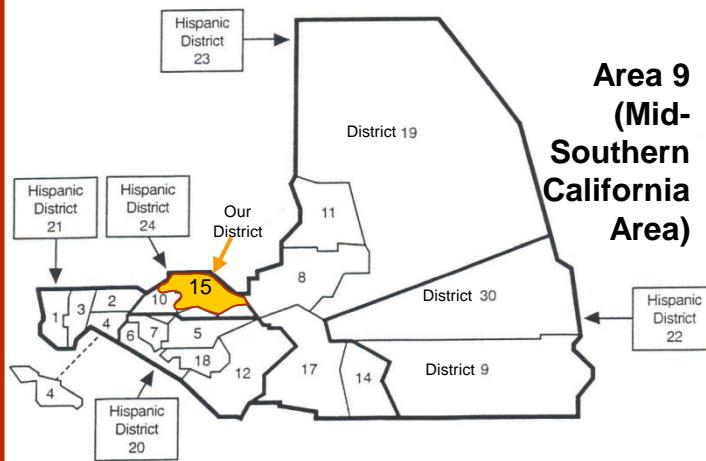
## What is the General Service Structure?

**Answer:** AA World Services is run by the trustees, and guided by the group conscience of all the AA groups in the US and Canada. The structure and process for collecting this group conscience from AA as a whole is called the “General Service Structure.”

The groups participate in this process by electing a GSR in each group, and having this GSR carry the group conscience (vote) on each issue to that Group's Delegate. The Delegates from each of the 93 Areas in the US and Canada then meet once a year (at the “General Service Conference”), carrying the votes of their groups (as communicated by their GSRs), to decide on all the issues being considered that year. Each issue is discussed by the delegates, and the opinions and group consciences of their groups are shared. The resulting recommendation on each issue is then communicated to the Trustees, who then have the power to enact these recommendations.



## Our Area (9)



Area 9 includes all AA groups in the counties of Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and the part of Los Angeles County south of Rosecrans Ave. There are 23 districts in Area 9. Eighteen of them are English speaking, and 5 are Spanish speaking. There are over 1500 AA groups in Area 9.

## My Two Sponsors

by Nancy R

Like most of us who serve AA in General service work, I have two sponsors. One is my program sponsor, and she helps me work the steps in my program of recovery. The other is my service sponsor. He helps me be of service as a GSR and in other General service positions that I temporarily fill. He helps me understand the 12 traditions and the 12 concepts, and how they help protect AA so that it will be there for future generations of alcoholics. He helps me to see how to adhere to these principals as I go about the daily business of fulfilling my General Service positions (a task that I find every bit as daunting as using the steps in all my daily affairs!). I am very grateful to both of my sponsors and all the experience, strength and hope they share with me.

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## News from our District

**Grapevine magazines available:** District 15 has many past issues of the Grapevine, which any AA group in our district can borrow. Just ask your GSR!

**GSR meetings:** District 15 meets at 7pm on the first Thursday of each month (on the 8th floor of the Kaiser hospital at the intersection of Lakeview and the 91 Freeway). Any AA member is welcome to come to our meeting and either just observe or to actively participate in general service to our District.

**AA comes of Age books available:** District 15 has "AA comes of Age", a book that traces the history and development of the Three Legacies (Recovery, Unity, and Service), and describes how the founding members passed on to the entire Fellowship the responsibility for running AA. If your group would like to borrow this book, just ask your GSR.

**Webpage:** District 15 has a webpage on the MSCA (Mid-Southern California Area) website. We are in the process of developing this webpage, with the aim of providing our district with information about

- general service
- the many parts of AA
- being a GSR, and
- District 15 events, guidelines, and opportunities for service

Feel free to visit our webpage at

[www.msca09aa.org/Area/d15.html](http://www.msca09aa.org/Area/d15.html) If you have any suggestions as to how we can improve this webpage to help provide General service to the groups in our district, please let us know by telling your GSR.

**GSR School:** District 15 has a GSR School at 6:45 pm on the first Thursday of each month just before our regular District 15 meeting. If you are a new GSR, or would like to find out more about becoming a GSR, you are welcome to attend.

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## News from our Area

**Archives:** Area 9 (called the "Mid-Southern California Area", or "MSCA") has an Archives Repository (located at 7111 Arlington Ave, Suite B, Riverside) which contains many artifacts and historical information about AA in our area. You are welcome to visit this archives in person, and to visit their webpage at [www.msca09aa.org/Archives.html](http://www.msca09aa.org/Archives.html).

The repository is open every Saturday from 10 am til 1 pm, or on Sundays and evenings by special appointment. You can email the committee for additional information at

[Archives@msca09aa.org](mailto:Archives@msca09aa.org).

**Website:** Area 9 has a website that is full of information about our 23 Districts, our 16 Standing Committees and their purpose and activities, and our newsletters, guidelines, meetings, event, and much more. Feel free to visit the website at [www.msca09aa.org](http://www.msca09aa.org).

**AA meetings:** Have you ever wondered how to find an AA meetings in remote parts of our Area (which includes the counties of Orange, Riverside, and San Bernardino, plus the part of Los Angeles County that is south of Rosecrans Ave.)? Our central offices throughout the Area maintain information on times and locations of meetings, and you can find the appropriate Central Office, and be linked to its on-line listing of meetings (yes, most of our Central Offices now list their AA meetings on-line) by going to [www.msca09aa.org](http://www.msca09aa.org) and clicking on "Meetings."

**Group Inventory:** Area 9 periodically takes an inventory of our Area. Just as any individual needs to take regular inventory on himself, and any AA group needs to take regular inventory on itself, so too does an Area need to periodically take inventory on itself.

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## News from our General Service Office

**Website:** The General Service Office maintains an extensive website at [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org). The website is maintained in 3 languages: English, Spanish and French. Among many other things, you can read and/or download many of our pieces of AA literature (including the big book of Alcoholics Anonymous!), and you can be linked to a variety of Central Offices and Areas across the U.S. and Canada. You can also order subscriptions to the Grapevine on-line, and can view its literature catalog on-line. You can also find out about the Archives of AA which contains personal collections, manuscripts, publications, photographs and memorabilia related to the origin and the development of the AA fellowship.

Did you know that our Area (Area 9) is the largest of the 93 areas in the U.S. and Canada? It is largest both in terms of the number of registered AA Groups and the number of AA members. A map of our Area (Area 9) and the other General Service Areas in California is depicted at the right.

If you are an AA member interested in learning more about General Service in our Area, including our service committees, meetings and events, purpose, etc., please feel free to visit its website at [www.msca09aa.org](http://www.msca09aa.org), or ask your GSR, or come to one of our District meetings, or visit our Area at one of our Area events.



## General Service Areas in California

(There are 6 Areas in California.)

## General Service Regions in the U.S. and Canada



We are in the "Pacific Region", which includes all AA groups in Alaska, California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Nevada, Utah, Arizona and Hawaii.

Each year in March, our Region holds an assembly, called PRAASA (Pacific Region AA Service Assembly). Any AA member is welcome to attend any PRAASA. GSRs and other AA members from all our region's 9 west-most states will be coming to this event.

REGIONAL MAP OF U. S. & CANADA