

# Al-Anon Guidelines

The Shared Experience of Al-Anon and Alateen Members.

## District Representative

G-37

The District Representative (DR) is an important link between the groups and the Area Assembly. The District is a geographical segment containing a number of groups, located relatively closely to one another. The DR represents the District at Area World Service Committee (AWSC) meetings and conveys information back to the groups. The DR chairs regular District meetings for groups in the District.

### Requirements

Any incoming, outgoing, or active past Al-Anon or Alateen Group Representative (GR) who is willing to represent the District at AWSC meetings and Area Assembly meetings, and who is not also a member of A.A., is eligible to serve as DR. A DR should have basic knowledge of Al-Anon and Alateen Traditions and the Concepts of Service, and how to apply them in the links of service. See the “World Service Handbook” section of the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27).

The GRs in the District elect the DR. The DR assists the Delegate in passing on information about World Service Office (WSO) activities and World Service Conference (WSC) decisions to the GRs in the District.

### Acronyms

- |                                |      |
|--------------------------------|------|
| • Group Representative         | GR   |
| • District Representative      | DR   |
| • Area World Service Committee | AWSC |
| • World Service Office         | WSO  |
| • World Service Conference     | WSC  |
| • Public Outreach              | PO   |

### Term of Office

DRs are elected for a three-year term, usually coinciding with those of Area officers and the Delegate. The election of the DR and Alternate DR usually takes place in the fall of the year after the election of GRs and before election of Area officers. See the “World Service Handbook” section of the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27).

### Dates to Remember

- District meeting, Area World Service Committee meeting, and Area Assembly
- Al-Anon Convention, Alateen Conference, World Service Conference

### Information the DR Needs to Know

The World Service Office (WSO) provides online resources for DRs on the Al-Anon website, as well as on a password-protected communication platform. For access, be sure to provide an email address to WSO.

You will need to know the names, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses of the:

- Group Representatives
- Area Delegate
- Area officers
- District officers and coordinators
- Local Al-Anon Information Service (AIS) Chairperson or contact
- Area Coordinators (Alateen, Archives, Group Records, Forum, Literature, Public Outreach, Web)

### DOs for District Representatives

- DO encourage members in your District to participate in service.
- DO help groups understand Al-Anon is a worldwide fellowship and help them understand the structure of their Assembly and WSO. (See “World Service Conference Structure” chart, in the “World Service Handbook” section of the *Service Manual*).
- DO encourage GRs to visit the Al-Anon website: [al-anon.org](http://al-anon.org). There are many resources for members and groups on the website, including the complete *Service Manual* and Al-Anon/Alateen Guidelines.
- DO visit and encourage new groups, making sure they are receiving proper information and help.
- DO become familiar with the WSO Online Group Records (available to DRs as “read only”), and regularly provide groups with group detail reports to verify accuracy.
- DO urge groups in your District to follow the Area process to complete and promptly return the groups’ annual update sheets sent out by the WSO.

- DO encourage groups to provide an email address for the group, to assure delivery of news from the WSO.
  - DO remind Group Representatives to update their meeting and group mailing information promptly.
  - DO report discrepancies in group information to the Area Group Records Coordinator.
  - DO schedule District meetings at regular intervals and keep in touch with GRs.
  - DO get to know the Alateen Group Sponsors in your District and encourage the Alateen groups to send GRs to District meetings.
  - DO attend Area Assemblies and Area World Service Committee meetings and report activities within your District. Remember you are the link between the groups in your District and the AWSC.
  - DO help your Delegate spread information and reports from the WSO.
  - DO communicate with the local Al-Anon Information Service (AIS/Intergroup).
  - DO study the *Service Manual* so you are knowledgeable of Al-Anon policies when questions arise from the groups in your District.
  - DO review the “World Service Handbook” section of the *Service Manual* for the duties of the DR.
  - DO study the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts of Service; they are guides for group unity, growth, and service.
  - DO remember to offer suggestions, not to issue orders.
  - DO encourage groups to invite Area Coordinators to give reports and hold workshops.
  - DO keep the Alternate DR informed and involved in the District activities.
  - DO get a Service Sponsor and ask for help when feeling overwhelmed.
  - DO be loving and patient with other members, as well as yourself; we are all at different stages of recovery.
  - DO remember to have fun!
- [See also *District Meetings* guideline (G-15)].

## Calling and Chairing District Meetings

- Regularly scheduled meetings help the Group Representatives plan ahead and to come prepared for the meeting.
- Some Districts meet monthly, others have bi-monthly, or quarterly meetings.
- Continuity is the most important factor in deciding when to schedule meetings.
- They can be held at the same location or rotated and hosted by the groups in the District.
- Fun activities and food attract members.

- Scheduling fellowship events may encourage members to take responsibilities that lead to more committed service positions. (See *Service Manual* on “District Meetings”).

## Supporting the Delegate

The Delegate’s report of the World Service Conference activities is an important message to carry to the Group Representatives at the District meeting. The Delegate may ask for feedback to take to the WSO and the District meeting is the place to collect that type of information.

## Helpful Hints

- The best District meetings have an agenda, and they follow it.
- Ask the GRs to share about their group needs, problems, and solutions based on the Traditions.
- Create and carry out District Public Outreach (PO) projects.
- Make sure the Area Group Records Coordinator and WSO have all your group addresses and updates.
- Stay connected with other DRs between AWSC and Assembly meetings; they are a valuable resource.
- Use the District Representative communication platform as a resource.

## The Alternate District Representative

- Completes the term when/if the DR resigns.
- Attends Al-Anon Information Service meetings.
- May attend all service meetings that DR attends.
- Assists in visiting District groups.
- May serve as:
  - Treasurer
  - Secretary
  - PO contact
  - Chairman of periodic meetings on the service structure, Traditions, and Concepts of Service
  - Member of the Al-Anon Information Service board

## Keeping in Touch with the GRs

A GR roster listing the name, address, phone, and email may be helpful in establishing communication and service sponsorship among the GRs. Some DRs send reports or recaps to the GRs about the Area Assembly and Delegate’s report. The DR asks the GRs for reports from their groups. These reports include problems and solutions the group may be experiencing. Email lists can provide fast communication of news and events. See “Anonymity within Al-Anon/Alateen” in the *Service Manual* for guidance on electronic communication.

## Visiting Groups

Visits may be spontaneous or scheduled. Many DRs routinely visit the groups in their District. On occasion, groups that are having problems may invite the DR to facilitate a group inventory. When visiting a group, the DR can verify that the group is receiving electronic and postal mail from the WSO and the Area. Registration/change forms can be made available during these visits. If the group does not have a Group Representative, the DR can encourage members to hold an election and be represented at District and Area meetings. *Alateen groups and newly registered groups may require the most attention.*

## Some Benefits of Becoming a DR

In addition to meeting Al-Anon members from other cities and towns in your Area, the District Representative is eligible to stand for the Area Delegate and other Area officer positions. Exact eligibility varies from Area to Area. You may read about the benefits of service in Conference Approved Literature; some of the subheadings in *When I Got Busy, I Got Better* (P-78), are:

- Replacing Isolation with Community
- Learning Trust
- Learning to Take Risks
- Increased Self-Esteem
- A Sense of Purpose
- Making a Difference
- Reaching Out to Others

## Finances

Groups may make regular contributions to the District treasury—this ensures that the District Representative’s expenses for visiting groups, creating copies, postage, attending AWSC meetings, PO activities, and other expenses are adequately met. If the DR is also a GR, the group usually pays the expenses to the Area Assembly. Districts may have fund raising events. The District Treasurer may develop an expense report for reimbursements like:

## District Representative Expense Sheet

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose/Event \_\_\_\_\_

Expenses: *(Receipts attached with explanations\* as needed)*

Item	Amount
Copies .....	\$ _____
Postage.....	\$ _____
Transportation .....	\$ _____
Meals.....	\$ _____
Miscellaneous.....	\$ _____
Hotel expenses .....	\$ _____
<b>Total Expenses .....</b>	<b>\$ _____</b>
Less Cash Advance.....	\$( _____ )
<b>Balance Due .....</b>	<b>\$ _____</b>

\*Explanation for expenses: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Serving as a District Representative can be a rewarding and challenging experience, as your circle of recovery expands outside of your own District! Remember, you are not alone—your Area World Service Committee and your groups are there to support you.