



## AL-ANON FAMILY GROUPS, ALBERTA/N.W.T. AREA

# GRs Guide to the Alberta/N.W.T. Area Assembly

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# ASSEMBLY STRUCTURE

## Attendees

- Group Representatives (GRs)
- District Representatives
- Area Officers, World Service Delegate, Past Delegates
- Al-Anon Central Service Office Alberta (ACSOA) Chair (Bookstore)
- AIS Calgary – Chair and AIS Edmonton – Chair
- Al-Anon Members who wish to attend OR invited guests

## Purpose of Assembly

- It is a gathering of GRs, conducted by the Area Officers and Coordinators to discuss the business of Al-Anon. (Refer also to Service Manual)
- The Delegate gives her/his report outlining the work of the World Service Conference that he/she attended in April.
- Co-ordinators present reports to the Assembly
- GRs will participate in discussions affecting Al-Anon/Alateen in Alberta/N.W.T. and vote on behalf of their group.

## Who is a voting member of the Assembly?

- GRs, Alternate GRs or another member chosen by the Group.
- Other Al-Anon members can participate in the discussions, however only Group Reps or their Alternate can vote at Assembly. (See Concept One, Service Manual.)

## How do the lines of communication work in Al-Anon service structure?

(see diagram p. 171 in *Service Manual*)

- GRs act as the voice of their group. GRs have a key role in connecting their group members to the larger Al-Anon community. All Al-Anon decisions at Assemblies are made by Al-Anon members through representation by their GR. Without active involvement by a GR, Al-Anon can fail to serve members effectively.
- District Representatives act as the voice of the groups in their District at Area World Service Committee Meetings (AWSCM) in March and May each year. DRs share information or questions with the Area Officers, Coordinators, and World Service Office (via Area Delegate). They also act as a resource to GRs to help groups learn from each other and to help resolve any issues that may arise in the groups. They help prepare the agenda for Assembly.
- The Area Officers conduct the day to day business of Al-Anon at the Area level and act as a resource to groups/districts in the Area. The Delegate is in direct contact with World Service Office and attends the World Service Conference in April each year with Delegates from Canada, USA and guests. The Delegate presents a report from his/her attendance at the World Service

Conference. The Delegate can also take ideas or suggestions from Assembly to the World Service Office that can help develop resources to serve the needs of the groups.

- Area Coordinators and Al-Anon Information Services/Literature Distribution Centers (ACSOA) (Bookstore) offer resources and support to groups related to their area of service. They attend and give reports to Assembly and are also available by phone or email. They help prepare the agenda for Assembly.
- World Service Office is a resource centre for Al-Anon/Alateen Family Groups. They are not a governing body, but act as a service body. They provide guidance and support to Area Officers and Area Coordinators to ensure they can perform their roles effectively. WSO staff regularly survey service members to determine what resources may be needed to support Al-Anon/Alateen success in each community.

## GROUP REPRESENTATIVES' (GR) ROLE AT ASSEMBLY

### What is the role of the GR?

- **Read the Alberta/N.W.T. Area Assembly Minutes, Agenda and discussion topics.** Background information is included in the Area Newsletter, "Keeping in Touch" (published March, May, September and December) and the minutes. These topics should be discussed with the members of your group so you can represent their thoughts and ideas during the discussions at Assembly and be prepared to vote on their behalf.
- **Learn about important issues regarding the needs of Al-Anon/Alateen from a broader perspective.** What can members of your group do to ensure Al-Anon and Alateen are relevant and available to the next generation?
- **Consider the qualifications of nominations for Officer service positions:** In September, the end of the three-year rotation, Officers and Area Coordinator positions are up for election. GRs are asked to consider the skills and abilities of each applicant to ensure he/she is able to perform the duties of the position. GRs are encouraged to discuss applicants with their group members (resumes are forwarded to GRs) and then vote for the person they consider best able to meet the needs of the position. At times there may be only one applicant. If that person is not considered suitable, there will be an option of voting "no applicant". Voting in this case is done by ballot. (Terms for positions are three calendar years)
- **Write down interesting ideas/comments.** You will hear from other members at Assembly who may have different perspectives, or great ideas/solutions to discussion topics. Write them down and share them with your group members.
- **Learn about resources available to your group members.** You will also have access to Officers and Coordinators who have resources to help you in your role as GR. If you have feedback for them coming from your group, now is a great time to have those conversations.
- **Prepare a report to take to your members.** You are expected to share what you learn with the members of your group at future group meetings or in whatever way works best in your group.

- **Encourage members to subscribe to *The Forum and the Area Newsletter*:** “Keeping in Touch” is the Alberta/N.W.T. communication publication that keeps members informed of what is happening in Al-Anon beyond the group level. It provides interesting topics to encourage members to use all the resources available to them. There are also reports from Coordinators that can provide ideas to help your group grow as well as suggestions to keep meetings interesting. To receive the newsletter email: [Newsletter@al-anon.ab.ca](mailto:Newsletter@al-anon.ab.ca)

### What do I need to know?

- Each group should have funds set aside to reimburse your GR costs (*reasonable* travel, hotel and meal) to attend Assembly. Your group pays your expenses so you can fully participate and report back, so please do not miss any part of the sessions.
- During the course of the weekend, you may have some questions arise. Your question might specifically be about the Business Meeting on Saturday morning or may be a general question about the Assembly weekend. You are encouraged to discuss it with a friend and look for the answer in your service manual. If you still need clarification, you are invited to write your question on the Ask-It-Basket form and put it in the Ask-It-Basket.

### What should I take with me?

- Alberta/N.W.T. Area Assembly minutes, Agenda, and background information related to topics. Please note: All the documents necessary to participate in the meeting are sent to you before the meeting. Because we would like to be paper-free, you are responsible for bringing your own copies, either as hard copies or on a device.
- *Current Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual.*
- Comfortable clothing and a sweater or wrap in case of temperature fluctuations.
- A coffee/tea mug or water bottle.
- Pen, notepad, laptops or tablets. (Electronic devices are allowed, but not essential.)
- Current meeting address, WSO group ID number, contact info, postal address, and email address for group.
- A copy of this booklet.

### Who Can I ask for help?

- Almost everyone in the room is, or has been, a GR. If you don’t understand something, be sure to ask someone sitting at your table during a break.
- We encourage you to sit with someone you do not know, a friend you haven’t met yet.
- Experience has shown that having a Service Sponsor will help make your term as GR more fulfilling. It is always better to share experiences in Al-Anon! (see Service Sponsorship Pamphlet)

### What do I need to take back to my district/group?

- **Ideas** learned from the experience of other GRs and other members of the Assembly.
- **Resources** available from the Area Officers and Coordinators and how to access them.
- **Highlights** from the Delegate’s Report (World Service Conference)
- **Discussion topics** Inform members of the topics that were discussed and new information you may have learned.
- **Encouragement – Active members = Vibrant Groups!** By sharing what you learn, you will be educating members about the importance of active involvement in supporting the health and growth of Al-Anon/Alateen.

## HOW DOES THE MEETING WORK?

### What we want to achieve:

- To do the business of Al-Anon/Alateen

### How are decisions made?

- Knowledge Based Decision Making (KBDM) is the model we use to gain an Informed Group Conscience. (More info in our Service Manual p. 70) There are four basic elements to KBDM:
  - Open communication between leadership and membership
  - Clarity in what their discussions hope to accomplish
  - All decision makers have common access to full information
  - Dialogue before deliberation: We exist in a culture of trust

### Rules of conduct for open discussion:

- 2 minutes at the microphone
- Begin and end each session on time
- No side conversations
- No cell phones
- No distractions
- No applause
- Express opinions, but not if someone else has already said what you were going to say
- Stay on topic
- Follow the agenda
- Be courteous
- No scents
- Presume Good Will (Presume that everyone wants what is best for Al-Anon regardless of whether you agree or disagree)

### How should I introduce myself when speaking at the microphone?

When speaking at the mic, introduce yourself by first name and last initial, District number and name of your city/town. You may share your Group name the first time at the mic. Each person may have one time at the mic per discussion topic.

### How is voting conducted?

- Please see “Rules of Procedure” in *Motions in Effect Booklet* p. 8 and 9.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **1. Will I be voting at Assembly?**

Only GRs vote at Assembly. The “ultimate authority” rests with the Al-Anon Groups. One vote per group. This is how Al-Anon is guided by the wishes of the members rather than a governing body. (see Concept One) There will be times that voting needs to be handled at AWSCM, but those actions are ratified by GRs at Assembly.

### **2. I am not able to attend Assembly. Can I send the votes by proxy or can another GR take my place?**

GRs must be in attendance to vote. A GR who votes for his/her group cannot also vote for another group. To have your group represented, the group could choose a member (who is not also an AA member) to attend Assembly in your place. He/she would be considered the “Alternate GR” and register as a voting member at Assembly. Each group has one vote.

### **3. Can other members who are not GRs attend Assembly?**

Yes, all Al-Anon/Alateen members are welcome and encouraged to participate in Assembly. All members are welcome to offer their ideas during discussions. This is how we ensure we have full knowledge before the GRs vote.

### **4. Why is it important for me to attend? Can't I just get a written report of Assembly?**

There are many useful conversations that take place at Assembly. It is impossible to capture all the great ideas in a written report. By attending, you have the opportunity to discover interesting ideas that may serve to improve your Al-Anon/Alateen meeting. Fellowship is an important part of Al-Anon/Alateen recovery. Participation is the Key to Harmony – Concept Four; this participation ensures an informed group conscience.

### **5. My group cannot pay for me to attend Assembly. How can our group participate?**

If your group cannot pay for all of your expenses, perhaps your district can help with some of the costs. Your group could do some fundraising within Al-Anon to raise money for your travel costs. (see Pg. 105 in the current *Service Manual*). We encourage you to make every effort to attend. Sharing rides and rooms can help lessen the expense and add to the fun!

### **6. How can I find a service sponsor to help me with my service position?**

There are many members who have participated in service and would be happy to help you on your new journey! Check with service members in your district, or talk with current service members at Assembly. Almost everyone in the room has something to offer. This is where fellowship can be helpful in choosing the right person for you.

### **7. Should District Representatives attend Assembly?**

District Representatives are encouraged to attend Assembly. District funds are used to send DRs to AWSC meetings and Assembly. It is very exciting to see DRs and GRs working together for the health of their groups and district.

### **8. What are the qualifications for an Officer position?**

The applicant should have experience as a current or past District Representative, be prepared to serve for 3 years and be an active member of Al-Anon and cannot be a member of AA. Applicants are asked to outline their service experience which indicates their involvement in Al-Anon and familiarity with The Steps, The Traditions and The Concepts. Applicants may also outline their personal knowledge, skills and abilities to demonstrate they can perform the duties of the position. Working knowledge of email and documents/spreadsheet is needed. For example, a secretary should have basic computer skills to operate the equipment at meetings and write up the minutes of meetings. (see Concept Nine). Also see the Position Snapshots booklet for other positions' requirements.

### **9. Will there be time for fellowship at Assembly?**

The business of Assembly is on your agenda which you received by email. These times are subject to change at subsequent Meetings. Although the business is priority, there are fun presentations planned and regular breaks to connect with others. GRs can meet informally on Friday evening if they need to come the day before Assembly. A banquet is usually held on the Saturday night of September Assembly with Fellowship and fun activities after.

### **10. Will there be a "Tradition Seven" collection at Assembly?**

No collection is taken. In Alberta/N.W.T., we have registration fees to cover costs.

### **11. Where are the guidelines for how the Alberta/N.W.T. Area Assembly conducts the business of Al-Anon?**

In general, Alberta/N.W.T. Area Assembly follows the guidelines presented in the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*. Our *Motions in Effect* Booklet documents new motions which have changed some procedures to better reflect the needs of our Area. As a new GR you will receive a copy of *Motions in Effect* for the Alberta/N.W.T. Area Assembly.

### **12. New information came forward at Assembly that makes me think my group would make a different choice if they had all the information. What should I do?**

As a trusted servant, you have delegated authority to use your intelligence to make effective decisions. (see Concept Ten). It is assumed that you have had full consultation with your group members and understand their needs. When attending Assembly where you have access to all the facts to guide you, it is expected that you act according to your own conscience. (see Concept Three)

### **13. How do I get to the Al-Anon Member's website?**

The website address for World Service Office Website is [Al-Anon.org](http://Al-Anon.org). Click on Members for the Members section. No password is required.

Alberta/N.W.T. Area Website is [Al-Anon.ab.ca](http://Al-Anon.ab.ca). Click Members – the password is Area80

# Al-Anon Declaration

Let It Begin with Me

When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help,

let the hand of Al-Anon and Alateen

always be there,

and *Let It Begin With Me.*

## RESOURCES

- Al-Anon Alateen *Service Manual* (current)
- Al-Anon Traditions and Concepts of Service: Various Conference Approved Literature (CAL)
- “Keeping in Touch” Alberta/N.W.T. Area Newsletter
- Motions in Effect for the Alberta/N.W.T. Area Assembly
- See List of emails for Officers and Coordinators on page 10
- Websites:
  - ❖ **AB/N.W.T.** - [www.al-anon.ab.ca](http://www.al-anon.ab.ca)
  - ❖ **WSO** - [www.al-anon.org](http://www.al-anon.org)
  - ❖ **ACSOA Webstore** – [www.al-anonbookstore.ca](http://www.al-anonbookstore.ca) / email: [order@Al-Anonbookstore.ca](mailto:order@Al-Anonbookstore.ca)  
**ACSOA phone:** 403-287-3397 (Bookstore)



## COMMON ACRONYMS

Here is a list of common Al-Anon acronyms, or initials. This list is to help newer service members to become familiar with our service terminology.

AAPP	Area Alateen Process Person
ACSOA	Al-Anon Central Service Office Alberta (Literature Distribution Centre (LDC) /Bookstore)
AFG	Al-Anon Family Groups
AFG, Inc.	Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. (World Service Office)
AIS	Al-Anon Information Service
ADR	Alternate District Representative
AGR	Alternate Group Representative
AMIAS	Al-Anon Member Involved in Alateen Service
AWSC	Area World Service Committee
AWSCM	Area World Service Committee Meeting
BOT	Board of Trustees (AFG, Inc.)
CAL	Conference Approved Literature
CMA	Current Mailing Address
COB	Chair of the Board (Board of Trustees, AFG, Inc.)
DR	District Representative
GR	Group Representative
IAGSM	International Al-Anon General Services Meeting
KBDM	Knowledge Based Decision Making (Informed Group Conscience)
LDC	Literature Distribution Centre (ACSOA)
MIE	Motions in Effect (Booklet)
ODAT	One Day at a Time
PIC	Police Information Check
PRC	Police Record Check
PO	Public Outreach
PSA	Public Service Announcement
WSC	World Service Conference (an event)
WSO	World Service Office (currently Virginia Beach VA)

## 2019-2021 Alberta/N.W.T. Officers

World Service Delegate:	Sharon F.	<a href="mailto:delegate@al-anon.ab.ca">delegate@al-anon.ab.ca</a>
Chairperson:	Olive W.	<a href="mailto:chairperson@al-anon.ab.ca">chairperson@al-anon.ab.ca</a>
Alt. Delegate/Alt. Chair/Alt. Budget Chair:	Jim A.	<a href="mailto:altdelegate@al-anon.ab.ca">altdelegate@al-anon.ab.ca</a>
Secretary:	Annie C.	<a href="mailto:secretary@al-anon.ab.ca">secretary@al-anon.ab.ca</a>
Treasurer:	Lorie S.	<a href="mailto:treasurer@al-anon.ab.ca">treasurer@al-anon.ab.ca</a>
ACSOA Chairperson	Norma F.	<a href="mailto:acsoa@al-anon.ab.ca">acsoa@al-anon.ab.ca</a>

## 2019-2021 Alberta/N.W.T. Coordinators

Webmaster/Website:	Jason D.	<a href="mailto:webmaster@al-anon.ab.ca">webmaster@al-anon.ab.ca</a>
Group Records:	Gisela	<a href="mailto:grouprecords@al-anon.ab.ca">grouprecords@al-anon.ab.ca</a>
Alt. Treasurer/Registration	Rhonda L.	<a href="mailto:registration@al-anon.ab.ca">registration@al-anon.ab.ca</a>
Area Resolutions	Diane G.	<a href="mailto:resolutions@al-anon.ab.ca">resolutions@al-anon.ab.ca</a>
Literature/Forum:	Sharon A.	<a href="mailto:literatureforum@al-anon.ab.ca">literatureforum@al-anon.ab.ca</a>
Alateen:	Sharon P.	<a href="mailto:alateen@al-anon.ab.ca">alateen@al-anon.ab.ca</a>
Public Outreach:	Lynn W.	<a href="mailto:publicoutreach@al-anon.ab.ca">publicoutreach@al-anon.ab.ca</a>
Archives:	Wendy P.	<a href="mailto:archives@al-anon.ab.ca">archives@al-anon.ab.ca</a>
Newsletter:	Jes S.	<a href="mailto:newsletter@al-anon.ab.ca">newsletter@al-anon.ab.ca</a>
Area Alateen Process Person:	Gilda F.	<a href="mailto:aapp@al-anon.ab.ca">aapp@al-anon.ab.ca</a>

## Anon Information Services

Calgary AIS	Sally K.	<a href="mailto:calgarychairperson@al-anon.ab.ca">calgarychairperson@al-anon.ab.ca</a>
Edmonton AIS	Shirley E.	<a href="mailto:edmontonchairperson@al-anon.ab.ca">edmontonchairperson@al-anon.ab.ca</a>

## Convention Chairperson

2019 Convention Chairperson	Bernie S.	<a href="mailto:convention2019@al-anon.ab.ca">convention2019@al-anon.ab.ca</a>
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## Regional Trustee Canada West

Regional Trustee Canada West	Contact:	<a href="mailto:wso@al-anon.org">wso@al-anon.org</a>
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## Group Contributions Information (2019-2021)

**\*Note:** This list will be updated and emailed to GRs as necessary. Always check for the latest update.

Member Contributions are an important and often misunderstood part of support. Keeping the Al-Anon program available to help families and friends of alcoholics depends on financial support of its service arms at local, Area and World Service Levels.

### **Suggested Order of Financial Responsibilities (Tradition Seven) (this does not show the suggested order)**

Group  
AIS (Al-Anon Information Services where present)  
District  
AB/N.W.T. Area Assembly  
ACSOA (Literature Distribution Centre/ Bookstore)  
AFG Headquarters, Inc.

### **You can make cheques payable to and send to:**

- 1. Group** (your Group's Treasurer passes the basket)
- 2. AIS Calgary** or **AIS Edmonton**  
Al-Anon Information Services  
PO Box 512, Station M  
Calgary AB T2P 2J2  
Al-Anon Information Services  
PO Box 1375  
Edmonton AB T5J 2N2
- 3. District** (Check with your own District Representative)
- 4. Alberta/N.W.T. Area Assembly**  
Lorie Sprokkreeff (note: Do not put Al-Anon on your envelope)  
51 Deer Park Crescent, Spruce Grove, Alberta, T7X 1M2
- 5. ACSOA**  
ACSOA Literature Distribution Centre or contribute online [www.al-anonbookstore.ca](http://www.al-anonbookstore.ca)  
McCaig Building  
303 Forge Road SE  
Calgary AB T2H 0S9
- 6. WSO - AFG Headquarters (Canada) Inc.** (make cheques payable to AFG Canada Inc.)  
275 Slater Street #900  
Ottawa ON K1P 5H9  
  
Or with US Postage  
AFG Headquarters, Inc.  
1600 Corporate Landing Parkway  
Virginia Beach, VA 23454-5617  
  
or contribute online at Al-Anon.org  
or apply for automatic contributions  
from your bank account (see WSO website  
[www.Al-Anon.org](http://www.Al-Anon.org))