



# **DISTRICT 35**

# **SERVICE MANUAL**

*2022 Edition*

**This service manual is intended to provide service guidelines for the trusted servants of District 35, Area 29. This document is not intended to replace or restate the A.A. Service Manual.**

*Updated 05/05/2022*

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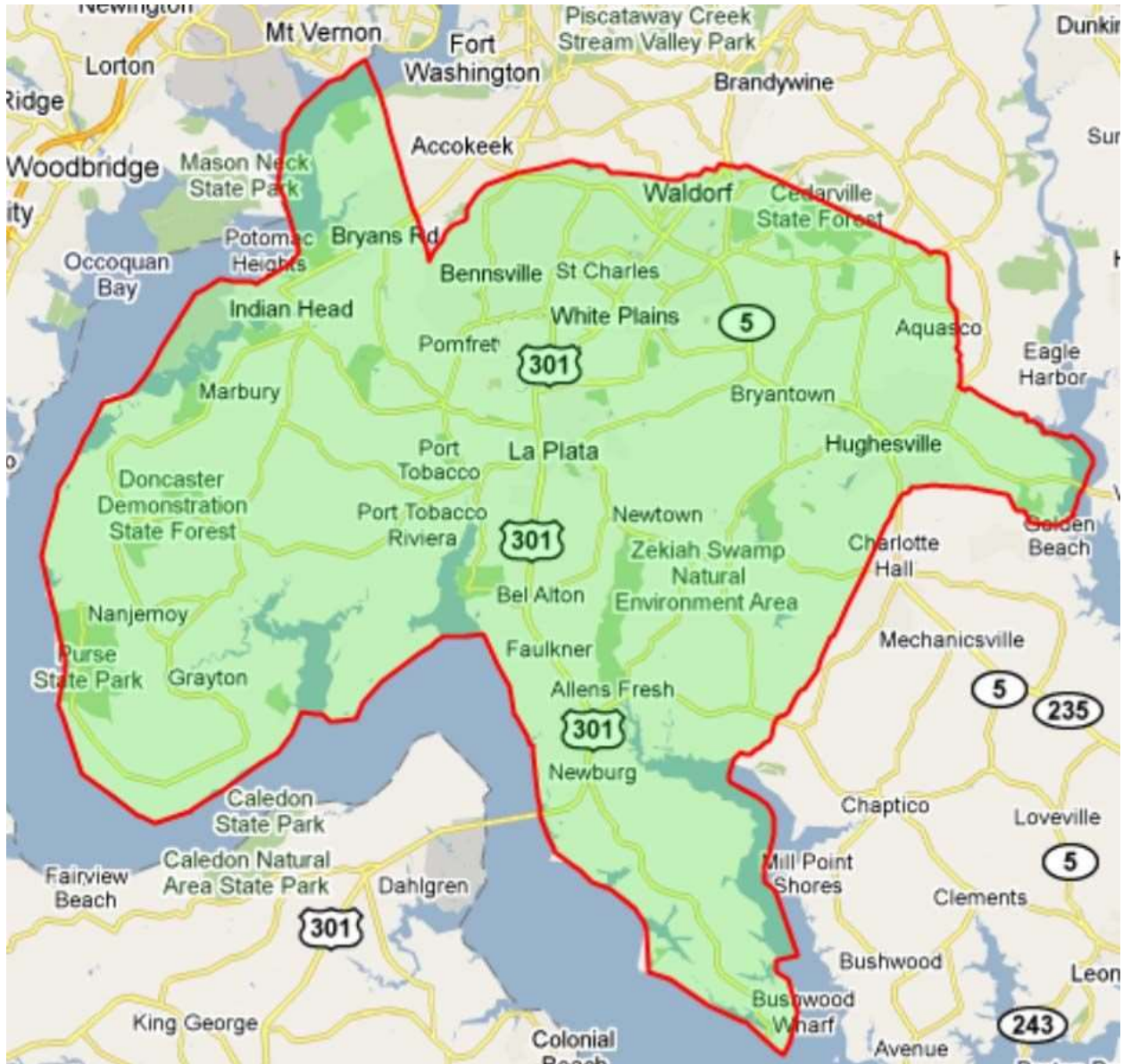
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## District 35 Geographic Boundaries

District 35 is a geographical territory within Area 29 of Alcoholics Anonymous. The District boundaries were created by the ad hoc Districting Committee of Area 29 and approved at the Area 29 Assembly. District 35 encompasses all of Charles County, Maryland.



The District Committee is responsible for serving all the A.A. groups in District 35 and participates in activities that carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous.

## **District 35 Service Manual**

### **Preamble**

The District 35 Committee of Alcoholics Anonymous is a service body established pursuant to the guidelines of the Maryland General Service (MGS) manual, which shall protect and respect the autonomy and right of dissent of the individual A.A. groups within District 35. The officers and members of District 35 shall be ever mindful of the ideals expressed in the Twelve Steps, the Twelve Traditions, the Twelve Concepts for World Service, the A. A. Service Manual and the MGS Area 29 Service Manual and shall strive to provide the voice of the group conscience of District 35 unity. The primary purpose of the District 35 Committee is service to A.A. as a whole. The District 35 Committee shall encourage each members' A.A. Home Group to participate in the business of District 35 and to support the efforts of District 35 Committee to cooperate with the General Service Office (GSO), A.A. World Services, Inc. (AAWS), and the A.A. Grapevine, Inc. toward fulfilling the primary purpose of Alcoholics Anonymous.

### **Composition**

#### **A. Composition.**

District 35 is located within the borders of Charles County, MD, which is inside the boundary of Area 29 (Maryland General Services or MGS) of the General Service Conference structure of A.A. and is composed of five duly elected officers, duly elected General Service Representatives (GSRs) from each members' A.A. Home Groups, and the Standing Committee Chairs. The District 35 officers are the District Committee Member (DCM), the Alternate District Committee Member (ADCM), the Secretary, the Treasurer and the District Intergroup Representative (DIR).

## **The District Committee**

The District Committee is made up of the elected positions listed below, appointed Committee Chairs, and General Service Representatives (GSRs). The elected positions (via Third Legacy Procedure as outlined in The A.A. Service Manual, 2018-2020 Edition, Page S21) serve a term of two years beginning January 1 of odd-numbered years and end December 31 of the following even-numbered year. The Committee Chairs generally serve a two-year term and are appointed by the DCM. Officers and Committee Chairs are expected to be present at all District 35 Business meetings every first Thursday of the month.

### **Elected Positions**

- District Committee Member (DCM)
- Alternate District Committee Member (Alt DCM)
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- District Intergroup Representative
- GSR (Group Service Representative)

### **Terms of Office and Elections**

- The term of office for all District positions (except GSR) is for a period of two (2) years. All positions (except GSR) are limited to one (1) two-year term. The Group Service Representative is elected by their homegroup and term of service is per their homegroup.
- Elections for all positions, except for GSRs, will be held in November of the even-numbered year. Orientation will be in December every year.
- The term of office begins in January of odd-numbered years.

## **B. Officer's Duties and Responsibilities**

### **B-1 Duties of the DCM**

- To establish District Standing Committees and appoint Standing Committee Chairs as necessary.
- To draft a monthly District 35 Meeting Agenda in coordination with the Secretary, when possible, and to chair the Monthly District 35 meeting.
- To determine the collective conscience of District 35 when appropriate and convey the district conscience to the Maryland Area 29 Committee.
- To attend and represent District 35 (or assure someone from the District is in attendance) at the MGS State convention held in June, and also assure attendance from District 35 at the MGS Area 29 Assemblies and present a District 35 business report at said assembly.
- To serve on the MGS Standing Committee upon request of the MGS Chairperson if feasible.
- To render assistance to new A.A. groups wishing to register with District 35, MGS Area 29, or the GSO.
- To annually review District 35 financial records with the Treasurer by October for presentation in November. The DCM and the Treasurer will draft the annual budget for approval prior to the end of the calendar year.
- Reimbursement for travel to the MGS Area 29 Assemblies and Committee Meetings by the DCM or his/her representative will be at the rate per mile set by Area 29 Guidelines.

### **B-2 Duties of the ADCM**

- To assist the DCM, when requested, in all duties of that office.
- To assume the duties of the DCM should the DCM become unable to serve.
- In conjunction with DCM, be a member of any committees as assigned by DCM.
- In coordination with the DCM, review the accuracy of the listing of the A.A. Home Groups within District 35, their locations, meeting times and accessibility status. Convey to the groups the importance of notifying the MGS Area 29 Registrar and the SMIA webmaster of any changes.



### **B-3 Duties of the Secretary**

- To prepare and draft minutes of all District 35 meetings and distribute to the DCM and ADCM for initial review prior to the monthly meetings. The draft minutes shall be reviewed and revised at the monthly District 35 meeting and shall be approved by vote of the members present.
- To maintain a current District 35 email distribution list.
- To notify the GSRs via email and/or text of the date and time of the monthly District 35 meetings and any special meetings including committee meetings.
- To maintain copies of all District 35 meeting addenda and minutes.
- To maintain a motions notebook or spreadsheet for items passed/failed that affect any District 35 policies or procedures.

### **B-4 Duties of the Treasurer**

- To receive voluntary contributions from District 35 A.A Home Groups and other sources, as defined by GSO Guidelines pertaining to contributions and to maintain a District 35 post office box for this purpose.
- To prepare and deliver an annual letter of acknowledgement to contributing Home Groups.
- To maintain a bank account in the name of District 35, along with a signature card on file at said bank signed by at least one (1) other officer of District 35, into which all contributions will be deposited and from which distribution of all outgoing funds will be made.
- To distribute District 35 funds in a timely manner as set forth in this service manual, and to carry out all other distributions of funds pursuant to an affirmative vote of the members of the District 35 Committee, according to budgetary constraints, when applicable.
- To prepare a monthly treasury report, showing receipts and their source; the disbursement of funds with applicable budget line items and the remaining balance. Said report will be given at the monthly District 35 meeting and shall be approved by vote of the members present.
- To assist the DCM in the annual review of the District 35 financial records ending December 31.

### **B-5 Duties of the District Intergroup Representative**

- To act as liaison between District 35 and Southern Maryland Intergroup Association (SMIA).
- To attend monthly SMIA meetings; if unable to attend, notify the DCM of his/her anticipated absence.
- To maintain communication with SMIA and facilitate the flow of information regarding District 35 service activities.
- To keep District 35 members informed regarding SMIA policies and activities.

### **B-6 Duties of the GSR**

- To be listed in A.A. directories and to serve as the contact on behalf of their A.A. Home Group with GSO, MGS-Area 29 and District 35.
- To represent their Home Group at District 35 meetings, workshops, MGS Assemblies and to serve as a voting member, both at District 35 and MGS-Area 29 levels.
- To convey their A.A. Home Groups' Conscience to the District 35 and to MGS-Area 29 Assemblies.
- To serve as a conduit of information between District 35 and their A.A. Home Group, always seeking to assist their group in being viable and informed through their knowledge.

### **C. Committee Chair Positions (Standing Committees)**

Standing committees are created by the District members and generally mirror the General Service Conference Structure Standing Committees. Their primary purpose is to carry out the wishes and directions from the group conscious of District members.

#### **C-1 Duties of the Corrections-Treatment Chair**

- Coordinates and acts as liaison between District 35 and institutions (hospitals, treatment centers, and corrections).

The CTC Chair also:

- Votes at District Business meetings
- Attends all District Business and Committee meetings
- Reports at the District Business meeting • Submits a budget request in October for the next fiscal year
- Utilizes the available Corrections and Treatment information kit and/or workbook to fulfill committee obligations or responsibilities
- Maintains a file of current responsibilities and obligations and information on in progress projects for the newly appointed CTC Chair
- The Committee is largely composed of group members, most of whom take on the role of liaison or sponsor to each of the active facilities and ensure that the A.A. meetings being taken into each institution are reliably attended.

#### **C-2 Duties of the Grapevine Chair**

- The Grapevine Committee Chair's primary responsibility is to ensure Grapevine literature is available for purchase and to communicate to the District the importance of the Grapevine as "A.A.'s Meeting in Print and Media."

The Grapevine Chair also:

- Votes at District Business meetings
- Attends all District Business and Committee meetings • Reports at the District Business meeting
- Promotes Grapevine subscriptions
- Informs the District when new Grapevine literature is available
- Maintains a file of current responsibilities and obligations and information on in progress projects for the newly appointed Grapevine Chair

### **C-3 Duties of the Public Information/Cooperation with the Professional Community Chair**

- The Public Information (PI) and Cooperation with the Professional Community (CPC) Committee Chair's primary responsibility is to increase awareness of A.A. in the community and facilitates requests for printed material and speakers. The PI/CPC Committee participates in community health fairs and other events. The Committee makes literature available to the medical, religious, mental health, and law enforcement communities and facilitates communication between A.A. and community members who encounter alcoholics through their profession (such as physicians, nurses, clergymen, lawyers, and social workers).

The PI/CPC Committee Chair also:

- Votes at District Business meetings
- Attends all District Business and Committee meetings
- Reports at the District Business meeting
- Utilize the available PI and CPC information kit and/or workbook to fulfill committee obligations or responsibilities
- Provides information about A.A.—who we are, where we are, what we are, and what we can and cannot do. (See the pamphlet, “How A.A. Members Cooperate with Professionals”)
- The Chair ensures that Where and When publications and A.A.-approved pamphlets are in stock and up to date at various locations
- Maintains a file of current responsibilities and obligations, a log of community literature locations, and information on in-progress projects for the newly appointed PI/CPC Chair.

### **C-5 Duties of the Hospitality Committee Chair**

- Votes at District Business meetings
- Attends all District Business and Committee meetings
- Reports at the District Business meeting
- Suggests menu for District events
- Maintains inventory of necessary items for district events
- Directs set up of food/refreshments at district events

## **C-6 Duties of the Communications Chair**

- Votes at District Business meetings
- Attends all District Business and Committee meetings
- Reports at the District Business meeting
- Creates flyers for district events and makes copies for distribution
- Notifies SMIA (Southern Maryland Intergroup Association) of upcoming events for Lifeline publication by submitting flyer to the current Lifeline editor at [somdlifeline@gmail.com](mailto:somdlifeline@gmail.com)
- Notifies Maryland General Services (MGS) Area 29 of upcoming events by flyer submission or submission of any other district information to [webmaster@marylandaa.org](mailto:webmaster@marylandaa.org)
- Notifies Margenser Newsletter of upcoming events by flyer submission or submission of any other district information to [margenser@marylandaa.org](mailto:margenser@marylandaa.org)

### **D. The District Meeting**

- The District Meeting will be held on a monthly basis, whenever possible.
- The meeting will be at a location and on a date selected by the DCM and then voted on by the District Assembly. These will be announced as far in advance as possible.
- The agenda for the District Meeting will be prepared by the DCM and assisted by the District Secretary when possible.
- It will be announced at the District Meeting that only voting members on the Secretary's role will be permitted to vote on District business, qualifying "voting members."
- A majority vote will be sufficient for all District business including the election or removal of district offices.
- Business coming up for discussion from the floor at any District Meeting that is not on the agenda in which requires a District vote should be put on the agenda for the following meeting, providing such placement is approved by majority of the voting members that are present. Immediate or emergency action may be taken with the approval of two-thirds of the voting members present.
- The meeting gives the DCM an opportunity to report to the GSRs on whatever subject and activities are pertinent. It gives the GSRs an opportunity to communicate with the DCM and express the group conscience. Communication is a two-way street with information flowing in both directions between the GSRs and the committee member. Meetings are rather informal and any situation concerning the Group, the District, or A.A. as a whole should be discussed freely. A quorum for District business will be those members present, providing notice of the meeting has been given.

### **E. The District – Business Motions**

- An item of business to be voted on is brought to the floor as a motion.
- The DCM will ask for a second of the motion.
- If the motion is seconded, discussion will ensue. (Motions coming from District Committees do not need a second).
- During discussion, members will raise their hand to be recognized by the DCM before speaking. Comments will be limited to two minutes per person. All members that wish to speak should be given the opportunity to do so.
- The Secretary will read the motion.
- A vote will be taken on the motion. If the motion passes, the DCM will ask for minority opinions. Those with a minority opinion will raise their hand and be limited to two minutes when recognized by the DCM. After the minority opinion has been heard, the DCM will ask if the minority opinion has changed anyone's vote. If so, the DCM will ask for a show of hands for a re-vote (simple majority). If there is a simple majority in favor of a re-vote, there will be a re-vote on the motion. If there is a simple majority on the re-vote, the motion passes. If there are no minority opinions expressed, a re-vote will not be taken.

## **F. The District – Funding**

- Necessary funds must be available for the District to fulfill its responsibilities.
- A great deal of the responsibility for funding will come from the individual Home Groups in the District. Each Group is asked to provide the District contributions in accordance with their Group Conscience and current literature dealing with A.A. finances. All donations are voluntary, and the District welcomes whatever amount each Group deems appropriate to support the carrying of the message at the District level.
- Any surplus funds of the District after District needs have been met may be dispersed to the GSO or other A.A. entities by vote of the voting members.



### **G. The District – Amendments**

- Proposed Amendments to these guidelines will be presented to the DCM in writing.
- The DCM will place them on the agenda for the next District meeting for first consideration.
- Next, the proposal will be forwarded to the Groups for their consideration.
- Next, the proposal will be placed on the agenda for the following District meeting for final approval pending a vote of GSRs present.
- The Secretary would mail or email any such proposal along with the District agenda to all voting members of the District no less than one week before the scheduled vote.

## **H. The District – Incorporation Into Guidelines**

- The updating and accuracy of these amendments will be the responsibility of the District Secretary.

## **Spirit of Rotation**

Tradition Two states: “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... As A.A. developed its own democracy, the principle of a rotating committee was formed, limiting its own authority. The principle of rotation allows our trusted servants to move on in service, giving newer members the privilege of serving. No one should hold onto a position of trust long enough to feel proprietary. This discourages newcomers from service. It is better that a service position remains open, affording an opportunity to a newcomer.”

## **Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts**

“A.A.’s Twelve Steps are principles for personal recovery. The Twelve Traditions ensure the unity of the Fellowship. The Twelve Concepts provide a group of related principles to help ensure that various elements of A.A.’s service structure remain responsive and responsible to those they serve.

To those now in its fold, Alcoholics Anonymous has made the difference between misery and sobriety, and often the difference between life and death. A.A. can, of course, mean just as much to uncounted alcoholics not yet reached. Therefore, no society of men and women ever had a more urgent need for continuous effectiveness and permanent unity. We alcoholics see that we must work together and hang together, else most of us will finally die alone.

The 12 Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous are, we A.A.’s believe, the best answers that our experience has yet given to those ever-urgent questions, ‘How can A.A. best function?’ and, ‘How can A.A. best stay whole and so survive?’”  
Alcoholics Anonymous, page 561.

For the Twelve Traditions of A.A. See Page S113, short form, and S13, long form, of *The A.A. Service Manual combined with Twelve Concepts for World Service*.

For the Twelve Concepts of World Service see Page IV, short form, and V, long form, of *The A.A. Service Manual combined with Twelve Concepts for World Service*.”

### **Concept III – The Right of Decision**

“The Twelve Concepts for World Service can be found the A.A. Service Manual combined with Twelve Concepts for World Service beginning on Page I in the back half of the book. Concept III states that trusted servants in A.A. are endowed with the ‘Right of Decision’, meaning we trust them to make decisions on our behalf. This is vitally important at all levels of service: The group trusts the GSR to act on its behalf, the GSRs trust the DCM to act on their behalf, the GSRs and DCM trust the Area Officers, Chairs, and Delegate to act on our behalf, and we all trust the General Service Conference members to act on all of our behalf.

Every trusted servant and every A.A. entity—at all levels of service—has the right to decide...how they will interpret and apply their own authority and responsibility to each particular problem or situation as it arises. That is, they can decide which problems they will dispose of themselves and upon which matters they will report, consult, or ask specific directions. This is the essence of ‘The Right of Decision.’

But this right also means the Fellowship must have trust in its trusted servants. If the groups instruct their GSRs rather than giving them a ‘Right of Decision’, then the area conference is hamstrung. If the GSRs instruct the area delegates rather than giving them a ‘Right of Decision’, then the General Service Conference is hamstrung, As Bill points out, ‘our Conference delegates are primarily the servants of A.A. as they should cast their votes according to the best dictates of their own judgment and conscience at that time.’

Bill warns against using ‘The Right of Decision’ as an excuse for failure to make the proper reports of actions taken; or for exceeding a clearly defined authority; or for failing to consult the proper people before making an important decision. But he concludes:

Our entire A.A. program rests squarely upon the principle of mutual trust. We trust God, we trust A.A., and we trust each other." *Reprinted from the Western Washington State Area 72 District 46 Handbook*