

*This **informal, unofficial** guide was written by a General Service Representative (GSR) for other GSRs for the purpose of helping the GSRs navigate their role in the General Service Conference. This overview is a brief description and is not meant to replace The A.A Service Manual, “The GSR Packet” (P-19).*

## **A General Service Conference Guide for General Service Representatives**

Every April or May, Alcoholics Anonymous hosts the General Service Conference (GSC) in New York. This conference serves as “the time when the collective group conscience of the U.S./Canada A.A. comes together to take actions that will guide the groups in the years to come” (*A.A. Service Manual page S55\**).

The lengthy process of establishing the group conscience of AA in the U.S and Canada first requires the cultivating the group conscience at the level of the AA Groups. Toward the end of each calendar year, the General Service Office sets the agenda for the following GSC. This agenda is released to the Regions, Areas, Districts and AA Groups in January or February. Thus begins the process of cultivating a group conscience on these agenda items.

In order for the collective group conscience of the U.S and Canada A.A to be established on these agenda items, the AA groups must review these agenda items, establish their groups’ conscience, and carry it to the delegate who will act as the groups’ voice at the General Service Conference.

The AA groups have only a few months to complete the tasks necessary in this long process:

1. Mid-February the GSR receives the GSC Agenda Items and Background Material for that year from their Delegate and/or District at the February District meeting, on the District Website, and/or via email. The GSR then distributes the GSC agenda items to their homegroup members, and works with their group to set a date for a group conscience meeting to discuss the GSC agenda items. The meeting should be scheduled after the March District meeting, but before the Delegate Workshop in April.
2. The homegroup members review the GSC agenda items. Each member can request the GSR gather more information on any agenda item about which they feel strongly or have questions. The GSR and Alt-GSR review the Background Material on these specific agenda items. They may also refer to notes sometimes provided by the Area Committee Members. If the homegroup is able, they will also send their GSR to the West Central Regional AA Service Conference where the region gets together the first weekend in March to discuss these items in full.
3. At the special Group Conscience meeting set up in 1, the group members review the agenda items the group members feel most strongly about. At this meeting, the group’s GSR reports the background information they were asked to review in 2. The group then gives the GSR feedback (group’s conscience) to take to the Delegate Workshop.
4. GSR attends the Delegate Workshop. The purpose of the Delegates Workshop is to allow the Delegate the opportunity to learn the groups’ conscience. That way the Delegate can carry their conscience to the General Service Conference in NYC.

## **Additional Resources:**

\*To learn more about the General Service Conference, read Chapters Seven and Eight of the Service Manual with your sponsor. PDF of Service Manual can be found [HERE](#).

### GSR email to home-group members after the March District meeting:

*Hello Everyone,*

*We went to the district meeting to find out more about the General Service Conference agenda items. We have all of the background info as well as notes from several sources who attended the West Central Regional Conference in Billings. Things are coming together now.*

*At this point, all of the home-group members will want to review the Final Conference Agenda Items (attached Agenda to email or link to District 18's site). Your job will be to 1) review the agenda items and 2) email us, your GSR and Alt-GSR, a list of items you want to know more about or feel strongly about. We will compile your responses, read the background material for all items on your lists, and bring the information we've found to our group's special Group Conscience meeting at time/date.*

*Please note that our Group Conscience meeting is coming up fast. Your GSR and Alt-GSR will need plenty of time to research the items in which you're interested, so please try to get us your list in the next seven to ten days to ensure we'll be able to get to everything.*

### Process of Determining AA's Group Conscience

*April/May of Previous Year*

**GSC** > Sets focus for following GSC

*January/February*

**GSO** > Distributes Agenda to Delegates

**Delegates** > Distribute Agenda and Background Materials to Area Committee Members (which includes the DCM)

**DCM** > Distributes Agenda and Background Materials to the groups' General Service Representatives (GSRs)

**GSRs** > Distributes Agenda and Background Materials to their groups

*March*

**West Central Regional Conference** > Delegate, Area and District Committee Members, and GSRs are informed on background of Agenda Items, discuss agenda with Regional Trustees and/or Trustees-at-large

**DCM** > Distributes all background information to GSRs

**GSRs** > Distributes specific agenda item background information to their groups

**Groups** > Inform GSR of the group's conscience on agenda items

*April*

**GSRs** > Inform Delegate of their Groups' Conscience at Delegate Workshop

*April/May*

**Delegate** > Carries the groups' conscience to the GSC in New York City

*Post-Conference*

**Delegate** > Gives a report to the Area and Districts. This report covers the proceedings at the Conference, including "record of reports, discussions, workshops, and actions" (A.A Service Manual page S58)