

HowTo: A Guide to being the District Registrar

District 54

1.0 Introduction

This document is intended to be a suggested guideline as to what the responsibilities are of the District Registrar and a suggested guide as to how to accomplish those tasks. The document is based on the experience gained over the past term (2012-2014) of the District Secretary/Registrar (these roles were separated before the term was over).

This document is provided as a supplementary guide in conjunction with the files forwarded by the outgoing District 54 Registrar to the incoming District 54 Registrar.

2.0 Document History

Date	Author	Description
2014/10/01	Jeff S.	Document creation.
2014/11/11	Jeff S.	Updated content to reflect experience & input from Area Registrar
2014/12/15	Jeff S.	Updated to include Document Overview section and added Appendix B: Registrar Resources.

2.0 Table of Contents

- 1.0 Introduction.....1
- 2.0 Document History.....1
- 2.0 Table of Contents1
- 4.0 Role and Responsibilities2
 - 4.1 Role2
 - 4.1.1 Serving the Groups within the District2
 - 4.1.2 Characteristics of the Registrar2
 - 4.2 Responsibilities2
 - 4.2.1 Group Representation2
 - 4.2.2 Registration of Group Representation3
 - 4.3 Reaffirmation of District Membership3
- Appendix A: Terminology4
- Appendix B: Registrar Resources5
 - Online Resources.....5
 - “Registrar Package – Dec 2014.zip” Contents5
 - Folders & Content Breakdown.....5

4.0 Role and Responsibilities

4.1 Role

The AA Service Manual does not define the District Registrar role but it does offer some guidance on the characteristics of a good District Registrar. Taken into consideration with the information provided at the Area Assembly Secretary/Registrar Information sessions a general image of what can be expected of the Registrar is formed. This vision of a Registrar is consistent with practical experience over the past term and can be considered a solid foundation for further definition moving forward.

4.1.1 Serving the Groups within the District

The Registrar’s focus is on the groups within the District themselves. The District Officers will liaise with the Secretary largely while the Registrar is preoccupied with the activities that facilitate the business related to groups themselves. This includes updating the District Committee Member (DCM) and Alternate DCM as changes in the group representation evolve during the term.

4.1.2 Characteristics of the Registrar

Synthesized from the mid-1990s and 2002-2003 text those characteristics can be summed up as follows:

- **Sobriety.** There is no specific period of sobriety stipulated other than to say a “reasonable period of sobriety” is required. It is suggested that this may mean 2 years sobriety in districts where AA is young and four or five years when there is an older district.
- **Business Experience.** This experience is suggested in order to capture the essentials of the meeting. It is also beneficial that the secretary be able to type.
- **Sense of Order.** Taking the minutes of a meeting oftentimes means sifting through quite a few thousand words said in order to capture the kernel or essence of the discussion.
- **Time, Interest, and Energy.** The role demands a lot of time and needs to be carried out on a schedule. Interest and devotion will keep the output of the secretary and the momentum of the group on track. The secretary is also in a good position to liaison between officers and committee members and can often play the role of arbiter if necessary.

4.2 Responsibilities

As the AA Service Manual does not define the District Registrar position but, through the Area Assembly Secretary/Registrar presentations and practical experience, a vision of what is required of the District Registrar can be formed. The role is centrally focused on the composition of the District Table’s membership (except the District Committee Officers – this is taken care of by the Secretary) and notifying the Area Registrar of changes to that composition as appropriate. This also entails the details associated to with each individual group itself.

4.2.1 Group Representation

Each group has three possible representatives associated to it. They can have a General Service Representative (GSR), an Alternate GSR, and a Mailing Contact. The three positions are not mandatory so a group may have a one, two, three, or none of these positions filled.

During the District Term 2013 – 2014 groups that had no representation were represented by District 54’s DCM. This was done for two reasons; (1) to prevent the group status from being set to “Unknown” in the GSO’s FNV (Fellowship New Vision) database and (2) to provide a mailing contact for group specific correspondence from GSO so that this correspondence could be passed along to the groups themselves. This is not a mandatory requirement or obligation of the DCM and the decision will have to be reviewed with each District Term.

4.2.2 Registration of Group Representation

The current Group Change Forms available both on the GSO’s website (aa.org) and the Area 83 website (area83aa.org) stipulate that the form should be mailed in to the New York head office once complete. Discussions in conjunction within the Area have concluded that this makes it hard for Districts to manage their membership if the process is followed because a reconciliation of the groups within the District (done in conjunction with the Area) only happens twice a year.

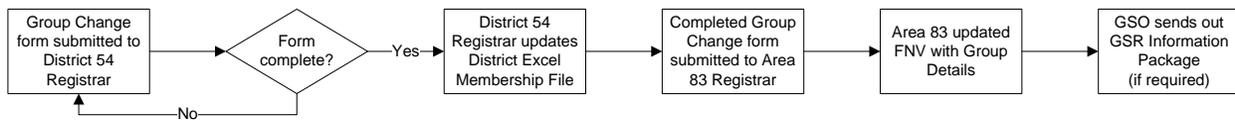


Figure 1 - Group Change Form Workflow

By processing the Group Change Forms in the order recommended in the diagram above it insures that the District has the most up-to-date group information without having to rely on the GSO and Area to update their information and disseminate it back to the District.

4.2.2.1 Group Change Forms

Group Change Forms are used to update and/or register group information. There are two primary forms that are used. One is the Group Change Form used to update existing group information and the other is the New Group Change Form used to register a new group (ref: [Online Resources](#)).

The Group Change Form will be the one used the most frequently as GSRs, Alternate GSRs, and Mailing Contacts are updated over the course of a term. The New Group Change Form is only used for groups not previously registered with AA.

4.3 Reaffirmation of District Membership

Twice a year, typically in the fall and spring, the Area registrar submits a data report from the FNV to each district within its catchment for review. The objective of this exercise is to reaffirm the group membership, group representatives, and any other pertinent details. This exercise is meant to synchronize the District information with the Area and GSO. This is important because access to the FNV is not extended beyond the Area level and the individual districts cannot synchronize their data any way other than through this manual exercise.

Appendix A: Terminology

This appendix contains a list of acronyms and terminology used in this document that is considered to be “uncommon” in every day AA parlance.

- GSO: General Service Office – This is AA’s headquarters in New York City.
- FNV: Fellowship New Vision – This is the database maintained at the GSO to keep track of the Area, District, and Group information. GSO and Area Officers have access to the system but District Officers do not.
- AA: Alcoholics Anonymous – Self-explanatory.
- Area – Refers to the broader geographic layer of administration in the AA structure of which District 54 belongs to. District 54 is part of Area 83.

Appendix B: Registrar Resources

This section contains a breakdown of the contents of the Registrar Package prepared in December 2014 as well as identifies some resources either available online or through other entities within the AA structure.

Online Resources

The following is a list of useful AA-related online resources. It should not be considered exhaustive or whole.

- Area 83 – <http://www.area83aa.org>
 - District Resources (Area 83 website) – Can download the latest Group Change Form from this page.
 - Group Change Form 2015 (used to update existing group information): <http://area83aa.org/docs/registrar/GroupChangeForm2015.doc>
 - New Group Form 2015 (used to registrar groups for the first time): <http://area83aa.org/docs/registrar/NewGroupForm2015.doc>
- GSO – <http://www.aa.org>
- Ottawa Area Intergroup – <http://www.ottawaaa.org>

“Registrar Package – Dec 2014.zip” Contents

This is the breakdown of the archive created in December 2014. The breakdown is done from a folder-level perspective relative to what the extracted folders/files would look like in the file system of a computer.

Folders & Content Breakdown

- **AA Organization Structure Information** – Contains information regarding the GSO – Area – District structure as well as a document defining the District 54 boundaries.
- **Form Templates** – Contains the non-standard template used occasionally as of December 2014.
- **Group Change Forms** – Contains the latest submitted version of the Group Change Forms associated to groups within District 54.
 - **Active** – Contains the Group Change Forms for all Active AA groups within District 54.
 - **Inactive** – Contains the Group Change Forms for all Inactive AA groups within District 54.
 - **Unknown** – Contains the Group Change Forms for all Unknown AA groups within District 54.
- **Membership** – Contains the Excel worksheet created during the 2013-2014 terms to track group representatives, district table officers (this information is maintained by the secretary), and general FNV group information.
- **Reference Documents and Samples** – Reference documents found online leveraged during the 2013-2014 term to create this document.

Note: File Formats

The majority of the editable files contained within the archive were created using Microsoft Office 2013 which makes those files natively backwards compatible to Microsoft Office 2007. Further backward compatibility in earlier versions of Office is possible through add-ons. Additional files in the archive were created using a variety of tools like Adobe Acrobat, et cetera.