

District 18 believes it is very important for groups to send their representatives to the Area Assemblies. With that goal in mind, here is a lot of information gathered from District, Area, and World Service sources and organized in a “frequently asked questions” format. It is hoped this information will be of help to your group as you discuss sending your GR to Assembly.

### **What is the relation between our group and Assembly?**

Your Group Representative (GR) is the first link in the chain that connects each Al-Anon Family Groups (AFG) member to the World Services Office (WSO). While your GR represents you at the monthly District meeting, once a year for one day in the spring and for three days in the fall, she or he may also represent the group at the Northern California World Service Area (NCWSA) Assembly. See the “Stay Connected through Links of Service” chart at the beginning of this FAQ for further illustration. See the Service Manual for restrictions on who has a voice and vote at Assembly. In brief, Assembly is to the Area as your business meeting is to your group.

### **Why is it so important to send our GR to Assembly?**

Of all the people who attend, only the GRs get to vote. The reason for this is that your GR represents the group members, in accordance with Concept 1: The ultimate responsibility and authority for Al-Anon’s World Services belongs to the Al-Anon Groups. Therefore, GRs are the voting members at Assembly because the focus of AFG service is to put the groups in the driver’s seat with regards to business. Also consider Concept 4: Participation is the key to harmony.

### **Where is Assembly this year, how much will it cost, and how does our GR register for it?**

The NCWSA is divided into northern, central, and southern sections, so during your GR’s three-year panel of service, s/he might go to The Conference Assembly is set for late April or early May with a \$5 registration that is typically, but not always, includes lunch, so that and mileage have been the only expenses for spring. Carpooling helps keep travel expenses to a minimum.

Fall Assembly set in late September or early October with a rotation in each section for both Assemblies. As an aid in calculating how much the group will need to save, here are approx. costs: Pre-registration is usually \$20.00. Rooms with tax can be approx. \$90.00-\$140/night – getting a roommate is standard practice. Meals and mileage must also be included in your estimate, carpooling is encouraged here as well. NCWSA guidelines for mileage are based on IRS business standards, which District 18 follows.. Please note that the block of rooms negotiated at the lower price can be reserved before the info is posted on the NCWSA website, so it is suggested that your GR make a reservation as soon as the details are announced.

### **Should GRs pay part of their own way?**

No AFG member should ever be asked to pay out of their own pocket to do any kind of service, as per our 7th Tradition and to avoid “problems of money, property and prestige.” Check with your group on how they choose to pay your expenses, as each group is autonomous

### **We have made every effort to be self-sufficient, but our group is small. What are our financial priorities if we don’t have enough in our treasury to meet all of our group’s expenses?**

While each group is autonomous and needs to work out its own budget, here are some WSO Guidelines (from Dollars and Sense):

Q. As a group, what are our financial priorities?

A. The immediate expenses for the group’s operation such as rent and the GR’s expenses should be met first. Remaining monies may be divided among the Al-Anon service arms, beginning with local and area structures. Another portion may be set aside for support of the WSO.

Q. Is it our group’s responsibility to reimburse its trusted servants for group-related travel and expenses?

A. Yes, most Al-Anon members agree that no one should be excluded from service because their personal resources are limited. It is ideal if the group is not dependent upon a member's willingness to assume costs related to the group's participation in the service structure. Travel expenses for trusted servants are the responsibility of the group.

Sending donations to the District, Area, and World Service Office happens after all the group expenses are met and the prudent reserve is established. Meeting the GR's expenses, including sending her or him to Assemblies, is a top priority. This is addressed in Al-Anon and Alateen Groups at Work (the booklet that came with your 2010 - 2013 Service Manual), pp. 53-54.

### **Does the District have any suggestions for how we can raise funds to send our GR to Assembly?**

Here are some solutions that other groups have tried.

- Budget for next year and set aside a designated amount from the 7th Tradition every month for the next year's Assemblies.
- Pass a separate basket or can for Assembly expenses, which also helps raise awareness and participation at the group level.
- Cut costs by making every effort to find a roommate and carpool.
- Have group-level events.

### **How do groups apply for Financial Assistance?**

District 5's goal is to have as many GRs attend as possible. After a group has made every attempt to meet its financial responsibilities, prioritizing and budgeting for GR expenses, it is understood that some groups with lower attendance may not be able to achieve this goal. Should your group need help, contact the District Representative (DR) and ask for a time slot on the agenda to ask for Financial Assistance.

### **A special word to groups without a GR...**

Here are some resources for finding out more about the Group Rep position. First of all, AFG's World Service member site has service guidelines that you can print out. Go to [al-anon.alateen.org/members](http://al-anon.alateen.org/members) and type in the password, which is your group name followed by a comma then afg (for instance, SatOfSerenity,afg). From the Members page, click on Group Services, then Guidelines, then Group Representative (G-11). This will take you to a .pdf file that will give you an overview of what the position is like.

Any member is also always welcome to attend the District 18 AFG business meeting, which meets every first Sunday of every month, (unless other wise stated) at Doctor's Hospital Medical Center's Conference Room at 1 PM. Modesto, CA.