

IS YOUR GROUP LINKED TO A.A. AS A WHOLE?

Most groups in South Africa choose to be linked to A.A. as a whole by listing the group with the General Service Office (G.S.O.), as well as with the Area Assembly, district and local central/intergroup office.*

Groups listed with G.S.O. have either General Service Representatives (G.S.R.s), or “group contacts,” who act as channels for two way information and shared experience. Once a group is listed with G.S.O., the group information is shared with the Area Assembly via the delegate. Group information may be first received by the Area, which then share the information with G.S.O.

What’s the point? Each group linked to the local general service structure is automatically a part of the “group conscience” of A.A. in South Africa through their G.S.R.’s participation in district meetings and Area Assembly. Each G.S.R. communicates his or her group’s “conscience” on important matters of policy considered by the district and Area Assembly. Groups in our listings are included in the confidential National Group Directory**, which provide contact information for traveling A.A. members and A.A. members volunteering for National Helpline duty.

New groups listed with the General Service Office are included in mailings sent to all listed A.A. groups. For instance, groups receive our quarterly newsletter AA in SA that keeps them informed on policies being considered by Conference, changes to A.A. literature and much more. Additionally, groups will also from time to time, receive special literature/service packs at no charge from G.S.O.

How? To participate in service provided by G.S.O. to A.A. groups, it is vital to furnish simple information to G.S.O. To notify G.S.O. when group information changes, i.e. the group contact or G.R.R. moves or resigns, and a new G.S.R or contact is elected; or, when there is a change in the group’s location or meeting day(s) and time, please send us an e-mail via gso@aaouthafrica.org.za Group changes should also be given to the Area secretary, and to the District Committee Member (D.C.M.).

A New Group: When a new group forms, the members usually take time to decide on the name of the new group***, elect trusted servants, plan the time and format of meeting(s), and obtain A.A. literature from the nearest central/intergroup office.

A new group may first ask to be listed with the local district and Area, or through direct contact with G.S.O. Either way works well. When G.S.O. receives notice of a new group, details are forwarded to the Central/intergroup office and delegate of the Area where the group is located, so that the delegate may communicate the good news to the D.C.M. and Area secretary.

Your District: Regardless of how new group information is received, the D.C.M. will make contact and welcome the group to “general service”.

Whether a group is “new” or has existed for years, the D.C.M. is the primary contact through the G.S.R. or group contact. Group representatives attend district meetings where they are kept up-to-date on A.A. activities and topics of interest. G.S.R.’s attending district meetings are an excellent resource for addressing group problems and concerns. In matter affecting A.A. as a whole, a group’s “conscience” is communicated to the Area Assembly by their G.S.R.

If you do not know how to contact your group's D.C.M., Area Secretary, and delegate, the General Service Office can often provide that information.

Mailing address:

Alcoholics Anonymous

General Service Office

Box 11416

Randhart

1457

Location:

28 Hennie Alberts Street

Brackenhurst

Alberton

Gauteng

Website: www.aasouthafrica.org.za

E-Mail: gso@aaSouthAfrica.org.za

Fax: 088 011 867 5950

G.S.O. is always happy to hear from A.A. members and groups. G.S.O. has two primary purposes:

1. To serve as a resource to better enable groups to carry the A.A. message of experience, strength and hope to the still suffering alcoholic
2. To provide service to A.A. as a whole which individual groups cannot usually manage, such as the publication of A.A. literature. The A.A. group is the fundamental unit supporting A.A. recovery.

*To participate fully, a group lists itself with the general service structure (G.S.O., Area and District)

**The National Group Directory is available from G.S.O. in electronic format. Please send us an e-mail should you require a copy.

***Guidelines for naming an A.A. group are based on "group conscience" as expressed through the Annual General Service Conference. "The A.A. Group" pamphlet, the basic guide for all groups in South Africa, suggest that a group avoid choosing a name that might suggest affiliation with any organization, club, political or religious institution. New groups are also advised to avoid names that refer to "family", "double trouble", "alcohol and pills" or the name of any actual person, living or dead.