

## **Structure of A.A. General Services in U.S./Canada**

\*While the following describes the general service structure in the U.S./Canada, the structure of sister A.A. entities in overseas countries may differ as to detail, depending on local laws, on how A.A. evolved, and so on. Basic principles, however, as embodied in A.A.'s Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts are shared in common throughout A.A., worldwide

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Alcoholics Anonymous is not organized in the formal or political sense. There are no governing officers, no rules or regulations, no fees or dues. The need for certain services to alcoholics and their families throughout the world has, however, been apparent from the beginning of the Fellowship. Inquiries have to be answered. Literature has to be written, printed, and distributed. Requests for help are followed up.

### **There are two operating bodies:**

**1.** A.A. worldwide services, directed by A.A. World Services, Inc., are centered in the General Service Office in New York City, where 84 workers keep in touch with local groups, with A.A. groups in treatment and correctional facilities, with members and groups overseas, and with the thousands of "outsiders" who turn to A.A. each year for information on the recovery program. A.A. Conference-approved literature is prepared, published, and distributed through this office.

**2.** The A.A. Grapevine, Inc., publishes the A.A. Grapevine, the Fellowship's monthly international journal. The magazine currently has a circulation of about 125,000 in the U.S., Canada, and other countries. The Grapevine also produces a selection of special items, principally cassette tapes and anthologies of magazine articles, which are spin-offs from the magazine.

The two operating corporations are responsible to a board of trustees (General Service Board of A.A.), of whom seven are nonalcoholic friends of the Fellowship, and 14 are A.A. members.

A General Service Conference, consisting of 93 delegates from A.A. areas in the United States and Canada, and trustees, A.A.W.S. and Grapevine directors, and staff from the General Service Office and the Grapevine in New York, meets once a year and provides a link between the groups throughout the U.S. and Canada and the trustees who serve as custodians of A.A. tradition and interpreters of policies affecting the Fellowship as a whole.

At the local group level, formal organization is kept to a minimum. The group may have a small steering committee and a limited number of rotating officers — “trusted servants” whose responsibilities include arranging meeting programs, providing refreshments, participating in regional A.A. activities, and maintaining contact with the General Service Office.

The principle of consistent rotation of responsibility is followed in virtually all A.A. service positions. Positions in the local group are usually rotated semiannually or annually. Delegates to the General Service Conference traditionally serve no longer than two years and alcoholic trustees of the General Service Board are limited to a four-year term.