

Guidelines

The Shared Experience of Al-Anon Members

Service Roles for Online Al-Anon Group Meetings

It is the responsibility of all officers to read and study these Guidelines, as well as other relevant Guidelines, and the Al-Anon Family Groups UK & Eire Service Manual. They should encourage other Group members to do likewise to increase their understanding of Service.

The organisation of a Group should be kept simple. However, every Group needs a Key Holder to open the online meeting room, a Host/Co-host, a Group Representative, a Chairperson, a Secretary and a Treasurer.

All officers are elected for a fixed term; rotation gives all members the privilege of serving. Keep in mind 'our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern'.

Key Holder

The Key Holder should have a level of technical knowledge about accessing the Zoom platform in order to open the online meeting.

Meetings require someone to open up the online meeting room prior to the start. A Group can decide how many Key Holders they wish to have in this role and a rota may be put in place to ensure someone is responsible and available prior to each meeting.

Responsibilities are to:-

- a) Open the meeting room - usually 15 minutes prior to the start time.
- b) If the Key Holder is not the Host, bring in the Host/Co-host, allocate permissions and discuss roles to be carried out during the meeting (refer to Host/Co-host responsibilities).

Host/Co-host

Online meetings require someone to ensure the smooth running of the technical side of the meeting and also the security.

Responsibilities are to:-

- a) Let members in from the waiting room.
- b) Mute/unmute members.
- c) Let in latecomers.
- d) Ensure the security of the meeting.
- e) Remove any person who is seriously disrupting the meeting or causing any security concerns.



Group Representative

If a Group joins the Virtual Area, the GR can reside anywhere. If the Group joins an in-person District/Area, the GR must be resident within the District/Area and be able to attend the in-person District Meetings and Area Assemblies. The Group Representative (GR) is a vital link in the continuing function, growth and unity of Al-Anon. They attend District Meetings and Area Assemblies and maintain contact between the Group, District and Area. This Service role is usually held for three years.

NB: An Al-Anon member who is also a member of AA is not eligible to serve as a GR because this is Service beyond the Group level.

If the GR resigns or misses two consecutive Area Assemblies, the Alternate completes the term and can be elected for a three-year term of their own. Another Alternate may then be elected.

Responsibilities are to:-

- a) Attend all District Meetings and Area Assemblies and represent the Group,

to vote on business matters and report information to the Group. The Alternate can attend District Meetings and Area Assemblies and vote if the GR is not available.

- b) Keep the Group informed about Al-Anon as a whole.
- c) Provide GSO with their name and address as the Group's Current Mailing Address (CMA) or provide the name and address of another willing and responsible member to be the CMA on behalf of the Group. The CMA must reside in the UK or Eire. 
- d) Report to the Group on correspondence from GSO.
- e) Ensure the Annual Record Check Form (ARC) is completed and returned to GSO each year.
- f) Encourage Group members to sign up to the GSO eNewsletter via the website.
- g) Encourage Group members to read and contribute to the e-zine *Al-Anon Today*.

Refer to UKG2 *Group Representative*.

Chairperson

It is preferable that the Service role of Chairperson rotates at regular intervals. Some Groups choose to have a new Chairperson every week to avoid perceived dominance, other Groups have the same Chairperson for up to a month.

Responsibilities are to:-

- a) Open the meeting with a moment's silence and then read the Suggested Welcome and/or Preamble. Many Groups also choose to read the Integrity Statement.
- b) Introduce speakers and/or announce the meeting topic and encourage all present to share.
- c) Remind members of Tradition Seven and how to donate.
- d) Close the meeting by reading the Suggested Closing and leading the Group in saying the Serenity Prayer.
- e) Ensure the meeting opens and closes on time.

Secretary

The Service role of Secretary should rotate regularly, preferably every twelve months, but at a different time from the Treasurer.

Responsibilities are to:-

- a) Handle Group correspondence not covered by the GR.
- b) Consult with the Group and then order Conference Approved Literature (CAL) where appropriate (e.g. UK116 *Welcome Newcomer!*)
- c) Notify GSO of any changes to the meeting details, (e.g. changes to Zoom details, Group Telephone Contacts, in accordance with Data Protection Regulations).
- d) Make announcements at meetings (e.g. dates of Area Assemblies, Conventions).
- e) Keep, if the Group agrees, a confidential up-to-date list of members' names and telephone numbers.
- f) Hand over these Guidelines and any other relevant material to the incoming Secretary.

Treasurer



An Eire meeting must set up an online bank account in Eire. A UK meeting must set up an online bank account in the UK. Treasurers must reside in the same country as the bank account. The Service role of Treasurer should rotate regularly.



At in-person meetings, it is preferable that this rotation is every twelve months, and at a different time from the Secretary. It may be decided by the online Group that the Treasurer remains in the role for up to three years due to the complexities in opening a bank account for the Group funds.

Responsibilities are to: -

- a) Act as collector, custodian and disburser of funds.
- b) Organise the collection at Group meetings via online banking details or PayPal.
- c) Keep a record of all receipts and expenditures. PLEASE NOTE: in Eire all

Groups are required by law to keep records of their financial activities.
Refer to UKG25 *Group Finance in Eire*.

- d) Submit a financial statement to the Group at regular intervals.
- e) Ensure that only sufficient funds to meet the Group's needs are held.
- f) Pay the Group's expenses which may include:-
 - * Cost of the online platform.
 - * Literature for the Group's use.
 - * Contributing to Area to pay the equalised fee for the Area Delegate to attend Conference. NB: Eire Groups that are part of the Virtual Area do not contribute.
 - * Contributing to the General Fund or Al-Anon Family Groups CLG, in order to support the work of Al-Anon in the UK & Eire.



Programme Chairperson

Some Groups choose to have a member doing this role as well as the meeting Chairperson. It is preferable that the Service role of Programme Chairperson rotates on a one, three or six-month basis.



Responsibilities are to:-

- a) Plan meetings and arrange for speakers in good time.
- b) Invite speakers either from within the Group or from other Groups.
- c) Let members know about future topics and speakers.

Greeter

Responsibilities are to:-

- a) Welcome newcomers.
- b) Respond to newcomer questions about the meeting and/or Al-Anon as a fellowship.
- c) If agreed by the Group conscience, the Secretary will send UK116 *Welcome Newcomer!* to the newcomer.

Some meetings may decide to ask newcomers to wait at the end of the meeting to find out more about the meeting/Al-Anon programme. The Group may decide on a rota of experienced members to carry out this role.

Group Telephone Contact

Each Al-Anon Group usually has two telephone contacts in order that their number be given to new members. These contact numbers must be either UK or Eire numbers depending on which country the meeting is registered as.



Things to consider are -

- a) The contact's number WILL be given to individuals who contact Al-Anon Family Groups seeking a Group.
- b) GSO WILL use the contact's number to communicate with the Group in the absence of a CMA.
- c) The contact's number WILL NOT appear on the website.
- d) Although trained Helpline operators deal with distressed calls some of these callers may still be distressed when calling the contact and may call at any time. Helpline operators do request that the distressed caller uses consideration.
- e) The contact is required to answer calls and/or texts from unidentified numbers.
- f) It is not advisable to phone a potential member at the request of someone else. The contact's phone call may be answered by the alcoholic. Ask the caller to give your number to the potential member. (In principle, GSO does not give out contact numbers to third party callers.)
- g) Contacts must not discuss personal details of calls in their Group.

Refer to UKG10 *Group Telephone Contact* and read before signing the permission section of the ARC form.

For further Information on all Al-Anon roles and responsibilities, Groups should consult UK1 *Al-Anon Family Groups UK & Eire Service Manual*.

