Area 27
Louisiana
Area Guidelines

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I. FOREWORD

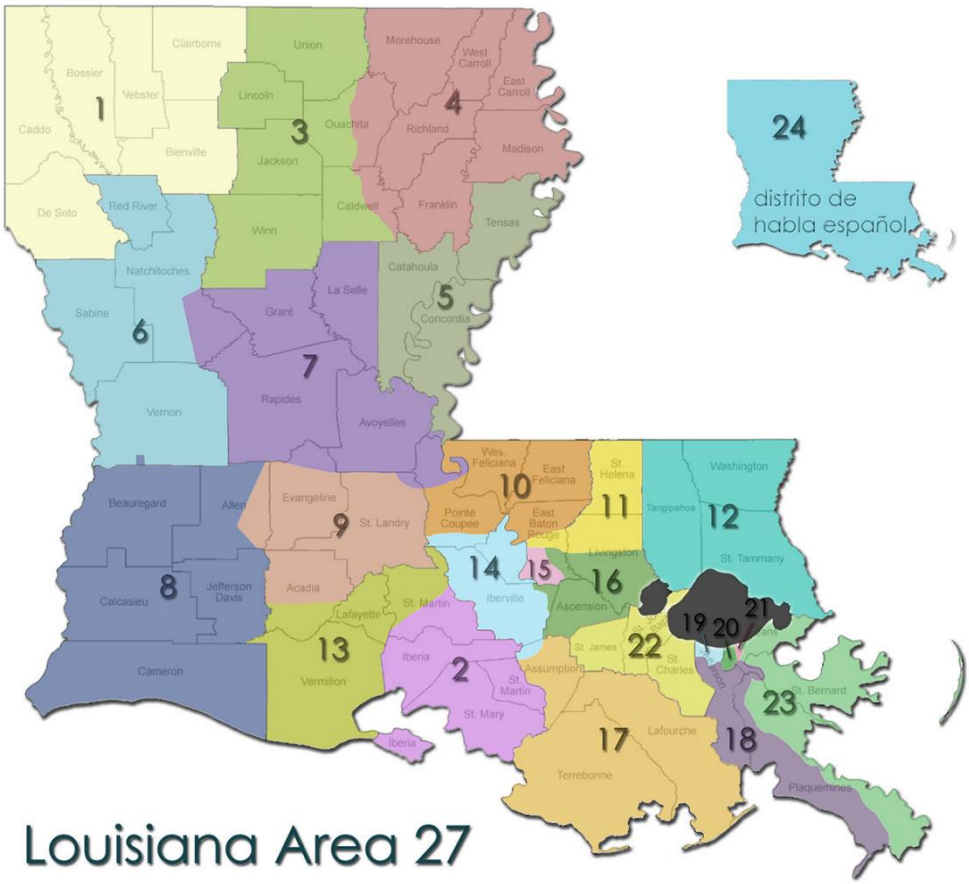
These are the Area 27 Louisiana Guidelines. Our Guidelines replace all previous bylaws and serve the purposes intended for the bylaws of our organization. They are to be used in conjunction with the AA Service Manual to enable and enhance the efforts of those who make up our Area Assembly, Area Committee, and the Area Service Committees in carrying the AA message.

There are no ruling bodies in Alcoholics Anonymous, only trusted servants. The guidance set forth in these guidelines simply consolidates the procedures accepted by the Louisiana Area Assembly. These procedures are, to the best of our knowledge, compatible with the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, Twelve Concepts, and the Service Manual of Alcoholics Anonymous. Subsequent Area Assemblies may decide to change or amend the procedures set forth herein. We would hope, however, that any change will be the result of an informed group decision in the true spirit of AA Recovery, Unity, and Service.

Proposed amendments to the Area Guidelines shall be submitted in writing to the Area Chair at the Agenda Setting Meeting. The proposed change shall be written into the paragraph in question with the entire paragraph rewritten to reflect the proposed amendment. The proposed amendment will be included on the agenda of the upcoming Area Assembly meeting. A ⅔ approval by the Area Assembly will constitute the adoption of the amendment.

Other less critical changes to aid readability and style may be made by the Structure and Procedures Committee. Suggestions for such updates may be made by any AA member through the Area Committee or Alternate Chair altchair@aa-louisiana.org. Upon approval by the Structure and Procedures Committee, updates are completed by the Alternate Chair and sent for publishing through the Technology Committee Chair. Current updates will be available on the aa-louisiana.org website. The Alternate Chair is responsible for the master copy of the guidelines and will supply archives with updated copies.

II. AREA MAP



Detailed district boundaries are currently listed on www.aa-louisiana.org and stored in the Area 27 Archives. Each District is represented by one DCM, except where noted below.

District 1 - 2 DCMs
District 2 - 1 DCM
District 3 - 1 DCM
District 4 - 1 DCM
District 5 - 1 DCM
District 6 - 1 DCM
District 7 - 1 DCM
District 8 - 1 DCM
District 9 - 1 DCM
District 10 - 1 DCM
District 11 - 1 DCM
District 12 - 1 DCM
District 13C - 1 DCM
District 13E - 1 DCM
District 14A - 1 DCM
District 14B - 1 DCM
District 15A - 1 DCM
District 15B - 1 DCM
District 15C - 1 DCM
District 15D - 1 DCM
District 16 - 1 DCM
District 17 - 1 DCM
District 18 - 1 DCM
District 19 - 2 DCMs
District 20 - 1 DCM
District 21 - 1 DCM
District 22 - 1 DCM
District 23 - 1 DCM
District 24 - 1 DCM

III. STRUCTURE

Louisiana Area Assembly is made up of elected Officers, appointed Standing Committee Chairs, Assembly Support Positions, Past Delegates, District Committee Members (DCMs), and General Service Representatives (GSRs).

Area Committee is composed of all Officers, Standing Committee Chairs, Assembly Support Positions, DCMs, and Past Delegates. The Area Committee takes care of housekeeping and sets the agenda for the upcoming assembly Business Meeting.

Assembly Officers
(Elected positions — see Elections section)

Delegate	Chair	Secretary
Alternate Delegate	Alternate Chair	Treasurer

Standing Committee Chairs
(Appointed to a two-year term by the Area Chair with Assembly approval)

Accessibilities	Public Information (PI)
Archives	State Convention
	Technology
Cooperation with the Professional Community (CPC)	Treatment
Corrections	Structures & Procedures
Grapevine	*(Chair – Alternate Chair)*

Assembly Support Positions
(Appointed to a two-year term by the Area Chair with Assembly approval)

Hospitality Coordinator	Literature Coordinator	Registrar

Committee Support Positions (non-voting)
Archivist – Archives Committee (appointed by the Area Chair for a voluntary term)
Webmaster – Technology Committee (appointed by the Technology Chair for a two-year term)

To gain an appreciation of the scope and effort required for any committee or position, see the job descriptions posted on the aa-louisiana.org website.

Any member of AA may attend any meeting at Area Assembly. However, members may attend specific meetings as observers only. Discussion is limited in these meetings to those assigned officers, committee members, facilitators, and/or service positions. Meetings with discussion limited to assigned members include: Area Committee Meeting, Standing Committee Chairs Meeting, DCM Sharing Session, and GSR Sharing Session. During Area Inventory, Area Officers usually conduct their own inventory with officer input only.

Ad Hoc Committees are formed from time to time to investigate subjects and propose actions to the Assembly. An Ad Hoc can be formed at the request of a member at the discretion of the Area Chair. An Ad Hoc is typically charged with a particular task and given a deadline in which to conclude and report its findings. The Area Chair appoints the Ad Hoc Chair, typically a Past Delegate, who selects members of the Area Assembly to serve on the committee. The work of an Ad Hoc is typically done between assemblies, but it may meet at assembly. A progress report is expected at each assembly to keep the Area updated until the work of the Ad Hoc is completed or the committee is disbanded.

Scholarship monies to assist DCMs in attending Area Assembly are made available only when the request is made and accompanied by a letter from the District requesting funds. This is also made available to Past Delegates upon request.

IV. ASSEMBLY SCHEDULING

Area 27 Assembly is scheduled four times each year, once each quarter. The location of assemblies can rotate every two years depending upon bids that are placed and voted upon by the full Assembly. This decision requires a simple majority. Bid information can be obtained from the Alternate Chair.

The setting of the schedule for each assembly is the responsibility of the Area Chair.

The Business Meeting format contains: Opening by Area Chair, Officers' Reports, Committee Reports, Old Business, New Business, and Adjournment.

The first quarterly assembly usually includes orientation for new GSRs and DCMs. Sharing sessions may be held for GSRs and DCMs.

The second quarterly assembly includes the Pre-Conference Assembly (PCA) and is held before the General Service Conference.

The third quarterly assembly includes the Delegate's presentation of the General Service Conference report. The budget for the coming year will be presented in the Area Business Meeting. In odd-numbered years, bids to host Area Assembly and State Convention are submitted to the Alternate Chair. Elections are held in even-numbered years.

The fourth quarterly assembly includes a vote on the budget for the coming year. In odd-numbered years, the Area Assembly votes on the bids to host Area Assembly and the State Convention, and conducts an inventory. In even-numbered years, new Officers and Service Committee Chairs are sworn in.

V. ELECTIONS

Election Assemblies are held at the third quarter assembly in even-numbered years in order to provide ample time for job transfers and to allow economical scheduling of the new Delegate and Alternate Delegate to attend the Southeast Regional Forum.

The Delegate, Alternate Delegate, Chair, Alternate Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer are elected for two-year terms. Terms for officers begin on January 1 of odd-numbered years. The terms for Delegate and Alternate Delegate are determined by the General Service Conference which sets Area 27 delegates to serve on odd-numbered panels.

AA's Third Legacy Procedure, as outlined in the AA Service Manual, is used for electing Area Officers. Election Assemblies cannot be facilitated by anyone standing for an Area Officer position. Traditionally, the outgoing Delegate facilitates the elections.

All members of the Area Committee are automatically nominated for all positions if they are eligible to serve. The nomination may be declined by the member during the roll call prior to the election for each office. Persons not currently members of the Area Committee may be nominated from the floor by a voting member of the Assembly.

A member must be present in order to stand for a position. Any member who stands for an elected position will be given an opportunity to introduce themselves and list previous service experience that may pertain to the position prior to the vote.

Nominations for Southeast Regional Trustee and Trustee At Large U.S. are made from among our Past Delegates every four years. This election is held during our regularly scheduled elections. Nomination information from GSO is usually sent to the Area Delegates ahead of time.

The Assembly may remove any Area Officer from office for cause including, but not limited to, relapse. Such removal from office shall be by a ⅔ majority vote of the Assembly done by written ballot.

When an Area Officer vacancy occurs, the Area Assembly shall conduct elections for the remainder of the term of the office vacated if there is no alternate, in accordance with these guidelines. For the offices of Delegate and Area Chair, their alternates shall assume the office vacated and an election for the office of the alternate shall be held at the next scheduled Assembly. If a new vacancy is created by a special election, an election shall be immediately held to fill that vacancy. If a member is elected to serve the remainder of a term, they are still eligible for the same position in the next regularly scheduled election, except for Delegate who is limited to serving at no more than three (3) General Service Conferences.

In the event the office of the Alternate Delegate, Alternate Chair, Secretary, or Treasurer becomes vacant at a time prior to an assembly, the Area Committee may select an interim officer to carry on the duties of the office until an election can be held. In the event the Area Committee does not appoint an interim officer within an amount of time considered reasonable by the Area Chair and which would result in serious disruption of the function of the Area, the Chair may appoint an interim officer to serve until an election is held.

For non-elected positions, see the Structure section.

VI. FLOOR PROCEDURES

These floor procedures are intended as a guide to conducting business on the floor of the assembly. AA principles are our guiding force; floor procedures are meant to help facilitate fair and informed discussion, never hinder it.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO VOTE?

Officers, Delegate, Past Delegates, Standing Committee Chairs, Support Positions, DCMs, and GSRs have one vote each in Assembly. Alternates may vote only if the regular DCM or GSR is not present.

PLACING ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

The Area Committee sets the agenda for the next assembly at the Agenda Setting Meeting held after the Business Meeting. Any AA member from Area 27 may submit an item for the next assembly's agenda by presenting it in written form at the Agenda Setting Meeting. Alternatively, it may be presented to a member of the Area Committee who may submit it during the Agenda Setting Meeting. If there is an emergency or time-sensitive item that needs immediate attention, the item must be submitted to the Area Chair for inclusion as a motion during the Agenda Item Discussion in order to be included for vote during the Business Meeting. It is suggested that items concerning or involving a Standing Committee be presented to that committee for discussion prior to presentation at the Agenda Setting Meeting. Prioritization of agenda items is set at the Agenda Setting Meeting by the Area Chair in consultation with the Area Committee. A motion's sponsor or their representative must attend the Agenda Item Discussion to present the agenda item, or the agenda item will be tabled until the next assembly. If no one is present at the next Agenda Item Discussion, the agenda item will be withdrawn from consideration.

MOTIONS & SECONDS

A motion's sponsor first states the motion at the microphone. A motion requires a second to be considered for discussion; otherwise, the motion fails. Any voting member of the Assembly may second a motion by saying "Second." A second to a motion does not necessarily mean the member supports the motion, just that the member wants the motion to be considered and discussed. Once a motion is made and seconded, it is then restated by the Area Chair before any debate.

DEBATE & DECORUM

Debate is any spoken comment and discussion on the merits of or comments in opposition to a pending motion. Any member wishing to speak in debate must come to the microphone. Comments are limited to two minutes and are timed by the Alternate Chair. No member shall speak twice on a motion until all other members who desire to speak to the motion have spoken. The sponsor of the motion may be allowed to answer questions as they are posed at the discretion of the Chair. If at any time the Area Chair is required to state a point of order or otherwise speak within the responsibilities of the Chair, then the member speaking should defer to the Chair. Such an interruption will not count toward the member's time to speak to the motion.

Full discussion of a proposal should take place *before* the vote. Premature actions (e.g., amending motions early in discussion or hastily calling the question) can divert attention from the subject at hand and hinder developing an informed group conscience, thus confusing and/or delaying Assembly business. Everyone is entitled to, and should express their opinion. However, if a point has already been made by someone, it is not necessary to restate that point.

AMENDMENTS TO MOTIONS
After a motion has been stated by the Area Chair, any voting member may offer an amendment, but it must be seconded before further discussion on the amendment can occur. Once seconded, discussion is limited to only the merits of the amendment. Amendments to motions require a simple majority to pass. If approved, the Area Chair then restates the main motion as amended. After the amendment is resolved, discussion on the main motion resumes.

WITHDRAW
A motion may be unilaterally withdrawn by the motion's sponsor at any time prior to a vote.

CALLING THE QUESTION
A motion to close debate, commonly referred to as "calling the question," must be made in order at the microphone. It is out of order to speak on the motion and immediately move to call the question. This motion can be used only to close debate, not prohibit debate, and is considered "out of order" if made before debate has begun. The call-the-question motion requires a second, is not debatable, and requires a two-thirds vote to end debate. If passed, the motion on the floor is moved to a vote. This motion yields to the motion to table.

TABLING A MOTION
Motions are tabled for various reasons, usually due to a lack of a presenter, time constraints, or need for more information. If a sponsor of a motion or their representative is not present at the Agenda Item Discussion, the motion is automatically tabled until the next assembly. If a motion is presented at the Agenda Item Discussion but no one is available to present it at the Business Meeting, the motion is automatically tabled until the next assembly. If the sponsor of a motion decides that more information is needed for an informed discussion or that there is not enough time to allow for a thorough discussion, the sponsor may choose to table the motion prior to it being presented at the Business Meeting.

A motion to table may be used to remove an item from consideration due to time constraints, in order to address more pressing motions that need to be handled immediately, when there is not sufficient time to allow for full discussion, or when more information is needed for an informed group conscious. Any voting member of the Assembly may make a motion to table at any time during discussion; it requires a second, is undebatable, unamendable, and requires a simple majority vote.

Tabled motions are automatically placed on the agenda for the next assembly under old business.

POINT OF ORDER
A point of order is an assertion that a procedure is being violated and a request that correct procedure be enforced by the Area Chair. It takes precedence over any pending motion out of which it arises. It is in order when another has the floor even if it is necessary to interrupt a speaker. It does not require a second and is not debatable or amendable. A point of order is decided by the Area Chair, subject to appeal. To make a point of order, a member rises and says, "Point of order." The Chair asks the member to state his point, and the member does so, being as specific as possible without entering into debate or asking a question. The Chair then rules on the point of order.

An appeal of the decision of the Chair is permitted by a member announcing, "I appeal the decision of the Chair." If the appeal is seconded, the Chair then defines the issue involved, explains the reasons for his or her decision, and says, "Shall the decision of the Chair be sustained?" An appeal is debatable, but no member may speak more than once in debate, and the Chair may defend his or her decision once again at the end of the debate. A simple majority vote sustains the Chair's decision.

SUBSTANTIAL UNANIMITY

The principle of Substantial Unanimity is outlined in Warranty Four of Concept XII of the Twelve Concepts for World Service. It is intended to ensure that important decisions are reached by full discussion and supported by a heavy majority. Therefore, all motions on matters of policy/main motions brought to a vote at Area Assembly require substantial unanimity, that is, a two-thirds majority for passage. Matters of policy may be defined as those motions brought before the Assembly that alter the Assembly's procedures or normal business. Motions to alter elections, the budget, or requests to deviate from the guidelines are examples of matters of policy.

Traditionally, the Assembly has given the Area Chair the discretion to decide whether a motion is a matter of policy, or not. Because the number of members present in the hall during assembly varies from time to time, the phrase "two-thirds vote" or "majority vote" means that quantity of the voting members present at that time of the vote.

COUNTING ABSTENTIONS

Abstentions are counted as part of the total number of votes cast when calculating simple majority and 2/3rds thresholds.

MINORITY VOICE/MOTION TO RECONSIDER

After the establishment or rejection of any matter of policy, the minority will be given an opportunity to speak. Subsequent to minority comment, the Area Chair will ask if any person voting in the majority wishes to change their vote. If so, a motion to reconsider must be made by a member who voted with the majority, but it can be seconded by anyone. A simple majority is required to reconsider. No action can be reconsidered twice during an assembly.