

ISO Area Handbook



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ISO Area Handbook

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Introduction

ISO areas were created as part of the structural changes within the International Service Organization (ISO) approved by the Conference in 2014. It was envisioned that each area would consist of approximately thirty or more member groups, and would be defined primarily by geographical proximity, although non-geographical areas might be based on commonalities, such as language or mode of meeting, such as electronic meetings.

It was agreed that each area would be expected to:

- Hold an annual meeting of Group Service Representatives (GSRs) elected by member groups in that area—to be referred to as an area assembly.
- Elect a delegate to represent the area in the ISO Conference, where those delegates function as members of the ISO corporation.
- Strive to fund a delegate for the annual meeting of the Conference by Seventh Tradition contributions.
- Consider issues affecting SAA as a whole and send the group conscience of an area assembly to the annual meeting of the ISO Conference via the area delegate.

The purpose of this handbook is to facilitate the formation of ISO areas by offering suggestions and guidance for use by area advocates, area chairs, GSRs, and other area trusted servants.

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Section 1: Purpose of an Area Assembly

An area assembly is a meeting of Group Service Representatives (GSRs) from a defined ISO area for the purpose of conducting area business in the following ways:

- To elect a delegate who will represent the area's groups in the annual meeting of the ISO Conference, where our fellowship considers questions that affect SAA as a whole.
- To develop an area group conscience on motions to be considered at the annual meeting of the ISO Conference. This area group conscience will inform the delegate's participation in Conference.
- To review issues brought to the assembly by local groups or sent from the ISO for review and comment by the area.
- To draft and submit motions for consideration by the delegates at the annual meeting of the ISO Conference.
- To provide a platform for the area delegate to report back to its constituent member groups through their GSRs on issues discussed and actions taken by the ISO Conference and other programs within the ISO.
- To enhance the capacity of the ISO to fulfill its mission to serve member groups by helping carry the SAA message of recovery to the sex addict who still suffers.

Section 2: Roles and Responsibilities of Area Trusted Servants

Area advocate: Areas are typically formed when an SAA member from a designated or proposed area volunteers to serve as an area advocate. The roles and responsibilities of an area advocate might include (but are not limited to):

- Acts as the champion for a proposed area, reaching out to local groups and encouraging GSR registration.
- Completes preliminary paperwork for the registration of a proposed area with the ISO.
- Helps convene the first area assembly.

Note: This position may or may not be needed once the initial area assembly leadership has been elected.

Suggested Area Roles and Responsibilities:

Group Service Representatives (GSRs)

- Chosen by their individual SAA groups to attend local area assemblies, discuss the business of the ISO, and act as the information conduit between the ISO and the areas, and their constituent groups.
 - At area assemblies, GSRs will elect an area delegate to represent them at the annual meeting of the ISO Conference.
 - The GSR will serve as the primary contact person between the ISO and their member group on matters relating to the ISO and the fellowship at large.
 - The GSR is the key means by which member groups will participate in the SAA service structure, acting as the voice of their group's conscience to area assemblies while at the same time taking information on ISO issues and activities back to their groups.

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- The GSR is eligible to attend the area assembly as a voting member and to stand for election to any area steering committee or officer position, or to be elected as the area delegate.
- GSRs may serve as area advocates encouraging other groups to elect GSRs and assist with early formation of an area.

Area Chair

- Provides leadership and conducts area assembly meetings.
- Convenes an executive committee and the area assembly as needed.
- Drafts the annual area report for presentation to its member groups.
- Acts as one of the contact people between the ISO and the area.

Area Vice-Chair

- If the area assembly chair is unable to fulfill the length of their term, the area assembly vice-chair would then become the chair until the next election.
- May work with the alternate delegate to coordinate GSR training workshops at the area level.
- Acts as one of the contact people between the ISO and the area.

Area Secretary

- Records and maintains area assembly and executive committee minutes and documents/records/archives.
- Acts as one of the contact people between the ISO and the area.

Area Treasurer

- Responsible for maintaining financial records and making necessary transactions for any funds collected and expenditures incurred by the area, including but not limited to:
 - Establishing a checking account (suggest two signatories, if feasible).
 - Helping the area create and maintain an annual budget.
 - Preparing a treasurer's report for presentation at area assemblies.
- An area may want to establish a checking account with a local bank.
In the US, some banks require an Employer ID Number (EIN) to open an account. Since groups, intergroups, and areas cannot use the ISO's EIN, an area can obtain an EIN by filing form SS-4 using a member's name or by using an assumed name (d/b/a). A bank is usually able to explain applicable state banking regulations.
- In any case, a responsible party (perhaps the treasurer) will be required to reveal a full name and perhaps a Social Security number.
- For EIN information and forms go to <https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/employer-id-numbers>.

Area Delegate

- Delegates will represent their area as a voting member of the ISO Conference.
- Delegates will convey information from the ISO Conference to the area and to groups within that area.

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- Delegates are key to maintaining multi-directional communication among local groups, the area, the ISO Conference, and other ISO entities (e.g., newsletters, workshops, *The Outer Circle (TOC)*, etc.).
- Delegates are encouraged to increase their participation in ISO service by submitting service résumés and standing for election to various service bodies at the international level (ISO Board, Literature Committee (LitCom), Conference Steering Committee (CSC), and Nominating Committee (NomCom)).
- The delegate may attend the annual meeting of the Conference in person or virtually.
- Guidelines adopted by the Conference for members to serve in a Conference-elected position are summarized in Appendix B and can be found on the service website at <https://saa-iso.org/svc/index.php>.

Alternate Area Delegate

- Serves as area delegate if/when the delegate is unable to fulfill their duties.
- Works with area assembly Vice Chair to coordinate GSR training workshops at the area level.

Area Registrar

- Maintains registration records for GSRs within the area, helping to ensure that the information in the ISO database is accurate and current.
- This function may be combined with those of another office, such as vice chair or secretary.

Suggested Committee Chair Positions

An area may wish to establish service committees, such as those below. There may be pre-existing service structures within a given area, e.g., an intergroup (IG), which may preclude the need for these positions in the area's committee structure:

- Literature chair
- LGBTQIA+ outreach chair
- Prisoner outreach chair
- Public Information (PI) chair
- Cooperation with the Professional Community (CPC) chair
- PI and CPC may be a combined chair
- *The Outer Circle* chair

The roles and responsibilities of these positions might include acting as liaison to the corresponding ISO or Conference committee and coordinating local efforts for outreach, information distribution, and participation.

Terms/Length of Service

- It is recommended each area consider two-year terms for all area assembly officer positions and delegate positions in order to ensure continuity of leadership.
- It is recommended each area consider staggering the terms of the officers to allow continuity of leadership.

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Section 3: Area Assembly – Formation and Initial Meetings

As an area begins the work of formation, it is recommended that interested members hold a preliminary meeting in person or by electronic means.

Suggested methods for reaching out to local GSRs and meeting contacts:

- Forward an invitation email to the ISO for distribution to already registered GSRs and meeting contacts.
- Distribute an invitation email using a local intergroup contact list.
- Use the local intergroup website to publicize the meeting date and time.
- Attend local meetings to announce the planning meeting and/or gather the contact information of interested members.

Assembly location suggestions:

- Regular local meeting location
- Hotel or church meeting space
- Local retreat center (perhaps at the time of a retreat)
- Videoconference service provider: the ISO can provide a line for a virtual area assembly

How to schedule a Zoom video conference through the ISO:

- Send an email to info@saa-recovery.org with the requested day and time.
- The ISO staff will send a confirmation email confirming the date and time, along with instructions on how to access the online meeting by computer or telephone.

Strategies for improving attendance at an initial planning meeting:

Combine with a local retreat and/or with an existing intergroup meeting.

Considerations for developing an area calendar:

- The annual meeting of the ISO Conference is held in May alongside the SAA International Convention.
- Set the date(s) for an area assembly meeting--annually, semi-annually, or quarterly.
- Consider the following time frames:
 - In July/August, consider a meeting to hear a report from the Conference meeting.
 - In October/November, elect area officers and discuss funding for the area delegate to attend the annual meeting of the Conference the next May.
 - In December/January, consider any issues that might be submitted as a motion to be considered by the Conference.
 - In February, reach a group conscience and make final preparations to submit any motions to the ISO office for consideration by the Conference.

The deadline for motions is March 1.

- By March, identify and register the delegate who will represent the area at the annual meeting of the Conference.
- In April/early May, discuss the motions on the Conference agenda and arrive at a group conscience that the delegate can carry to the annual meeting.

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Outreach Suggestions

- Use the same distribution method used for your pre-assembly planning meeting.
- Consider distributing a meeting agenda, previous meeting minutes with discussion topics, and possible motions to be submitted at the upcoming ISO Conference annual meeting.

Funding Area Activities

- Financial self-support is the norm as prescribed in Tradition Seven, primarily via the groups within the area.
- Intergroups may consider some level of financial support for area assemblies and area delegates while they are becoming established.
- Well-established areas may be able to assist small and/or new areas for initial participation in the annual meeting of the ISO Conference. The best interest of the fellowship and ISO is served by maximum possible participation of area delegates in the Conference.
- Frequent communication with GSRs about area activities is encouraged.

Section 4: Suggested Activities of an Area Assembly

- To better understand the relation of the area to other ISO entities, and to learn more about the path of a Conference motion, please see the Twelve Concepts or the *SAA Service Manual* https://www.saa-iso.org/mbrs/service_manual/index.php. (Contact the ISO office for current login information.)
- An area assembly may be called by the current chair (or area advocate).
- Robert's Rules of Order have been adopted as the parliamentary authority for all entities within the ISO. Under Robert's Rules, special rules may be adopted to address issues such as substantial unanimity, format for the agenda of the area assembly, etc.
- Area annual report (prepared by the area chair) may be presented for approval and submission for inclusion in the ISO annual report.
- Draft and implement area operating procedures and update as needed.
- Elections may be planned as required:
 - Election of area assembly officers
 - Election of an area delegate
- An executive committee consisting of the elected area officers may be authorized to act on behalf of the area between meetings. The authorities of an executive committee should be carefully defined.

Elections and Other Area Business

- Before an election is held, areas may choose to draft area operating procedures.
- Recommended election procedures for trusted servants:
 - Review of guidelines for international service at <https://saa-iso.org/svc/index.php>, and roles and responsibilities of each area position.
 - Call for Nominations.
 - Members may nominate themselves.
 - Consideration of past area, regional, or international service experience is suggested.

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- Presentation of the nominee slate and a three-to-five-minute statement by each candidate might include willingness to serve, service history, sobriety date, etc.
- Distribution of ballots and voting.
- Counting and announcement of election results.
- Review of upcoming Conference motions.
- Develop an area group conscience to guide delegate participation at the annual meeting of the ISO Conference.
 - Note: *Delegates should be allowed to vote according to their conscience at the Conference meeting, while keeping in mind the group conscience of their area.*
- Creation of area-specific motions to be considered by the Conference.
 - Note: *The deadline for submission of motions for consideration by the Conference is March 1 each year.*
- Reports by GSRs on local meeting activities—three-to-five-minute presentations about each meeting in the area, covering meeting format, make-up, average attendance, service roles, outreach activities, special needs, etc.
- Reports by area trusted servants as needed (chair, treasurer, delegate, etc.).
- Consider new business brought to the assembly by GSRs.

Section 5: Funding an Area Delegate

Expenses to consider when planning to send a delegate to the annual meeting of the ISO Conference:

- Travel costs (airline, taxi, car rental, shuttle fees, etc.)
- Hotel (consider room sharing, hotel points, etc.)
- Conference registration fee (for in person or virtual attendance)
- Miscellaneous expenses (e.g., per diem for meals and incidental expenses or reimbursement for documented incidental expenses)

Options for funding:

- Donations from groups within the area.
 - Individual donations.
 - Specific fundraising efforts to support delegate participation in the Conference meeting.
 - Requests may be submitted to local groups or intergroups for assistance.
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Appendix A

Terms and acronyms used in this handbook:

Board:	ISO Board of Trustees
CSC:	Conference Steering Committee
GSR:	Group Service Representative
IG:	Intergroup
ISO:	International Service Organization
LGBTQIA+:	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, asexual/ agender, plus
LitCom:	ISO Literature Committee
NomCom:	Conference Nominating Committee
PI-CPC:	Public Information - Cooperation with the Professional Community
SAA:	Sex Addicts Anonymous
TOC:	<i>The Outer Circle</i>

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Appendix B

Identifying Leaders for International Service Work

ISO Conference Delegates

The ISO of SAA has learned through experience that those who serve well at the international level have had success in their own personal recovery. For this reason, guidelines for effective leadership were adopted at the Organizing Convention in Houston in 1989 and updated by the Board of Trustees in 1998 and 2010. These guidelines for Area Delegates were adopted by the Conference in 2022.

These guidelines are not intended to be applied as rules. They are meant to be helpful suggestions that remind us that the ISO needs experienced and sober trusted servants at all levels of service. Each area assembly must consider the candidates available and choose the person best able to serve.

Guidelines for a candidate:

- Has at least two years participation in the Fellowship;
- Has at least one year of current continuous sexual sobriety, including abstinence from all inner circle behaviors;
- Has worked the Twelve Steps with an SAA sponsor;
- Has demonstrated leadership in service work at the local level;
- Has received endorsement from their sponsor and home group, intergroup, or area – affirming their belief that the candidate has the serenity and wisdom necessary to serve at the international level;
- Observes Traditions Ten and Eleven in a manner that protects SAA from repercussions related to any actions that might draw SAA into public controversy.

The ISO recognizes that the identification of candidates who qualify for international service begins at the local level, where delegates are also elected. The ISO depends on local group conscience to identify members who have the skills, serenity, wisdom, and willingness to serve effectively.