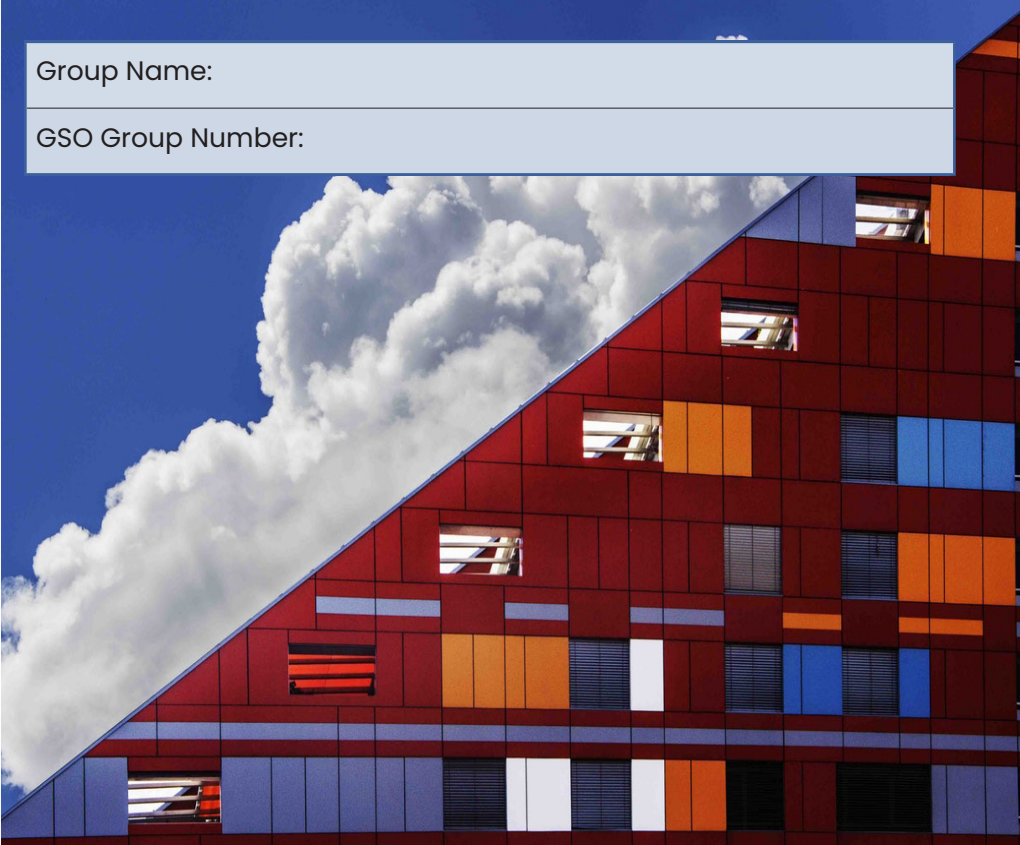


# Group Secretary Handbook

Group Name:

GSO Group Number:



**Santa Clarita Valley Central Office  
of Alcoholics Anonymous**

2024-2025  
September 5, 2025



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## INTRODUCTION

Dear Secretary,

Your service as Secretary is important. Your efforts are part of the activities of thousands of others who are in action for the welfare of AA as a whole. If we at the Central Office can help, please call.

The Central Office depends upon the groups for the necessary support to carry out its responsibilities. This support comes in the form of volunteer help from group members and financial contributions. All of us are reminded to “carry the message” – not just some of us. Our efficiency and the continuation of services offered are related to the level of support from the groups.

As secretary, the central office depends on you to keep us informed with current information about your group, such as changes in your meeting place or time. Send an email to [info@aascv.org](mailto:info@aascv.org)

It is also important for your group to elect your group's Intergroup Representative to the Santa Clarita Valley Intergroup to give your group a voice in the Intergroup.

This handbook will provide answers to some of the questions that might arise. You and your group members should become familiar with its contents to aid them in their roles. Literature may be purchased at the Central Office from Monday, Wednesday, and Friday between 10:00 am and 5:00 pm.

The Gratitude Gazette monthly newsletter is an important means of Intergroup communication. You and your group members may receive the “Gratitude Gazette” from the Central Office by email. Join here ([aascv.org](http://aascv.org)). It contains events, personal stories, news items, and reports, and as much information as possible must be directed to the members as possible. Information expands the Group Conscience, one of the strengths that hold AA together.

Become knowledgeable about the different service committees that are the structure of Alcoholics Anonymous – Intergroup Standing Committees and other service structures, such as being a General Service Representative (GSR) for your group in your area and district. We like to refer to all of these various service opportunities as “Gratitude with Service” since service is, after all, one way to show gratitude for the program that saved our lives.

We started this with a reminder that your services as Secretary are vital; let us help your group to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

Sincerely, Central Office Manager

# THE TWELVE TRADITIONS

## Tradition Four

**“With respect to its own affairs, each A.A. group should be responsible to no other authority than its own conscience. But when its plans concern the welfare of neighboring groups also, those groups ought to be consulted. And no group, regional committee, or individual should ever take any action that might greatly affect A.A. as a whole without conferring with the trustees of the General Service Board. On such issues our common welfare is paramount.”**

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
6. An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

## WHAT DO GROUP MEMBERS DO?

When Newcomers walk into our meeting rooms, we want AA to be there for them as it was for us—something we can do continuously only if we function as a group. But, for a group to keep going, all kinds of tasks must be done.

A Group may be different from a meeting. **“Any gathering of two or more alcoholics who wish to recover and have no other affiliation may call themselves an A.A. group”** (Tradition 3, long form). (It is the practice of the GSO to list groups and not meetings, form F-30) The meeting will be held either online and/or in person. A meeting can be added to the Meeting Guide (MG); seen as a public meeting, or they can elect not to be added to the MG and are considered a private meeting. A meeting that does not belong to a “group” does not have representation.

**“I am responsible... when anyone, anywhere reaches out for help,  
I want the hand of A.A. always to be there.  
And for that I am responsible.”  
– Responsibility Declaration**

## WHAT DOES THE GROUP PROVIDE

- Provides and maintains a meeting place
- Create a safe meeting place. See Service Material [SMF-209](#)
- Schedules and holds meetings
- Provides coffee
- Carries the message of Alcoholics Anonymous
- Adheres to the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous
- Collects 7th tradition, spends money to support the group, and appropriately allocates the remaining to the AA Service Structure.
- Stocks AA literature and meeting schedules
- Answers AA calls for help
- Discusses and resolves group problems
- Sustains continuing contact and support with the rest of AA—locally, through the SCV Central Office, District 7 and Area 93 Assembly, and nationally through the General Service Office (GSO) in New York.

## WHAT TRUSTED SERVANTS ARE NEEDED?

That depends on the needs and size of the meeting. The following are some of the common service positions in our area.

### **Group Secretary**

It is suggested that a group Secretary have at least six months of continuous sobriety and be available to attend meetings during the term of office. Each group has its own procedures set by the group's conscious. However, the Secretary may perform some, if not all, of the following:

- May be responsible for opening the meeting facility and setting up for the meeting.
- Start and close all meetings on schedule.
- Welcome newcomers and visitors.
- Arrange for a leader and select members to read literature such as "How It Works," "The Traditions," and other group-approved readings.
- Make AA-related announcements and request monthly reports from the Treasurer, IGR, and GSR representatives.
- Pass the 7th Tradition baskets and manage the contributions in the absence of a treasurer.
- Please ensure that the group's information is current with the Central Office, Area Assembly, and the General Service Office.
- Read the Gratitude Gazette newsletter and report about AA activities and news to the group.
- Advise the group on the needs at the Central Office, Area Assembly, District, SCV H&I, and all other service needs.
- Maintain the group's telephone list.
- Chair the group's business meetings.
- Sign proof of attendance slips.

To Aid the Secretary, AAWS provides the following pamphlet: **The A.A. Group...Where It All Begins** (P-16)



## **Group Treasurer**

This may also be the responsibility of the Secretary, or a group might have a separate treasurer. It is suggested that a group Treasurer have at least one year of continuous sobriety and have completed most of their steps (Steps one through nine.) The treasurer should be familiar with the Seventh Tradition: “**Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.**”

Self-supporting means the contributions should cover rent, literature, coffee, and other supplies. Group conscience may decide that the group also pays for sobriety chips or tokens and cakes for anniversary celebrations. After this self-supporting minimum, it is suggested that monies equal to cover at least one month of all costs be kept as a “Prudent Reserve.” After covering operating expenses and prudent reserve, groups should distribute contributions to support other AA services.

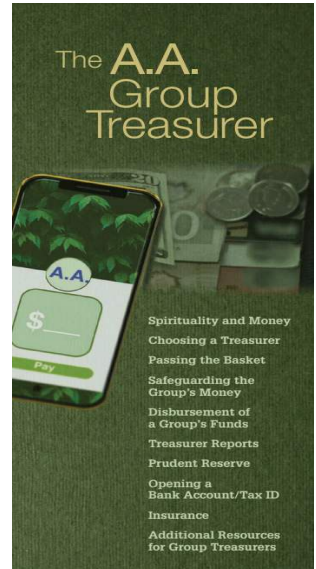
Additionally, the treasurer:

- Keeps track of the group’s Seventh Tradition contributions and expenses.
- Knows how much money is required to meet the group’s operating needs and prudent reserve.
- Makes monthly, quarterly, or biannually reports on income and expenditures to the group depending on the group’s conscience.
- Informs the group of shortfalls in meeting the operating expenses or prudent reserve.
- According to the Group’s Conscience, distribute the group’s surpluses to the SCV Central Office, Area 93 Assembly, District 7, GSO. A “pie chart.” You can find your group’s Central Office ID number next to the group name on the [aaascv.org](http://aaascv.org) website list of meetings or by calling the Central Office. Many Groups have not yet listed their groups with GSO, and the Central Office can direct you to complete the process.

To Aid the Treasurer, AAWS provides the following pamphlet: **The A.A. Group Treasurer** (F-96)

## **Literature Person**

This function may also be incorporated into the Secretary position. The literature person acquires and maintains a stock of AA Conference-approved and other books and pamphlets, meeting schedules, “Gratitude Gazette” newsletters, and flyers for AA events.



To Aid the Literature Person, AAWS provides the following book:  
**Literature Workbook** (M-52)

### ***Coffee Maker***

Most groups have a separate position for the coffee maker. The coffee maker ensures coffee is ready 15 minutes before the meeting starts and cleans up after the meeting.

### ***Greeter***

The greeter welcomes everyone to the meeting. This can be one of the most essential service positions suited to newcomers and old-timers alike.

### ***Timer***

The timer sets a time limit for shares. Depending on the meeting format, it may be one to four minutes, and there is an option to allow one minute to finish up. The limits are set by the group conscious.

### ***Chips/Tokens***

Some groups give chips or tokens for different lengths of sobriety, such as a Welcome chip, 30, 60, and 90 days, six months, and nine months. Some groups may have different milestones.

### ***Cakes***

Cakes or other desserts are purchased, and receipts are given to the treasurer for reimbursement for meetings where AA anniversaries (birthdays) are celebrated with the group.

### ***Cleanup***

Some groups ask for a service commitment to clean up the meeting space after the meeting. This may include tasks such as resetting or putting away chairs, organizing the literature, and restoring the meeting space to its original condition.

## **CONFERENCE-APPROVED LITERATURE**

What is Conference-approved literature? The term "Conference-approved" describes written or audiovisual material approved by the General Service Conference for publication by AA World Services, Inc. (AAWS). This process assures that everything in such literature is in accord with AA principles. Conference-approved material always deals with the recovery program of Alcoholics Anonymous or with information about the AA Fellowship. Any Conference-approved booklet or pamphlet goes through a lengthy and painstaking process, during which a variety of AA's from all over the United States and Canada read and express opinions at every stage of production.

What is Service Material? Service Material differs from Conference-approved literature in that it has not come about through Conference Advisory Action. It is produced when there is a need for information

that is readily available on a specific subject. Service material reflects AA group experience as well as specific and timely information that is subject to change.

What are AA Guidelines? AA Guidelines are compiled from the shared experience of AA members in various service areas. They also reflect guidance given through the Twelve Traditions and the General Service Conference (U.S. and Canada). The purpose of these guidelines is to assist groups and members in reaching an informed group conscience.

*Excerpts from AA Literature Workbook (M-51). Reprinted with permission of AA World Services, Inc.*

Your Central office writes and distributes brochures or booklets that are not Conference-approved. If such pieces meet the needs of the local membership, they may be legitimately classified as "AA literature."

## STEERING COMMITTEE

Not all groups have Steering Committees. However, for those that do, the Steering Committee:

- Prepares slates of candidates for group offices.
- Hears questions relating to group practices.
- Ensures all issues are presented to the group conscience for decisions and/or implementation.

## GROUP CONSCIENCE

We often hear the phrase "Group Conscience" in AA. This concept is fundamental and vital to the operation and functioning of AA at all levels. It flows out of our 2nd Tradition, **"For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern."** An issue is brought before the Group. Prior notice is given, and the topic under consideration is announced. It is a practice in AA that we try to have substantial (2/3) unanimity or if the group conscience desires a simple majority (50% +1), but we also listen to the minority opinion. For small groups, a committee of 4-5 members works well. For larger groups, 12 or more members provide a better cross-section of group experience.

### ***About Those Group Problems***

Group problems are often evidence of a healthy, desirable diversity of opinion among the group members. In Step Twelve's words, they give us a chance to **"practice these principles in all our affairs."** The Traditions were written to address group problems. From the book,

Alcoholics Anonymous, page 563, **“Our A.A. experience has taught us that:”** Group problems may include such common AA questions as:

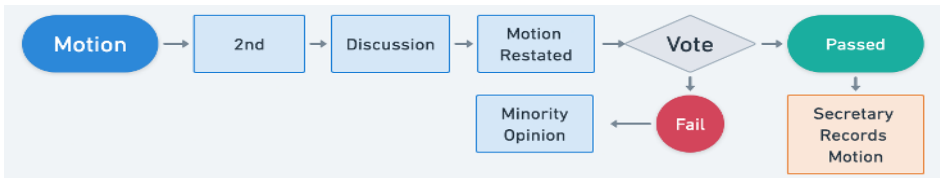
- What should the group do about “relapses”?
- How can we boost flagging attendance at meetings?
- How can we get more people to help with group chores?
- What can we do about one member’s anonymity break?
- Another’s romantic emphasis on “thirteenth-stepping”?
- How can we get out from under the “bleeding deacons,” those old-timers who insist they know what’s best for the group?
- And how can we get more old-timers to share their experience resolving group dilemmas?

Almost every group problem has a resolution, which usually can be reached through an informed group conscience. Importantly, understanding the Traditions, a good sense of humor, cooling-off periods, patience, courtesy, willingness to listen and to wait—plus a sense of fairness and trust in a **“Power greater than ourselves”**—have been found far more effective than legalistic arguments or personal accusations.

These are just some of the basics your group needs to discuss. What are the group’s needs? What other positions may be needed?

### **Group Motion**

On issues that arise and a Group Conscience is required, a Group may entertain a motion on the items. Groups can use a simple voting process or a traditional process.



## **GROUP INVENTORY**

Many groups periodically hold a “group inventory meeting” to evaluate how well they are fulfilling their primary purpose: to help alcoholics recover through AA’s suggested Twelve Steps of recovery. Some groups take inventory by examining our Twelve Traditions, one at a time, to determine how well they are living up to these principles. It is always a better practice to take the Inventory with the help of another mature member who does not attend the Group so they can be objective. Groups interested in taking regular inventory will find a review of the Tenth Step helpful. The following questions, compiled from AA’s shared experience, may help arrive at an informed group conscience. Groups will probably wish to add questions of their own:

1. What is the basic purpose of the group?
2. What more can the group do to carry the message?
3. Is the group attracting alcoholics from different backgrounds? Are we seeing a good cross-section of our community?
4. Do new members stick with us, or does turnover seem excessive? If so, why? What can we, as a group, do?
5. Do we emphasize the importance of sponsorship? How effectively? How can we do better?
6. Are we careful to preserve the anonymity of our group members and other AA's outside the meeting rooms? Do we also leave the confidences they share at meetings behind?
7. Do we take the time to explain to all members the value of the group of keeping up with the kitchen/housekeeping chores and other essential services that are part-and-parcel of our Twelfth-Step efforts?
8. Are all members given the opportunity to speak at meetings and to participate in other group activities?
9. Mindful that holding office is a great responsibility not to be viewed as the outcome of a popularity contest, are we choosing our officers with care?
10. Are we doing all we can to provide an attractive meeting place?
11. Does the group do its fair share toward participating in the purpose of AA—as it relates to our Three Legacies of Recovery, Unity, and Service?
12. What has the group done lately to bring the AA message to the attention of professional in the community—the physicians, clergy, court officials, educators and others who are often the first to see alcoholics in need of help?
13. How is the group fulfilling its responsibilities to the Seventh Tradition?

*“The AA Group” pamphlet pp. 35-36. Reprinted with permission from AAWS.*

## **INTERGROUP/CENTRAL OFFICE**

The local Alcoholics Anonymous Groups with representation are the ultimate authority over all Central Office, Committees, and Service Boards. At the regional level, representatives from the AA Groups make up the Intergroup. Each Group is entitled to elect a representative to the Intergroup. Each Group is entitled to one (1) vote on all matters brought before the Intergroup. The Central Office is supported through the volunteer efforts and financial contributions

of the AA Groups they serve. The Central Office, in keeping with AA traditions, recognizes the autonomy of AA The Central Office does not claim authority or ruling powers over AA Groups, respecting their autonomy.

### **Purpose**

The Intergroup exists to aid the Groups they support in their common purpose of carrying the AA message to alcoholics.

### **Intergroup Representative (IGR)**

Each meeting in Santa Clarita Valley is eligible to have a representative called a IGR.

- Attends IGR monthly meetings.
- Reports on actions and reports back to your group.
- Bring any group issues that affect AA as a whole to the Intergroup Meeting.
- Solicits and reports group conscience on issues before the Intergroup.
- Any AA member is welcome to attend the Intergroup meeting.

### **Intergroup Meetings**

The Santa Clarita Valley Intergroup meets on the:

**4th Monday of each month at 7:00 pm.**

**In-Person at Central Office**

**26951 Ruether Ave., B-4**

**Santa Clarita, CA 91351**

### **The Gratitude Gazette Newsletter**

The Gratitude Gazette newsletter is published monthly to keep the Santa Clarita Valley AA Fellowship informed.

Inside Each Edition:

- Upcoming Events
- Coordinating Intergroup Minutes
- Original Stories & Excerpts from AA Literature
- Service Opportunities
- Fellowship Birthdays

To subscribe to the free digital copy, visit [aaascv.org](http://aaascv.org) and sign up with your name and email at the bottom. You can unsubscribe at any time.

# YOUR CENTRAL OFFICE IS HERE TO SERVE YOU

**“A Central Office/Intergroup is an A.A. Service Office that involves a partnership among groups in a community – just as A.A. groups themselves are partnerships of individuals. It is established to carry out certain functions common to all groups.”**

**– GSO Guideline**

## **What Does our Central Office do?**

- Receives phone calls every month, including 12-step calls.
- Receives an average of 3,500 website hits every month.
- There is always a need for members to sign up on our 12-step phone and email lists.
- The Central Office provides daytime opportunities a week to answer phones..
- Central Office stocks AAWS (Alcoholics Anonymous World Services) Conference-approved literature, AA Grapevine publications, and other helpful resources.
- Print updated Meeting Schedules.
- Print our monthly newsletter, the Gratitude Gazette.
- Provide information regarding other AA services.

## **AA ECONOMICS**

Many are sober today as a direct result of a call made to Santa Clarita AA Intergroup, finding a meeting on the [aaascv.org](http://aaascv.org) website, and/or reading AA literature purchased from the Central Office. Running the phones and website, publishing the meeting schedules, and having literature available take financial resources.

A fundamental principle of AA is that it will always be self-supporting through its own contributions. A dollar contribution in a basket was considered appropriate in the 1960s – a dollar that could buy over \$10 worth of goods today.

A suggested \$3.00 (or more) contribution the next time the 7th Tradition basket goes around in your group will go a long way toward ensuring that an AA meeting will always be available when we need one.

What happens to your contributions to the Santa Clarita Central Office?

- 24/7 Hotline and Central Office Website
- Monthly Newsletter
- Support for Intergroup Activities
- Conference-Approved Literature

- Support for group meetings (meeting listing, current group information, and group resources)
- Special workers employed by Central Office to ensure its smooth and efficient day-to-day operations
- Taxes, rent, and other municipal fees

## **PARTICIPATE IN THE BIRTHDAY PLAN**

We love to celebrate our milestones in sobriety with each other. We are also convinced that this information can encourage others. Each birthday celebration is a celebration of the gifts of the Fellowship.

In grateful celebration of their sobriety birthdays, many AA members contribute one dollar or more for each year of sobriety to the local Intergroup. The birthday will be listed in the Gratitude Gazette newsletter, and the contribution will go toward helping Santa Clarita Intergroup.

Please make a note for your AA Meeting, AA Group, or AA Member contributions of:

- Your sobriety date including the year
- First name and last initial
- Home Group (optional)

### **Check:**

Send Contributions to:

Santa Clarita Central Office of AA

26951 Reuther Ave B-4, Santa Clarita, CA 91351

### **Online:**

PayPal (no PayPal account needed):



### **Cash:**

Come by Central Office in person during open hours.

## **AREA 93 ASSEMBLY**

Alcoholics Anonymous has 93 areas in the U.S./Canada. We are geographically located in Area 93, Central California. You can visit the website: [area93.org](http://area93.org)

## **Areas Purpose**

To carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

To support the General Service Conference and its members in its role as provider of AA World Services and as guardian of the Twelve Steps and Traditions.

To elect and support a delegate to the General Service Conference, to take our Group conscience to New York.

To provide communication and encourage unity within the area.

To assist in the development and communication of an informed group conscience.

## **General Service Representative (GSR)**

The group's General Service Representative (GSR) works with the District, Area Assembly, and Area Committees. The GSR is the group's link to the General Service Office (GSO) in New York and with AA as a whole. Your group's district is in District 7, see [area93district7.org](http://area93district7.org). In addition, GSRs are the main contact with the GSO and receive the Bulletin, Box 459, and other information from the GSO to share with their group.

Ensures that the group and representatives are registered with the General Service Office.

Represents the group at district and area assemblies.

Keeps the group informed of all general service activities in the area.

Receives and shares all mail from the GSO, including the newsletter (Box 459).

## **Grapevine Representative (GVR)**

The group's Grapevine Representative (GVR) links the members to the AA Grapevine monthly magazine and encourages paper and digital subscriptions and personal story submissions.

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

Q. How do I update our meeting information?

A. Secretaries can call the Central Office and provide updates during office hours. Information for new meetings and changes to current meetings can also be emailed to the Central Office Manager at [info@aascv.org](mailto:info@aascv.org).

Q. The Treasurer has some questions about making contributions. Where do they find the answers?

A. The most updated "Pie Chart" document with addresses is always available on the 7th Tradition Page of the [aascv.org](http://aascv.org) website.

Contributions to the Central Office can be made in person during business hours or online via the Contributions section on the home page. If mailing a contribution, please include an email address for a receipt.

Q. How do I find the numbers for my Group ID?

A. The GSO in New York issues your Group ID for listed groups. To obtain the Group ID, visit the Central website Meeting Schedule, look for your meeting(s), and in the notes section, see the nine digits of your Group ID. If your Group is not listed. You will need to contact AA World Services at [AA.org](http://AA.org) to create or locate a GSO number. You can get assistance from the District 7 Registrar at [registrar@area93.district7.org](mailto:registrar@area93.district7.org)

Q. How do I find out what's happening in Santa Clarita Valley AA?

A. The website lists events, meetings, announcements, and important documents, including the monthly meeting minutes and financials, each month.

## 12-STEP CALL VOLUNTEERS

When someone reaches out for help, our phone volunteers use a list of 12-Step volunteers to set up a 12-Step phone call. People can be added to the 12-step list by calling Central Office during business hours or emailing the Central Office at [info@aascv.org](mailto:info@aascv.org).

## INTERGROUP STANDING COMMITTEES

In addition to the group service commitment of IGR, SCV Intergroup has service opportunities on committees. These include:

- Public Information/Cooperation with the Professional Community (CPC)
- Outreach
- Newsletter (in need of help populating the article archive website and writing new content)

## HOW DOES A GROUP JOIN THE INTERGROUP?

The group's elected IGR can attend the next Intergroup meeting on the 4th Monday of each month (orientation at 6:30 pm, meeting at 7:00 pm). For location information see the Intergroup page on [aascv.org](http://aascv.org).

## WHAT CAN I GET AT THE CENTRAL OFFICE?

The bookstore sells aluminum, brass, tri-plate tokens (24 hours to 50 years), AA World Services literature, Grapevine books and magazines, and printed Schedules. Newcomer Packets are available for your

group. There are event flyers and information on Service opportunities. We encourage everyone in the Santa Clarita AA community to drop by and discover the many resources available.

## **QUICK ONLINE REFERENCES**

Alcoholics Anonymous ([aa.org](http://aa.org))

Stepping Stones Alano Club ([steppingstonesalanoclub.org](http://steppingstonesalanoclub.org))

Central Park Group ([centralparkgroupsantaclarita.com](http://centralparkgroupsantaclarita.com))

The Rafters Group ([raftersaa.com](http://raftersaa.com))

Santa Clarita Valley H&I ([scvhandi.org](http://scvhandi.org))

District 7 ([area93district7.org](http://area93district7.org))

Area 93 ([area93.org](http://area93.org))

SCVYPAA ([scvypaa.org](http://scvypaa.org))

## **7TH TRADITION**

“Our Twelfth Step—carrying the message—is the basic service that the A.A. Fellowship gives; this is our principal aim and the main reason for our existence. Therefore, A.A. is more than a set of principles; it is a society of alcoholics in action. We must carry the message, else we ourselves can neither and those who haven’t been given the truth may die.”

Contributions to the Central Office are used to support phone service for twelfth-step calls, coordination of group activities, and AA literature sales.

Contributions to GSO (General Service Office) support group services in North America and help carry the message worldwide.

Contributions to the Area Assembly and District ease the job of GSO and put your contribution to locally to foster communications and promote unity.

Our 7th tradition encourages us to be fully self-supporting through our own contributions at all levels. Below are a few suggestions for dividing the balance of your group’s funds after the basic expenses (rent, literature, coffee, reserves, etc.) are covered. These are only suggestions, and as always in our fellowship, the group conscience should decide what is best for your group.

The Central Office does not mail receipts. If you wish to receive one, please include your email address.

## Suggested Group Contributions 7th Tradition

Percent	Sent To	Sent By (Attach Check)
50%	Santa Clarita Central Office of AA 26951 Reuther Ave B-4 Santa Clarita, CA 91351	(Electronic: <a href="https://aascv.org/7th-tradition/">https://aascv.org/7th-tradition/</a> ) see below or (Check payable to: SCV Central Office)
10%	District 7 General Service Board PO Box 599 Acton, CA 93510	(Electronic: <a href="https://area93district7.org/make-a-contribution/">https://area93district7.org/make-a-contribution/</a> ) or (Check payable to: District 7, CCAA)
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