Area Group Records Coordinator

G-36

The Area Group Records Coordinator serves as the communication connection among the individual Al-Anon members and the group, District, Al-Anon Information Service (AIS), Area, and the World Service Office (WSO).

What does the vital role of the Area Group Records Coordinator consist of?

The Area Group Records Coordinator is the "keeper" of Al-Anon group information. It is essential that the Area Delegate be kept informed of group records procedures, since the Area Delegate communicates with the WSO. (In Areas with many groups or a large volume of changes, the Delegate or the Area Chairperson can contact the WSO to designate additional trusted servants to have access to Area records to assist the Area Group Records Coordinator.)

Note that Alateen group information is handled by the Area Alateen Process Person (AAPP). The Area Group Records Coordinator communicates with the Area Delegate, AAPP, and Area Alateen Coordinator to become familiar with how the Area processes Alateen groups records.

The Area Group Records Coordinator:

- Serves as primary contact between the Area and the WSO regarding Al-Anon group records.
- Uses the WSO Online Group Records application to maintain the Area's Al-Anon group records.
- Informs groups in the Area that mail from the WSO goes to the Current Mailing Address (CMA) and not to the Group Representative (GR). When the GR is also the CMA, the GR will receive the mail.
- Prepares reports for the Area about record-keeping which may include statistics, tips, or other relevant information.
- Encourages members and groups to use their WSO identification number.
- Encourages DRs to use the WSO Online Group Records application, and assists them in how to access it.
- Communicates with the AIS offices in the Area.
- Updates the Area's records with all changes received from the groups or the WSO.
- Works with other Area coordinators to strengthen the Area's groups.

In some Areas, the Area Group Records Coordinator also:

- Maintains lists of Area trusted servants.
- Provides labels to the Area or Newsletter Editor(s) for group mailings.
- Submits lists (or labels) to the Area Alateen Coordinators.
- Assists the registration committee at Assembly.
- Sends new groups a welcome letter.
- Informs groups which Districts they are located in and provides the name and contact information of their District Representatives.
- Keeps the Area Archivist informed about new and inactivated groups.

What skills are recommended for Area Group Records Coordinators?

- Good organizational skills and the ability to pay attention to detail.
- Experience working with computer databases.
- Strong general computer and internet skills.
- Availability to attend Area World Service Committee meetings and Assemblies.
- Understanding of the Area and world service structure.

Tools and Resources

Online Group Records: A web application that provides easy-to-read group information from the WSO database. It's available to Area Group Records Coordinators to help them maintain Al-Anon group records in their Areas. The Area Group Records Coordinator can:

- Submit new Al-Anon group registrations.
- Make group changes.
- Generate reports as needed.

The Area can request to have additional trusted servants access the WSO Online Group Records application to assist with data entry. Trusted servants must be current AWSC members, such as a District Representative, Area Coordinator, or Area Officer; access is granted concurrent with the Area Group Records Coordinator's term. The Area Group Records Coordinator oversees their WSO Online Group Records application training, provides instructions, and updates the Area Group Records process.

Live Training and On-Demand Training Videos: AFG Records Staff provides training to new Area Group Records Coordinators regarding the use of the Online Group Records application. Training sessions are recorded and available for later reference. On-demand tutorial videos are also available within the Online Group Records application.

AFG Connects—A closed, online communication platform for Area Group Records Coordinators to:

- Engage in peer discussions
- Read updates from the WSO
- Retrieve materials from the document library

The WSO Website— The WSO's website, al-anon.org, contains a number of helpful resources such as:

- Group Registration and Change Forms
- Guidelines
- The online newsletter *In the Loop* which periodically contains articles and announcements of interest to Area Group Records Coordinators
- *News from the WSC*, a publication containing highlights from the annual World Service Conference
- The *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27) which contains terms used in Al-Anon service, the "Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies," and expanded readings about the Twelve Concepts of Service.

The Role of the WSO in Registration and Review of Group Information

A primary function of the WSO is to register Al-Anon Family Groups. As part of this task, the WSO reviews registration forms for completeness and accuracy and for adherence to existing policy as stated in the "Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies" in the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual.* "The WSO will register any group designating itself as an Al-Anon Family Group with the understanding that it will abide by the Traditions and that meetings will be open to any Al-Anon member." (See "Alateen Policy" section for information on registering an Alateen group.)

Tips Coordinators Share

- Conduct a workshop at the District and/or Area on the best way to update the records.
- Communicate with the AIS, if there is one. Groups may send updates to the AIS because they publish a meeting list. (Talk to each other; let the AIS know you can provide up-to-date group listings to them and ask that they inform you of all group changes they receive.)
- Provide links from local websites to the WSO's online Meeting Search to eliminate the need for duplicative record-keeping. If a local database of meeting information is also necessary, try to minimize the number of trusted servants who have to maintain it. For example, instead of maintaining separate Area, District, or Al-Anon Information Service listings, all members can send changes to the Area Group Records Coordinator who can keep the Newsletter Editors, Districts, and Al-Anon Information Services informed.
- Some Areas list groups only if they have a WSO ID number.
- Become a Service Sponsor to the new Area Group Records Coordinator when you rotate out of the position. In recent surveys, a majority of incoming Coordinators shared that they received little or no transition assistance from the outgoing service member.

Something to Think About

Concept Ten states: *Service responsibility is balanced by carefully defined service authority and double-headed management is avoided.*

In some Areas, there is an Area database of the groups; the AIS offices keep another database; and the Newsletter Editor(s) yet another. Experience shows that communication works best when there is one primary guardian of the records, usually the Area Group Records Coordinator, and one database for storing the records, usually the WSO's database. It is the database used to power the Meeting Search at al-anon.org.