



# Background Information and Development 2019 Area 50 Budget

*“Our spiritual way of life is safe for future generations if, as a Society, we resist the temptation to receive money from the outside world. But this leaves us with a responsibility—one that every member ought to understand. We cannot skimp when the treasurer of our group passes the hat. Our groups, our areas, and A.A. as a whole will not function unless our services are sufficient and their bills are paid.”*

-The Language of the Heart, p. 221

# Carrying The Message—Our Primary Purpose— From National to Local Levels

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## ▶ **A.A.'s General Service Office**

- Functions as a storehouse of A.A. information.
- Communicates with members and groups around the world.
- Publishes A.A.'s literature.
- Supplies information and experience to professionals and others interested in A.A.

## ▶ **The Area Committee**

- Coordinates A.A. activities over a broad geographic area.
- Sends a Delegate to the annual General Service Conference.
- Holds Area Assemblies to determine the needs of the Fellowship, through input from G.S.R.s.
- Provides information at all levels of service.

## ▶ **The Local District**

- Communicates directly with groups.
- Provides the District group conscience for the Area Assemblies.
- Serves as a link between the Area Delegate and the G.S.R.s.

## ▶ **Individual A.A. Groups**

- Ensure newcomers feel welcome.
- Promote both the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions.
- Elect and support a G.S.R.
- Through an informed group conscience, adopt a specific contribution plan tailored to meet the group's financial situation and when possible, support A.A. service entities.



# Where Does The Area Get Its Authority?

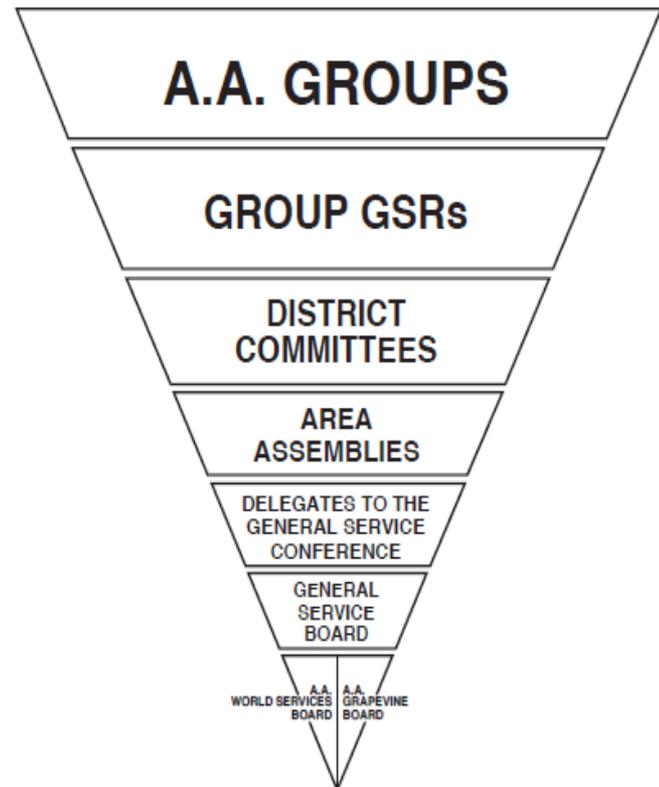
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▶ **A.A.’s Traditions recognize the need for some kind of organization to carry the message in ways that are impossible for the local groups.**

▶ **Our Area Assembly is a service committee established under Tradition Nine and funded by Tradition Seven contributions.**

- *Tradition Nine: “A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.”*
- *Tradition Seven: “Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.”*

▶ **Concept 1 states: “*The A.A. groups today hold ultimate responsibility and final authority for our world services.*” Our structure resembles an upside down triangle.**



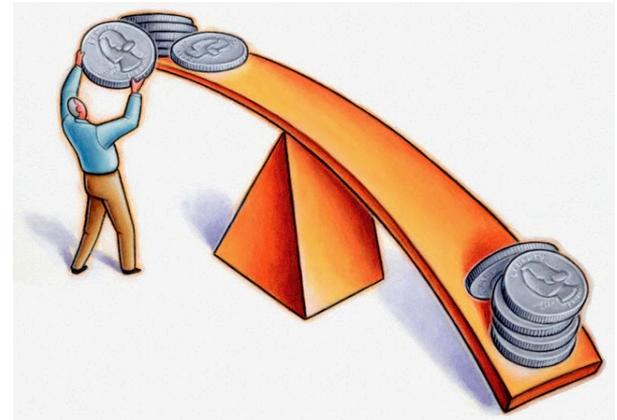
# WNY Area 50—Our Purpose

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- Support carrying the message of Alcoholics Anonymous to the alcoholic who still suffers.
- Support the General Service Conference and its members in its role as provider of A.A. World Services, and as guardian of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions.
- Elect and support a Delegate who will deliver the collective group conscience of the Area at the annual General Service Conference.
- Connect all Area meetings through the DCMs and GSRs via Area Assemblies and regular communication.
- Assist in the development and communication of an informed group conscience in all parts of our service structure.

# The Budget Process

*Fiscal Management of Our Twelve Step Work*



# How Is The Budget Developed—Who Is Responsible?

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- ▶ **Each Area Officer and Committee Chair was asked to complete a Budget Request worksheet.**
- ▶ **District Committee Members were also asked to complete a projection of expenses for committee work and district events.**
- ▶ **The Treasurer and Finance Committee prepared a draft budget.**
  - We followed the Area's Financial guidelines with consideration of expenses and anticipated contributions from groups and individuals.
- ▶ **The Treasurer and Finance Committee members now present the draft budget to our groups/District meetings through our DCMs and GSRs.**
- ▶ **The Budget is then reviewed by groups, discussed, amended as necessary, and voted upon at the Budget Area Assembly in November 2018.**
- ▶ **Area Officers identify projected expenses for each budget line item.**
  - For example costs of supplies: copies, postage, and expenses for assigned events.
  - Includes costs of attending outside Area Events (NERAASA, NYSIW, etc.).
- ▶ **Committee Chairs identify projected expenses, that vary by committee, for:**
  - Committee-sponsored Outreach to District and Group meetings, facilities and professionals.
  - Committee meeting expenses (rent copies, supplies, etc.).



# How Do Standing Committees Help Us Carry A.A.'s Message of Recovery?

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## Accessibilities Committee

- Assists the Districts and groups in carrying the message to alcoholics with special needs.
- Provides resources and coordinates the effort of volunteers.
- Updates and confirms lists of meetings accommodating those with special needs.
- Facilitates communication among Central Offices, Districts and volunteers to help all members with special needs.

## Archives Committee

- Collects, organizes, preserves, and displays records of AA history in Area 8, including documents, audio recordings and photographs.
- Archives service work is more than custodial activity; it is how we share the heritage of our fellowship.

## Cooperation With the Professional Community Committee

- Establishes good cooperation between A.A. and the professional community.
- Provides information about A.A. to those who have contact with alcoholics through their profession.

## Corrections Committee

- Organizes and facilitates AA meetings for incarcerated members.
- Distribute literature and support correspondence with members in correctional facilities
- Organizes and facilitates the Bridging the Gap program to help newly released AA members get to meetings.

## Finance Committee

- Advises the Area Committee and Area Assembly regarding budgeted and unbudgeted financial items and makes recommendations on Area financial guidelines.
- Receives and acknowledges contributions from groups and members.
- Assists the Area Treasurer who is a voting member of the Finance Committee, in preparing the annual budget.



# Standing Committees Help Us Carry AA's Message of Recovery—Two

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## Grapevine/La Vina Committee

- Considers and makes recommendations regarding proposed additions to and changes in Grapevine and La Vina publications.
- Informs Assembly members, through displays and other suitable methods, of all La Vina and Grapevine publications, audio-visual materials, and other items.

## GSA Education Committee

- Responsible for programming and content to inform and educate the general service assembly members.

## GSR School Committee

- Responsible for educating new service members-especially our new General Service Representatives.

## Public Information Committee

- Conveys A.A. information to the general public, including the media.

## Treatment Committee

- Organizes and facilitates AA meetings within treatment centers.
- Organizes and facilitates the Bridging the Gap program to help newly released AA members get to meetings.

## Website Committee

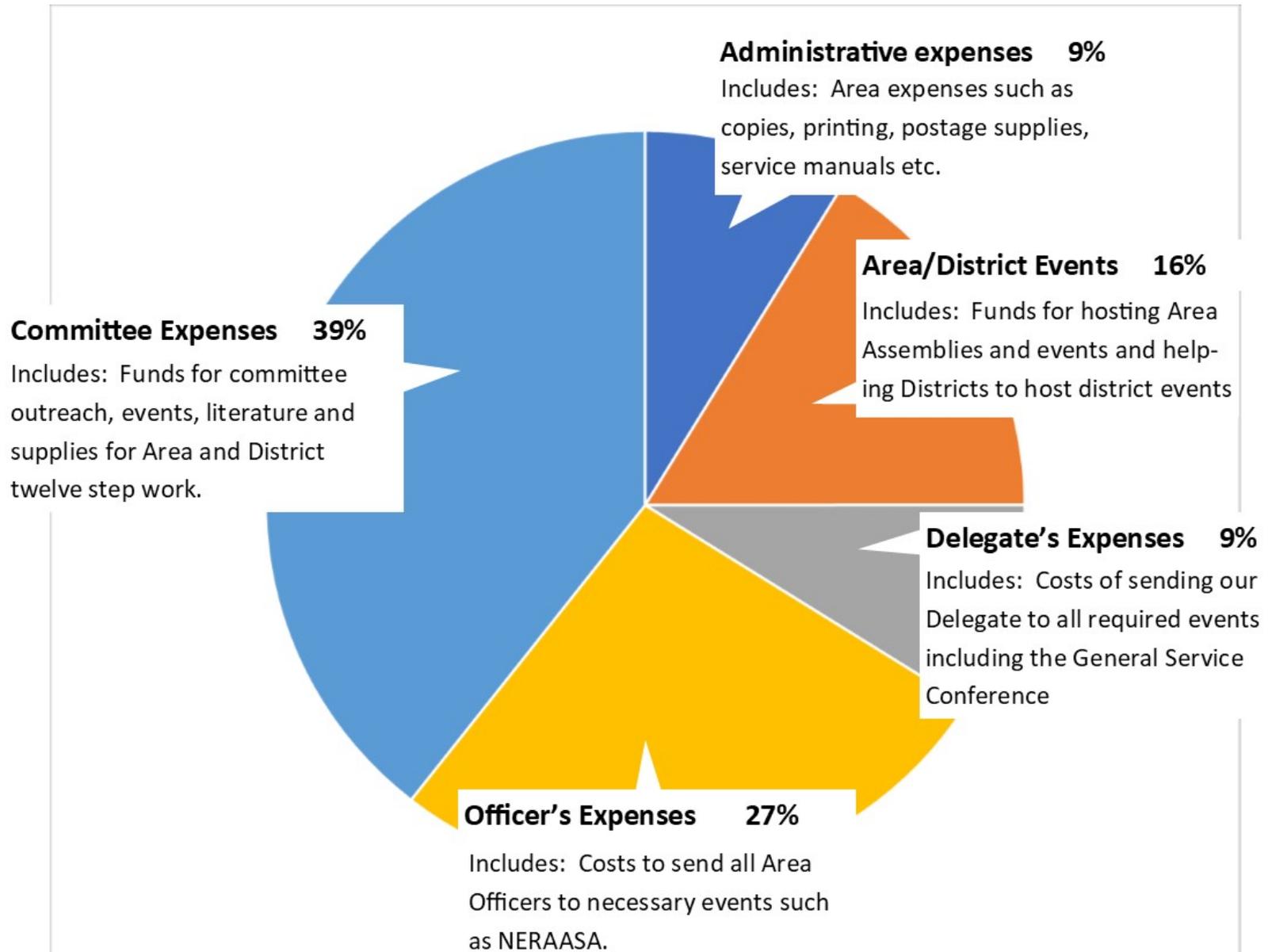
- Oversees maintenance, improvement, and operation of the Area 50 website <http://area50wny.org/> and existing database applications.
- Ensures all Area website content is appropriate.



# What Does the 2019 Proposed Budget Include?

- ▶ **The total proposed budget totals \$40,000. This represents a large increase from the 2018 approved budget in an attempt to "spend down" a surplus treasury.**
- ▶ **Administrative expenses, including meeting rent, liability insurance, and supplies represents ~9%.**
- ▶ **Costs of hosting general assemblies and adding outside speakers and new elements to General Assemblies is ~6% of the budget.**
- ▶ **Expenses for our Delegate to attend events required by the position including the General Service Conference is ~9%.**
- ▶ **Educating our other 15 elected Officers by defraying costs associated with attending events represents ~27% of the budget.**
- ▶ **Our 11 Standing Committees represents ~40% of the total budget. These include committee expenses, area events, outside area events, and committee sponsored outreach. This is the work of carrying the message directly to the alcoholic who still suffers and the professionals who may encounter them.**
- ▶ Archives
- ▶ Accessibility
- ▶ Cooperation with the Professional Community
- ▶ Corrections
- ▶ Finance
- ▶ Grapevine
- ▶ GSA Education
- ▶ GSR School
- ▶ Public Information
- ▶ Treatment
- ▶ Website

# 2019 Draft Budget Breakdown:



# How did we reach a figure of \$40,000 for the budget?

(These figures are based on the behavior of this Area over the last 4-5 years)

• If we continue spending at our current rate through the rest of 2018 the treasury will contain approximately \$24,000 in funds at year end:	\$24,000
	<u>-\$6,000</u>
• Deduct from this our \$6,000 prudent reserve:	\$18,000
• Add to this our expected contributions of around \$13,000	<u>+\$13,000</u>
	\$31,000

- Based on data from previous years we can expect to spend about half of what we actually budget.
- If we budget for \$40,000 in expenses we will most likely spend closer to \$20,000.
- Even if we start to spend at a rate of 75% of budgeted funds we will be covered at around \$30,000.

**BEST CASE SCENERIO:** We begin to spend more money on service activities, educating current and future area service members, activating districts, informing groups of their larger responsibilities outside the home group. This in turns generates more contributions and more members involved in service and more potential alcoholics served.

# Are The Area's Contributions and Expenses The Same Every Month?

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## ▶ Group Contributions

- Groups may make contributions to the Area monthly, quarterly, semi-annually, or whenever they choose to do so.
- The Area's *monthly financial report*, however, takes the total anticipated annual contribution amount and divides it equally by twelve months.
- That's why the Area may appear to have a "deficit", when we are really on-track for that particular time in the year.



## ▶ Area Expenses

- Our expenses also vary month to month. For example, officers attend outside multi-area events during certain months and costs must be reimbursed all at once.
- That's why the *monthly financial report* may appear to be way over budget for an individual month, when we may be actually on track.

## ▶ Unbudgeted Expenses

- Occasionally, the Area faces unanticipated expenses, such as new equipment.
- In these cases, the Finance Committee may make recommendations but defer to the group conscience of the assembly body.

# What If Contributions Or Expenses Are Higher Or Lower Than We Thought They Would Be?

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- ▶ **Our Area Finance Committee and Area Treasurer take great care in preparing a draft budget that is approved at an Area Assembly.**
- ▶ **If contributions appear to be *falling short*, the Area must take action!**
  - We have no ability to borrow money from anyone.
  - We often inform our groups and ask those that can, to make a special donation, perhaps supported by group members. ***That's why it's important that groups and members have knowledge of how their contributions support AA's 12-Step work.***
  - We may need to postpone reimbursing our Area officers—even though these amounts were approved during the Budget Area Assembly.
  - We may need to prioritize and stop some planned 12-Step work performed by the Area and Area committees.
- ▶ **If contributions are *Higher* than anticipated, we do not have the ability to “save the money for a rainy day”.**
  - The Area approved establishment of a “prudent reserve” fund in 2018. However, this is equivalent to less than 10% of the total budget and is designed for unforeseen, unbudgeted expenses. Use of the prudent reserve requires the approval of the Area Committee or Area Assembly.



# Please Keep In Mind

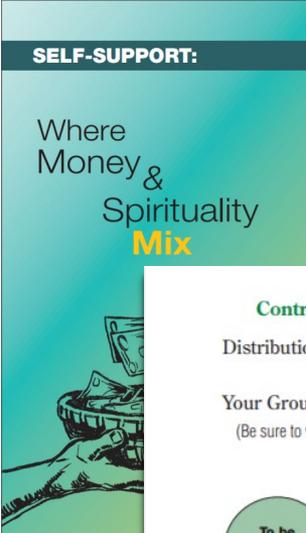
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- ▶ The budget does not reflect funds on hand. Rather, it shows the stated purpose for contributions that the Area may receive.
- ▶ The budgeting of any item does not mean that the expense will actually occur.
- ▶ Since the Area does not have a line of credit, it is not possible for the Area to spend money it doesn't have in its bank account. It cannot reimburse trusted servants for their 12-step work or pay any budgeted expenses if the money is not actually in the bank.
- ▶ The Area *reimburses* trusted servants for the 12-step work they pay for out of their own pockets. Therefore, they should always confer with the Area Treasurer or Finance Committee to ensure that funding is actually available.



# As a GSR, how can I inform my home group?

## ► The Self Support Pamphlet:



**SELF-SUPPORT:**

Where Money & Spirituality Mix

**Samples of Group Contributions to A.A. Service Entities**

Distribution Plan of \_\_\_\_\_  
(YOUR GROUP NAME)

Your Group Service # \_\_\_\_\_  
(Be sure to write group name and service # on all contributions.)

\_\_\_\_\_ % to district  
 \_\_\_\_\_ % to area committee  
 \_\_\_\_\_ % to G.S.O.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ % to intergroup or central office  
 \_\_\_\_\_ % other A.A. service entities  
 \_\_\_\_\_ % other A.A. service entities

**To be determined by YOUR groupe**

**OR**

\_\_\_\_\_ % to district  
 10% to area committee  
 30% to G.S.O.  
 50% to intergroup or central office

**OR**

If you have no intergroup/central office:

\_\_\_\_\_ % to district  
 40% to area  
 30% to G.S.O.

## ► The Green Self-support card:

**SELF-SUPPORT**

The Seventh Tradition states that Alcoholics Anonymous is self-supporting through our own contributions. The contributions help to cover the group's expenses. But the Seventh Tradition is more than simply paying for rent and other group expenses. It is both a privilege and a responsibility of individual groups and members to ensure that our organization, at every level, remains forever self-supporting and free of outside influences that might divert us from our primary purpose.

The monetary amount of each contribution is secondary to the spiritual connection that joins us in unity with A.A. groups around the world.

**Service Material from the General Service Office**

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**SOME THINGS TO THINK ABOUT**

**Some facts:**

- Currently about 41.5% of groups contribute to the General Service Office.
- Costs of Services provided by G.S.O. (as of 2017) are approximately \$7.27 per member per year.
- Gross profit from A.A. literature sales account for over 50% of G.S.O.'s income.
- Your contributions help ensure the future of our Fellowship worldwide.

**Personal thoughts:**

- What is the value of your sobriety?
- Does your group know that contributions may be made online at AA.org?
- Gratitude, expressed through contributions, reaches the still-suffering alcoholic.

# What Do I Share With My Group?

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▶ **Remember—When you're a G.S.R. you are linking your home group with the whole of A.A.**

- That's still an important side of your work. But now, as the GSR, you have an even bigger responsibility: You transmit ideas and opinions, as well as facts. Through you, the group conscience becomes a part of “the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship,” as expressed in the General Service Conference.

▶ **Your group, District and Area are all part of the communication structure that holds A.A. together, supporting the “Unity” of the Fellowship.**

▶ **Talking About the Budget:**

- Ask the group Secretary for time to talk about the upcoming Budget Assembly at the meeting or during a business meeting.
- Let group members know their questions and feedback are important to you and the Area.
- Review the importance of the budget, highlight what it contains and how contributions are used.
- Make the proposed budget (and these slides) AVAILABLE to members who wish to see its details.
- Encourage members to learn more about the availability of our Area Committees to support 12-step work in your community.
- Invite a friend or two or more to attend the Budget Assembly with you.
- Ensure your group has its own “pie chart” distribution plan to make contributions, if it's able to, to support GSO, the Area, District, Intergroup, and other service entities as you determine.



Thank You All for your Service  
and Participation

Area 50 Budget Assembly  
November 17, 2018