



Group Service Representative Orientation Booklet

Effective: January 2011

Amended: November 2016

Introduction

We would like to welcome all members of Narcotics Anonymous, new groups and group service representatives (GSR's) to the Central Nova Area of Narcotics Anonymous (CNANA) Area Service Committee (ASC).

This booklet is provided as an introduction to our Area Service Committee, our service structure, and our NA service guides. Each home group should provide their GSR with a copy of "A *Guide to Local Services in Narcotics Anonymous*". We suggest that you take time to read it as well as "*The Group Booklet*", "*The Twelve Concepts for Service in NA*", "*It Works How and Why*" and "*The Guidelines for Central Nova Area Service Committee.*"

At this time we would like to focus on a few sentences from the introduction to the Basic Text of Narcotics Anonymous.

"Everything that occurs in the course of NA service must be motivated by the desire to more successfully carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers"

"We must always remember that as individual members, groups and service committees, we are not and should never be in competition with each other"

"We work separately and together to help the newcomer and for our common good"

"We have learned, painfully, that internal strife cripples our fellowship; it prevents us from providing the services necessary for growth"

If you have any concerns, comments or questions, please contact the ASC Chairperson or the ASC Vice-Chairperson. Please feel free to ask us anything, we encourage open communication and we are here to offer our assistance.

Yours in Service,

CNANA ASC Chairperson

Group Service Representative (GSR)

Each group elects one group service representative; even those groups hosting more than one recovery meeting elect just one GSR. These GSR's form the foundation of our service structure. GSR's provide constant, active influence over the discussions being carried on within the service structure. They do this by participating in area service committee meetings, attending forums and assemblies at both the area and regional levels, and sometimes joining in the work of an ASC subcommittee.

If we are vigilant in choosing stable, qualified leaders at this level of service, the remainder of the structure will almost certainly be sound. From this strong foundation, a service structure can be built that will nourish, inform, and support the groups in the same way that the groups nourish and support the structure.

Group service representatives bear great responsibility. While GSR's are elected by and accountable to the group, they are not mere group messengers. They are selected by their groups to serve as active members of the area service committee. As such, they are responsible to act in the best interests of NA as a whole, not solely as advocates of their own groups' priorities.

As participants in the area committee, GSR's need to be as well informed as they can be concerning the affairs of the committee. They study the reports of the committee's officers and subcommittee chairpersons. They read the various handbooks published by Narcotics Anonymous World Services (NAWS) on each area of service. After carefully considering their own conscience and what they know

about how their group members feel, they take active, critical parts in the discussions, which form the group conscience of the entire committee.

GSR's link their groups with the rest of the NA service structure, particularly through the information conveyed in their reports to and from the area committee. At group business meetings, the GSR report provides a summary of area committee activities, often sparking discussions among group members that provide the GSR with a feel for how the area can better serve the group's needs. In group recovery meetings, GSR's make available fliers announcing area and regional activities.

At area committee meetings, GSR reports provide perspectives on group growth vital to the committee's work. If a group is having problems, its GSR can share those problems with the committee in his or her reports. And if the group hasn't found solutions to those problems, the area chairperson will open a slot on the committee's "sharing session" agenda so that the GSR can gather the experience others have had in similar situations. If any helpful solutions arise from the sharing session, the GSR can report those back to the group.

- Taken from page 35 of "A Guide to Local Services in Narcotics Anonymous"

Group service representatives link their groups to the rest of Narcotics Anonymous. Most groups also elect an alternate GSR who can fill in for the group representative when needed. GSR's serve a dual role. As our fellowship's Second Concept for Service indicates, GSR's take part on their groups' behalf in the area committee and the regional assembly, conveying a sense of their groups' wishes to the service structure and bringing back information on what's happening in the larger world of NA. Yet our Twelve Concepts also suggest that GSR's are delegated the authority to serve in their own right as ASC and regional assembly participants, exercising their own conscience and best judgment in the best interests of NA as a whole. For more information on the GSR's job, see both the Twelve Concepts for NA Service and the NA Group chapters appearing earlier in this guide.

Basic equipment for group service representatives usually includes copies of "A Guide to Local Services in Narcotics Anonymous", area guidelines (if the area has them), and the log of area policy actions (available from the area secretary). Qualifications and terms of service for GSR's are determined by the groups, which elect them.

- Taken from page 47 of "A Guide to Local Services in Narcotics Anonymous"

Alternate GSR

Groups also elect a second representative called an alternate GSR. Alternate GSR's attend all the area service committee meetings (as nonvoting participants) with their GSR's so that they can see for themselves how the committee works. If a GSR cannot attend an area committee meeting, that group's alternate GSR participates in the GSR's place.

Alternate GSR's, along with other members, may also serve on area subcommittees. Subcommittee experience gives alternate GSR's added perspective on how area services are actually delivered. That perspective helps make them more effective area committee participants if their groups later elect them to serve as GSR's.

-Taken From page 36 of "A Guide to Local Services in Narcotics Anonymous"

Responsibilities of the GSR

As GSR you bring your group's conscience to area and carry information back to your group. Communication is an essential aspect of this position. You should attend home group meetings regularly, and attend group business meetings and ASC meetings monthly. If you are unable to attend your business meeting or area, contact your Alternate GSR to take your place. Make sure that the Alternate GSR has all

the information needed to fill in for you. If the Alternate GSR is unavailable ask another home group member to fill in. Groups that are not represented at area risk losing their vote.

As GSR you are responsible to present your group's report to area. This report should include how your group is doing, financial information, group concerns, announcements and any change in meeting time or place. You should be prepared to participate in discussion at the area table. GSR's make, discuss and vote on motions. At the ASC meeting listen carefully and make note of any information that you should bring back to your home group.

At your monthly business meeting you will give a report on the ASC meeting. It is helpful to bring your copy of the ASC minutes to your group business meeting. Your report should include highlights from reports presented at area, any important information from discussions, motions voted on and positions available to be filled. Also bring to your group's attention any positions or motions to be voted on. At the next area meeting you will vote your group's conscience on these. You should bring the announcements to your group as soon as they are made available.

Sample GSR Report for the Minutes

Beginning Balance: \$3.78 **Income:** \$94.52 **Rent:** \$10.00 **Literature:** \$33.55 **ASC Contribution:** \$25.00 **GSR Fund:** \$15.00 **Other:** \$12.18 **Prudent Reserve:** \$50.00 **Total GSR Fund:** \$100.00
Ending Balance: \$2.57

Number of Home Group Members: 6 **Average Attendance:** 18 **Members at Business Meeting:** 5
Group Concerns: Selling non approved NA merchandise at any NA function.

Other Group Info: We had 2 members join our group this month. We have elected a new GSR, Ellen B.

Announcements: Our meeting will be closed on July 1 due to a church function. John D will be celebrating 5 years on July 15.

Yours in service, Ellen B, GSR

Area Service Committee (ASC)

“Workhorse of the service structure” – maybe that's the best way to describe the area service committee. Most of the hands-on work of delivering NA services to the groups and the community occurs at the area level.

NA groups support meetings where addicts can share their recovery with one another. Only minimal organization is necessary to hold those meetings. But there is a lot more that can be done to further the aims of Narcotics Anonymous:

- ♦ NA panel presentations at addiction treatment centers and correctional facilities can reach addicts particularly in need of what we have to offer.
- ♦ Public information presentations to schools and community groups, mailings to addiction treatment professionals, meeting notices in newspapers, and public service announcements on local radio and television stations can help direct people to NA.
- ♦ Directories showing where and when NA groups in the area hold their recovery meetings can help addicts and others find nearby meetings being conducted at times convenient to them.
- ♦ A phone line service can help addicts seeking recovery find a meeting in their area. It can also provide information about NA to interested community members.
- ♦ A ready supply of NA books and pamphlets can make it easier for groups to stock their literature tables.

- ♦ Social activities can help addicts feel more comfortable in their local NA community and increase unity and camaraderie among area members.

All of these services require a certain degree of organization, the complexity of which could easily divert NA groups from the week-in, week-out task of conducting Narcotics Anonymous meetings for their members. Most of these services also require more money and manpower than any single group could possibly muster. How do groups stay focused on their primary purpose and still see that these other services are developed and maintained? In the words of NA's Ninth Tradition, they "create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve." And the service committee closest to home, the committee best situated to provide the most direct service to the groups and the community, is the area service committee.

- Taken From page 45 of "A Guide to Local Services in Narcotics Anonymous"

Area service committees are ultimately responsible to the groups they serve. Narcotics Anonymous groups send group service representatives (GSR's) to serve on the area committee. While still maintaining final responsibility and authority for area services, they invest enough delegated authority in their GSR's—and through them, in the area committee—for the necessary work to get done.

NA groups also send money to the area committee, money needed to coordinate panels, maintain phone lines, and conduct public information activities. Through their contributions of money and manpower, the groups exercise both their responsibility and their authority for NA services.

- Taken from page 46 of "A Guide to Local Services in Narcotics Anonymous"

The area committee is the primary means by which the services of a local NA community are administered. The area committee is composed of group service representatives, administrative officers (chairperson, vice chairperson, secretary, treasurer), subcommittee chairpersons, and the area's regional committee members. The area committee elects its own officers, subcommittee chairpersons, and RCM's.

- Taken from page vii of "A Guide to Local Services in Narcotics Anonymous"

Starting an NA Group

When considering starting a new group it is strongly suggested you read "IP #2" and "The Group Booklet", as well as "A Guide to Local Services in Narcotics Anonymous." More useful information can be found in "Building Strong Home Groups – Taking the Next Steps" which is available online from NA World Services at http://www.na.org/admin/include/spaw2/uploads/pdf/IDT_Frame_27Feb07.pdf.

NA meetings may vary greatly in structure and format, however, there is always one constant: they are started so that the NA message of recovery can be carried to the still-suffering addict in the most effective way – addict to addict.

A Narcotics Anonymous group is any meeting of two or more recovering addicts who meet regularly at a specific time and place for the purpose of recovery from the disease of addiction. All Narcotics Anonymous groups are bound by the principles of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of NA. Each group has but one primary purpose – to carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers.

The group is the most powerful vehicle of carrying the message of hope and the promise of freedom from active addiction.

When starting a group the first priority is to secure a regular meeting location. Try to find a facility that is conducive to an atmosphere of recovery and will allow room for the meeting to grow. It is important to find a location that will allow the group to practice the Sixth Tradition, which states "An NA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the NA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of

money, property, or prestige divert us from our primary purpose.” This principle of nonaffiliation allows the group to develop its own autonomy. After securing a location, establish the time and day of the week, make arrangements for opening and closing the meeting space, and any other preparations necessary. Tradition Seven tells us, “Every NA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.” In keeping with the Seventh Tradition, establish a means of paying rent for the facility; NA groups must always be self-supporting. The group responsibilities (opening doors, making coffee, providing literature, cleaning up, etc.) are best shared by two or more addicts. Some groups have lost their meeting space because they failed to properly care for the meeting facility. But if we try to leave the room better than we found it, we protect the atmosphere of recovery and the reputation of Narcotics Anonymous.

If the meeting is slow in getting started, be patient. Experience proves it will grow. Support can be generated by contacting the nearest area or regional committee, making announcements at other meetings, and by distributing flyers.

When there is enough participation and support, a group business meeting is held. At this first meeting, matters of the group are formalized (name, format, etc.) and trusted servants are elected. Though the group may seem more businesslike at this time, we must remember we are setting the foundation for carrying out our primary purpose. It is our responsibility as group members to care for NA and make an investment in our recovery. It is truly our privilege to participate in our home group.

- Taken from “IP #2 The Group”

This checklist contains matters to address when starting a new group.

- ✓ **Get in touch with the nearest service committee.** An area service committee meeting is the ideal place for announcing your intention to start a new group. There, you can gather experience from representatives of other groups in the area, and learn of the services available to your group when you need them.
- ✓ **Obtain a meeting place.** Here are some details to know when opening a new meeting:
 - Where?** The location of the meeting facility.
 - When?** The day, time, and duration of the meeting.
 - How much?** What is the facility charging for rent? Is that realistic, keeping in mind the number of people you can expect to attend the meeting? When is the rent due?
 - What does the facility require?** No smoking? *Absolutely* no litter? Sweep and mop after the meeting? Close windows, lock doors?
 - Would you rather have your group’s mail sent to a group trusted servant or your Area Service Committee? Or, would you like your group’s mail sent to the facility address?** Will they set up a box where you can pick up newsletters and announcements mailed to your group?
- ✓ **Name your group.** A few things you may want to consider are: Is the name recovery oriented? Does the name create the impression that the group is affiliated with the facility in which it holds its meetings?
- ✓ **What group trusted servants are needed? What does the group expect those people to do?** “*The Group Booklet*” gives descriptions of various group officer positions. Make sure all group members agree on what they want *their* officers to do.
- ✓ **What kind of meeting format will you use?** “*The Group Booklet*” describes a number of format variations commonly used in our fellowship. Which format, or combination of formats, does your group want to use?

- ✓ **Will this be a “closed” NA meeting? Or an “open” meeting?**
- ✓ **What kinds of NA literature does your group want to stock?**
- ✓ **What kinds of refreshments should be purchased?**
- ✓ **Have you registered your group with Narcotics Anonymous World Services and with the secretary of your area service committee?** You can obtain a group registration form from NAWS at the address listed below or on our website www.na.org. By filling it out directly online or mailing it in, you’ll ensure that your group is kept in touch with NA as a whole. You’ll also receive *The NA Way Magazine*.

- Taken from page 27 of “The Group Booklet”

Here are a few additional questions to ask before starting a new group:

- ✓ When will the first meeting be held?
- ✓ How many home group members do you have?
- ✓ Have you held a business meeting yet?
- ✓ Will the 7th cover your expenses?
- ✓ Have you attended area?
- ✓ Have you approached Outreach for support?
- ✓ Are you prepared to open every week for the next 6 months, or do you have someone else who will open if needed?
- ✓ Have you contacted an existing group near you for support or to sponsor you until you get established?
- ✓ Are you prepared to accept the guidance and support of this area’s executive?

Contact NAWS Fellowship Services Team, at fsteam@na.org, for assistance in starting a new meeting and get a free Group Starter Kit.

Some Useful Websites

Central Nova Area of Narcotics Anonymous: www.centralnovaarea.ca

Central Nova Area e-mail address: centralnovaarea@gmail.com

Canadian Atlantic Region of Narcotics Anonymous: www.carna.ca

Canadian Assembly of Narcotics Anonymous: www.canaacna.org

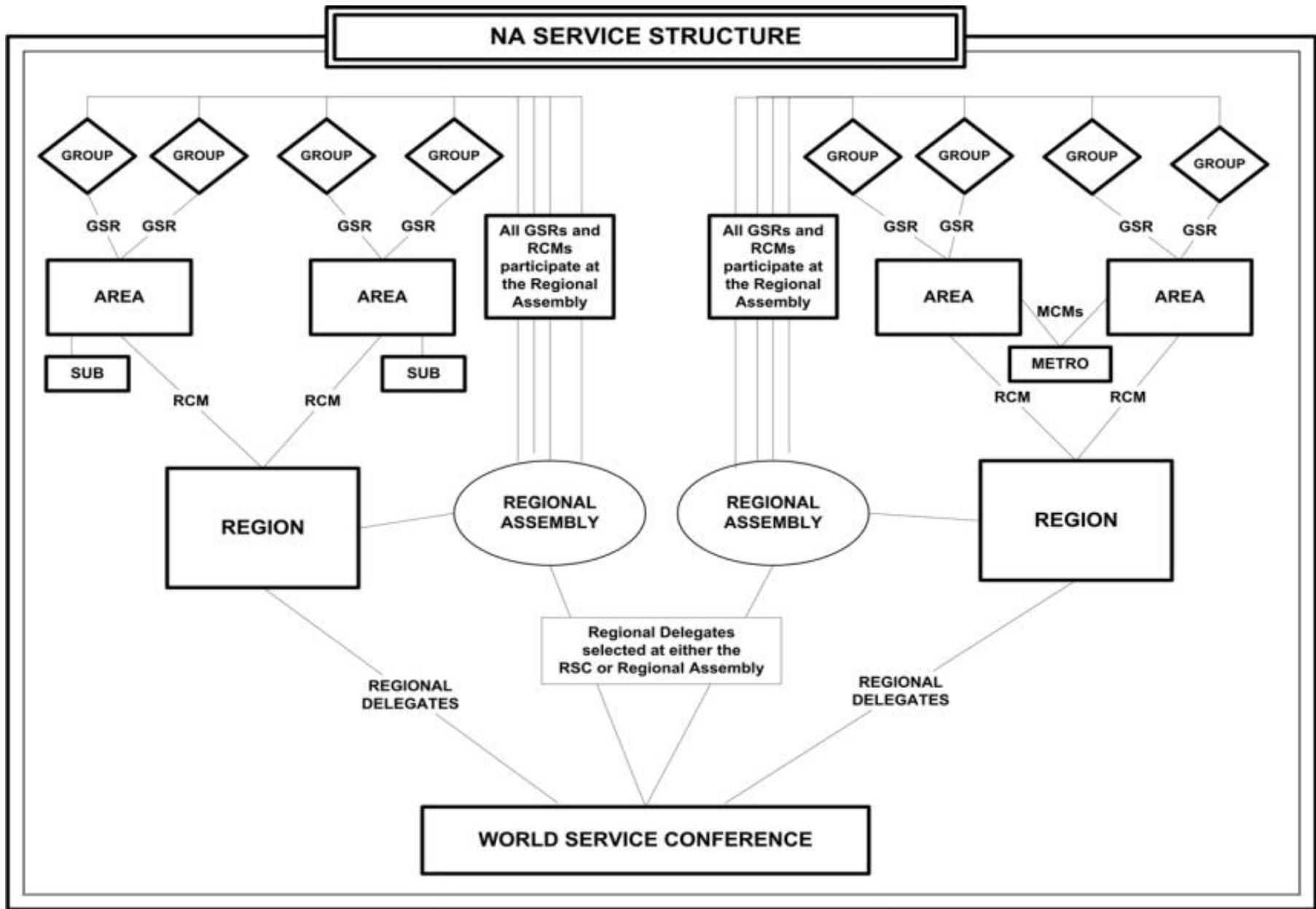
Narcotics Anonymous World Services: www.na.org

Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on NA unity.
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 membership is a desire to stop using.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or NA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.
6. An NA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the NA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, or prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every NA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Narcotics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. NA, as such, ought never be organized, but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Narcotics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the NA 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.

Twelve Concepts for NA Service

1. To fulfill our fellowship's primary purpose, the NA groups have joined together to create a structure which develops, coordinates, and maintains services on behalf of NA as a whole.
2. The final responsibility and authority for NA services rests with the NA groups.
3. The NA groups delegate to the service structure the authority necessary to fulfill the responsibilities assigned to it.
4. Effective leadership is highly valued in Narcotics Anonymous. Leadership qualities should be carefully considered when selecting trusted servants.
5. For each responsibility assigned to the service structure, a single point of decision and accountability should be clearly defined.
6. Group conscience is the spiritual means by which we invite a loving God to influence our decisions.
7. All members of a service body bear substantial responsibility for that body's decisions and should be allowed to fully participate in its decision-making processes.
8. Our service structure depends on the integrity and effectiveness of our communications.
9. All elements of our service structure have the responsibility to carefully consider all viewpoints in their decision-making processes.
10. Any member of a service body can petition that body for the redress of a personal grievance, without fear of reprisal.
11. NA funds are to be used to further our primary purpose, and must be managed responsibly.
12. In keeping with the spiritual nature of Narcotics Anonymous, our structure should always be one of service, never of government.



For more detailed information about the NA service structure please read "A Guide to Local Service in Narcotics Anonymous"

Motion Table

Type of Motion	Purpose	Interrupt	Second	Debatable	Vote
Adjourn	To end the committee meeting.	No	Yes	No	Simple
Amend	To change part of the language in a main motion.	No	Yes	Yes	Simple
Amend by substitution	To alter a main motion by completely rewriting it, while preserving its intent.	No	Yes	Yes	Simple
Appeal ruling of chair	To challenge a decision that chair has made about the rules of order.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Simple
Main motion	An idea a committee member wants the committee to put into practice.	No	Yes	Yes	Varies
Order of the day	To make the committee return to the agenda if it gets onto another track.	Yes	No	No	None
Parliamentary inquiry	To ask the chair about how to do something according to the rules of order.	Yes	No	No	None
Point of information	To be allowed to ask a question about a motion being discussed, not to offer information.	Yes	No	No	None
Point of order	To request clarification of rules of order when it appears they are being broken.	Yes	No	No	None
Previous question	To stop debate and vote right now on whatever motion is at hand.	No	Yes	No	Two-Thirds
Privilege, personal	To make a personal request to the chair or the committee.	If urgent	No	No	None
Reconsider	To reopen for debate a motion previously passed.	No	Yes	Yes	Simple
Refer, commit	To halt debate, send motion to subcommittee or ad hoc committee before vote.	No	Yes	Yes	Simple
Remove from the table	To resume consideration of a motion previously passed.	No	Yes	No	Simple
Rescind, repeal	To void the effect of a motion previously passed.	No	Yes	Yes	Two-Thirds
Table	To put off further consideration of a motion until a later date and time.	No	Yes	No	Simple
Withdraw a motion	To allow a motions maker to take back that motion after debate has begun.	Yes	No	No	Unanimous

For more detailed information about Robert's Rules of Order please read pages 104-110 of "A Guide to Local Service in Narcotics Anonymous"