

The A.A. Group Treasurer



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Spirituality and Money

While the work of the group treasurer often involves many details, it is important to remember that the money the treasurer oversees serves a spiritual purpose: it enables each group to fulfill its primary purpose of carrying the A.A. message to the alcoholic who still suffers. This is the fundamental work of A.A., and to continue it the group must keep its doors open. The group treasurer is an important part of this Twelfth Step work.

Choosing a Treasurer

The position of group treasurer is one of the most responsible positions in any A.A. group. While there is no standard length of sobriety necessary for a member to take on the position of group treasurer, many groups suggest that the treasurer should have a reasonable period of sobriety (at least six months to a year or more). It is also suggested that group treasurers be well grounded in the Twelve Traditions and be familiar with the principles and practices of the group itself.

Passing the Basket

The traditional means of assuring that the group is self-supporting is to pass the basket for group members to make voluntary contributions to help cover the group's expenses and to support local services, and the services of your General Service Office. Typically, after the basket is passed, the group treasurer takes charge of the money collected.

A number of groups have utilized digital payment platforms to provide opportunities for members to make cashless contributions. There are different payment platforms to facilitate this service and it is up to the group to determine which one to use. Experience suggests that the treasurer is a likely choice to handle digital contributions, though some groups add more than one trusted servant to share the responsibilities or create a new service position to inform the group about digital payment options and assist other group members who are interested in contributing this way.

Safeguarding the Group's Money

The group treasurer takes reasonable precautions to safeguard the group's funds. Many groups keep the group's treasury in a bank checking account in the group's name, often requiring at least two signatures on all checks. This provides security against acciden-

tal loss; it also provides ease of disbursement and a continuing record of income and expenses. Monthly bank statements are normally sent directly to the group treasurer, who can bring them to the group's business meeting.

Disbursement of a Group's Funds

The group treasurer is usually the person responsible for paying the group's routine bills and for keeping accurate records of the group's funds. The treasurer needs to be well informed about how the group's money is spent and should have addresses and mailing information for all A.A. service entities that the group contributes to.

After the group's basic needs are met, such as providing for rent, literature, refreshments, and insurance, the group can participate in the financial support of the Fellowship as a whole by sending money to various A.A. service entities: 1) their local intergroup or central office; 2) their area and district; and 3) the General Service Board. Many groups provide financial support for their GSRs attending service functions.

Groups and individual members also support the Grapevine by purchasing Grapevine and La Viña magazine subscriptions and other Grapevine publications and using them in their Twelfth Step work. Grapevine and La Viña magazine subscriptions can be purchased at <https://store.aagrapevine.org/subscriptions>.

Online and recurring contributions: Contributions to the General Service Board can be made online, either by credit card or PayPal. Additionally, members or groups can set up recurring contributions that will automatically charge their credit card either monthly, quarterly or annually.

Treasurer Reports

Most groups request a treasurer's report and all relevant documentation at monthly or regularly scheduled business meetings. This way, all group members can stay informed about the financial health of the group and make group conscience decisions about how the funds should be spent.

Prudent Reserve

Most groups try to hold a certain amount of money in reserve. There is no predetermined amount for such

a reserve, but most groups try to put aside enough money to cover at least one to three months' operating expenses. The group itself usually determines the actual size and scope of the prudent reserve. Our experience shows that an accumulation of A.A. funds for unspecified purposes beyond a prudent level may divert a group's attention from carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. Groups with excess funds are encouraged to support other service entities.

Opening a Bank Account/Tax ID*

Some groups keep their funds in a bank account, for which a tax ID number is required — even for non-interest-bearing accounts. The first step in obtaining a Federal ID Number is by filing form SS-4, which can be obtained at any Internal Revenue Service office or at the IRS website at www.irs.gov. **Each A.A. group must get its own individual number; there is no one number that applies to Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole.** Depending on how much your group will keep on deposit at a bank and what its fees are, you may want to file for tax-exempt status. For information, see IRS publication 557, "Tax-Exempt Status for Your Organization." It may be worthwhile to consult an accountant to learn more about these subjects. (Applies to U.S. only.)

Insurance

Landlords may sometimes ask that A.A. groups carry insurance coverage. Some groups cooperate with the facility where they meet by purchasing a rider in the facility's liability insurance policy. For information, you may wish to consult a local insurance agency. GSO's liability insurance cannot be extended to cover local groups.

Additional Resources for Group Treasurers

For more information consult the pamphlet, "Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix," or the A.A. Guidelines on Finance. "The A.A. Group" pamphlet discusses the role and qualifications of treasurers and how they fit into the A.A. service structure. These items may be obtained by contacting the General Service Office in New York or going on the GSO website at www.aa.org.

**Be sure to ask your financial institution for their requirements.*

**For contributions to A.A. service entities,
contact your district committee, area
committee, and local intergroup/central office.**

DISTRICT

AREA

INTERGROUP/CENTRAL OFFICE

OTHER

Contribution payments may be made by check or credit card, using the contribution envelope.

Checks in U.S. dollars payable to the **General Service Board** may be mailed to:

General Service Office

Post Office Box 2407

James A Farley Station

New York, NY 10116-2407

(Please write your group number on the check)

Checks in Canadian dollars payable to the **General Service Board** may be mailed to:

General Service Office

Post Office Box 459

Grand Central Station

New York, NY 10163

(Please write your group number on the check)

Online contributions may be made by credit card or PayPal. Click on the A.A. Member Contributions Online icon on www.aa.org.

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General Service Office

P.O. Box 459
Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163
www.aa.org