

PRE-ASSEMBLY GUIDE TO THE CONCEPTS

2026 Area 72 Assembly

1. CONCEPT XII – The Warranties (Since 1951)

General Warranties of the Conference: in all its proceedings, the General Service Conference shall observe the spirit of the A.A. Tradition,

- i. taking great care that the Conference never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power;
- ii. that sufficient operating funds, plus an ample reserve, be its prudent financial principle;
- iii. that none of the Conference Members shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority over any of the others;
- iv. that all important decisions be reached by discussion, vote, and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity;
- v. that no Conference action ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy;
- vi. that, though the Conference may act for the service of Alcoholics Anonymous, it shall never perform any acts of government; and that, like the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous which it serves, the Conference itself will always remain democratic in thought and action.

2. CONCEPT II - Delegated Authority

(Delegated Responsibility has Equal Service Authority Concept X) - When Dr. Bob got sick, Bill saw that the future of AA's Service Structure was at risk and realized that an unknown Board couldn't be in charge. So, in 1962, the Twelve Concepts were adopted. The First Concept states that "The final responsibility and ultimate authority for AA World Services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship." As a GSR, you have that "Delegated Authority."

It's not practical for every member of Area 72 to attend the Area Assembly. That would mean a 25,000 person assembly. So, each group has elected a representative to represent them and their group's conscience at the Area Assembly. They have delegated the responsibility for their group's to you the principle of Delegated Authority. Today, we're here to discuss how an Area Assembly works and the topics on the agenda. I encourage you to ask every question you think your group might have.

With that responsibility you have other certain rights:

- i. **Right of Decision**
- ii. **Right of Participation**
- iii. **Right of Appeal and Minority Opinion**

3. Concept III - Right of Decision

To insure effective leadership, we should endow each element of A.A.—the Conference, the General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives—with a traditional "Right of Decision."

It's important to understand this principle because you might hear new information at the Area Assembly that could change your vote, even after getting your group's conscience. Concept Three states that you have the Right of Decision to act on this. Familiarity with your group's views and thought process is crucial. When you exercise this right, it's vital to report back to your group on how and why you voted the way you did. You may hear something that makes you think your group would vote differently if they had this piece of information. You have the Right of Decision to do that. Having familiarity with your group and their thought process will be integral. Most importantly when exercising this right is to report back to your group on how you changed your vote and why.

PRE-ASSEMBLY GUIDE TO THE CONCEPTS

2026 Area 72 Assembly

4. Concept IV: Right of Participation

At all responsible levels, we ought to maintain a traditional "Right of Participation," allowing a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.

Your group gets a vote equal to all the other groups' right to vote.

5. Concept V: Right of Appeal and Minority Opinion:

Throughout our world service structure, a traditional "right of appeal" ought to prevail, thus assuring us that minority opinion will be heard and that petitions for the redress of personal grievances will be carefully considered.

This Concept establishes not only the right for minority opinion to be heard and grievances addressed, but imposes upon the minority a responsibility to express their point of view, and upon the majority the responsibility of really listening with an open mind.

It can be extremely difficult to stand up and express a minority opinion, particularly when the minority appears to be very small. From childhood most of us have been told that in a democracy "the majority rules". Many of us have a fear of ridicule, or being judged, or looking foolish among our peers. In A.A., however, each of us has an obligation to share our thoughts.

All of us who have been in service for some time have seen situations where the minority opinion expressed has brought to the attention of the group a facet of the question that had been overlooked, and has thus changed the outcome of a vote.

Concept Five recognizes that minorities can frequently be right, and that even when they are partly or wholly in error they still perform a valuable service when they bring about a thorough discussion of important issues. Bill Wilson tells us that the well-heard minority is our chief protection against an uninformed, misinformed, hasty or angry majority.

And Finally....

6. Back to Concept III - Right of Decision:

Why this is so important is that you might hear something at the Area Assembly, after you already have the conscience of your group, that might change your vote. You may hear something that makes you think your group would vote differently if they had this piece of information. You have the Right of Decision to do that. Having familiarity with your group and their thought process will be integral. Most importantly when exercising this right, the report back to you group on how and why you voted a certain way is vitally important.

7. Concept 11 - Who we elect is always a matter of serious concern!

.....Therefore, the composition of [Area], the personal qualifications of their members, the manner of their induction into service, the systems of their rotation, the way in which they are related to each other, the special rights and duties of [our Elected Trusted Servants] ..., will always be matters for serious care and concern.