**AREA ASSEMBLY PLANNING CHECKLIST**

Hosting an assembly is a great opportunity to invite the involvement of your home group members. Participation in any general service meeting offers all members a 12-Step experience. Attending an assembly offers home group members to experience the activities of the General Service Representatives (GSR). Their experience will help build an understanding of how each group participates in A.A. as a whole.

Review this entire document as soon as possible. A planning timeline is provided but the specific details will differ for each assembly and facility.

Send to [policy@area8aa.org](mailto:policy@area8aa.org) any amendments to this document that may be helpful to the next assembly planning experience.

**HOW ASSEMBLY DATES ARE SELECTED**

In the months prior to each January and September assembly, the five annual San Diego-Imperial Area Assembly (SDIAA) dates are identified and agreed upon by the Area Committee Meeting (ACM). They will immediately be posted onto the area's Master Calendar. Posting the assembly dates to the Master Calendar helps to reduce scheduling of dates that will cause a conflict in attendance. Requests for volunteer districts to host the assembly on the established dates will be presented to the body of the assembly in this manner:

1. In January of each year, the assembly will receive and approve bids for the assemblies to be held from June through December in the following year;
2. In September of each year, the assembly will receive and approve bids for the assemblies to be held from January through May in the following year.

The description of the specific purpose of each of the five area assemblies is described on page 5 of the San Diego-Imperial Area's GSR Manual. (<http://www.area8aa.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/2014manualgsrenglish.pdf>). Please note the specific month for each assembly may change due to unforeseen circumstances.

* + - January - Orientation Assembly
    - March - Pre-Conference Assembly
    - May/June - Post Conference Assembly
    - September - Big Day Assembly (area business) in even-numbered years and Election Assembly in odd-numbered years
    - November Budget Assembly (and other area business)

**HOSTING DISTRICT RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Take every opportunity to ask the members of your home groups to help with:**

1. Secure a location.
2. As soon as the assembly date and location are established, send the information to the Area Alternate Chair for listing on the area's Master Calendar ([altchair@area8aa.org](mailto:altchair@area8aa.org)).
3. Paying all area assembly-related costs after receiving the rent subsidy amount from the Area as described herein ($500.00 as of December 2015) A check request can also be made to access the $25.00 subsidy available for copying costs. (Complete this form and send it to the Area Treasurer to request a check <http://www.area8aa.org/san-diego-imperial-area-assembly-check-request/>)
4. Event flyer: Creating, copying, distributing, and arranging for posting the flyer on the area's website. See Timeline Prior to Assembly section for recommendation on timing of distribution.
   1. Send the flyer to the Policy Committee (email address) for recommendations on copyright credits, proofreading, and respect of A.A.'s Traditions. (Insert link to Flyer Checklist)
   2. Upon receipt of the Policy Committee's acknowledgement, send the flyer to the area's Translation Committee ([translations@area8aa.org](mailto:translations@area8aa.org))
   3. After the flyer is returned from the Policy and Translation Committees, send the flyer to the Area Webservant ([webservant@area8aa.org](mailto:webservant@area8aa.org)) for posting the the area's website.
   4. Begin distributing the flyers about 90 days prior to the date of the event. Provide copies of the flyer in both English and Spanish to your DCM to take to the monthly Area Committee Meeting (ACM). Ideally, it would be great to provide copies (English and Spanish) at the assembly that occurs just prior to the one your district(s) is/are hosting.
5. Insuring there is a Greeting Committee at the Area Assembly
6. Making coffee at Area Assembly (a coffee team is suggested)
7. Set up of tables and chairs, seating for officers, a podium, etc. (diagram attached or provided.
8. Serving a continental breakfast
9. Providing and serving lunch
10. Contacting the Area Alternate Chair to access the storage facility to arrange for transport of the sound system equipment and other supplies ([altchair@area8aa.org](mailto:altchair@area8aa.org)).
11. Clean up at Area Assembly - Be sure to check if there is a specific time by which the facility needs to be vacated.

**Assembly Hosting Tasks Timeline**

| **Insert Date** | **Time Interval Prior to Assembly** | **Task** | **Responsible District** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **12/12/19** | ASAP | As soon as the assembly date is determined, contact the Area Alternate Chair for posting it to the area's Master Calendar. |  |
|  | 6 months | Select the location. For space and seating requirements, see: **Facility Capacity** and **Set Up** under the **Guidelines and Tips for a Successful Area Assembly** section. |  |
|  | 4-5 months | Create a flyer. See below for: **Creating and Translating a Flyer.** |  |
|  | 3 months | Distribute flyer at ACM and, if possible, assembly just prior to the one being planned. |  |
|  | 2-3 months | Contact all hosting districts to set planning meeting date. See: **Agenda for Planning Meeting** |  |
|  | 2 months | Contact Alternate Chairperson for current inventory in storage unit and to arrange for a walk-through of the assembly site. |  |
|  | 1 month | 1. Contact facility to learn when site can be accessed for setup. (Helpful when we can get in on a Friday) 2. Identify any special instructions. 3. Notify all members of the hosting committee in all participating districts of the time the facility can be entered for set up. |  |
|  | 1 week | Transport supplies from storage unit to assembly site. |  |
|  | 1 week | Confirm assembly start/end times and lunch hour with Area Chair |  |
|  | 1 week | Send reminders to all task coordinators with details on facility access time, etc. |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  | 1-2 days | Purchase food/supplies for your district's designated meal |  |
|  | ASAP after the assembly | Return supplies to storage unit |  |
|  | ASAP after the assembly | Schedule and conduct a Host Committee Wrap-up Session (This can be done by questionnaire.) Report any helpful changes to this document to [policy@area8aa.org](mailto:policy@area8aa.org). |  |

**Agenda for Planning Meeting**

The DCMs of all co-hosting districts will hold a planning meeting to determine:

* 1. A budget for the assembly and the specific dollar amount for which each district is responsible.
  2. Contributions will be collected during the assembly. Discuss and decide how pooled contributions will be divided between all co-hosting districts. This is usually done in consideration of total expenses.
  3. Assign district responsibility for each of the below-listed activities. See section on **Guidelines and Tips for a Successful Area Assembly** that pertain to each listed item.
     1. **Set up**
     2. **Greeting Team**
     3. **Coffee Team**
     4. **Other Beverages**
     5. **Serving Continental Breakfast**
     6. **Serving Lunch**
     7. **Clean Up Team**
     8. **Additional funds for rent (if needed)**
     9. **Additional funds for flyers**
     10. **Accounting Team**

For example, area assemblies with 3 or more co-hosting districts it may be easiest to have one district responsible for setup, cleanup and coffee, another responsible for breakfast, and another responsible for lunch.

Share all notes from the planning committee meeting to [altchair@area8aa.org](mailto:altchair@area8aa.org).

**Timeline Day of Assembly**

**\*Confirm assembly start/end and lunch hour time with the Area Chair** - This can and will change without notice!

1. **Set Up** / **The PA system** -Generally, 2 hours prior to start of assembly
2. **Greeting Team** - Direct GSRs to GSR Orientation room
3. **Coffee Team** - Generally, 2 hours prior to start of assembly
4. **GSR** **Orientation** -Usually starts 1 hour prior to assembly start time
5. **Serving Continental Breakfast** - Generally, 1 hour prior to assembly start time
6. **Serving Lunch -** Confirm anticipated lunch start time with Area Chair
7. **Clean Up Team-** If there are any time requirements set by the facility for vacating the premises, be sure to immediately advise the Area Chair. Also, check with the Area Chair for for the anticipated hour for the end of the assembly.

**Guidelines and Tips for a Successful Area Assembly**

1. **Facility Capacity and Other Requirements**
   1. DCMs are encouraged to tour new locations that may better fit the local AA population. Reach out to all GSRs to see if they have site recommendations.
   2. Understand all the assembly's facility/site requirements and tour the site before starting the contracting process. In touring facilities ask where first aid stations and AED are located. Ask if monitoring for hearing accessibility can be added.
   3. Invite Area Chair to tour proposed facility. All contracts need to be sent to the Area Chair, who is the administrative officer of SDIAA.
   4. Be sure to understand if the facility has its own sound system, display projectors, and display screens/monitors. Often, these come at additional fees.
   5. Inquire if the facility allow renters to bring ‘outside’ food and beverages (coffee, etc.) into the meeting rooms.
   6. Building capacity should comfortably accommodate 250 people in what is referred to as a banquet seating arrangement. It should be noted that “official” room capacity limits often overestimate how many people can actually fit comfortably in the room. Allow for extra space. Generally speaking, a room with 3,500 to 5,500 square feet will accommodate our needs. Check the room for pillars, posts, or other parts of the building that will block the view of the stage or front of the room where the podium will be placed.
   7. GSR Orientation
2. It is desirable, though not mandatory, to have a separate breakout room for the new GSR orientation meeting.
3. The Orientation Assembly will require a larger room than that used for the GSR Orientation at other Assemblies. Most groups start their new GSRs in January so 150 people versus the usual 50 can be expected.
   1. From time to time, we need additional (smaller) rooms for breakout sessions. Contact the Area Chairperson prior to securing the facility to determine whether such needs exist for the Area Assembly your district(s) is hosting.
   2. It is preferable that the location have either hard-wired or Wi-Fi Internet access that can be made available to the Officers, IT committee and the Registrar.
   3. Building needs adequate bathroom and kitchen facilities.
   4. Facility must have handicap access to the building as well as the restrooms.
   5. There must be plenty of free parking available.
   6. Consider the time of year and determine whether heating or air conditioning is necessary.
   7. A minimum of 43 tables and 250 chairs is required.
   8. Rent should be reasonable - maximum amount reimbursed to hosting district(s) is $500 per assembly.
   9. Inquire as to specific insurance requirements or guidelines of the facility to be rented for the area assembly. SDIAA has liability insurance coverage to provide adequate coverage in any facility in which we are holding an event. Contact the Area Treasurer at [treasurer@area8aa.org](mailto:treasurer@area8aa.org) to request a copy of the binder be sent to the facility.
   10. If necessary, Area Treasurer can write a check for the deposit, provided it does not exceed $500 and such request is accompanied by a rental agreement. The Area Chairperson, as administrative officer of the Area, must be a signer on any contract. (<http://www.area8aa.org/san-diego-imperial-area-assembly-check-request/>)
4. **Creating and Translating a Flyer**
   1. The Area Assembly will subsidize the district(s) $25 for flyer printing.
   2. The flyer, when designed and completed, should be taken to the Policy Committee for review. Upon approval for posting to the area's website, send the flyer to the Translation Committee. Send both the English and Spanish versions of the flyer to the Webservant. **(Refer to Policy Committee Guidelines for Flyers)**
   3. At least 90 days in advance, deliver hard copies of the flyers to the Area Committee Meeting to distribute to each of the 20 English-speaking districts and the 3 Spanish-speaking districts. Historically, districts have printed 2,000 to 2,500 flyers; 2000 English, 500 Spanish. A good suggestion is to poll each individual DCM to ask if s/he has the ability to blast a copy of the flyer to each of the GSRs. This may reduce the dollars spent on copies.
   4. Flyers should be available to distribute (1) at the preceding Area Assembly as well as (2) at least one Area Committee meeting a month prior to the event (to give time for DCMs to distribute to GSRs)
   5. Provide a copy of assembly flyer to Area Newsletter Committee chairperson.
   6. If you will provide copies of the assembly flyer to Intergroups for distribution in their newsletters, be sure to check with each for their publication schedule.
5. **Greeting Team**
   1. Signs with the circle and triangle are available in the area's storage unit and can be prominently displayed with arrows to designate the facility for parking and the building location. Some hosts use balloons to draw attention to the driveways to the facility's location.
   2. Some districts provide people as parking guides.
   3. At least two greeters are needed at each entry door.
   4. Additional greeters may be necessary to direct area assembly attendees to the GSR Orientation. Greeters should meet attendees and new GSRs to direct them to the registration table and new GSR orientation meeting.
6. **Coffee Team**
   1. Two to three people are needed
   2. Coffee set up should begin at least one hour before the GSR Orientation meeting begins, which usually begins at 8am. Verify the start time.
   3. 2 regular coffee pots, 1 Decaf coffee pot, 1 small pot of hot water
   4. Check pots during the day and refill as needed.
   5. Historically, an Area Assembly will consume 6 regular and 1 decaf pots of coffee.
7. **Other Beverages -** Historically, each person attending the area assemblies consumes 2 beverages (water, soda, etc.)
8. **Set Up**
   1. Please contact the Area Chair in advance for a table configuration diagram as each assembly may have unique needs.
   2. It is recommended you secure a team of 10 people to set up the room. At minimum four to six people are needed.
   3. The Alternate Chair is responsible for the PA system and AV setup. Contact him/her to learn about the number of tables needed. This number will be in addition to the 52 in d. below.
   4. We need 52 tables (25 round and 27, 6-foot rectangular):
      1. A total of **25 round tables**:
         1. 23 round tables, each large enough to seat 8 people. In the area's storage locker there are metal placard holders and laminated cards numbered 1 through 23. The cards are numbered 1-23 for each of our area's districts. Place one card in each of the placard holders in the center of each table.
         2. 1 round table will have the placard holder with the laminated card showing “past-delegates and guests".
         3. 1 round table will have the placard holder with the laminated card showing “standing committee chairs”
      2. A total of **27, 6-foot long rectangular tables**:
         1. 2, 6-foot long rectangular tables near the main entrance for Registration
         2. 2, 6-foot long rectangular tables near the main entrance for flyers and business agenda handouts
         3. 13, 6-foot long rectangular tables placed for easy access to displays for the following committees: Accessibilities, Finance, Newsletter, Literature (two tables), Cooperation with the Professional Community, 1 table to combine San Diego-Imperial Area Institutional Committee (San Diego H&I) and North County Area Institutional Committee (North County H&I), Grapevine / La Viña, Archives, Policy, Young People's Coordination and Translation;
         4. 2, 6-foot long rectangular tables for Treasurer and Alternate Treasurer
         5. 3, 6-foot long rectangular tables up front for Delegate, Alt. Delegate, Chairperson, Alternate Chairperson, Secretary and Alt. Secretary
         6. 5 (minimum) 6-foot long rectangular tables for food serving and coffee stands
   5. We need a minimum of **200 chairs** (recommend 250)
   6. Host district volunteers can help with displays for Standing Committees
9. **Serving Continental Breakfast - Need enough for 200 people**
   1. Two to six people are needed to prep and set up breakfast
   2. Two to four people are needed to stand by the breakfast service table
   3. Food ideas: Bagels, donuts, jellies, butter, peanut butter, cream cheese, fruits
   4. Beverages: bottled water, orange juice, sodas
   5. Usually costs $300-400. Use contribution can to defray costs. Make sure contribution can is visibly located and a monitor is assigned
10. **Serving Lunch**
    1. 2 to 4 people are needed for set-up in addition to the 4 to 8 that are needed for serving.
    2. Food ideas: Some commonly used ideas for main courses for lunch are sandwiches, pizza, pasta, chicken, and/or carne asada. Some commonly used ideas for sides are various types of salads, chips, veggies, rice and/or beans. It's always a good idea to have options for people who don't eat meat or gluten. Shop around to find good quality at an economical price.
    3. Beverages: bottled water, orange juice, sodas
    4. It is suggested to purchase cake or other desserts at Costco.
    5. Candies or cookies: a nice sweet option for a couple hours after lunch is to distribute these to each of the tables.
    6. Utensils, plates, napkins, and serving utensils will need to be provided.
    7. Use contribution can to defray costs. Make sure contribution can is visibly located and a monitor is assigned.
    8. Make an announcement about the contribution collection can at least once before lunch. Consider providing a suggested specific contribution amount along with the statement, "if it is possible for you."
    9. Historically, approximately $500 is collected in the contribution collection can
    10. Clean up after the lunch break
    11. The ideal setup allows for two lunch lines, one on each side of the length of the serving tables.
11. **Going to the Area Storage Unit**
    1. We have a storage unit at 8192 Miramar Road, Unit B284 (Upstairs), San Diego (Hours: 6 AM to 10 PM)
    2. Storage room contains coffee pots, various supplies (such as placard holders and laminated cards) and PA system
    3. Contact Alternate Area Chairperson, who has key and access code to gain entry
12. **The AV equipment**
    1. The Alternate Chair is responsible for the PA system and AV setup. Contact him/her regarding the set up of PA equipment. There is logistical coordination of the equipment transport to and from the Area Assembly event and then there is the technical configuration of the equipment.
    2. The cargo load of the PA system is 2 speakers, 1 amplifier, 2 mikes, a bulky collection of extension cords and duct tape
13. **Clean Up Team**
    1. You will need a large team of 5 or more people. If necessary, be sure to announce the need for additional volunteers during the assembly.
    2. If is very important to arrange the clean up team before the event, since many leave early from time to time.
    3. Arrange to return any unused supplies, cleaned coffee pots, PA equipment back to the storage area.
    4. Be sure all tables and kitchen working surfaces are wiped clean.
    5. All items borrowed for use at the site's kitchen should be cleaned and returned to their storage area.
    6. All trash is collected, bagged, and deposited as directed. (There is usually a dumpster on the site.)
    7. Check the bathrooms for trash and any other disorder.
    8. Learn the specific instructions on how the room is to be left when our assembly vacates It may be our responsibility to return the room to a specific configuration. In most cases, the tables and chairs will need to be taken down.
14. **Accounting Team**
    1. Appoint a person to periodically collect contributions from containers. It is best not to let too much cash accumulate.
    2. Count the cash right after lunch to determine if expenses have been met to meet the budget set by the hosting committees.
    3. If there is a shortfall, consult with the Area Chair to make an announcement and an additional 7th Tradition collection.