

FINANCE COMMITTEE BREAKOUT

Quarterly Assembly
Chilliwack, January 2026

Responsibility Statement

*I am responsible when anyone,
anywhere, reaches out for help, I want
the hand of AA always to be there,
and for that: I am responsible*

Agenda Overview

1. The Treasurer in AA Literature

2. Sample Group Financial Procedures

3. Challenges and Opportunities

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The AA Group Treasurer

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. (All excerpts are taken from "Where Money and Spirituality Mix" and "The AA Group Treasurer")

Tradition Seven (Long Form)

The A.A. groups themselves ought to be fully supported by the voluntary contributions of their own members. We think that each group should soon achieve this ideal; that any public solicitation of funds using the name of Alcoholics Anonymous is highly dangerous, whether by groups, clubs, hospitals, or other outside agencies; that acceptance of large gifts from any source, or of contributions carrying any obligation whatever, is unwise. Then, too, we view with much concern those A.A. treasuries which continue, beyond prudent reserves, to accumulate funds for no stated A.A. purpose. Experience has often warned us that nothing can so surely destroy our spiritual heritage as futile disputes over property, money, and authority.

We Are All Responsible

While the Fellowship has always faced problems of money, property and prestige in one form or another, through the wisdom of the Seventh Tradition we have never been diverted from our primary purpose of carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers — wherever he or she may be. This is the fundamental work of Alcoholics Anonymous, and to ensure that the hand of A.A. will always remain outstretched, money and spirituality must continue to mix. And for that, we are all responsible.



Much Time and Little Money

Twelfth Step work is the lifeblood of Alcoholics Anonymous — carrying the message to the next suffering alcoholic. Without it, the Fellowship would wither and die. Yet, even at its simplest level this vital contact between one alcoholic and another involves an investment of time and money. “Let’s begin with my own sponsor, Ebby,” writes Bill W., in the book *Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age*. “When Ebby heard how serious my drinking was, he resolved to visit me. He was in New York; I was in Brooklyn.

His resolve was not enough; he had to take action and he had to spend money. He called me on the phone and then got into the subway; total cost, ten cents. At the level of the telephone booth and subway turnstile, spirituality and money began to mix. One without the other would have amounted to nothing at all. “Right then and there, Ebby established the principle that A.A. in action calls for the sacrifice of much time and a little money.”



Choosing A Group 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.



Core Responsibilities

- Collection & Custody: Handles the collection basket, maintains bank accounts (often with two signatures for security), and safeguards group funds.
- Disbursement: Pays for rent, literature, refreshments, insurance, and other group necessities.
- Record Keeping: Keeps simple, accurate records of all income and expenses, providing reports at business meetings.
- Service Support: Distributes excess funds (above a prudent reserve) to local, area, and General Service Office entities, as directed by the group's conscience.



Passing the Basket

The traditional means of assuring that the group is self-supporting is to pass the basket. Since there are no dues or fees for A.A. membership, those members attending the meeting are asked to make a voluntary contribution 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 groups Treasurer takes responsibility for counting, and holding on to the money collected until deposited into the groups account.



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 Office. Many groups provide financial support for their G.S.R.s attending service functions. These entities use contributions in a number of ways, always with the aim of carrying the A.A. message.

Treasurer Report

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.



The Group Treasurer - an Area 79 guideline

- A “How To” when opening a new account
- Transition Between Treasurers - Setting up the incoming Treasurer
- Establishing a 7th Tradition distribution plan for your group
- Financial operations cycle - what needs are specific to your group ie. when is your rent due
- Tips on how to set up your group for success “Best/Suggested practices” and what we need as an AA entity to open and maintain a financial institution account
- Finance related services available through Area 79
- Quick links and guides to AA References and Documents
- Financial Reporting - Monthly, Quarterly, Yearly

Agenda Overview

1. The Treasurer in AA Literature

2. *Sample Group Financial Procedures*

3. Challenges and Opportunities

Why are group financial policies and procedures important?

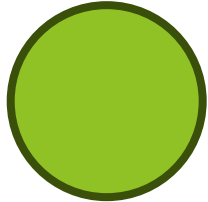
- ▶ Opportunity to address potential conflicts before they happen
 - ▶ “Principles before Personalities”
 - ▶ Depersonalizes discussion; sets up opportunity to ask questions
 - ▶ Allows group to think things through and obtain group conscience instead of reacting “on the fly”
- ▶ Provides continuity over the lifetime of the group
 - ▶ How does the group want things done?
 - ▶ Makes sure key information and decisions are documented and preserved
- ▶ Not carved in stone
 - ▶ Changes with the evolution of group conscience
- ▶ Finance Committee goal is to post sample copies on the A79 website
 - ▶ Jumping off point for discussions in your group or district
 - ▶ Not re-inventing the wheel

Areas to Consider

Topic Area	Description
Group Role Expectations	“Job Description”
Collection & Custody	How money is collected and handled
Disbursement	How the group’s financial obligations are paid
Record Keeping	Documenting group’s financial position by accurately tracking collections and disbursements
Service Support	Distributing 7th tradition funds to the 4 levels of service

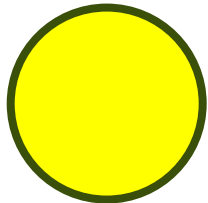


Key to Sample Document Status



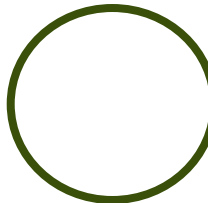
Posted on Area Website

More samples welcome!



Work in Process

"Coming Soon"



Not Started

Looking for group input or samples




Everything we talk about today are suggestions and samples, **not** prescriptions or directives


The ultimate decisionmaker on how your finance function operates is your group conscience

Sample Group Policies

1/5

Legend:




-  Posted
-  WIP
-  Not Started




Group's Expectations of the Treasurer Role...	Consider	Sample Document Status
Who is your Ideal Treasurer? "Job Description"	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interested in supporting the group in a service position• Active participant in the group – understands "how the group works"• Trustworthy• Grounded in the 12 Traditions• Sobriety requirements? AA participation duration?• Duration of term• Attends x% of business meetings• Participation in other group activities - e.g. links to district through GSR• Are there automatic triggers for replacement	

Sample Group Policies

2/5

Legend:

-  Posted
-  WIP
-  Not Started

Collection & Custody	Consider	Sample Document Status
Incoming funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Tracking sheets for basket collection	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">How do funds get deposited – ie e-transfer manually, e-transfer automatically, cash via ATM, cheques via ATM, Square or other Point of Sale channel	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Point of Sale configuration	

Sample Group Policies

3/5

Legend:

- Posted
- WIP
- Not Started

Disbursement	Consider	Sample Document Status
Signature Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How many signatures required on disbursements?• Transition policy for people unavailable to continue in signatory role	<input type="radio"/>
Prudent Reserve	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Setting a group's prudent reserve• How often is it reviewed?• How is it changed?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Expense Reimbursement policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is there an expense reimbursement form?• Minimum documentation for reimbursement	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Disbursement Expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• List of any "contracts" with renewal dates – e.g. PO Box rental renews in July, Space rental is paid monthly to meeting venue via e-transfer	<input type="radio"/>

Sample Group Policies

4/5

Legend:




- Posted
- WIP
- Not Started



Record Keeping	Consider	Sample Document Status
Expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How often would the group like to see a financial snapshot? How is it distributed?• Record keeping method• Transparency statement – anyone can ask anything at any time• Budget cycle	<input type="radio"/>
Sample	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Group report format	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Group Finance Binder Contents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Definitive source• Record of deposits and disbursements• Budget• Record of credentials to accounts, email addresses, Point of Sale configurations	<input type="radio"/>

Sample Group Policies

5/5

Legend:

-  Posted
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Service Support	Consider	Sample Document Status
Disbursement decision process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How does the group decide what to send each entity?• Is there a trigger for disbursements – e.g. \$>\$600 available• Expectations on how soon after decision is made for disbursement – e.g. within one week of business decision approving disbursement	
7TH tradition disbursement plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To what entities? List appropriate entities for your group and disbursement methods	

Summary

- ▶ We are just starting to gather samples and example policies and procedures
- ▶ The Finance Committee section of the Area 79 website will be your evolving repository
- ▶ Next Steps are to continue to work on developing and posting samples



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Challenges and Opportunities

- ▶ Common Group Situations
- ▶ Considerations on developing a solution

For More Information

- ▶ **Area 79 website**

- ▶ Constantly being updated

- ▶ **Spencer P**

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Thank You!