

other outside enterprise even if the name is associated with its location—e.g., the \_\_\_\_ Church AFG or the \_\_\_\_ Hospital AFG.

To help avoid confusion with other entities it is suggested that groups spell out their full name and include the letters AFG for Al-Anon Family Group.

The WSO will review proposed group names for adherence to Al-Anon principles. (See “Naming the Group” in “Groups at Work.”)

### **Assembly Representation**

Each Al-Anon/Alateen group elects a Group Representative (GR). (See “World Service Handbook.”) Assembly Areas should encourage the attendance of Alateen GRs at district and Assembly meetings.

### **Multiple Group Membership and Office-Holding**

Al-Anon members who attend several groups *regularly* and *participate fully* in all of them may consider themselves members of all those groups. Most members, however, consider one group their home group.

Membership entitles a person to vote and hold office. Whether members may hold office in more than one group is a matter of group autonomy, although it does deprive other members of the privilege of serving and growing. No member may, however, be Group Representative (GR) of more than one group at the same time.

### **Service Participation by Members of Al-Anon Family Groups Who Are also Members of Alcoholics Anonymous**

Al-Anon Family Groups and Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) share a common spiritual legacy in A.A.’s Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. Before Al-Anon was founded, family groups met with and beside A.A. groups. In 1951, various family groups banded together and agreed to organize Al-Anon Family Groups, a program dedicated to helping the friends and families of alcoholics. Over the years, Al-Anon developed its own service structure, based on the model provided by A.A.’s experience and guided by the Twelve Traditions.

Tradition Five defines Al-Anon’s single purpose. Tradition Six encourages cooperation with Alcoholics Anonymous, maintaining that Al-Anon is a separate entity that ought never affiliate or create the appearance of affiliation with any outside enterprise. Putting these principles into practice maintains a separation between the service structures of Al-Anon and A.A. This separation helps avoid

*continued on page 126*

## **Group Problems**

Any group or service arm within a Conference Area that fails to resolve its disputes or misunderstandings by application of the Traditions and Concepts of Service should seek guidance from its district or Area Assembly. If further guidance is needed, the matter can then be referred to the WSO or the respective national General Service Office (GSO). The WSO or GSO can only offer suggestions by relating the shared experiences of other groups or by providing the appropriate references in existing service material.

## **Meetings**

### ***Locating Meetings***

Al-Anon and Alateen meeting information can be obtained by contacting Al-Anon Information Services listed in local telephone directories and on the WSO Web Site, [www.al-anon.alateen.org](http://www.al-anon.alateen.org). The WSO toll-free meeting line number, 1-888-4 AL-ANON (888-425-2666), is available between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m., Eastern Time.

A printed list of Al-Anon Information Services and offices worldwide is found in *Getting in Touch with Al-Anon/Alateen* (S-23). Many Areas and Information Services post meeting information on their local Web sites, which are listed on the WSO site. (See “*Getting in Touch with Al-Anon/Alateen*,” and “World Directories of Al-Anon Family Groups.”)

### ***Open/Closed Meetings***

Closed meetings are for all Al-Anon members, anyone whose personal life is or has been deeply affected by close contact with a problem drinker. Open meetings may be attended by anyone interested in Al-Anon/Alateen.

### ***Introductory Meetings***

Introductory meetings can be held at institutions, such as hospitals, treatment centers, and shelters, or any other location where families and friends of alcoholics gather. Attendance changes frequently. Such a meeting is not considered an Al-Anon group and does not have its own Group Representative. Experienced Al-Anon members share the responsibilities for conducting introductory meetings and for inviting those in attendance to try a regular Al-Anon/Alateen meeting. Al-Anon groups, directly or through

the appearance of a conflict of interest and safeguards Al-Anon's singleness of purpose. Accordingly, Al-Anon's policy is that members who are also members of A.A. do not serve as Group Representative (GR), District Representative (DR), Area Delegate, World Service Conference member, alternate to any of these service positions, or on any committee of the World Service Office.

Filling service positions is a matter of district and Area autonomy, within this policy and the spiritual principles that form its basis. Tradition Four grants autonomy to local service arms, except in matters affecting Al-Anon or A.A. as a whole. Al-Anon members who are also members of A.A. participate fully in all group activities, including group conscience decisions. However, they do not hold Al-Anon service positions that vote in matters affecting another group or Al-Anon or A.A. as a whole.

Participating in Al-Anon service is integral to recovery for every member. Step Twelve, carrying our message to others, is a very important part of Al-Anon service. Members of Al-Anon who are also members of A.A. are often in a position to carry our message to those who are not aware of the benefits of attending Al-Anon Family Groups. Members of Al-Anon who are also members of A.A. may serve Al-Anon in ways that include being an Alateen Group Sponsor (see "Alateen Policy") or they may be invited by local/Area service arms, the Board of Trustees, or the World Service Office to participate in projects, in keeping with the spirit of this policy.

This policy on service participation by members of Al-Anon who are also A.A. members protects Al-Anon's viability as a program dedicated to helping the families and friends of alcoholics. It ensures that Al-Anon's service structure represents the unique perspective of families and friends of alcoholics, recognizing that the alcoholic's perspective is represented in A.A.'s service structure. Members honor this policy out of respect for Al-Anon unity and the group conscience process, in accordance with Tradition One and Tradition Two.