

Hosting a Southern Area Assembly on behalf of SAA

The primary purpose of an Assembly is to allow the Southern Area to carry out its business i.e. GSR, Group and Conference Delegates reports, fellowship finances, etc.

Venue requirements

1. A room capable of holding a minimum of 80 people for the AA business meeting situated away from communal food or other noisy areas.
2. A hall capable of holding a minimum of 250 people for the Public Meeting.
3. One room for AA sharing meetings to accommodate a minimum of 100 people, and one room for an Al-Anon meeting.
4. Adequate kitchen and toilet facilities. Consideration is to be given to noise and traffic to and from the tea and coffee AND meetings.
5. Morning and afternoon teas, preferably continuous coffee and tea, a light lunch, and supper (optional evening meal which can be a separate charge).
6. Due to the distance South Islanders often travel to SAA, it is advisable that any Friday night meetings start no earlier than 7:30pm.
7. Banners:
 - a. Two sets of Steps and Traditions banners, one for the AA business meeting, the other set is for the AA sharing and public meetings. It is possible to borrow very large Banners from GSO for use at public meetings at large venues.
 - b. One set of Concepts and the Toronto Declaration for the business meeting.
 - c. Local delegates have a set of male and female pull-up banners for the Public Meeting or foyer.
8. A long table and suitable area for a literature stall.
9. A mihi whakatau / pōwhiri are a separate event and we have no opinion on it. If held, please ensure respect of local tradition and adherence with our Traditions by having this as a separate and unaffiliated event before an assembly begins.
10. Note that entertainment is a totally self-supporting activity. It is NOT part of the Assembly budget.

Programme

For smooth running, the required times and programme for a Southern Area Assembly are as follows.

Please note the Annual General Meeting (AGM), held in the last weekend of October, **always starts at 9:00am.**

Friday evening

5.30 pm Registration

7.30 or 8pm Start AA Meeting

Saturday

8.30am Registration

9.00am **AGM business meeting starts**

AA Workshop (if it is an AGM a workshop is optional)

The workshop is always an AA business related topic rather than a recovery related topic. For example, it might be on Traditions or Concepts, GSR role, Service Sponsorship, AA structure or other service-related content. (It could also be a topic conference has asked us to consider).

10.15am Tea & Coffee

10.30am **AA business meeting starts (or continues if it is the AGM)**

12.00pm Lunch

1.00pm **AA business meeting continues**

3.00pm Afternoon tea

3.30pm **Business Meeting continues (if necessary)**

Combined sharing session

6.00pm Evening meal (if included)

7.30pm AA Public Meeting

9.30pm Supper Sunday 9am Spiritual Meeting (if facility available)

Organisation

1. It is suggested that groups applying to host the SAA, are groups, who regularly attend and participate in SAA business on a regular basis. This helps to ensure groups running the assembly understand the needs and importance of SAA. New groups can be sponsored by a more experienced group in hosting Southern Area Assemblies. We ask for help when needed.
2. Groups wishing to host an extended weekend around the Southern Area Assembly need to plan any extra activities around the set format and timetable as above.
3. The host group/s need to form an Assembly Host Committee with a Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, co-opted members and, if possible, an Al-Anon representative whose invitation will be in writing to the NZAGSO at office@al-anon.org.nz. NOTE: The Chair of the SAA is available as a liaison to the Host Committee.
4. An AA bank account is needed and ALL transactions are to be carried out through this account and recorded. A minimum of two signatories are needed to operate the account. Any cash sale dockets are to be approved by the Host Committee before reimbursement through the bank account.
5. A well informed Committee member to present the Assembly report at the following SAA.
6. A completed Financial Report needs to be forwarded to the SAA Chair and Treasurer within one month of the Assembly. **See Appendix 4 for a suggested example.**
7. The SAA advance loan be a maximum of \$2000.00 as part of the hosting guidelines and this is to be reviewed annually at the AGM.
8. Registration charges need to be sufficient to cover the cost of hiring the venue and all other incidental expenses e.g. whiteboard, sound system hire, tea and coffee.
9. If dinner is provided, that meal shall be charged at a sufficient price to cover the cost.
10. Planned entertainment (if provided) needs to be completely self supporting and cannot be included in the general SAA expenses and incidentals.

11. Tradition 7 can be collected at Assembly meetings and will be shown as separate income in the Financial Report. Tradition 7 will not be practiced at public meetings unless absolutely necessary. Please ensure donations are from AA members only.
12. Any surplus from costs associated with the provision of an evening meal will be also shown as separate income in the financial report.
13. Advance notice of the dates and venues of the assemblies shall be sent to Mainstay at NZGSO PO Box 6458 Wellington or nzgso@aa.org.nz as soon as date and town is confirmed. This is to be followed, as soon as possible, by the programme including address, registration and meal costs. Mainstay is now produced bi-monthly so the window of time to show the event in Mainstay is very tight and needs to be organised as soon as possible.
14. Only AA conference-approved literature may be displayed and sold at Southern Area Assemblies. Literature is ordered from GSO and sent to your group. Please order well in advance. Literature not sold may be returned in a good condition and the balance of the sold literature paid directly to GSO.
15. The Host Committee will nominate, elect or invite people to chair the AA sharing meetings and Public Meeting. It is important that the chair of these meetings have knowledge of the Steps, Traditions and Concepts.
16. Invitations may be sent to doctors, clergy, health professionals, school teachers etc. to attend the Public Meeting.
17. In line with Tradition Seven, Al-Anon will be reimbursed their proportion of any surplus from the registration fee (this is calculated as a ratio of attendees / costs).

Appendix 1 - Assembly Hosting Checklist

What

By when

Before the assembly

Written request with the date and proposed pencilled booking of the venue to the Southern Area Assembly Secretary by 1st August to host Assembly the following year.

Hosting Committee guidelines received from Southern Area Assembly Secretary, including Public Information Meeting Guidelines (these are embedded in the appendices).

Host Planning Committee formed – Chair, Secretary, Treasurer

Venue secured or confirmed

Check with venue holders to ensure any protocols relating to the venue are followed

Notices placed in Mainstay and on AA NZ website

Minutes book established

AA Bank account to record hosting committee transactions

Budget established by Host Committee, and advance funds from Southern Area Committee requested if required

Written request for literature to GSO for the literature table

Chair of Meetings arranged Public Meeting speakers contacted and chosen

Important to remember that as this is a public meeting our speakers are a reflection of AA and preference should be given to speakers with a sound knowledge of the Steps and Traditions and an uplifting message of recovery from alcoholism.

Please ask your speakers to refrain from using bad language

Venue signage created

Menu and catering established

People for setting up and cleaning up confirmed

Flyers created – to place in local areas advertising Public Meeting

Local media contacted. E.g., community radio stations, community newspapers.

During the assembly

Venue signage put up

Parking clearly signposted and controlled

Have Big Book available at Registration Desk for attendee to sign (to be given to newcomer at Speaker Meeting)

Health and safety / security protocols of the venue understood

First Aid equipment and person clearly identifiable

After the assembly

Venue holders, chair people, media, speakers and AI-Anon thanked

One person from the Hosting Committee to attend the next SAA to answer questions and present the Financial Report

Appendix 2 – An example of a Public Meeting format

1. Introductions and Preamble

Welcome to this Public meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous: My name is _____ and I am an alcoholic.

The Preamble:

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for AA membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. AA is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy, neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

There may be some here who are not familiar with our tradition of personal anonymity at the media level. Our public relations policy is based on attraction, not promotion. We need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.

Therefore, we respectfully ask that no AA member be identified directly or indirectly by full name, public position or photograph in published or broadcast reports of this meeting.

2. Sobriety Countdown

Read the countdown, and then ask the longest member to give the newest member a Big Book.

3. Speakers

4. Chair of SAA to close the meeting and invite people to the next SAA – announce date and town

5. Close on time with Serenity Prayer

Appendix 3 – Format for the Sobriety Countdown

55 years plus	11 months
50 - 54 years	10 months
45 - 49 years	9 months
40 - 44 years	8 months
35 - 39 years	7 months
30 - 34 years	6 months
25 - 29 years	5 months
20 - 24 years	4 months
15 -19 years	3 months
11 -14 years	2 months
10 years	1 month
9 years	3 weeks
8 years	2 weeks
7 years	1 week
6 years	6 days
5 years	5 days
4 years	4 days
3 years	3 days
2 years	2 days
1 year	First 24 hours

Appendix 4 - Example of a Host Committee Financial report to submit to Southern Area Assembly

Income

Registrations	\$1,500.00
Dinner	\$825.00
Advance from SAA	\$1,000.00
Total income	\$3,325.00

Expenses

Venue hire	\$500.00
Sound system hire	\$50.00
Name badges	\$25.00
Printing for signage and flyers	\$30.00
Tea, coffee, sugar, milk	\$80.00
Morning and afternoon tea	\$50.00
Public meeting supper	\$80.00
Dinner	\$825.00
Advance to SAA	\$500.00
Total expenses	\$2,140.00

Surplus returned to SAA \$1,185.00