

Area 70 Finance Guidelines

Area 70 (Vermont) is one of 93 delegate areas that make up the General Service Structure of Alcoholics Anonymous in the U.S. and Canada. Area 70 serves the A.A. members and groups in Vermont.

Area 70 and its Full Area Assembly (F.A.A.) perform many functions. Among the most important of these is the use of money entrusted to the F.A.A. The Area is funded by contributions from A.A. members and groups. These funds are contributed to fulfill A.A.'s primary purpose of carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers, and to follow the Seventh Tradition of Self-Support. The existence of these Finance Guidelines is not a matter of trusting our trusted servants. Rather it is a matter of making sure basket money is as secure as possible.

An important component of our principle of self-support is assuring that any qualified member should be able to take a service position regardless of personal finances.

Area 70 is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit corporation, and has both legal and fiduciary responsibilities. Area 70 re-established the Finance Committee in 2000. Finance Guidelines were developed and accepted by the F.A.A. with later revisions. The current guidelines are the result of a 2015 revision.

The Guidelines assure that the Area and its committees look beyond monetary details to make certain that its actions and spending are guided by our Twelve Traditions and other spiritual principles. Much of the detailed work in establishing sound fiscal practices, creating an annual budget, periodically reviewing the Area's financial condition, and proposing changes to its financial guidelines has been delegated by the F.A.A. to the Finance Committee.

Keeping in mind our tradition of self-support, the Finance Committee's primary purpose is to review budget and financial reports of Area 70 and review or initiate F.A.A. or Committee recommendations that involve finances. Like the Finance Committee at GSO, the Area 70 Finance Committee looks into budgets, and is concerned with money needed to carry out service work.

The Committee includes the elected Area Treasurer and an appointed Finance Committee Chair and any other A.A. member who wishes to join. The Delegate, Alternate Delegate and Area Chair serve as ex-officio members of the Committee.

To prepare a budget that clearly reflects what it truly costs Area 70 to do its business, the Committee system formulates recommendations for Area consideration paralleling the General Service Conference structure.

The Finance Committee makes informed financial recommendations to the Full Area Assembly. The F.A.A. is the ultimate conscience for Area 70 finances and budget.

The Finance Committee shall meet on a quarterly basis at Area 70 Full Area Assemblies, or as needed. Any AA member may attend these meetings. The Committee shall review the previous quarter's contributions to determine their sufficiency in supporting Area 70 activities. The Finance Committee shall review the previous quarter's expenditures to determine if they are within the approved budget and appropriate for the conduct of the Area's purpose of carrying the message to the alcoholic. The Finance Committee shall ensure that the Treasurer maintains a Prudent Reserve for Area 70's finances. The Prudent Reserve is defined as 25 percent of the average annual expenses for the previous two calendar years. The Finance Committee conducts an annual review of the accounting books and documents.

The Finance Committee will compile a proposed budget for review by the Area Committee in November and a final budget for approval by the F.A.A. in December of each year.

Guidelines On Budget Preparation

Budget Submissions and Deadline

Individual budgets are to be prepared by Area 70 Officers and Committee Chairs for their positions. In election years, the incoming Officers and Committee Chairs shall prepare their budgets in consultation with the outgoing Officers and Committee Chairs. These proposed budgets are to be submitted to the Area 70 Finance Chair no later than October 1 of each year. The Finance Chair will provide budget preparation forms in advance.

Budgets will include all anticipated expenses for the coming year (i.e. telephone, literature, printing, event travel, mileage, lodging, meals, etc.)

Area 70's fiscal year is January 1 through December 31.

Sharing Travel and Hotel Expenses

It is the responsibility of all trusted servants to use the basket money in the most judicious manner possible. Therefore, it is expected that whenever appropriate and available, members will share transportation, hotel rooms and other resources to minimize costs.

Budget Approval Is Not a Guarantee of Funding

Prior to incurring any travel or event expense, members will check with the Treasurer to ensure budgeted funds are available.

Funding Guidelines – Elected Officers

Delegate – Conference Expenses

Area 70 shall pay to the General Service Office, prior to March 1 of each year, the recommended contribution to help cover Conference costs for the Delegate. The amount of the recommended contribution is set each year by GSO. The Delegate is responsible for informing the Treasurer of the amount of the recommended contribution.

All Conference travel and other Conference-related expenses are paid by GSO.

Delegate - Non-Conference Expenses

In addition to anticipated expenses for travel and supplies throughout the year, the Area 70 Delegate's budget submission shall include full funding so the Delegate can attend the Area 70 Pre-Conference, Northeast Regional Delegate Reunion, the Northeast Regional AA Service Assembly, the Area 70 Convention, and (every two years) the Northeast Regional Forum.

The Delegate shall also be reimbursed for mileage to attend Full Area Assemblies, Area Committee Meetings and for pre and post-Conference visits to each of the Districts in Area 70.

In addition to the Delegate's budget, the Delegate is also responsible for preparing the budget for the Pre-Conference Sharing Session.

Alternate Delegate

It is expected the Alternate Delegate will be fully informed on all Conference and Area 70 issues so as to be prepared to step in for the Delegate, if necessary, at a moment's notice. Therefore, in addition to anticipated expenses for travel and supplies, the Area 70 Alternate Delegate's budget submission shall include full funding so that this person can attend the Area 70 Pre-Conference, Northeast Regional Delegate Reunion, the Northeast Regional AA Service Assembly, the Area 70 Convention, and (every two years) the Northeast Regional Forum.

The Alternate Delegate shall also be reimbursed for mileage to attend Full Area Assemblies, Area Committee Meetings and for pre and post-Conference visits to each of the Districts in Area 70.

Area Chair

In addition to anticipated expenses for travel and supplies, the Area 70 Chair's budget submission shall include full funding so that the Chair can attend the Area 70 Pre-Conference, Northeast Regional AA Service Assembly, the Area 70 Convention, and (every two years) the Northeast Regional Forum. The Area Chair shall also be reimbursed for mileage to attend Full Area Assemblies, Area Committee Meetings and for visits to the Districts in Area 70.

Secretary and Treasurer

In addition to anticipated expenses for travel and supplies, the Area 70 Secretary and Treasurer's budget submissions shall include full funding of that person's expenses (including travel) to attend the Northeast Regional AA Service Assembly and (every two years) the Northeast Regional Forum.

The Secretary and Treasurer shall also be reimbursed for mileage to attend Full Area Assemblies, Area Committee Meetings and the Pre-Conference Sharing Session.

Funding Guidelines – Committee Chairs

In addition to anticipated expenses for travel and supplies, each Area 70 Committee Chair's budget submission shall include full funding of that person's expenses (including travel) to attend the Northeast Regional AA Service Assembly and (every two years) the Northeast Regional Forum.

Expenses and registration for the Area 70 Convention will be funded for Area 70 Committee Chairs when the Chair has a service function at the Area 70 Convention. An example of a service function would be staffing their committee's display for a minimum of four hours during the Convention.

Area Committee Chairs shall also be reimbursed for mileage to attend Full Area Assemblies, Area Committee Meetings and the Pre-Conference Sharing Session.

NERAASA & NERF Expenses

Prior to budget preparation, the Area 70 Finance Chair shall supply each Officer and Committee Chair with an estimate of registration, meal and hotel expenses for NERAASA and NERF. The Finance Chair shall have obtained this information from NERAASA and NERF event organizers. These shall be the figures used in preparing budgets. Travel expenses will vary for each budget and shall be prepared individually.

Responsibilities of Those Funded

It is expected those funded to attend events will participate fully in the events so as to learn and increase their ability to serve the still-suffering alcoholic through service work. The attendee may be asked to prepare and deliver a report to other Committee members or the F.A.A. upon returning from the event.

Accounting for Expenses

The activities of the Area 70 Officers and the Committee Chairs are supported by the Area 70 Assembly Budget and these people may be reimbursed accordingly. Budget money is to be used only to carry the message within each area of responsibility. Examples of items for which reimbursements may be made are: postage, labels, stationery, telephone calls, photocopying/printing, literature, travel expenses. No money will be expended over the approved budget unless recommended by the Finance Committee and approved by the F.A.A.

An accounting of these expenses shall be made on the most recent revision of the Area Expense Form prepared by the Finance Committee, and submitted to the Area 70 Treasurer. When possible, original receipts will accompany the Expense Form. The Treasurer, after discussing an expense with the originator, may at the Treasurer's discretion consult the Finance Committee to determine if an expense is reasonable.

For standardization, all travel by personal vehicle shall be reimbursed at the rate of \$.35 per mile, provided the total mileage is stated on the Expense Form.

All claimed expenses should reach the Area 70 Treasurer within 30 days of the time the expense is incurred. December expenses must reach the Area 70 Treasurer prior to January 15 of the year after the year in which expense were incurred in order to be payable, as all accounts for the previous year close on January 31.

Maintenance of Non-Profit Corporation Status

The Finance Chair is responsible for assuring that Area 70's Non-Profit Corporation status is maintained. As a 501 (c) (3) we have certain responsibilities to fulfill in order to continue to be considered a Public Charity. These include assuring that: the Area Treasurer annually files the Income Tax Forms, both Federal and State; filing as a 501 (c) (3) for the previous tax year is completed by the due date (May 15); the Area Secretary's minutes indicate that the March F.A.A. is the Annual meeting of the Corporation; all contributions to Area 70 are properly acknowledged in writing and that accurate records of such contributions are maintained; any and all fees, both state and federal, are budgeted for and paid; and any other responsibilities necessary to maintain our 501 (c) (3) status are attended to.

Special Policies and Provisions

1. In accordance with the Seventh Tradition: "Every A.A. Group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions." Therefore, contributions to Area 70 from an individual are limited to \$200.00 annually and any individual bequest is limited to a maximum one time contribution of \$3,000.00.
2. There will be no credit or debit cards attached to any 501 (c) (3) account.
3. Along with the Treasurer, the Finance Chair and the Area Chair receive a copy of the monthly bank statement.
4. On a quarterly basis, the Finance Committee shall review the Convention account and any other accounts that are created by the F.A.A.

5. The treasurer is required to use an appropriate form of bookkeeping software. This ensures a complete and uniform accounting report.
6. The state of Vermont has approved the sales tax exemption status of Area 70 as a 501 (c) (3). The sales tax exemption number and form may be obtained from the Finance Committee Chair on request.
7. Any expenditure reimbursement of \$300 or more requires two signatures, that of the Area Treasurer and the Area Chair.
8. The Meeting List account be dissolved and the monies be reflected in the Area 70 Financial Statements as a separate line item.

Approved by the Full Area Assembly June 14, 2015.
Effective January 1, 2016.

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