

How to form your RR Group

To ensure the democrat decision making and rotating leadership called for in our guiding principles, after a short period of initial formation, all regular, listed Refuge Recovery Meetings are to be held by RR groups. It is the responsibility of each Refuge Recovery meeting to establish a RR group and hold a group business meeting within the first six months of the meetings existence. Individual RR groups who hold RR meetings are the foundation of our service structure.

The principle of trusted volunteers comes into being when the meeting members become willing to delegate the responsibility for running the meeting to the RR group.

First a vote is held, among those who have been attending the meeting regularly, to elect group officers. For information on how to vote in group business meetings please see *Voting and Quorum in RR Group Business Meetings* link on the Service resources page.

Note* The elected Meeting Secretary is the person responsible for running the weekly RR meeting. This is a separate service position from the Group Recording Secretary.

For the purpose of most groups, officers usually consist of a Group Representative, a group Recording Secretary and a Treasurer. In very small groups, the recording Secretary and Treasurer duties can be combined until an additional member becomes qualified to serve as a group officer. Some groups have additional officers depending on their specific needs.

The officers of a group must be chosen with care because of the responsibilities that their offices carry and the potential effect unqualified officers can have on the group. RR groups can suffer and break up, due to the election of officers who are unqualified to serve or do not have a history of time abstinent in recovery. Of course, relapse while serving as a trusted group volunteer triggers an automatic resignation for that officer. Choose your trusted officers well, it is you who they will be serving.

As a general guide, we have found that the Group trusted volunteers are most successful if they have certain assets necessary for the performance of their responsibilities.

These qualifications include:

1. The willingness or desire to serve.
2. A history of time abstinent from all intoxicants and adherence to process addiction bottom lines. We suggest a minimum qualification of six months.
3. A good working knowledge of the Refuge Recovery program.
4. An understanding of the Refuge Recovery Guiding Principles.
5. Active and ongoing participation in the groups they are to serve.
6. Ability to work with others in a constructive manner.

These assets do not guarantee a good officer, however, they do help to ensure that those we choose will be capable of doing the job.

Group Officers & Responsibilities

The Group Representative is responsible for the day-to-day functions of the group. It is the responsibility of the Group Representative to:

- To ensure that the RR meeting is being run according to RRWS meeting guidelines.
- To ensure that elections are held for all meeting service positions.
- To assure that the RR group business meeting takes place when and where it is supposed to.
- To run the RR group business meeting according to the guidelines described in the *How to Run A RR Business Meeting* service resource.
- Responsible for ensuring the group democratic voice is communicated with Refuge Recovery committees and Refuge Recovery World Services.
- Responsible for staying informed of and ensuring that, the substance of initiatives proposed by local, regional and world service committees that may affect the group are discussed, and when appropriate voted on, by the local Refuge Recovery group.

The Recording Secretary takes notes so that they can prepare the official written record of the meeting, called the “minutes.” Clear, accurate minutes are very important – they will be used to keep track of the group’s decisions, as well as unfinished business from previous business meetings.

The Treasurer of an RR group is responsible for the funds which are donated to the group and for the distribution of these funds. The money collected in our meetings must be carefully budgeted. There are numerous expenses necessary for running a group. In order to maintain our groups, the group collections and members contributions must always be used to further the Refuge Recovery purpose. The Treasurer has a serious responsibility and thought should be taken in selecting a member to perform this function.

The Treasurer:

- Keeps an accurate record of all the group's financial transactions.

- Maintains the group accounts, and is responsible for issuing funds to pay the rent, purchase books, buy supplies, and cover the costs of any miscellaneous expenses the group incurs.
- Makes group contributions to directly support the Refuge Recovery World Service Office. Each group benefits from the services provided by RRWS and each group rely's on all other RR groups to support the world service organization. After paying its bills and buying a small number of Refuge Recovery books to offer for sale at each meeting, each group should hold a reserve adequate to run the group for 2 months. After this reserve has been established, all funds collected over this reserve amount are to be passed along to help Refuge Recovery as a whole.

“The Essential Elements of a RR Group” specify that Group Officers will be elected for a designated period of time with a term of at least :

1-year+ training month Recording Secretary

1 year+ 1 training month - Treasurer

1 year+1 training month — Group Representative

Group Representatives, Treasurers and Recording Secretaries typically serve for one term with a training period for the incoming officers of one month at which time they are succeeded by other members who have been elected by the group. Officers service is limited to two consecutive terms.

One of the responsibilities of all group officers is to train group members to replace them. A group can be strengthened by new officers who are prepared to take over the responsibilities of those they replace. Continuity of service can be aided by staggering the election of trusted volunteers, and overlapping terms of service.