

Southern California World Service (SCWS)

Area Elections -Delegate

Assembly Discussion May 20, 2023

What are our SCWS Election Procedures?

(Please refer to complete Election Procedures document)

- The SCWS Assembly elects new Officers for the Area Board every three years.
- The Officers are: Delegate, Alternate Delegate, Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer.
- The election is held at the November Assembly during the last year of the three-year Panel. (*What is a “Panel”? Please see “Terminology”, slide 23*)
- All members interested in standing for an Officer position submit a Resume. The Officer Job Descriptions and complete Election Procedures are posted on the SCWS website (scws-al-anon.org.)

SCWS Election Procedures (Continued)

- Our Area Chairperson serves as the “Election Chairman”.
- The Election Chairman reviews the proposed Election Procedures with the Assembly.
- Following the review, the Chairman asks for a vote of acceptance of the proposed election method.
- A 2/3 vote by the Group Representatives indicates acceptance of the Election Procedures.
- Reference: *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual, 2022-2025, V-2, p. 154-157.*

Current SCWS Election Procedures:

How is the Delegate Elected?

(Please refer to complete Election Procedures document)

- First ballot: Candidate receiving $\frac{2}{3}$ vote is elected Delegate.
- If first ballot does not elect Delegate, Chairman may ask candidates receiving lowest votes to withdraw. If two candidates each receive at least 40% of the total vote, Chairman may ask those two candidates to remain and the others to withdraw.

Current SCWS Election Procedures: How is our Delegate Elected? (Continued...)

- Whether or not names are withdrawn, a second ballot is taken.
- If still no election occurs, a third ballot is taken between the two candidates receiving the most votes.
- If $\frac{2}{3}$ vote still is not reached, the Delegate is selected by lot. The first name drawn becomes the Delegate.
(What is “by lot”? Please see “Terminology”, slide 23)

How did our SCWS Area decide upon our current Election Procedures?

Let's start with...

- Reviewing the history of SCWS Area elections
- Referring to the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual, 2022-2025 Version-2*
- Gathering information from other Areas

SCWS History of Delegate Elections: Motions

- **1969:** To continue to combine offices of Delegate and Chairman, and that runner-up would be Alternate Delegate.
- **1972:** Motion carried that in the election of the Delegate/Chairman (one position at that time) the runner-up would automatically become Alternate Delegate.
- **1981:** That Southern California Area elect one Chairman and one Delegate.

SCWS History of Delegate Elections: Motions continued

- **1984:** That one more (third) ballot for Delegate be taken, with the individual having the majority of votes being elected Delegate.
- **1996:** That if after balloting a 2/3 majority has not been reached, that the choice be made by lot between the two highest-vote candidates.

SCWS History of Delegate Elections: Results

- Area records do not indicate how the Delegate was selected before 1979.
- From 1979 until 2020 there have been 15 Delegate elections (15 Panels)
- Out of the **15** Panels...
 - **9** Delegates were elected “by lot”
 - **4** Delegates were elected by 2/3 majority,
 - **2** Delegates elected were the only candidate standing

Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual

2022-2025, Version 2, (p. 156-157)

1. The Chairman asks each DR and others eligible, according to Area autonomy, whether he is prepared to serve as Delegate for three years. If so, he becomes a candidate.
2. As suggested in Warranty Three, the voting process should be followed even if there is only one candidate. *Warranty Three: “that all decisions be reached by discussion, vote and whenever possible by unanimity”* (p. 17)
3. Names of all candidates for the position of Delegate are displayed.

Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual

(p. 156-157) continued...

4. Votes are cast. Candidates leave the room or meeting while votes are tallied and displayed.
5. In the spirit of substantial unanimity, the first candidate to receive a two-thirds vote is elected.
6. If no one has the required two-thirds vote after several ballots have been taken, the Chairman may suggest that the candidates with the largest percentage of votes remain on the ballot and the others withdraw.

Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual

(p. 156-157) continued...

7. Whether or not any names are withdrawn, another ballot is taken.
8. If still no election occurs, the Chairman asks for a motion to close the balloting and that the choice be made by lot between the two with the highest number of votes. The first one drawn becomes the Delegate. Alternatively, some Assemblies prefer to have a final ballot taken, in which case the candidate with the most votes becomes the Delegate.

Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual, continued...

Al-Anon World Service Conference Charter (p. 229)

b. Delegates are chosen from District Representatives by a two-thirds confidential ballot or by lot.

Suggested Procedures (p. 139-140)

While the procedures outlined in the “World Service Handbook” are suggestions, they have been found by Al-Anon and Alateen members who have followed them to be a simple and direct method of selecting Delegates for the Conference and for conducting Assembly and Conference affairs free of political friction.

Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual continued...

p. 199

The Handbook or Third Legacy method of naming Delegates by a two-thirds vote or by lot greatly reduces political friction; it makes each Delegate feel that he or she is truly a world servant rather than merely the winner of a contest. Thus far, our Third Legacy methods have produced DRs and Delegates of a high level of dedication and competence. Our Area Assemblies need only to continue to act with care and in a selfless spirit.

Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual

p. 199 (cont)

Some members, still doubtful whether choice by lot is a good idea, feel that the best person does not always win. It must be pointed out that each time we have disregarded the two-thirds vote or lot in naming Delegates, there has been a sense of defeat and disturbance in the minority camp, which is not offset by naming the supposedly best person. Indeed the second-best person can often be as good a Delegate as the Assembly's first choice and may even be a better Delegate.

Paths to Recovery

p. 303

“In the Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual, the suggested election procedures for our trusted servants are outlined. Experience and careful thought have produced these procedures which are seen by many to be spiritual in direction. Guided by the principles found in all of our three legacies– the Steps, Traditions and Concepts – leaders are selected on the basis of Al-Anon membership, eligibility, special skills and willingness to serve. Selecting a delegate by a two-thirds vote or by lot reduces the possibility of personalities interfering with principles and assures the newly elected delegate of member support.”

How are Delegates selected in other Areas?

- A survey regarding voting procedures for Delegate was sent through *AFG Connects*.
- The question asked was: When there is not a clear 2/3 majority after several ballots, does your Area:
 1. Select your Delegate “by lot” — drawing the name from the “hat”,

OR

 2. Choose the candidate who received the simple majority (50% + 1)

Delegate elections in other Areas, cont.

- Delegates, Past Delegates, and Area Chairs of **19** other Areas responded.
- **9** Areas use “by lot” if there is not a 2/3 majority after several ballots.
- **4** Areas responded: they “Follow the *Service Manual*”.
- **3** Areas use “Simple Majority” if there is not a 2/3 majority after several ballots.
- **1** Area replied: Last 3 Panels there was only 1 Candidate.

Delegate elections in other Areas, cont.

- **2** Areas replied by outlining a different procedure.
- Maritime Provinces and Massachusetts:

At the Fall Election Assembly, a PowerPoint presentation is given that explains what procedures could be used if no candidate for Delegate receives 2/3 majority after several ballots. The two different final choices of “by lot” or “simple majority” are discussed. The GRs vote that day to choose (with 2/3 majority) either the “by lot’ or “majority” procedure.



Why are we discussing this today?

- Our SCWS Area will be having an Election Assembly November 18, 2023.
- Currently, our Election Procedures state that when one candidate does not receive a 2/3 majority after three ballots, the Delegate is selected by lot. This drawing is done between the two candidates receiving the most votes. The first name drawn becomes the Delegate.
- Some Area members have proposed to change the 5th bullet point under voting procedures "2. Election of Delegate" to read: *If 2/3 vote still not reached, the Delegate is elected by a 4th ballot by receiving the majority vote (50% + 1).*

In Conclusion...

- The Group Representatives (GRs) will vote on our Election Procedures on November 18, 2023 before the election. We will first review the Procedures and have time for discussion at the November Assembly.
- We hope today's discussion will bring information and awareness to our GRs so they are better informed to vote in November.
- We are not making any decisions today. However your feedback on the presentation is greatly appreciated!



Let's start with Questions, then Comments.



Reminder:

- ❖ Only “members” of the Assembly have “voice”
- ❖ 1 minute at the “mic” for Questions; 2 minutes for Comments
- ❖ Please lower your hand if another member asks your question or makes your comment.

Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual, 2022-2025: Terminology

Areas: Areas are comprised of groups and Districts in a determined location that can be geographically or non-geographically defined. Every group in the Area has a voice and a vote in Area business through their Group Representative (GR). Each Area in the World Service Conference Structure (US [including Puerto Rico], Bermuda, Canada, and non-geographically based groupings) is represented at the annual World Service Conference by an Area Delegate, elected every three years by the GRs. (p. 67)

“by lot”: a method of selecting between two candidates for Delegate as well as Alternate Delegate (SM: p. 156; 229). In case of a tie between two candidates, where neither candidate receives a two-thirds majority, the two names are written on pieces of paper and placed into a container (sometimes called “the hat”). The name that is drawn from the container will become the Delegate for the next three-year Panel.

Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual 2022-2025, Terminology continued...

Panel: A panel consists of one-third of the Delegates attending the World Service Conference. A panel is elected every year for a three-year term. The elections of the three panels are staggered so that a Conference always includes one panel of Delegates with two year's experience. (p. 142)

World Service Delegate: a District Representative who has been elected World Service Delegate for a three-year term by the GRs at an Assembly. The World Service Delegate shares Area experience at three Annual Conferences, which serve Al-Anon worldwide. He brings the views and the spirit of worldwide Al-Anon back to his Area. (p. 143)