

“Beyond the Group Level”—Clarifying Our World Service Application Language

Members know that in Al-Anon we love our phrases and acronyms. One of the most familiar—the “Three Cs”—offers hope to newcomers as they learn, “We didn’t cause the disease of alcoholism, we cannot control it, and we can’t cure it.” Those of us fortunate to have an Al-Anon Information Service nearby may have heard this service entity affectionately referred to as an AIS.

While these phrases are often helpful, they can sometimes be confusing. This became clear to the Board of Trustees and Delegate Committees responsible for reviewing applications for Trustees and At-Large members of the Executive Committee for Real Property Management. During the 2025-2026 nominating process, it was discovered that applicants had long been evaluated on the requirement to have service experience “beyond the group level”—without a single, clearly documented definition of what that meant!

Thankfully, last year, several committee members courageously asked for clarity when uncertainty arose. That question sparked a thoughtful review of applications and resumes for all world service-level positions, focusing on what specific service experience was needed for each role. As one example, instead of requiring Executive Committee At-Large member applicants to have service experience described only as “beyond the group level,” the resume was updated to ask for service “in at least one of the following positions: District Representative, Area Delegate, Assembly Officer or Coordinator, or AIS Liaison to Area World Service Committee (AWSC).”

The Board is deeply grateful to members who are willing to serve at the world service level.

The Trustees hope these updates will make the process clearer and a little less intimidating. In the end, we are all equal in the circle—and clarity helps us better understand what is asked of us when we step forward to serve.

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