

FAQs

About Becoming a Debtors Anonymous General Service Board Trustee

(Adopted 1995, revised 2007)

What is the Debtors Anonymous General Service Board?

The Debtors Anonymous General Service Board, Inc. (DA GSB) is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization incorporated in the State of New York. The General Service Board is the chief service arm of the DA World Service Conference and is essentially custodial in its character.

Who are the General Service Board Trustees?

The GSB bylaws require that the Board have at least nine debtor (Class A) Trustees and a maximum of three non-debtor (Class B) Trustees. Class A Trustees are those who have arrested their compulsive debting, have not incurred new, unsecured debt for a period of at least three years and who are living so far as possible within the concepts of the Debtors Anonymous Twelve Steps. Class B Trustees are those who are not now and have not been afflicted by the disease of compulsive debting and who express a profound faith in the DA program. Trustees elect their own successors from among all interested parties, subject to approval at the next annual Conference.

What is the purpose of the General Service Board?

The following excerpt from the bylaws of the General Service Board describes a primary function of the General Service Board as a whole:

The Corporation [DA GSB] is regarded by the Fellowship as the custodian of the Traditions and, accordingly, the Corporation shall not itself nor, so far as it is within its power to do so, permit others to modify, alter, or amplify the Traditions, except in keeping with the provisions of the Certificate of Incorporation (the 'Certificate') and the bylaws of the Corporation (the 'bylaws'). The Corporation shall put forth its best efforts within the context of the Conference, Articles of Incorporation, and these bylaws to protect the Twelve Traditions.

What else does the GSB do?

The Trustees are responsible for managing the day-to-day affairs of the DA program, including maintaining DA's financial records, managing DA's cash flow, overseeing the DA General Service Office and employees, maintaining the DA Web site and other communications channels, reviewing and publishing DA literature, producing the annual World Service Conference, and responding to requests from DA members, newcomers, professionals, journalists, and other members of the public.

How do the Trustees work together?

GSB Trustees meet twice a year in person—at the World Service Conference they arrive two days early, and in the late winter/early spring they meet for a long weekend. The rest of the time the Board meets on two-hour-long conference calls, usually about every six weeks. In addition, each Trustee serves on several committees and participates in the work of those committees via email and conference calls. Trustees also serve as a liaison to a World Service Conference committee/caucus.

How long do GSB Trustees serve?

GSB Trustees serve for a 3-year term, and may renew their service for another three-year term, for a total of six years. New Trustees may join the Board at any time during the year; however, their term of office begins when they are ratified at a World Service Conference.

What are the suggested qualifications to become a Trustee?

The General Service Board of Debtors Anonymous has found that the following attributes are those that contribute most towards being able to fulfill a General Service Board commitment. It is suggested that a GSB Trustee Nominee would:

1. Be a member of DA who regularly attends meetings, has a sponsor and is a sponsor, has and sits on pressure relief groups, and has at least three years of not incurring any new unsecured debt (Class A Trustee).
2. Be committed to working the Twelve Steps of DA (Class A Trustees), or have a working knowledge and understanding of the Twelve Step process (Class B Trustees);
3. Have a desire to seek the will of a Higher Power, however one may conceive of a Higher Power;
4. Be committed to service as a principle of life; have a willingness and desire to grow through service with the knowledge that it will have its challenges, requires a definite commitment of time, and that world service takes priority over other service;
5. Be dedicated to and active in DA service, as demonstrated by successful completion of service commitments on an ongoing basis, including experience and participation as a GSR or ISR in at least one World Service Conference;
6. Have the ability to follow through with commitments and show willingness to complete the commitment in accordance with DA principles, DA Tools, the Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions;
7. Have a desire and the ability to perform leadership roles in the spirit of being a trusted servant rather than a ruler and have the ability to work independently while at the same time being part of a team;
8. Be dedicated and committed to the health of DA and have a desire to carry the message to the still suffering debtor;
9. Understand the difference between majority rule and group conscience and be willing to work within the group conscience;
10. Have a flexible attitude and the ability to work with other people even if the direction was not the first choice;
11. Have reliable and private access to a telephone, a computer, a printer, and email.
12. Have effective communication skills, including the ability to listen to others and speak honestly, the ability to write and deliver reports, the ability to follow-up on messages and engage in the group process with the GSB, and to the ability to use the telephone, email, and the Internet.
13. Have good time management and organizational skills.
14. Have the ability to travel twice a year or more on GSB business.
15. Have the willingness to use one's full name, address, telephone number, and email address in order to communicate effectively with the GSB and the General Service Office.

How do I nominate someone or myself for GSB Trustee?

A nomination consists of three items:

1. **A Letter of Intent:** This is a letter from the nominee stating his or her interest in GSB Service and that he or she meets the guidelines as described for a Class A or Class B Trustee. Please be

sure to include all contact information, including full name, address, telephone number, and email address.

2. **A Service Resume:** A resume/biography of the nominee showing prior DA service, other Twelve Step service, and any qualifications or experience that may be helpful to the DA General Service Board.
3. **A Letter of Recommendation:** A signed letter from the nominating person or group making the nomination and stating their knowledge of the nominee's experience in a service role or activity.

What form should the nomination package take?

The three items in the nomination package should ideally be emailed as an attachment (in Word, rtf, pdf, or jpeg formats) to the GSB Nominations Committee c/o the General Service Office at da-gso@debtorsanonymous.org. The package can also be mailed to the GSB Nominations Committee c/o the General Service Office, PO Box 920888, Needham, MA 02492-0009; however, keep in mind that email capability is essential to being able to serve effectively on the General Service Board.

Who can nominate a candidate?

Any GSB Trustee, GSR, ISR, Board Committee, Conference Committee (including the Convocation), GSR Group, Intergroup, DA group, DA member, or collection thereof may nominate a recovering debtor for GSB Service.

What is the deadline for submitting a nomination?

New Trustees may start at any time during the year, but are officially ratified at the annual World Service Conference. Ideally, to avoid a new Trustee serving more than a few months before being ratified, nominations should be received by the Nominations Committee by April 1. If approved, the new Trustee will begin serving immediately and attend the next World Service Conference.

How will I be notified if my nomination has been approved?

The Nominations Committee will notify each nominee of the outcome of the GSB review process by mailed letter to the address given by the candidate.

What happens if my nomination is not approved?

The GSB reviews each candidate's qualifications very carefully. The review process includes interviewing each candidate by telephone and/or email. The GSB is looking for candidates who have a history of consistent and effective DA service, a willingness to serve DA as a whole, and the ability to work well in the context of the spiritual group conscience process. Sometimes, after reviewing a candidate's service history, the GSB declines to approve a nomination. This does not mean that the candidate may not apply again in the future, after gaining more experience in DA recovery and service.

Why should I consider becoming a DA Trustee?

Here are ten reasons to become a DA Trustee:

1. To give back what I've been given.
2. To help DA live, prosper, and grow.
3. To maintain my own recovery.
4. To demonstrate the power of service to transform lives.
5. To understand how our organization operates.
6. To learn how to apply the DA Steps, Traditions, and Concepts to our service work.
7. To gain humility.
8. To practice leadership skills in a spiritual context.
9. To work with trusted servants who are working a rigorous recovery program.
10. To remember always that I am a part of DA and DA is a part of me.