



CAROLINA REGION OF NA H&I Subcommittee SPONSORSHIP BEHIND THE WALLS - Correspondence Guidelines

CRSBTW@GMAIL.COM

We are an NA step writing sponsorship project operating under the Hospitals and Institutions Subcommittee of the Carolina Region of Narcotics Anonymous. This may well be one of the most rewarding things you do for your recovery. The primary purpose of this project is to provide Sponsorship, through written Narcotics Anonymous step guidance, for any incarcerated addict desiring recovery within Narcotics Anonymous. • It is our purpose to provide Sponsors who are willing to correspond with any inmate who has the desire to work the Steps. It is our hope, that in our correspondence, we will help the suffering addict find the solution that we have found. In observance of the of the Correctional Facilities rules regarding mail and correspondence, the following is suggested guidelines from shared experience to help you when writing NA members on the “Inside”:

1. Potential Sponsors must have at least two years clean, actively participating in the NA Fellowship with a Sponsor, have worked through the first five steps in writing with a sponsor, have the endorsement of their area RCM or H&I chair, and the approval of their understanding of these guidelines by the CRNA H&I subcommittee.
2. In keeping with Tradition Twelve, we respect the anonymity of our correspondents. All correspondence will be sent through a Post Office Box, with an H&I subcommittee volunteer forwarding mail to other members, who are participating in the “NA Sponsorship Behind the Walls” program. No personal contact either in person or by phone is permitted. All correspondence should be received through the Hospitals and Institutions Subcommittee. Never give out your address or phone number. For your own protection and anonymity, always use a pen pal name. If your first name is part of that pen name, NEVER use your whole name.
3. When we engage in this type of service, it should always be men writing to men and women writing to women. Please refer to the following Narcotics Anonymous recovery and service literature that strongly support this suggestion. H&I Service Bulletin #5 Men working with Men, Women working with Women; Hospitals & Institutions Handbook Page 7; IP #11 Sponsorship Revised and the PR Handbook Page 112. Never write anything you don't want the world to read. **All correspondence is opened and subject to monitoring by the institution.**

4. Correctional Facilities have rules for sending literature. Most Correctional Facilities only allow inmates to receive literature directly from the publisher, you should always check with a facility before mailing books or literature. Photocopies of literature (no staples) included in your correspondence is usually accepted by the institution

5. If an inmate requests an NA book or booklet from you, the Hospitals and Institutions Subcommittee of the Carolina Region of Narcotics Anonymous will send an Introductory Guide to Narcotics Anonymous and potentially additional literature (Basic Text, SWG, IWHW) to the inmate upon your request if the budget allows.

6. NA members who are writing and/or Sponsoring an inmate should not visit that facility.

7. Remember, it only takes two addicts to have a meeting and writing is no different. Let the inmate know, that all forms of sharing whether in a meeting and/or writing, helps us as much as it helps them. Remind the inmate that they are never alone. We simply share our experience, strength, hope and being clean in recovery. Change happens as a result of working/applying the principles behind the 12 steps of recovery. We encourage you to be a step-writing guide through that process.

8. Encourage the inmate to participate in twelve step meetings available to them within the facility.

9. Prior to their release, we strongly suggest sending them an area/regional meeting schedule in the vicinity where they will be released. It is important to have a "game plan" and general knowledge of meeting places the first day they are released. Your relationship with this addict will come to an end upon release, and you should encourage them to find a homegroup and find a sponsor with which to continue their recovery.

In addition to and in alignment with the guidelines above, Volunteer Sponsors specifically agree to:

- 1) Communicate with sponsees in writing ONLY, responding to their letters within two (2) weeks.**
- 2) Utilize the CRNA Sponsorship Behind the Walls Project Mailing Address ONLY, as provided below.**
- 3) Respect the confidentiality of my sponsee.**
- 4) Refrain from using abusive or profane language in all of my correspondence.**
- 5) Maintain my focus on recovery through working the 12 Steps of Narcotics Anonymous.**
- 6) Refrain from providing sponsee with personal details; phone number, address, email address.**
- 7) Refrain from face to face meetings, visiting sponsee or arranging any meetings upon release.**
- 8) Refrain from supplying sponsee materials; such as envelopes, stamps, pre-stamped envelopes, writing paper, writing implements, books, tapes or any other items.**
- 9) Refrain from contacting anyone or relaying messages to anyone my sponsee might request.**
- 10) Refrain from compromising the 12 Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous or any facility guidelines.**
- 11) Refrain from commenting on any matter that might jeopardize the safety and security of the facility, staff, facility residents, outside members or anyone else. We have NO Opinion on outside issues.**
- 12) Certify that I have not been a victim of, or an accomplice of, a crime with any potential sponsee.**

Reasons for removal from program as a Sponsor :

- 1) Loss of Abstinence**
- 2) Non-fulfillment of Duties, (i.e. - not returning sponsee letters within the two (2) week timeframe)**
- 3) Providing personal information or relaying messages, packages or letters to anyone.**
- 4) Arranging any meetings with Sponsee upon their release from custody.**
- 5) Disregarding any of the 12 specific agreements listed in these guidelines and the Sponsorship Participation Request Form**

Thank you for taking part in your own recovery by sharing and caring the NA way so that "No addict seeking recovery need ever die."

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**Carolina Region Sponsorship Behind the Walls Project
5594-C Sunset Blvd. #137 Lexington, SC 29072**

Welcome Letter

DEDICATION AND PURPOSE: THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF THIS PROJECT IS TO PROVIDE SPONSORSHIP THROUGH WRITTEN NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS STEP GUIDANCE TO ANY INCARCERATED ADDICT DESIRING RECOVERY WITHIN NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS.

Dear _____

The Sponsorship Behind the Walls Project of the Carolina Region of Narcotics Anonymous has just received your letter. We are in the process of finding a recovering addict to write to you. In reality we may be unable to provide sponsorship in the strictest sense of the word, because in your situation many of the facets of sponsorship cannot be fulfilled. But we can provide you with a recovering addict willing to guide you in the steps of recovery in hopes that step guidance can be your bridge to recovery until you find a sponsor upon your release.

We suggest that you start your search for a sponsor in an NA meeting as soon as you are released. If you have 90 days or less before your release there is not time to develop a relationship with a step guide. Upon your release we're sure that you will be able to find a sponsor that will be able to meet all your needs. If you have less than 90 days until your release, please let us know where you will be released and we will provide you with information on where to find NA meetings and recovering addicts in that area. Addicts on the outside are able to choose someone to guide them through the steps by listening to other addicts in meetings and seeing how they live. The Sponsorship Behind the Walls Project has set up some guidelines so that we can try to assure that, though your circumstances make it necessary for us to choose your step guide for you, you will still receive guidance from someone who will help you grow in NA. All of the potential step guides have shared with this committee their commitment to their NA based recovery. They work all their steps in writing and have completed at least the first five with an NA sponsor. They have a minimum of 2 years clean and attend NA step

meetings regularly. We assure you that your step guide will be of the same gender and will have no prior knowledge or acquaintance with you prior to your incarceration.

Mail is collected from our PO Box once a week. After step guides have received their letters, a reply will be sent within 2 weeks. During the process of assigning a step guide to you, your very first letter was read anonymously, but all future **correspondence will be strictly confidential between you and your step guide. It is important that you understand, though, that every letter between you and your step guide will be subject to prison rules regarding review of mail and that the prison will be notified of your involvement with the Carolina Region's Sponsorship Project. Contact with your step guide will be limited to writing only** and cannot include requests for photos, drawings, pictures, messages to others, phone calls, rides, visits or any damaging personal information. We are bound by the 12 Traditions of NA and the rules of the prison.

You need to know that **if you have any questions or concerns about your relationship with your step guide or your needs for step guidance are not being met, you can write to the Carolina Region's Hospitals and Institutions Subcommittee, at 5594-C Sunset Blvd. #137 Lexington, SC 29072 and let them know.** There are times when the relationship with the person we choose to guide us through the steps doesn't work or stops working. Addicts on the outside have the option of choosing someone else, and you have options as well. Although you will not be able to choose the new step writing guide, you can request that we provide you a different individual to guide you through the steps. In order to protect your step guide's anonymity, step guides will be using "pen names". By using "pen names" we hope to avoid any problems which might impede the message of recovery. Please be patient with us, someone will respond to you in the near future.

Your friends in recovery,

the CRNA Sponsorship Behind the Walls Project



Carolina Region of Narcotics Anonymous
Sponsorship Behind the Walls Project – New Step Guide Request Letter
5594-C Sunset Blvd. #137 Lexington, SC 29072

Date: _____

Dear _____,

Enclosed you will find a letter received by the Sponsorship Behind the Walls Project from a new inmate requesting a Step Guide. Your contact's name is _____

Please remember to use only the pen name you picked and gave to the CRNA H&I subcommittee when you signed your participation request form as we want to be sure to get the letter to the addict that requested your service as soon as possible. It is imperative that you abide by the CRNA Sponsorship Behind the Walls guidelines and the 12 specific agreements you committed to on your Participation Request form. These guideline restrictions are in accordance with the traditions of Narcotics Anonymous and facility regulations. ALL of your correspondence will be reviewed by the facility.

In following our guidelines we ask that you respond to your new contact within 2 weeks.

Please mail your returned step guidance to CRNA Sponsorship Behind the Walls at the address in this letterhead. You may use your actual name and address on the envelope as we will place your material in a new envelope, but never use your whole name in your correspondence. If you have any questions and need further information, or have any changes or comments for the Sponsorship Behind the Walls project, please contact us by email or phone.

We thank you for your service.

the CRNA Sponsorship Behind the Walls Project

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