

Sponsorship behind the walls Correspondence Guidelines

We are a “NA SPONSORSHIP” program operating under the Public Relations subcommittee of the Michigan Regional Service Committee of Narcotics Anonymous.

This may well be one of the most rewarding things you do for your recovery. The primary purpose of this group is to provide Sponsorship, through the mail, for inmates who desire to work the Twelve Steps of 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. Our purpose is to remain clean, just for today, and to carry the message of recovery.

In observing the rules of the correctional Facilities regarding mail and correspondence, the following are suggested guidelines from shared experience to help you when writing NA members on the “Inside”:

- 1) Potential sponsors must have at least one year clean time, and be actively participating with a sponsor.
- 2) In keeping with Tradition Twelve, we respect the anonymity of our correspondents. All correspondence will be sent through a post office box, with a correspondence coordinator to forward mail to other members who are participating in the SBW’s program. No personal contact in person or by phone is permitted. All correspondence should be received through the Michigan Regional Service Committee. Never give out your address or phone number. For your own anonymity and protection, it is suggested you use your first name only or a pen name if you choose.
- 3) When we engage in this type of service, it should always be men writing to men, women writing to women. We believe it is best that no romantic involvements develop.
- 4) Never write anything you don’t want the world to read. All correspondence is opened and subject to monitoring by the institution.
- 5) Correctional Facilities have rules for sending literature. Most correctional facilities only allow inmates to receive literature directly from the publisher, so you should

always check with a facility before mailing books or literature. Photocopies are usually accepted. Most facilities do not allow inmates to receive stamps or pre-addressed, stamped envelopes.

6) If an inmate requests an NA book from you, the committee will send the inmate, upon your request, an Introductory Guide to Narcotics Anonymous.

7) NA members with correctional facility and H&I clearances may not correspond with inmates in those facilities.

8) We introduce ourselves briefly in our opening letter so the addict can get to know and identify with us. We always stay focused on recovery.

9) Remember, it only takes two addicts to have a meeting, writing is no different, so let the inmate know that like in all forms of sharing, this helps us as much as it helps him or her. Let them know they are never alone. We share our experience, strength, and hope, and being clean in recovery. Since 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.

10) Encourage the inmate to participate in twelve step meetings available to them in the facility.

11) Prior to their release, we strongly suggest sending them an area/regional meeting schedule where they will be released. It is important to have a “game plan” and knowledge of meeting places the first day they get out.

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.”

First Name Last Initial

C/O SBW

P.O. Box 51202

Kalamazoo, MI 49005

I hereby request to participate in the SBW program and agree to abide to all rules stated above. I also agree that I am representing MRSCNA and the NA program and will act accordingly to uphold the highest standards of conduct. If I fail to do so I can be removed from participation.

Signature of Applicant Date

Approved by Date