



**Region 51 of Narcotics Anonymous**

**Sponsorship Behind the Walls**

**Guidelines**

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## **Meeting Format**

### **Sponsorship Behind the Walls Meeting Format**

Opening Prayer

Read Twelve Concepts for Service in Narcotics Anonymous

Roll Call (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and Literature Coordinator)

Welcome new members

Approve minutes from previous meeting

Chair Report

Vice Chair Report

Treasurer Report

Secretary Report

Sponsor Reports

Old Business

New Business

Elections (if needed)

Open Forum

Agenda for next meeting discussed (if needed)

Closing Prayer

## **Twelve Concepts for NA Service**

1. To fulfill our fellowship's primary purpose, the NA groups have joined together to create a service structure, which develops, coordinates, and maintains services on behalf of NA as a whole.
2. The final responsibility and authority for NA services rests with the NA groups.
3. The NA groups delegate to the service structure the authority necessary to fulfill the responsibilities assigned to it.
4. Effective leadership is highly valued in Narcotics Anonymous. Leadership qualities should be carefully considered when selecting trusted servants.
5. For each responsibility assigned to the service structure, a single point of decision and accountability should be clearly defined.
6. Group conscience is the spiritual means by which we invite a loving God to influence our decisions.
7. All members of a service body bear substantial responsibility for that bodies' decisions and should be allowed to fully participate in its decision-making process.
8. Our service structure depends on the integrity and effectiveness of our communications.
9. All elements of our service structure have the responsibility to carefully consider all viewpoints in their decision-making process.
10. Any member of a service body can petition that body for the redress of a personal grievance, without fear of reprisal.
11. NA funds are to be used to further our primary purpose, and must be managed responsibly.
12. In keeping with the spiritual nature of Narcotics Anonymous, our structure should always be one of service, never of government.

## **Sponsorship Behind the Walls (SBTW) Committee Guidelines**

### **I. Mission Statement**

Our mission is to provide an opportunity for an addict who is incarcerated to work the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous.

### **II. General Purpose**

Our primary purpose is to provide a sponsor to work the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous to those people who are incarcerated and who are not able to meet potential sponsors at NA meetings. Our interactions will only be via mail, not by telephone, online, or in person.

### **III. SBTW Meetings**

Sponsorship Behind the Walls is a subcommittee of the Region 51 H&I committee. All SBTW meetings are open to NA members and any member has a voice on the floor.

- A. Quorum for the SBTW committee to conduct business is one more than 1/2 of the officers on the roll call.
- B. All business will be conducted on a consensus-based decision-making (CBDM) process.
- C. All financial expenditures (not including basic office and postal supplies) need a motion and approval by the SBTW committee.
- D. SBTW committee meetings are held once a month (last Saturday of the month) on a virtual format via Zoom. In order to protect the anonymity of the committee members, virtual meetings will not be recorded.

### **IV. Election of Officers**

In selecting trusted servants, we have a spiritual responsibility. If we place someone in a service position who does not have a working knowledge of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts, then we bear responsibility if this member is unable to perform their responsibilities in a manner consistent with our principles.

- A. Elections of officers will be held annually in July.
- B. An election is announced at SBTW committee meeting three (3) months prior to the election so that nominations may be solicited from the fellowship.
- C. When holding elections for the position of Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson is given a priority vote of confidence one (1) month (June) prior to the annual elections.
- D. Elections for these positions will be held once a year. The spirit of rotation is encouraged. A committee member is allowed to serve up to two (2) consecutive terms (two years) in a position, but is not expected to serve more than one term. If a member chooses to serve more than one term, an open election will be held in order to allow any members who qualify to also run for that position.

## **V. Election Process**

- A. An explanation of the position is read from the SBTW Guidelines before nominations are opened to establish each position's responsibilities.
- B. Nominations are opened and accepted from the floor.
- C. At the time of nominations, each nominee should state, in person, their qualifications for serving the fellowship as a whole in this position (state clean time, past service experience, any previous failures to complete a service commitment, any misappropriation of fellowship assets, and why they can serve as well as their willingness to serve the fellowship).
- D. Questions may be asked of the nominee at this time.
- E. Voting is done by a show of hands if there are more than two (2) nominations, the voting is a process of elimination until one (1) nominee receives a majority of those voting.

## **VI. Qualifications and Responsibilities of Officers**

### **A. Chairperson**

- 1. The qualifications of the Chairperson are:

A willingness to serve, has had a least two (2) years in the NA service structure, one (1) year service within the SBTW committee, and the willingness to give the time and resources to do the job. A qualified nominee for this position will have three (3) years uninterrupted abstinence from all drugs, leadership abilities, the ability to communicate, computer skills, and organizational skills.

- 2. The responsibilities of the Chairperson are:

- a. Attends all SBTW monthly committee meetings.
- b. Mentors the Vice Chairperson to assume the role of Chairperson in the following year.
- c. Maintains and updates sponsor and sponsee data using an internet database system, e.g., Google sheets. Keeps track of inmate correspondence using an internet database system, e.g., Google sheets..
- d. Collects mail from the SBTW post office box on a weekly basis.
- e. Follows all mailing procedures outlined in Section VIII.

### **B. Vice Chairperson**

- 1. The qualifications of the Vice Chairperson are:

A willingness to serve, has had a least one (1) year in the NA service structure, and the willingness to give the time and resources to do the job. A qualified nominee for this position will have three (3) years uninterrupted abstinence from all drugs, leadership abilities, the ability to communicate, computer skills, and organizational skills.

**Note:** The position of the Vice Chairperson is typically a two (2) year commitment. After serving for one (1) year as the Vice Chairperson, it is customary to serve as the next SBTW Chairperson after a priority vote of confidence is taken.

2. The responsibilities of the Vice Chairperson are:
  - a. Attends the monthly H&I administrative body meeting. The purpose of this is twofold: to gather information about any ongoing H&I business and to relate information/business from the SBTW meetings to the H&I committee.
  - b. Prepares initial response packets to send to inmates.
  - c. Learns all mailing procedures and prepares to assume the role of Chairperson.
  - d. Fills in for Chairperson upon their absence.
  - e. Orients new members to the SBTW committee.

### **C. Secretary**

1. The qualification of the Secretary are:

A willingness to serve, has had a least one (1) year in the NA service structure, and the willingness to give the time and resources to do the job. A qualified nominee for this position will have two (2) years uninterrupted abstinence from all drugs, leadership ability, the ability to communicate, knowledge of word processing programs, is computer literate, and has organizational skills.
2. The responsibilities of the Secretary are:
  - a. Maintains an accurate record of each SBTW committee meeting.
  - b. Types and emails minutes of the SBTW meeting to all committee participants within ten (10) days following the SBTW meeting.
  - c. Types and sends any letters or correspondence the SBTW committee so dictates.
  - d. Maintains records of the SBTW correspondence, the SBTW files, and archives.
  - e. Fulfills any tasks that may be assigned to the Secretary during the year.

### **D. Treasurer**

1. The qualifications of the treasurer are:

A willingness to serve, has had at least two (2) years in the NA service structure, and the willingness to give time and resources to do the job. Bookkeeping or accounting experience is suggested. The qualified nominee for this position will have four (4) years uninterrupted abstinence from all drugs, leadership ability, the ability to communicate, and organizational skills. The Treasurer must be financially stable and remain abstinent from gambling during their term.
2. The responsibilities of the Treasurer are:
  - a. Manages all SBTW financial resources.
  - b. Maintains a record for all incoming and outgoing monies through SBTW and presents an itemized report of finances at each monthly SBTW meeting.

- c. Maintains a fiscal yearly budget from July 1 through June 30.
- d. Maintains the petty cash fund and is responsible for disbursement of funds.
- e. Ensures that stamps and envelopes are readily available.
- f. Maintains an accurate balance and will report monthly balances with accumulated year-to-date totals, prudent funds, and operating expenses as part of the Treasurer's report.
- g. Disburses funds according to the direction of the SBTW committee.
- h. Any request made to Hospital and Institutions (H&I) for payment or reimbursement must include an itemized receipt.

**Note:** The SBTW Chairperson and Treasurer will prepare the annual budget and submit by June 30. The budget will be submitted to H&I by the Chairperson for consideration each year in the month of July. The fiscal year will begin in the month of July and continue through June.

## **VII. Resignation of Officers**

### **A. Voluntary**

This should be made in writing to the SBTW committee. Advance notice prior to leaving office is suggested and greatly appreciated.

### **B. Involuntary**

- 1. Any officer or other trusted servant elected by the SBTW committee who misses two (2) consecutive SBTW meetings without prior approval of the body is considered to have automatically resigned their position. At the end of the second missed meeting, the committee will then discuss the position of that elected trusted servant and make a decision of whether or not to reassign the position.
- 2. Relapse.
- 3. Misappropriation of fellowship and/or SBTW committee assets.
- 4. Impeachment.

## **VIII. Functions of the Committee**

- 1. All letters will be sent via the PO Box with no personal last names, addresses, or phone numbers of the sponsors, committee members, or anyone else given to the inmate. Sponsors will use a first and last (alias), as decided by the sponsor. Sponsor Agreement (attached) with these signatures will be filed with Sponsorship Behind the Walls committee.
  - a. Sponsor Contact: NA Sponsorship Behind the Walls, PO Box 28956, Las Vegas, NV 89126.
- 2. Sponsors from the Sponsorship Behind the Walls committee will have an individual inmate assigned by the committee after the sponsors have been oriented and inmates of the same



gender (when possible) become available. The Chairperson or Vice Chairperson will notify the new sponsors once they have been approved for the sponsorship program. The sponsor must have had no prior knowledge of his or her assigned inmate. This means the sponsor should have never met the person he or she will be assigned for sponsorship at any time during his or her life.

3. After an inmate goes through the initiation process and is assigned a sponsor, all correspondence between the sponsor and inmate will then be confidential.
4. The Chairperson then logs all incoming and outgoing letters by date, with name and facility of the inmate, sponsor, and phone number so that SBTW committee may make inquiries of the status between the sponsor and inmate. See section VI. A. 2. c. for more details.
5. While SBTW believes that inmates with incarceration time of one year or more will have more of an opportunity to work through the Twelve Steps with a sponsor, we will not turn away an inmate who has less than a year to serve. If an inmate has less than a year to serve and desires to start working the steps, the committee will assess their time to determine the best way to approach working the steps.
6. No arrangements for rides, visits, loans, phone calls, materials for corresponding, photos, books, drawings, tapes, or contacting family members or friends will be made between the sponsor and inmate.
7. Members of SBTW committee will not write any letters of recommendation to the parole board or any other entity on behalf of their inmate sponsee.
8. The Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous will be strictly upheld.
9. All rules and regulations of the facility will be strictly upheld.
10. Any inmate who thinks they have a problem with addiction, may write the Sponsorship Behind the Walls committee with any recovery-related questions or concerns at any time.
11. Sponsor Agreement must be signed by all sponsors.

## **IX. Inmate Criteria for Acceptance into SBTW Program**

1. Any inmate who thinks they have a problem with addiction may write the Sponsorship Behind the Walls committee with any related questions or concerns at any time. The inmate may request sponsorship if they are willing to work the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous.
2. Inmates with incarceration time of one year or more will be assigned a sponsor on a first-come basis; however, those with less than a year and a willingness to work steps with a sponsor will be considered based on a review by the SBTW committee.
3. Inmates will be screened in a three-step process by the Chairperson and/or Vice Chairperson.
  - a. Initial welcome packet with questionnaire (*Am I an Addict?* IP)
  - b. Requested essay of who they are and why they want to join the program.
  - c. Upon completing a & b, the inmate will be assigned a sponsor.

4. Must be willing to follow all rules and regulations of the facility.
5. If an inmate does not meet any of the following criteria, he or she will be sent information on how to access recovery material, other ways he or she might obtain a sponsor, and a meeting list to his or her local region/area.

## **X. Rules for Sponsors and Sponsorship Engagement**

1. Complete abstinence from all drugs for two (2) years.
2. Must have a working knowledge of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous through application.
3. The Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous will be strictly upheld.
4. Must carry a clear Narcotics Anonymous message.
5. Must always keep in mind that they are representing the NA fellowship and the SBTW committee when interacting with inmate.
6. Uses the *Narcotics Anonymous Step Working Guides* to work the steps with a sponsee.
7. Must have no convictions for at least two (2) years or more.
8. Must be off parole.
9. Must meet all the requirements of the screening process, i.e., attends orientation and signs the Sponsor Agreement.
10. Men sponsor men and women sponsor women.
11. A willingness and availability to reply to any letter within two (2) weeks or less from the date the sponsor receives the letter is **mandatory**; the sponsor is responsible to report that they are no longer available to be an active member in the SBTW committee or with their assigned inmate.
12. Must abide by the SBTW Guidelines for sponsorship, but also those of the institution, and may be asked to resign as a sponsor to an inmate if they are unable to do so at any time.
13. Must keep in contact with the SBTW committee. This can be done by attending committee meetings or communicating via email or phone. If the committee loses contact with a member and cannot reach them after several attempts, the member will then be removed from the committee.
14. No arrangements for rides, visits, loans, phone calls, materials for corresponding, photos, books, drawings, tapes, contacting family members or friends will be made between the sponsor and inmate.
15. SBTW committee sponsors cannot write any letters of recommendation to the parole board or any other entity on behalf of the inmate sponsee.
16. Will not send the inmate, any books, tapes, or related items, unless they are NA-approved material or otherwise approved by the SBTW committee.

## APPENDIX A

### Sponsorship Behind the Walls Sponsor Orientation Checklist

This checklist is designed for the person giving the orientation. During orientation, it is critical that new sponsors understand their responsibilities as a sponsor and follow the SBTW Guidelines. This can be achieved by explaining the following items:

- ☐ The scope of sponsoring an inmate, i.e., understanding the guidelines presented in the Sponsorship Agreement as well as the time necessary to invest in this commitment.
- ☐ Must always keep in mind that they are representing NA and the Sponsorship Behind the Walls committee when interacting with an inmate sponsee. As such, the sponsor must carry a clear NA message to the sponsee.
- ☐ Be willing and available to reply to any letter within two (2) weeks or less from the date the sponsor receives the letter. This is **mandatory**. The sponsor is responsible to report that they are no longer available to be an active member in this committee or with their assigned inmate.
- ☐ Maintain confidentiality and the sponsor's anonymity by using their alias when communicating with the inmate sponsee.
- ☐ Maintains contact with the SBTW committee. This can be done by attending committee meetings or communicating via email or phone.
- ☐ It is imperative to communicate with the committee regarding the status of your sponsor/sponsee relationship.
- ☐ Does not mail anything other than step work or NA-approved literature to the inmate sponsee. Books **MUST** be mailed directly from a publisher. All books must be soft cover. (If a sponsor orders directly from NAWS, in order to maintain their anonymity, NAWS Customer Service should be contacted directly at 818-773-9999, ext. 133 or [custserv@na.org](mailto:custserv@na.org).)
- ☐ Does not provide any letters of recommendation to the parole board or any other entity/organization in the name of the inmate sponsee.
- ☐ Does not supply the inmate with materials such as envelopes, stamps, pre-stamped envelopes, writing paper, and/or writing implements.
- ☐ The content of the sponsor's letters is to remain on topics outlined by the program of Narcotics Anonymous and are to adhere to the SBTW Guidelines.
- ☐ Only the *NA Step Working Guides* is to be used while working the steps with an inmate sponsee. Any other method of working the steps should be presented to the SBTW committee for discussion.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Inmate Copy**

#### **Sponsorship Behind the Walls Sponsorship Committee Guidelines**

##### **I. General Purpose**

Our primary purpose is to provide a sponsor to work the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous to those people who are to be incarcerated in an institution and are not able to meet potential sponsors at their local NA meetings. Our interactions will only be via mail, not by telephone, online, or in person. Our mission is to ensure that any addict seeking recovery through a working knowledge of the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous can do so even in an institution.

##### **II. Functions of the Committee**

- a. All letters will be sent via the PO Box with no personal last names, addresses, or phone numbers of the sponsors, committee members, or anyone else given to the inmate. Sponsors will use first names only, as decided by the sponsor. Sponsorship Agreement with these signatures will be filed by the Sponsorship Behind the Walls committee.
- b. Sponsors from the Sponsorship Behind the Walls committee will have an individual addict assigned by the committee in the order that the sponsors have qualified and that addicts of the same gender (when possible) become available. The committee will notify the new sponsors once they have been approved for the sponsorship program. THE SPONSOR MUST HAVE HAD NO PRIOR KNOWLEDGE OF THEIR ASSIGNED INMATE. THIS MEANS THE SPONSOR SHOULD NEVER HAVE MET THE PERSON THEY WILL BE ASSIGNED FOR SPONSORSHIP AT ANY TIME DURING THEIR LIFE.
- c. After the Chairperson or the committee reads the first letter, all correspondence between the sponsor and inmate is confidential.
- d. The Chairperson then logs all incoming and outgoing letters by date, with name and facility of the inmate, sponsor, and phone number so that inquiries of the status between the sponsor and inmate can be made.
- e. Inmates with incarceration time of one year or more will be assigned a sponsor on a first-come basis; however, those with less than a year and a willingness to work steps with a sponsor will be considered based on a review by the SBTW committee
- f. NO ARRANGEMENTS FOR RIDES, VISITS, LOANS, PHONE CALLS, MATERIALS FOR CORRESPONDING, PHOTOS, BOOKS, DRAWINGS, TAPES, CONTACTING FAMILY MEMBERS OR FRIENDS WILL BE MADE BETWEEN THE SPONSOR AND INMATE.
- g. The Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous will be strictly upheld.
- h. All rules and regulations of the facility will be strictly upheld.

- i. Only women will write women, and only men will write men.
- j. Any inmate who thinks they have a problem with addiction may write the Sponsorship Behind the Walls committee with any recovery-related questions or concerns at any time.

### **III. Sponsor's Requirements**

- a. Completed abstinence from all drugs for two (2) years.
- b. Must have a working knowledge of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous through application.
- c. Must be off parole.
- d. Must have no convictions for at least (2) years or more.
- e. Must meet all the requirements of the screening process.
- f. Men with men, and women with women.
- g. Must carry a clear NA message.
- h. Must always keep in mind that they are representing Sponsorship Behind the Walls committee when interacting with inmate.
- i. A willingness and availability to reply to any letter within two weeks (2) or less from the date the sponsor receives the letter is mandatory; the sponsor is responsible to report that they are no longer available to be an active member to this committee or their assigned inmate.
- j. Must abide by the guidelines of not only the SBTW committee, but those of the institution, and may be asked to resign as a sponsor to an inmate if they are unable to do so at any time.

## APPENDIX C

### Sponsorship Agreement

1. It is imperative to communicate with the committee regarding the status of your sponsor-sponsee relationship.
2. Maintains contact with the SBTW committee. This can be done by attending committee meetings or communicating via email or phone.
3. Limit my contact with the inmate to writing only.
4. Refrain from using abusive or profane language in my correspondence.
5. Respect the confidentiality of the inmate.
6. Refrain from supplying the inmate materials including envelopes, stamps, pre-stamped envelopes, writing paper, and writing implements.
7. Refrain from sending the inmate, any books, tapes, or related items, unless they are NA-approved material or otherwise approved by the SBTW committee.
8. Refrain from supplying the inmate with my telephone number, address, and any other information prohibited by the SBTW guidelines.
9. Refrain from visiting the inmate or having any contact with them outside the facility.
10. Refrain from contacting anyone the inmate might ask me to contact. This includes writing letters of recommendation to the parole board or any other entity on behalf of the inmate.
11. Refrain from revealing any damaging personal information as outlined in the SBTW guidelines.
12. Attest to not having been a victim or an accomplice of a crime with someone who is presently incarcerated as a result of that crime.
13. Use sensible/reasonable alias. SBTW will ask the sponsor to reconsider their alias if the committee feels it does not meet sensible/reasonable criteria.
14. Be willing to have your personal information placed in the cloud such as Google docs/suite, etc. or stored on a paper copy by prior arrangement with the chair.
15. Use *The NA Step Working Guides*.

I understand that every letter I send into the facility where the inmate resides could be opened and checked for contraband. The content of the letter is to remain on topics outlined by the program of Narcotics Anonymous and discretion will be exercised in writing about any matter that could be construed as to jeopardize the safety and the security of the facility, its staff, its residents, this committee, or anyone else.

I understand that failure to adhere to any of the aforementioned articles will result in cessation of my participation in the Sponsorship Behind the Walls committee program and may put the whole program at risk.

The SBTW committee will notify me when I am approved as a sponsor and when I have been assigned an inmate.

Sponsor Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ SBTW Alias: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_