

Suggestions for the Temporary Contact

1. Remember you may be the first outside member of A.A. the contact meets. As such, you are representing all of us. It is important to be relaxed, friendly, and interested.
2. Keep the general conversation related to recovery. Avoid discussing the new member's treatment or confinement. We have no opinion on outside issues.
3. Take time to introduce the new person to as many A.A. members as possible. Do not, however, push your contact. Some people are very shy.
4. Invite them to the "meeting after the meeting" if there is one. Show them we are not "stupid, boring, and glum" and that sobriety can be enjoyable.
5. Your commitment is usually finished after attending six meetings or as soon as a sponsor has been located. Use good recovery related judgment about when to end the relationship.
6. Make sure the newly released A.A. member receives meeting schedules, phone numbers, and A.A. literature.
7. Encourage the new member to attend meetings as often as possible, to find a home group, and to get a sponsor as soon as possible. Let them know even a temporary sponsor now would be acceptable.
8. Share your experience, strength, and hope with the newly released member, just as you would with anyone else new to A.A. in your community.
9. Be familiar with the suggestions of the BTG program contained in this pamphlet. We don't offer or imply any other service and assistance unless we personally want to provide it.
10. Respect the full anonymity of the new member.

Remember

Experience has shown it's best to take the new member to a meeting within 24 - 48 hours of release.

You are not responsible for the new member's attitude or actions in or out of the meetings.

It is suggested that you do not loan money or anything of value, or become a personal taxi service.

This program is based on attraction rather than promotion. Relax and enjoy the experience and so will the new member.

We are not to act in any reporting or communication capacity regarding the A.A. member and the justice system. We do not intercede on their behalf with any decision from their administration.

Some professionals refer to alcoholism and drug addiction as "substance abuse." Therefore, non-alcoholics are sometimes introduced to A.A. and encouraged to attend meetings. Anyone may attend open A.A. meetings but only those with a drinking problem may attend closed meetings.

Suggested Reading for the Volunteer:

Bridging the Gap
Where Do I Go From Here?
Information on A.A.
A.A. At A Glance
A Newcomer Asks
Questions and Answers About Sponsorship

For More Information or to Volunteer for BTG:

District _____ BTG Coordinator

OR:

Area 69 Corrections (or) Treatment
P.O. Box 648
Sandy, Utah 84091-648

www.utahaa.org

For AAs on the Outside

Temporary Contact Volunteer

Utah, Area 69 Bridging the Gap Prerelease Contact Program

A Pamphlet For Temporary Contact Volunteers

Connecting Inside A.A. Members to the A.A. Community

Temporary Contact Form

Please add my name to the list of Temporary Contacts. I would like to become a Bridging the Gap volunteer in our District.

Name: _____ M / F

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Home Group: _____

Location: _____

District: _____

Corrections _____ Treatment _____ Both _____
(Tear off this portion of the pamphlet)

Please notify the BTG Coordinator when there are changes in your contact information

Return this application to your GSR or:

District _____ Bridging the Gap Coordinator
or (Corrections or Treatment Committee) c/o:

If the District Coordinator fails to make contact send to:

Area 69 Corrections (or) Treatment
P.O. Box 648
Sandy, Utah 84091-648
Web site: www.utahaa.org

A.A. Bridging the Gap Program

Dear A.A. Member,

The Bridging the Gap Program, or BTG, connects the new member being released from confinement to A.A. in their community. You are being asked to be that connection, what is called a Temporary Contact. You may volunteer to serve in Corrections, Treatment, or both.

When a new, soon-to-be released member contacts us, we match that person to a Temporary Contact in the community where they will be living. If you have volunteered for this type of service, we will call you, get the okay, and then send you their contact information.

Your job is simple. You contact the new A.A. member and arrange to take them to an A.A. meeting. Preferably within 24 - 48 hours of their release. Your commitment is taking them to as many as six meetings.

During this time, you help them become acquainted, get phone numbers, and perhaps locate a sponsor and a home group. You introduce them to others in A.A. so they have a broad, healthy base, then you are available to serve as a Temporary Contact for another person.

Please note: *It is not intended that you become their sponsor, even temporarily. It is best if the word "sponsor" is not used to describe this type of service. The term Temporary Contact is preferred.*

If you are willing to be the hand of A.A. when a confined member reaches out for help, complete the Temporary Contact form and give it to your GSR, or to your District BTG coordinator, Corrections, or Treatment chairperson. Or, mail it to one of the addresses on the lower left side.

Volunteers need to adhere to the rules facilities have regarding contact with inmates and clients, both while they are in the facility and after they are released. The BTG coordinator can provide the necessary information for each institution.

Bridging the Gap Program Procedures

1. Those currently in correctional and treatment facilities, are eligible for BTG when they have less than three months of confinement left.
2. The new member fills out a pre-release form and mails it to the Bridging the Gap Coordinator or to the corrections or treatment committee responsible for processing temporary contact requests. The coordinator will notify the inside member when the application has been received and is being processed.
3. A temporary contact is then located and given the confined members contact information. Each District maintains its own database of volunteers.
4. The temporary contact should communicate with the inside member within two weeks to confirm contact. It is suggested to remain in closer contact as their release date approaches.
5. Some treatment clients may require a phone call instead of a letter to expedite the contact arrangements for their first meeting depending on their expected release date.
6. The inside A.A. member and the temporary contact arrange a meeting following the time of the new member's release. The inside A.A. provides such information as date of release, arrival time in the local area, and an address and phone number.
7. The temporary contact will then meet the new member at an agreed upon time and place to attend their first A.A. meeting together. It's important to be on time.
8. It is suggested that the first meeting be viewed as a regular twelfth step call and that you take another A.A. member with you. Use the same guidelines you would with any newcomer.
9. Review the A.A. Bridging the Gap program with the new member in order to minimize the possibility of misunderstandings. Remind them it is only temporary.