

Behind The Walls Sponsorship FAQ

❖ Getting started

How do I become a behind the walls sponsor?

◆ Attend a Behind The Walls Sponsorship (BTWS) subcommittee meeting, contact your local Area Liaison, and/or complete the application process on-line on the Central California website.

www.ccrna.net/btws

Or write to:

BTWS PO Box 1206, Ventura, CA 93002-1206

What are the qualifications to be a sponsor?

◆ The main requirements are to have a minimum of three (3) years clean, working knowledge of the NA 12 Steps and 12 Traditions, to be off probation and parole, and to have no felony or misdemeanor convictions within the last year. Additional information can be found in the Guidelines and Agreement documents.

What is the approval process?

◆ Once you have completed the application and agreement process attend a subcommittee meeting to introduce yourself so the subcommittee can get to know you.

Are there committee meetings I should attend?

◆ Each Behind the Walls Sponsor is required to be in contact with their local Area Liaison, and also encouraged to attend any BTWS meetings.

Are there other ways for me to be of service if I do not meet the qualifications for sponsorship or I am not interested in sponsoring?

◆ Yes. There are many ways to participate on the subcommittee. Join the monthly meetings to find a way to get involved.

Can I still sponsor if I have not been to prison/jail?

◆ Absolutely yes! Sponsors only need to carry the message of recovery; you'll share the opportunity to learn a new and different way of life.

❖ Sponsorship Questions

What is the difference between BTWS and regular sponsorship?

- ◆ BTW sponsors use guidelines that are very specific.
- ◆ Your Sponsee is assigned to you by the Subcommittee.
- ◆ All Sponsor/Sponsee interactions are by correspondence only.
- ◆ NA members with correctional facility clearances may not Sponsor inmates in those facilities.

Why men with men, women with women policy?

- ◆ This is a requirement to participate in the BTWS program - per Guidelines.

What if I don't click with my sponsee or visa versa?

- ◆ Take this issue to the BTWS Subcommittee and ask to be reassigned.

❖ What resources do I have to help me?

- ◆ Resources are supplied by the BTWS Subcommittee and include Guidelines, Dos and Don'ts, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) sheet, Sample letters, Presentations, and more that will be accessible to you.
- ◆ The BTWS Subcommittee meets monthly. Sponsors are encouraged to attend meetings and ask questions.
- ◆ Each Area has a Liaison who can be contacted with any questions that may arise between BTWS Subcommittee meetings.

❖ Questions about the letters

What can I say in my Letters?

- ◆ What you share with your BTW Sponsee(s) is less personal, focusing on the 12 steps and 12 Traditions and sharing your experience, strength, and hope in a more general way. You are not a penpal.
- ◆ Only use current fellowship-approved literature with your Sponsee(s).
- ◆ Never write anything you don't want the world to read. All correspondence is subject to monitoring by the institution.

What if I stop getting letters?

- ◆ It is suggested that you keep writing once per month for at least 3-6 additional months. Your sponsee may have been moved to another facility or may not be receiving or sending mail for other reasons. If you still do not receive any mail ask the committee to drop that Sponsee and you will be reassigned another Sponsee.

Will I be safe?

- ◆ For your own anonymity and protection, you will be required to use your first name only or a pen name if you choose to do so.
- ◆ There should be no in person or phone contact (including after release) between Sponsor and Sponsee.
- ◆ Never give out your personal information such as: address, phone number, home group, Area, etc.
- ◆ In keeping with Tradition Twelve, anonymity is respected. All correspondence from Sponsees is sent through the SBTW PO box. A Postal Coordinator will forward mail to you and the other Sponsors participating in the BTWS Program.

❖ Questions about the inmates we serve:

Can I refer an inmate to this program?

- ◆ Yes. Write to:

BTWS PO Box 1206, Ventura, CA 93002-1206

and request a Sponsor.

Why aren't we allowed to visit or have phone calls with our inmate sponsee(s)?

◆ For your protection and to avoid personal relationship boundary issues, it is highly recommended that you not have a personal relationship with the inmate(s) you are sponsoring.

◆ The BTWS relationship is less personal and more general than regular sponsorship. The BTWS relationship is strictly centered around sharing your experience, strength, and hope.

Why aren't we allowed to send things to our inmate sponsee(s)?

◆ For your protection and to avoid personal relationship boundary issues. also Generally this is a standing request from the facilities.

◆ Commonly used terms

◆ Short to the gate
Less than one year until release date

◆ On paper
On parole or probation

◆ Off paper
Off parole or probation