

AREA 11 ANSWERING SERVICE VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

Guidelines are compiled from the shared experience of AA members in various service areas. They also reflect guidance given through the Twelve Traditions and the General Service Conference (US and Canada). In keeping with our Tradition of autonomy, except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole, most decisions are made by the group conscience of the members involved.

SUGGESTED QUALIFICATIONS:

1. At least one year of sobriety
2. Active involvement in A.A and familiarity with twelve step work
3. Have a sponsor
4. Contact with Answering Service Volunteer Coordinator

The answering service receives the original call. If the professional answering service cannot field the call, they call people from the list of volunteers (men for men; women for women) until they find someone available to respond to the call. If you are the person they contact or the person directly answering the phones these guidelines may be helpful.

1. Before you return their call, you can dial *67 to prevent your number from appearing on their caller ID.
2. Be certain you are speaking to the person who called, **do not break their anonymity.**
3. Give your first name only and state that you are a member of Alcoholics Anonymous.
4. Identify the needs of the caller (AA information, ride to a meeting, etc.).
5. Ask when they had their last drink - they may be in DT's.
6. You may face some different circumstances:
 - a. If they want to go to a meeting, offer to meet them there or offer a ride; whichever you choose. Please be sure to bring someone else if you are offering a ride.
 - b. If they are too drunk to talk, offer to call them later or ask them to call the answering service when they are sober.
 - c. **IF YOU THINK THEY ARE IN TROUBLE, THREATEN SUICIDE OR TO HARM THEMSELVES, CALL 911.**
 - d. If the caller wants another 12-Step program, refer them to 211.
 - e. If the person calling is a relative or friend of an alcoholic, suggest that they contact Al-Anon or Al-Ateen (1-888-825-2666) or meeting info only: (1-800-344-2666).
 - f. If the caller wants speakers for schools, clubs, etc., refer the call back to the Answering Service Chair. They have the referral numbers for Cooperation with the Professional Community (CPC) and Public Information (PI) Chairs.
 - g. If you cannot handle the call, let them know someone else will be contacting them. Then call your sponsor or an AA friend for help.
 - h. If the caller is from another answering service district, talk to them, and *if necessary* refer them to the correct district answering service (See A.A. schedule – Page 6 for numbers).
7. It is recommended that you don't give out your phone number until the person gets to a meeting. **DO NOT GIVE OUT ANYONE ELSE'S NUMBER.**

TOOLS YOU MAY NEED

- A.A. schedules
- CT Alcoholics Anonymous WEBSITE: www.ct-aa.org
- Big Book, Step Book, Pamphlets

Please note: If you need help, contact your sponsor or your District Answering Service Chair.