



Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

AA TEMPORARY CONTACT / BRIDGING THE GAP VOLUNTEER



Connecting

Inside AA Members

To the Outside

AA Community

BRIDGING THE GAP PROGRAM

Dear AA Member,

Bridging the Gap (BTG) is a program to help connect the new member being discharged from a facility to AA in their community. As a Temporary Contact, you are that connection.

Past experience shows that attending an AA meeting on the day of release is one of the most effective ways for an inmate to make a sober transition and maintain continued sobriety in the free world. It is strongly recommended that an inmate who is an AA member have an AA contact on the outside (preferably someone with 1+ years sobriety and of the same sex) who contacts the inmate and arranges to meet him or her on the day of release to help “Bridge the Gap” between the institution and AA outside a prison setting.

When a soon-to-be discharged member contacts us, we try to 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 your okay, and then send you the person’s contact information.

Your job is simple. After you make contact with the new AA member, you arrange to take them to an AA meeting, preferably within 24 hours of discharge. Your commitment is taking them to as many as six meetings.

During this time, you help them get acquainted with AA, get phone numbers and perhaps get a sponsor and home group. You introduce them to others in AA, so that 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” not be used to describe your BTG service. The preferred term is “Temporary Contact” and it means just that.

If you are willing to be the hand of AA when a member from a facility reaches out for help, complete the information on the last page of this booklet and give it to your GSR or anyone in your area’s Corrections Committee, or email to corrections@aaemass.org.

Please have one year of continuous sobriety in Alcoholics Anonymous to make a commitment to this type of 12-Step work.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE TEMPORARY CONTACT:

Remember you may be the first outside member of AA the contact meets. As such, you are representing the AA Fellowship. It is important to be relaxed, friendly and interested.

1. Keep the general conversation related to recovery. Avoid discussing the new member's discharge, housing, finance, support (other than AA) or other matters. We have no opinion on outside issues.
2. Take time to introduce the new person to as many AA members as possible. Do not, however, push your contact. Some people are shy.
3. Invite them to the "meeting after the meeting" if there is one. Show them we are happy, joyous and free and that sobriety can be enjoyable.
4. Your commitment is usually finished after attending six meetings or as soon as the newly discharged member locates a sponsor or joins a home group. Use your judgement about when to end the relationship.
5. Make sure the newly released AA member receives a meeting schedule, phone numbers and AA literature. Show them pamphlets and literature available at the meetings you attend.

6. 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.

7. Share your experience, strength and hope with the newly discharged member, just as you would anyone else new to AA in your community.

8. Be familiar with the suggestions of the BTG program contained here. Try not to offer or imply any other service and assistance unless you personally want to provide it.

9. Please respect the complete anonymity of the new member.

10. Treat this as you would any other 12-Step call and take an AA buddy.

AA Responsibility Pledge

I am responsible, when anyone, anywhere reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that: I am responsible.

Thank you for your service and willingness to be a Temporary Contact.

Full name:

City:

Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

Telephone:

Email address:

Home group:

Location:

Date:

Please return this completed portion to your GSR or your Corrections Committee; you can also email it to corrections@aaemass.org.