

Sierra Sage Region Behind The Walls Sponsorship Program

Operating Guidelines

Approved by RSO/RSC 01/09/2023

Previously Operating as H&I 2013/Approv 2014 DH
Previously Approved by RSC Nov 2015 DH & Nov 2016 DH
(BTWH&I Separation) Approved RSC May 22, 2017 SM
Operating Revisions Proposed September 2018 AB
Proposed (Pandemic) Draft Revisions/ Approval by RSC November 2019 SC 2nd Draft
Revisited for approval Jan 2020-2021 TF/SM
Proposed Final Draft Revisions for Approval to RSO/RSC Jan 2022- Dec -Jan 2022 SM/PR
Approval by RSO/RSC Jan 2023 - SM Chair/AM V Chair/Susan Sect/Lind Alt Sec

Approved RSO/RSC 01-09-2023
POSTED SSRNA WEBSITE 1/09/2023

Behind The Walls Sponsorship Subcommittee Guidelines

I. General Purpose / Mission Statement

Our primary purpose is to provide a sponsor to work the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous to those people who are incarcerated in an institution. Our interactions will only be via mail, not by telephone or through visitation, or any other resource. Our mission is to ensure that any addict seeking recovery through a working knowledge of the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous has the opportunity to do so, even in an institution.

II. Membership

The Subcommittee shall consist of Administrative Officers: Chairperson, Vice Chair, Secretary, Mail Coordinator, File Clerk(s), and Sponsors. (Can be changed as deemed necessary by the Chair or a subcommittee decision (CBDM). If voting is used, the standard is one (1) vote per person. Chair only votes in a tie)

III. Functions of the Subcommittee

A. All letters will be sent via the BTWSP P. O. Box, with no personal information given to the inmate. Sponsors will use first names only, as decided by the Sponsor. "Correspondence Only" form. "Sponsor Agreement" forms, (Pg 5) with these signatures will be filed with Behind the Walls Sponsorship Subcommittee and kept in each Sponsors folder.

B. Sponsors from the SSR Behind the Walls Sponsorship Subcommittee will have an individual inmate assigned by the Subcommittee Chair, in dated order that the sponsors have qualified with the SubCommittee Chair via Email, Regional Website in person or by mail or telephone. Inmates will be assigned sponsors of the same sex. The Subcommittee Chair 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 that they should have never met the person they will be assigned for sponsorship at any time during their lives.

C. After the Chairperson receives first letters from the Sponsee by Mail, and tracks the letters via database (Incoming/Outgoing/Postage/Envelopes) reads the first letter, a Welcome Letter & Assign#1 to the Sponsee, w/Reply Page, and Chair Sends #2 & #3 in the same fashion until Sponsee has completed all 3 Assignments. After then the Chair sends the full packet (all 8 pages) to the Sponsee and when the Sponsee sends Page 5 back, signed, the Chair assigns the Sponsee a Sponsor, by number, (and sends an "Sponsee Assignment" letter/and assigns 1,2,&3 to the Sponsor, and a "Sponsor Assignment" letter to the Sponsee) all correspondence between the sponsor and inmates is confidential from that date forward.

- **THE SPONSOR MUST WRITE TO THE SPONSEE WITHIN 14 DAYS FROM THAT DATE**

D. The Chair is responsible for maintaining the SSR BTWSP “Database” and contact information for the sponsors and sponsee’s so the subcommittee and Mail Coordinator may make inquiries of the status between the sponsor and inmate. (The Archive Cabinet is kept for 7 years in the Regional Storage, anything older than 7 years is destroyed). The Secretary shall purge older docs annually in January.

E. Only inmates with incarceration timelines of 12 months or more will be assigned a sponsor, and Sponsees must write one letter every 90 days to remain active in the Database.

F. NO ARRANGEMENTS FOR RIDES, VISITS, LOANS, PHONE CALLS, MATERIALS FOR CORRESPONDING, PHOTOS, BOOKS, DRAWINGS, TAPES, NON N.A. APPROVED LITERATURE, CONTACTING FAMILY MEMBERS OR FRIENDS WILL BE MADE BETWEEN THE SPONSOR AND INMATE. Sponsors of the subcommittee may choose to remain in contact with their sponsee’s after their release at the sponsor’s discretion.

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 Behind the Walls Sponsorship Subcommittee with any recovery related questions or concerns at any time. Our response may include providing information pamphlets, meeting directories, or any other approved NA information regarding the concerns of the inmate, at the discretion of the Chair and Vice Chair.

K. All members of the administrative body are required to attend virtual meetings via online format 1 time each 12 month period, or by calling the Chair and reporting active *Sponsees*. Loss of abstinence, non-fulfillment of duties, or missing 1 consecutive Sponsor reports periods (12 months) without prior notification may be grounds that you will be resigned from your commitment in order to insure that our guidelines are being followed and our primary purpose is being carried out.

L. The Subcommittee meets bi monthly at “5:00 pm on the last Sunday at the: Zoom Meeting ID # 876 290 5567.

M. Chair meets in Regional Meeting /Odd months.

N. If necessary the Chairperson may decide if the letters are qualified or “not qualified”, and may write to the Inmate if needed, and send a NQL Letter to the inmate to inform them of the disqualification.

O. If necessary, any member of the Subcommittee may be removed by a simple majority vote of the Subcommittee or RSC Committee.

P. Sponsor Assignment letters will also be written to the inmate when a new Sponsor is assigned or reassigned.

Q. All Sponsee’s that complete the 12 Steps through the BTWS Program will receive an official completion letter within 30 days of notification of completion from their Sponsor.

IV. Qualifications and Responsibilities of Administrative Body:

A. Chairperson:

1. Is elected by the group conscience of the Subcommittee (Every 2 years), via email and/or using Social Media/Zoom with the Secretary taking tally and making all election posts and announcements. Web pages and social media/Zoom can be used.

2. Complete abstinence from all drugs for five (5) years.

3. Must have one (1) year experience in Regional H&I Service/Regional BTWSP Service or as Area H&I Chair and a working knowledge of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous through application.
4. Mediates all Subcommittee (on line or Zoom) meetings/emails, with the general understanding of consensus-based decision making. (CBDM)
5. Prepares a report for each R.S.C. meeting and makes all motions on behalf of, and is the voice of the Subcommittee at R.S.C.
6. Coordinates, *and works with its Administrative body and is the Single-Point of accountability and* is responsible for all work done by the Subcommittee.
7. Institutes guidelines, updates and ensures that traditions are being upheld.
8. Coordinates screening of all applications. (i.e. sponsees or sponsors)
9. Performs initial correspondence with inmates. (i.e. Welcome Letter & Assign #1-#3) when requested.
10. Maintains communication with sponsors via email, phone, mail, Social media/Zoom and/or bi-monthly reports, as needed.
11. Is available to answer questions from the Area Subcommittees.
12. Prepares a budget with the Vice Chair to be approved by the subcommittee to then be submitted for the approval of the RSC for the upcoming year. [*Current Budget 2021-2022 \$155.00 plus 1 roll [100] stamps] . Reviewed if a change is needed.
 - ADDED: Budget Increased by Vote at RSC 5/2024 (increased \$10.00 in Postal increase (July 2024) to \$165.00. + 1 roll of stamps.
13. Maintain communication with NAWS by email and/or phone annually.
14. Service commitment shall be for a rotation period of two (2) years. 2 terms allowed, and being prepared to mentor for 1 year as part of the final term.
15. Facilitates all subcommittee meetings via e-mail and or Zoom
16. Coordinates with Behind The Walls Sub-Committee Program Mail Coordinator and others to check and distribute mail, minimum 1x per week.
17. To send separate Facility Packets to the prisons Programs Warden, (Or Warden) for review with a written cover letter to all the Nevada prison facilities one time per year regarding our program and what we offer to the inmates and prison. Always offering the Warden, and Prison Staff a unique Q&A Prison Panel with a 72 hours minimum notice. Including our Guidelines and a copy of the Prisoner Packet (Pg 1 - 8) for the Prisons review. All facility packets, copies of letters and correspondence with facilities will be achieved and kept for 7 years.
18. To track all Sponsee letters in/out in the tracking Database to help us prepare and view what we are currently spending.
19. To keep updated the "Database", Cross-Reference List and Inmate Information List (Members and Inmates on the program {Past & Present} updated on a regular basis. (Letters Every week) Totals every other month (in Coordination with RSO/RSC Meetings) and keep it up to date for regular use, and operations of the Subcommittee, as needed.
20. [*Current Budget 2021-2022 \$155.00 plus 1 roll [100] stamps] 58.00 =\$213]
21. Annual Facility Packets (AFP) and Prison Panel Participants (PPP)
(Changes as Postage increases)
 - a. Chairperson Coordinates with H&I Regional Chair the facilities by sending each of the

Nevada Prisons an Annual Facility Packet (AFP) in the month of November (January at the latest), which will include a cover letter, a current package of forms sample, literature and whatever else the subcommittee decides within our financial means and budget.

b. TheAFP/packet explains to the prison that we serve through written communication to ensure that the information that we are providing to their inmates about our program(s) is accurate and along the lines of the prison program guidelines and our H&I and BTWSP subcommittee guidelines.

c. We send all Nevada facilities (Warden or/Programs Wardens) AFP packets, flyers, updates, and options to have a Prison Panel and information by representing the PPP by way of the Panel visiting the prison, when requested and approved by the Prison Warden, as a Q&A PP Panel. It can be done in person or by Zoom.

d. To have (The Regional PPPanel) in alternating odd month's (6) per year. PPP via Zoom Meeting and to do practice Q&A discussion(s) about the individual programs to prepare for a PPP when it is requested. [More can be seen in the PPP Section below in #IX.]

e. PPP Panel Subcommittees can include H&I chairs, PR Chair's and BTWSP Chair as needed and scheduled. Chair, VChair, and any qualified members, to bring and form a Q&A panel presentation when requested by a Prison shall be announced and formed 30 days in advance and 72 hours advance notice by the Prison.

f. Zoom PPPanel Meeting will practice every other odd Month to have Panel work prepared in advance in case of a request. Practice is held currently as needed as BTWSP Schedules bi-monthly end of month subcommittee meetings.

g. PP (Facility) Packets will be mailed January every year.

B. Vice Chair:

1. Is elected by the group conscience of the Subcommittee (Every 2 years), via email and/or using Social Media, or Zoom with the Secretary taking tally and the Vice Chair and Secretary making all election posts and announcements. Web pages, social media or email can be used.

2. Complete abstinence from all drugs for 3 years.

3. Must have one (1) year experience in Regional H&I service/1 year BTWSP Service or as an Area Chair or Area H&I Chair. Must have a working knowledge of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous through application.

4. Works with the Chairperson to ensure the smooth operation of the Subcommittee and steps in and performs the duties of the Chairperson when absent, learning the database and its use.

5. Advises and coordinates with the webmaster for updating the Sierra Sage Regional Website.

6. Service commitment shall be for a period of two (2) years.

7. Prepares a budget with the Chair to be approved by the subcommittee to then be submitted for the approval of the RSC for the upcoming year, in the month of November, no later than January.

8. Works with Chair when necessary to *receive* completed mail, prepare assignments, and send any and all packets and then assign sponsees to sponsors.

C. Secretary:

1. Is elected by the Behind The Walls Sponsorship Subcommittee *via in person, email*

and/or using Social Media with the Outgoing Secretary taking tally and making all election posts and announcements. Outgoing Secretary shadows the new Secretary for a period of 6 months.

2. Complete abstinence from all drugs for *suggested one (1) year*.
3. Must have suggested one (1) year experience in Group or Area level service and a working knowledge of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous through application.
4. Suggested to have computer and clerical skills.
5. Must keep an accurate set of attendance spreadsheets, minutes of all Subcommittee meetings, e-mails, and learning session topics discussed; they should be ready for distribution to all Subcommittee members within 14 days via in person, email, social media, facebook page, messenger or Zoom.
6. If necessary, may be removed by a simple majority vote of the Subcommittee.
7. Service commitment shall be for a period of two (2) years; with mentorship to rotate to Chair for 2 years/2 terms.
8. Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary or Mail Coordinator, will retrieve mail from the BTWSP PO Box and help log, then distribute, by hand or by mail to the appropriate place.
9. All Subcommittee members must maintain a level of availability to the Subcommittee Chairperson, and the sponsors through phone/email, text, social media and Zoom communication.
10. Works with Chair and Vice Chair to maintain letters and paperwork to sponsors and sponsee's.
11. To help BTWSP, the Sub Committee maintains records of mail, postage, tracking Letters In/Out, and supplies used.

D. Sponsor:

1. Completed abstinence from all drugs for two (2) years.
2. Must have completed the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous with a Narcotics Anonymous sponsor.
3. Must have a working knowledge of the Twelve Traditions through application.
4. Must be off parole and/or probation.
5. Must have had no convictions for at least 1 year or more.
6. Must meet all of the requirements of the screening process. (i.e. print form; fill out & sign; and assigned next Sponsee by Chair/Vice Chair via email, phone, or text/Zoom.
7. Men with men, and women with women.
8. Must carry a clear N.A. message and have an N.A. sponsor.
9. Must always keep in mind that they are representing NA Behind the Walls Sponsorship Subcommittee when interacting with inmate(s).
10. A willingness and availability to reply to any letter within two weeks or less from the date the sponsor receives the letter is mandatory.
11. Must abide by the guidelines of not only our BTWSP Subcommittee, but those of the prison institution(s), and may be asked to resign as a sponsor to an inmate if they are unable to do so at any time.
12. Must attend 1 time minimum every 12 months, via email, phone, text or multimedia/Zoom, reporting to the coordinator and/or liaison in the same manner.
13. If necessary, may be removed by a simple majority vote of the Subcommittee.
14. Must be willing to only use NAWS approved literature. (NA Step Working Guide

only.

15. Must be willing to maintain anonymity through the use of an alias name. 16. The sponsor is responsible for reporting that he/she is no longer available to be an active member in this Subcommittee or their assigned inmate.

16. Must be familiar with the H&I/PI/BTWSP Do's and Don'ts.

17. Must be willing to use your own funds to maintain correspondence.

V. Elections of Officers:

1. Nominations in July and Elections to be held in September of even years *via email, phone, text or Zoom*.

2. At the discretion of the subcommittee, per CBDM, special elections may be held for all positions.

3. No positions can be held more than two consecutive terms in the spirit of rotation.

4. All Nominations and elections of the Chairperson must be approved by RSC

VI. Subcommittee Budget:

1. \$213.00 total quarterly budget. (No Budget will be received/taken March & September of each year) *The increase of \$58.00 is for stamps if needed and shall increase as the price of stamps increase*) A Budget will be revisited every two (2) years to make sure that is still a sufficient amount to conduct Subcommittee business

2. Any Budget change requests shall be submitted at a general session of the R.S.C. and approved by the Subcommittee Chair and RSC; at RSC and with R.C.M.'s, and dispersed through the Regional Treasurer. A "Budget" is known as "*The development of an annual project agenda and list of possible future expenditures*" and is important in the establishment and continuation of the BTWSP Subcommittee.

3. The Budget will not reflect the BTWSP PO Box 12932, Reno, Nv. 89511: cost or any USPS increase annually) as it is to be paid by the Regional Service Committee. Now Paid through November 2022/3, and each year thereafter if needed.

VII. Removal From Position:

- Any Relapse is immediate grounds for removal of any and all positions.

VIII. Amendment to BTWSP Guidelines:

- Must be submitted in writing via email, and at the RSC SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING BY THE BTWSP CHAIR and must be voted and approved by all voting members of the BTWSP Subcommittee and within a 30-day turn-around.
- Then it must be taken to RSC for vote and approval.

IX. Prison Panel Participants (PPP) * (Shared with H&I (if needed) AND BTWSP)

1. Chair, Vice Chair Men's/Women's/ Mail Coordinator, / Panel Participants, and Liaison(s). The H&I Regional Chairperson, Each area's H&I Chairperson; and other jobs designated may be involved in the PPP (Prison Panel) if they are available or if needed, for further use with Prison communications. Keeping with the primary purpose of carrying the message to prisoners via Mail, Zoom, or other media (Tablets) or answering Questions to the Prison through a Panel Environment.

a. PPP - Other Positions needed:

1. Designated Panel Members can be (Regional BTWSP Chair , Regional H&I Chair,

Area H&I Chairs (6) , Regional PI Chair, Area PI Chairs (6) /other Members doing Panel Training) are to be qualified volunteers that meet Panel and prison requirements per the Behind the Walls Sponsorship Subcommittee Guidelines; will respond to any requests from Prison facilities for any Q&A requests. (Minimum 3 persons, Maximum 7 persons) are to go to or service any Prison as a Panel. PPP may be done in person or *using Social Media*

2. Complete abstinence from all drugs for two (2) years.

3. Must have one (1) year experience in Group or Area level service and a working knowledge of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous through application.

4. If necessary, may be removed by a simple majority vote of the BTWSP Subcommittee.

5. Service commitment shall be for a period of one year for Area members, and two (2) years for Regional Members who wish to join the PPP Panel.

6. All members of the PPP subcommittee are requested to give reports via email, Social media, Zoom, Messenger, to the subcommittee Chair, 1 x every 6 months

X.Facility Packets (FP) and Prison Panel Participants(PPP) :

1. Chairperson Coordinates with the facilities by sending each of the Nevada Prisons an Annual Facility Packet (AFP) in any month between JAN - JUNE (at the latest), which will include a cover letter, a current package sample, literature and whatever else the subcommittee decides within our financial means and budget.

Calls can be made only by the Chair & Vice Chair to Parole & Probation, Legislature, Attorney General, and Prison Program Wardens regarding packets sent to them and Tablets and funding for prisoners to attend meetings, work steps, and communicate via email their personal 12 step writing. Packets are only a first step in the PPP Panel so that we can continue to try and get tablets for inmates working the BTWSP.

2. The AFP/packet explains to the prison that we serve through written communication to ensure that the information that we are providing to their inmates about our program(s) is accurate and along the lines of the prison program guidelines and our BTWSP subcommittee guidelines.

3. We send all Nevada facilities (Warden or/Programs Wardens) AFP packets, flyers, updates, and options to have a Prison Panel and information by representing the PPP by way of the Panel visiting the prison, when requested and approved by the Prison Warden, as a Q&A PP Panel.

4. To have (The Regional PPPanel) in alternating odd month's (6) per year at the subcommittee meetings. PPP practice Q&A discussion(s) about the individual programs to prepare for a PPP panel when it is requested by a Prison.

5. Panel Subcommittees to include H&I chair, PI Chair, and BTWSP Chair & Vchair, and any qualified members, to bring and form a Q&A panel presentation when requested.

6. Zoom PPPanel Meeting with Practices when scheduled to have Panel work prepared.

7. BTWSP is working with other Regions for Panel and Parole possibilities and online meeting possibilities for the future. (Arizona, New Mexico)

XI. Amendments

1. Any Amendments to these Guidelines shall be approved at the Subcommittee first then presented at RSO/RSC by the Chair of BTWSP for approval of the Sierra Sage Region.