

AA Bridging the Gap Program

Dear AA Member,

The Bridging the Gap program connects the new member being discharged from a facility (treatment center) to A.A. in their community. You are being asked to be that connection, this is called a Temporary Contact.

When a new, soon-to-be discharged 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 talk to about the individuals needs and situation and discuss this. If you have agreed to be a temporary contact, we will relay your contact information to this individual and it will be their responsibility to contact you.

Once the individual has contacted you your work begins. We are looking to get this individual to a meeting within 24 to 48 hours of their discharge. It may be asked of you to give this individual a ride to their first meeting. During this time, you will help them become acquainted in a meeting and with fellow AA members, get phone numbers and perhaps locate a sponsor and a home group. You will introduce them to others in A.A. so they have a broad, healthy base to start their recovery journey on.

Please Note: It is not required 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 a helping hand of A.A. when a member from a facility reaches out for help. Please complete the Temporary Contact form and return it to the Bridging the Gap contact coordinator. Their information is included on the contact form.

Volunteers need to adhere to the rule's facilities have regarding contact with the residents, both while they are in the facility and after they are discharged. The BTG coordinator can provide the necessary information for each facility.

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 discharge. 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 happy joyous and free 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 judgement 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 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 discharged member, just as you would anyone else new to A.A. in your community.
9. Be familiar with the suggestions of the BTG program contained in the pamphlet. We don't offer or imply any other service and assistance unless we personally want to provide it.
10. Please respect the complete anonymity of the new member.