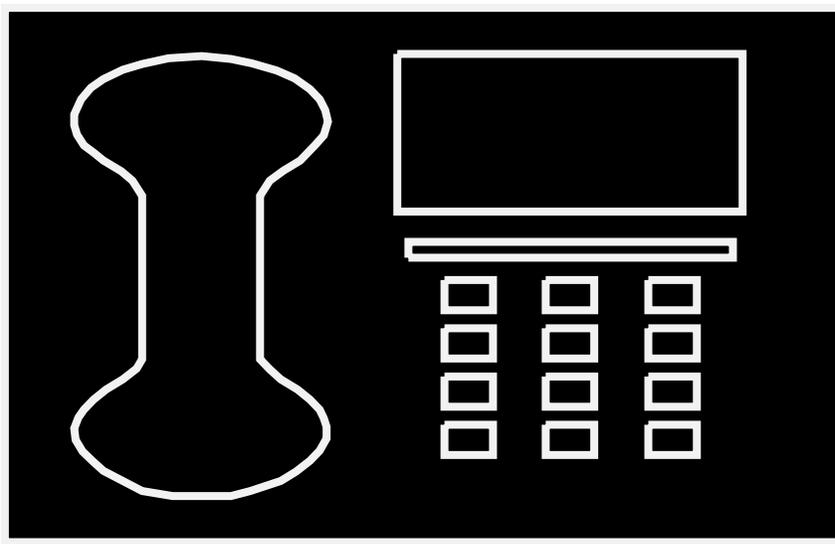




Phonelines Handbook

Rio Grande Regional Service Committee of
Narcotics Anonymous

2017



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History	
Date	Description of any changes
Sept 24, 2017	Approval draft Updates for new PBX phone system, reorganize, add flowchart, and phone log

Introduction

As a volunteer for phonelines you are providing a valuable service. Volunteering for the phonelines is a great way to give back, **“We Can Only Keep What We Have by Giving It Away.”**

The first Narcotics Anonymous member the caller will come in contact with is usually the phoneline volunteer. The response time and the attitude of a volunteer can have a lasting impression on the caller. This is a position of great responsibility.

Purpose

A phoneline volunteer is a Narcotics Anonymous member whose primary objective is to direct the potential newcomer to a Narcotics Anonymous meeting or direct questions about our fellowship to the appropriate subcommittees.

Suggested Requirements

- Ⓝ One year continuous clean time and attend meetings regularly (active member of Narcotics Anonymous)
- Ⓝ Knowledge of the Twelve Steps, Traditions, and Concepts of Narcotics Anonymous
- Ⓝ Must attend and complete a Phoneline Training Session

Reasons for Removal

- Ⓝ Request to be removed
- Ⓝ Relapse or loss of clean time
- Ⓝ Failure to respond to callers or phoneline service
- Ⓝ Taking physical, emotional, sexual or financial advantage of a caller

How it Works

- Ⓝ The caller dials 800-925-4186 or one of the [local Area numbers](#) to access the pre-recorded meeting list, speak with a recovering addict in English or Spanish, or leave a message.
- Ⓝ If you are on the list to receive calls from around the region, calls may come from any area in the region. [See List of all hotline numbers](#) on page 11.

- Ⓝ The regional phoneline blasts the call to all volunteers on the regional phoneline list. When the volunteer answers, they are prompted that this is an NA call and to press any key when ready (This keeps it from going to voicemail). The call is taken by the first person to answer and press any key.

Guidelines for Taking Calls

The following are basic guidelines for taking calls, every call will be different. If you are not sure how to handle a call or an issue that comes up please contact the Phonelines Chair for further guidance. Also see the Flowchart for Taking Calls on page 13.

- Ⓝ The number one objective is to get the caller to a meeting.
- Ⓝ We want to give the caller the message of recovery: “any addict can stop using, lose the desire to use, and find a new way of life.”
- Ⓝ Respond promptly and be warm and friendly
- Ⓝ Remain objective and non-argumentative
- Ⓝ Don’t preach or use judgmental words.
- Ⓝ Don’t try to persuade some to stop using
- Ⓝ Don’t project your own issues into the call.
- Ⓝ Don’t glorify active addiction.
- Ⓝ We do not endorse or make recommendations about other programs or agencies
- Ⓝ Don’t make promises or guarantees to callers about what Narcotics Anonymous will do for them
- Ⓝ Take the time to check a current schedule so you give accurate information.
- Ⓝ The Phoneline is the first introduction to Narcotics Anonymous for many addicts. Speak accordingly. Connect with your higher power before returning a call. (example: Take a moment to say the Serenity Prayer).

What Narcotics Anonymous Does NOT Do

- Ⓝ Operate, recommend, or endorse Detox Units, Recovery houses, or Halfway Houses
- Ⓝ Crusade, solicit, or try to persuade anyone to join us.
- Ⓝ Keep records of membership, or case histories
- Ⓝ Make any type of medical or psychological diagnoses or prognosis
- Ⓝ Provide any type of social services
- Ⓝ Provide any type of counseling
- Ⓝ Accept money from outside sources. (see the 7th tradition)

Special Considerations

Sometimes a caller will use the Narcotics Anonymous Phonenumber as a counseling service. Remember that we are primarily an information line. Volunteers are not counselors or psychologists and cannot help solve life issues or counsel callers. The following are some guidelines to handle such calls:

- Ⓝ If the caller tends to talk for a long time and the conversation is not getting anywhere:
 - Give the caller information
 - Politely end the call
 - Suggested ways to end the call:
 - “I need to end this call in case another addict is trying to get through for help.”
 - “It sounds like you have a lot going on; I’m not a trained counselor so I can’t help you solve these problems, but I encourage you to go to a meeting where you can learn from other addicts’ experience, strength, and hope.”
- Ⓝ Suggestions to callers who says they can’t or won’t go to a meeting because of:
 - Fear:
 - Share your experience as a newcomer
 - Let them know what happens at a meeting
 - Assure them that they won’t be singled out or required to say or do anything.
 - Offer to meet them there or have another addict meet them there.
 - Transportation:
 - Offer to give them a ride, if you are willing, and never go alone
 - Try to find them a ride with two or more addicts
 - Suggest public transportation if available
 - Childcare Issues:

- Encourage the caller to bring their children to an open meeting.
- If their children are in school, tell the caller about daytime meetings.
- Still Using:
 - Let the caller know, “The only requirement is the desire to stop using.”
 - Tell the caller to come anyway as long as they don’t have any drugs or paraphernalia on them.
- Hopelessness
 - Share your own experience
 - Tell the caller they have nothing to lose to try it.
- Other Obstacles:
 - Share your experience

Do's And Don'ts

🌐 Do's:

- Be kind, courteous, and helpful
- Ask questions
- Keep calls brief
- Remain calm
- Remain objective
- Give accurate information
- Respect anonymity of the caller and fellow addicts
- Follow the Twelve Traditions

🌐 Don'ts

- Don't argue with people whose views of addiction or recovery differ from yours or Narcotics Anonymous
- Don't try to persuade the caller to quit using
- Don't use foul language
- Don't give medical advise
- Don't use the phonenumber as a dating service
- Don't glorify active addiction
- Don't make promises or guarantees about what Narcotics Anonymous will do for them
- Don't project your own issues
- Don't preach or use judgmental words

Feedback Session

Each Phonenumber member may be given a Phonenumber Log (see example on page 14) to aid in gathering data for the feedback session of the local subcommittee meeting. This may vary depending on the Area. It's intention is to help the subcommittee to know what changes may need to be made to better serve callers. The following should be included:

- Ⓝ The date and time
- Ⓝ Type of caller
- Ⓝ The nature of the call
- Ⓝ How the caller heard about NA
- Ⓝ Action taken
- Ⓝ Special information needed to complete the call. (Ex. Did they contact the Phonenumber Chair for information on how to handle the call?)

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is to protect the caller, the phonenumber volunteer, and other Narcotics Anonymous members. As a phonenumber volunteer we ask that you follow the following guidelines.

- Ⓝ When a caller asks for a certain member, never confirm or deny that person is a member of Narcotics Anonymous.
- Ⓝ Never give out another member's name or number to anyone even if the caller is law enforcement.
- Ⓝ If the caller asks for a RGRSC officer or any other trusted servant, take the caller's name and number and have that trusted servant call them back.
- Ⓝ If you get a request for a speaker or research information take the caller's number and have the local Public Relations Chair or another appropriate subcommittee call them back.

Safety

Phoneline volunteers need to be sure to put their safety and recovery first. Phonelines is an informational line; we are not a taxi service or a counseling service. Phoneline volunteers are not required to meet or give rides; it is at their own discrimination. The following guidelines are to protect the phoneline volunteer:

🚗 Giving rides

- Suggest public transportation
- Use your best judgment
- Try to meet in a public place
- Don't meet somewhere that might endanger your recovery
- If you meet at a callers home:
 - Always take another addict with you (never go alone)
 - Let someone know when and where you are going and when you expect to be back.
 - If your instinct tells you not to go, don't go
 - Do not go in the callers house
- Never make a stop on the way, especially at the callers request
- Make clear to the caller that they should not be holding any drugs or paraphernalia

📖 Suggested material to have with you:

- Schedules
- Little White Books
- NA IP's (information pamphlets)
 - See the Phonelines Chair or local Literature Chair for literature

👥 Meeting callers:

- Offer to meet at a meeting and talk after the meeting
- Try to meet in a public place, if it's not possible to meet at a meeting
 - Use your best judgment
 - Never meet somewhere that might endanger your recovery
 - Always take another addict with you (never go alone)
 - Make clear to the caller that they should not be holding any drugs, paraphernalia, or weapons.
 - Let someone know when and where you are going and when you expect to be back
- Meet at a callers home only as a last resort
 - Use your best judgment
 - Never meet somewhere that might endanger your recovery
 - Always take another addict with you (never go alone)
 - Make clear to the caller that they should not be holding any drugs or paraphernalia
 - Let someone know when and where you are going and when you expect to be back.

- Ⓢ Suggested material to have with you:
 - Schedules
 - Little White Books
 - NA IP's (information pamphlets)
 - See the Phonelines Chair or local Literature Chair for Literature

Family and Friends

Addiction is a disease that affects the whole family or environment where a using addict lives. Therefore, many calls come from family or friends of addicts. Narcotics Anonymous does not deal with these problems. Even though we are here primarily to help the addict, it is important to give these callers some time and support. By listing ourselves in the telephone directory, we invite calls from the public. We ought to treat callers kindly and talk to anyone who reaches out for help.

- Ⓢ Briefly inform them about Narcotics Anonymous
- Ⓢ If the addict is ready for help:
 - Direct them to an Narcotics Anonymous meeting
 - Suggest that the addict call the phonenumber
 - If the addict is with the caller ask if they are willing to talk
 - Offer to go to an open meeting with the addict
- Ⓢ Suggest the caller contact Nar-Anon (be sure to let the caller know Narcotics Anonymous is not affiliated with Nar-Anon)
- Ⓢ Keep in mind that the caller could be the addict

Crisis and Medical Calls

The phonenumber service is an informational service only and is not qualified to handle emergency situations. Never give medical advice, stopping using can be considered medical advice. Follow the following Guidelines if you receive such a call:

- Ⓢ Effects of certain drugs
 - Refer the caller to the Poison Control (Number is in the list at the end of this hand book)
- Ⓢ If the caller has overdosed
 - Remain Calm
 - Try to get the caller to hang up and call 911
 - If they can't or won't call 911, see if you can get their address so you can hang up and call 911 for them. If you feel it is appropriate, you can call them back and keep them on the phone until EMTs arrive.
 - Do not, under any circumstances, give medical advice or try to help directly yourself.

- Ⓜ If the caller is suicidal
 - Always take a suicide call seriously. Never assume it is a joke. It's impossible to tell over the phone, especially if the caller has been using.
 - Remember we are not trained in suicide prevention.
 - Urge them to call the local suicide hotline or 911
 - Do not, under any circumstances, go to the caller's location and try to help directly yourself.

Referral's Within Narcotics Anonymous

A phonelines volunteer may receive calls outside of the scope of phonelines that needs to be referred to a different Subcommittee. If this happens take the caller's name and numbers and contact the chair of that subcommittee. If you are not sure forward the information to the phonelines chair.

- Ⓜ Calls that should be transferred to Public Relations
 - Calls from media, (TV stations, Radio stations, Newspaper, etc...)
 - Calls requesting an Narcotics Anonymous speaker or presentation
 - Calls requesting literature
 - Calls from people conducting research

- Ⓜ Calls that should be transferred to Hospitals & Institutions
 - Treatment Centers requesting a meeting
 - Institutions requesting a meeting
 - Detention Centers (jails) or prisons
 - Any other Facility requesting a meeting

Referral's Outside of Narcotics Anonymous

Phoneline volunteers may receive calls from callers who need services outside the scope of Narcotics Anonymous. The phonelines volunteer can give referrals to other agencies; the volunteer must let the caller know that Narcotics Anonymous is not affiliated or endorses any specific organizations. Giving this information is a courtesy. Volunteers can use their judgment regarding the appropriateness of giving referrals to other agencies. A list is provided at the end of this handbook.

Helpful Numbers

Ⓝ Narcotics Anonymous Numbers

Regional Phonelines Coordinator Tom K.....408-857-3438
 Regional Chair
 Regional Vice Chair Stuart H.....915-241-8117
 Hospitals & Institutions Fermin G.....505-974-3451
 Rio Grande Region www.riograndena.org800-925-4186
 P.O. Box 90207, Albuquerque, NM 87109
 Narcotics Anonymous World Services www.na.org818-773-9999

Rio Grande Region Helpline Numbers

<i>Narcotics Anonymous Rio Grande Region Member Areas</i>		
<i>Name of Area</i>	<i>Locations</i>	<i>Number</i>
Greater Albuquerque/Bosque Area	Albuquerque, Rio Rancho, Gallup, Bernalillo, Los Lunas, Socorro, Moriarty, Edgewood, San Ysidro, Central & Western NM	800-798-6649 Local Help Line 866-925-4186 Regional Help Line
Four Corners Area	Aztec, Bloomfield, Farmington, Durango & Cortez, CO and surrounding communities	505-324-1807 Local Help Line 866-925-4186 Regional Help Line
Northern New Mexico Area	Santa Fe, Taos, Espanola, Okeyowingeh Pueblo, Las Vegas and surrounding communities	800-804-4706 Local Help line 866-925-4186 Regional Help Line
Pecos Valley Area	Carlsbad, Clovis, Portales, Roswell, Hobbs, Eastern NM	800-370-4927 Local Help line 866-925-4186 Regional Help Line
Lower Organ Mountain Area	Las Cruces, Silver City, Deming, Alamogordo, Ruidoso, Truth or Consequences, Southern NM	575-635-6193 Local Help Line 866-925-4186 Regional Help Line
El Paso Area	El Paso & Anthony, TX	800-249-9428 Local Help Line 866-925-4186 Regional Help Line

- Ⓢ Numbers **not** affiliated with Narcotics Anonymous
 - **It is important that when phoneline volunteers give these numbers out that they always explain that Narcotics Anonymous is not affiliated with nor does Narcotics Anonymous recommend or endorse any of these programs, organizations, or services.**

Emergency – For emergencies.....911

Poison Center – For people asking questions about effects of drugs....800-222-1222

Suicide Prevention – For callers who may be suicidal.....800-273-8255

Runaway Hotline – For runaways.....800-786-2929

National Sexual Assault Hotline – For rape victims..... 800-656-HOPE

CO Mental Health Crisis Line.....844-493-8255

NM Crisis and Access Line.....855-662-7474

TX Mental Health Crisis Line ACCESS.....800-621-1693

Alcoholics Anonymous – 12 step program (alcohol) www.aa.org.....212- 870-3400

Al-Anon-support for alcoholics’ families www.al-anon.org.....757-563-1600

Nar-Anon-Support for addicts’ families www.nar-anon.org.....800-477-6291

Flowchart for Taking Calls

Phoneline Flowchart

