

# Phoneline learning Day

Revision 1.2  
Sept 16, 2017  
Tom K. (408) 857-3438  
[tom@tomkondo.com](mailto:tom@tomkondo.com)

# A New Phonenumber system

In 2016 the Rio Grande Area changed phonenumber systems.

We went from an answering service with humans to an automated phone tree.

Why? Cost and Speed

A human answering service costs about \$6000 a year

An automated phone tree is about \$140 a year per number

This allows us to have not only a Regional number but also a local number for each Area.

The human answering system tried to connect callers to NA volunteers by calling volunteer one at a time.

The automated system calls multiple volunteers in parallel so the caller usually talks to a volunteer quicker.

# Area Phone Tree

Announcement  
This is the XXX Area NA Hotline  
If this is medical emergency dial 911  
**If you need a Spanish speaker press 1 now\***  
If you need meeting info,  
It's available on the web at [riograndena.org](http://riograndena.org)  
or press 2  
If you need to talk to an NA Volunteer press 3  
For all other concerns press 4  
To repeat this message, press 9

Forward to Regional Spanish  
call forwarding group

Call the Area volunteers phone group  
If no answer, automatically calls a  
Region wide phone group

Meeting Info Menu to select a day  
for meeting info which provides all  
meetings in that Area on that day

Monday  
Tuesday  
Wednesday  
Thursday  
Friday  
Saturday  
Sunday

Voicemail Menu to leave a message  
Select the appropriate voicemail for  
Area services

Area Chair

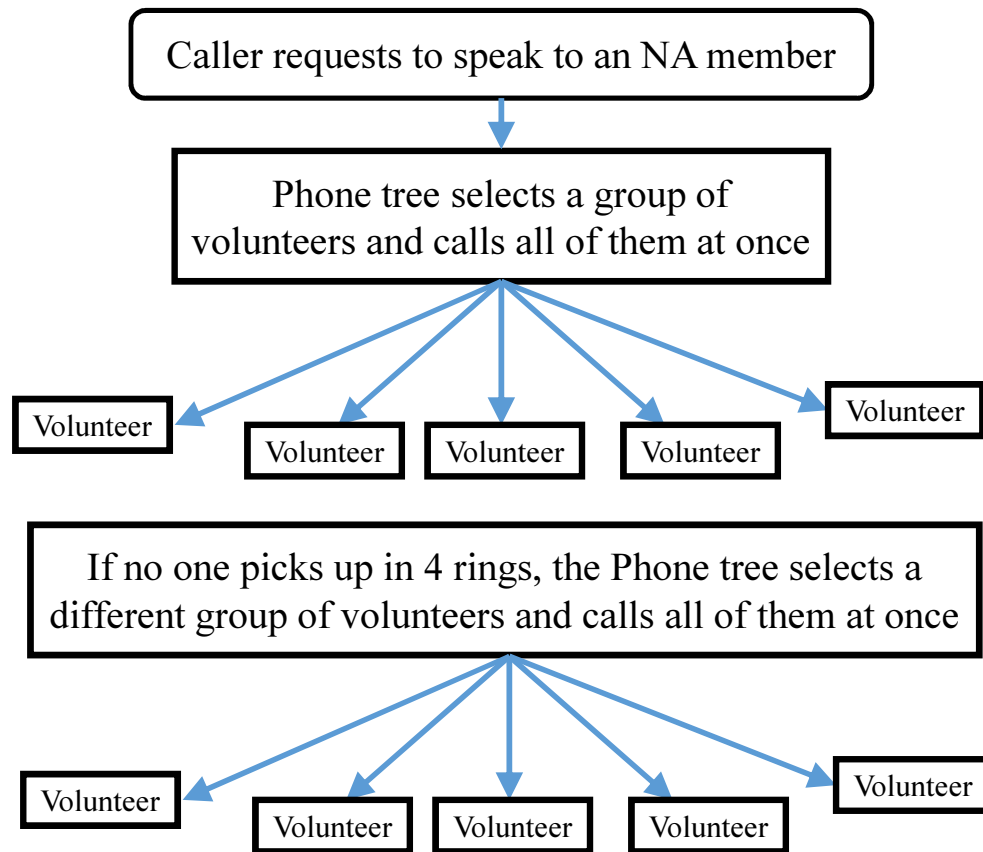
H&I

Phoneline

Activities

***\*In Spanish***

# How a Volunteer Receives a Call



The Caller hears:

Please hold while we transfer you to Narcotics Anonymous. If you remain on hold we will try to connect you or you can press any key to leave a message.

The Volunteer hears:

You have a call for Narcotics Anonymous. Press any key to accept the call

The first volunteer to press a key is connected to the caller. This eliminates a call going to voicemail.

There may be multiple call groups of volunteers for the Area and there are also Regional call groups to take calls if all the Volunteers in the Area are busy.

# Meeting Info Menu

If you want information on a meeting in [Your Area]

- On Monday press 1 - provides a list of all the meetings in the Area on Monday
- On Tuesday press 2 - provides a list of all the meetings in the Area on Tuesday
- On Wednesday press 3 - provides a list of all the meetings in the Area on Wednesday
- On Thursday press 4 - provides a list of all the meetings in the Area on Thursday
- On Friday press 5 - provides a list of all the meetings in the Area on Friday
- On Saturday press 6 - provides a list of all the meetings in the Area on Saturday
- On Sunday press 7 - provides a list of all the meetings in the Area on Sunday

To repeat this message press 9

**The local Area Phonenumber chair is responsible for keeping this information current.**

As shown in the prior slide, the voice prompts provide meeting information for the El Paso Area

For example on Tuesday there is:

NOON Newcomers St. Paul's Methodist Church 7000 Edgemere Blvd. El Paso, Texas 79925

6:30 PM Solo por Hoy St Stephen Church 1700 George Dieter El Paso, Texas 79936

7:00 PM Tuesday Open First Christian Church 901 Arizona St. El Paso, Texas 79902

## Voicemail Menu

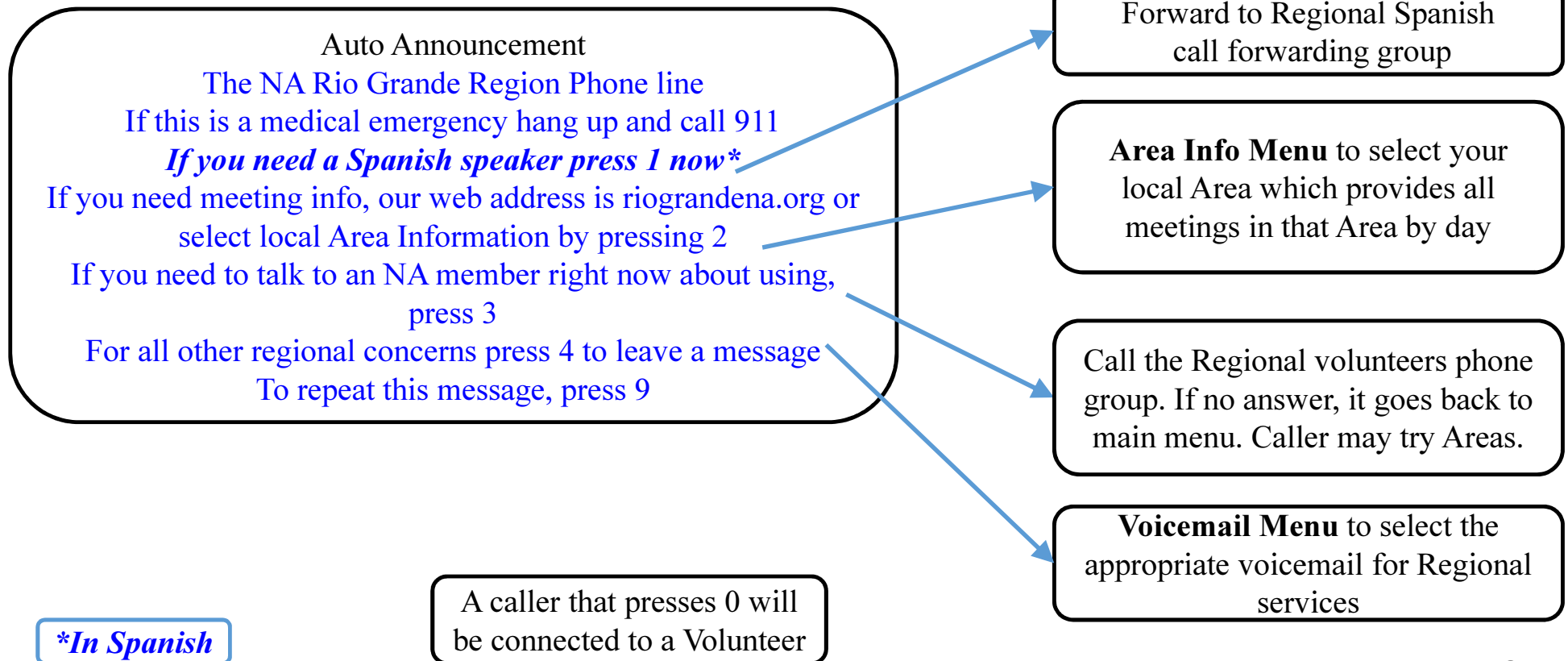
If you wish to leave a message for:  
The XXX Area Committee Chairperson, press 1  
The XXX Area H&I, press 2  
The XXX Area Phonenumber, press 3  
The XXX Area Activities, press 4  
The XXX Area Public Information, press 5  
To repeat this message, press 9

Each of these has their own voicemail.  
Some Areas just use a single voicemail for convenience.

The messages left may be forwarded to email or text message or both as a voice file. The members of the service body do not need to log in for messages. The calling number is recorded in text in the forwarded message for easy response from a smart phone.

For an additional fee, voice messages may be transcribed to text.

# Regional Phone Tree





# Area Info Menu for the Regional Phoneline

The Rio Grande region is divided in six geographic Areas:

Albuquerque, Northern New Mexico, Four Corners, El Paso, Southern New Mexico, Eastern New Mexico

If you want information on a meeting or other info in your local Area

For Albuquerque (including Gallup) press 1 (calls their local number)

For Northern New Mexico press 2 (calls their local number)

For El Paso press 3 (calls their local number)

For Southern New Mexico press 4 (calls their local number)

For Four Corners press 5 (calls their local number)

Eastern New Mexico press 6 (calls their local number)

To repeat this message press 9

Each of these Areas have their own phone number.

# The Region and Area phone numbers

Rio Grande Region	(800) 925-4186
Northern NM	(800) 804-4706
Eastern NM (Pecos Valley)	(800) 370-4927
Four Corners	(505) 324-1807
El Paso TX	(800) 249-9428
Central & Western NM (ABQ&Bosque)	(800) 798-6649
Southern NM (LOMA)	(575) 635-6193 (In transition)

Please feel free to call any of the numbers and check them out.

# NA Volunteer Data

An NA volunteer provides at least the following data:

- Name, phone number, and email
- NA Area and town
- Specify that they accept their Area calls only or will accept any call in the Region  
(Region volunteers are called only when no one in the Area picks up)
- Specify the days of the week and times they are available to take calls
- Language – English, Spanish, or both (Spanish are part of a region wide call group)

# Area Responsibilities

The Area Phonenumber Chair is responsible for:

- Recruiting volunteers
- Maintenance of the meeting info
- Maintenance of Area phone list
- Notifying Region if a local member on the Regional phone list changes status
- Training the phonenumber volunteers
- Determining via a group conscience on wording of voice prompts and updating the voice prompt and account settings (such a number of rings)
- Determining via a group conscience on Volunteer clean time requirements

# Volunteer Scheduling

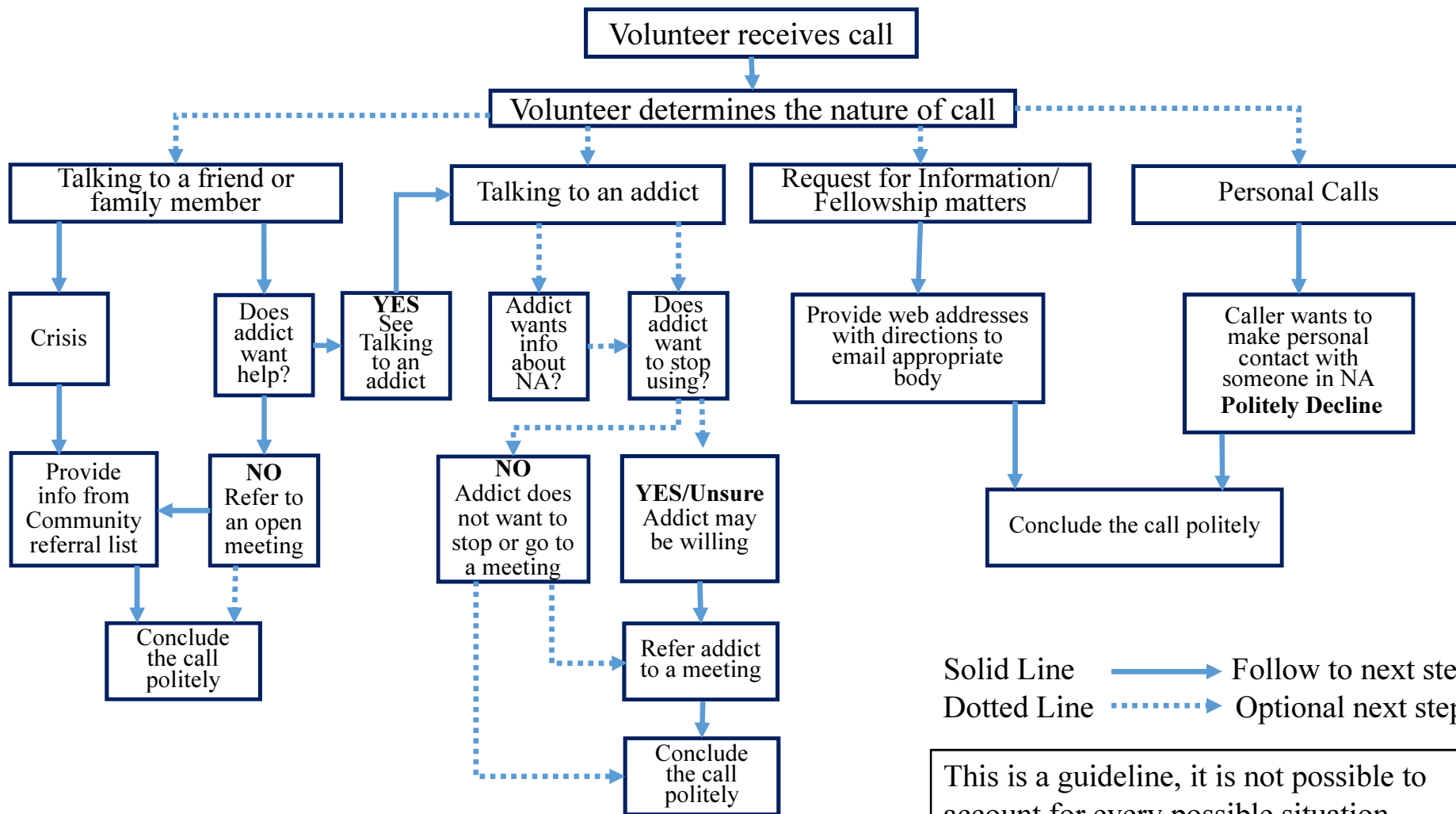
- Volunteers may be scheduled in shifts or simply not pick up if unavailable.
- If no one answers, there are a group of region wide volunteers that will be called next
- All Spanish speakers are part of a separate region wide group.
- Eventually, we will be able to schedule everyone individually, hopefully by next year.

# 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 Phonenumber Chair for further guidance.

- **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
- Be warm and friendly
- Remain objective and non-argumentative
- Don't preach or use judgmental words
- Don't try to persuade someone to stop using
- Don't project your own issues into the call
- Don't glorify active addiction
- Don't make promises or guarantees to callers about what Narcotics Anonymous will do for them
- Take the time to check current schedule so that you can relay accurate information
- The Phonenumber is the first introduction to Narcotics Anonymous for many addicts. Connect with your higher power before returning any call. (example: Take a moment to say the Serenity Prayer)
- We are not counselors, we are not sponsors
- Protect confidentiality – no personal information
- Maintain your safety – first names only

# Phoneline Flowchart



Solid Line ———> Follow to next step  
 Dotted Line - - - -> Optional next step

This is a guideline, it is not possible to account for every possible situation

# Do's and Don'ts

## Phoneline Volunteers Do's

- Do always identify yourself with your first name only and state that you are an addict.
- Do always have the necessary materials (e.g., White Booklet, meeting list, NA pamphlets, Twelfth-Step list, and Phoneline Log) close to the telephone, in order to avoid delay and confusion.
- Do find out what the caller needs. Ask questions.
- Do, if you are returning a call, be certain that the person requesting help is on the line before identifying yourself as an addict or mentioning Narcotics Anonymous.
- Do remember to be helpful and polite to all callers.
- Do make appropriate referrals when necessary.
- Do keep a log of all the calls you answer.
- Do contact the phoneline chairperson if problems arise.

## Don'ts

- Don't argue with people whose views of addiction differ from yours or NA's. If the caller does not want to stop using, do not try to persuade him/her to stop.
- Don't try to handle calls that you are not qualified to answer.
- Don't give medical advice.
- Don't give out other people's names or telephone numbers.
- Don't answer questions about who was at an NA meeting (e.g., to police officers, probation officers, or significant others). However, general information may be given about NA's make-up (variance in size of meeting, NA open to all age groups, etc.).
- Don't glorify active addiction by telling war stories.
- Don't project your own issues
- Don't preach, swear, or use judgmental words



# Features still to come

1. Texting
2. Individual volunteer scheduling
3. The ability to import/export a call forwarding group between accounts. We need to maintain the regional call forwarding group across all six Areas as well as the Spanish group. This is possible manually and that is what we are to start with but we are asking to do some automation.

# Questions???

Tom K. (408) 857-3438, [tom@tomkondo.com](mailto:tom@tomkondo.com)

# Notes

- This is a simplified phone tree with a main menu and two submenus
- Terms used:
  - A Caller is a person making a call into the system
  - An NA Volunteer the person receiving the call
  - A Region – This refers to the entire Rio Grande Region which is all of New Mexico, West Texas and 4 Corners
  - An Area – For the purposes of the Phoneline, the Rio Grande region is divided in six geographic Areas to make it easier for travelers:
    - Central and Western New Mexico: combines Albuquerque and Bosque Areas including Gallup
    - Eastern New Mexico – Pecos Valley Area
    - El Paso
    - Four Corners
    - Northern New Mexico
    - Southern New Mexico – LOMA
  - Each Area has it's own phone number and a separate account.
- Voice prompts are in **BLUE**, specifications/information are in **BLACK**
- There are call group(s) for the Area plus a call group for the Region that is list of volunteers who will take any call throughout the region.