

Treatment and Corrections Orientation

PURPOSE OF BRINGING PANELS AND MEETINGS INTO INSTITUTIONS

The purpose of bringing panels and meetings into institutions is to carry A.A.'s message to those who cannot attend outside meetings. Our approaches will be based on the District's T&C guidelines and the rules of each institution and facility.

More resources: <https://www.aa.org/treatment-committees>

PRESCRIBED MEDICATION

- A.A. members are not doctors and should not discourage others from taking prescribed medications.
- In the pamphlet *The A.A. Member — Medications and Other Drugs*, members are cautioned not to assume the role of doctors.
- Facility administrators and Treatment Committee members have already agreed upon medication policies before A.A. meetings are permitted inside.
- Violating these agreements can jeopardize A.A.'s presence at the facility.
- Remember: Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.
- Additional resource: *Problems Other than Alcohol* pamphlet.

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF T&C SERVICE

- This orientation prepares you for your first panel.
- If you have at least six months in recovery: YOU HAVE experience, strength, and hope to share.
- This handout provides basic guidelines; for more, see the District T&C guidelines or the full T&C Handbook on the A.A. website.

REQUIREMENTS FOR T&C SERVICE

To Serve as a Panel Chair:

- Minimum of 1 year sober.
- Working knowledge of the 12 Steps with a sponsor.
- Strong A.A. message.
- Willing to follow T&C guidelines and facility rules and policies.
- Willing to carry the message responsibly.

To Serve on a Panel:

- Must be invited by the panel chair.
- Must complete orientation.
- Minimum of 6 months sober.
- Sponsor with working knowledge of the Steps.
- Complete a willingness month, which entails 3 shadowing sessions if you have never spoken on a T&C panel previously.

PERSONAL COMMITMENTS

- Notify panel leader at least 48 hours in advance if unable to attend.
- Do not invite substitutes or bring others without approval.
- The panel leader should only conduct a meeting with fewer than two people to avoid a dark night.

T&C MEETING FORMATS

- Most facilities prefer a panel speaker format with Q&A.
- If unsure, ask the panel leader about the specific meeting format for each facility.

DO'S AND DON'TS

Do's:

- Share your experience, strength, and hope.
- Follow District T&C guidelines.
- Arrive on time.
- Check with the panel leader for facility guidelines and policies.
- Use A.A. language ("sober" not "clean and sober").

Don'ts:

- Do not break anonymity.
- Avoid "you" statements.
- Do not debate facility rules.
- Avoid outside issues (Religion, Politics, and Sex).
- Limit discussion of active drinking.
- Do not discuss facility staff or operations.
- Do not bring excessive cash or valuables.
- Avoid favoritism.
- Do not deliver or carry messages.
- Do not share phone numbers inside correctional facilities.
- Never bring contraband: cigarettes, candy, gum, cell phones, weapons.
- Dress code: avoid revealing clothing, inappropriate tattoos, and offensive images.

MEN WITH MEN, WOMEN WITH WOMEN

- Same-sex panels for same-sex facilities.
- Co-ed panels for co-ed facilities; maintain proper boundaries at all times.

T&C IS A PRIVILEGE

- Violations of T&C guidelines and facility policies can damage A.A.'s credibility.
- Always remember: If we get banned from the facility, we cannot carry any message to the alcoholic still suffering.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS GUIDELINES

- Avoid opinions on outside issues.

- Do not comment on other programs, facilities, or unrelated topics.
- Share your personal recovery in A.A. only.

ADOLESCENT GUIDELINES

- Adolescents are potential members and must be treated with respect.
- A clear message of recovery is effective.
- Attendance should be voluntary when possible.
- Structured format focused on recovery through the 12 Steps.

Additional Do's and Don'ts for Adolescents:

Do's:

- Avoid preaching; keep it 'we' centered.
- Validate feelings.
- Share fun and fellowship aspects of recovery.
- Be honest.

Don'ts:

- Do not glorify your past.
- Avoid "you" statements.
- Do not compare bottoms.
- Do not patronize or use profanity.

RESPONSIBILITY STATEMENT

- Your responsibility is to the facility, the residents, and A.A.
- Follow the District guidelines and the 12 Traditions to uphold your responsibility.

BECOMING A T&C PANEL LEADER

- After 6 months of T&C speaking experience and attending 3 consecutive District T&C meetings, you may become a panel leader.
- This service strengthens your personal foundation in recovery.