

INMATE STEP WRITING (ISW) CENTRAL ATLANTIC REGION OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

2017



ISW PURPOSE

Addicts behind the walls work the 12 Steps of Narcotics Anonymous with an approved step writing guide on the outside through the mail.

- ▶ Carry the message of recovery from drugs to incarcerated addicts
- ▶ Provide the incarcerated addict with an opportunity to work the 12 steps of recovery with a trained Narcotics Anonymous step guide while they are serving their time
- ▶ Prepare the incarcerated addict with a positive re-entry process to the community without the use of illegal substances

ISW HISTORY AND NATIONAL ACTIVITY

Many ISW programs exist across the US in many regions supported by NA World Services Hospitals & Institutions Service Committee

- ▶ **Currently Inmate Step Writing Programs are supported by Narcotics Anonymous (NA) across the U.S.**
- ▶ **Supports our NA Mission: *“That no addict seeking recovery need die without the chance to find a new way of life”***
- ▶ **These activities are supported by our World and Region Service Committees to assure integrity of the programs for addicts behind the walls**

- ▶ Observe the rules of the correctional facilities regarding mail and correspondence
- ▶ ISW Guides are trained on specific issues to insure correspondence integrity
- ▶ Written guidelines are provided to all ISW Guides
- ▶ ISW Guides sign a correspondence agreement
- ▶ ISW Guides must attend training yearly
- ▶ ISW Guides must have at least two years clean time and they must be working the 12 steps with a sponsor
- ▶ ISW Guides must have completed through step 5 of 12 steps in order to qualify
- ▶ ISW Guides are assigned to the same gender as the inmate

ISW PROGRAM INTEGRITY

**HAVE A PROBLEM
WITH DRUGS?**

WE CAN HELP!

**Requirements for
Step Guides**

- ▶ **Is your recovery based in Narcotics Anonymous?**
- ▶ **Have you done a 4th and 5th step?**
- ▶ **Do you work the steps in writing with an NA sponsor?**
- ▶ **Do you have at least 2 years clean time?**
- ▶ **Do you attend NA step meetings regularly?**
- ▶ **Do you have a working knowledge of the 12 steps and 12 traditions of NA?**
- ▶ **Do you have experience as an NA sponsor?**

ISW PROGRAM INTEGRITY

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**Questions for Step
Guides**

- ▶ **Do you have the means to provide stationery and stamps for regular correspondence?**
- ▶ **Do you have the willingness and availability to reply to any letter you receive within 2 weeks, and to notify the coordinating secretary each time?**
- ▶ **Are you willing to sign and follow the NA ISW Correspondence Only agreement?**
- ▶ **Are you willing to attend at least one ISW Committee meeting or one ISW workshop per year?**

ISW PROGRAM INTEGRITY

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**Questions for Step
Guides**

- ▶ **ISW step guide- 2 years**
- ▶ **Chair- 4 years**
- ▶ **Vice Chair- 2 years**
- ▶ **Coordinating Secretary- 2 years**
- ▶ **Assistant Coordinating Secretary- 18 months**
- ▶ **Recording Secretary – 1 year**

ISW PROGRAM INTEGRITY

**HAVE A PROBLEM WITH
DRUGS?**

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**Service Structure
Clean Time
Requirements**

ISW PROGRAM INMATE CRITERIA

- ▶ Inmates must have a desire to work the 12 steps of NA during their incarceration with an assigned ISW Guide
- ▶ The Inmate must have at least 90 days remaining before their release
- ▶ Inmates must be aware that the ISW Guides will be corresponding with them with a pen name and will remain anonymous
- ▶ All correspondence will be through the Central Atlantic Region of NA PO Box (P. O. Box 1959 Chesterfield, VA 23832)
- ▶ No personal addresses will be shared

**“IN DESPERATION” WE
SOUGHT HELP FROM
EACH OTHER IN
NARCOTICS
ANONYMOUS**

ISW PROGRAM INMATE CRITERIA

- ▶ Inmates names and identities will always remain anonymous - This anonymity is fundamental to NA Traditions
- ▶ ISW Guides will never visit or speak by phone with the inmate
- ▶ ISW Guides will not supply books, stamps, envelopes or money to the addict
- ▶ The step writer may request The Introductory Guide to Narcotics Anonymous and the step guide from NA World Services

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ISW PROGRAM INMATE INITIAL COMMUNICATION


“Every addict can stop using, lose the desire to use, and find a new way to live”

- ▶ **Inmates send a letter to the Central Atlantic Region of NA PO Box (P. O. Box 1959 Chesterfield, VA 23832)**
- ▶ **An initial letter is sent to the inmate asking for**
 - ▶ **Full Name**
 - ▶ **Institution Name and Address,**
 - ▶ **BKG #, PFN and DOC #**
 - ▶ **Gender**
 - ▶ **Expected Release Date**
 - ▶ **Name of the facility counselor or official contact at your institution**
- ▶ **The Inmate is asked to read “Who, What, How, and Why” from NA Literature (IP #1) & describe how it may relate to them**

- ▶ **Narcotics Anonymous hopes to carry the message of recovery to incarcerated Addicts**
- ▶ **The NA ISW Program is a resources that will assist a positive lifestyle for Addicts while incarcerated**
- ▶ **The ISW Program will assist to reduce recidivism due to the continued use of drugs**
- ▶ **NA Volunteers hope to be of service**

CONCLUSION

The benefit of one addict helping another is without parallel



- ▶ **Flyer for ISW Program**
- ▶ **Policy & Guidelines for ISW**
- ▶ **ISW Guide Correspondence Agreement**
- ▶ **Inmate initial letter**
- ▶ **Inmate 90 day letter**

CONCLUSION

Appendix



▶ **Questions and Answers**



▶ **Next Steps**

- ▶ **Step Guide Sign Up**
- ▶ **Committee Service**
- ▶ **Flyers to facilities in your areas**

CONCLUSION

Wrap Up

Service Participation

