



# Corrections Correspondence

—a special kind  
of A.A. Service

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*I know how important our Twelfth Step work is and I enjoy writing to men who are locked up. It is one of the tools that I use to keep me sober. I myself found A.A. in prison almost 20 years ago. And it hasn't been necessary for me to return to prison since I was released.*

—Outside Correspondent

We are in need of A.A. members on the “outside” to correspond with A.A. members in correctional facilities across the U.S. and Canada.

Having prison experience is not a prerequisite — sobriety in A.A. is. People in custody are more interested in learning how we got and stayed sober through A.A.’s Twelve Steps, rather than hearing about time we may have spent in prison.

It is suggested that members correspond with members of the same gender identity. Currently, we receive more requests from people in custody and we appreciate your participation, which will help us to provide this service to all who seek it.

If you would like to share your experience, strength and hope with A.A.s who are confined, please mail the tear-off form to GSO’s Corrections Desk, or email the information to [corrections@aa.org](mailto:corrections@aa.org). (You can also access the form on the Corrections Committee page on our website at [www.aa.org/corrections-committees](http://www.aa.org/corrections-committees).) The name of a person in custody selected at random from a geographical distance of 700 miles or greater will be sent to you from the General Service Office and you will make the initial contact through the mail.

Those who have participated in this service have found sharing with individuals in custody to be a very gratifying form of Twelfth Step work. We are happy to know there are A.A. members like you willing to help make it possible for the A.A. message to be carried to those on the “inside.”

### **Guidelines for Corrections Correspondence Service (CCS)**

Welcome to one of the most rewarding and rarely mentioned forms of Twelfth Step work.

In the spirit of cooperating with correctional facility requirements for correspondence and mail, here



# **CORRESPONDENCE FORM — for Outside A.A. Members Only**

**CCS-3**

**PLEASE PRINT — Return to address below**

**Gender identity (e.g. Male, Female, Non-binary)** \_\_\_\_\_

**How many members in custody are you able to write to?:** \_\_\_\_\_

**I can correspond in** ☐ **English** ☐ **French** ☐ **Spanish** ☐ **Other language** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone (office use only):** \_\_\_\_\_  
(First and Last)

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email (office use only):** \_\_\_\_\_  
(P.O. Box or Street Address, City, State or Province, Postal or Zip Code)

**Corrections Desk, General Service Office, Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163**  
**Direct: (212) 870-3085   Email: [corrections@aa.org](mailto:corrections@aa.org)   Fax: (212) 870-3003   Website: [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org)**  
**Please add this email to your contacts to ensure receipt of important messages.**

are some suggested guidelines drawn from shared experience to help you when writing to A.A. members on the “inside”:

To begin, remember that when writing to those in custody, *you must use your last name on the envelope* or it will not be accepted by most institutions. The GSO does not forward CCS mail.

1. We introduce ourselves by qualifying briefly in our opening letter.

2. We try to let individuals know that writing, like all forms of sharing, helps us as much as it helps them.

3. We let the person in custody know that they are not alone.

4. Most correspondents use their home address, since we match correspondents by a distance of 700 miles or greater. Some correspondents ask permission of their A.A. group or intergroup/central office to use the office P.O. Box for receiving mail.

5. We share sobriety and sobriety only.

6. We have found it best for all concerned if no emotional or romantic involvements develop.

7. If there is a desire to send a gift for a special occasion, we make it an A.A. book, A.A. literature, or Grapevine material. (Before sending literature, see if the facility will allow it. Many Correctional Facilities will permit a person in custody to receive only literature sent directly from the publishers.) Also, some facilities do not allow those in custody to receive stamps or preaddressed, stamped envelopes.

8. In the spirit of the Twelfth Tradition, we respect the anonymity of our correspondents.

9. We encourage “inside” A.A. group activity and stress making that first meeting *the day* the individual leaves confinement.

10. We encourage “inside” correspondents to notify GSO prior to their release so that GSO can set up a prerelease contact from their home community.

(Visit [www.aa.org/aa-corrections-prerelease-contact-information-inside](http://www.aa.org/aa-corrections-prerelease-contact-information-inside).)

Thank you for your willingness to share in this most important work.

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