

Corrections Desk Activity Update

February 2023

To: Corrections Committee Chairs

cc: Regional Trustees, Area Delegates

From: Eileen A., Corrections Coordinator
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Warm greetings from the Corrections Desk here at the General Service Office (GSO) US/Canada. It is so nice to be in touch with you all again. My name is Eileen I have the privilege of serving as GSO Staff Coordinator on the Corrections assignment.

If you are a new Corrections chair – welcome aboard! As many of you know, your Area Registrar can update information in our Fellowship Connection database for new committee chairpersons; although some new committee chairs contact us directly to provide their contact information. In any event, please continue to reach out when changes are made so we can continue to have the most up to date information to send you current information from the office.

I am pleased to share the following highlights that I hope you find useful as you carry the message to those inside the walls.

Corrections Correspondence Service (CCS)

The revised sign-up form updated for inclusivity and to help clarify requests will be print ready and available on the website shortly.

We still need Spanish speaking men from the eastern US to correspond with persons in custody, women participants on the inside in the US and all inside and outside participants in Canada.

We also need participants who identify as Transgender and Non-binary.

How you can help: Please share the CCS sign up forms at your home group, at the various correctional settings you visit and any other A.A. event you attend. Sign-up forms and pre-stamped envelopes are available at the GSO free of charge.

Corrections Correspondence Service for Canada

The Canadian corrections working group continued to support the efforts to increase awareness and participation of CCS in Canada made by past corrections trusted servants.

We had a successful meeting with the Correctional Services Canada (CSC) which serves the Federal Prison system in Canada. The CSC requested that we help organize a meeting between the corrections trusted servants and the regional professionals to ensure that A.A. is available in all 43 facilities. We provided the sign-up forms and information that we have an international pre-stamped envelope available to defray postage cost. We have had a few persons in custody sign up for this service and hope to have many more.

We were informed that CSC is 3-5 years away from having an infrastructure to support the use of tablets that can provide digital access to A.A. literature.

Prerelease Contact Information

The A.A. Corrections Prerelease Contact Service connects the A.A. member being released from prison with A.A. in their community.

<https://www.aa.org/aa-corrections-prerelease-contact-information-outside> This leaflet explains the procedures for A.A. members "on the outside."

<https://www.aa.org/aa-corrections-prerelease-contact-information-inside> This leaflet explains the procedures for A.A. members "on the inside" and about to be released.

Digital Literature Behind the Walls

Conference-approved AAWS and AA Grapevine copyrighted eBooks and audiobooks are available on tablets and desktops in the various correctional settings in the U.S., and can now be accessed by people who are incarcerated and by the professionals who serve them. Thanks to the 7th tradition contributions of members, we have contracts with several vendors so we can provide literature at no cost to persons behind the walls.

What can you do? Local trusted servants, who work in correctional settings in the U.S., can ask their contacts which vendors they use. Areas are served by different vendors. Each facility can be autonomous and has their own contracts. We have contracts with many major vendors including ViaPath, Edovo/GTL, Securus-Jpay or Ingram CoreSource – OverDrive so our e-book and audiobook content can be accessed. Additional vendors will be added, and we hope to provide quarterly updates.

Please contact corrections@aa.org to learn if there is tablet use in your area, which literature titles are being accessed most and for any additional information.

Corrections Kit Contents & Other Service Material Available Online

Please visit the "Corrections-Committees" <https://www.aa.org/corrections-committees> section of GSO's A.A. Web site where you can view, download, and print out the most recent version of the Workbook. Almost all Corrections service material can be found there including a Corrections Kit Content List with clickable links to enable you to recreate the Kit for yourself.

Corrections Kit (M-45I)

The Corrections workbook is in its final stage of revision. An updated English version is expected March 2023. A section on sponsorship is included in the Corrections workbook.

The proposed agenda item ***Consider a request to include content to existing A.A. literature on sponsorship of persons in custody by outside members of the fellowship*** will be discussed by the Corrections Conference Committee.

Sharing From Behind the Walls Bulletin

The Winter Issue of the bulletin <https://www.aa.org/sharing-from-behind-the-walls> is available on GSO's website for those who want to make extra copies for people in custody (Area and district Corrections chairs automatically receive it.) The newsletter is published four times a year and contains excerpts of sharing from letters from people in custody that come to this desk. If you need a reminder about how valuable your A.A. service is, please read these selections!

Please take advantage of the previous editions of the bulletin (also available on the aa.org website) – in English, French, and Spanish. They can continue to be effectively used to share with people in custody.

Here is an excerpt from Fall 2022 issue

Bondage of Self

These four walls, these four walls, forever hold me in.
Keep me trapped in misery, over and over again.
I know you're thinking prisons, or this concrete cage called jail.
But the walls that keep me imprisoned don't come with court dates or bail.
One wall is labeled anger. It stands taller than I can see.
Another is named resentment, that stays staring back at me.
The third one is named guilt, where I am the only one I can blame.
And the last one is named fear, a ferocious demon I could not tame.
I know these walls surrounding me were built by my very own hand.
Trials, tribulations and obstacles blinding me from discovering who I am.
As I bow my head, I admit defeat, I reach out for some kind help.
I pray these walls fall apart, releasing me from bondage of self." — Jeramy G., Southeast Region

We need your help:

Please provide your shared experience:

- 1) **Virtual meetings in correctional facilities in the US and Canada.**

As this is a new growing area, the conference committee and the trustees committee on corrections has asked that we gather shared experience from those A.A. members providing this service for possible use in service material. Please email your shared experience by March 30, 2023, using the subject line "**Shared Experience – Virtual meetings**" to corrections@aa.org Local/Regional News

International weekly corrections meeting online.

The purpose of the meeting is to share experience in *carrying the message* to the inside members. Trusted servants meet to discuss best practices and learn how to implement them in their own Areas. Everyone is welcome at this meeting, especially present and past correction chairs, and anyone who is interested in AA corrections service.

Meeting ID: 841 1036 5604 1st and last Sunday of month at 6pm (EST) all other Sundays at 11am (EST)

6th Annual National Corrections Conference Nov 10-12, 2023 Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Please see the link below for more information.

<https://nationalcorrectionsconference.org/>

Thank you for your service.

Eileen A., Corrections Coordinator

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