Writing Steps For Recovery
(behind the walls)
Starter Package

Contents:
- Article from April NA Way Describing What We Do & Why
- 1. Introduction
- 2. History
- 3. Orientation List
- 4. Typical First Letter
- 5-6. Welcome Letter
- 7. Correspondence Only Agreement
- 8-10. Policy and Guidelines
- 11. H&I Dos and Don’ts
- 12. DOC Guidelines
- 13. DOC Ethics
- 14-16. DOC Criminal Thinking Patterns
- 17-18. It’s Working! Letters
- 19. 90-Day or Less Letter
- 20. Spanish Response Letter
- 21. Prison Invitation Letter
- 22. Participating Facilities
- 23. WSR Contact & Correspondence Agreement
- 24. WSR Out Of State Inmate Response Letter
- 25. WSR Out Of State H&I Invitation & Assistance Letter

Revised 7-2009
Primary purpose

"There are many ways of doing things in Narcotics Anonymous. And just as all of us have our own individual personalities, so will your group develop its own identity, its own way of doing things, and its own special knack for carrying the NA message. That's the way it should be. In NA we encourage unity, not uniformity."

The Group Booklet, p. 1

Writing steps for recovery behind the walls

"My name is C____. I'm currently a resident of ____ Correctional Institution. I've been involved in the institution's drug and alcohol program for two months. Now it is a six-month program. I'm looking for a sponsor. I really need one. I'm serious about my recovery. If you could help me—which I hope you could—please write back to me. I really appreciate it. Thank you very much."

And so it began. After receiving this cry for help from an addict serving time in one of our state prisons, the Connecticut Region (USA) decided to discover a way within our service structure to help incarcerated addicts find the same relief from addiction we have found. That was in June 1993.

"Sponsorship Behind the Walls" started functioning as a working group of our regional H61 subcommittee in the fall of 1994. In December 1995, the WSO Board of Trustees (the name at the time for one of the elements of our current World Board) pointed out that since we used pen names and were offering step direction through NA service, not traditional sponsorship, the name "Sponsorship Behind the Walls" was perhaps not the best name for this service. As a result of this input, the group's name was changed to "Writing Steps for Recovery," or WSR for short. At that same time, the regional conscience called for the committee to become a standing subcommittee of the Connecticut Region, rather than a working group of H61, since the service is quite different from that of taking presentations into institutions.

In the beginning, we worked with the Connecticut Department of Corrections to come up with guidelines that would make it possible for us to follow the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts while adhering to the rules and regulations of DOC facilities. As of the summer of 2007, WSR had been approved to serve addicts in all eighteen Connecticut DOC institutions. This accomplishment has taken time and consistent, responsible service. Because of what we have been able to accomplish, we feel grateful to share our experience, strength, and hope with anyone interested in doing the same.

I began my involvement with WSR in early 1996. Working with this committee has been a wonderful part of how I stay clean. Over the years I've had step writers in prison who have been so eager to change their lives that they diligently worked all Twelve Steps before their release. Recently, one of the girls I guided through her steps showed up at our subcommittee meeting, was trained to become a new WSR step guide, and took on a subcommittee commitment. In January, when we held our workshop at the Connecticut Convention, another former inmate who had worked her steps through WSR qualified to become a new step guide. We've received word that there are now some addicts in Connecticut's prisons who have been working with WSR step guides and have enough clientele and step-writing experience to offer true sponsorship to fellow inmate addicts! It’s so incredibly rewarding to see this process come full circle, to see the living, breathing, recovering proof that what we are doing is working! Through this service, addicts with experience in working the steps have an anonymous avenue for sharing that experience with incarcerated addicts.

My WSR commitments have been instrumental in my own recovery. It’s been incredibly rewarding knowing that my service contributed to at least one addict being released from jail with the knowledge and experience she needed in order to live differently. She carried that knowledge into her recovery on the outside, and is now giving back what she freely received. I’ve also benefited in much the same way as I do when I sponsor women. Working the steps with other addicts reinforces my understanding of how the steps work for me. I’m also grateful that this service is convenient and time-friendly. It’s the closest thing to sponsorship that we can give these addicts—and for me, it has the extra benefit of not further complicating my sometimes chaotic daily life.

I've loved the times when I've had a commitment on the subcommittee level, too. As the corresponding secretary, I've grown more accustomed to picking up the phone and asking for help. Never before in my recovery have I ever had this much practice in that simple, life-saving skill. This commitment, more than any other I've had in the seventeen years I've been clean, assures me that I will stick with the winners. When I receive that initial letter from an inmate who pours out his or her heart about how far down into degradation and despair the disease of addiction has taken them, and they ask for our help in learning a new way to live, I am sometimes moved to tears. I have absolutely no doubt that, for me, this is the best service commitment in NA! This article was taken from the April 2008 NA Way

Please visit the local resources area at www.na.org [http://www.na.org/?local_resource_area_resources to find - or to offer - inmate step writing resources.

This is a column for you, about you, and by you. We invite you to share any challenges your group or NA community may have faced, how you reached a solution, or its "special knack" that keeps you coming back!
The closest thing to written sponsorship we can offer within our guidelines and traditions, until the incarcerated addict is able to go to regular open meetings and find a regular sponsor.

“...When I write to my WSR sponsor and she writes to me it is like being at a meeting when I read. All the time when I write to her I look forward to knowing I will have some mail that is positive. This is the best thing that ever happened to me, especially since my addiction has burnt all my bridges now. The only thing I have left is my life and if I use that will be gone...”*

“...I am very very grateful to NA Each time I receive a letter from my WSR step guide with step work and I read it, it makes me get honest with myself which is very important so I don't use again. I feel I would not be as involved or serious in my recovery as I am now if it weren't for Writing Steps for Recovery. Prison saved my life but my step guide is helping me to learn how to live and stay clean. I hope this letter will help another addict like my step guide has helped me...”*

* Letters from the “inside” written anonymously when inmate step writers were invited to share what they would like addicts on the outside to know about their experience with NA - WSR (Fall '96)

WSR Regular Monthly Meeting

7:30 PM EVERY 3rd Thursday
St. John’s Lutheran Church
downstairs – 2nd room - 295-303 Arch St. New Britain, CT
for more information, visit the CT Regional Website:

http://ctna.org/wsr.htm

or send us an email:
wsr@ctna.org

♥...Check for yourself ... another “NA Way” to give back what was so freely given... ♥
In June 1993 the following letter to Connecticut Region NA was received from an addict serving time in a state prison requesting help in finding a sponsor:

"My name is C____. I'm currently a resident of ____ Correctional Institution. I've been involved in (their) Drug and Alcohol program for 2 months now. It is a 6-month program. I'm looking for a sponsor. I really need one. I'm serious about my recovery. If you could help me, which I hope you could, please write back to me. I really appreciate it. Thank you very much."

This letter was passed on to the Regional H&I committee, and read in July. It was apparent to all that we didn’t have a place in our service structure to help addicts in this situation, and most were aware that this letter was one of many received over the years. Our H&I World guidelines tell us that sponsorship is not a function of an H&I presentation panel, and since many incarcerated addicts have no opportunity to meet any other recovering addicts until they are released, an ad hoc work committee within Regional H&I was formed and met for a year to propose an answer within our service structure. It was called: Sponsorship Behind the Walls at first.

H&I, and then the CT fellowship through the usual group conscience process, approved the policy with few changes, and SBTW started functioning as a subcommittee of H&I in the fall of 1994. Letters from incarcerated addicts have been coming in ever since at 5 in the beginning to 40 per month now.

The committee name changed in accordance with input from WSO Board of Trustees in December 1995. They pointed out that since we used pen names, and were offering step direction through NA service that this was not traditional sponsorship as we who are free to go to regular meetings know it. We, and the groups in our region agreed, and the name was changed. At that same time, the committee became a standing subcommittee of the Connecticut Region, rather than a subcommittee of H&I, since the work of the committee is quite different from that of bringing presentations into institutions. These two changes were approved by group conscience from all CT groups as represented at CTRNA in the usual manner.

During the past couple of years, we’ve had about 30 to 45 inmate “step writers” writing at any given time, and about 30 to 35 “step guides” writing to each of them. It is the closest thing to written sponsorship we can offer within our guidelines and traditions, and it seems to be working very well. OUR PURPOSE IS TO PROVIDE WRITTEN GUIDANCE THROUGH THE STEPS OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS TO ANY INCARCERATED ADDICT DESIRING RECOVERY, AND WHO IS UNABLE TO FIND REGULAR OPEN SPONSORSHIP BEFORE RELEASE FROM PRISON. Each one is assigned a personal Step Guide and after the first letter, which may be read anonymously to the committee, all is confidential between the step writer, and the step guide.

In July of 2007, DOC Addictions Services approved WSR function in all Connecticut facilities based upon positive experiences over the past 13 years.
NA - WRITING STEPS FOR RECOVERY
PO Box 1541
Middletown, CT 06457-1541
a subcommittee of
Connecticut Region Narcotics Anonymous

Step Guide Orientation

1. Review WSR introduction and history
2. Read “typical first letter” or actual new letter anonymously
3. Read “Welcome letter” out loud (is the first thing sent to inmates requesting WSR)
4. Go over Correspondence Only agreement
   a. Note especially "no prior knowledge"
   b. Also "confidentiality of all information"
   c. Only letters can be sent from step guides; the Introductory Guide is sent by the committee upon the step guide's request
5. Go over 12 Guidelines for Function from WSR Policy
   a. Details of How to Become a WSR Step Guide from WSR Policy
   b. Emphasize importance of affirming and read aloud all 11 questions
   c. Point out importance of notifying coordinating secretary at the time of each response
   d. Importance of attendance at WSR meetings, learning days, and workshops
   e. Importance of maintaining pen-names and CORRESPONDENCE THROUGH THE WSR PO BOX ONLY UPON RELEASE as a bridge to recovery in order to give step-writers the same opportunity to "do as we did" in creating their own network and finding a sponsor in real meetings on the outside.
6. H&I do's and don'ts
7. Do DOC Orientation
   a. Emphasize emotional vulnerability of inmates and the importance of maintaining a supportive and loving but not inappropriate intimate tone
   b. Be clear that we are to remain known as pen names only
8. For ALL LETTERS:
   a. Address the envelope to: “Inmate full name & id#; then the CI name & address”.
   b. Your return address: “Pen-Name-WSR NA; PO Box 1541, Middletown, CT 06457”.
   c. Make a copy of each letter that you write. Occasionally the letters don't get to the addict or they lose them and ask you for a copy. Also it is helpful to look at what you wrote when writing your next letter or making sense out of the response you got back.
9. In your FIRST LETTER be sure to:
   a. Ask if they have received the “Welcome letter” and if they understand our basic guidelines.
   b. Ask if they have a Basic Text. If not, notify coordinating Secretary so NA Introductory Guide can be sent. (If they asked for it in their introductory letter, let them know that they need to write a letter to you starting the step process in order for the committee to send them a book).
   c. Let your new step writer know that turn- around time for letters is much longer than the 2 weeks the step guides have from time of receipt, and that it has to do with time for the SW letter to get to the PO box, be collected, then to SG.
   d. Give step direction just 2 or 3 questions at a time at first (and at your discretion in subsequent letters)
   e. Emphasize importance of planning NA meeting schedule when on furlough and with upcoming release. Send schedule information for their home area - do not send the schedule as this is not an approved piece of literature. (and at your discretion in subsequent letters)
   f. Educate about 90/90, phone numbers, “people, places, things” etc. (and at your discretion in subsequent letters)
   g. In order to benefit from the experience of other addicts who have prior experience in working with Step Writers in jail, read your first letter to another more experienced WSR Step Guide prior to sending it.
10. Mention, review & discuss as necessary:
    a. “It’s working” letters from facilities
    b. 90 days or less letter
    c. Spanish response letter (for when there are no Spanish-writing SG’s available)
    d. List of participating CI's
Hi,

My name is ..... and I am badly in need of a sponsor because I’ve been trying to work my 4th Step but I can’t do it alone. It hurts too much. It was suggested to me to get a sponsor and since I don’t have one to visit me through the mail is my best bet. I was in recovery for almost two years but I never passed the third step probably because of fear but today I believe that if I don’t deal with all this pain I’ll end up relapsing again and I don’t want to use ever again.

Well the reason for this letter is so that NA can find me a sponsor so I can get my life back in order and work at changing it.

Please write back soon and Thank you very much.

God Bless,

....

1 Typical first letter from the “inside” written by a Connecticut addict inmate to NA-WSR (a CT Regional Narcotics Anonymous Subcommittee). Typing done in the interest of anonymity and readability.
DEDICATION AND PURPOSE: THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF THIS COMMITTEE IS TO PROVIDE WRITTEN NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS STEP GUIDANCE TO ANY INCARCERATED ADDICT DESIRING RECOVERY WITHIN NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS.

Dear

The Writing Steps for Recovery Committee has just received your letter. We are in the process of finding a recovering addict to write to you. WSR is unable to provide sponsorship in the strictest sense of the word, because in your situation many of the facets of sponsorship cannot be fulfilled. But we can provide you with an addict willing to guide you in the steps of recovery in hopes that step guidance can be your bridge to recovery until you find a sponsor.

We suggest that you start your search for a sponsor in an NA meeting as soon as you are released. If you have 90 days or less before your release there is not time to develop a relationship with a WSR step guide. Upon your release we’re sure that you will be able to find a sponsor that will be able to meet all your needs. Addicts on the outside are able to choose someone to guide them through the steps by listening to other addicts in meetings and seeing how they live. WSR has set up some guidelines so that we can try to assure that, though your circumstances make it necessary we choose your step guide for you, you will receive guidance from someone who will help you grow in NA. All of the potential step guides have shared with this committee their commitment to their NA based recovery. They work all their steps in writing and have completed at least the first five with an NA sponsor. They have a minimum of 2 years clean and attend NA step meetings regularly. We assure you that your step guide will be of the same gender and will have no prior knowledge or acquaintance with you prior to your incarceration.

Mail is collected from our PO Box once a week. After step guides have received their letters, a reply will be sent within 2 weeks. During the process of assigning a step guide to you, your very first letter was read anonymously to the committee, but all future correspondence will be strictly confidential between you and your step guide. It is important that you understand, though, that every letter between you and your step guide will be subject to prison rules regarding review of mail and that the prison will be notified of your involvement with WSR. Contact with your step guide will be limited to writing only and cannot include requests for photos, drawings, pictures, messages to others, phone calls, rides, visits or any damaging personal information. We are bound by the 12 Traditions of NA and the rules of the prison.

You need to know that if you have any questions or concerns about your relationship with your step guide or your needs for step guidance not being met, you can write to the WSR Committee and let them know. There are times when the relationship with the person we choose to guide us through the steps doesn't work or stops working and addicts on the outside have the option of choosing someone else and so do you. You may not be able to choose an individual but you can choose a different individual. In order to protect your step guide's anonymity, step guides will be using "pen names". Many potential step guides serve on the H&I panels that service the institutions that potential step writers are coming from. A lot of jails have rules forbidding contact between H&I panel members and inmates. Also H&I is bound by their own guidelines. By using "pen names" we hope to avoid any problems which might impede the message of recovery. Please be patient with us, someone will respond to you in the near future.

Your friend in recovery,
**NA Reaching Out Newsletter Subscription Form**

*Reaching Out* is a quarterly, recovery-oriented newsletter made available free of charge to incarcerated addicts through Narcotics Anonymous World Services. If you will be incarcerated for at least six more months and would like a free subscription to *Reaching Out*, you can let NA World services know by sending them the following completed form.

**SUBSCRIPTION ORDER FORM**

I am an incarcerated addict (and will be for at least six more months) and want a free subscription to *Reaching Out*.

Name ______________________________________________________
Identification Number ___________________________________________
Address _____________________________________________________
City _______________State/Province _______ Zip/Postal Code_________
Country ____________________________________________________

Send your completed form to:
*Reaching Out*
c/o NA World Services
PO Box 9999
Van Nuys, CA 91409 USA

**Submission Information From Reaching Out Magazine:**

*We encourage submissions for Reaching Out from members and H&I subcommittees. Please consider that we are more likely to publish articles that focus on how NA has helped an individual to recover while incarcerated rather than those that concentrate on the horrors of drug use. Send all submissions to Reaching Out; NAWS, PO Box 9999; Van Nuys, CA 91409-9999; USA, or to fs@mail@na.org.*
I understand that in my role as a step guide in the WSR program I am to conduct myself under the guidelines as outlined by the WSR committee, the DOC, and the individual institution.

As a WSR step guide I agree to:

1. Limit my contact with the step writer to writing.
2. Refrain from using abusive or profane language.
3. Respect the confidentiality of the step writer.
4. Refrain from supplying the step writer with any materials for corresponding including envelopes, stamps, pre-stamped envelopes, writing paper and writing implements.
5. Refrain from sending the step writer any books, tapes, and items of this nature. *The step writer may request The Introductory Guide to Narcotics Anonymous and the step guide can then notify the coordinating secretary of the request so that this guide can be sent by the WSR Coordinating Secretary.
6. Refrain from supplying the step writer with my telephone number, address, and any other information prohibited by the program.
7. Refrain from visiting the step writer or having contact with him/her outside the facility.
8. Refrain from contacting anyone whom the step writer might ask me to contact other than himself/herself.
9. Refrain from revealing any damaging personal information.
10. Attest to having no prior knowledge of the step writer including not having been a victim or an accomplice with him/her as the result of a crime.

The DOC is aware that this program is designed for the purpose of recovery through the steps of Narcotics Anonymous and will allow the WSR committee to send an Introductory guide to NA to the step writer if the institution is unable to provide the NA Basic Text or the Introductory Guide to NA.

Furthermore, I understand that every letter I send into the facility may be opened and checked for contraband. The content of the letter is to remain on the topic outlined by the program and discretion will be exercised in writing about any matter that could be construed as to jeopardize the safety and security of the facility, it's staff, it's residents, this committee or anyone else.

I understand that failure to adhere to any of the aforementioned articles will result in cessation of my participation in the WSR program and may put the whole program at risk.

_________________________________________                       _______________________
Step Guide’s Pen Signature                                                           Date Signed

____________________________________________               __________________________
Step Writers Name & ID number & Inmate #                               Step Writers Facility

Facility Contact:  

Revised 12-2008
I. Dedication and purpose
The primary purpose of this committee is to provide written Narcotics Anonymous step guidance to any incarcerated addict desiring recovery within Narcotics Anonymous.

II. Guidelines for function
1. All letters are sent via the NA WSR PO Box with no personal last names, addresses, or phone numbers of step guides, committee members, or any one else given to step writers. Step guides use pen names. Correspondence Only agreements with these signatures are filed with the WSR committee and the inmate step writer's facility.
2. Step guides from the WSR Committee have an individual addict assigned in the order that the step guides have qualified and that addicts of the same sex become available. The coordinating secretary notifies the new step guide if they are not present at the meeting when their "turn" comes up. The step guides agree to have no prior knowledge of their assigned inmate step writer, and to respect the confidentiality of their assigned addict. They also agree to correspond through the WSR PO Box only after release.
3. After the initial letter is read (anonymously) to the committee, all correspondence between step guide and step writer is confidential.
4. All incoming and outgoing letters are logged by date with name, facility, and DOC identification number of the inmate step writer, and name, pen name, and phone number of the step guide by the coordinating secretary.
5. No arrangements for rides, visits, loans, phone calls, materials for corresponding, photos, books*, drawings, tapes, contacting family members or friends will be made between step guide and step writer. *The step writer may request The Introductory Guide to Narcotics Anonymous in their first letter back to their new step guide. The book will then be sent by the Corresponding Secretary upon step guide notification of the need.
6. The 12 Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous will be strictly upheld.
7. All rules and regulations of the institution will be strictly upheld.
8. Only women write to women, and only men write to men.
9. At H&I commitments, the availability of WSR can be announced, including information that the committee meets monthly, and that informational cards will be available upon request of the addicts behind the walls.
10. Informational cards will also be available for the prison addictions and volunteer services staff so that inmates who are unable to attend the H&I presentations can have equal access to WSR.
11. Any addict behind the walls or anyone who thinks they may have a problem may write the WSR Committee as a whole with any questions or concerns at any time.
12. Presentations to the fellowship and to facilities will include the WSR statement of dedication and purpose, as well as these guidelines for function.
III. Voting Policy
NA members present at WSR Committee meetings have a vote.

IV. How to Become A WSR Step Guide
Addicts will qualify and become an oriented CT DOC volunteer at the committee. They will discuss and be able to answer affirmatively all of the following questions. Step guides will be assigned an inmate step writer in the order that they have qualified, and that addicts of the same sex become available. The coordinating secretary will notify the new step guide if they are not present at the meeting when their “turn” comes up.

1. Is your recovery based in Narcotics Anonymous?
2. Have you done a 4th and 5th step?
3. Do you work the steps in writing with an NA sponsor?
4. Do you have at least 2 years clean time?
5. Do you attend NA step meetings regularly?
6. Do you have a working knowledge of the 12 steps and 12 traditions of NA?
7. Do you have experience as an NA sponsor?
8. Do you have the means to provide stationery and stamps for regular correspondence?
9. 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?
10. Are you willing to sign and follow the NA WSR Correspondence Only agreement?
11. Are you willing to attend at least one WSR Committee meeting or one WSR workshop per year?

V. Cleantime Guidelines
1. WSR step guide- 2 years
2. Chair- 2 years
3. Vice Chair- 2 years
4. Coordinating Secretary- 2 years
5. Assistant Coordinating Secretary- 18 months
6. Recording Secretary – 1 year
7. Postal Facilitator - 2 years
8. Committee member- one day

VI. Responsibilities of Trusted Servants

Chair
1. Minimum cleantime requirement is 2 years
2. Keeps order in the meeting
3. Keeps discussion on the topic
4. Prepares an agenda for each meeting
5. Ensures that the Traditions are upheld in all matters
6. Maintains a link of communication between the WSR and CT Regional NA Service Committee, including giving a monthly report at that meeting
7. Attends each meeting of CT Regional Service Committee.
8. Keeps accurate record of funds received and spent
9. Obtains check from CTRSC in March for PO Box 1541 (yearly payment due April 1)
10. Makes sure committee has a monthly meeting place
11. Maintains an ongoing file of all WSR minutes

Vice Chair
1. Minimum cleantime is 2 years
2. Helps chairperson keep proceedings orderly
3. Acts as chairperson in the case of chairperson's absence. Fills in for any other trusted servant position as necessary.
4. If the office of chairperson becomes vacant, serves as chair until confirmed by the CT Region

Revised 12-2008
Service Committee or until a new chair is elected.
5. Attends all WSR and CT Region Service Committee meetings.

**Coordinating Secretary**
1. Minimum cleantime is 2 years
2. Attends monthly WSR meeting
3. Is responsible for the extra Post Office Box Key
4. To assure accountability, keeps a complete log of all WSR step guide/step writer communications (as described in Guidelines for Function # 4.) Keeps in phone contact with step guides if needed.
5. Mails Correspondence Only agreements to inmate's facility each time the step guide is assigned a new inmate step writer

**Assistant Coordinating Secretary**
1. Minimum cleantime is 18 months
2. Attends monthly WSR meeting
3. Goal of the position is to assist the coordinating secretary and to learn the duties of the coordinating secretary so that the assistant can function in the absence of the coordinating secretary.

**Recording Secretary**
1. Minimum cleantime is 1 year
2. Attends monthly WSR meeting
3. Takes an accurate set of minutes at each meeting and distributes them to subcommittee chair prior to the RSC (last Saturday of each month), and to members prior to next meeting.

**Postal Facilitator**
1. Minimum cleantime is 2 years
2. Attends monthly WSR Meeting & reports on the details of the distribution of all letters received.
3. Is responsible for one of the Post Office Box Keys
4. Picks up WSR mail on a weekly basis and within 48 hours forwards all mail to the appropriate trusted servant(s)
5. Notifies/reminds WSR Chair upon receipt of PO Box renewal to assure that **PO Box 1541 is renewed on or before every Apr 1**

**Out of State Correspondent**
1. Minimum cleantime is 1 year
2. Attends monthly WSR meeting
3. Internet Access
4. Working knowledge of the 12 steps and 12 traditions
5. Receives requests for assistance from out of state inmates and responds by sending Out of State Response letter (out-of-state-inmate-response letter.doc) to the inmate and forwarding the inmate's letter along with our H&I response letter (out-of-state-H&I-letter.doc) to the inmate's most local Regional Service H&I committee.
6. Keeps a log (monthly out-of-state writers record.doc) of all Out of State Requests and responses and submits a report of these activities at the monthly meeting.

**VII. Terms of Commitment**
1. All trusted servant positions are for 1 year, with a 2 year limit on consecutive terms in the same position.
2. Anytime a trusted servant misses a meeting he or she will contact the chair regarding their inability to attend the meeting and also submit a monthly activity report. If a trusted servant fails to meet these criteria two consecutive months, the commitment will be considered OTF.
3. Any trusted servant may have other responsibilities depending on the needs of WSR.

Revised 12-2008
H&I DO’S AND DON’TS

DO Emphasize that in NA, recovery is available to any addict, regardless of "type" of drug(s) used

DO Make it clear that NA is separate and distinct from the facility as well as other fellowships

DO Make directories of outside meetings available

DO Emphasize the importance of getting to an NA meeting the first day out

DO Emphasize the importance of getting a sponsor and a home group, the ongoing nature of recovery, and the importance of attending meetings (suggest 90 meetings in 90 days)

DON'T Break another person's anonymity or tell his or her story

DON'T Get involved in discussion about the inmate's guilt or innocence

DON'T Debate which drugs are acceptable. NA is a program of complete abstinence from all drugs

DON'T Discuss conditions within the facilities or opinions about staff members

DON'T Give or receive gifts, money, or loans

DON'T Give your personal address or phone number

DON'T Take messages in or out of the facility

DON'T Debate the merits of the treatment program or the other fellowships. Remember, we have no opinion on outside issues. The best approach is to focus on the positive and unique qualities of our program. Use references from your Basic Text. It is the foundation of our program of recovery.

DON'T Comment on the methods used by a treatment facility. Not all facilities are Twelve Step based nor do their understandings of the Steps necessarily coincide with the understanding gained in Narcotics Anonymous. We share our experience without reference to the facility's methods or to inmates' comments

DON'T While sharing, put too much focus on what it was like. They already know.
MISSION STATEMENT:

“The Department of Correction shall protect the community; ensure a secure, safe and humane environment for staff and offenders; and provide opportunities for self-improvement in a climate that promotes professionalism, respect, integrity, dignity and excellence.”

DOC GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS

* Listen and write carefully with sincerity
* Accept people with different values
* Be persistent and patient
* Be dependable
* Be capable of empathizing
* Be objective
* Be mature and confident
* Be enthusiastic
* Use discretion
* Seek to establish adult relationships
* Use good judgment
* Encourage a positive attitude
DOC VOLUNTEER CODE OF ETHICS

* The volunteer should maintain high standards of personal conduct

* The volunteer should act in accordance with the highest standards of integrity

* The volunteer's primary responsibility is to work cooperatively with staff to benefit the inmate

* The volunteer encourages the inmate to explore his/her own values while not imposing his values on the inmate

* The volunteer should respect the privacy of the inmate and hold in confidence all information

* The volunteer should treat co-volunteers with respect, courtesy, fairness, and good faith

* The volunteer has the responsibility to communicate with the WSR committee on a regular basis

FURTHER DOC RULES AND REGULATIONS

* Respect the confidentiality of records and other privileged information

* Do not make phone calls or perform similar services for inmates

* Refrain from using inappropriate or possible misinterpretable signs of affection

* Do not enter into business ventures with inmates
Criminal Thinking Patterns

(Excerpted from The Criminal Personality, “A Profile for Change” Vol 1, Yochelson and Samenow and The Criminal Personality, “The Change Process” Vol 2, Yochelson and Samenow)

Thinking Errors

1. Closed Thinking
2. Victimstance
3. Views Self as a Good Person
4. Lack of Effort
5. Lack of Interest in Responsible Performance
6. Lack of Time Perspective
7. Fear of Fear
8. Power Thrust
9. Uniqueness
10. Ownership Attitude

“A combination of thinking errors which forms thinking patterns that are unhealthy and go counter to responsible thinking”

Leads to the following beliefs:
- I can do anything I want. I can make right anything I want.
- I am all powerful.
- I must be number one.
- I must be in control.
- I must have my expectations met.
- I am a good person. I am not a Criminal Thinker.
- I must get what I want or my self image is on the line.
- I must live for the moment
- I am a loner and I am unique.
- I must never be put down.
Results:
- Makes a series of choices disregarding others.
- Bases decisions on assumptions, unrealistic expectations, prejudgments and not on facts.
- Takes drugs to facilitate excitement and to expand the view of self as number one.
- Uses deception, lies, and short cuts to “pull the wool over others”.
- Rejects responsible living and rejects society.
- Puts on a façade of conformity.
- Refuses to do anything disagreeable. Feels a need for excitement.
- Looks complying in behavior but the thinking is invariably irresponsible.
- Hears but does not listen.
- Does not take stock of self; daily moral inventories are never made.
- Sets no future goals.
- Has a self-serving lifestyle – “How you should serve me”.

The Fact is Criminal Thinkers are extremely fearful:
- Of not getting their own way.
- Of getting caught.
- Of being put down.
- Of being discovered on the inside.
- Of having to speak about personal fears.

Criminality is a Failure of Morality and of Responsibility:
- A criminal chooses his lifestyle and associates.
- A criminal is responsible for all personal choices and behaviors.
- Crime resides in the client and is caused by the way he thinks and then acts on that thinking.
- The criminal rejects society long before society rejects the criminal. He is a victimizer rather than the victim.

Making Change:
- Some self-understanding results through identifying thinking errors but the bulk of self-understanding follows once change is put into practice.
- Only after the client has changed his behavior will he come to understand more about himself and others. He cannot wait for insight to propel him to change.
- Always close minded, the Criminal Thinker requires education about the outside world.
- It becomes necessary to learn what the restraints in life are and what initiatives are necessary.
- To recognize that life is a series of problems everyone has to meet and struggle with in a responsible way is helpful to the client.
- Needs repetition. Doing something right only once is not an indicator of change.
DETERRENTS TO IRRESPONSIBLE THINKING PATTERNS
(Excerpted from The Criminal Personality, “A Profile for Change” Vol 1, Yochelson and Samenow)

Deterrent 1. STOP! THINK OF IMMEDIATE CONSEQUENCES
1. Before you act, think about the immediate consequences.
2. Ask, “What gets me into trouble?”
3. Think, “Smoking a joint equals prison.”
4. Remember, if anything can go wrong, it will.

Deterrent 2. STOP AND THINK: WHO GETS HURT? USE A REASONING PROCESS
1. Think about all the problems similar actions have “cost” you, as well as others in the past.
2. Use your bad feelings to change yourself.
3. Think about the whole picture, the “ripple effect” your behavior has caused.

Deterrent 3. PLAN AHEAD, THINK AHEAD AND MAKE ANOTHER CHOICE
1. Use this deterrent when you are reminded of exciting past actions and you want more of them. Consider the past as poison.
2. Try to predict with whom, where, and under what circumstances you might get into trouble. List ahead of time your past thoughts and actions that equal poison.
3. Avoid troublesome people and places, and make another choice.

Deterrent 4. EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE – TAKE A DAILY MORAL INVENTORY
1. Think; not about the crime itself, but that it is wrong.
2. Think; about the injuries you have inflicted upon others.
3. Examine your conscience immediately as you think about irresponsible/criminal conduct.
4. A daily moral inventory is a preventative tool.

Deterrent 5. DO NOT DWELL ON IT
1. Use responsible thinking patterns to replace old patterns.
2. Before acting, use and practice responsible thinking patterns.
3. Dismiss irresponsible thoughts fast.
December 18, 1996

NA Writing Steps for Recovery
Connecticut Region NA
P.O. Box 1541
Middletown CT 06457-1541

To whom it may concern:

I would like to bring to the attention of your subcommittee the excellent service you bring to the inmates of York Correctional Institution.

**Writing Steps for Recovery** has proved invaluable in the progress our clients have made in recovery.

You are positively putting the 5th Tradition of NA into action. Keep up the excellent work!

Sincerely,

Evald EJ Johnson, Correctional Counselor

EJ/res
April 23, 2004

NA Writing Steps for Recovery
Connecticut Region NA
P.O. Box 1541
Middletown, CT 06457-1541

Dear Carleen L., Ana G. and Gordon E.:

Thank you for the information that you shared during your visit this morning. The service that WSR provides is most valuable in helping the men at Brooklyn C.I. Writing Steps for Recovery has been a beneficial tool for the men to use while they are preparing for their eventual release from prison. The subcommittee of WSR has provided writing sponsors for the inmates for the past several years. You are truly reaching out to help a brother in need. May God continue to bless your Fellowship as you serve others.

Sincerely,

Mike Caruso
Correctional Counselor
Dear

The WSR committee has just received your letter. Our committee is designed to help addicts who will not be released 90 days or longer from the time we received your letter. Because your stay is less than that we feel we can best help you by sharing some suggestions that will help you get started in NA recovery upon your release. These are:

1. Check with the volunteer or addiction services staff at your institution to obtain a meeting schedule if one is available.

2. If you can't obtain a schedule and don't know where the meetings are in your area, call the hotline number for your area. The number can be found in most phone books under Narcotics Anonymous or from Info. line. Connecticut's helpline number is 1-800-627-3543.

3. At your first meeting let people know who you are and that you're new. Get phone numbers, a current meeting schedule (if you haven't already gotten one) and start your search for a sponsor who will help you work the steps of NA recovery-

4. Don't hang out in "the old familiar places" with the "old familiar faces".

5. Most importantly, DON'T USE NO MATTER WHAT!

Narcotics Anonymous promises us that through working this program we can find relief from our obsession to use drugs. Every addict who stays clean is proof of this miracle and all it takes to belong is the desire to stay clean.

Good luck and we hope to see you in the rooms of NA soon.

Yours in recovery,

Writing Steps for Recovery Committee
Querida/o ____________,

En estos momentos este comite no tiene un/a adicta/o que habla espanol disponible. Entonces, esta carta esta escrita en ingles, y una persona quien habla solamente ingles le va a escriber a usted para tras. Nosotros esperamos que usted pueda encontrar a alguien que pueda traducir la carta en espanol para usted.

De Usted en Recuperacion,

NA Writing Steps for Recovery Committee

Comite de Escribiendo Pasos para Recuperacion

(En Ingles: Currently our committee has no Spanish speaking addicts available. Therefore, this letter is written in English, and an addict who speaks only English will write back to you. We hope that you can find someone who can translate the letter into Spanish for you. Yours in Recovery,... )
Dear

Enclosed is information concerning The Narcotics Anonymous Writing Steps for Recovery Committee. This packet is being sent to you because an inmate in your facility recently wrote to our committee asking that we provide him with a qualified step guide to help him write his steps for recovery. NA-WSR and many DOC Correctional Institutions have been working together since 1994 (details included in the next page titled “A Short History of the WSR Committee”). The Connecticut DOC Addictions Services approved the participation of this committee for all Connecticut Correctional Institutions at their July 2007 monthly meeting, and your facility has now been added to the list due to the letter we received from the inmate.

The purpose of this service is to provide guidance through writing the steps of NA with any incarcerated addict/inmate desiring recovery within NA. Working the steps is the process we’ve found for continuing ongoing growth with our ability to live life on life’s terms without the use of drugs.

This committee operates on certain policies and guidelines. Some of the requirements to be a step guide are:

1. Two years of continuous abstinence from all drugs
2. A willingness and availability to reply to any letter within two weeks of receipt.

Among the contents of this packet you will find:

- A Short History of the WSR Committee
- Our current Policy and Guidelines
- A letter from one CT facility expressing satisfaction with our service
- The Welcome Letter for inmates requesting our services,
- A Typical First Letter from a recovering addict requesting our services
- A Gratitude Letter from one of the recovering addicts we have been able to serve
- The WSR Correspondence Only Agreement that our Step Guides sign
- The letter we send to recovering addicts who will be released within 3 months
- The letter we send to Spanish speaking recovering addicts in the event we do not have any Spanish speaking step guides available
- The list of CT facilities currently served by the NA Writing Steps for Recovery Committee

There are more guidelines and policies which we will be happy to discuss during a presentation to your facility if you would like to request more direct information. We are looking forward to participating with your institution.

If you have any questions or helpful comments for us, please write to us at the address above. Please let us know if the name of the appropriate contact person changes.

Yours in service to the addict who still suffers,

CT Region NA WSR Committee
### Connecticut Prisons (as of 9-2007) Working With WSR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility</th>
<th>Staff Liaison</th>
<th>Mailing Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Bridgeport CI     | Diana Garcia  
(203) 579-6131           | 1106 North Avenue  
Bridgeport, CT 06604 |
| Brooklyn CI       | Bill Clancy  
(860) 779-4572           | 59 Hartford Road  
Brooklyn, CT 06234 |
| Carl Robinson CI  | Pat Kupec  
860-763-6200             | 285 Shaker Rd  
Enfield, CT 06082 |
| Cheshire CI       | Rick Renault, CCS  
203-250-2600            | 900 Highland Ave.  
Cheshire, CT 06410 |
| Corrigan CI       | Sue Paquette  
(860) 848-5700           | 986 Norwich-New London Turnpike  
Uncasville, CT 06382 |
| Enfield CI        | Ida Terry  
(860) 763-7300           | 289 Shaker Road, PO 1500  
Enfield, CT 06082 |
| Garner CI         | Howe Lundquist  
203-270-2800            | 50 Nannawauk Rd,  
Newtown, CT 06470 |
| Gates CI          | Leigh Ware  
860-691-4765             | 131 N Bridebrook Rd  
Niantic, CT 06357 |
| Hartford CI       | Barbara Segura  
(860) 240-1800           | 177 Weston Street  
Hartford, CT 06120 |
| MacDougall-Walker CI  | Barbara Segura  
(860) 627-2100           | 1153 East Street, South  
Suffield, CT 06080 |
| Manson Youth      | Ken Matthewson  
203-806-2500            | 42 Jarvis St  
Cheshire, CT 06410 |
| New Haven CI      | Robin Hobson/ Nyles Glover  
203-789-7111           | 245 Whalley Ave  
New Haven, CT 06350 |
| Osborn CI         | Marge Oiszewski  
860-487-2712  
860-763-8600  
860-566-7500 | PO Box 100  
Somers, CT 06071 |
| Radgowski CI      | MaryAnn Murphy/Lisa Dean  
860.848.5000  
(860) 848-5700 | 986 Norwich-New London Turnpike  
Uncasville, CT 06382 |
| Webster CI        | Ms. M. Garneau  
Cheshire, CT 06410 |
| Whiting/Dutcher   |                                | Middletown, CT 06457 |
| Willard-Cybulski  | Terry Kelley  
860-763-6577/860-763-6522  
7:30 – 3:30 T,W,F / 1:30 – 8 M, Th | 391 Shaker Road  
Enfield, CT 06082 |
| *York CI (women)  | Tracy McKoy  
(860) 691-6503           | 201 West Main St  
Niantic, CT 06357 |
I understand that in my role as a step guide in the WSR program I am to conduct myself under the guidelines as outlined by the WSR committee, the DOC, and the individual institution.

As a WSR step guide I agree to:

1. Limit my contact with the step writer to writing.
2. Refrain from using abusive or profane language.
3. Respect the confidentiality of the step writer.
4. Refrain from supplying the step writer with any materials for corresponding including envelopes, stamps, pre-stamped envelopes, writing paper and writing implements.
5. Refrain from sending the step writer any books, tapes, and items of this nature. *The step writer may request The Introductory Guide to Narcotics Anonymous and the step guide can then notify the coordinating secretary of the request so that this guide can be sent by the WSR Coordinating Secretary.
6. Refrain from supplying the step writer with my telephone number, address, and any other information prohibited by the program.
7. Refrain from visiting the step writer or having contact with him/her outside the facility.
8. Refrain from contacting anyone whom the step writer might ask me to contact other than himself/herself.
9. Refrain from revealing any damaging personal information.
10. Attest to having no prior knowledge of the step writer including not having been a victim or an accomplice with him/her as the result of a crime.

The DOC is aware that this program is designed for the purpose of recovery through the steps of Narcotics Anonymous and will allow the WSR committee to send an Introductory guide to NA to the step writer if the institution is unable to provide the NA Basic Text or the Introductory Guide to NA.

Furthermore, I understand that every letter I send into the facility may be opened and checked for contraband. The content of the letter is to remain on the topic outlined by the program and discretion will be exercised in writing about any matter that could be construed as to jeopardize the safety and security of the facility, it's staff, it's residents, this committee or anyone else.

I understand that failure to adhere to any of the aforementioned articles will result in cessation of my participation in the WSR program and may put the whole program at risk.

Step Guide’s Mailing Address, Phone Number and Pen Name

First and Last Name
Street Address
City, State & Zip
Phone

Step Guide’s Pen Signature
Date Signed
Dear

The WSR committee has just received your letter. Our committee is designed to help addicts in Connecticut Prisons who are requesting help to work the steps of Narcotics Anonymous. We are recovering addicts who volunteer our time to share our step writing experience and as such our resources are limited and we can only commit ourselves to work with the addicts within CT. We are forwarding your letter on to the Regional H&I Committee in your state in hopes they can give you the help you are requesting. We commend you for reaching out to us in an effort to enhance your recovery and know that you will find the following suggestions helpful as you get started in NA recovery. Please reach out to your local H&I meeting if there is one being brought into your facility. Upon your release please follow these suggestions:

1. Prior to your release check with the volunteer or addiction services staff at your institution to obtain a meeting schedule if one is available.

2. If you can't obtain a schedule and don't know where the meetings are in your area, call the hotline number for your area. The number can be found in most phone books under Narcotics Anonymous or from Info. line.

3. At your first meeting let people know who you are and that you're new. Get phone numbers, a current meeting schedule (if you haven't already gotten one) and start your search for a sponsor who will help you work the steps of NA recovery-

4. Don't hang out in "the old familiar places" with the "old familiar faces".

5. Most importantly, DON'T USE NO MATTER WHAT!

Narcotics Anonymous promises us that through working this program we can find relief from our obsession to use drugs. Every addict who stays clean is proof of this miracle and all it takes to belong is the desire to stay clean.

Good luck and we hope to see you in the rooms of NA soon.

Yours in recovery,

Writing Steps for Recovery Committee
Out of state H&I Letter Invitation to help and Request for Assistance

WSR:  Dedication and purpose - The primary purpose of this committee is to provide written Narcotics Anonymous step guidance to any incarcerated addict desiring recovery within Narcotics Anonymous.

Dear NA Service Representative,

We are writing to you because an inmate in a facility in your state wrote to us requesting participation in our subcommittee. We are forwarding this letter to you in hopes that you will be able to help. We have responded to this letter with our usual “Out Of State Response Letter” and are sending you a copy of that letter as well. As with all subcommittees in NA, our resources are limited and because of these limitations, we can only commit ourselves to work with the addicts in our own state.

If you are interested in how CT WSR is helping addicts in jail receive the step guidance they are asking for, please download our Policy and Orientation Packet by following the link Local Service Committee Resources FTP Site from http://www.na.org/local_resource_area.htm. There is even an audio taped workshop which we held at the 2008 CT Convention available to you on this WSO website resource area. In the April 2008 issue of the NA Way there is an article entitled “Writing steps for recovery behind the walls”. To access this article on the web please go to: http://www.na.org/pdf/naway/en/NAWay_Apr08.pdf.

Over the years many regions and areas have contacted us and we have been able to share our experience, strength, and hope with them by passing on our policies, guidelines, and other documents that we have created to assist addicts in jails with their step writing efforts. As a result, there are many other WSR subcommittees that have been formed throughout the world and wonderful work is being accomplished. Please read on for a short history of how WSR came to be.

In July 1993 the Connecticut Regional H&I committee brought a letter from an inmate in one of Connecticut's jails asking for help to the CT Regional Committee meeting. Because of this letter an ad hoc committee within Regional H&I was formed and met for a year to try and find a way to help addicts in jail who wanted guidance writing the steps. The subcommittee that was subsequently formed was called: Sponsorship Behind the Walls. Sponsorship Behind the Walls (SBTW) started functioning as a subcommittee of H&I in the fall of '94 and then in Dec '95 The WSO Board of Trustees pointed out that since we used pen names, and were offering step direction (through NA service) and not traditional sponsorship, that the name Sponsorship Behind the Walls was not perhaps the best name for this subcommittee. As a result of this input, the committee name was changed from Sponsorship Behind the Walls to Writing Steps For Recovery.

At that same time, group conscience called for the committee to become a standing subcommittee of the Connecticut Region, rather than a subcommittee of H&I, since the work of the committee is quite different from that of bringing presentations into institutions. As you can see from this brief synopsis of our history, we have been in existence for over 14 years. As of the summer of 2007, we are now approved to serve addicts in every CT DOC Institution. Becoming approved in every CT DOC Institution has taken time and consistent, responsible service. CT WSR is happy to be helping incarcerated addicts enjoy the benefits of working the steps through our service structure, and feel grateful to share our ESH with anyone who is interested.

Please feel free to contact us if you would like more information on what we do, how we do it, or how you can do it to.

Yours in service to the addict who still suffers,

CT Region NA WSR Committee