

# Virginia Area 57 Alateen Sponsorship and Behavior Requirements

*Approved at the Spring Assembly, May 3, 2009*

## **DEFINITION OF AL-ANON MEMBERS INVOLVED IN ALATEEN SERVICE**

The WSO and Area shall define an Al-Anon Member involved in Alateen service as: an Al-Anon member who is directly responsible for Alateens while being of service to Alateen. This includes, but is not limited to: Alateen group sponsors, chaperones for Alateen, substitute Alateen sponsors, District and Area Alateen Coordinators, and any Al-Anon member providing transportation for Alateens to or from events, conferences, Assemblies, etc. For simplicity in this document, all of these individuals are being called "sponsors". The WSO refers to any of the above as an Al-Anon Member involved in Alateen Service.

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR SPONSORSHIP**

- a) Minimum age of 23.
- b) Currently attending at least one Al-Anon meeting weekly.
- c) Must be an active Al-Anon member for the past two years in addition to any time spent in Alateen.
- d) Has never been convicted of a felony, and not have been charged with child abuse or any other inappropriate sexual behavior, and not have demonstrated or been treated for emotional problems which could result in harm to Alateen members.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES REQUIRED OF SPONSORS AND ALATEENS**

- a) Alateen Group and District approval of applicant.
- b) Satisfactory background check for applicant every three years. In addition to sponsors, Area group records and Alateen coordinators will also complete a background check every three years.
  - i. All new sponsors, or sponsors who have not resided within the state of Virginia for the previous three years shall submit a "National Criminal Background Check For Employees or Volunteer Providing Care to Children, the Elderly and Disabled" Virginia State Police form SP-24.
  - ii. Any previously approved Alateen sponsor from Virginia who has lived continuously within the commonwealth for the past three years shall submit a "Criminal Record Name Search" form SP-167 and a "Sex Offender & Crimes against Minors" Virginia State Police form SP-266.
- c) Review and uphold the area Alateen and Alateen Sponsor behavior requirements.
- d) Overt or covert sexual interaction between any adult and Alateen member is prohibited. Alateen members must also abide by this requirement.
- e) Conduct contrary to applicable state laws is prohibited. Alateen members must also abide by this requirement. Sponsors must be knowledgeable in regards to Virginia Code on child abuse and reporting thereof, Virginia code 63.2-1509.
- f) Sponsors must obtain parental permission and medical consent when transporting or caring for an Alateen member on any trip. State forms will be filled out and notarized and kept on the Sponsor's person until the Alateen member returns home. Alateen members are also responsible for obtaining parental permission and medical care when applicable.

## **STRONGLY RECOMMENDED FOR SPONSORSHIP**

- a) Parents are advised against sponsoring a group their child may attend.
- b) Have an understanding of how the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts are utilized in recovery, and keep the focus on the Al-Anon program at all Alateen functions.
- b) Participate in area/district Alateen workshops.
- c) Know your district representative and Alateen coordinators.
- d) Encourage Alateen participation at district and area functions.
- e) Become familiar with Alateen literature.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR GROUP CERTIFICATION AND AREA PROCESS

This is the Virginia Area Process for Registration of all Alateen groups in the state, effective 12/31/04.

- a) Each group must have two certified sponsors approved by the District and Area per Alateen group prior to a new meeting forming. Each group must have two certified sponsors approved by the group, District and Area per Alateen group prior to recertification. It is strongly recommended that Alateen groups be held the same night, place and time as Al-Anon meetings.
- b) The Sponsors must meet the Requirements and Responsibilities on page 1 and complete a satisfactory background check.
- c) Each new Alateen group is required to register with the Area before registering with the World Service Office (WSO). This involves completing the Alateen Registration/Group Records Change form, the WSO Al-Anon Member Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS) Form, and the Area 57 Form (see attachments A, B, and C). These 3 forms should be submitted to the District first. The District Representative (DR) signs the Area Form only, and sends all 3 forms to the Area Authorized Signature person. The Area Authorized signature person obtains the background checks, signs the AMIAS form, and sends the AMIAS form and the Group Registration form to the WSO. Your group will then be registered and given a WSO group number.
- d) Each year group sponsors will submit a signed Area form and completed Alateen Registration/Group Records Change form to their district Alateen Coordinator, or whomever the DR appoints to handle Alateen affairs within the district. The AMIAS form is only filled out and submitted to the WSO one time.
- e) Every three years, upon election of area officers, each Alateen Sponsor shall submit to a criminal and sex offender background check. Payments of all expenses associated with this task are to be paid for by the district where the Alateen meeting is held.
- f) Completed background check forms are to be returned to the Area Authorized Signature person. They will then sign the AMIAS form and submit the background check results to the Area group records coordinator for retention in a secure location, i.e. safety deposit box. Group Records Coordinator along with Area Chairperson will have access to records. Non-current Alateen sponsor records may be computer scanned onto CD's for long-term record management. The Group Records Coordinator will also maintain the yearly Area 57 forms in files.
- g) District Representatives along with the Area Alateen Coordinator will insure each group requesting certification meets all the requirements as set forth in the Virginia Area Alateen Sponsor and Behavior Guidelines, herein called the Guidelines.
- h) Each year in October the Group Records Coordinator along with the Area Alateen Coordinator will notify each registered Alateen group and sponsors to start the process within their districts. Refer to section d) listed above.
- i) Districts will submit to the Area Alateen Coordinator all information necessary to validate that each Alateen group and sponsor meets the criteria of the Guidelines. Districts should complete this process by December of each year. All information must be in to the WSO by December 31 of each year.
- j) The Area Alateen Coordinator along with the Area Group Records Coordinator will verify yearly that listings from the WSO of all groups and sponsors in the Area have met and continued to meet the Guidelines. Those groups without forms in by June of the next year will be considered not to have met the Guidelines, and will not be listed in District, Area, or WSO listings.
- k) Existing sponsors who do not complete and submit the yearly forms by June, or who do not pass the subsequent background checks, will be asked to step down. The group will need to find replacement sponsors and start at letter a) in order to remain in compliance with the Area Process.
- l) Area Alateen Coordinators and Area Group Records Coordinator shall also notify each district as to which groups and sponsors have complied with said Guidelines.
- m) The Area and Districts must drop listings and references to any group within their area or districts who do not comply with the Guidelines. The Area Alateen Coordinator and DRs will both be responsible for notifying said groups to cease and desist utilizing the Alateen name. Any group not in compliance will also not be listed with the WSO, and is considered disbanded.

## ALATEEN CONFERENCE/CONVENTION/ASSEMBLY GUIDELINES (C/C/A)

### SPONSORS/AMIAS BEFORE THE C/C/A

1. Photocopy enough copies of the Conference Packet (General Information, Permission Slip, and C/C/A Guidelines) for each member of the group interested in attending.
2. Have the “C/C/A Guidelines” read and discussed by your group before the C/C/A event. Sponsors are also required to abide by these guidelines.
3. Pre-register your group as soon as possible.
4. Sponsors/AMIAS should use discretion in bringing any Alateen to C/C/A. Normally only those individuals who have been active in the program for the past three months should be considered. Remember you and the Alateens you are escorting are representing Alateen and attendees should be respectful of that fact. [NOTE: Remember, adults are not personal sponsors to Alateens.]
5. Each group shall bring one male sponsor for every five or less male registrants and one female sponsor for every five or less female registrants. All sponsors need to have been approved through the Area process and include their WSO number on the C/C/A Registration form if they are going to be responsible for the care or transport of Alateens.  
**Please bring only the number of sponsors necessary for your group. ONE PER FIVE! This ratio of five to one will be reduced at conventions due to hotel room size, i.e. three or four to one in a two-bed room with a rollaway cot. NO Alateen may come to the C/C/A without a sponsor. This ratio may be less at Conventions or Assemblies due to size of rooms available and requirement that sponsors are in the same rooms as Alateens. [NOTE: Adults and Alateens should not share a bed]**
6. Do not leave your area without travel permission slips/medical form in hand (see attachment D). **NO ONE (SPONSOR INCLUDED)** will be permitted to attend the C/C/A without a travel permission slip/medical form. All Alateen permission slips must have a notarized signature of parent or guardian.
7. Military dependents must bring their military I.D. cards. All others must have their medical insurance number or a number of a responsible party on their permission slip/medical form.
8. If parents of C/C/A attendees are going to be out of town during the Conference weekend, sponsors make sure you have a telephone number where they can be reached in case of an emergency.
9. Remind C/C/A attendees to leave C/C/A information with their parents.
10. REREAD “C/C/A Guidelines” in the car while traveling to the C/C/A.

### C/C/A GUIDELINES FOR ALL SPONSORS AND ALATEEN MEMBERS

1. Sponsors of each group assume full responsibility for the conduct and safety of their own group.
2. All sponsors should be responsible for all Alateens and Young Alateens – helping and comforting if lost or in trouble.
3. The conduct expected of those attending C/C/A should be clearly understood by all before leaving the home area.
4. Room assignments will be made by the housing committee. The room assignments are made for the duration of the C/C/A and rooms **WILL NOT** be changed without the specific permission of the Housing Committee or the Board. Know the housing location of each of your group members. Check each room before leaving the C/C/A. This makes it easier for the Clean-up Committee to insure your group has cleaned its space.
5. All males and females will be housed in separate rooms/facilities. There will be **ABSOLUTELY NO VISITING** by members of the opposite sex.
6. All curfews as set forth by each C/C/A must be adhered to by all and will be **STRICTLY ENFORCED**.

7. **POSSESSION OF WEAPONS, ALCOHOL OR DRUGS, VIOLENT OR DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR IS STRICTLY FORBIDDEN. THE C/C/A WILL DISMISS ANY VIOLATOR(S) FROM THE C/C/A.** Parents will be notified and requested to remove the violator(s) from the C/C/A site. **THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTIONS.**
8. All registrants are required to attend all C/C/A sessions and meals, as set forth in the Guidelines for that event. Sponsors will insure all Alateens under their supervision understand these Guidelines.
9. Persons from the ages 7 (through and including) 19 from a practicing Alateen Group, with the sponsor's approval are welcome.
10. Suggest that each member of your group check with you at least once each morning and once each afternoon. (A simple "Hi" would be sufficient.)
11. Try to have at least **ONE** meal with your group each day.
12. Set a good example – try to participate in and share with the Alateens in as many activities as possible.
13. No registrants may leave the C/C/A facilities at any time without permission from the sponsor and Chairman of the event.
14. All fees are payable by check or money order made out to the C/C/A. **DO NOT SEND OR BRING ANY CASH PLEASE.**
15. The C/C/A will not be responsible for the loss of articles of clothing and/or personal effects. Personal identification is suggested.
16. **NO PETS** are allowed at the C/C/A.
17. **NO CAMPING** is allowed at the C/C/A.
18. Electronic equipment should not be brought to the Conference. The Board should be notified of any emergency needs for cell phones, and these should not be turned on in meetings except with permission of the Conference Board.
19. **SEXUAL ACTIVITY IS A VIOLATION OF C/C/A. VIOLATORS WILL BE DEALT WITH AT THE BOARD'S OR COMMITTEE'S DISCRETION. Overt or covert sexual interaction between any adult and Alateen member is prohibited. Overt or covert sexual interaction between any Alateen members is prohibited.**
20. VA State law prohibits the purchase or possession of tobacco products by anyone under the age of 18, Virginia Code 18.2-371.2.
21. Conduct contrary to applicable state laws is prohibited.
22. All violators of these C/C/A Guidelines are subject to dismissal from the C/C/A. Dismissal may mean the removal of the whole group if the Sponsor is forced to escort said individual home due to lack of parent or guardian availability. Violators will be turned over to the appropriate governing body for appropriate action.
23. Sponsors from states outside Virginia will be accepted at Alateen Conferences as long as they are certified by their home **Area** in accordance with W.S.O. standards and their Area has verified current certification.
24. Each sponsor should review with all Alateens the "Alateen Safety Guidelines"(G-34) document.

## **GUESTS**

### ***ALATEEN MEETINGS***

Alateen meetings are closed meetings. Only the Alateen Group Sponsors and Alateen members may attend (see *2006-2009 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*, page 35). Alateen groups may plan an annual open meeting to allow others to attend.

### ***ALATEEN CONFERENCES***

Most Alateen Conferences are closed events for Alateens and their Alateen Group sponsors only. An Alateen Conference with an open meeting(s) should develop a way to identify the Area-certified Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen service (AMIAS) and a safety plan to insure that the Alateens are always in their care.

Alateen conference committees may invite guests as speakers. These guests should be identified to everyone attending the conference. Special nametags should be worn by guests to allow everyone attending the conference the ability to readily identify who is a guest. Guests should never be housed in rooms with any Alateen. Conference Boards may invite guests to participate in workshops at conferences provided that

a least one AMIAS approved sponsor is present during the workshop. The Anonymity statement should be read aloud at the start of each meeting being attended by any guest.

Attachment A: Alateen Registration/Group Records Change Form

Attachment B: Al-Anon Member Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS) form

Attachment C: Area 57 Form

Attachment D: Travel Permission Slip/Medical Form