

## NCWSA REQUIREMENT FOR TEEN SAFETY

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### A. GENERAL:

1. **Statement of principles:** In establishing this Requirement for Teen Safety, NCWSA recognizes as an integral part of the Al-Anon/Alateen program that we must exercise care:
  - a. in selecting Sponsor Candidates,
  - b. in supervising Sponsor Candidates, and
  - c. in preventing abusers from serving or continuing to serve as group sponsors.
2. **Implementation of principles:** The 2004 Assembly has approved this NCWSA Requirement for Teen Safety ("Requirement") in order to comply with the requirements of Motion 51 of the AFG Board of Trustees dated December 8, 2003 ("Motion 51"). This Requirement is intended to set the minimum requirements that will
  - a. Assure the safety of teens who attend an Alateen Group, an Alateen Conference and/or Al-Anon function that includes Alateen participation, whether the function is sponsored by NCWSA, by a District or by an Intergroup within the Area's boundaries, and
  - b. Assure teens, sponsors, parents and the public that Al-Anon and Alateen functions are a safe place for teens and
  - c. Meet or exceed the minimum requirements of Motion 51.

This Requirement, has been reviewed by an attorney familiar with California law concerning care of children at events and groups. Should there be any conflict between this Requirement and that of WSO requirements, this Requirement will be updated to agree with WSO requirements.

### B. SELECTING AND APPROVING ADULTS WHO WORK WITH TEENS IN AN ALATEEN ENVIRONMENT

1. **Definition of terms**
  - a. **Person involved with Alateen Service:** A person who is on the **Sponsor Candidate List** who occasionally or repetitively works with teens in any capacity including but not limited to 1) attending an Alateen Conference, 2) being responsible for the Alateen portion of a District or Area function, including Day In Al-Anon, Assembly, Convention or similar activities or 3) traveling with teens to or from an Al-Anon or Alateen function.
  - b. **Alateen Sponsor Applicant:** someone who wishes to serve as a **Person involved with Alateen Service** and has completed and submitted the **NCWSA Alateen Sponsor Candidate Profile**.
  - c. **NCWSA Alateen Sponsor Candidate Profile:** Form to be filled out by a Sponsor Applicant, a copy of which is attached to this Requirement.
  - d. **Sponsor Candidate:** An **Alateen Sponsor Applicant** who has been certified and added to the **Sponsor Candidate List**.

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- e. **Sponsor Candidate List:** A list of **Sponsor Candidates** who have been certified by the District or Area Administrator. This list is updated and submitted to the Area Administrator at least annually.
- f. **Alateen Group Sponsor:** A person who is on the **Sponsor Candidate List** and who serves as a sponsor of an Alateen group.
- g. **AA Member:** An Al-Anon member who is also a member of AA is eligible to become a **Sponsor Candidate** by virtue of their Al-Anon membership. An AA member who is not an Al-Anon member may not serve as a **Sponsor Candidate**.
- h. **District, Area:** The term "District" refers to any local function whether it is District, Intergroup or AIS; the term Area refers to non-local functions.
- i. **District or Area Alateen Coordinator:** A person who is on the **Sponsor Candidate List** and who serves as an Alateen Coordinator at the District, Intergroup or Area.
- j. **Safety Administrator:** A person who is on the **Sponsor Candidate List** and who is responsible to
  - (1) certify candidates at the District or Area level
  - (2) keep a record of **Sponsor Candidates** and
  - (3) report the certifications annually to the Area (District **Safety Administrator**) or the WSO (Area **Safety Administrator**).
- k. **Convention Attendees:** A person who attends an Al-Anon Conference, Convention, Assembly, whether at the District or Area level is not considered a **Person involved with Alateen Service** unless that person performs one or more of the functions listed in these definitions.
- l. **Alateen Group:** As defined in the Service Manual. In addition, a group that 1) has one or more **Alateen Group Sponsors** and 2) has completed the registration process defined in this Requirement.
- m. **Alateen Member:** A person under the age of 21 who attends an **Alateen Group** meeting and who meets the requirements for membership listed in the current revision of the Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual.
- n. **Alateen Conference or Convention:** A weekend event where the Alateens structure a gathering under the supervision of at least two **Sponsor Candidates**. Any adult who attends an Alateen Conference or Convention must be on the **Sponsor Candidate List** unless they do not serve in any capacity that allows them to supervise Alateen members.
- o. **Al-Anon Conference or Convention with Alateen participation:** A weekend event, such as a conference or convention, sponsored by an entity in the Al-Anon service structure, such as the Assembly or any District, which has separate participation by Alateen members.
- p. **AA Conference or Convention with Al-Anon and/or Alateen Participation:** A weekend event sponsored by Alcoholics Anonymous where Al-Anon and/or Alateen members have been asked to participate.

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### 2. Selection of Sponsor Applicants

a. **Finding Alateen Sponsor Applicants:** **Alateen Sponsor Applicants** can be found in several ways: by Alateens themselves, by a current Group Sponsor who knows other people in the program who may make a good Sponsor, or by the District servants by making regular announcements about the need for **Sponsor Candidates**. Anyone who finds an **Alateen Sponsor Applicant** refers the person to the District or Area **Safety Administrator** for the next action.

b. **Information at the District Level:** The **Alateen Sponsor Applicant** ("Applicant") first meets with the District **Safety Administrator**. If the District holds regular Sponsors' Workshops, the **Sponsor Applicant** should also visit at least one of these workshops. Every **Sponsor Applicant** will be given a packet of Conference-Approved Literature (C.A.L.) explaining the Alateen Program and the responsibilities of Sponsorship. In addition, each **Alateen Sponsor Applicant** receives the **NCWSA Alateen Sponsor Candidate Profile** and its cover letter that explains the process of being interviewed to become a **Sponsor Candidate** and the reasons why this is now taking place. In districts where there is no **Safety Administrator**, it is recommended that the District Representative provide this information. Upon certification, the **Sponsor Candidate** should return the certified **NCWSA Alateen Sponsor Candidate Profile** to the **Safety Administrator** with the **Sponsor Candidate** keeping a copy. The **Safety Administrator** will complete the certification process and add successful Sponsor Applicants to the **Sponsor Candidate List**. If the Applicant has indicated a preference of an Alateen group to sponsor, the Administrator would inform the District Alateen Coordinator (or District Representative), who will then arrange for the **Sponsor Candidate** to visit the group.

#### c. **Interviewing Sponsor Candidates at the Alateen Group:**

(1) Alateen Groups have the autonomy to select their group sponsors. However, they are restricted in their choices of sponsor to those who are on the **Sponsor Candidate List**. Being on the **Sponsor Candidate List** does not guarantee that an individual Alateen Group must or will accept the **Sponsor Candidate**.

(2) All Northern California Alateen groups will be provided with a "NCWSA Safety Requirements" letter from NCWSA outlining the seriousness of selecting their **Alateen Group Sponsor** and providing suggestions for going about that process. Each person should be aware that each Alateen member has the right to say "no"-even if based simply on gut instinct. To prevent peer pressure from swaying opinion, voting should be conducted by secret ballot (on pieces of paper). When a **Sponsor Candidate** visits the Alateen Group for the first time, the group will interview the **Sponsor Candidate**. The Alateens are encouraged to ask any questions they feel would help them to get to know the **Sponsor Candidate** better. The **Sponsor Candidate** would also be asked to share with the group. Alateens make the ultimate decision about selecting their group sponsor. The decision about their **Alateen Group Sponsor** does not have to be made during their first meeting with the **Sponsor Candidate**.

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The group conscience could be taken the following week (naturally with the candidate not present). We recommend that a **Sponsor Candidate** be accepted for a trial period of approximately 4 weeks; then, after the group and the **Sponsor Candidate** have more experience together, the Alateens may vote again to accept the **Sponsor Candidate** as a permanent **Alateen Group Sponsor**. Should a candidate be rejected at the group level or if a temporary or permanent **Alateen Group Sponsor** is voted out, the Alateen Group's Representative must notify the **Safety Administrator** and/or the District Alateen Coordinator or the District Representative.

**d. Evaluation of an Alateen Sponsor Applicant:** A person who applies to become a **Sponsor Candidate** must agree to adhere to the following minimum safety and behavioral requirements, including signing the **NCWSA Alateen Sponsor Candidate Profile**.

**(1) Minimum Safety and Behavioral Requirements for a Sponsor Candidate:**

Every Al-Anon member involved with Alateen service must

- (a) be an Al-Anon member regularly attending Al-Anon meetings;
- (b) be at least 21 years old;
- (c) have at least two years in Al-Anon in addition to any time spent in Alateen;
- (d) not have been convicted of a felony;
- (e) not have been charged with child abuse or any other inappropriate sexual behavior;
- (f) not have demonstrated emotional problems, which could result in harm to Alateen members;
- (g) disclose any involvement in an investigation by a child welfare or other similar government agency.

**(2) In addition, every Al-Anon member involved with Alateen service must:**

- (a) Agree not to have overt or covert sexual interaction (whether consensual or not) with an Alateen member, including but not limited to
  - (i) Touching a teen inappropriately;
  - (ii) Dating a teen who is an Alateen member;
  - (iii) Holding or hugging in an inappropriate manner;
  - (iv) Having any inappropriate communication by phone or electronically.
- (b) Agree not to conduct him/herself in a manner contrary to applicable laws;
- [c] Agree to allow the **Safety Administrator** to independently verify the information on the **NCWSA Alateen Sponsor Candidate Profile**;
- (d) Agree to promptly notify the **Safety Administrator** if, after certification the **Sponsor Candidate** is charged with child abuse, a crime, or inappropriate sexual behavior;
- (e) Agree not to carry teens under the age of 18 in an auto to or from an Alateen or Al-Anon function unless the teen has an NCWSA (or similar) permission slip signed by a parent or guardian and the driver has appropriate automobile insurance.

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### ***POSSIBLE FUTURE ADDITIONS TO TEEN SAFETY REQUIREMENT:***

- (3) ***Background Checks:*** *The Alateen Safety Committee will, upon the approval of this Requirement, continue to meet to develop a method of checking the background of all Alateen Sponsor Applicants by doing the following in a timely manner*
- (a) *Applying to the State of California to become an Applicant Agency;*
  - (b) *Certifying **Safety Administrators** who will have access to the State Databases;*
  - (c) *Finding a secure location to place confidential records.*
  - (d) *Upon completion of this preparation, certifying all those on the **Sponsor Candidate List** through the state background check procedures.*
- (4) ***Additional Requirements:*** *The Alateen Safety Committee will, upon the approval of this NCWSA Teen Safety Requirement, continue to meet to discuss adding items now on the WSO recommended list:*
- (a) *Requiring two Alateen sponsors at every Alateen meeting.*
  - (b) *Considering behavior before, during, and after any Alateen meeting or activity of Alateens and persons involved with Alateen service.*
  - (c) *Connecting Alateen conferences (and other weekend conventions and conferences) to the Area structure.*
  - (d) *Forming an Alateen meeting that meets at the same time and place as the Al-Anon meeting.*
  - (e) *Being gender conscious.*
  - (f) *Avoiding one-on-one interactions. (Safety Requirements on meeting one-on-one, except in a public place, with any teen who is under the age of 18.)*
  - (g) *Having an appropriate ratio of adults to Alateens at all times.*
  - (h) *Transporting Alateens to and from events.*
  - (i) *Educational training and awareness programs.*
- q. **Resignation and Removal:** We recognize that circumstances change and a person may not be willing or able to continue as an **Alateen Sponsor Applicant, Sponsor Candidate or Alateen Group Sponsor**. In addition, information received after appointment as a **Sponsor Candidate or Alateen Group Sponsor** may require a review of the original application.
- (1) Any **Alateen Sponsor Applicant or Sponsor Candidate** may resign at any time by giving notice to the local **Alateen Safety Administrator**. Any **Alateen Group Sponsor** may resign at any time by giving notice to the **Alateen Group** where the person is an **Alateen Group Sponsor**. A resignation will take effect upon the date of receipt of the notice or the date specified, whichever is later. Notice may be given in writing or verbally. Acceptance of the resignation is not necessary to make it effective. A voluntary resignation will not alone be used as a reason to prevent that person from serving as a **Sponsor Candidate** in the future.

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- (2) The applications of all **Sponsor Candidates** and **Alateen Group Sponsors** will be periodically reviewed. Should the person not return a new completed application in a timely manner, that person may be removed from the list of **Sponsor Candidates** and from the list of any Alateen groups where the person may have served as an **Alateen Group Sponsor**. Not returning a renewal request will not alone be used as a reason to prevent that person from serving as a **Sponsor Candidate** in the future.
- (3) Should there be changes to the information supplied at the time of certification that would have prevented the **Alateen Sponsor Applicant, Sponsor Candidate or Alateen Group Sponsor** from having been selected as a **Sponsor Candidate, the local or area Alateen Safety Administrator** may require that the person step down from the position.

### C. MINIMUM SAFETY AND BEHAVIORAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE ALATEEN GROUP:

1. **Qualification as Alateen Group:** To be called an Alateen Group and listed as such in the NCWSA District or Area lists, the Alateen group agrees to abide by this NCWSA Teen Safety Requirement by
  - a. Selecting Sponsors only from the list of Certified **Sponsor Candidates**;
  - b. Requiring at least one sponsor to be present as part of the Alateen Group;
  - c. Corresponding with the District or Area **Safety Administrator** whenever any meeting change has occurred, which includes the addition or loss of a sponsor, meeting location, time etc.
2. **Notification of Disqualification:** The NCWSA will notify the World Service Office (AFG Headquarters, Inc.) of any Alateen group that does not meet the NCWSA Teen Safety Requirements.

### D. MINIMUM SAFETY AND BEHAVIORAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DISTRICT:

Each District agrees to

1. Provide forms required to meet this NCWSA Teen Safety Requirement to the **Alateen Sponsor Applicant** and the Alateen group.
2. Provide name and address of the District **Safety Administrator** and the District Representative to the Area **Safety Administrator**.
3. Provide lists of **Sponsor Candidates** and Alateen Groups that meet the NCWSA Teen Safety Requirement criteria to the NCWSA Safety Administrator at least annually on a schedule to be determined by the Area **Safety Administrator**.
4. Keep confidential the content of the **NCWSA Sponsor Candidate Profile** and to use and distribute that content only in accordance with applicable law.

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### E. **MINIMUM SAFETY AND BEHAVIORAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE NCWSA:**

The NCWSA agrees to

1. Provide forms required by this NCWSA Teen Safety Requirement to the District **Safety Administrator** and the District Representative.
2. Provide the name and address of the Area **Safety Administrator** and the Area Chairperson to the World Service Office, the District **Safety Administrator**, the District Representative and to those persons legally authorized to have this information.
3. Appoint the following persons to the positions as follows:
  - a. Area Safety Administrator = Alternate Delegate
  - b. Alternate Safety Administrator = Area Chairperson
  - c. Alternate Safety Administrator = Alateen Coordinator
  - d. Alternate Safety Administrator = Alternate Alateen Coordinator
4. Recommend that districts appoint the following persons to the positions as follows:
  - a. District Safety Administrator = District Representative
  - b. Alternate Safety Administrator = Alateen Coordinator
  - c. Alternate Safety Administrator = Alternate Alateen Coordinator
5. Contact and employ an attorney familiar with California laws concerning child safety, who must review this NCWSA Teen Safety Requirement prior to final issuance.
6. Keep confidential the content of the **NCWSA Sponsor Candidate Profile** and to use and distribute that content only in accordance with applicable law.

### F. **INFORMATION FLOW FROM THE SAFETY ADMINISTRATOR TO THE WSO:**

At a schedule to be determined by the Area **Safety Administrator** (but at least annually), each District **Safety Administrator** shall send a copy of their **Sponsor Candidate List** and a list of Alateen groups with sponsors to the Area **Safety Administrator**. The Area **Safety Administrator** will forward these to the WSO, following WSO formats.

### G. **APPEALS:** In line with the Al-Anon and Alateen Warranties, this NCWSA Teen Safety Requirement recognizes that “no member shall be placed in unqualified authority over other members”, including any person who is a **Safety Administrator**, **Sponsor Applicant** or member of an Alateen or Al-Anon Group.

1. Any member of Al-Anon and Alateen may appeal a **Safety Administrator**'s decision. This includes the decision to certify a **Sponsor Applicant**, the decision not to certify a **Sponsor Applicant** and the interpretation of the criteria used to make the decision. Reasons that an Al-Anon or Alateen member, including the applicant, might appeal a decision includes, but is not limited to the following:
  - a. Information of which the **Safety Administrator** might not be aware.
  - b. Personal experiences that could be a factor in certifying a **Sponsor Applicant**.
  - c. New charges that weren't known.
  - d. Old charges that no longer apply.

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2. Appeals must first be made to the **Safety Administrator** who made the decision. If the person appealing the decision is not satisfied with the result, that person may make his next appeal to the **Area Safety Administrator**, outlining in writing why the first result is not satisfactory. The next and last appeal is to the Executive Committee of NCWSA. As the Board of Directors of NCWSA, Inc, the decision of the Executive Committee is final.
3. The appeals procedure to be used is identified as B-27, the NORTHERN CALIFORNIA WORLD SERVICE COMMITTEE GUIDELINES FOR CONFLICT & COMPLAINT RESOLUTION.

### **H. LIST OF REQUIRED FORMS**

This list will continue to be updated as additional forms and Spanish translations are available. Please check the web page [http://www.ncwsa.org/A22-OPENING\\_PAGE.html](http://www.ncwsa.org/A22-OPENING_PAGE.html) for the latest items.

1. A-22-1 NCWSA Alateen Sponsor Candidate Profile
2. A-22-2 Al-Anon Member Involved in Alateen Service Form (WSO form)
3. A-22-3 Letter to Alateen Sponsor Applicant
4. A-22-4 Letter to Alateen Group
5. A-22-5 Letter to District Safety Administrator or District Representative
6. A-22-6 Alateen Group Registration Form (WSO form)
7. A-22-7 NCWSA Travel and Treatment Form
8. A-22-8 Frequently Asked Questions

### **I. RECOMMENDED CONFERENCE APPROVED LITERATURE:**

This list will continue to be updated as additional literature is made available by the World Service Office.

1. P-21 Youth and the Alcoholic Parent
2. P-24/27 Current Issue of the Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual
3. P-29 A Guide for Sponsors of Alateen Groups