

TAS Kit
AA Manitoba (Area 80)
January 2026



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Telephone Answering Service (TAS) Kit

INTRODUCTION TO TELEPHONE ANSWERING SERVICE

Thank you for your interest in Telephone Answering, your help is a necessary and vital part of the Twelve Step work we do at Alcoholics Anonymous. People just like you have organized this kit. All the information is as up to date as possible. Please excuse any errors or omissions you may find but please do bring them to the attention of the TAS rep by email at wiatas@aamanitoba.org or the Intergroup Committee by calling Manitoba Central Office at 204-942-0126.

This is your kit and everyone is responsible for updating their kit on a regular basis. You will need current Winnipeg and Rural Manitoba meeting schedules and a calendar of the events page (<https://aamanitoba.org/events>). You can obtain this information by visiting the Central Office at 1865 Portage Avenue 11:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. Monday – Friday. You can also find this information on our website www.aamanitoba.org.

Your Intergroup Rep should also be picking up this information at the regular intergroup meetings that fall on the first Monday of each month. It can also be found on the AA Manitoba website at <https://aamanitoba.org/t-a-s/>

Thanks again for helping with this most essential lifeline for the alcoholic who is still suffering. One year of continuous sobriety is required to perform this very vital service work. If you do not have the required sobriety, ask your sponsor to take the phones with you.

If for some reason you are unable to make your shift it is up to you to get someone to take your place as well as let the TAS representative know.

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WHAT DOES THE AA HELPLINE DO?

Besides connecting suffering alcoholics with recovering alcoholics, the help line provides the following information:

- Meeting times and group locations
- Gathering information for 12 steppers
- Central Office hours- Monday – Friday 11:30 – 5:00
- Other miscellaneous questions about AA conferences, dances, etc
- Names and phone numbers of other AA groups

WHAT YOU NEED TO ANSWER PHONES

- Up-to-date TAS Kit
- Recent confidential 12th step list (provided by TAS Rep)
- List of referral numbers (included in this kit)
- Current city and rural meeting schedules
- AA Manitoba events calendar (available at <https://aamanitoba.org/events/month>)
- City of Winnipeg map

ANSWERING PHONES AT HOME

- The Central Office phone will automatically be forwarded to the telephone number you've provided at the beginning of your shift, and disconnect at the end of your shift.
- When receiving a call, you will be prompted to press 1 to accept the call. This is how you can distinguish between a call to Central Office and your personal calls
- Calls may be forwarded to landlines or mobile phones

YOUR VOICE ON THE PHONE

Telephone volunteers are a necessary and very important part of Alcoholics Anonymous. They truly are representatives of AA and in whose hands often rest the responsibility for the public image of our fellowship. Remember that none of us has all the answers. Always ask your Higher Power for help when covering the phones.

Answering calls from sick alcoholics is one of the most important functions of the Intergroup Office. The volunteer's voice is often and sometimes the only contact a still suffering alcoholic will have with AA. A calm and gentle manner can instill trust in a prospective newcomer. That first call is a difficult one for the problem drinker to make; try to understand that, and try to listen and gently ask if they would like someone to call them (male-male, female-female)

Do not promise the caller things like rides to hospitals, meetings, home visits or assistance. These are matters to be resolved between the 12th step volunteers and the caller. Never give out names/numbers from the 12-step list.

Please remember that our only message concerns recovery in AA. *Do not give out personal advice or opinions* on medical, legal, marital, religious matters, or other addictions, etc, no matter how qualified you may be. On the phones we are the representatives of AA, and as such are experts only in getting and staying sober. Therefore, if someone needs medical attention, direct them to the professionals/hospital.

- Volunteers on the 12th step list are listed by Group. At the end there is a list of volunteers listed by languages spoken other than English.
- Try to find a volunteer who lives in the same area as the caller, or who belongs to a group from that area. Refer male callers to male volunteers and females to females.
- It is important to respond to a call for help promptly. If you are having difficulty finding a volunteer, phone the caller back to reassure him that you are still working on it. If you are unable to find someone, try to direct the caller to the closest meeting. *Answering phones is not a 12th step call.*
- Do not leave messages on an answering machine or with anyone. You have to be sure that a volunteer is going to call right away.
- When you contact a willing volunteer, provide them with all the information you have acquired. If you have any concerns about the caller, pass them on also. We do get calls from disturbed people and we should take every precaution to alert our volunteers of any suspicions we may have.

YOUR SAFETY FIRST

- When calling someone, use *67 to block your phone number
- Always go with another person on a 12-step call
- Men with men. Women with women

Types of calls you may receive:

A CALLER LOOKING FOR HELP

If the caller can admit they have a problem with alcohol, share some of your experience, strength and hope, to help the caller identify. Find out if the caller wants to stop drinking, and if they want someone to call them. Make sure to get their necessary information ex: name, phone number, age, gender, etc, then contact a member on the Twelve-Step list and relay the information.

Questions you can ask:

- When was your last drink?
- Do you want to quit drinking?
- Have you been to AA before?
- Did you have a sponsor?
- Did you do the 12 steps?
- Did you stop going to meetings?
- Why did you stop going to meetings?

SOME PEOPLE JUST WANT TO TALK

Be a good listener but do not let the person take advantage of you. If someone just wants to talk and declines or avoids your suggested offers to help, explain that you cannot tie up the phone as someone in need could be trying to call.

GENERAL INFORMATION CALLS FROM MEMBERS

People looking for meeting times and locations ex: someone traveling through town looking for a meeting and needs to know when and where there is one closest to them. Look on a map for the closest meeting to where they are (there are private Google maps on the AA website that will have all Winnipeg groups marked complete with addresses and start times) and direct them to it. A general knowledge of the major hotels/motels in the city and groups closest to them is helpful when trying to help visitors. Refer inquiries about how to set up a group, purchase literature, or for specific information on the daily operation of AA to our Central Office manager, Brenda. Advise them to call back during regular office hours.

GENERAL INQUIRIES FROM THE PUBLIC

People call wanting to know what AA is all about and how it works. People call AA looking for AFM, thinking that it is all connected. Some callers are seeking help for a loved one, ex: "my husband has a drinking problem, what can I do about it?" If the caller has not had previous contact with AA, explain we have a fellowship of alcoholic people who help each other to get and stay sober. Offer the telephone number for Al Anon to family members calling about a loved one, or any of the numbers for other fellowships and resources located in this kit.

TROUBLESOME CALLS

If the caller is argumentative, remain patient and tactful. Try not to lose your temper, raise your voice, or become involved in any argument. If you and another member are covering the phones together, sometimes it is wise to pass the call to them, or simply and politely terminate the conversation. If the caller becomes abusive and/or persists with inappropriate language, terminate the call immediately. If the caller is very drunk, tell them to call back when sober. It may be that a referral to one of the detox centers listed is appropriate. If the caller appears to be suicidal, use your judgment. You may provide the Klinik 24-hour suicide line at 204-768-8686. If you are extremely concerned and can get the callers' name, number, and address you can call 911.

Referral Numbers for treatment, addiction, family, etc

SUICIDE PREVENTION

988 Suicide Crisis Helpline

Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc. MKO Mobile Crisis Response Team

Manitoba Suicide Prevention and Support Line (24/7)

PHONE

988

1-844-927-5433

1-877-435-7170

COUNSELLING SERVICES & CRISIS LINES

Domestic Violence Crisis Line

Kid's Hep Phone

Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre

Reporting child abuse

Sexual Assault Crisis

Women's Health Clinic

1-877-977-0007

1-800-668-6868

204-925-0300

1-866-345-9241

204-786-8631

204-947-2422 ext 204

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

211 Manitoba

Behavioural Health Foundation

Crisis Response Centre

Mood Disorder Association of MB

211

204-269-3430

204-940-1781

204-560-1461

ADDICTIONS SERVICES

Al-Anon/Alateen Central Services

Cocaine Anonymous of Manitoba

Families Anonymous

Gamblers Anonymous Winnipeg

HSC Detox/Addictions Unit

Manitoba Addictions Helpline

MB Opioid Support & Treatment

Marymound Inc.

Youth Addictions Stabilization Unit

Native Addictions Council of Manitoba

Narcotics Anonymous

Overeaters Anonymous

Problem Gambling Services (Winnipeg)

RAAM (Rapid Access to Addictions Medicine)

Services at River Point Centre (Men's Programming and Men's Intake)

Sexaholics Anonymous

Youth Addictions Centralized Intake Service

204-943-6051

204 250 2626

204-237-0336

204-582-4823

204-787-3855

1-855-662-6605

204-944-7070

204-944-7417

204-586-8395

1-877-909-3636

204-334-9008

204-944-6368

1-877-541-7646

204-944-6209

204-795-3189

1-877-710-3999

EMERGENCY SHELTER & HOUSING

Domestic Violence Crisis Line	1-877-977-0007
Ikwe Widdjiitiwin Crisis Shelter for survivors & victims	1-800-362-3344
Main Street Project	204-232-5217
St. Boniface StreetLinks	204-228-2369
Street Connections	204-981-0742
West Central Women's Resource Centre	204-774-8975
Willow Place Women's Shelter	204-615-0311
WINNIPEG BOOTH CENTRE	204-946-9402