

## **ROCKLAND COUNTY INTERGROUP AA ANSWERING SERVICE GUIDE FOR THE VOLUNTEER**

You can contact the answering service chairperson using the contact form at the bottom of this page.

1. THE TELEPHONE ANSWERING SERVICE number is 845-262-4613. Please DO NOT call in at the beginning of the shift if the group has already provided a sheet with names and phone numbers.
2. Remember: Answering service people are not AA people and there are several operators at the service office. You may not be talking to the same one each time you call. Make a note of the operator's name.
3. Answer your telephone promptly. Try to keep your phone free by minimizing personal calls and keeping them brief.
4. Identify yourself by first name only when answering your phone so that the answering service knows they have reached the correct person.
5. If you have a non alcoholic on the phone seeking information for professional reasons, refer them to the P.I. committee email at: [aainfo@rocklandnyaa.org](mailto:aainfo@rocklandnyaa.org)
6. Don't trust your memory. Keep a pad and pencil handy to jot down the information the answering service will provide to you. You may also find it beneficial to keep a current meeting list by the phone to help a caller find a meeting near them. If you don't have one handy you can always use the online one at: [www.rocklandnyaa.org](http://www.rocklandnyaa.org) Tell the caller about our website so they can also find a meeting for themselves.
7. Return the twelve step call promptly, identifying yourself by first name only. Make sure that you are talking to the party who called the answering service before you mention AA. NOTE: You may wish to press \*67 before returning the call to block special services such as call return and caller id, which can allow the twelve step caller to call you directly or even get your phone number (see Important Phone Information on page 2 for details).
8. Be courteous and compassionate, but establish as soon as you can whether the person calling is the person who WANTS HELP FOR THEMSELVES in

accordance with our primary purpose. If not, the party should be referred to the appropriate numbers, as necessary (see Referral Numbers on page 2).

9. You should not have to talk to the person for more than 5 or 10 minutes before you can establish the best way to be of service. It is suggested that you refer the call to a Twelve Stepper who resides in the same area as the caller. Remember, we do not provide taxis or babysitters. Make that clear.
10. Tell the troubled person that you will have someone call him/her as soon as possible. If you are unduly delayed in reaching a Twelve Stepper, call the person back and ask them for their patience. The return call will be greatly appreciated by the caller.
11. In the event that the party is threatening suicide, try to keep the conversation going and calm the party down. Keep talking and try to get the location and description of the threatening party. If possible, try to call the police on another line or by another means. If that is not possible, make an excuse to hang up to answer the door or go to the bathroom and call the police as soon as you hang up. Then call the person back and keep him/her on the line until the police arrive.
12. If you are unable to contact someone on the Twelve Step call list when you are scheduled to go off duty, please continue with the search to find an appropriate twelve stepper to handle the caller. Again, the caller should be kept informed of any delays.

## **DON'Ts**

1. Never give out a different alcoholic's last name or phone number, even to another alcoholic. If the caller insists on speaking to a particular person and you have their number; you may place the call to the person and have them return the call.
2. Do not identify yourself as associated with AA when calling the Twelve Stepper until you are sure you are talking with the Twelve Stepper, and not to another member of the family, a friend or babysitter, etc. This will protect their anonymity.
3. In general, do not process a call unless it is from an alcoholic who wants help. Refer all other callers politely to one of the other appropriate numbers on the lists.

## **REFERRAL PHONE NUMBERS**

### **POLICE DEPARTMENTS**

- Clarkstown 845-639-5800

- Haverstraw (Town) 845-354-1500
- Haverstraw (Village) 845-429-5711
- Nyack/South Village 845-358-0206
- Orangetown 845-359-3700
- Piermont 845-359-0240
- Ramapo 845-357-2400
- Spring Valley 845-356-7400
- Stony Point 845-786-2422
- Suffern 845-357-2300
- Sheriff's Patrol 845-638-5400
- State Police (Nyack area) 845-353-1100
- Palisades Parkway Police 845-786-2781

### **HOSPITALS**

- Good Samaritan –Alcohol Clinic 845-368-5075
- Nyack Recovery Center 845-348-2070
- Blaisdell Addiction Treatment Center 845-359-8500

### **AA ANSWERING SERVICES & WEB SITES IN OTHER AREAS**

*(Please note – Links to external sites are furnished as resources but do not necessarily indicate endorsement by RCI)*

- New York state meeting list [www.ny-aa.org](http://www.ny-aa.org)
- Bergen County, NJ 908-687-8566 [www.nnjaa.org](http://www.nnjaa.org)
- Nassau County (Long Island) 516-292-3040 [www.nassauny-aa.org](http://www.nassauny-aa.org)
- New York City 212-647-1680 [www.nyintergroup.org](http://www.nyintergroup.org)
- Queens 718-520-5021 [www.queensaa.org](http://www.queensaa.org)
- Brooklyn Intergroup 718-339-4777 [brooklynintergroup.org/brooklyn](http://brooklynintergroup.org/brooklyn)
- Suffolk County (Long Island) 631-654-1150 [www.suffolkny-aa.org](http://www.suffolkny-aa.org)
- Ulster County 845-331-6360
- Albany 800-252-6465
- Orange County 845-534-8525 [orangenyyaa.org](http://orangenyyaa.org)
- Sullivan County 845-234-4841 [www.scia-aa.com](http://www.scia-aa.com)

### **ALANON**

Rockland 845-727-2050

[www.rockland-al-anon.org](http://www.rockland-al-anon.org)

### **IMPORTANT PHONE INFORMATION**

There are two considerations which may compromise your privacy when returning a twelve step call: call return and caller ID. Call return allows a caller to press call you back by pressing \*69 as many times as he/she wishes until someone else calls him/her. Caller ID allows your telephone number to be shown to the person you are calling.

There are two options available to protect you:

1. Press \*67 prior to dialing each phone number. This will block both of these services.
2. Call Verizon and ask for a permanent block of these services on your phone. This block costs no money, but may prevent you from calling certain businesses and service numbers, which require this block off to call them (to prevent "phony" phone calls). However, to call such a business, you dial \*82 prior to each call to remove the block on your phone for that call only.