

Al-Anon Guidelines

The Shared Experience of Al-Anon and Alateen Members.

Alateen Safety Guidelines

G-34

Alateens are members of the Al-Anon Family Groups who have been affected by the family disease of alcoholism. They have come to Alateen seeking recovery. Before recovery can take place, an environment of trust and safety must exist. It is the responsibility of Al-Anon and Alateen *as a whole* to work together to maintain a healthy, loving, and supportive environment.

These guidelines offer procedures for ensuring the safety of Alateen members, the Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS), and Al-Anon and Alateen as a whole. All guidelines, including the *Alateen Safety Guidelines*, offer the shared experience of Al-Anon and Alateen members. Following these guidelines is not a substitute for abiding by the Area Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements (ASBR) created by your Area and obeying the law of your Area as it relates to minors. Each state and province defines its own way of regulating these issues, and it is important that each person involved with Alateen is aware of and follows local legal requirements.

Keeping It Safe

This section guides each Al-Anon and Alateen member, Area, and group as they work together to ensure the safety of Alateens seeking recovery.

What Can Alateen Members Do?

- **Familiarize yourselves with your Area's Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements.**
- **Remember, take responsibility for your own safety and well-being.** You do *not* have to accept unacceptable behavior! If you or anyone else in your group is uncomfortable with the actions of your Alateen Group Sponsor(s), the Sponsor(s) can be replaced with another Area-certified AMIAS. First, start with an informed group conscience. Involve the District Representative (DR) and/or Area, District, or Al-Anon Information Service (AIS) Alateen Coordinator. These trusted servants will work with you. They are committed to your well-being.
- **Invite your District Representative to your group on a regular basis.** Then, if a problem should occur, you have another familiar source of help at hand. Staying connected with a DR, or Area Alateen Coordinator, may prevent unacceptable behavior by an Alateen Group Sponsor or other Alateen members.
- **Conduct exchange meetings with other Alateen groups and their Alateen Group Sponsors.** You may want to call upon them for help in solving Sponsor or group problems. An ongoing interchange between other Alateen Group Sponsors and Alateens brings a new perspective to problem solving. *There is safety in numbers.*
- **Take responsibility for your own behavior and your participation in the group.** Your meeting space may be lost by engaging in any inappropriate activity. Engaging in roughhousing, fighting, overt and covert sexual behavior, or any other inappropriate activities before, during, and after an Alateen meeting or event may put you or your group in a dangerous position and prevent you from receiving the help that Alateen offers. These inappropriate actions can affect Al-Anon and Alateen as a whole and place the adults who are trying to help Alateen in a legally vulnerable position. Even if *your* actions are blameless, you can be adversely affected by the actions of others.
- **Participate in creating or updating your Alateen group behavior guidelines,** designed to ensure everyone knows what is expected before, during, and after the meeting. Then, if you or anyone else in your group is uncomfortable with the actions of another Alateen member, a discussion regarding the group's behavior guidelines is appropriate. If the offensive conduct persists, that member can be asked not to return to the meeting. Before taking such action, start with an informed group conscience, referring back to your group's behavior guidelines and the application of the Twelve Traditions.
- **Commit to adhering to the same requirements as Alateen members who are minors when participating as an Alateen if you are legally an adult according to local laws.**

- **Encourage your group to take a regular group inventory;** the guideline Taking a Group Inventory (G-8a and G-8b) may be helpful.
- **Support the actions of your Alateen Group Sponsors** who are responsible for the Alateens in the meeting room. To the best of their ability, Alateen Group Sponsors must

maintain a sense of safety and trust in order for recovery to take place and to protect the Alateen members from physical and emotional harm. Alateen Group Sponsors adhere to the Area's Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements conflict resolution procedures wherever necessary.

Just a Note: Each group has the autonomy to enact and enforce its own standards for conduct and procedures, provided these do not violate local law, the Area's Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements, and Al-Anon's Twelve Traditions. The acts of each individual, Al-Anon/Alateen group, and AMIAS assigned as Alateen Group Sponsor(s) are solely the acts of that group/individual(s) and not those of AFG, Inc.

What Can Alateen Group Sponsors Do?

- **Know your Area Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements** and your legal responsibilities as an AMIAS and Alateen Group Sponsor.
- **Have two Alateen Group Sponsors attend each meeting as recommended.** If one Alateen Group Sponsor cannot be there, call a Sponsor from another group or invite another certified AMIAS to serve as a substitute Sponsor. It may help to hold an Alateen meeting concurrently with an Al-Anon meeting. An eligible Al-Anon member who has agreed to serve as a contact between the Al-Anon and Alateen group and has been certified by the group's Area can be called upon to serve as a substitute when a Sponsor cannot attend.
- **In addition to regularly attending Al-Anon meetings, participate in District and Area Alateen Group Sponsor Workshops.** Connect with other Alateen Group Sponsors and the Area Alateen Coordinator on a regular basis. Take an annual Alateen Group Sponsor inventory. Choose a Service Sponsor who is familiar with Alateen sponsorship. Become familiar with Alateen literature and guidelines. Know how to contact emergency services should an Alateen member become ill or be hurt on site. Since some services are not always available, emergency procedures should be worked out in advance.
- **Keep on hand a list of community resources where Alateen members can seek help** for physical violence, abuse, suicide prevention, etc., and share how the members can get in touch with the resources.
- **Set boundaries.** AMIAS who serve as Alateen Group Sponsors share *experience* in living with the disease of alcoholism, *strength* gained from working the Twelve Steps, knowledge of the Twelve Traditions, and *hope* for the future. An Alateen Group Sponsor is not a counselor, nor the peer of an Alateen member. When an Alateen Group Sponsor gives advice or attempts to solve the problems of the Alateen member, it could lead to unhealthy dependencies. Overt and covert sexual interaction between an Alateen member and any adult is prohibited. It leaves the adult subject to liability, including

charges of statutory rape, and diminishes any possibility of recovery for the Alateen member. Such involvement is illegal and brings Al-Anon and Alateen to the forefront of public controversy. For this reason, no AMIAS is permitted to serve as an Alateen Group Sponsor if there is any romantic involvement with any Alateen member. Ensure that Alateen members who are legally adults know they are responsible for adhering to the same requirements as Alateen members who are minors when they are participating as Alateens.

- **Avoid infringing upon parental authority.** Parents are responsible for the behavior of their children before and after a meeting. If an Alateen member must be removed from the meeting, it is up to the parent to address the behavior. The Alateen Group Sponsor role is to support the Alateen group by sharing how the program helps us cope, using the tools of the program. It is not the Alateen Group Sponsor's responsibility to question or agree with how the parents exercise their authority. Even in the face of conflict, anonymity is maintained about what is heard in meetings and to not undermine an Alateen member's anonymity by reporting to parents.
- **Help the Alateen member to establish limits.** Protect the Alateens whenever behavior gets out of hand. Inappropriate behavior includes physical threats, sexual conduct, rough play, etc. Helping the Alateens identify inappropriate behaviors themselves through a group inventory provides them with an opportunity to design group behavior guidelines. The *Taking a Group Inventory* guideline (G-8a and G-8b) may be helpful.
- **Know when to step down as an Alateen Group Sponsor.** Whenever you feel the need to protect yourself if conflict arises in the Alateen group, consider discontinuing serving as an Alateen Group Sponsor. (i.e. accusations, group controversy, or threat of personal harm) Even if you are not at fault, stepping aside will not only protect both the Alateen members and you, it will also preserve the *unity* of the fellowship.

What Can Areas Do?

- **Engage a legal professional to review your Area Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements at least once a panel, if not annually.** Laws regarding minors evolve frequently and Areas are responsible for ensuring their minimum requirements maintain adherence to local laws.
- **In addition to establishing Area Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements, also establish behavioral requirements for events specific to the type of function,** e.g., Alateen meeting, Area Assembly, Alateen conference, Alateen fundraising event. The requirements may be general in tone to allow for some flexibility, but specific enough to conform with site or schedule requirements. While Alateen Group Sponsors are not parents, they are responsible for the Alateens they escort to functions outside of the meeting. They have the right to refuse to bring an Alateen member who will not abide by the Area's Safety and Behavioral Requirements. The requirements should be read and agreed to by all before leaving the home group when attending a conference, Assembly, or other event.
- **Support your Area Alateen Coordinator's training and education efforts.** Provide time and resources for training workshops.
- **Support Alateen conferences!** To ensure the safety of Al-Anon and Alateen as a whole, an Alateen conference within the Area or region is connected to the Area structure. The role of Al-Anon is to *guide* rather than *direct* young people toward recovery. Alateens are more responsive when they are treated with the same respect as any other Al-Anon member. Allowing the freedom for the members involved to make their own decisions within the boundaries of safety and the Area's minimum requirements ensures integrity to Al-Anon/Alateen principles and fulfills the purpose of an Alateen conference: to encourage the growth of Alateen and to increase understanding of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions through the sharing of ideas, fun, and fellowship with other Alateens and Alateen Group Sponsors (See *Alateen Conferences Guideline* [G-16]).
- **Support your Area Alateen Process Person (AAPP)** with new AMIAS certification, group registration, and the Annual Alateen Recertification Process. Stay informed of progress throughout the Annual Recertification Process window!

What Can Al-Anon as a Whole Do?

- **Form an Alateen meeting at the same location where there is an Al-Anon meeting.** Experience shows that forming a new Alateen group that meets concurrently with an Al-Anon group increases safety for Alateen members and Alateen Group Sponsors. The Al-Anon group can be a source of additional certified AMIAS to serve as backup Alateen Group Sponsors. Also, because Alateen is a part of Al-Anon, Alateens may go to the Al-Anon meeting if a substitute Alateen Group Sponsor is not available when the regular Alateen Group Sponsor(s) is not present.
- **Find a way to serve Alateen.** Many Al-Anon members cannot become full-time Alateen Group Sponsors. Yet, everyone can serve Alateen in some capacity. Encourage eligible members to become certified as AMIAS through their Area's process so that they can serve Alateen by providing transportation to meetings, District and Area meetings or functions, and Alateen conferences. These members can also be of service by serving as backup Alateen Group Sponsors or by chaperoning at Area Assemblies or conventions. Any Al-Anon member can be of service to Alateen by encouraging other members to bring their children to Alateen, providing information to schools, or participating in other public outreach projects.

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**Working Together - Let's keep Alateen going,
growing, and glowing. Alateen and Al-Anon:
"Together We Can Make It" fun, healthy, and safe.**

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What Can AMIAS Transporting Alateens Do?

Alateen members come from homes where the disease of alcoholism may have created distorted impressions of acceptable behavior. Just as we in Al-Anon had to learn what appropriate boundaries are, so do Alateens. When an AMIAS interact with Alateens in some capacity, both are well served when the following is kept in mind:

- **Transport Alateens in groups and with another adult whenever possible.**
- **Make sure a custodial parent/legal guardian signs a permission form when you are transporting his/her child to a meeting.** Have the responsible party sign the permission form in your presence. This is a legal requirement in most states/provinces.
- **Be gender and number conscious!** It is always a good idea to work in teams if you are involved with several Alateen members at a time. Whenever transporting or meeting with Alateen members, inform another Alateen Group Sponsor or Al-Anon member of your whereabouts and avoid meeting in isolated places. Whenever possible, it is best to avoid one-on-one interactions with Alateen members.

What Can Alateen Groups Drafting Meeting Behavior Guidelines Do?

All Alateen members are responsible for themselves, remembering that what they do reflects on their group and the name of Alateen.

- **Alateen Group Sponsors need to know where their group members are *at all times*.**
- **Possession of alcohol, drugs, or any substance prohibited by local law is strictly forbidden.**

It's important for Alateen members to understand that, because Alateen Group Sponsors and AMIAS are responsible for the Alateens present at the meeting, they have the right to inform any Alateen they need to abide by group behavior guidelines to attend the meeting—always remembering to place principles above personalities.

Responsibility Statement

This statement offers clarification to the Al-Anon/Alateen fellowship regarding the role of Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS).

Requirements for Service to Alateen:

An Alateen Group Sponsor is a responsible, adult member of Al-Anon who attends Al-Anon meetings regularly and is currently certified as an AMIAS through the Area's Alateen process. Alateen Group Sponsors share their *experience* in recovering from the effects of the family disease of alcoholism, *strength* gained from the Twelve Steps, knowledge of the Twelve Traditions, and *hope* for the future. They help Alateens keep the focus on the Al-Anon program.

No person can be certified as an AMIAS who has ever been convicted of a felony or charged with child abuse or any other inappropriate sexual behavior or has demonstrated emotional problems which could result in harm to Alateen members. For the complete list of requirements in your Area, please contact your Area Alateen Coordinator.

Role of AMIAS:

AMIAS are to provide direction to assure that emphasis is placed on the Al-Anon/Alateen program of recovery and, to the best of their ability, maintain an atmosphere that will protect the Alateen members from physical and emotional harm. An AMIAS is familiar with and complies with the Area's Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements. AMIAS are expected to maintain appropriate adult behavior by behaving calmly, consistently, and with integrity. AMIAS are never to belittle a parent or place themselves above the authority of a custodial parent or legal guardian. AMIAS agree to abide by their Area's Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements and to step down should their behavior come into question.

Suggestions for AMIAS Serving as Alateen Group Sponsors:

At Alateen Meetings

- **Encourage Alateen members** to keep reasonably good order among themselves and establish behavior guidelines with them. Rough housing, fighting, inappropriate sexual behavior, and the use of alcohol, drugs, or other prohibited substances on the meeting premises are forbidden.
- **Remind Alateen members** that they bear responsibility for their own actions and that, through their actions, they set an example for Al-Anon and Alateen as a whole.

At Alateen/Al-Anon Activities Away From Meetings

- **Have guidelines for acceptable behavior.** Before attending a function or event, read and discuss the guidelines thoroughly with the Alateen participants.
- **Obtain a signed permission slip** from a custodial parent or legal guardian for Alateens to attend Al-Anon/ Alateen functions other than regular meetings. Keep in mind, a signed permission slip does not necessarily eliminate potential legal and financial liability for accidents or injuries that result from certain activities (i.e., swimming, horseback riding, etc.).
- **AMIAS need to *always be aware*** of the specific whereabouts of individual Alateen members during Alateen activities.

Navigating the Legal and Traditional Responsibilities of being an AMIAS:

As an AMIAS, you may become aware of an instance(s) of suspected child abuse. This awareness may create a dilemma for you regarding how to deal with the suspected problem. You may feel morally compelled to report the incident to the authorities in an effort to protect the Alateen member from further harm yet wonder whether, by doing so, you would be violating Al-Anon's Traditions of anonymity and confidentiality.

Some of this dilemma can be mitigated by each AMIAS having clarity in advance of becoming aware of any incidence of suspected child abuse—likely to be an emotional experience for both the Alateen and the AMIAS—as to local laws and responsibilities and plainly informing the Alateens of any requirements the AMIAS might have.

Area efforts to seek legal advice during initial creation of ASBRs, and at least once a panel thereafter, provide AMIAS with the foundation for understanding applicable laws. Responsibilities in accordance with local child abuse laws, particularly the parameters for mandatory disclosure, must be identified as part of the Area requirements. Al-Anon and its trusted servants, particularly those serving as AMIAS or Alateen Group Sponsors, are not above the law.

AMIAS who are required by law to report cases of suspected child abuse are urged to inform the Alateens before sharing begins, clarifying that they will disclose such incidents discussed at meetings or events.

In instances where AMIAS are not legally bound by mandatory disclosure laws, AMIAS may use their best moral judgment when deciding what is truly right for the Alateen member's safety in the immediate or long term. If their judgment lends them to believe they might report an incidence of suspect child abuse, they should similarly inform the Alateens before sharing begins.

AMIAS who feel a moral responsibility or are compelled by law to report cases of suspected child abuse to the authorities are encouraged to inform their Area Alateen Coordinator, DR, or other Area-designated, AMIAS-certified trusted servant prior to reporting. AMIAS are responsible for ensuring these discussions happen quickly to ensure prompt reporting, if necessary.

Using the Area process, these discussions provide the opportunity to reason things out, keeping in mind the Traditions and the Alateen member's anonymity, and to involve local legal counsel, if appropriate, before disclosure. These discussions also serve as good reminders about the parameters of reporting; for instance, it is important to keep the identity of the alleged abuser anonymous, since accusations of child abuse are defamatory and can lead to claims of libel and slander. To keep the Alateen fellowship from public controversy, AMIAS who do report suspected child abuse do so on a personal basis rather than as an AMIAS.

Prior to reporting to the authorities, AMIAS are also encouraged to discuss their intentions with the Alateen member to avoid placing the member in danger and to maintain confidence and trust in the AMIAS and the Alateen program.

FORM A: INFORMATION AND PERMISSION FORM

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Since laws vary from Area to Area, it is suggested that this form be reviewed for compliance with local laws.

THIS FORM MUST BE FILLED OUT ENTIRELY IN ORDER FOR THE ALATEEN MEMBER TO PARTICIPATE

CUSTODIAL PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN: Please read, complete, sign this form and keep a copy for your records.

ALATEENS: Please return this completed form to your Alateen Group Sponsor or accompanying AMIAS.

AMIAS/ALATEEN GROUP SPONSOR ESCORT: Keep the original copy of this form in your possession for the duration of time the Alateen member is in your charge.

ALATEEN MEMBER'S INFORMATION

First and Last Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State/Province: _____

Zip/Postal Code: _____

Phone Number: () _____

Date of Birth: _____

AMIAS/ALATEEN GROUP SPONSOR ESCORT INFORMATION

First and Last Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State/Province: _____

Zip/Postal Code: _____

Phone Number: () _____

EVENT INFORMATION

Name of Event: _____

Location of Event: _____

Address of Location: _____

Phone Number of Location: () _____

Date & Time & Place of Departure: _____

Date & Time & Place of Return: _____

Mode of Transportation : _____

(include make, model, year of vehicle & license plate number)

FORM A: INFORMATION AND PERMISSION FORM

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*Since laws vary from Area to Area, it is suggested that this form be reviewed for compliance with local laws.***CUSTODIAL PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN INFORMATION**

First and Last Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State/Province: _____

Zip/Postal Code: _____

Phone Number: Home () _____ Work () _____

During this event, I can be reached at: () _____

NEAREST RELATIVE NOT LIVING WITH THE ALATEEN MEMBER OR CUSTODIAL PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN

First, Last Name & Relationship: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State/Province: _____

Zip/Postal Code: _____

Phone Number: Home () _____ Work () _____

HOLD HARMLESS STATEMENT

As the parent/guardian of aforementioned Alateen member, I am responsible for payment of any medical services required and obtained on said member's behalf. I further hold harmless the event attended by my child and

 (insert name and WSO registration number (if known) of group, district, Al-Anon Information Service office, and/or Area)

or authorized representative thereof, should any harm come to my child as a result of his/her participation in this activity or procurement of medical treatment.

Custodial Parent/Legal Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

CUSTODIAL PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN PERMISSION (to be signed in the presence of the AMIAS/Alateen Group Sponsor escort)

I, _____ hereby grant permission to _____ to travel to and
 (Custodial Parent/Legal Guardian Name) (Alateen member name)

from and to participate in _____ under the supervision of _____
 (Event Name)

_____ on _____
 (AMIAS/Alateen Group Sponsor escort Name escort Name) (Dates of Event including Travel Time)

Custodial Parent/Legal Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

FORM B: MEDICAL FORM

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Since laws vary from Area to Area, it is suggested that this form be reviewed for compliance with local laws.

AUTHORIZATION TO OBTAIN MEDICAL CARE

In order for anyone to obtain medical care for another person who is not a family member, this form must be filled out entirely and bear the original notary seal.

When distance and time may compromise acquisition of timely medical attention, attendance to a fellowship event can be prohibited if this form is not properly filled out and notarized.

DISEASES/MEDICAL CONDITIONS

(Alateen member or AMIAS/Alateen Group Sponsor name) _____ has (had) the following diseases or problems:

Heart Trouble	_____
Tuberculosis	_____
Stomach Ulcers	_____
Asthma	_____
High Blood Pressure	_____
Low Blood Pressure	_____
Epilepsy	_____
Liver Trouble (Hepatitis)	_____
Fainting spells or Seizures	_____
Diabetes	_____
Hives	_____
Other (Please describe)	_____

ALLERGIES

(Alateen member or AMIAS/Alateen Group Sponsor name) _____ has had allergic reaction from the following:

(please check):

Penicillin	_____
Local Anesthetics	_____
Aspirin	_____
Sulphur Drugs	_____
Sedatives	_____
Bee Stings/Insect Bites	_____
Pollens	_____
Foods (please list)	_____
Other (Please Describe)	_____

CURRENT MEDICATIONS

Please list all prescriptions & over-the-counter drugs. These medications MUST be in their original container(s) with labels firmly in place.

(Alateen member or AMIAS/Alateen Group Sponsor name) _____ is currently using the following medications:

OTHER CONDITIONS OR PROBLEMS

(Alateen member or AMIAS/Alateen Group Sponsor name) _____ has the following condition or problems not listed above that you should know about: (please explain)

FORM B: MEDICAL FORM

page 2 of 2

Since laws vary from Area to Area, it is suggested that this form be reviewed for compliance with local laws.

MEDICAL INSURANCE INFORMATION

You must provide medical insurance information in the space below.

For the US:

Name of Insurance Co. _____

Employer Name _____

Employee Name and Social Security Number _____

Group ID Number _____

(or attach a medical coupon if covered by Medicaid)

For Canada:

Health Card or Medi-Number _____

NOTARY STATEMENT

Form B, Authorization to Obtain Medical Care, is not valid without a signed and sealed Notary Statement.

State/Province of _____

County of _____

(AMIAS/Alateen Group Sponsor Escort Name) _____ is authorized upon
my signature below to obtain any medical care necessary for the duration of the above stated function on behalf of
(Participant's Name) _____
who is (state relationship - self, son, daughter) my _____.

Dated this _____ day of _____ 20____

(Signature - if 18 or over)

(Signature of Custodial Parent/Legal Guardian if under 18)

Before me, the above signed authority, on this day personally appeared _____, to me known and
known by me to be the person who signed the above authorization, and acknowledged to me that (s)he executed the same for
the purpose therein stated.

WITNESS my hand and seal this _____ day of _____ 20____

NOTARY PUBLIC

My Commission Expires:

Seal:

