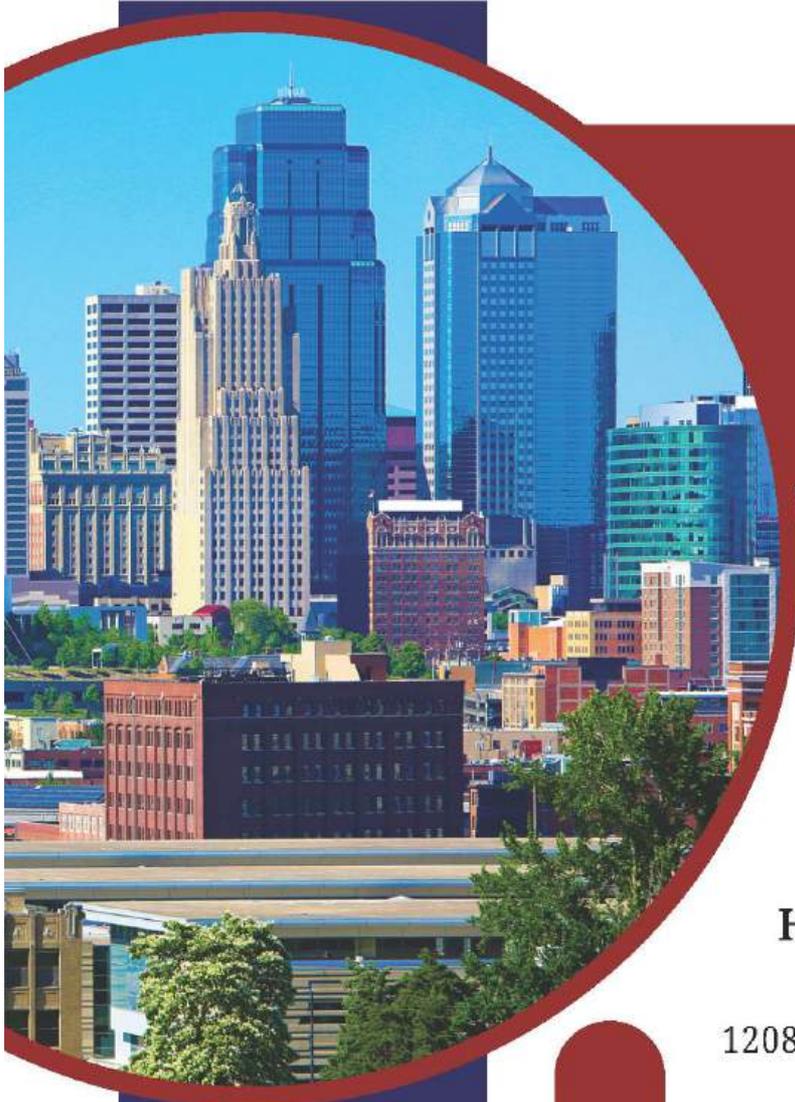


2026

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS  
**BRIDGING**  
*THE*  
**GAP**  
TEMPORARY CONTACTS

*Spring  
Newsletter*



**SEPTEMBER  
25-27, 2026**

**Key Discussions & Insights:**

- Presentations ●
- Discussions ●
- Shared Experiences ●
- Breakout Sessions ●

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In Alcoholics Anonymous Treatment and Corrections service, Bridging the Gap programs connect alcoholics leaving Treatment or Correctional facilities with Alcoholics Anonymous in their home communities by providing them with temporary contacts.

Bridging the Gap Workshop Weekend events are full weekends focused on sharing our experiences, Bridging the Gap, and developing new ideas that enhance our Service to those requesting temporary contacts.

BTGWW Annual Workshops, Newsletters, and Digital Resource Library are tools that help us learn from each other.

Registration fees ensure BTGWW events remain self-supporting.

This Newsletter is confidential and is for use by members of Alcoholics Anonymous.

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# WELCOME TO AREA 25 DISTRICT 10

A big thanks to Area 25 (Kansas) District 10 for volunteering to host the 2026 Workshop Weekend. While members from the Kansas Area have participated in the workshop, this is the first time Area 25 has hosted it.



The workshop will be held on the southwest side of the Kansas City Metro Area in Olathe, at the Hilton Garden Inn. We have also arranged with the hotel to extend the discounted room rate for 3 days before and 3 days after the workshop in case you can take a little extra time to enjoy the sights around Kansas City. We have the Zoo, Art and History Museums, a Presidential Library, the Jazz district, and within a few miles, fields and fields of sunflowers.

And of course, you can't come to Kansas City without trying some BBQ. This year, instead of having the Saturday banquet provided by the hotel, we are trying something different.

Across the parking lot is Joe's BBQ. In KC, you can often hear lively banter about where to go for the best BBQ. Joe's is often at the top of the list.

Originally, we thought we could all just walk across the parking lot on Saturday evening and grab tables and order off the menu. After scoping it out, we found that the line on a Saturday was out the door and down the block.

So we have made the reservations and set the menu. We will have a buffet with beef, pork, and chicken offerings. If you are a vegetarian, several sides will be available. Also included are drinks, salad, and of course, dessert.



If you are flying in, the Kansas City International Airport (MCI) will be your destination. Kansas City is also a major stop between Chicago and LA on Amtrak, if you are looking for something different.

We look forward to seeing you all soon.

# WELCOME TO KANSAS

The state of Kansas runs 429 miles east to west and 225 miles north to south. Once outside of the Wichita and Kansas City neighborhoods, Kansas is a primarily rural community. Most industry in our state is related to agriculture. Being in the middle of the great plains, Kansas was hit hard during the dust bowl era of the 1930s. From these hard times Kansans have developed an attitude of “we all need to work together if we are going to survive.” This same attitude can be found throughout the A.A. community as well. In Kansas we understand the needs of A.A.s remote communities.

Kansas City sits at the crossroads of the Kansas and Missouri rivers. These river ports made Kansas City a major stopping off place on the westward expansion of our country. It also left a very diverse blend of cultural, ethnic and culinary experiences. As the third largest rail hub in the country and the third largest trucking center, we still have a continuous flow of very diverse personalities passing through our area. This continuous blending of cultures and personalities makes A.A. meetings rich with a diverse blend of experience, strength and hope.

Kansas is also rich with history. Abilene, KS is the home town of President Dwight D Eisenhower. His presidential library is also located in Abilene. One Miss America and two astronauts have also called Kansas home. In the 1860s the most brutal fighting of the civil war was the Kansas – Missouri border wars. From this time in American history, Kansas was nicknamed “The Free State.” We are also rich with A.A. history. The first A.A. group in Kansas was formed by Dr. Miles N in 1942. It was cleverly named “Kansas Group Number One.” With his own money, he built a treatment center for alcoholics called the “Shrine on the Hill.” It was the first detox and treatment center in the Kansas City area. With its “old school” method of detoxing drunks, it was in continuous operation until the mid-1980s when insurance companies stopped paying for treatment. The A.A. group could not financially support the building any longer and had to abandon the center. A few years later the county took over the building for back taxes and now it is a city park. All the groups in Kansas can trace their root back to Akron, Ohio through Kansas Group Number One.

One of the greatest assets that came out of this melding of cultures is our varied culinary options. You can find almost any international flavor you desire. Obviously Kansas City is best known for our Bar-B-Q. The only truly American cuisine. For our Saturday night banquet, we invite you to join us at KC Joe’s Bar-B-Q for a sampling of some of our finest local dining experience. After dinner we will walk back across the parking lot to the Hilton Gardens.

Area 25 District 10 is located on the far eastern edge of Kansas. We are adjacent to Area 39 Districts 6 and 10 on the Missouri side (border wars are no longer an issue). Both Area 25 and District 10 in Area 25 are honored to welcome you the 2026 Bridging the Gap Weekend Workshop. We look forward to seeing you there.

Jimmy the C.  
Host Committee Chair

# NEW GUIDELINES FOR BRIDGING THE GAP

Last fall GSO published guidelines for Bridging the Gap. You can find them on [aa.org](http://aa.org) by searching for ‘Bridging the Gap’ or following the link at the bottom of the page.

## A.A.® Guidelines

Bridging the Gap

From G.S.O., Box 450, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10162

The A.A. Guidelines below are compiled from the shared service experience of A.A. members throughout the U.S. and Canada. They also reflect guidance given through the Twelve Traditions and the General Service Conference. In keeping with our Tradition of autonomy except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole, most decisions are made by the group conscience of the members involved. The purpose of these guidelines is to assist in reaching an informed/group conscience.

### HOW DO A.A. MEMBERS BRIDGE THE GAP?

All across the U.S. and Canada, A.A. members find ways to introduce new and potential A.A. members to their first meetings. Many of these new and potential members are in treatment facilities and other settings,<sup>1</sup> and need help finding A.A. in their home communities (this is “the gap.”) A.A. volunteers step in to “bridge the gap.”

Members of Alcoholics Anonymous meet new members and potential members upon their completion of a program or release from a facility, and accompany them to their first first few A.A. meetings.

### GETTING STARTED

Start simply when forming a committee.

Experience suggests that even though a soon-to-be released alcoholic may have been participating in an A.A. group or meeting inside a treatment or correctional setting, there is often anxiety about the transition to an A.A. group on the outside.

Remember, BIG is not intended to become a long-term AA relationship, but simply to help ease the newly-released member's transition to outside AA and to help get them started on the road to sobriety in their home community.

### BTG RESPONSIBILITIES (VARIES BY LOCATION)

In most parts of the U.S. and Canada, the work of organizing a Bridging the Gap program or Temporary Contact program is best handled by a committee of A.A. volunteers. The responsibilities of these committees often include:

- Meeting and corresponding with staff and administration at local settings to ask for permission to share about BTG/Temporary Contact service.
- Finding and organizing volunteers. Make announcements in local newsletters at A.A. Groups, meetings, or ask to present at local intergroup, district and area meetings and events.
- Making contact with alcoholics desiring transition help on release.

- Communicating and cooperating with other A.A. service entities, so as not to have overlapping services. Without this thoughtful approach, this can be particularly confusing to the non-AA entity or professional when being contacted by multiple committees.
- Maintaining communication with appropriate staff members at the General Service Office in New York.
- Sharing AA literature and other appropriate service materials.
- Providing reliable, consistent contact information, receive requests, and routing requests to volunteers locally or across areas.
- Making presentations: As a stand-alone committee, or make a joint presentation with PI, CPC, Corrections, Treatment, HM committees.
- Practicing unity: Contact other local trusted servants to help find volunteers to chair committee meetings, coordinate volunteers, present to staff, participants or clients, to be temporary contact volunteers.
- Respecting autonomy: The bridging the gap activity is done differently in each location. Local trusted servants can look for help and inspiration from other areas, but ultimately create a system that works for your particular local circumstances.
- The AA member volunteer contacts the alcoholic client/participant and arranges to meet that person on the day of release to help in bridging the gap between the setting and AA on the outside.

### LOCAL EXPERIENCE WITH BTG

Across the U.S. and Canada, local circumstances dictate how BTG volunteers connect newcomers with A.A. in their communities. In some places, there are many treatment centers, in others, potential members are encountered in detox centers, hospitals or other settings.

Our experience has shown that attending an A.A. meeting on the outside on the day of release from medical, psychiatric, thera-

<sup>1</sup> The type of settings can vary. Such settings include: hospitals, prisons, public clinics, psychiatric, behavioral health, detox, residential/long-term, community based, military and veteran programs, shelters, halfway houses, transitional centers.

An annual workshop on BIG is coordinated by and for A.A. members from all across the U.S. and Canada. To find out more, contact [coord@aa.org](mailto:coord@aa.org)

### HISTORY

Bridging the gap activities by A.A. members go back to the late 1950's. Trying to reach clients in correctional, therapeutic, and treatment settings and escorting them to meetings was an important part of early health step work, but was often not organized.

This changed in the 1970s, when the growth of in-patient treatment centers led A.A. members to realize that many alcoholics would need help finding A.A.

Most BTG programs today include regular visits to treatment settings by AA volunteers, who offer “temporary contact” to newly sober alcoholics to help them become part of AA when they leave the setting.

Today we have many forms of Bridging the Gap, Temporary Contact and Contact upon Release, and First Entry Programs throughout our fellowship.

### RESOURCES AND LITERATURE

- Meeting Guide App: <https://www.aa.org/bridging-gap> — helps members find meetings based on location.
- Treatment Committee page on <https://www.aa.org/treatment> — request and volunteer forms are available.
- A.A. Guidelines: [https://www.aa.org/pages/en\\_US/aa-guidelines](https://www.aa.org/pages/en_US/aa-guidelines)
- “Bridging the Gap” pamphlet
- A.A. videos and Audio: [https://www.aa.org/pages/en\\_US/videos-and-audio](https://www.aa.org/pages/en_US/videos-and-audio)
- Corrections Committee page on [https://www.aa.org/pages/en\\_US/corrections](https://www.aa.org/pages/en_US/corrections) — request and volunteer forms are available.

peutic, or treatment setting is one of the most effective tools for making a sober transition and maintaining continued sobriety in the outside world.

Experience has also shown that temporary contacts work best when care is given to match AA member volunteers and new comers by gender and, if possible, age.

Special care should be taken to ensure that any requests for temporary contacts that come from women or other vulnerable members be handled carefully.

Experience suggests that it is particularly helpful to bring the new comers to a variety of meetings.

### BTG EXPERIENCE: WORKING WITH PROFESSIONALS

Our local committee suggests that BTG volunteers need to set up a consistent way to communicate. “While it is part of my service to track down the current BTG Chairperson in an area, I don’t do it if a professional attempting to assist a discharged client finds the same. If a clinician/professional gets bothered instead trying to help a client, they may lose interest in that case. They may also lose interest in dealing with our organization.”

“It’s important to remember that treatment and other therapeutic settings are managed differently through private, community, church, state or federal agencies, and may have specific request needs that AA volunteers should respect.”

Another BTG trusted servant shared, “I found the professionals are very adaptable to do what is needed to assist their residents. We typically begin by emailing, then speak on the phone, then a zoom call to ensure all elements are in working order.”

“We, the temporary contacts, need to be very clear with the newly released AA’s what AA is and what AA is not. We should talk to the newcomer about our primary purpose, our singleness of purpose, our unity, and our anonymity.”

### GETTING ORGANIZED

“We coordinate volunteers by logging into the database and determining which team the person is being released to. We then find a member that is willing and able to reach out to them on the very day they are released.”

“Our committee has a male and a female BTG chair to coordinate the contact lists of volunteers.”

“We make it a priority to get the BTG lists up-to-date and involving districts so BTG will become the communication point for referrals.”

“All of us on the area committee send temporary contact requests to each other when people from our respective Districts are being released to their districts so that the gaps can be adequately bridged.”

“When calling a newcomer’s home, remember that someone else may answer the phone who may not know about the newcomer’s desire to attend an A.A. meeting. Protect his or her

anonymity by not disclosing your own association with A.A. or your purpose for calling.”

### CHALLENGES FACED BY BTG VOLUNTEERS

“The biggest challenge is getting the members with time involved, and at this time (because of Covid) not being able to speak in facilities face to face.”

“We announce at meetings the need for volunteers and the BTG program but find this is not effective. I would love to do a workshop, but I have not been able to get any participation/direction from other entities.”

“We are trying to be more inclusive...but are struggling with how to do it on our volunteer application.”

“Our committee acted a gender gap. When we make a BTG presentation for volunteers we do not get a lot of female participation. We do try to appeal to women specifically in our presentation, with an emphasis on safety and anonymity. When this issue is directly discussed, women’s participation is greater.”

“Due to confidentiality policies and schedules, visiting a newcomer in a facility may prove to be impossible.”

### RELATIONSHIP TO GSO

When GSO receives a request for A.A. temporary contacts, it is forwarded to the local area.

Note: For A.A. members in custody, the pre-release temporary contact program run by Corrections Committees is a separate program. Similarly, the Corrections Correspondence Service is not a part of this temporary contact program. It is intended for alcoholics who have six months or longer remaining on their incarceration.

### AA COMMITTEES, AND SERVICE ENTITIES

The alcoholics requesting help to transition to A.A. outside of their facility are best served when A.A. service entities and committees work together to provide the full variety of AA services.

Cooperation with the Professional Communities (CPC) and Public Information committees can also help to share about this service. Areas can provide pre-release contact services via dedicated transition committees at the Area/District level.

There are many instances of overlapping responsibilities. It should be clearly established that A.A. committees are not in competition with each other. Local circumstances determine who does what. Depending on the location, the work is done by a shared committee, or the work is split into separate committees.

Local A.A. committees and members will have the best experience for each location, and can help provide bridge services and coordinate volunteers. Some local committees will host BTG/Temporary workshops and events for local professionals or A.A. members.

An annual workshop on BIG is coordinated by and for A.A. members from all across the U.S. and Canada. To find out more, contact [coord@aa.org](mailto:coord@aa.org)

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<https://www.aa.org/aa-guidelines-bridging-gap>

## WHAT ABOUT NEXT YEAR

The future of the Bridging the Gap Workshop Weekend always depends on 2 things. First, the attendance of the previous year. The workshop is self-supporting thru registrations. The BTGWW steering committee works diligently all year to provide an interesting and informative weekend. We have enough seed money to put deposits on the hotel for the next year, but if the current year doesn't break even we won't be able to replace the seed money and make deposits for the next workshop. Attendance and support lets the steering committee know how we have done in organizing the workshop. So far, by the skin of our teeth, we have been self-supporting each year.

The second requirement for a successful workshop is a volunteer host committee. We realize we were late getting the workshop info out this year. That was specifically because we didn't have any volunteers to host in 2025. Thank you Kansas District 10 for stepping up. Without a host we don't have a location to have the workshop.

Hosting a national workshop may seem overwhelming if you haven't done that, but It's really no different from holding any other convention/conference/roundup or AA gathering. The primary responsibility is to find a viable meeting space to hold the workshop. Historically it has been in the meeting space of a hotel, but other venues are just fine as long as there is a hotel close where the attendees can stay for the weekend. The other thing we ask of the host committee is to provide a hospitality room. We need our coffee and a place to continue conversations from the previous breakout sessions. And some donuts in the mornings. Other than the hospitality room, the workshop is financially responsible for the meeting rooms and related expenses, and arranging the presenters for the breakout sessions.

As of right now we have not heard from anyone interested in hosting the workshop in 2027. On our website (BTGWW.org) we have posted a bid package to help guide you thru the process of talking to potential meeting locations. And the steering committee members are always available to help and share our experience with hosting past workshops.

If you are interested in hosting, or maybe just curious, please download the bid package and look it over. We are always here if you have questions. Let's look to the future of Bridging the Gap and where we can be in 2027.