

Comments on HWS Requirement for Alateen Safety

September 2008

This revision of the Safety Requirement has incorporated some of the experience of the Alateen coordinator and members as we have been using our process for certifying Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS). It certainly has been a process of learning by doing.

There was a misunderstanding about the WSO ID # and its connection with the certification process. WSO assigns a number to anyone whose name is entered into the data base. Some people who apply as AMIAS already have an ID number. Some receive their number as a part of the AMIAS certification process. However, that number has *no connection* with the status of being an AMIAS.

Please note on page 5, under “Starting an Alateen Group”:

- a) Alateen meetings must register BEFORE the group begins to meet.
- b) **A meeting must register at least two sponsors** who attend together or back each other up. It is also advantageous to be co-located with an existing Al-Anon meeting that has members who are on the Area list of certified AMIAS’s who could serve as temporary sponsors.

The guideline in (a) is from the minimum board requirements for Alateen safety. The requirement in (b) is new for our Area; it was previously a recommendation.

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Area Alateen Coordinator

DRAFT:
September 2008
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HWS REQUIREMENTS FOR ALATEEN SAFETY GENERAL

Deleted: ¶
The Hawaii Area Fall Assembly held at Kailua-Kona, Hawaii on October 31, 2004 approved this Requirement for Alateen Safety.¶

B. Statement of Principles: In establishing this Requirement for Alateen Safety, HWS recognizes as an integral part of the Al-Anon/Alateen program that we must exercise care:

1. In selecting Sponsor Candidates,
2. In supervising Sponsor Candidates,
3. In preventing abusers from serving or continuing to serve as groups sponsors,
4. To assure that the Alateen members conduct themselves in appropriate behavior towards other Alateen members in meetings.
5. To ensure that all Alateen members are responsible for their actions and
6. To see that Alateen members should arrive no sooner than 15 minutes before the beginning of the meeting and be picked up no later than 15 minutes after the meeting has closed

B. Implementation of Principles: The 2004 Assembly has approved this HWS Requirement for Alateen Safety in order to comply with the requirements of the AFG Board of Trustees Alateen Motion. This Requirement is intended to set the minimum requirements that will:

1. Assure the safety of Alateens who attend an Alateen Group, an Alateen Conference and/or Al-Anon function that includes Alateen participation, whether the function is sponsored by HWS, by a District or by an Intergroup within the Area's boundaries, and
2. Assure Alateen, sponsors, parents and the public that Al-Anon and Alateen functions are a safe place for Alateens and
3. Meet or exceed the minimum requirements of the Board's Alateen Motion
4. Following the preliminary approval of this Requirement, an attorney familiar with Hawaii law concerning care of Alateens at events and groups reviewed it. Should there be any conflict between this Requirement and that of WSO requirements, this requirement will be updated to agree with the WSO requirements.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HWS AREA ALATEEN SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

A. PROCESS FOR COMMUNICATION BETWEEN AREA ALATEEN COORDINATOR, DISTRICTS, AREA AND WSO.

1. **FLOW OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE AREA AND THE WORLD SERVICE OFFICE FOR ALATEEN** – The World Service Office (WSO) specifies that only one individual be designated in each Area as the communicator on Alateen business. That person can be the Area Alateen Coordinator or other volunteer. If these duties are performed by someone other than the Coordinator, the designated title is Alateen Process Person (APP). This individual plays an important support role, serving as “mailman” between WSO and the Alateen Coordinator. If the area Alateen Coordinator wishes to have another individual take on the role of APP, it is essential that the Coordinator and the APP work closely together. Communications include:

- a) Certifying Area Alateen Sponsor Candidates;
- b) Registering Alateen groups;
- c) Making changes to the “Alateen Registration/Group Records Change” form when necessary;
- d) Updating and verifying Al-Anon Members Involved In Alateen Service (AMIAS) and registered groups in our area annually. The Alateen Coordinator or

APP will follow the area process for annual re-certification of all AMIIAS in the area by:

- (1) Contacting each Alateen group to confirm information on file at WSO;
- (2) Notifying the WSO of any changes in Alateen groups and AMIIAS.
- e) Responding to requests and/or questions from WSO, about Alateen in the area;
- f) Communicating with any Alateen group or AMIIAS should concerns arise about adherence to HWS Area Alateen Safety Requirements;
- g) Notifying the WSO of any Alateen Group or AMIIAS that is not meeting the HWS Alateen Safety Requirements, communicating with any and all individuals involved. When necessary, following the procedure for removing a group or an AMIIAS and notifying WSO of such action.

2. FLOW OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN DISTRICTS AND ALATEEN COORDINATOR:

- a) The COORDINATOR agrees to follow the qualifications under the HWS Safety Guidelines necessary for a group to be called an Alateen Group and be listed as such in the World Service Office (WSO) and HWS District or Area lists:
 - (1) Selecting Sponsors only from the list of certified Sponsor Candidates (AMIIAS);
 - (2) Requiring at least one sponsor to be present at every group meeting;
 - (3) Corresponding with the District and Area Alateen Coordinator whenever any meeting change has occurred e.g., meeting location or meeting time, and including the addition or loss of a sponsor.
- b) The COORDINATOR agrees to:
 - (1) Advise the District Alateen Coordinator or DR of Conference Approved Literature (CAL) which explains the Alateen program and the responsibilities of a Sponsor.
 - (2) Provide forms required by this HWS Alateen Safety Requirement to the District Alateen Coordinator, to the District Representative and to any Alateen Sponsor Candidates who requests them.
 - (3) Provide "Alateen Registration/Group Records/Change Forms" to Alateen Groups and/or Alateen Sponsors who request them.
 - (4) Provide DRs with the list of Sponsor Candidates and Alateen groups that meet the Area HWS Alateen Safety Requirements at least annually.
- c) DISTRICT agrees to:
 - (1) Provide names and addresses of the District Alateen Coordinator and the District Representative to the Area Alateen Coordinator;
 - (2) Share information about an Alateen Sponsor candidate in the District with the Area Alateen Coordinator and/or Alateen Process Person;
 - (3) Receive from the Alateen Coordinator the list of Sponsor Candidates and Alateen Groups that meet the Area HWS Alateen Safety Requirement in their District at least annually and confirm this information with the Coordinator.

B. PROCESS FOR SPONSOR CERTIFICATION AND GROUP REGISTRATION

1. **Finding and Selecting Alateen Sponsor Applicants.** Alateen sponsor applicants can be found in several ways:

- a) An Al-Anon member volunteers to be an Alateen Sponsor.
- b) An Alateen group can request that an Al-Anon member become an AMIIAS.
- c) A current Alateen Group Sponsor can recommend an Al-Anon member.
- d) District servants can make regular announcements about the need for Sponsor Candidates.
- e) To begin the selection process, anyone who finds an Alateen Sponsor Candidate refers the person to the District Representative, District Alateen Coordinator or Area Coordinator for information about the certification process.

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

a) **Minimum Safety and Behavioral Requirements for a Sponsor Candidate.**

Every Al-Anon member involved with Alateen service must:

- (1) Be an Al-Anon member regularly attending Al-Anon meetings;
- (2) Be at least 21 years old;
- (3) Have at least two years in Al-Anon excluding any time spent in Alateen;
- (4) Not have been convicted of a felony;
- (5) Not have been charged with child abuse or any inappropriate sexual behavior;
- (6) Not have a history of emotional problems which could result in harm to Alateen members;
- (7) Disclose any involvement in an investigation by a child welfare agency or similar entity;

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

- (1) Agree not to have overt or covert sexual interaction (whether consensual or not) with an Alateen member, including but not limited to
 - (a) Touching a teen inappropriately
 - (b) Dating a teen who is an Alateen member
 - (c) Holding or hugging teens inappropriately
 - (d) Having any inappropriate communication by phone or electronically with Alateens
- (2) 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 HWS (or similar) permission slip signed by a parent(s) or legal guardian and the driver has appropriate automobile insurance;
- (3) Agree to allow the Area Alateen Coordinator to independently verify the information on the HWS Alateen Sponsor candidate Profile;
- (4) Agree not to conduct him/herself in a manner contrary to applicable laws;
- (5) Agree to promptly notify the Area Alateen Coordinator if, after certification, an Alateen Sponsor is charged with a crime, with child abuse or with inappropriate sexual behavior.

3. **Certification Process for Al-Anon Member Involved In Alateen Service (AMIIAS):**

- a) All Adults in the Hawaii Area who wish to be involved with Alateen Service—which includes Sponsors, Drivers, Chaperones and anyone in contact with Alateens

at an Al-Anon/Alateen activity or transporting Alateens to and from such activities—must go through the certification process before working with any Alateens.

- b) If the Alateen Sponsor Candidate meets all of the above Requirements, s/he notifies her/his District Alateen Coordinator of the wish to become an AMIIAS. If there is no District Alateen Coordinator, the Candidate contacts the Area Alateen Coordinator. A face-to-face meeting is preferable wherever possible; this is left to the discretion of the Coordinators.
- c) The District or Area Alateen Coordinator will give the Candidate a packet of Conference Approved Literature (CAL) explaining the Alateen program and the responsibilities of Sponsorship.
- d) It is strongly recommended that Sponsor Workshops be held at the District and/or Area Level and that all Al-Anon members who are currently (or who may be considering) working with Alateens attend these whenever possible.
- e) When provided with the contact information for the Sponsor Candidate, the Area Alateen Coordinator will send to the Candidate the necessary forms.
- f) The Candidate fills out the WSO and Area forms according to the instructions and returns them to the Area Alateen Coordinator to sign and forward to WSO. The Candidate should keep a copy of the application. The Area Alateen Coordinator verifies the forms are complete, signs off on them, and sends the completed “Al-Anon Member Involved In Alateen Service” form to WSO to be processed.
- g) The Group Records Coordinator at WSO returns the paperwork to the Area Coordinator, indicating the new status of “certified AMIIAS” for the Candidate, whose name is added to the Area AMIIAS list. The Area Coordinator retains all paperwork returned from WSO.

4. Selection of Sponsors by an existing Alateen Group

- a) Alateen Groups have the autonomy to select their group sponsors. However, they are restricted in their choices of sponsors to those who are on the list of certified AMIIAS in the area. Being on the list does not guarantee that an individual Alateen Group must or will accept the AMIIAS as their group sponsor.
- b) All Hawaii Alateen Groups will be provided with a “HWS Area Safety Requirements” letter from HWS Area Alateen Coordinator, outlining the seriousness of selecting their Alateen Group Sponsor and making suggestions for going about that process.
- c) It is recommended that voting be done by secret ballot (on pieces of paper) to prevent peer pressure from swaying opinion.
- d) The proposed Group Sponsor should visit and be introduced to the Alateen group by the outgoing Alateen group sponsor (unless removed), other sponsor, District Alateen Coordinator or the District Representative.
- e) The Alateen group will interview the AMIIAS during the first visit. The Alateens are encouraged to ask any questions they feel would help them to get to know the prospective Sponsor better. The Sponsor may also be asked to share with the group.
- f) Alateens make the ultimate decision about selecting their group sponsor. Each person should be aware that each Alateen member has the right to say “no.” The decision about their Alateen Group Sponsor does not have to be made during their first meeting. The group conscience could be taken on a subsequent week (with the prospective sponsor not in attendance).
- g) The group may choose that a Sponsor Candidate be accepted for a trial period of approximately four weeks; after the group and the sponsor have more experience

together, the Alateens may vote again to accept the sponsor as a permanent Alateen Group Sponsor.

- h) If a permanent Group Sponsor cannot be found or agreed upon, a member from the approved Area AMIIAS list can serve the group until one is approved as a permanent Sponsor.
- i) When the Alateen Group approves a Sponsor, the Sponsor must request from the Area Alateen Coordinator an “Alateen Registration /Group Records Change Form” and fill it out to register as the Group Sponsor. This form is given to the Area Alateen Coordinator (or APP) to add the WSO ID numbers to the form and then forward to WSO.
- j) Should a prospective sponsor be rejected at the group level or if a temporary or permanent Alateen Group Sponsor is voted out, the Alateen Group’s Group Representative, or other member, must notify the Area Alateen Coordinator and/or the District Alateen Coordinator or the District Representative. To maintain status as an active Alateen group, there must be a minimum of two certified AMIIAS registered to the group. There must be at least one sponsor present in order for the group to hold a meeting.

5. **Starting an Alateen Group**

- a) Alateen meetings must register BEFORE the group begins to meet.
- b) A meeting must register at least two sponsors who attend together or back each other up. It is also advantageous to be co-located with an existing Al-Anon meeting that has members who are on the Area list of certified AMIIAS’s who could serve as temporary sponsors.
- c) The proposed Group Sponsors must be on the Area list of Current AMIIAS (see Process for Sponsor Certification). The sponsors notify the Area Alateen Coordinator of their intention to start a group and request an “Alateen Registration/ Group Records Change Form” and, after filling it out, send it on to the Area Alateen Coordinator (or APP).
- d) After verifying that the proposed Group Sponsors are on the area list of AMIIAS, the Coordinator, (or APP) sends the completed “Alateen registration / Group Records Change Form” to WSO.
- e) The Alateen group can now meet.

6. **When present at an Alateen meeting, the responsibilities of the Sponsor include:**

- a) Sponsor must have parent(s) or legal guardian sign a list, designating who can drop off and pick up Alateens.
- b) Sponsor must supervise Alateens in the meeting area and not let Alateens out of room until pick up by parent(s) or legal guardian (within 15 minutes of completion of Alateen meeting).
- c) Sponsor must protect Alateens and discourage Alateens from any physical, sexual, emotional and verbal abuse among each other during the meeting.
- d) Sponsor must enforce the rule no drugs, smoking, drinking and swearing among Alateens during the meeting.
- e) It is recommended that Sponsor meet with (if at all possible) Alateens in age appropriate groups a. 9-11 years; b. 13-17 years.

7. When transporting Alateens to and/or from Al-Anon/Alateen assemblies, or conventions or conferences held by Al-Anon/Alateen or Alcoholics Anonymous, the Sponsor must:

- a) Be a licensed and insured driver.
- b) Have the parent or legal guardian sign a permission form in the presence of the sponsor.
- c) Have the parent or legal guardian fill out forms about legal matters (e.g, a Temporary Restraining Order), medical and emergency issues.
- d) Send a confirmation to parent(s) or legal guardian with sponsor info on how to reach Sponsor during the time the Alateen is in the care of Sponsor.

8. REMOVAL OR RESIGNATION as an Alateen group sponsor:

- a) Resignation: It may occur that a person is not willing or able to continue as an Alateen Group Sponsor.
 - (1) A sponsor may resign or give notice any time by communicating with the Area Alateen Coordinator, who will notify WSO that the sponsor has resigned from the group.
 - (2) It is recommended that the Sponsor speaks directly to the Alateen Group, informing the group of her/his needs to resign and then makes every effort to work with the group and other sponsors toward a smooth transition, maintaining the presence of sponsors at every meeting.
 - (3) A voluntary resignation will not alone be used as a reason to prevent that person from becoming a Sponsor Candidate in the future.
- b) **Removal of an Alateen Sponsor:**
 - (1) When an AMIIAS moves from the Area, the Area Coordinator must remove that person's name from the registered list and report to WSO that the status of this AMIIAS is "inactive." If the Al-Anon member wishes to become an AMIIAS in her/his new area, a new certification process must be started there.
 - (2) An Alateen Group Sponsor may be asked to step down or be removed from the approved list by the Area Alateen Coordinator and the HWS Executive Committee:
 - (a) If the Sponsor fails to update and return the necessary paperwork for the annual re-certification process on the date specified by the Area Alateen Coordinator
 - (b) If it is determined that, at the time of application to become an AMIIAS, there was a withholding of information that would have prevented the Sponsor Candidate from being selected

9. APPEAL PROCESS if removed:

- a) In line with the Al-Anon and Alateen Warranties, this HWS Alateen Safety Requirement recognizes the "no member shall be placed in unqualified authority over other members," including any person who is a Alateen Coordinator, Sponsor Candidate or member of an Alateen or Al-Anon Group.
- b) Any member of Al-Anon and Alateen may appeal an Alateen Coordinator's decision. This includes:
 - (1) The decision to certify a Sponsor Candidate
 - (2) The decision not to certify a Sponsor Candidate
 - (3) The interpretation of the criteria used to make the decision

- c) Reasons that an Al-Anon or Alateen member might appeal a decision include, but are not limited to, the following:
- (1) Information of which the Alateen Coordinator might not be aware;
 - (2) Personal experiences that could be a factor in certifying a Sponsor Candidate;
 - (3) New charges that were not known;
 - (4) Old charges that no longer apply.
- d) Appeals must first be made to the Alateen Coordinator who made the decision, outlining in writing reasons why the result is not satisfactory. If the person appealing the decision is not satisfied with the result, after the appeal is reviewed by the Alateen Coordinator, that person may make his next appeal to the Area Executive Committee of Hawaii World Service.
- e) As the Board of Officers of HWS, the decision of the Area Executive Committee is final.