



Pinellas County Intergroup Helpline Policies & Procedures Form HLPP v2.0

Requirements:

- Two years sobriety.
- 1 year Intergroup experience.
- Available and accessible 24/7

Duties:

- Actively recruit new Helpline volunteers to take calls utilizing Intergroup representatives, Plain and Straight publication, and word of mouth.
- Maintain a list of volunteers and a schedule of their coverage periods for helpline calls.
- Interact with Answer Florida (current answering service) to acquire call statistics and reporting, as well as make needed changes in computer system coverage.
- Change morning and evening call forwarding numbers daily. Change hourly on Saturdays (or as schedule requires).
- Prepare monthly report for Steering Committee and Intergroup.
- Attend both the monthly Steering Committee and Intergroup meetings.
- Make sure your Co-Chair is available in your absence for all your duties including attending the Steering Committee and/or Intergroup meetings.
- Train volunteers by phone on Helpline phone procedures. Provide each volunteer with:
 - A list of community resources / referral agencies.
 - List of 12 step volunteers.
 - Instructions for operating voicemail.
 - Current procedure for answering a call.
- Be available for questions and backup for all helpline coverage hours.

Daily Responsibilities:

- During the hours that Central Office is open and answering phones (10 a.m. to 6 p.m.) prepare helpline dial out numbers for the evening and following morning.
 - Evening dial out:
 - Dial 497-2760, wait for system to answer.
 - Enter pass code.
 - Listen to, and if necessary, make note of any undeleted messages (sometime volunteers leave messages on the system for the

Chairperson to listen to. May be a long distance number, a request for a Where and When to be mailed out, or a call requiring special attention. Press 4, then 1 to hear the message. After making any notes, press 3 to delete the message.

- Press 9 to return to the main menu.
 - Change out dial numbers by pressing 8, then 4. The system will say “to review your first out dial number, press 1. To change your first out dial number, press 2”.
 - Press 2 to enter the new out dial number. Enter the out dial number **including the area code**.
 - Press 1 to accept this number, or 2 to re-edit. After accepting the number, continue on.
 - Switch to the 2nd out dial number by pressing 3, then 2.
 - Press 2 to enter the new out dial number. Enter the out dial number **including the area code**.
 - Press 1 to accept this number, or 2 to re-edit. After accepting the number, continue on.
 - Switch to the 3rd out dial number by pressing 3, then 3.
 - Press 2 to enter the new out dial number. Enter the out dial number **including the area code**.
 - Press 1 to accept this number, or 2 to re-edit. After accepting the number, continue on.
 - Switch to the 4th out dial number by pressing 3, then 4.
 - Press 2 to enter the new out dial number. Enter the out dial number **including the area code**.
 - Press 1 to accept this number, or 2 to re-edit. After accepting the number, continue on.
 - Press 9 several times to exit the system and hang up.
- Morning dial out:
- Dial 497-2761, follow procedure above.
- Some daily schedules will require an additional change of numbers, i.e. when a group answers calls from 6 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., and individual volunteers cover the remainder of the evening and morning until Central Office opens at 10 a.m.. In this instance, evening out dial numbers would need to be changed again at 9:30 p.m..

- Chairperson must be in close contact with a cell phone for emergencies and in case calls go unanswered by volunteers. The Chairperson maintains their own phone number as the 5th out dial number in the system at all times, and is the ultimate back up volunteer.

Weekend Responsibilities:

- Many volunteers can only donate time on the weekends. Therefore Saturday has many short volunteer shifts requiring a change of out dial numbers approximately every 3-4 hours. At 2 p.m., the system automatically forwards incoming helpline calls to the San Martin group, eliminating the need to program their number into the system. The San Martin group ends its coverage at 6 p.m. and the system will then revert back to the original Saturday dial out program. To simplify entering numbers, the 6 p.m. number can be entered anytime during the San Martin group's coverage period.

Monthly Responsibilities:

- During the first week of the month, Answer Florida will fax a summary of calls for the prior month. This includes the total number of calls, after hours messages, during hours messages, and after hours dispatches.
- Chairperson integrates these statistics into a monthly report along with other pertinent information such as the number of volunteers, any problems encountered, etc., and forwards the report to the Intergroup Secretary prior to the report deadline. The report is copied by Central Office and presented by the Helpline Chairperson at the Steering Committee meeting on the first Tuesday of the month.
- Chairperson also attends the Intergroup meeting on the 3rd Monday of the month and presents the Helpline report to Intergroup members, answers any questions, and addresses any concerns.

Miscellaneous Responsibilities:

- As volunteers leave the Helpline due to time constraints, relocation, or other reasons, new volunteers need to be recruited. Communication to Intergroup regarding the need for new volunteers and utilizing other resources, such as word of mouth, or the *Plain and Straight* is the Chairperson's responsibility.

- New volunteers need to be interviewed by the Helpline Chairperson to ascertain length of sobriety, home group, and desired time slot. (Minimum of 1 year sobriety and a home group are required to volunteer for the Helpline).
- The Chairperson provides orientation for new volunteers:
 - Operation of the voicemail system.
 - Procedures for answering calls.
 - Resources available for callers.
 - 12 step list - callers requesting immediate help may have a 12 step volunteer visit. This process is initiated by the Helpline volunteer contacting a 12 step list volunteer in a nearby zip code.

See appendix A

- Chairperson assumes overall responsibility for Helpline callers receiving prompt return calls and appropriate information. Ongoing monitoring of Helpline performance can be made through call statistics and number of calls coming through to the Chairperson. Chairperson should provide feedback to volunteers as needed. If problems are observed and ongoing, Chairperson must make whatever changes are necessary for continued smooth operation of the Helpline.