

Guidelines for Letter Writers

- The letter writer's role is to be a Christian Science chaplain, sharing the Comforter, rather than to be a friend or penpal. We understand that it is the Father-Mother's presence and companionship and not a mortal sense of friendship that brings comfort. (See Miscellaneous Writings, 403:28–405:3) Because of this, letter writers will be assigned to particular letters rather than to individuals. While a letter writer might continue to be assigned to a particular inmate's letters, each letter received will be reviewed and assigned to a letter writer based on prayer.
- Letters should first and foremost serve to point recipients to the study of the Christian Science Pastor, the Bible and Science and Health,. To this end, it is helpful to include citations that support and confirm the ideas shared. Letter writers are not teachers or spiritual mentors since we understand that "...they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me" (John 6:45). Letter writers have the opportunity to come together with those requesting correspondence to humbly serve as witnesses of Truth rather than as teachers.
- Each institution has its own guidelines for letter formats and contents that must be followed. In each case, we will find out and provide those parameters.
- The role of JIC volunteers is to offer metaphysics only:
 - We are not to offer personal assistance of any kind, including but not limited to: financial aid, lawyer recommendations, advice for housing, work, etc.
 - No personal details should be shared other than healings and examples of Christian Science demonstrations
- In order to protect the room for prayer and study necessary for dedicated metaphysical letter writing, volunteers who are letter writers may not serve concurrently in the various institutions. This is often the requirement of the institutions as well.
 - All contact for letter writers is through the JIC only:
 - The institutions often require the use of a P.O. Box since personal/business addresses cannot be given to inmates. The JIC P.O. Box is the return address letter writers are to use.
 - The JIC P.O. Box may only be used for correspondence with JIC appointed letter writers.
- If a JIC volunteer wishes to correspond personally with an inmate, he/she may do so but may not serve as a letter writer during that time and must use his/her own P.O. Box.
- Letter writers may not ask other volunteers to write to an inmate. All JIC correspondence needs to be assigned by the chairs.
- All correspondence by inmates and letter writers will be read.
 - The one exception is when the inmate has requested the help of a journal listed practitioner. Letter writers who are journal listed practitioners may take such cases once they inform the committee of the need. The resulting correspondence will remain confidential and will continue to use the JIC P.O. Box.

This is the process when a letter comes to the JIC P.O. Box from an inmate:

1. Letter arrives at JIC P.O. Box
2. After reading the letter, chairs will assign it to a letter writer and notify him/her of the need.

3. Letter writer will write a response and email it to chairs to review. Chairs will notify letter writer if any changes are needed.
4. Once letter is approved, letter writer will send the letter to the inmate with the JIC P.O. Box as return address.
5. Letter writer will let the secretary know when the letter was sent so it can be added to the correspondence tracker.