PROLOGUE

Dear Committee Member:

This publication is designed to provide unified theocratic direction to Branch and Country committee members worldwide. This manual also serves as a helpful reference for Governing Body members, helpers to Governing Body committees, and headquarters representatives. Each brother who is provided with a copy of this manual should read it thoroughly from time to time so as to stay up-to-date with theocratic policies and procedures. Elders at Bethel should be foremost in recognizing theocratic instructions, studying them, and applying them diligently.—Gen. 6:22; Ex. 7:6; 39:32; Josh. 1:8; 14:5; Prov. 1:5; John 14:31; 1 Cor. 4:17; Jas. 1:22.

Branch and Country committee members should especially be well acquainted with organizational instructions so that they can help others at Bethel and in the field to accomplish their ministry fully. (2 Tim. 4:5) If because of legal restrictions or some other exceptional circumstance it appears to the committee that a particular organizational policy or procedure cannot be implemented locally, the committee should explain matters clearly in writing to the Governing Body or to the appropriate Governing Body committee and await further direction.

Each Branch and Country committee member is to be provided with a personal copy of this manual. If it will be helpful to him, a committee member may also obtain a personal copy of Branch Organization in another language if available. If a brother who serves as a secretary to your committee or to a committee member needs the manual for his work, he too may receive it. This approval applies to printed or electronic versions of Branch Organization in any language, including access in the Bethel edition of Watchtower Library. Care should be taken to ensure that the material is made available only to these authorized brothers, since the content of this manual is confidential and is not to be shared with those outside of Bethel.

The portions of this manual that apply to a Bethel department should be made available to the department overseer. In turn, any Branch Organization instructions that apply to those working in the department should be made available to the members of the department.

When revisions to this manual are received, the updated pages should be placed in the manual and the old pages promptly destroyed. At times, a letter from the Governing Body or one of its committees will set forth updated direction that will supersede the direction herein until revised Branch Organization pages are made available. All should be alert to follow the latest instructions.

In addition to being acquainted with this manual, committee members should keep up-to-date with the Scriptural principles and theocratic direction provided in Dwelling Together in Unity, the Watchtower and Awake! magazines, the Life and Ministry Meeting Workbook, Organized to Do Jehovah’s Will, “Shepherd the Flock of God”—1 Peter 5:2, Circuit Overseer Guidelines, Correspondence Guidelines, and other policy materials. This includes letters that are sent to all branch offices and letters sent to individual branch offices in response to local needs.

Please be assured that we appreciate your hard work in looking after Kingdom interests in your part of the world field. (1 Pet. 5:2, 3) It is our prayer that Jehovah will grant you the wisdom from above to care properly for your many responsibilities, all to the praise of our Great Shepherd.—Jas. 3:17, 18; Ps. 23:1.

Your brothers,

Governing Body
of Jehovah’s Witnesses

(Revised January 2016)
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GOVERNING BODY
AND GOVERNING BODY
COMMITTEES

1. Governing Body: The Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses is made up of brothers who are anointed servants of Jehovah God. They have the responsibility for giving direction and impetus to the Kingdom work. (Matt. 24:14, 45-47; Rev. 12:17) Like its first-century counterpart, the Governing Body today looks to Jehovah, the Universal Sovereign, and to Jesus Christ, the Head of the congregation, for direction in all matters. (1 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:23) The Governing Body is organized to take the lead as Jehovah directs it by holy spirit. The members of the Governing Body do not regard themselves as the leaders of Jehovah's people. Rather, like all anointed Christians on earth, they "keep following the Lamb [Jesus Christ] no matter where he goes."—Rev. 14:4.

2. The Bible says: "Let all things take place decently and by arrangement." (1 Cor. 14:40) The Governing Body obeys this direction by putting in place various helpful procedures and guidelines that ensure the smooth and orderly operation of the branch offices and the congregations. Responsible Christian men do their part by setting an example of obedience as they put such arrangements into effect. All Christians, especially overseers, should look to Jehovah for guidance and should pray regularly for his direction and blessing. All should show themselves "reasonable, ready to obey" those placed in oversight. (Jas. 3:17) Thus, each group, congregation, circuit, and branch is blessed with a united, orderly body of believers who reflect well on the happy God.—1 Cor. 14:33; 1 Tim. 1:11.

3. While the Governing Body delegates certain details or responsibilities to committees made up of its own members, to committees made up of other dedicated servants of God, or to instruments such as corporations and legal agencies, the Governing Body always takes the lead in promoting the smooth functioning of the organization and the unity of all of God's people.—Acts 6:1-6; 1 Tim. 1:3; Titus 1:5; Heb. 13:17; w01 1/15 pp. 28-31.

4. The Governing Body gives final approval for new publications as well as new audio and video programs.

5. The Governing Body cares for the appointment and deletion of Branch and Country committee members and designates the brother who will serve as the coordinator of the committee. It also appoints circuit overseers and country representatives. In most cases, such appointments are made based on recommendations received from the Branch Committee. The Governing Body also appoints helpers to Governing Body committees as well as headquarters representatives qualified to make branch visits.

6. The Governing Body may arrange for qualified men to care for theocratic assignments in any locality at any time. It is not bound by recommendations received from other elders. Such recommendations serve merely as a guide and may even be rejected for reasons known to the Governing Body. The Governing Body has the prerogative to use its discretion and look into any matters it deems necessary to examine with regard to the Kingdom work.

(Revised July 2014)
7. To oversee various aspects of the Kingdom work, six administrative Governing Body committees have been established. [See Chart 1.1.] Their responsibilities are as follows.

8. **Coordinators' Committee**: This committee oversees auditing, branch correspondence and communication standards, historical archive records and exhibits, legal matters and litigation, records management, and the development of news content for the jw.org Newsroom. This committee also supervises communication with government officials, the media, and academic institutions in order to convey an accurate picture of our beliefs and practices. It responds to disasters, outbreaks of persecution, and other emergencies affecting Jehovah's Witnesses anywhere in the world. In general, all computer-related issues are also cared for by this committee. However, the Writing Committee oversees matters having to do with the development and maintenance of computer programs and tools used to process and translate publications and to publish them in electronic format, including MEPS, the Watchtower Translation System (WTS), Watchtower Library, and jw.org.

9. **Personnel Committee**: This committee oversees the arrangements for the physical and spiritual welfare of Bethel family members around the world. (Eph. 4:3; Phil. 2:1-5; Jas. 5:14-16) It oversees the selecting and inviting of new members of Bethel families, temporary volunteers, part-time and full-time commuters, remote servants and volunteers, construction servants and volunteers, full-time and part-time construction commuters, and Assembly Hall and Bible school facility servants and handles questions regarding their service. It also appoints expatriate Bethel family members, including Bethelites in foreign service.

10. **Publishing Committee**: This committee supervises the printing and shipping of Bible literature worldwide. It has oversight of printeries and properties owned and operated by the various corporations used by Jehovah's Witnesses. Funding for branches is approved and arranged for under the direction of the Publishing Committee. It has oversight of issues involving accounting, allowances, budgeting, global health-care arrangements for special full-time servants, humanitarian aid requests, insurance, purchasing, taxes, and other financial matters for branch facilities throughout the world, such as the purchase or sale of real estate, equipment, and vehicles. All Branch Requests (AB-3), Nonliterature Branch Requests (AB-3a), and other budget approvals are processed and approved under the direction of this committee. It oversees arrangements for the construction, renovation, and maintenance of all the organization's facilities, including branches, remote translation offices, missionary homes, schools, Kingdom Halls, and Assembly Halls.

11. **Expenditures of up to USD 2,000,-000 will be approved by the Publishing Committee. The Governing Body, however, is responsible for approving major real estate transactions and significant construction projects involving the expenditure of more than USD 2,000,-000. In most cases, Branch Committees will present the details of such projects to the Publishing Committee, and thereafter, the matter will be presented to the Governing Body.

12. **Service Committee**: This committee supervises all areas of the evangelizing work comprising the activity of publishers, pioneers, and missionaries, as well as congregation organization and the shepherding activities of elders and circuit overseers. It appoints field missionaries and assigns them to areas of need. The Service Committee also provides guidance to branch offices as to the responsibilities of the Service Department. Hospital Information Services at world headquarters as
well as the activity of Hospital Information Desks, Hospital Liaison Committees, and Patient Visitation Groups is supervised by the Service Committee. Instructions on field service reporting are given by the Service Committee. It also assigns geographic locations to a particular branch office and outlines the program for periodic branch visits by headquarters representatives and branch shepherding visits by Governing Body members.

13. Service-related questions that cannot be handled by a Branch Committee and that might affect a publisher's standing in the congregation or an appointed individual's qualifications are referred to the Service Committee. Such matters include difficult cases having to do with the formation of judicial, appeal, and special committees.

14. While the Teaching Committee oversees the preparation of the curriculum for theocratic schools, the Service Committee provides direction to the branches on the operation and scheduling of the schools that are conducted within their branch territories. The Service Committee determines who may be invited to attend the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead and the School for Branch Committee Members and Their Wives.

15. Teaching Committee: This committee supervises the production of spiritual food that is delivered orally for the benefit of the worldwide brotherhood and supervises the format that is to be followed at congregation meetings. For example, it is directly involved in preparing the Life and Ministry Meeting Workbook, talk outlines, convention dramas, dramatic Bible readings, and convention chairman's introductions, as well as video publications posted on jw.org or broadcast through other means. These materials are used for dispensing instruction at Bethel spiritual programs, congregation meetings, circuit assemblies, and regional conventions. The Teaching Committee also oversees the organization of international, special, and regional conventions around the world as directed by the Governing Body. In addition, this committee supervises the Scriptural curriculum for seven theocratic schools, namely:

- Watchtower Bible School of Gilead
- School for Branch Committee Members and Their Wives
- School for Circuit Overseers and Their Wives
- School for Kingdom Evangelizers
- School for Congregation Elders
- Bethel Entrants’ School
- Pioneer Service School

16. The Theocratic Schools Department works under the supervision of the Teaching Committee and assists in instructing students of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead and the School for Branch Committee Members and Their Wives.

17. Besides reviewing and approving all new recommendations of Morning Worship chairmen and instructors of the School for Kingdom Evangelizers, the Teaching Committee also handles inquiries from branches regarding the above matters, including queries about alternate source material for the Congregation Bible Study in languages into which the main study publication has not yet been translated. The Teaching Committee reviews and approves programs for the dedication of new Assembly Halls and branch facilities, providing helpful guidelines for these events. Guiding principles are also given to the branches on how to conduct morning worship and the Bethel family Watchtower Study. In addition, outlines for Monday night lectures presented to the worldwide Bethel family each service year are reviewed and approved by this committee.

(Revised January 2018)
18. The Teaching Committee oversees Audio/Video Services, the Theocratic Schools Department, the WHQ Broadcasting Department, and the WHQ Travel Department. More specific information about each department is located in Chapter 7.

19. Writing Committee: This committee supervises the production of spiritual food in written and electronic form for our brothers and for the public in general. It also develops and maintains the organization’s websites and oversees the translation work done throughout the earth. This includes the translation of audio and video programs from English into additional languages.

20. The publications that the Writing Committee supervises include Bibles, the Watchtower and Awake! magazines, all bound books, booklets, brochures, tracts, invitations, final copy for the Life and Ministry Meeting Workbook, and any revisions of these. It also supervises the production of public witnessing posters and unique branch materials, such as dedication and tour brochures and public relations materials. This committee also approves talk outlines and scripts for dramas. Additionally, the Writing Committee responds to questions about the meaning of certain scriptures and points presented in the publications, including general questions from the branches about doctrines or morals that do not deal with specific cases in which the standing of those in the congregations might be affected.
CHART 1.1

World Headquarters

Governing Body

Coordinators' Committee
- Auditing/Records Management Department
- Museum Department
- Office of Public Information
- WHQ Computer Department
- WHQ Legal Department

Personnel Committee
- Global Health Care Office
- Global Purchasing Department
- International Printing Department
- Treasurer's Office
- Worldwide Design/Construction Department
- Regional Design/Construction Department-Africa
- Regional Design/Construction Department-Americas
- Regional Design/Construction Department-Asia/Pacific
- Regional Design/Construction Department-Europe

Publishing Committee
- Hospital Information Services

Service Committee
- Audio/Video Services
- Theocratic Schools Department
- WHQ Broadcasting Department
- Regional Broadcasting Department-Europe
- WHQ Travel Department

Teaching Committee
- Art Department
- MEPS Programming
- Text Processing Services
- Translation Services
- Web Publishing
- Writing Correspondence
- Writing Department

Writing Committee

Chapter 1
RESPONSIBILITY OF BRANCH COMMITTEE MEMBERS

1. The Governing Body appoints well-qualified elders to serve as members of a Branch Committee. Each Branch Committee oversees the preaching work in the field and the work in the branch office, the remote translation offices, and any other remote facilities within its assigned territory. As the representatives of the Governing Body in their assigned territory, Branch Committee members must faithfully implement and follow the direction coming from God’s Word and “the faithful and discreet slave.”—Matt. 24:45-47.

2. Each Branch Committee member must feel a deep sense of responsibility to Jehovah. Thus, he must work diligently to fortify and maintain his good relationship with God. He must be a diligent student of the Bible and be governed by its laws and principles in his personal and public life. (Josh. 1:8; Ps. 1:2) He must be zealous for the ministry. (2 Tim. 4:2) He must be a fine example in following Bethel rules, never feeling that he is above them. (Heb. 13:17) His deep love and respect for Jehovah fuels his desire to be faithful in little and in much. (Luke 16:10; 1 John 5:3) He recognizes that his appointment by holy spirit is a privilege and that it will be taken away if he neglects his spirituality. (1 Tim. 4:14-16) His humble mental attitude moves him to seek out and listen to the opinions of others, to take the lead in showing honor, and to be a peacemaker. (1 Ki. 22:19-23; Matt. 5:9; Rom. 12:10; Phil. 2:5-8; Jas. 3:17, 18) Like Christ Jesus, he finds joy in unselfishly serving the interests of his brothers. (Mark 6:31-34; John 13:14, 15; Phil. 2:4) Such dedicated spiritual men are truly gifts from Jehovah to shepherd his precious sheep.—Eph. 4:8, 11, 12; 1 Pet. 5:2, 3.

3. Each Branch Committee member should be able to give as well as to follow direction. He must keep up-to-date with the policies and direction from the Governing Body and help others in oversight at the branch office to do likewise. [See Chart 2.1.] While he will set a fine example in being willing to work along with his brothers at any task, he will not try to do all the work himself. He will delegate work in a responsible way, helping other spiritual men to be trained and to gain experience so that they too can shoulder weighty responsibilities.

4. Branch Committees also have the responsibility to keep the organization clean. (1 Cor. 5:11-13) They must be courageous in seeing to it that all unrepentant ones are removed from the congregation. Such courageous action builds up respect for the branch office and the Branch Committee. Our brothers should always feel welcome to come to the branch office with any concerns or problems that they may have and be confident that they will receive a hearing ear.—Prov. 21:13.

5. Dealing With People: Each member of the Branch Committee should always treat his fellow servants with love, kindness, respect, and dignity. (Eph. 4:32; 1 Pet. 4:17) He must manifest a warm and friendly disposition, being careful never to be harsh or unkind. (Eph. 4:31; Col. 3:8) If, on account of imperfection, he errs in word or deed, he will be quick to admit his fault and apologize. (Matt. 5:23-25) Following in the steps of Christ Jesus, he provides an
example in honoring others and pursuing peace.—Rom. 14:19; 1 Pet. 2:21.

6. Branch Committee members do not view themselves as superior to their brothers and thus do not desire to be served or feel entitled to special treatment. (Matt. 20:25-28; 23:6-12; 2 Cor. 1:24) As they seek to imitate Christ Jesus, their lowliness of mind makes them refreshing and upbuilding to those working under their oversight. —Matt. 11:28-30; Phil. 2:3.

7. Members of the Branch Committee should be willing to handle problems, taking time to hear both sides and being cautious never to leave even the impression of partiality or favoritism. (Deut. 13:14; Jas. 2:9) They must keep confidential those matters told them in confidence and not talk to their wives or others about individuals’ problems or confidential matters of the organization.—Prov. 25:9.

8. Counsel should not be given hastily. (Prov. 18:13) If unsure of the counsel of God’s Word, it is best to consult with others and do research before answering. (Prov. 15:22, 28) If a Branch Committee member has a tendency to speak hastily and later to change his mind as to the course he first advised, the brothers will soon lose confidence in his soundness of judgment. If we read directly from the Scriptures when offering counsel, we make clear that God’s Word is the authority for making decisions and that we are not simply giving a personal viewpoint.—2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

9. If a Branch Committee member is a foreigner in the country where he serves, he should recognize that the local people have a measure of pride in their land, their culture, and their way of doing things. Whether a foreigner in the country or not, a Branch Committee member should never take the position that the people he serves are beneath him, speaking to them as inferiors. Instead, as their humble fellow servant, he must work hard to develop appreciation for the local people and their culture, being willing to adapt himself so as to win their love and respect.—1 Cor. 9:20-23.

10. Nothing contributes more to the happiness of our brothers than the conviction that they are loved and appreciated. (1 Cor. 8:1; 13:4-8) Continue to reflect Jehovah’s great love for his sheep. To that end, committee members should make regular personal visits to each department, speaking briefly with each worker, sharing words of appreciation and encouragement.

11. Makeup of a Branch Committee: In small branches, it may be sufficient to have three members form the Branch Committee. However, in large branches with printing operations, extensive territories, or a variety of languages, five or more members may be needed. It is desirable that one or more members of the Branch Committee be citizens of the country where the branch is located. Nevertheless, in all cases, spiritual qualifications should be viewed as of greatest importance.

12. The appointment as a member of the Branch Committee or to a position of oversight in the branch organization is not for any specified period of time. Having in mind the advancement of the Kingdom work, the Branch Committee may at any time recommend to the Governing Body a new appointment, a removal, or the reassignment of individuals.

13. Oversight Responsibilities: The Branch Committee prayerfully determines the distribution of oversight responsibilities for the individual members of the committee. These assignments should take into consideration each brother’s age, strengths, experience, and personal circumstances. (Rom. 12:3-8; Rev. 1:20) A Branch Committee member would usually serve as the day-to-day overseer or
assistant overseer of a key department. The members of the committee may also serve as Branch Committee contacts for additional Bethel departments. A committee member should serve as the overseer of the Service Department. (See 6:36) Usually another Branch Committee member would serve as the Translation Department overseer. A committee member would usually serve as the Bethel overseer in a larger branch office, since his role involves the general oversight of all Bethel Home operations. In printing branches, the printery overseer is usually a member of the Branch Committee. The Branch Committee should consider these matters carefully so that there is a balanced distribution of oversight responsibilities. Adjustments should be made as needed in order to promote good order, the peace of the Bethel family, and the advancement of the Kingdom work.—1 Cor. 14:33, 40.

14. When adjustments in oversight are made, the brothers and sisters working in each Bethel department should be clearly informed as to the brother serving as the department overseer, the assistant overseer(s) and, if applicable, the Branch Committee member designated as the contact for the department. Each Branch Committee member should take an active interest in those working in the departments that he is overseeing. He should endeavor to meet weekly with the department overseer under his oversight.

15. Because of age or infirmity, some members may become unable to accept all assignments in connection with the Branch Committee. If so, the committee may wish to recommend an additional member to help with the workload. Nevertheless, the older and experienced members may be retained on the committee to share their wisdom and insight. (Prov. 16:31) In line with the above, it is not necessary for every member to take the chairmanship in rotation. Brothers 80 years of age or older are not to serve as coordinators of Branch or Country committees or as overseers of departments, nor are they to serve as contacts for departments. However, dignified assignments should be found for these older brothers. (1 Tim. 5:1, 17) For example, they may serve as assistant overseers if their circumstances permit. Older brothers should be keenly interested in passing on their wisdom and experience to those with whom they work. (2 Tim. 2:2) In larger departments, two brothers could serve as assistant overseers if needed. A department overseer or Branch Committee coordinator who is not yet 80 years of age might modestly decide that it would be best to have a younger brother take on that role. (Mic. 6:8) If so, it would be good for the Branch Committee to take the request into consideration to ensure a smooth transition.—See 6:36.

16. **Branch Committee Coordinator:**

Each Branch Committee has a coordinator appointed by the Governing Body. He is responsible for coordinating the work of the committee and for any departments that the Branch Committee places under his oversight. He is responsible for sending reports and correspondence to the Governing Body and also for keeping the Branch Committee informed of all communications received from the Governing Body. Branch Committee coordinators and those overseeing various departments will find it helpful to keep a calendar of activities. [See Chart 2.2.] This will assist them in making sure that important matters will be handled on schedule and not be overlooked. The Branch Committee coordinator is responsible for seeing that the minutes of each Branch Committee meeting are kept, showing the date of the meeting, those present, the points considered, and the decisions reached. To provide further training to a brother with potential to serve on the Branch Committee, a larger branch may seek approval from the Governing Body to use him to take the weekly minutes of the committee meetings.
17. Branch Committee Chairman: There is a chairman at each Branch Committee meeting. The chairmanship rotates annually on January 1. The rotation is usually handled alphabetically. The chairman arranges for the agenda to be prepared and distributed to each member of the Branch Committee. The members should receive the agenda well in advance of the meeting so that they have sufficient time to prepare thoroughly and to give meaningful input. The chairman should notify all members as to the time of the meeting. He will also indicate on the agenda who is assigned to open and close the meeting with prayer. He ensures that there is good order and, along with the Branch Committee coordinator, sees that committee decisions are carried out in a timely manner.

18. Branch Committee Meetings: The Branch Committee decides when to hold its regular meetings. The committee should not postpone giving attention to its responsibilities or delay in providing direction needed to expedite the work. In nearly all cases, the Branch Committee will meet weekly, but special meetings may be held when needed. In small branches, meetings can be held less frequently according to what may be practical and also depending on the location of the members of the Branch Committee. For obvious reasons, it is good if all members of the Branch Committee can live close enough to the branch to be generally available for such meetings. Minutes should be kept of all Branch Committee meetings. If a member is indisposed or absent, the committee can still function if a majority is present.—See 2:38.

19. The Branch Committee may invite other individuals to come to its meetings for consultation or to present information that will help the committee in reaching decisions.

20. During Branch Committee meetings, each member should express himself freely when he has something meaningful to add. (Prov. 10:19) It is not expected that all brothers will have the same opinion on all matters. Nevertheless, the Governing Body expects that in most cases the Branch Committee will come to unanimous decisions. In any significant case in which a decision is not unanimous, the Branch Committee should write one letter to the appropriate Governing Body committee, stating the varying views. Pertinent details should be provided, including an explanation as to why some members are for a matter and why some members are against it. Providing the names of those who are for and those who are against a certain decision is helpful. If individual members wish to submit additional comments, these should be sent along with the letter from the Branch Committee. If this direction is followed, there would be no need for a Branch Committee member to send his personal observations or objections about a branch matter in a personal e-mail to someone at headquarters. (Rom. 14:19) If needed, the Governing Body committee will seek direction from the entire Governing Body. If, in rare cases, the urgency of a situation does not allow sufficient time for the Branch Committee to send a letter to the Governing Body explaining the details and differing points of view, the majority decision of the Branch Committee should stand until further direction is received.

21. If the Branch Committee determines that a particular decision is of major importance, it should not decide the matter but should send it to the appropriate Governing Body committee with its observations and recommendations. (Ps. 19:13; Prov. 11:2) This procedure is to be followed even when the committee is unanimous as to how the matter should be handled. When the Branch Committee writes about a weighty matter, the coordinator should make it clear in the letter that the Branch Committee members who were present have read the letter and that
they are in agreement with its content. The names of any Branch Committee members who were absent should be indicated as well.—See 2:39; 3:3; 6:41.

22. Unity on Branch Committees: From time to time, Branch Committee members may experience personal differences with one another. This often occurs when a brother imposes his personal opinion or preference on others. Of course, responsible brothers may occasionally have a difference of opinion. Despite such differences in thinking, they must continue to work together in love and with mutual respect.—Col. 3:13, 14.

23. Branch Committee coordinators should especially be conscious not to impose their opinion or preference on others in decisions that should be made by the entire Branch Committee. If a member of the Branch Committee lives outside of Bethel, he should be part of the decision-making process to the extent possible and not simply be informed after the fact about decisions that were made.

24. If the peace and unity of the committee are threatened, each member must examine himself carefully to determine what adjustments he must personally make in order to display “the wisdom from above.” (Jas. 3:17, 18) While it is easy to see the faults of others, it takes a mature Christian man to look carefully into the mirror of God’s Word and see his own faults clearly and then work to change. (Jas. 1:23-25) While one or more members of the committee may feel that they are not part of the problem, all must be part of the solution. Therefore, each one should supplicate Jehovah for His divine help to resolve the problem, never allowing place for the Devil.—Eph. 4:26, 27.

25. Continue to work together unitedly as a committee in peace and unity, cooperating closely as a body of mature brothers. (Ps. 133:1; Phil. 2:1-4) “Take the lead” in honoring one another. (Rom. 12:10) Much is expected of those who have been put in charge of much. (Luke 12:48b) The Bethel family notices the way you deal with one another and imitates your example, whether positive or negative.

26. Recommendations to the Governing Body: If the Branch Committee wishes to recommend the appointment or deletion of a circuit overseer or a country representative, the Recommendation(s) to the Governing Body—Circuit Overseer (S-391) form or the Recommendation(s) to the Governing Body—Country Representative (A-114) form should be completed and sent to the Governing Body. While the Branch Committee should give careful and prayerful consideration to the qualifications of each brother being recommended (and, if married, the brother’s wife), extensive additional comments in a separate letter are not needed unless there is something significant to report about the brother (or his wife) that the Governing Body should know when considering the recommendation. The wives of such brothers should not be listed on the recommendation form.—See 2:49; 6:132.

27. All members of the Branch Committee who are in agreement should have their names listed at the bottom of the recommendation form. If a member of the Branch Committee was not present when the recommendations were considered, then the word “absent” should be shown next to that brother’s name at the bottom of the recommendation form. A copy of the form will be returned to the branch office if the appointments and/or deletions are approved by the Governing Body.—See 2:30.

28. Appointments and Deletions of Branch and Country Committee Members: Branch Committees should plan ahead to meet the future need for committee members. Since it is preferred that brothers being considered
for appointment to the Branch or Country committee attend Gilead School before the recommendation is made, their Gilead recommendations should be submitted to the Service Committee well in advance. (See 6:184, 186.) In the case of Bethel brothers with such potential who are not able to read, write, and speak English fluently, such brothers and their wives, if married, could be invited to attend a future class of the School for Kingdom Evangelizers so that their potential can be further evaluated and their spirituality deepened. If a well-qualified circuit overseer has the potential to serve on the Branch Committee and is being seriously considered for this role, he should be invited to serve at Bethel temporarily to evaluate further his qualifications and determine whether he and his wife can adapt to Bethel life. After the evaluation period, if the Branch Committee continues to believe that he has the qualifications to serve on the committee, he may then be recommended for Gilead. If a branch visit is planned in the coming months, it is usually best to discuss recommendations about prospective committee members with the headquarters representative before submitting the Recommendation(s) to the Governing Body - Branch or Country Committee Member (A-113) form. In addition to the recommendation form, the Branch Committee should supply the Governing Body with a covering letter explaining the reasons for the recommendation and, if available, the headquarters representative’s comments. Once the Governing Body confirms the appointment or deletion of a Branch or Country committee member, the HuB Persons record will be updated at world headquarters. The record in HuB should reflect the history of any previous appointments. This applies even if a previous Branch or Country committee he served on was dissolved. When a country office has its own instance of HuB, if serious questions arise about the qualifications of a Branch or Country committee member, the review should be handled by the Branch Committee and not the brother’s body of elders. If needed, the Branch Committee may discreetly obtain information from other elders. After their review, the Branch Committee should forward their recommendation to the Governing Body for a final decision.

29. A newly appointed Branch or Country committee member who is fluent in English and, if married, whose wife is also fluent in English will be scheduled by the Service Committee to attend a future class of the School for Branch Committee Members and Their Wives.

30. Appointments and Deletions of Circuit Overseers: See 6:130, 132, 141-144; 9:95-96 with regard to the qualifications and training of prospective circuit overseers. In cases of death, judicial action, pregnancy, or resignation for health reasons, the Branch Committee is authorized to process the deletion. Thereafter, the Governing Body should be informed of the deletion on the next recommendation form that is submitted. For all other reasons, the Branch Committee should submit to the Governing Body the usual form with a covering letter explaining the recommendation to delete a circuit overseer. The Branch Committee must await approval from the Governing Body before informing him about his appointment or deletion.—See 2:26-27; 9:6-9, 108.

31. Know the Organization: Branch Committee members, whether in a large or a small branch, should seek to become acquainted with all the operations carried on at the branch. They should research how the work can be done in the most effective and beneficial way and do all they reasonably can to help it to be done in that way. A Branch Committee should know if the brothers are accomplishing the best work they can and, if they are not, the
committee may be able to show them how to do better. The members of the Bethel family should love their work and want to see it improve and increase.

32. Branch Committee members should also be interested in all facets of the Kingdom work in the field and should seek to expand the preaching work and carry it out in the most effective way.

33. Communication During Difficult Times: If a country should become isolated by war or other adverse conditions and it is impossible, at least for a time, to have any communication with the Governing Body, the Branch Committee will carry on in looking after Jehovah's sheep. Especially in a time of trouble, it is important for the sheep to have spiritual food and guidance. Encouragement should be given them to have regular meetings and continue worshipping Jehovah. If conditions allow, publications will be provided. If new publications are not available, direction can be given to review past publications and to study the Bible itself, not forsaking assembling together, even though it may be in small groups.—Heb. 10:24, 25.

34. If conditions develop to the point that any members of the Branch Committee are taken away, those who remain should consider the qualifications of other elders who have proved themselves and have years of experience in the work and, if there is a possibility of communication, make the recommendation of these to serve as replacement Branch Committee members. If communication with the Governing Body is not possible, the replacement elders can be asked to serve temporarily, and they can be made familiar with the functions of the branch organization and share in the shepherding of the flock. Every effort should be made to have committee meetings from time to time, depending on the conditions. If any individual member of the Branch Committee should find himself under surveillance and it is not advisable for him to try to meet with other members of the committee, he may be able to send word to them concerning his situation. In that event, another elder may be asked to step in temporarily to share in the activities of the committee. If conditions develop to the point that it is impossible to hold meetings because the committee has been scattered, then each individual should continue to do what he can to shepherd the flock, having in mind what Jesus said as recorded at John 10:11-15 and remembering to seek the guidance of Jehovah through prayer.

35. Every effort should be made to communicate with the Governing Body if conditions will allow and if it will not jeopardize the interests of the work. The Branch Committee in each land will know what the circumstances are and will seek the guidance of Jehovah in making a decision as to what is the best course of action at the moment. The Governing Body desires to receive the reports and news concerning Christians scattered throughout the world, but because difficult conditions may develop, these provisions are set forth in connection with the functioning of the Branch Committee.

36. It will be practical if communications sent to the Governing Body are in English. Circumstances in some lands may prevent this. If one who knows English is taken away, the Governing Body will be pleased to receive communications in any language.

37. Country Committees: The Governing Body may determine that a Country Committee should be established in certain lands to work under the oversight of a Branch Committee. A Country Committee is composed of mature Christian elders appointed by the Governing Body. Usually the recommendations for Country Committee members are made by the Branch Committee. The brothers on the Country Committee are responsible for the
administration of the office, Bethel Home, remote translation offices, and literature depots in the country where they serve, as well as for handling correspondence, finances, and reports. Even if there is no office in a particular country because of legal restrictions, the Governing Body may appoint a Country Committee to assist a Branch Committee to care for the Kingdom work in that land.

38. The Governing Body designates one brother to serve as the Country Committee coordinator. That brother is responsible for coordinating the daily routine of work. A chairman will serve in a rotational arrangement for a period of a year, following the same pattern as that for a Branch Committee. Generally, a Country Committee will meet each week, or perhaps every second week, depending on matters needing attention.—See 2:16-18.

39. While a Country Committee should be guided by the same Scriptural procedures and policies established for Branch Committees, it must remember that it does not have the same authority as a Branch Committee. Therefore, the Country Committee members should be modest and work cooperatively with the overseeing Branch Committee for the advancement of the Kingdom work in the country where they serve. (Prov. 11:2; 15:22) Any major problems or questions that the Country Committee cannot resolve in line with Branch Organization or other policy materials should be referred to the Branch Committee. The Country Committee will contact the Branch Committee if there is a disagreement about how a matter should be handled, even as a Branch Committee inquires of various Governing Body committees when the brothers on the Branch Committee have differing viewpoints on how something should be done. (See 2:20-21.) The overseeing Branch Committee should feel free to provide the Governing Body and its committees with supplemental comments or observations it wishes to make with regard to recommendations being made by a Country Committee.

40. A Country Committee is authorized to answer questions that local elders and circuit overseers may submit in writing to the office regarding judicial and other congregation or circuit matters. However, if there is any uncertainty as to how a complicated or delicate matter should be handled, the Country Committee should communicate with the overseeing Branch Committee.

41. Country Committees may arrange for locations and times for circuit assemblies and regional conventions. The Country Committee may care for the selection of convention and assembly speakers as is done by Branch Committees.—See Chapter 7.

42. With regard to appointing or deleting special pioneers, the Country Committee is to make its recommendations to the overseeing Branch Committee and await its approval. Whether the Country Committee will tabulate the field service reports or send them directly to the Branch Committee for handling will be determined by the overseeing Branch Committee. Literature distribution to the congregations should be handled as directed by the Branch Committee.

43. The overseeing Branch Committee will forward to the Governing Body any recommendations submitted by the Country Committee for the appointment or deletion of circuit overseers.

44. The general oversight of missionaries and missionary homes is under the direction of the Country Committee. However, such problems as illness and leave of absence and any difficulties that require attention by a Governing Body committee should be reported to the Branch Committee with the recommendations of the Country Committee. The Branch Committee, in turn,
will write to the appropriate Governing Body committee, providing full details.

45. The handling of legal matters and the registration of legal entities will be under the direction of the Branch Committee. However, the Country Committee will be consulted as needed.

46. All correspondence from the Country Committee intended for other branch or country offices is to be sent to the overseeing Branch Committee for forwarding. When necessary, the Country Committee may write a letter to the Governing Body or to one of its committees. However, the letter should first be sent to the Branch Committee so that, if necessary, the Branch Committee may add its comments before forwarding the letter to world headquarters.

47. In a rare situation in which communication with the Branch Committee is not possible, it may be necessary for the Country Committee to send information directly to world headquarters or to other branch offices. In cases where communication with the Branch Committee or with headquarters is not possible, the Country Committee will give the needed supervision to the Kingdom work until conditions return to normal and contact with the Branch Committee or headquarters can resume. If there are any relief measures to be taken in behalf of the brothers, the Country Committee will give the needed oversight, bearing in mind the direction that is provided herein related to such aid.—See 3:58.

48. Country Representatives: In countries where there are a significant number of publishers but where there is no Branch Committee or Country Committee, three qualified elders are appointed by the Governing Body to serve as country representatives. As a group, the country representatives serve as advisers, helping the Branch Committee to stay in close touch with the local situation in the lands that the branch office oversees. The brothers serving as country representatives are not considered a Country Committee and do not function in any supervisory capacity. Country representatives do not qualify to attend the School for Branch Committee Members and Their Wives. Nevertheless, the Branch Committee should view them as a helpful resource and periodically inquire of them, perhaps sending a list of questions for them to consider. (Prov. 15:22) The country representatives should be discerning men who can provide meaningful input on the Kingdom work and local needs in the country where they live. (Prov. 27:23; Acts 6:3) Their input will be especially helpful when they notice conditions or trends that endanger the brothers or that threaten the Kingdom work in the country. Those recommended could include special pioneers or circuit overseers. Elders who formerly served on a Branch Committee or a Country Committee in that land may be particularly qualified. It is preferred that at least one of the country representatives be native to the country. In a country with a remote translation office, one of the three country representatives might include the language overseer, the maintenance overseer, or the home overseer.

49. Recommendations and deletions of country representatives are submitted to the Governing Body using the Recommendation(s) to the Governing Body —Country Representative (A-114) form. (See 2:26.) One of the three brothers should be recommended to serve as the chairman of the group. Once the Governing Body confirms the appointment or deletion of a country representative, the HuB Persons record will be updated at world headquarters. The branch office should provide newly appointed country representatives with a letter that explains their appointment and the basic operation of the group as well as the names and contact information of the other two country representatives.
50. The country representatives may meet at a convenient time and place whenever there is a need or as directed by the Branch Committee. The group is not given permanent office space or computer equipment. Their periodic meetings should be arranged at any convenient location that is available, such as a Kingdom Hall, Assembly Hall, or the home of one of the brothers as long as confidentiality can be maintained. Such meetings should not interfere with normally scheduled meetings or assemblies. Upon request, the branch office may reimburse reasonable travel expenses for country representatives to participate in their periodic meetings. The group should open and close their meetings with prayer. A typed report, usually no more than one to two pages in length and addressed to the Branch Committee, should be sufficient to convey their key observations. The chairman of the group should keep a confidential file of these reports for two years. Reports older than two years should be destroyed, since the branch office will have its copies on file.
## GUIDELINES, INSTRUCTIONS, AND MANUALS

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Chapter 2 2-12 (Revised August 2018)
Translation Department

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**Note:** Additional technical instructions are posted on the following sites:
- Materials Distribution System (MDS)
- Publication Processing Documentation (PPD)
- Technical Support Library (TSL)
CHART 2.2

CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES

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<th>Month Due</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Reference</th>
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<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>Submit <em>Basic and Support Form</em> (A-104) to Personnel Committee&lt;br&gt;Congregations submit literature inventory by September 1&lt;br&gt;Submit <em>Writing Questionnaire</em> to Writing Committee by September 1</td>
<td>A-104i&lt;br&gt;bo 5:46&lt;br&gt;HWC:EY May 29, 2018, No. C-58028W</td>
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<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>Submit end-of-year field service report&lt;br&gt;Submit annual report of alternative health-care expenses to Global Health Care Office</td>
<td>bo 6:164&lt;br&gt;A-110, chap. 7</td>
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<td>November</td>
<td><em>Annual branch audit questionnaires due by November 30</em>&lt;br&gt;Submit <em>Request for Field Missionaries</em> (S-218) to Service Committee</td>
<td>bo 3:2&lt;br&gt;bo 6:7</td>
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<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>Submit <em>Gilead Student Recommendations</em> (G-7) to Service Committee&lt;br&gt;Submit proposed GAA per-publisher amount for approval&lt;br&gt;Annual review of design/construction personnel due by December 31</td>
<td>bo 6:187-189&lt;br&gt;bo 5:19&lt;br&gt;DC-53</td>
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<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>Rotate Branch Committee chairman on January 1&lt;br&gt;Post the schedule on PPD as to when the Memorial, special talk, regional convention, and circuit assemblies will be uploaded to JW Stream. [Translating branches only]</td>
<td>bo 2:17&lt;br&gt;bo 7:9, 27, 46</td>
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<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>Congregations submit literature inventory by March 1</td>
<td>bo 5:46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>Submit <em>Request for Field Missionaries</em> (S-218) to Service Committee</td>
<td>bo 6:7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>Submit <em>Annual Budget Package</em> to Treasurer’s Office by July 20</td>
<td>bo 5:12; badg 3:7-8</td>
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<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>Submit annual review of circuit overseers to Governing Body by August 1&lt;br&gt;Submit annual review of field missionaries to Service Committee by August 1</td>
<td>bo 9:94&lt;br&gt;bo 9:97</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scheduled at Branch Committee's discretion</td>
<td>Annual review of Bethel personnel</td>
<td>bo 4:11</td>
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<td>Annual review of remote servants</td>
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<td>Annual review of special pioneers</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Annual visits to field missionaries</td>
<td>bo 9:118</td>
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<td>Annual visits to remote translation offices</td>
<td>HWB:ETA</td>
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<td>Bethel family members’ annual spring cleaning of residence rooms</td>
<td>bo 4:66</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bethel family members’ annual cleaning of offices and shops. [Larger branches]</td>
<td>bo 4:67</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Submit <em>Branch Visit Questionnaire (A-26)</em> to headquarters representative at least two weeks prior to his arrival</td>
<td>bo 6:2</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Review of indigenous- or foreign-language fields</td>
<td>bo 6:152</td>
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<td>Submit reports on regional convention and circuit assembly series at the end of the season</td>
<td>bo 7:6, 27</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Review accident and near-miss trends with department safety contacts</td>
<td>bo 5:16-17</td>
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COORDINATORS’ COMMITTEE

AUDITING

1. The Branch Committee is responsible for the audit of the branch financial activities. The audit of the financial activities is to be performed once per year. The Branch Committee should appoint one local auditor. A world headquarters auditor will perform the annual audit at least once every five years. Within 30 days after the auditor submits the branch audit, the Branch Committee should send the Coordinators’ Committee a numbered letter explaining how each finding will be addressed.

2. Scheduling the Audit: Branches with a local auditor can begin performing the audit as early as February 1, testing financial activity within that service year. It is not necessary to wait until all financial activity for the branch is completed for that service year. The auditor may submit the questionnaires and his report as early as June 1, but no later than November 30. When a branch receives an audit by a world headquarters auditor, he may begin performing the audit as early as June 1 but should submit the questionnaires and his report no later than November 30. The world headquarters auditor and the Branch Committee should determine the dates for the audit. Additionally, since an audit by a world headquarters auditor is usually performed in a condensed time frame, it is imperative that the audit be given priority. Representatives from the branch Accounting, Local Design/Construction, and Purchasing departments should be assigned and available to answer questions that may arise during the audit.

3. Branch Audit Report (A-21): The Branch Audit Report consists of questionnaires that will be used on a rotational basis. Each year, one of the audit questionnaires will focus on internal controls for all financial areas of branch activity. The other questionnaires will provide an in-depth audit of specific areas of the financial activity of a branch. The audit includes references to organizational guidelines, such as Branch Organization (bo), Branch Accounting Department Guidelines (badg), Local Design/Construction Department Guidelines (DC-3), and Purchasing Guidelines (PD-1). Since one purpose of the branch audit is to provide an independent review, the Coordinators’ Committee does not provide copies of the audit questionnaires to Branch Committees before or during the audit. However, after the auditor submits the Branch Audit Report and his comments directly to the Coordinators’ Committee, he will provide a copy to the Branch Committee.

4. Use of HuB: Some of the questions state that specific reports or searches must be run within HuB. If the auditor is not familiar with these programs, someone who is familiar with them should be made available to assist him. For auditors that are familiar with using HuB, create a user for the auditor and assign him to the financial auditing feature group.

5. Branch Committee’s Comments on Report: Within 30 days after the auditor submits the branch audit, the Branch Committee should send the Coordinators’ Committee a numbered letter explaining how each finding will be addressed. Below are questions that should guide your explanations.

- What steps do you plan to use to correct the finding, and when will the steps be completed?
• Are you unsure of how to correct the finding and therefore are in need of assistance regarding how to do so?
• Was the finding a misunderstanding? If so, what is the correct situation, and what led to the misunderstanding?
• Do you need more time to identify how to correct the finding? If so, when can we expect to receive an update?
• Do you feel that you cannot correct this finding and that an exception should be granted? If so, why do you feel this way?

For each finding, answers should be provided to the set of questions that best fit the situation at the branch. There is no need to restate the questions(s) that are being answered. These clear explanations for each finding will enable the Coordinators’ Committee and the appropriate world headquarters department(s) to see what steps are being taken to address the finding and if any additional help or direction should be provided.

6. Local Auditors: The Branch Committee should appoint one qualified elder from outside of the branch Accounting or Purchasing departments to serve as the branch auditor. Generally, it should not be a member of the Local Design/Construction Department (LDC). However, if an exception is approved, someone from a different department should be assigned to work with the local auditor on any aspects of the audit that pertain to LDC. A member of the Branch Committee would not normally be appointed to serve as the branch auditor. The auditor should not be the Branch Committee coordinator or the Branch Committee contact that oversees the Accounting or Purchasing departments. However, if it is believed that an exception is required, please write to the Coordinators’ Committee. The local auditor will generally be a part-time responsibility. He does not need to have extensive accounting experience. He should be trustworthy and conscientious, have good judgment, and be able to interact well with people.

7. If the local auditor or any assistant auditor is different from the previous year and already in some form of special full-time service, a memorandum should be sent to the Auditing/Records Management Department with the name of the brother, his Member ID number, and his Bethel domain user name. This should be done as soon as possible. Thereafter, the Auditing/Records Management Department will send him additional information.

8. If the local auditor or any assistant auditor is different from last year and is not a Bethelite or in some form of special full-time service, he should complete an Application for Volunteer Program (A-19) before being invited to assist the organization. (See Personnel Guidelines, p12.) If it is decided that he qualifies, he may be invited to serve as a Bethel consultant (BOC). Upon his acceptance, he should be assigned to the Branch Committee Office. A Bethel login and an e-mail account should be created for him, and he should be given year-round access to these. He should be contacted by the local Computer Department and helped to set up his Bethel e-mail account. After this is completed, his name, Member ID number, and Bethel domain user name should be sent to the Auditing/Records Management Department. Thereafter, the Auditing/Records Management Department will send him additional information. Because of the nature of his work, he may be given temporary access to the Bethel network for the duration of the branch audit. Anyone who is granted access to the Bethel network should sign the Watchtower Information Resources Confidentiality Affirmation. See 4:50; Computer Department Guidelines (A-105).
9. **Assistant Auditors**: A ministerial servant may be trained as an assistant auditor. However, please keep in mind that the brother should be mature and trustworthy, able to keep things confidential, and have a good reputation within the branch. Additionally, he would not be used to lead meetings with department overseers or the Branch Committee and would not be used to investigate serious issues, such as fraud, should they be discovered as a result of the branch audit. Likewise, sisters could be used in a secretarial or support role but would not meet with department overseers or Branch Committee members.

10. **World Headquarters Auditors**: If no qualified brothers are available in the country, a memorandum should be sent to the Auditing/Records Management Department to request that a world headquarters auditor be assigned to perform the branch audit. Additionally, it is the goal that each branch receives an audit by a world headquarters auditor at least once every five years, even if the branch has a local auditor. This will enable world headquarters auditors to learn and understand the unique circumstances of each branch, to work with the local auditor where applicable, and to provide feedback to the Coordinators' Committee. If the Branch Committee feels that an auditor from another branch is required, the Coordinators' Committee would need to give approval for such a request. The Coordinators' Committee may also initiate a branch audit and assign the auditors according to the need. When an auditor is assigned by the Coordinators' Committee and there is no local auditor, other brothers may be assigned to assist him, but the headquarters auditor will serve as the lead auditor.

11. If you feel that a brother in your branch has the qualifications and the ability to serve as a world headquarters auditor and is available to audit another branch, please write to the Coordinators' Committee explaining the qualifications of the brother. If there are brothers in your branch who are currently used as world headquarters auditors, you do not need to write about them unless they are no longer able to serve in this capacity.

12. If a local auditor needs further training, the Coordinators' Committee will assign a world headquarters auditor to provide remote assistance for the next audit. This assistance would likely be of a technical nature and would not involve aspects of the audit that would require a world headquarters auditor to visit in person. Often the world headquarters auditor who previously worked with the local auditor would be assigned to provide this assistance. It is not expected that many hours of remote assistance would be needed. If extensive help is required, the Auditing/Records Management Department should be informed so that more on-site training can be provided.

13. **External Audits**: In addition to the annual branch audit, local circumstances may at times require other audits. An external audit is done whenever local legislation requires it or it seems otherwise prudent. This is usually done by a government-registered auditor. His report, together with the audited financial statements, may be submitted to the government agency stipulated in the legislation. Wherever possible, a qualified brother should perform this type of audit. There is generally no need to provide information related to entities that are not subject to the audit. Notify the Coordinators' and Publishing committees if an external audit will be conducted on a branch for the first time.

14. At times, authorities will require an audit of a specific aspect of branch activity. Although it is necessary to comply with legal requests, there is no need to volunteer information that is neither requested nor required by law. Identify which documents are part of the official accounting system, hence
subject to audit, and which documents are strictly of an internal nature and are therefore not required for the audit. Notify the Coordinators' and Publishing committees as soon as you become aware that this type of audit will be performed on a specific aspect of your branch activity.

15. Auditing/Records Management Department: Under the oversight of the Coordinators' Committee, the Auditing/Records Management Department at world headquarters assists with coordinating and reviewing the audits of all branches, supports world headquarters auditors and local auditors, and works along with the appropriate world headquarters department(s) as it pertains to audit findings.

16. The WHQ Computer Department oversees the work of all branch Computer Departments worldwide under the supervision of the Coordinators' Committee. This includes setting standards, providing global shared services, specifying new equipment, designing and maintaining computer networks, and supporting commercial enterprise software and software developed by headquarters.

17. The WHQ Computer Department has technicians working under its direction in various branches in order to provide timely assistance to branches around the world. These technicians closely follow the standards and policies that apply to all areas under the supervision of the WHQ Computer Department, such as networking, servers, and software.

18. For detailed information on organizing local computer operations, the Branch Committee and the branch Computer Department should consult Computer Department Guidelines (A-105).

19. Branch Computer Department Responsibilities: The Branch Committee should appoint a capable, trustworthy brother and perhaps an assistant to oversee the Computer Department. The principal responsibility of the Computer Department is to supply branch departments with computers, servers, software, telephones, radio communication, data communication, telecommunication, and related technologies. In addition, this department provides helpful support to keep equipment in good working order. Most important, it ensures that all the electronic data belonging to the branch is available only to those authorized to use it and is protected against tampering or accidental loss.

20. Standards and Guidelines: In order to maintain reasonable uniformity among branches, headquarters provides standards and technical guidelines. The branch Computer Department should endeavor to keep up-to-date with such information as provided in correspondence to the branches, Computer Department Guidelines (A-105), and the Technical Support Library (TSL) located on the Global Bethel Intranet. There is usually no need for branch personnel to experiment with or pioneer the use of the latest technologies available. Rather, they should concentrate on using what has been approved.

21. If the branch Computer Department feels that it needs assistance in evaluating whether to replace equipment, in using new software, or in similar matters, the branch office may submit a request for help and direction to the WHQ Computer Department.

22. Data Backups and Disaster Recovery: Ensuring good data backups and having a disaster recovery plan are extremely important and should be viewed as one of the priorities of the Computer Department. Backup procedures should be performed, monitored, and verified at the frequency and in the manner directed in Computer Department Guidelines (A-105). Unless an exception has been granted by the WHQ
Computer Department, backup data should be kept in or moved weekly to a secure location that is not in the same building as the primary server being backed up. This increases the possibility that, in the event of a localized accident or a disaster affecting the main servers, branch data could be restored and reinstalled on new equipment.

23. The Computer Department is responsible for having basic recovery procedures in place in case critical equipment, such as a server, fails. The procedure will vary according to the amount of computer equipment used throughout the branch territory and the availability of local vendor support. It may include having a limited supply of spare equipment readily available. The readiness to respond to potential issues should be thoroughly validated at least once a year.

24. Approvals: Any purchase of new computer hardware or software that goes beyond normal supplies, such as printer cartridges and small items (memory sticks and so forth) needs approval from headquarters. This includes replacements for equipment that is taken out of service because of failure or because of the need for upgrading. Approval is obtained by submitting a Nonliterature Branch Request (AB-3a). For a list of recommended equipment, consult the TSL.

25. Security: Much of the information that is stored electronically is of a confidential nature. The Branch Committee should have an up-to-date list of all brothers who have access to such data. A meeting at which the importance of confidentiality is emphasized should be attended by each brother who is given such rights. A branch member may lose his Bethel service privilege if confidential data is accessed or copied without authorization. All users accessing branch data should first sign the Watchtower Information Resources Confidentiality Affirmation (in the TSL). If changes are needed for legal reasons, this document may be adjusted by the Branch Committee.

26. The Computer Department is responsible for regular server and network administration tasks, such as software installation, switch configuration, data backup, user and group maintenance, file permissions, and monitoring. The Computer Department Guidelines (A-105) detail the department’s work. For additional information relating to the security and management of confidential data, see Information Security & Acceptable Use of Computers (in the TSL) and the Records Management Guidelines (A-160) (on MDS).

27. Infrastructure: The Computer Department would generally specify, install, and maintain the cabling and infrastructure for the branch network. When planning network improvements, WHQ Computer Department should be contacted. It will work along with the local Computer Department and the supervising Regional Design/Construction Department (RDC) to prepare designs and budgets for the improvements at the branch facility or remote translation office (RTO). The Branch Committee may decide that another department, such as Maintenance, will install the new infrastructure according to the WHQ Computer Department’s approved design and budget.

28. An air-conditioned and secure room should be designated where network equipment and servers containing the branch data can be installed. The telephone system would usually also be installed in this room, along with all the communications equipment needed to connect the branch to the outside telephone system and to the Internet. Access to this room should be limited to those who have been authorized by the Computer Department overseer and the Branch Committee. Anyone authorized should be well-trained and familiarized with the operation of the room prior to being allowed to have access.
29. **Training and Support:** The Computer Department must be service-oriented. Its goal is not only to provide computer equipment and software but also to help branch members make good use of the equipment and software that have been approved and provided for translation, publishing, and administration.

30. The complexity of the technology in use today makes it very important that thorough training is provided for those working in the Computer Department. This includes training to understand the office productivity software and server products currently being used. It is also necessary to train those assigned as backups for this work. When a computer system is installed, training is often provided. Ongoing training is required to get the most benefit from the computer equipment and to reduce the frustration that results from members not knowing how to use the equipment or software.

31. Depending on the size of the branch, the Computer Department might choose to establish a help desk that brothers can contact to receive help with using computer equipment and software. The brothers or sisters assigned to the help desk should be well-trained so that they can resolve the majority of problems without involving other technicians. In addition, those working on the help desk should be patient and kind with those needing assistance, showing a willing spirit. In most cases, it is good for those who support the hardware and software to deal directly with the brothers using the hardware and software. This promotes good understanding and cooperation and usually leads to better support. The help desk is not to provide assistance for or to repair personally owned computers.

32. **HuB:** The WHQ Computer Department is responsible for the development and support of the HuB software, the standard administrative software used by all branch offices worldwide. Branch offices should use existing HuB features or request enhancements to meet additional requirements. The HuB program is kept up-to-date with organizational procedures as these are adjusted from time to time. The branch should not develop other administrative software locally without written approval from the WHQ Computer Department.—See 3:38-40.

33. **HuB** is a large program with thousands of features. Since it is used by both large and small branch offices, not all features are appropriate for each branch office. Simplification in branch operations also means simplifying our use of computers wherever possible. The Branch Committee in each branch is responsible for deciding which features of HuB should be used. Balance is required to ensure that the features of the software being used contribute to productivity and accuracy without placing a burden of unnecessary work on those using it. If a Branch Committee is unsure about using a particular feature of the program, it should consult the WHQ Computer Department.

34. Selected brothers in various branches serve on the Applications Regional Support Team. Brothers who are assigned to this team follow direction from the WHQ Computer Department when providing support to the branches. Branches should use the online TSL support forum to request HuB support. The WHQ Computer Department may then assign a Regional Support Team member to assist. If a branch office needs assistance to implement a new feature in HuB, the requesting branch office should send a memorandum to the WHQ Computer Department, outlining the need.

35. The Branch Committee should organize HuB support. The branch Computer Department maintains the HuB server and database, makes regular backups, applies necessary updates, and administers user security. The
Branch Committee is responsible for determining which users are granted various HuB permissions. However, it is not necessary for HuB administrators to be members of the Branch Committee, as this is a technical role.

36. User training is best done by the most experienced HuB users in the branch. In many branches, this will be experienced users within a department. In branches that do not have experienced users within a department, a department overseer may ask the branch Computer Department for such training. Those assigned to support HuB should be alert to new features by keeping up with HuB announcements, release notes, and the HuB documentation. They should make sure that new features are made available to software users after discussing these features with the Branch Committee and the respective department overseers.

37. The WHQ Computer Department provides the branch offices with resources to assist in training and support. In addition, the HuB support site on the Global Bethel Intranet contains helpful information, training material, and program updates. Branch offices can use the online support forum for technical assistance or to report bugs in the program.

38. Programming: Computer software can be a valuable tool in getting our work done. However, simplification in our operations includes simplifying our software requirements where possible. Standard software packages are developed and maintained under the direction of headquarters, and as far as possible, branches should work with the standard software tools provided, such as HuB, apps.jw.org, MEPS, and the Watchtower Translation System (WTS). This software should be kept up-to-date as directed by headquarters. —See 3:32.

39. It is generally not necessary for a branch to develop custom software, Thus, most branches do not require a separate programming group in the Computer Department. Before software projects are started, they must be approved by the Branch Committee and the WHQ Computer Department, even if the project is to be done by remote volunteers or a resource outside of Bethel. When the Branch Committee recommends a local programming project, it should write to the WHQ Computer Department for approval. The WHQ Computer Department will consult with other headquarters departments and seek approval from the appropriate Governing Body committee as needed.

40. Where a local need is not addressed by a standard software package, such as HuB, apps.jw.org, Builder Assistant, Watchtower CAD, MEPS, or WTS, it is best in most cases to request an enhancement to the existing software. In this way, other branches with the same needs may benefit. Enhancement requests for existing software should be submitted in writing to the headquarters department or Governing Body committee that cares for the software package. —See 8:1.

41. At times, because of some specific local situation, a department at the branch office might not be able to care for its assigned work exactly as desired using the HuB program. In such cases, the Branch Committee should usually adjust the way the department does its work. If it is believed necessary, the Branch Committee may send an enhancement request to the WHQ Computer Department. If it is not possible for a department to use the standard software because of local legal requirements or other unique circumstances, the Branch Committee should write to the WHQ Computer Department for direction.

42. Although branches were previously able to make customizations to the Admin program, this is not possible with the HuB program. If there is a local
requirement not addressed by existing HuB features, the Branch Committee should write to the WHQ Computer Department for direction. Branches should not submit enhancement requests and then do local software development to address what they requested while waiting for the enhancement to be programmed. HuB reports may be customized or translated to meet local requirements without seeking additional permission.

43. **HuB enhancement requests** should always be entered on the appropriate document template, approved by a Branch Committee member, and then sent to the WHQ Computer Department. If the benefit of an enhancement request justifies the amount of work required, it will be approved by the WHQ Computer Department after consulting with the appropriate headquarters department or Governing Body committee. Enhancement requests that would involve significant work or would change an organizational procedure will have to be carefully analyzed.

44. **Commercial Software:** The Computer Department is responsible for making sure that commercial software is not used without proper licensing. Personally owned software should not be used on branch computers. If software is needed, it should be properly purchased and licensed by the branch. This means that records have to be kept to show clearly all available licenses at the branch and who is using them. Discrepancies must be resolved either by removing the program or by obtaining a proper license. Software should not be obtained without approval from the WHQ Computer Department and should not be installed on any branch equipment without prior approval from the Computer Department.

45. **Use of the Internet:** All security policies from the WHQ Computer Department should be carefully followed. These provide essential protection from cyberattacks, malicious software, and viruses from the Internet. Internet access should be monitored and filtered. Since access to the Internet is automatically granted to most users, reminders should be periodically given about using this access during work hours for work-related matters only.

**CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMUNICATION**

46. This section provides direction for handling correspondence and communication between branch offices and with world headquarters. For guidelines on the handling of correspondence with congregations and individuals in the field, see Chapter 6.

47. A Branch Committee should feel free to ask the Governing Body or one of its committees any question related to the Kingdom work in the territory under the oversight of the branch office. It is best that such questions be expressed clearly and carefully in writing rather than by telephone. The Branch Committee should ensure that it has an arrangement for handling correspondence efficiently.

48. **Branch Committee Coordinator:** The Branch Committee coordinator should be especially attentive to matters sent to and from the Governing Body and its committees. Good communication between the coordinator and other Branch Committee members is essential so that all are involved and are aware of direction being provided. Numbered letters sent to the Governing Body or its committees should be signed by the coordinator on behalf of the Branch Committee. (See 2: 20-21.) Correspondence should not be delayed unnecessarily. The urgency of some matters may require that another committee member sign the letter if the Branch Committee coordinator is not available. See Chapter 2 for more information regarding correspondence sent to the Governing Body and its committees.
49. Branch offices are authorized to write to other branch offices and to headquarters. However, branch offices should not write to offices under the oversight of another Branch Committee, such as country offices, translation offices, literature depots, and so forth. In such cases, the correspondence should be sent to the branch office that has oversight. Country offices are authorized to write to the branch office that oversees their work.

50. Desk Symbols: If many people in the branch or country office prepare correspondence to be sent to other branch offices or to headquarters, it may be practical for the branch office to use desk symbols. The use of desk symbols serves to help the branch office identify the author and/or his secretary. When a reply is received that refers to the correspondence by desk symbols and date, the reply can be promptly routed to the appropriate desk. The Branch Committee may determine the desk symbol system that works best locally. No more than three letters should be combined to form each desk symbol, such as ABA, SCA, HID. The Branch or Country committee should see that a confidential listing of the branch office's desk symbols is kept up-to-date. The desk symbol list is to be provided only to those who need to consult the listing for their Bethel work. It is not to be distributed to anyone outside of Bethel.

51. Correspondence Standards: All correspondence should be dated and include the desk symbols as well as a subject or a regarding (“Re:”) line. If it is necessary to send the correspondence by more than one means, this should be indicated at the top, for example, "Via Hard Copy and HuB." (See 3:57.) If the correspondence is truly urgent or time-sensitive, this should be clearly indicated under the date. If the subject involves another country or geographic location, this should be indicated at the beginning of the subject line. For example, if the Central America branch office writes about a matter in Guatemala, the subject line should commence with “Guatemala—” followed by the subject.

52. Notes: When only a very brief reply to correspondence is needed, it is appropriate to reply using a brief note at the top of the received correspondence. This note could convey an approval, a confirmation, or other minor detail. If the note is truly urgent or time-sensitive, this should be clearly indicated above the date. The note should also show the intended recipient, those being copied, the number of attachments (if any), and the sender, as well as the desk symbols and date.

53. Numbered Letters: All correspondence between a Branch Committee and the Governing Body or one of the Governing Body committees should be sent by means of numbered letters. [See Chart 3.1.] Branch Committees should address a numbered letter to one Governing Body committee only. The letter number, letter date, and desk symbols serve as a helpful reference to specific correspondence. For numbered letters sent to the Governing Body and its committees, each branch office uses a number series that starts at 101 and continues sequentially until 9999. The letter number series is not reset or restarted each year. It is reset to 101 after letter number 9999 has been used. Unique letter numbers will be used on letters sent to Branch Committees but will not necessarily be sequential. When the Governing Body or one of the Governing Body committees sends the same letter (a circular letter) to various branch offices, the same letter number will be used. Additionally, to identify easily circular letters from headquarters, the letter number will begin with a “C—” prefix, such as “No. C-1234P.”

54. Memorandums: Correspondence between branch offices is sent by means of memorandums, not numbered letters. Memorandums are
also used for correspondence between branch offices and headquarters departments. [See Chart 3.1.] The word "MEMORANDUM" needs to be shown above the name of the sending branch. In addition, for the recipient, the department should be specified under the name of the branch, for example, "Attention: Shipping Office." A memorandum does not need to be signed by the Branch Committee coordinator.

55. E-Mail: In addition to the use of numbered letters and memorandums, departments at headquarters and at the branch offices may be approved by oversight to use e-mail to communicate directly with departments or individuals in other lands about technical and routine matters. However, e-mail does not replace numbered letters or memorandums. Recommendations, direction, and decisions are to be communicated through numbered letters or memorandums, as explained above. In most cases, authorized e-mail communications between departments or individuals serve the purpose of expediting the clear communication of technical and routine details having to do with previously approved projects. If such e-mail communication is approved between a department at headquarters and at the branch offices or between branch offices, oversight should ensure that such e-mail communications are limited to their authorized technical purpose. E-mail should not be used by anyone to bypass official communication. A department overseer should be sure that his oversight on the Branch Committee is kept aware of the nature of work-related e-mail communications that he or others in the department send to anyone outside the branch office or to those at other branch offices or at headquarters.—See 6:45.

56. Telephone Calls: The telephone may be used to communicate with headquarters or with another branch office if necessary. This is especially true when a sudden emergency or other urgent matter arises. Usually, urgent matters handled over the telephone should be followed up with official communication in a numbered letter or a memorandum. For technical and routine matters, the guidelines outlined above with regard to the use of e-mail also apply to telephone calls. Department overseers should authorize any international phone calls before they are made.

57. Hard-Copy Mail: It is preferred that hard-copy correspondence be scanned and then sent electronically via HuB. If a matter must be sent by hard copy and HuB, please indicate this at the top of the correspondence as described in 3:51. Whenever possible, correspondence and attachments should be sent electronically using HuB, as this expedites the handling and assists in the tracking and routing of items once they have been received. If HuB is temporarily unavailable and emergency communication is needed, e-mail may be used.

DISASTER RELIEF AND EMERGENCIES

58. From time to time, emergency situations arise throughout the world. Sometimes there are violent storms, damaging floods, or strong earthquakes. At other times, brothers may be forced to flee from their homes because of warfare or mob violence. When such problems occur, the Branch Committee should write to the Coordinators' Committee as soon as possible (usually within two days) to explain what is happening and how our brothers are being affected. This initial contact may include any recommendations to provide assistance. On occasion, it may not be possible for the branch office to communicate with the Coordinators' Committee. Or a need may suddenly arise to do something for brothers affected by a disaster. In such circumstances, the branch office is permitted to spend up to USD 5,000 immediately to provide temporary relief and assistance to brothers involved in a ma-
jor disaster. When funds are spent, an explanation should be included in the letter sent to the Coordinators' Committee. The letter should state what the local brothers are able to do and what materials or facilities are available to take care of the immediate needs of the brothers affected. Further instructions are found in the Disaster Relief Guidelines (S-180).—See 2:47.

59. If the Coordinators' Committee approves relief funds over USD 5,000, a separate Cash Management Center Request (A-99) form should be submitted to the Treasurer's Office for these funds, since funds designated for relief purposes should be used first. The approval letter from the Coordinators' Committee should be referenced in the comments field of the A-99. An A-99 form should be submitted even if the branch has the funds on hand to care for this expense.

HISTORICAL ARCHIVE RECORDS AND EXHIBITS

60. The Branch Committee is responsible for identifying historical archive records. These encompass a wide range of formats that include correspondence, documents, printed publications, newspaper articles, photographs, audio or video recordings, and digital files. Normally, the oldest historical records and documentation are kept for future reference. These generally include historical records that document the establishment and development of the following two categories for your branch territory:

Preaching and Teaching Work
- Records related to the opening of the preaching work in the branch territory
- Significant preaching initiatives through the years
- Major conventions held in the branch territory
- Opening of the preaching work into new language fields
- Copies of literature released in target languages of the country
- Bibles produced over the years in target languages of the country
- Annual service reports
- Key legal rulings or precedents that served to establish freedom of worship or the freedom to preach
- Experiences, correspondence, or artifacts related to the work of brothers and sisters who were instrumental in the development of the work

Significant Theocratic Facilities
Records related to the construction or purchase of:
- Branch offices
- Remote office facilities
- Assembly Halls
- Landmark Kingdom Hall projects, such as the first in your branch territory, the first in a region, or special construction types
- Missionary homes and other noteworthy housing for special full-time servants

61. Catalog of Artifacts: The Branch Committee should maintain a catalog of historical archive records and artifacts. Under the direction of the Coordinators' Committee, the Museum Department at world headquarters establishes standards and computer tools for the branches to maintain their catalog. These standards and tools contribute to a global catalog of historical and organizational artifacts. The Museum Department also coordinates the sharing of artifacts and catalog data between branches and with world headquarters for the purpose of reference and research. (See 8:2-3.) Further information regarding cataloging standards will be provided.

62. Personnel: Many branches will be able to care for their historical archive records with part-time personnel,
This may also include part-time commuters and remote volunteers. In larger branches, during special projects or because of other unique circumstances, there may be a need for an overseer and a few others to coordinate the work of the part-time personnel who are assisting with archiving records and artifacts. The personnel assigned to care for historical records and artifacts would typically work under the direction of the Bethel Office.

63. Historical Exhibits and Bible Displays: The Branch Committee may choose to display appropriate artifact samples and historical records rather than to keep them stored in an inaccessible file area. This should be done in a manner that does not damage the artifacts or records. Thus, the Bethel family and visitors will be educated and encouraged by seeing their theocratic history. (Ps. 48:13) In addition, branches may share their historical artifacts with other branches as directed by the Museum Department.

64. Requests for new historical exhibits or Bible displays should be sent to the Coordinators’ Committee. The Museum Department will then work with the Worldwide Design/Construction Department (WDC) to confirm the budget for the proposed exhibit. The Museum Department will then work with the branch in preparing a final proposal within the allotted budget for submission to the Coordinators’ Committee. After the Coordinators’ Committee approves the exhibit, WDC will coordinate the installation.

65. Museum Department: In addition to maintaining the global catalog and assisting in developing proposals for branch exhibits, the Museum Department implements the direction of the Coordinators’ Committee on the rotation of special exhibits or historical artifacts of special interest between branches. This department also coordinates the sharing of various artifacts so that high-quality exhibits are constructed at many branches worldwide. In addition, the Museum Department cares for the Watch Tower Society’s Bible collection as well as the three Warwick museums: The Bible and the Divine Name, A People for Jehovah’s Name, and Faith in Action.

LEGAL MATTERS AND LITIGATION

66. Official opposition to the advancement of Kingdom interests, particularly the preaching of the good news, is to be expected. As foretold, there are those who ‘frame trouble in the name of the law’ and who resort to the courts in an effort to silence the spread of the Bible’s lifesaving message. (Ps. 94:20; Matt. 10:16-19) While the theocratic organization does not need legal status to form congregations or engage in the field ministry, being legally recognized affords a degree of protection, which is why efforts are made to ‘defend and legally establish the good news.’—Phil. 1:7.

67. The Branch Committee should promptly inform the Coordinators’ Committee of serious legal challenges, providing dates and times of occurrences, names of individuals involved, and a thorough but concise explanation. This includes outlining what the charges against the brothers may be and sending a copy of the laws involved, translated into English. The Branch Committee should not assume that the Coordinators’ Committee is up-to-date on the situation in a given country just because there was correspondence with world headquarters about the situation in the past. All correspondence relating to child abuse should be sent directly to WHQ Legal without copying any other office at headquarters or at the branch.—See form S-66, paragraph 36.

68. It is advisable to have a Legal Department in larger branch offices, particularly where there is significant ongoing legal opposition to theocratic activities. If possible, it is good to have
a licensed attorney serving with the department. It is the responsibility of the entire Branch Committee to be aware of legal challenges to our worship.—Esther 3:5-15.

69. When legal controversies arise, the branch Legal Department may consult, if necessary, with a lawyer who is not serving at Bethel. The lawyer’s opinion and recommendation should be included in the letter sent to the Coordinators’ Committee. If it seems necessary to hire a lawyer, the lawyer should explain the legal remedies available, the likelihood of a favorable result, how long it will take, and an estimate of his costs. In explaining matters to the Coordinators’ Committee, the Branch Committee should outline the lawyer’s opinion on whether a favorable outcome will be achieved, his reasoning, and the recommendation of the Branch Committee.

70. To minimize the use of non-Witness attorneys, it is beneficial to maintain a list of brothers and sisters in the field who are lawyers. Legal matters can periodically be referred to spiritually qualified attorneys who are willing and feel privileged to help. They are generally pleased to assist without charge.

71. Action against Jehovah’s Witnesses is often preceded by negative propaganda in the media and derogatory statements by government officials. The Branch Committee should promptly inform the Coordinators’ Committee if events indicate that the authorities are considering the imposition of restrictions or an outright ban on true worship. With comments from the branch office and the help of the WHQ Legal Department, the Coordinators’ Committee will prepare an approach to the appropriate officials. Written materials explaining our activities and refuting falsehoods may be prepared. The objective is to inform responsible officials of the true position of Jehovah’s Witnesses. To ensure that the best approach is made, the branch office should always communicate with the Coordinators’ Committee before setting up such meetings. Any meetings that are approved to be held with officials should be cared for by a member of the Branch Committee and, if available, someone from the branch Legal Department.

72. Most governments have committed themselves to respecting human rights, including freedom of worship. (Rev. 12:16) National and international organizations monitor governmental compliance with these commitments. It may be helpful to inform such agencies about the arrests of publishers, lawsuits, or proposed legislation against true worship. The Branch Committee should communicate with the Coordinators’ Committee before doing so, explaining which organization is to be approached. A draft of what the branch office wishes to submit should be sent to the Coordinators’ Committee. The Coordinators’ Committee will then decide whether the approach should be made.

73. The branch office should always ask for any court action to be delayed or adjourned to allow ample time for a complete report to be sent to the Coordinators’ Committee and to allow time to receive instructions from headquarters. If possible, a two-month delay or extension should be requested.

74. In the event of an adverse ruling or decision, the Branch Committee should immediately inform the Coordinators’ Committee and specify the time limit for making an appeal. The Coordinators’ Committee will want to know the opinion of the branch Legal Department about the advisability of appealing, the reasons for or against making an appeal, as well as the costs. The letter to the Coordinators’ Committee should also state any possible negative effects on the legal status of the Kingdom work if the matter is not appealed or if the appeal is lost.

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75. If the Branch Committee does not have time to write to the Coordinators’ Committee to receive instructions because of a deadline that cannot be extended, a legal update should be provided as soon as possible. If necessary, the Branch Committee coordinator or another member of the Branch Committee may telephone headquarters about the matter.

76. If the Branch Committee believes that an action taken against true worship should be publicized, the branch office should write to the Coordinators’ Committee with a recommendation of what could be prepared, making sure that all of the facts are fully substantiated.

77. Legal Status: Obtaining legal status or registration facilitates the entry of missionaries, the organization of assemblies, the importation of literature, the entitlement to tax exemptions, and other benefits. The Branch Committee should give careful attention to obtaining and maintaining legal registration. Of course, the organization will never compromise principles of pure worship merely to obtain legal status. Attention should be given to the type of legal status being sought. Some religions have a very favorable status, whereas others are merely tolerated. It is necessary to examine carefully the law in each country to determine which form of legal status would be most beneficial for theocratic purposes.

78. Legal Entities and the Worldwide Order: Branch Committee members should have a clear understanding of the relationship among the Governing Body, the Branch Committee, the legal entities used by branch offices, and the Worldwide Order of Special Full-Time Servants of Jehovah’s Witnesses (“Worldwide Order”).

79. The Governing Body has delegated a measure of oversight of the spiritual and material welfare of “the flock of God” to Branch Committees throughout the world. These Branch Committees also oversee administrative and legal activities of the organization in their designated territories. Of course, all Branch Committees serve under the spiritual direction of the Governing Body.—See w01 1/15 pp. 28-31.

80. Branch Committees are encouraged to register and use a recognized legal entity to carry on the legal affairs of the branch office. Depending on the local laws and circumstances, a branch office may need to use more than one legal entity to further the work in its territory. Any recommended adjustments in the use of legal entities are to be presented to the Coordinators’ Committee. This would include recommendations for the appointment or deletion of directors or officers of legal entities. If recommending an officer or director who is not a member of a Branch or Country committee, the Branch Committee should provide the following information with the recommendation: The brother’s present assignment, date of birth, date of baptism, full-time service start date, special full-time service start date, and a short description of his spiritual qualifications and theocratic responsibilities. Some countries do not allow the registration of religions or the formation of a legal entity of a religious nature. In such countries, it may be necessary to use a legal entity that is of a general nonprofit nature or, in a rare instance, a for-profit nature. In either case, the Branch Committee must not lose sight of the primary objective to spread the good news of God’s Kingdom under Christ Jesus. Our principal activities as an organization are religious even though some aspects may be viewed as educational or charitable in nature.

81. Members of the Worldwide Order serve at all branch offices. The Worldwide Order provides ministers for the legal entity or entities used by the branch offices to carry out the spiritual activities of Jehovah’s Witnesses. (Matt. 24:14; 28:19, 20; Acts 1:8;
Rom. 12:1) For this reason, it is important that Branch Committees understand what the Worldwide Order is and the relationship between it and the legal entities branch offices may use.

82. The Worldwide Order is an unincorporated association made up of all those in special full-time service throughout the world. Members of the Worldwide Order are baptized ministers in special full-time service who perform whatever assignment they receive from the Worldwide Order. Each member of the Worldwide Order signs a Vow of Obedience and Poverty ("Vow"), which is a voluntary commitment made by each member.

83. Members of the Worldwide Order are not compensated and do not receive in-kind benefits for any services they perform. The support a member receives is based on the member’s commitment to the Order and is not related to any service performed or the nature of any assignment. Members of the Worldwide Order receive food, shelter, and other basic necessities. Regardless of the nature of their privilege of service, all receive modest, yet appropriate, support. In view of the foregoing, the activities of any legal entity used by the Branch Committee are not to be viewed or regulated as a "commercial" enterprise or as involving an employer/employee relationship between any legal entity and members of the Worldwide Order.

84. At times, authorities attempt to categorize the endeavors of those in special full-time service as ‘secular work.’ As Christians, we do have a "work" commissioned to us. (John 4:5; 5:17; Acts 13:2; 1 Cor. 15:58; 16:10; 2 Tim. 4:5) However, members of the Worldwide Order are motivated, not by financial gain, but by the desire to accomplish the will of Jehovah and Jesus Christ in helping all "to attain to repentance." (2 Pet. 3:9) Even so, in keeping with Jesus’ admonition, Branch Committee members and those who serve under their oversight need to exercise caution when asked to describe the nature of our activities. (Matt. 10:16) While we do engage in "work," even as Jesus and his first-century disciples did, we are certainly not secularly employed or motivated.

85. If a Branch Committee feels that it should describe itself, its legal entities, or the Worldwide Order differently than set forth above, it must first provide details of the proposed adjustment to the Governing Body in order to receive direction.—See 6:51; 9:1.

86. The Branch Committee should consider whether to register Jehovah’s Witnesses as a local entity. However, registration as a local branch of the Pennsylvania corporation may be preferable. Regimes in developing countries are less likely to expropriate property belonging to an American corporation. In other countries, having legal ties to an American legal entity is not desirable. If the Branch Committee recommends pursuing legal registration in a particular country, the details should be sent to the Coordinators’ Committee. The WHQ Legal Department will provide assistance in preparing a charter and bylaws needed for registration.

87. There may be other laws in the country regulating those who transact business on behalf of local or foreign corporations. To ensure that the branch office is operating legally, a lawyer should be consulted so that the legal requirements are known. Each member of the Branch Committee should be familiar with the laws of the country as they pertain to corporations or business matters.

88. Power of Attorney: This is a legal document authorizing an individual to act as a legal agent or representative of another person or legal entity (such as the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania). The Power of Attorney names an individual to handle ‘necessary business matters.’ (Acts 6:3)
The Branch Committee may write to the Coordinators’ Committee if a Power of Attorney is needed to conduct corporation business, to register the corporation, or to obtain legal recognition as a branch of a foreign corporation.

89. In some countries, the law requires anyone holding a Power of Attorney to register it with the government. If that is the case, it should be done, thus avoiding the severe complications for not complying with such laws. Each member of a Branch Committee should be aware of the legal requirements regarding Powers of Attorney, including time periods for renewal or expiration.

90. Lawsuits for Libel, Damages, or Injunctive Relief: Before initiating any such legal actions, the Branch Committee must receive approval from the Coordinators’ Committee. The recommendation from the Branch Committee should include a description of available legal remedies, the cost for such legal action (including estimated attorney’s fees), an estimate of the likely time from the initiation of the action to the conclusion, and the likelihood of success and the recovery of an award. In libel actions, the Branch Committee should consider whether the suit will further advertise the false accusations. If it is believed that failure to initiate a lawsuit will lead to other difficulties, these concerns should be explained.

91. Printed Matter Against Jehovah’s Witnesses: As a general policy, the organization does not publish responses or retaliate legally if another organization or individual circulates printed matter that contains falsehoods about Jehovah’s Witnesses. It is usually best to concentrate on the positive activity of Kingdom preaching. If the Branch Committee thinks that the wise course is to take steps to counteract negative reports that may adversely affect our activities, the committee should set forth recommendations to the Coordinators’ Committee.—See 6:23.

92. Refusal of Blood Transfusions: If our brothers’ refusal of blood transfusions is being disregarded or overridden by health-care providers, legal action may be warranted. If the Branch Committee recommends such, a complete overview of the matter should be presented to the Coordinators’ Committee. The recommendation should clearly state what is hoped to be accomplished by taking legal action. We are not inclined to get involved if a favorable result will not help the brotherhood in general.

93. Child-Custody and Visitation Disputes: At times, publishers are involved in child-custody or visitation disputes in which our beliefs are attacked. Unfavorable child-custody decisions in which our beliefs and activities are misrepresented can adversely affect our reputation in the community, even our legal status. With prior approval of and subsequent review by the Coordinators’ Committee, some branch offices have prepared and made available information to assist publishers whose beliefs are attacked in such disputes.

94. Personal Decisions: The Legal Department at the branch office is set up to assist the Branch Committee in “the defending and legally establishing of the good news.” It is inappropriate for the Legal Department to take time from these “more important things” to assist individuals with their personal legal matters. (Phil. 1:7, 10) The Legal Department should limit its work to legal matters affecting the advancement of Kingdom interests rather than personal requests for legal advice or services.

95. Protecting the Organization’s Copyrights: The organization has a long-standing policy of copyrighting its publications. Copyright is a tool that can be used to protect dedicated materials from being misused, such as by apostates or false religious organizations as well as by those who attempt
to commercialize our artwork, photographs, or text. We do permit some uses of our copyrighted material, such as use or reproduction by Jehovah's Witnesses for the personal use of family members, use of the organization's artwork by the congregation at a Kingdom Hall, and use by authors and others for educational purposes with specific permission granted on a case-by-case basis. However, approval is not given for the general or widespread distribution of our publications, including artwork, photographs, and text, for posting on the Internet or any other electronic network or for reproduction or distribution in exchange for money. If the branch office learns that the organization's copyrighted material is being misused, the Branch Committee should write to the Coordinators' Committee, providing full details, including the action that the committee recommends be taken against the violator.

96. Tax Matters: Although many countries provide tax exemptions for religious entities, some countries do not. Tax exemptions are generally created by law and are usually not a legal right. Where required to do so by Caesar, legal entities used by branch offices should pay the taxes legally required of them, even if other religious entities do not follow the law. Conversely, legal entities used by branch offices should not pay taxes where there is an accepted legal basis for not doing so. Every Branch Committee should take full advantage of any legal exemption from taxation. Branch Committees should keep in mind that how they handle tax and legal matters (including the tax or legal status of those in the Worldwide Order) could have implications for other branch offices, the worldwide organization, and the Worldwide Order. In addition, individuals engaged full-time in religious activities may be entitled to tax exemptions. Such exemptions relieve the branch offices of some financial obligations and indirectly constitute legal recognition of our activities. The Branch Committee should keep the Coordinators’ Committee informed when exemptions currently enjoyed by the organization or members of the Worldwide Order may be in danger of being lost.

97. To respond effectively in times of emergency or war, Branch Committee members should be familiar with all decrees affecting our work and the operation of the branch office. The Branch Committee should watch carefully so that the work will be protected and the brothers will be given necessary direction. The Branch Committee should be alert as to what is going on in the country and keep the Coordinators’ Committee duly informed.

98. Keep Proclaiming the Good News: In some places, opposers make every effort to stop the Kingdom work. Nevertheless, true Christians continue preaching, even if this means doing so in a quiet manner. If literature is not available, the brothers can talk about the truth using only the Bible. Dedicated servants of Jehovah should be thoroughly acquainted with the Word of God so that they can continue to preach no matter what circumstances might arise.

99. Data Protection: The organization of Jehovah's Witnesses respects individuals' rights of privacy, based on principles set forth in the Bible. The organization recognizes the necessity for open and frank communication and the collection of personal and sensitive personal data in order to administer to the needs of Jehovah's Witnesses and accomplish its religious and charitable activity. The organization also recognizes the corresponding necessity to maintain confidentiality and ensure that information is adequately protected. (Prov. 15:22; 25:9) Confidentiality is highly valued.—Prov. 20:19.

100. Various countries have enacted data protection laws to ensure individuals’ rights of privacy. The organization
of Jehovah's Witnesses has a long-standing history of respecting privacy rights and maintaining confidentiality, even before the enactment of such data protection laws. The organization will continue to protect information disclosed to it in harmony with its long-standing practice, now recorded in this policy.

101. Scope of Application: This policy applies to the entire organization of Jehovah's Witnesses, as represented by branch offices located throughout the world.—See 6:23.

102. Data Protection Policy: The organization of Jehovah's Witnesses handles all personal data in accordance with the following principles:

a. Personal data will be processed in a fair and lawful manner.

b. Personal data will be collected, processed, and used only to the extent necessary to fulfill Jehovah's Witnesses' religious and charitable purposes.

c. Personal data will be accurate and kept up-to-date. Any error will be corrected as soon as possible after the organization becomes aware of it.

d. Personal data will be kept only for as long as is necessary for the legitimate purpose(s) of the organization.

e. Due consideration will be given to respecting the rights of data subjects.

f. Appropriate technical and organizational measures will be taken to prevent unauthorized or unlawful disclosure of personal data. All computer-held personal data is held on password-protected computers to which only authorized users hold passwords. Offices are locked after office hours and only authorized staff may gain entry.

g. Personal data will not be transferred between branches unless necessary to accomplish the religious or charitable purposes of the organization of Jehovah's Witnesses, to which all of Jehovah's Witnesses have consented by virtue of their free and willing decision to become Jehovah's Witnesses and identify themselves as such.

103. Rights of the Data Subject:

a. A data subject's right to the protection of personal and sensitive personal data and to the correction or deletion of personal and sensitive personal data is to be granted according to the practice of Jehovah's Witnesses as set forth in this policy.

b. Whoever makes a request according to this section must provide sufficient evidence of his identity.

c. If a data subject requests access to, correction of, or deletion of personal data or sensitive personal data about himself, the organization will fairly consider granting the request by balancing the interests of the individual in gaining access or correcting or deleting data against the legitimate religious interests of the organization, including whether granting the request would endanger the organization's right to religious freedom and practice.

d. The organization has an interest in permanently maintaining data regarding an individual's status as one of Jehovah's Witnesses. Deleting such information would unduly infringe on the organization's religious beliefs and practices.

104. Right of Appeal: If a person believes that his rights have been infringed, he can appeal to the Branch Committee by means of a written personal letter. The letter must be sent within two weeks of the action that forms the basis of the appeal.
NEWS AND PUBLIC INFORMATION

105. Office of Public Information (OPI): This office at world headquarters works under the direction of the Coordinators’ Committee to represent Jehovah’s Witnesses to the media, academia, and other nongovernment organizations. To this end, OPI publicizes accurate information about Jehovah’s Witnesses and to correct misconceptions and prejudices about our organization and work. OPI provides training to the Public Information Desks (PIDs) and coordinates their participation in global media strategies and information campaigns. This office is also responsible for informing the brotherhood of significant events related to our worldwide activities in the form of news items published in the Newsroom section of jw.org.

106. OPI prepares and distributes information that highlights developments or initiatives of Jehovah’s Witnesses that are of special interest to specific representatives of the media, academia, and other public-facing organizations with international influence. A few examples include significant building projects, disaster relief work, translation initiatives, the use of advanced technologies in our Bible educational work, or special witnessing campaigns on subjects such as education, health, and social issues. This office maintains a list of internationally recognized journalists, academics, and other non-Witness experts and, where appropriate, takes the initiative to provide updates on Jehovah’s Witnesses relevant to the work of these professionals.

107. OPI also provides assistance to the Coordinators’ Committee in addressing situations or topics covered by the media that may significantly impact our activities. If a branch office needs help with media-related issues, the Branch Committee may submit the details of the situation to the Coordinators’ Committee for direction. If there is a major development or a fast-breaking news item in the branch territory (particularly in the case of a disaster or other emergency), the branch should communicate confirmed and relevant details directly to OPI through the PID via the Public Communications Resource intranet site (http://www.bethel.jw.org/WHQ/OPI/PID) or by e-mail (opi@jw.org) as soon as possible for a potential news item for the Newsroom section of jw.org. The Branch Committee should also submit a more comprehensive report to the Coordinators’ Committee.—See 6:23.

108. Public Information Desk (PID): It is beneficial for the branch office to establish good relations with the public news media wherever possible. To this end, the PID should regularly provide representatives of credible media outlets, journalists, and academics in the branch territory with accurate and newsworthy information about our activities and beliefs. (Col. 4:5, 6) This may include preparing media-specific material on topics and events of local interest involving Jehovah’s Witnesses. The PID may also direct these professionals to the resources and other official information available on the Newsroom page of jw.org.

109. When the branch receives requests for information from the media, discernment should be used in deciding whether inquiries should be answered and, if so, to what extent. Each situation is unique and should be evaluated based on the subject matter as well as the reputation of the outlet and the reporter. Any requests from media or academic professionals involving the republication of material that is not from the Newsroom should be referred to the Coordinators’ Committee for consideration. Additional support information, procedural guides, and communication tools are available to the PID through the Public Communications Resource intranet site administered by OPI.

110. The PID should be alert to positive news stories related to Jehovah’s
Witnesses in the branch territory and, after obtaining approval from the Branch Committee, provide this information and related source materials to OPI. OPI will then determine if the recommended story qualifies to be developed into a news item. If so, OPI will develop the material with the assistance of the branch and forward the item to the Coordinators’ Committee for consideration. News releases and news alerts currently appearing in the Newsroom can serve as a guide to the PID for ideas on positive news stories. Once a branch-related news item is posted to the Newsroom, the PID should immediately inform appropriate media and/or academic contacts within the branch territory. Please keep OPI informed of any resulting news coverage.

111. Public Information Desk Overseer: Each Branch Committee should appoint a brother at the branch to oversee the activities of the PID. The Branch Committee should also consult Country Committees under its supervision to appoint a media contact for each country in the branch territory. (Please review our letter dated HCA:NB June 4, 2015, No. C-38278C.) Those assigned to the PID, particularly the PID overseer, should have a working knowledge of both English and the language used by local media, so as to assist those who translate materials appearing in the Newsroom and to facilitate communication with OPI. The brother overseeing such media-related functions should be humble, capable, and tactful. He should be able to articulate our beliefs clearly in a personable yet professional manner, particularly when dealing with non-Witnesses. The brother should be prepared to care for news interviews and other inquiries from media outlets, serving as the official spokesman for Jehovah’s Witnesses in the branch territory. He will also serve as the permanent branch media contact for news releases prepared by OPI. Please keep OPI informed of the current staffing of the PID and the media contacts working in countries under the oversight of the Branch Committee.

112. Appointing Additional Organizational Spokesmen: Along with the use of the PID overseer as a spokesman for Jehovah’s Witnesses in your branch territory, there may be times when other individuals are selected to assist with media inquiries on specialized topics because of their background in that field. For example, a member of the Legal Department at the branch may be used to handle media inquiries related to ongoing court cases or major legal issues involving Jehovah’s Witnesses. Such appointments should be determined on a case-by-case basis after evaluating the specific nature of the media request. However, in all cases, the PID would coordinate the arrangements made between the media professional and the assigned spokesman as well as assist the spokesman in preparing for any interviews.

113. The Teaching Committee provides an annual convention media guide to branch offices for use in connection with regional, national, special, and international conventions. A representative from the Media Services Department may be assigned as a convention spokesman by the local Convention Committee in harmony with direction from the branch office. Following the instructions in the media guide, it is appropriate for this brother to invite the local media to report on the convention each year. Ordinarily, no newspaper, radio, or television advertising is used for conventions unless it is free.

114. Correcting Misinformation: As a general rule, we avoid controversy when it comes to minor misconceptions that appear in the media. However, if some in the media spread false information of a serious nature about Jehovah’s organization, what can be done? The Branch Committee generally knows the situation in the country and will of-
ten be able to judge whether it would be wiser to contact the media and attempt to correct the misinformation or to ignore the matter. There is "a time to be silent and a time to speak." (Eccl. 3:7) Please write to the Coordinators’ Committee if further direction is needed. —See w98 12/1, pp. 17-18, pars. 15-18.

115. Handling Media-Related Emergencies: In a media-related emergency, such as criminal activity involving Jehovah’s Witnesses or a slanderous campaign that could have repercussions on our preaching work, the Branch Committee has the responsibility to handle the matter quickly. The committee should communicate with the Coordinators’ Committee for direction, particularly if it is anticipated that problems will quickly spread to other countries because of media reports. If slanderous or lying reports appear in the media, it may be appropriate for the PID, in consultation with the branch Legal Department, to review these reports and submit a recommendation to the Branch Committee. The Branch Committee may write to the Coordinators’ Committee to provide details on the matter or to request additional direction on pursuing the matter legally. —See 6:23.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT

116. Under the direction of the Coordinators’ Committee, the Branch Committee is responsible for the implementation and routine audit of records management throughout the branch. This includes the identification, maintenance, safeguard, and destruction of records in the normal course of activity. Each individual, office, and department within the branch is expected to comply with the records management policy.

117. Auditing/Records Management Department: Under the oversight of the Coordinators’ Committee, the Auditing/Records Management Department at world headquarters provides guidance and training to branches for the safe and coordinated management of all branch records.—For information on historical archives, see 3:60-65.

118. Records Management Guidelines (A-160): For detailed information regarding records management, see Records Management Guidelines on MDS. Please review and become familiar with the principles contained in these guidelines. However, do not begin implementing these guidelines until you are contacted by the Coordinators’ Committee.
## CHART 3.1

### CORRESPONDENCE FORMATS FOR COMMITTEES AND DEPARTMENTS AT WORLD HEADQUARTERS

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<th>Governing Body and Committees</th>
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(Revised January 2018)
CHAPTER 4

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

BETHEL FAMILY

1. The Branch Committee, acting representatively for the Governing Body, is to be keenly interested in the spiritual welfare of the Bethel family. An effort should be made to maintain a wholesome atmosphere among all in the family. Members of the family should feel that the Branch Committee is ready to help and, of course, committee members should be approachable at all times. Suggestions should be welcomed and used if advisable.

2. It is proper to commend the brothers and sisters and express appreciation for their work, assuring them that they are needed. This will contribute to their contentment and happiness. In turn, a happy family will be a productive family.—1 Cor. 12:25, 26.

3. Avoiding Partiality: All members of the Branch Committee must give careful and prayerful consideration to avoiding partiality in dealing with those at Bethel and those in the field. (Rom. 2:11; Jas. 3:17, 18) When there is reason to provide something extra for someone in the spirit of 1 Timothy 5:17, 18, the matter should be handled openly and in a manner that all will appreciate and understand. This will eliminate any appearance of secrecy or favoritism. Thus, whether receiving extra help or doing any work in connection with it, individuals who may be involved in such matters will understand the situation, giving no cause for gossip or hurt feelings.

4. Overcoming Problems: Individuals often encounter personal problems and may want to talk to someone to ask questions and receive Scriptural counsel and guidance. Branch Committee members need to be good listeners and show kindness and patience.

5. Some have problems because they try to impose their conscience on others and insist that everyone see things their way. (Rom. 14:1-4) Or a person may look for something to criticize and then build up a list of complaints, perhaps eliciting support from others. (Rom. 12:17, 18) Older brothers may use 1 Timothy 5:17 to suggest that as an exception, they should have special privileges. How much better it is to take to heart Luke 22:25, 26, for we all are brothers! If a sister, especially the wife of an overseer, feels that she deserves special privileges or insists on saying how things should operate, there will be problems. (1 Tim. 2:11, 12) Some kind, understanding counsel will usually correct such trends before they become deeply rooted.—Gal. 6:1.

6. The Branch Committee should calmly and Scripturally help the brothers to keep balanced and find joy in working together. Most personal problems can be handled locally at Bethel, but major questions and problems may be referred to the Personnel Committee. Fine direction is provided in Dwelling Together in Unity, in the section entitled “Resolving Problems.”

7. Application Process: An application form, Application to Become a Member of the Worldwide Order (A-8), should be submitted to the Branch Committee and kept on file. This application is first reviewed by the Branch Committee, which determines (1) if the individual qualifies for Bethel service and (2) if there is a need for him at Bethel. If there is a need, the Branch Committee will send a recommendation to the Personnel Committee for final approval,
providing such essential information as the applicant’s full name, gender, age, years baptized, marital status, whether anointed or other sheep, years in full-time service, current assignment, the Bethel assignment he is recommended for, and the reason why he is needed at Bethel.—See 6:12.

8. When recommendations of new ones for Bethel service are made, the age requirements, from 19 to 35 years, should be kept in mind. Those under 19 years of age should not be recommended. Each one invited to Bethel should be a productive worker. Special circumstances may at times require recommending a mature brother with a special skill to serve at Bethel, even though he may be a little over 35 years of age. But this should be the exception. If such a recommendation is made, the Branch Committee should explain why the brother is needed and what efforts have been made to find someone else who meets the basic requirements for Bethel service. Although the older brother may be an excellent worker and would fill a need, his wife may find it difficult to adjust to Bethel or may have health problems that make her a below-average Bethel worker. In such a case, one department may benefit while another would not.

9. Without consulting with the Personnel Committee, the Branch Committee is authorized to approve:

- A new Bethel family member (BBR), provided that the person is within the standard age requirement and will be replacing someone who has departed or will soon depart Bethel service. However, if the addition of the new Bethel family member will increase the overall size of the Bethel family, or if the person is over the usual age requirement, the Branch Committee will send a recommendation to the Personnel Committee for final approval.
- A temporary Bethel family member (BBT) for up to one year who is a replacement for a regular Bethel family member or a temporary Bethel family member and is within the standard age requirement. If it is desired to retain the services of a temporary Bethel family member after the initial one-year period, the Branch Committee should submit its recommendation to the Personnel Committee in the usual manner near the completion of the person’s temporary assignment. Temporary Bethel family members should be provided with a specific end date for their temporary service.—See 4:27.

10. There is no need to consult with the Service Committee before recommending for regular Bethel service (BBR, BBT, or BBF) those who are graduates of the Bible schools or who are temporary special pioneers, special pioneers, or substitute circuit overseers. However, if the Branch Committee wishes to transfer to Bethel a field instructor, a field missionary, and/or a circuit overseer for a period of more than three months, the committee should send a numbered letter to the Service Committee explaining the need and a proposal for caring for the need in the field if the transfer is approved by the Service and Personnel committees. Along with the numbered letter, the usual recommendation form that is used when making recommendations for Bethel service should be attached, which will be forwarded to the Personnel Committee for further handling if approved.—See 6:38.

11. All who work at Bethel should have meaningful work to do. If there is not enough work for a person to do at Bethel, it would be better for him to be assigned to the field. The Branch Committee should always make sure that Bethel is neither overstuffed nor understaffed. A formal review of all Bethel personnel should be performed on a yearly basis to determine who may be better suited for an assignment in a different
Bethel department or in the field. Newer members of the Bethel family gradually gain proficiency and, in time, can easily shoulder a greater workload. Experience has shown that when many young people are assigned to work together, some are inclined to waste time, especially without an overseer present to see that the work gets done.

12. New Members: When new members arrive at Bethel, a member or a representative of the Branch Committee should speak to them about the importance of working whole-souled and putting Kingdom interests first. Also, the arrangement for providing spiritual assistance needs to be explained to them. Encouragement should be given them to discuss personal problems with any of the experienced elders at Bethel. Every help should be offered to aid new members in adjusting to life at Bethel.

13. The new member is shown to his room and given the opportunity to read the Dwelling manual and any other material provided. Any forms that are required by the branch office will be filled out. A program of orientation is arranged so that he will become familiar with the layout of the buildings and see the work being done in various departments, such as the kitchen, dining room, laundry, and housekeeping. Working for a day and a half with a housekeeper has proved to be very helpful for new ones. It is better that a member of the Branch Committee or a brother or brothers appointed by such committee introduce the orientation program for any of these departments, although a sister may be assigned to demonstrate certain procedures.

14. For new members of the family, the first year is a year of training. Elders working closely with the new brothers should endeavor to help them appreciate their privilege of sacred service at Bethel. It is hoped that well-qualified ones will continue to serve at Bethel for as long as they may be needed.

However, if an individual does not seem well-suited for Bethel service, he should be given appropriate counsel as soon as this is observed. It would be unkind and unscriptural simply to tell a person at the end of the year that he has not proved satisfactory. Counsel and help should be given throughout the year. Of course, anyone may be dismissed or directed to leave at any time for improper conduct or for any other circumstance that may interfere with his Bethel service. In any case, matters should be explained to him in a kind manner and in a way that may help him to progress whether he stays at Bethel or not. We want to help new Bethel family members make a success of their service at Bethel with the goal of making spiritual advancement.

15. First Five Years at Bethel: A person who comes to Bethel should be in good health. He should have his personal affairs arranged so that he is able to devote himself to his Bethel service within the framework of the established arrangement for support of members of the Worldwide Order, such as personal time away, health care, and so forth. He should be physically, mentally, and circumstantially able to adjust to Bethel and to give consistent attention to his work assignment. In the case of a married couple, the above would apply to each mate individually. Each should enjoy good health and be able to shoulder his or her own responsibility as a member of the Bethel family.

16. If a member of the Bethel family misses an unusually high number of workdays, perhaps 15 to 20 days in a year’s time, the Branch Committee needs to be aware of this. Was it the result of an unusually prolonged illness, an accident, or an operation? Is it expected that he will miss a similar number of workdays each year because he has generally poor health? Was it necessary to care for an unusual family emergency that is not likely to be repeated? Such matters were considered when a new one was being trained during

(Revised August 2016)
his first year, and they should con­tinue to be given careful considera­tion during the first five years of his Beth­el service, particularly during his three year tested-as-to-fitness period. There is no need for individuals to lose any of their personal time away because they missed a certain amount of work. The real issue is whether Bethel is the place for them. The goal is to keep the organization strong and, at the same time, to give consideration to the needs of individuals. The Personnel Committee may be consulted in unusual cases.

17. Even though a person who is still relatively young may have been at Beth­el for more than five years, he should be able to do his work without missing a great number of workdays. If he consistently misses work because of poor health or other personal problems, the Branch Committee will consider what can best be done to help him. In some cases, it may be that he should leave Bethel if there is no reason to believe that there will be improvement. Of course, if a person has spent a good portion of his life at Beth­el and works diligently to the extent that his health permits, we certainly want to look after him and not in any way make him feel that he is a burden to Bethel. When members of the Bethel family have spent many years in special full-time service, perhaps 25 or more, and some disabilities arise, the branch will make some provision for them and arrange for them to serve according to their physical ability.

18. Seniority: Years of seniority are determined by adding up the time a person has been in full-time and special full-time service assignments. Seniority includes time spent in all avenues of full-time service. It does not include time spent as a congregation publisher or an auxiliary pioneer. A person’s seniority is used to determine such things as the number of additional days of personal time away that are credited to him each year on September 1 and the amount credited to his Personal Expense Account. Seniority is also helpful to the branch office in handling such matters as the assignment of Bethel rooms in a fair and impartial way. (See 4:20.) At times, two or more Bethel family members may have similar seniority. To help resolve matters involving seniority-based assignments or other privileges, seniority is determined in the following order: (1) full-time service, (2) special full-time service, (3) date of baptism, (4) age.

19. If a person has had a break or breaks in his full-time service, his seniority is the combined total of days he has spent in full-time service assignments. Thus, if an individual has to leave full-time service to care for aging parents or some other responsibility and is thereafter able to resume full-time service, his seniority is based on the entire period or periods he was previously in full-time service. Those leaving special full-time service assignments (special pioneer, member of the Bethel family, circuit overseer, missionary, construction servant, or any other special full-time service assignment) to enter the regular pioneer service will not experience an interruption in their full-time service record if they are appointed as regular pioneers within three months of leaving their previous assignment. Brothers and sisters in full-time service who are sentenced to prison because of their Christian neutrality will similarly have their full-time service record recorded as uninterrupted if they resume serving in the full-time ministry within three months of their release from prison.—See 6:94.

20. Rooming: Only regular Bethel family members (BBR), temporary Bethel family members (BBT), and expatriate Bethel family members (BBF) are provided permanent housing accommodations in buildings owned or rented by the branch. Rooms are assigned according to the individual seniority, based on time spent in full-time service, of the senior roommate. (See 4:18-19.) When the one who obtained the room...
leaves Bethel, it is put up for bid. As a general policy, two people are assigned to each room. The Branch Committee should take into consideration the number of rooms available and the number of people to be housed, the size of the rooms, the age, health, and years of service of the occupants, and other factors. In some isolated instances involving elderly ones or other extenuating circumstances, adherence to the policy of two people to a room may result in distress and hardship for one or both roommates. If a problem arises that the Branch Committee is not able to resolve, it may be necessary to write to the Personnel Committee to explain the problem and make recommendations. Single Branch Committee members may be accommodated in a modest room without a roommate, provided there are sufficient rooms available. If a Bethel family member loses his or her marriage mate in death and the surviving mate has 40 or more years of full-time service and is living in a large double room, he or she should move to a smaller double room after a reasonable amount of time has elapsed. For widows or widowers advanced in age, the Branch Committee may make an exception for them to remain in their current room. In either case, a roommate will not be assigned. If the surviving mate has less than 40 years seniority, he or she may remain in his or her current room alone for one year and then be given the option of being assigned to a one-person room of up to 350 square feet (33 sq m) that is not a double room or choosing a roommate and remaining in the current room.

21. Transfers Within Bethel: When any worker is transferred from one assignment to another, he should be told why. Thus, he will not wonder if the change is because of a failure on his part or if there is something that he should try to improve.

22. Transfers to Other Countries: A branch may assign Bethel members to offices under its supervision in other countries without consulting the Personnel Committee. Additionally, a branch may move personnel within its branch territory, such as to or from a remote translation office, without seeking approval from the Personnel Committee. This is the case whether the remote office is within or outside of the country where the branch is located. All other requests to transfer branch personnel, such as transfers between two branch offices, should continue to be forwarded to the Personnel Committee for consideration and approval.

23. The cost of obtaining or renewing a passport is ordinarily the responsibility of the individual. However, if a special full-time servant is transferred to another country at the direction of the organization and he needs a passport to care for his assignment abroad (whether in the field or at Bethel), the branch office may pay for the passport (either a new one or a renewal) if the special full-time servant requests such financial assistance. Any unusual cases should be submitted for consideration to the appropriate Governing Body committee along with the pertinent details and your recommendation.

24. Training: Bethel family members who travel to another country at their own expense during their personal time away may at times request to receive some practical training during their visit to the foreign Bethel. In other instances, the branch may recommend that a member of its Bethel family temporarily be sent to another Bethel to receive some necessary training. In either case, a written recommendation should be submitted to the Personnel Committee using the Bethel Department Training Request form (A-97). Training will be provided only to fill a definite need that exists at Bethel. Approval will not be given to training requests submitted for individuals who simply wish to extend their stay in a foreign country.

26. Departures: If a member of the family desires to leave Bethel service, he should submit a written notice to the Branch Committee at least 30 working days in advance, if at all possible. In this way, arrangements can be made for someone to replace him in the work assignment. A person leaving special full-time service cannot use more than 24 working days of accumulated personal time away to extend his departure from special full-time service, even if he may have accumulated more unused days. (See 9:75.) If an individual has been directed to leave Bethel for nonjudicial reasons but disagrees with the direction, he may appeal to the Branch Committee. If upon hearing the appeal, the Branch Committee decides that he should leave Bethel but the person strongly disagrees with the decision, the Branch Committee should advise him that he may ask the Personnel Committee in writing to review the matter if he wishes to do so. If this is the case, his letter of appeal should be sent along with the comments of the Branch Committee.

27. When a person leaves Bethel service, it would be good to review carefully the appropriate staffing guidelines to determine if a replacement is needed. If a replacement is needed, the Branch Committee is authorized to invite someone without consulting with the Personnel Committee.—See 4:9.

28. Elders at Bethel: All elders should be available to members of the family who have problems. Elders should be observant of any difficulties or discouragement on the part of a Bethel family member and be ready to offer personal counsel and help. The Branch Committee should explain clearly to all elders what their responsibilities are and what is expected of them. Serious problems should be reported to the Branch Committee. Elders should see the value of giving encouragement to fellow workers and commendation for things well done. They should help all in the family to maintain a good attitude toward their service privileges, reassuring each one that his services are needed and appreciated.—Matt. 11:28-30.

29. In some larger branches, it may be advantageous to have small elder groups made up of elders at Bethel to share in the responsibility of assisting the Branch Committee in taking care of the Bethel family. (Titus 2:6, 7) The elder groups may help in making recommendations or in dealing with problems that individuals have. They do not decide on the everyday operation of the branch or on changes that are to be made. They assist principally in giving commendation and in caring for personal problems. Of course, the Branch Committee is free to seek information or suggestions from such elder groups.

30. Once a year, branches should arrange to have an elders' meeting with all appointed elders serving with the following enrollments: regular, expatriate, and temporary Bethel family members, full-time and part-time commuters, remote servants, construction servants, expatriate construction servants, full-time and part-time construction commuters, and Assembly Hall and Bible school facility servants. Those who are serving in the field should watch the meeting the same way they receive other spiritual programs. This would preferably be streamed live. If this is not practical, a recording can be made available for 30 days on JW Stream. Responsible elders may be asked for their suggestions on subjects to be discussed. Thereafter, the Branch Committee can assign committee members or selected elders to develop outlines and present these in brief talks to the assembled elders. This regular communication with the elders is helpful in keeping them well-informed. It provides an opportunity to encourage them and assists them to fulfill their responsibilities as elders. The Personnel Committee will prepare and forward to all branches one outline that may be used by the Branch Committee for the elders’ meeting.
JUDICIAL COMMITTEES

31. Anyone coming to know of serious misconduct on the part of a member of the Bethel family should advise the offender of his obligation to bring this to the attention of a member of the Branch Committee or another elder. The one having knowledge of the offense should also make a report to the Branch Committee so that the organization will be kept clean. (Lev. 5:1) This should be done whether the offender reports the matter or not. The judicial procedures outlined in this section apply equally to full-time and part-time commuters.—See 5:10.

32. Investigation Procedure: If the elders of the congregation that a Bethel family member attends become aware of an accusation against the Bethelite, they should immediately contact the branch office for direction. Except for regular pioneers, this direction applies equally to all full-time service enrollments listed in Chart 9.2, Full-Time Servants Enrollments. If the accusation involves the Bethelite’s conduct with someone in his congregation or if the offense was committed in his congregation environment, the Branch Committee may determine that it will be most practical to have the local elders investigate and handle the case to the extent necessary. Otherwise, the matter will be handled at Bethel. In either case, two elders will investigate the allega- 
tion. If the accused is under consideration for a theocratic assignment, it should be held in abeyance pending resolution of the case. If upon investi- gation the elders determine that the charges have no substance or that no further action is needed, they should inform the Branch Committee in writing of their findings. If the elders determine that a disfellowshipping offense has been committed, the Branch Committee will appoint a judicial committee.

33. Judicial Committees Involving Bethelites in the Congregation: If it has been established that a Bethel family member has committed a disfellowship- ing offense involving his congregation, the congregation body of elders should inquire of the branch office immediately as to how to proceed. The branch office will determine whether the local body of elders should convene a judicial committee or whether the case should be handled by a judicial committee at Bethel. If the local elders are directed to appoint the judicial committee, the case will be handled in an expeditious manner, just as a judicial case would be handled for any publisher in the local congregation. The judicial committee should immediately advise the branch office of the final decision.

34. Judicial Committees at Bethel: These are appointed to handle offenses that are the basis for disfellowshipping, just as they would be handled in the congregation. The judicial committee and its chairman are appointed by the Branch Committee. Qualified elders who are in a good position to render a balanced and just decision should be appointed. Though the judicial committee is usually made up of three elders, it could include four or five because of the gravity of the offense and other factors. Branch Committee members should not serve on judicial committees if other qualified brothers are available to do so. Thus, if needed, some Branch Committee members would be available to serve on an appeal committee. Although the judicial committee may want to consult with members of the Branch Committee before reaching a conclusion, the judicial committee alone should make the decision. The report to the Branch Committee will be made out using the form Judicial Committee Summary at Bethel (A-7).

35. Appeal Committees: If the judicial committee (either at Bethel or in the congregation) decides that the Bethel family member should be disfellow- shipped, he may make an appeal in
writing to the Branch Committee. The Branch Committee will select an appeal committee of qualified elders at Bethel, one of whom will be appointed to serve as chairman. The appeal should be heard in an expeditious manner even if the basis for the appeal does not appear to be sound. In the case of disfellowshipping, the wrongdoer should be given the usual seven days to make this appeal, even though he would normally leave Bethel on the day the original judicial committee advises him of the decision to disfellowship. No announcement of the disfellowshipping should be made until seven days have elapsed since the appeal was handled.—ks10 8:1-20.

36. When the disfellowshipping is upheld, there is no further arrangement for appeal. However, if an individual persists in believing a serious error in judgment has occurred, the appeal committee should inform him that he may submit his allegations in writing to the appeal committee within seven days for transmittal to the Branch Committee. The appeal committee should not mention this provision unless the individual indicates that he believes a serious error in judgment has occurred. If he indicates a desire to submit a letter of appeal to the Branch Committee, the announcement of disfellowshipping should be delayed. The appeal committee should submit the wrongdoer's letter, the report from the judicial committee, and a report from the appeal committee to the Branch Committee. No announcement should be made until a reply is received from the Branch Committee.—ks10 8:14-15.

37. If someone is judicially reproved and therefore must leave Bethel, a letter should be sent to the body of elders of the congregation that he will attend so that the elders may be able to assist him to regain his spirituality. A copy of the judicial committee's report (either from Bethel or from the congregation) should be sent to the Service Department, which will write the letter to the body of elders. In the case of disfellowshipping, the form Notification of Disfellowshipping or Disassociation (S-77) should also be included in the report to the Service Department. If the person is reinstated, the S-77 form should be signed and returned to the Service Department. An announcement should be made to the Bethel family in the case of a disfellowshipping. (ks10 7:31) In the case of someone who is judicially reproved, the Branch Committee should use good judgment in determining whether an announcement should be made or not.—ks10 7:21.

38. Judicial Matters Involving Those With a Design/Construction Enrollment: Similar to the arrangements for handling a judicial matter involving a member of the Bethel family, the Branch Committee should be informed whenever a construction servant, Assembly Hall servant, or Bible school facility servant serving under its supervision becomes involved in serious misconduct. The Branch Committee will be responsible for determining if local elders, elders in the servant's home congregation, or other elders selected by the Branch Committee or circuit overseer should be assigned to handle the matter. The Service Department will serve as the correspondence conduit between the branch office and the elders assigned to handle the matter.

EXPATRIATE BETHEL FAMILY MEMBERS

39. A person may decide on his own to move from his homeland to another country. Although he was not assigned by the organization to serve in a foreign country, he may eventually be approved to serve as a regular member of the Bethel family (BBR) in that country and may continue serving indefinitely as such.

40. The designation “expatriate Bethel family members” (BBF) includes:
• Individuals who have moved on their own to the country and who after being invited to Bethel are recommended to the Personnel Committee as expatriate Bethel family members.

• Bethelites in foreign service

Foreigners serving at Bethel who are not recommended for expatriate Bethel family member status will continue to serve as regular members of the Bethel family (BBR).

41. If a foreign brother is especially valued for his experience and maturity and has served at Bethel for a period of time, the Branch Committee may recommend to the Personnel Committee that he serve as an expatriate Bethel family member.

42. Some Bethel family members are sent by the Personnel Committee to a Bethel in another country to fill a particular need or to provide training for a period of no less than three years. In correspondence, these expatriate Bethel family members will continue to be referred to as “Bethelites in foreign service.”

43. An expatriate Bethel family member would not lose his status if he is approved for continued Bethel service following his marriage to either a local sister or a sister from another country. He would remain an expatriate Bethel family member and his wife would be appointed as an expatriate Bethel family member regardless of her country of birth.

44. The personal time away arrangement for expatriate Bethel family members is the same as that outlined in the Dwelling manual, paragraphs 30-37.

BETHELITES IN FOREIGN SERVICE

45. Bethelites in foreign service are expatriate Bethel family members sent by the Personnel Committee to fill a need for skilled workers or to train local brothers to become skilled and to equip them to take on more responsibility. The goal is for a branch to become self-sufficient as far as workers are concerned.

46. Bethelites in foreign service are expected to remain in their assignment for at least three years. If there is still a need for their help and they are willing to remain in the assignment after three years, they may continue in foreign service. The Worldwide Order will cover the cost of transportation to the foreign assignment as well as the cost of shipping necessary personal belongings. See Branch Instructions for Shipping Personal Belongings and Personnel Guidelines (p-13).

47. If a Bethelite in foreign service wishes to return to his home branch after completing at least three years in foreign service, he should write to the Personnel Committee, expressing his desire. The Branch Committee should receive a copy of the letter and provide the Personnel Committee with its recommendation. He may request to return to Bethel service in his home branch if he previously served at Bethel. If, as an exception, the Personnel Committee sent a well-qualified brother from the field to serve as a Bethelite in foreign service and the brother wishes to return to his home branch, he may ask to return to the field. The Branch Committee should forward all such written requests along with its observations to the Personnel Committee. The Worldwide Order will pay for the return trip. In all cases, the Personnel Committee should be advised when a Bethelite in foreign service discontinues his foreign service assignment. —See Guidelines for Bethelites in Foreign Service (A-69).

TEMPORARY VOLUNTEERS

48. At times, a need may arise for additional help at Bethel for a short period of time. When such needs exist, Branch Committees have the authority...
to invite brothers and sisters who have an approved Application for Volunteer Program (A-19) on file to volunteer at Bethel for periods of six months or less. However, when temporary volunteers are needed for more than six months, the Branch Committee should obtain approval from the Personnel Committee. If there is a need for the volunteer to serve at Bethel on a full-time basis, the recommendation for him to serve as a regular member of the Bethel family should be handled in the usual way. When a temporary assignment exceeds a full calendar month, the volunteer may automatically receive a monthly reimbursement that is equivalent to the monthly allowance that is given to Bethel family members in that country (unless the temporary volunteer specifically mentions that no reimbursement will be needed).

COMMUTERS

49. Part-time commuters (BBV) and a limited number of full-time commuters (BBL) may be invited to supplement the need for additional workers. They are not members of the Bethel family and are not housed at a Bethel-owned property. Full-time commuters are members of the Worldwide Order of Special Full-Time Servants of Jehovah's Witnesses and therefore receive the usual provisions given to those in special full-time service. They may attend the Morning Worship program and the Bethel family Watchtower Study, as well as be assigned to participate in these spiritual programs as commenters. Whenever a recommendation is made to the Personnel Committee for someone to serve as a full-time commuter, the branch should include a recommendation for an appropriate allowance to cover housing, transportation, and personal expenses. Part-time commuters are not members of the Worldwide Order. Regular pioneers who are part-time commuters may count up to 70 hours a month and have a reduced requirement of 780 hours per year. The 780 hours would be the total of all hours worked at Bethel and those spent in the field ministry. Branch Committees are authorized to approve a new part-time commuter without consulting with the Personnel Committee if the applicant will be replacing a part-time commuter who has left or will soon leave this form of service. Part-time commuter quotas have been established for each branch. Recommendations to increase such quotas should be sent to the Personnel Committee for approval. Part-time commuters may attend the Morning Worship program on the days that they work at Bethel. They may also attend the Bethel family Watchtower Study even if they do not work on that day.—See 7:109-110.

REMOTE VOLUNTEERS AND SERVANTS

50. Qualified brothers and sisters who desire to serve as remote volunteers should submit, through his or her congregation, an Application for Volunteer Program (A-19). Branch Committees are authorized to approve a new remote volunteer without consulting with the Personnel Committee if the applicant will be replacing a remote volunteer who has left or will soon leave this form of service. Remote volunteer quotas have been established for each branch. Recommendations to increase such quotas should be sent to the Personnel Committee for approval. Remote volunteers would initially be invited to serve for one year. Remote volunteers who are granted access to the Bethel computer network should be asked to sign the Watchtower Information Resources Confidentiality Affirmation. (See 3:8.) Approved remote volunteers who are serving as regular pioneers may receive hour credits each month for the time they spend as remote volunteers, similar to the arrangement for regular pioneers who serve as part-time commuters. They may be granted up to 70 hours a month and have a reduced requirement of 780 hours per year.
51. Similar to remote volunteers (BRV), remote servants (BRS) are those selected from among individuals who possess needed skills of a specialized nature but whose personal circumstances do not allow them to serve physically at Bethel. They provide a valuable full-time contribution to the work of a Bethel department from their private homes. However, unlike remote volunteers, remote servants are members of the Worldwide Order. Therefore, they receive benefits similar to what are provided to other members of the Worldwide Order, such as personal time away and health care. These special full-time servants may receive access to the Bethel spiritual programs. Recommendations for remote servants should be limited to very skilled individuals whom a Branch Committee considers to be especially valuable to the work. Applicants should be between 19 and 55 years of age, in good health, and considered spiritually mature. Anyone who is recommended as such should have already been tested first as a remote volunteer or as a temporary volunteer. A remote servant should submit, through his or her congregation, an Application to Become a Member of the Worldwide Order (A-8). Using the Remote Servant (BRS) recommendation form (A-95), a recommendation including a recommended allowance should be sent to the Personnel Committee for its consideration. Remote servants should be reviewed annually by the Branch Committee to determine whether they continue to qualify and whether their services continue to be needed. It is not necessary to submit a new recommendation to the Personnel Committee every year unless there are specific concerns that merit consideration. Remote servants may supplement their monthly allowance by engaging in some limited secular work as long as it does not interfere with their meeting the weekly 40-hour requirement for their Bethel work and fulfilling their congregation responsibilities. They are not required to use personal time away in order to perform some limited secular work.

BETHEL CONSULTANTS

52. Brothers or sisters who assist the branch from their private residences when a particular need or a project arises are enrolled as Bethel consultants (BOC). Typically, these volunteers provide limited assistance with purchasing, real estate, translation work, special conventions, tax or legal matters. Generally, they do not receive access to the Bethel network or any of its data, such as correspondence, file directories, or HuB data. These outside volunteers should complete an Application for Volunteer Program (A-19) before being invited to assist the organization. Approved Bethel consultants who serve as regular pioneers may receive hour credits monthly for the time they spend on branch work, similar to the arrangement for pioneers approved to work with Kingdom Hall and Assembly Hall construction projects.

USE OF SPECIAL PIONEERS FOR BETHEL WORK

53. It is preferred that special pioneers focus their time and energy on their assignment in the field rather than on Bethel work. With this in mind, before submitting a recommendation to the Personnel Committee to use a special pioneer for Bethel work, the Branch Committee should determine if a Bethel family member could fill the need. Alternatively, it may be possible to recommend that a regular pioneer or an exemplary publisher be enrolled to serve as a part-time commuter (BBV) or remote volunteer (BRV). (See 4:49-50.) Because of the temporary nature of a temporary special pioneer assignment (FTS), there is no provision for such ones to be used for Bethel work. If such an individual is needed for Bethel work, he should discontinue his temporary special pioneer service so that he may accept the part-time or full-time Bethel assignment. In this way, another qualified pioneer could be used in the field as a temporary special pioneer.

(Revised January 2018)
54. Requests to use skilled special pioneers to handle Bethel work part-time will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Only when there is an exceptional need that cannot be filled by a Bethel family member, a part-time commuter, or a remote volunteer will approval be given to use a special pioneer to do Bethel work on a part-time basis. If the Personnel Committee approves such a request, the special pioneer should spend no more than half of his monthly hour quota doing Bethel work. Additionally, the Branch Committee should remember that priority should be given to training a replacement to do the Bethel work as soon as possible. In this way, the special pioneer can eventually refocus his full time and energy on his assignment in the field.

55. On the other hand, if a highly skilled special pioneer is needed to do Bethel work on a full-time basis, consideration should be given to recommending to the Personnel Committee that he serve as a remote servant (BRS) or, if he lives near the main Bethel facility or a remote Bethel facility, as a full-time commuter (BBL). Moreover, there is no objection if an individual chooses to discontinue serving as a special pioneer in order to make himself available for Bethel work. If a need for his services exists, the Branch Committee should make an appropriate recommendation to the Personnel Committee in the usual manner.

56. If approval is given to use a skilled special pioneer to assist part-time with Bethel work, he should retain his primary enrollment. However, he should likewise be enrolled concurrently in HuB either as a part-time commuter or as a remote volunteer, which will serve as his secondary enrollment.

57. Occasionally, the Service and Personnel committees also receive recommendations that certain infirm special pioneers or special pioneers who have a reduced hour requirement serve simultaneously as part-time commuters or as remote volunteers. In cases where the field activity of a special pioneer is severely limited because of age or health, perhaps he is still able to do some Bethel work, such as translation. In situations like these, he should spend no more than half of his monthly hour quota doing Bethel work. This may allow the individual to enjoy productive work and a sense of accomplishment.

BETHEL HOME ORGANIZATION

58. The Bethel Home encompasses most matters pertaining to the daily needs of the Bethel family. This includes reasonable provisions for such things as cleaning, laundry, meals, medical care, security, safety, and the general welfare of the family. (Luke 10:7; 1 Tim. 6:8) While the entire Branch Committee should be familiar with the work done in the Bethel Home, one committee member or someone assigned by the Branch Committee should oversee this work.—dw par. 29.

59. Although many helpful services may be provided to the Bethel family, care should be exercised to make wise use of dedicated resources. All Bethel family members should be conservation-minded regarding utilities and equipment. (dw pars. 75-78) The Branch Committee should provide reminders to the family as needed.

60. All assignments in the Bethel Home are important and necessary. Performing domestic tasks, even those considered menial by some, is sacred service to Jehovah. (dw par. 23) Depending on the workload, an individual may be able to care for work in more than one department. Good planning and proper organization are essential for smooth and efficient operation. (1 Cor. 14:40) Additionally, it may be necessary to assign members of the family to care for various duties during nonworking hours.—dw par. 27.

61. Housekeeping and Cleaning: "A good model for all Christian homes is..."
Bethel. Not only does the cleanliness of Bethel contribute to the good reputation of Jehovah and his name people but it is also essential to maintaining good health. (Deut. 23:13, 14) Therefore, Bethel life requires that a high standard of physical cleanliness be maintained. To keep up this high standard, every area at Bethel should be cleaned according to a set schedule or as needed.

62. Bethel family members have the primary responsibility to care for their own room. Occupants should not expect the housekeeper to put things away for them. They should try to lighten the housekeeper's workload as much as possible.—dw pars. 57-60.

63. A Branch Committee member or another responsible brother assigned by the Branch Committee should oversee the housekeeping and cleaning operations, ensuring that good-quality training is provided and that the approved standards are being consistently maintained. When giving housekeeping assignments, responsible brothers should take into consideration such things as room sizes and types and the age of the housekeepers, as well as other circumstances.

64. Cleaning principles, examples of housekeeping routines and cleaning schedules, and departmental guidelines can be found in the Housekeeping Information manual. Actual cleaning procedures, available equipment, and chemicals will vary according to local circumstances. Consistent routines ensure that no areas are overlooked and that a high standard of cleanliness is always maintained. (Lev. 11:44, 45) Housekeepers should be flexible and take the initiative in caring for their individual assignments.

65. It may be advantageous to assign brothers to do some of the more physically demanding cleaning tasks.—1 Pet. 3:7.

66. In the spring of the year, Bethel family members spend a Saturday morning cleaning their entire room and any personal storage areas assigned to them. This is an assigned work period for everyone in the Bethel family. The objective of spring cleaning is to care for areas that are not scheduled to be cleaned by the housekeeper, as well as to give the family an opportunity to dispose of all unwanted personal items. Bethel family members may be given a list of tasks that they should accomplish. If the Branch Committee feels that it is necessary, in addition to Saturday the preceding Friday afternoon may also be used to do spring cleaning. Brothers 60 years of age and older and sisters 40 years of age and older may use all day Friday. Those who are assigned to care for duties during spring cleaning or those who are away for any reason may do their spring cleaning at a later time.

67. Larger branches may decide to use a specific workday each year for annual office cleaning. In such cases, Bethel family members may be allowed to spend up to one workday each year to clean their offices and work areas thoroughly. As in the case of spring cleaning, this cleaning period is not considered time away from work. Rather, it is part of the Bethel work assignment.

68. Laundry: The Bethel family is expected to wear neat, clean clothes that befit Christian ministers. The laundry assists the family in maintaining a good appearance so as to serve as a model to all those visiting Bethel and to enhance the organization's reputation in the local community. In addition, the laundry cares for all Bethel linens, which contributes to the good health of the family.—dw par. 63.

69. The Branch Committee will determine the size of the laundry staff, taking into account the size of the Bethel family, the number of sisters working in the department, the age of the workers, the type of laundry equipment that
is being used, the type of clothing and linens used locally, and so forth. Good training is essential to ensure that the personal garments of the Bethel family and Bethel linens are cleaned properly.

70. All members of the family should be instructed on how to organize personal items before sending them to be laundered. On designated days of the week, members of the family bring or send their items to the laundry. Clean laundry should be returned to occupant rooms or made available for pickup as soon as possible.

71. All Bethel linens should be regularly inspected and repaired. At times, it is more cost-effective to replace an item than to repair it.

72. Arrangements should be made for basic garment repairs, such as for rips and tears, on personal items. Depending on the condition of the item and the needed repairs, the overseer will determine whether the repair will be made and will communicate with the owner of the garment as needed. Where possible, a limited service for altering clothing for the family may be provided.

73. **Meals:** Mealtimes should be pleasant and enjoyable occasions for all. Meals that are nutritious and tasty contribute to the overall happiness and well-being of the Bethel family.—Eccl. 2:24.

74. The Branch Committee should make sure that wholesome food is served. Fresh food in season is usually less expensive and more nutritious. Extravagance and the purchase of specialty items should be avoided. (Luke 10: 41, 42) Additionally, by planning ahead and buying certain items in bulk, the branch may realize a cost savings.

75. Sufficient amounts of food should be served at each meal. No Bethel family member should leave the table hungry because of a lack of food. (Mark 8: 3, 8) Food that is left on the table after a meal may be taken away by members of the family for their personal use.—dw par. 73.

76. Meals should always be served on time. The time for meals may be determined locally.

77. The cook or a designated brother working with the kitchen should create the menus and submit them for approval to the Branch Committee member assigned to oversee the kitchen. If the committee member feels that a change is needed, he should first consult with the cook or the designated brother working with the kitchen.

78. Everyone assigned to handle food must be given thorough training in food safety, and these principles should be strictly followed. Specific guidelines can be found in the *Food Safety Training manual*.

79. The kitchen is not available for private use unless approved by the Branch Committee.

80. The size of the kitchen and dining-room staff will vary according to the size of the Bethel family and the types of meals served. Cooks and dining-room workers will generally start work early to prepare the breakfast meal. Their work schedule for the rest of the day is adjusted accordingly.

81. Weekend meals and mealtimes vary according to the local circumstances and the size of the branch and will be determined by the Branch Committee. Serious consideration should be given to the needs of both the older and the younger members of the family. If no one from food service is working on a weekend, food may be provided in advance or individuals may be assigned to prepare meals.

82. During the evening and weekend meals, members of the family may be assigned to kitchen or dining-room duties. If local circumstances allow, brothers and sisters 50 years of age and
older may be excluded from receiving these assignments.

83. A reasonable supply of nonperishable staple foods should be maintained for emergencies. Such supplies should be used and replenished on a regular basis to ensure that these foods do not deteriorate.

84. Health: When individuals are invited to Bethel, it is with the understanding that they are in good health. Sufficient rest, sleep, proper hygiene, moderation in entertainment, moderation in eating and drinking habits, and balanced exercise are essential to maintaining good health.—dw pars. 63-67.

85. If in-house health-care services are established, arrangements should be made for a capable, sympathetic, experienced brother to oversee these services. It may be that a doctor, a nurse, or another qualified medical professional is available to assist with such care.—See 9:40-49.

86. At the beginning of each workday and, if practical, at the beginning of each afternoon work period, housekeepers will check each room. Any who are in sick should be reported to the health-care overseer or department. Arrangements should be made to care for the needs of those who are ill. This would include making sure that sufficient healthful food is available for their use.—See 5:38 for information regarding health care provided outside of the branch.

87. Security: Constant attention should be given to the protection of the Bethel family. Additionally, the branch property, which includes money, vehicles, and equipment, needs to be kept secure.—dw par. 98.

88. Each Bethel family member should feel a personal responsibility for security as well as for any keys and identification entrusted to him.—dw pars. 96-102.

89. A review of the effectiveness of branch security measures should be made periodically. To reduce the risk of criminal activity, practical measures should be implemented. Some examples are noted as follows:

- Accessible doors and windows should be appropriately secured.
- All entrance and exit door locks should receive regular inspection and maintenance.
- Security lighting should be installed at appropriate locations.
- Proper choice and placement of shrubbery can enhance security.
- Valuables should not be displayed in public view.

90. Each night, periodic security checks of the branch property should be performed. In addition to ensuring that the property is secure, inspections should be made of each building, to check for gas leaks, windows left open, water running, drains clogged, unnecessary lights left on, and so forth.

91. It is usually advisable to install anti-theft devices on branch vehicles. Such devices may include bars attached to the steering wheel, chain locks for the engine hood, and cut-off switches that interrupt the starter circuit.

92. Safety and Accident Prevention: Imitating Jehovah, the Branch Committee places a high value on human life. (Ps. 36:9) The most valuable assets to Bethel are people. Therefore, the safety of the Bethel family is never compromised for the sake of speed, cost, or convenience.—dw par. 69.

93. The safety of the Bethel family continues to be a concern of the Personnel Committee. The Branch Committee should review carefully what is being done in a practical way to educate the brothers and sisters at the branch about the importance of accident prevention. Accident-prevention instructions can include matters involving the safe operation of motor vehicles, proper work
habits, the use of machinery and tools, and so forth. All these areas should be examined to see if common-sense precautions are being taken to prevent accidents. Members of the family can be trained to evaluate the potential hazards of a work site or assignment prior to starting work.

94. Each department overseer should consider safety procedures and fire prevention to be an important part of his responsibility. Brief, regular safety talks should be integrated into the work schedule of appropriate departments. These discussions should be positive; they emphasize the Branch Committee's concern for the welfare of the family and the improved efficiency that results from following safety procedures consistently.

95. Overseers of departments that care for work that is potentially dangerous should ensure that all safety hazards have been explained to those working on such assignments and that safety procedures are being carefully followed. Bethel family members selected to serve in such assignments should be mature and safety-conscious.

96. All legal requirements regarding chemicals should be met. Training should be given to ensure the proper handling and storage of all chemicals. For example, mixing such chemicals as bleach and ammonia can be toxic.

97. A definite procedure should be established in advance that would be implemented in the event of an accident or emergency. Such an action plan would require someone to be available to perform the following essential functions:

- Administer first aid.
- Notify overseers.
- Provide emergency transportation to a nearby hospital or doctor.
- Call the fire or police department.

98. Each branch should have a program for training the drivers of branch vehicles. Only those who are qualified and well-trained should be used to drive. The following points should be applied:

- Vehicles must be properly maintained.
- Trucks should not be overloaded.
- Seat belts should be used by drivers and passengers.
- Drivers who are overly tired or otherwise impaired should not operate vehicles.
- All drivers should drive at a reasonable speed, according to local regulations and road conditions.

99. When losses, damage, or accidents occur involving branch property or individuals, responsible brothers will need to investigate the incident. Those having oversight should take steps to make needed changes and give appropriate counsel so as to prevent similar accidents in the future. (Ex. 21: 29) Additionally, an incident wherein there was no loss, damage, or accident (a near miss) should also be investigated. A full report of the accident or near miss should be made to the Branch Committee.—See 5:10; dw par. 68.

100. Accidents involving serious injury or major property damage should be reported to the Publishing Committee immediately. If a major injury to a Bethel family member results, the Personnel Committee should also be notified of the incident.

101. Visitors to the Branch: The branch offices of Jehovah’s Witnesses are recognized by our brothers and sisters as centers of theocratic activity. Motivated by strong faith, Jehovah’s people make special arrangements to visit Bethel to be encouraged and to see what is being accomplished. We do not want to make these visitors feel that they are imposing on us and on the work being done at Bethel. Good arrangements should be in place to welcome visitors in a warm way and to have well-prepared tour guides, who will en-
thusiastically show them the Bethel facilities.—Rom. 12:13.

102. During regular working hours, someone should be assigned as a receptionist to greet visitors in a warm manner. The receptionist will also respond to phone calls and handle incoming inquiries, such as Kingdom Hall locations or items of local interest. However, it is the responsibility of the visitors to arrange for their own transportation and accommodations.

103. Depending on local circumstances, Bethel family members may host visitors for a meal. Additionally, they may make arrangements to have their parents, relatives, or friends in the truth stay as overnight guests for one or two nights in a guest room. Their stay may be extended for a night or two beyond that if circumstances allow. Whether coming for a meal or staying overnight, guests should be advised ahead of time to dress modestly, in line with Bethel standards.—dw pars. 103-112.

104. Special attention should be given to caring for the needs of visiting missionaries, expatriate Bethel family members, and other special full-time servants. They should feel comfortable and welcome. At times, this includes providing transportation, food items, and so forth.

ASSEMBLY HALL AND BIBLE SCHOOL FACILITY SERVANTS

105. Where the size of an Assembly Hall or a Bible school facility warrants it, one or more Assembly Hall or Bible school facility servants may be assigned to oversee the normal operations, building maintenance, grounds maintenance, and cleaning of the facility. These are special full-time servants who work under the direction of the Local Design/Construction Department (LDC). These are qualified individuals who have already proved their skills and organizational abilities in some form of full-time service as Bethelites, temporary volunteers, construction servants, or special pioneers. They are members of the Worldwide Order who generally live on site and work a schedule similar to that of the Bethel workweek. The general age limit for those who are enrolled as Assembly Hall or Bible school facility servants is 70 years. Where warranted, a branch may request approval from the Personnel Committee for an exception.

106. The LDC or others designated by the Branch Committee may give well-qualified single brothers or married couples an Application to Become a Member of the Worldwide Order (A-8). The Branch Committee will review the application and determine if the applicant qualifies to be recommended either as an Assembly Hall servant (BAS) or as a Bible school facility servant (BSS). When there is a need for additional servants, the Branch Committee will submit the appropriate recommendation form (A-72 or A-91) to the Worldwide Design/Construction Department which, in turn, will make a recommendation to the Personnel Committee for approval. Since the majority of the work should be done by local volunteers and groups from nearby congregations, the number of Assembly Hall and Bible school facility servants can be kept to a minimum.

107. If Assembly Hall or Bible school facility servants have health problems, appropriate care is provided. (See 9: 40-49.) Additionally, although these servants work under the direction of the Local Design/Construction Department, it is the responsibility of the Branch Committee, under the direction of the Personnel Committee, to oversee the spiritual welfare of these individuals serving in their branch territory.

CONSTRUCTION SERVANTS

108. At times, brothers and sisters are assigned to assist with building and maintaining facilities used in
CONSTRUCTION VOLUNTEERS

109. In addition to construction servants (BCS), qualified brothers and sisters may be assigned by the Branch Committee as construction volunteers (BCV) to assist with building and maintaining facilities and to assist with disaster relief. Assignment duration may vary from two weeks to three months with a possible extension of up to three additional months for a maximum length of six months. If it is felt that a longer extension is needed, the Branch Committee will provide a recommendation to the Worldwide Design/Construction Department which, in turn, will forward it to the Personnel Committee for approval.

- When assignments exceed a full calendar month, the volunteer receives the same monthly allowance that Bethel family members in that country receive. If needed, the branch makes practical living and food-service arrangements for the duration of the volunteer’s assignment.
- Construction volunteers are not full-time servants unless they are already regular pioneers. Regular pioneers may be credited up to 70 hours per month while serving as construction volunteers. Construction volunteers receive one day of personal time away for each full calendar month of their assignment.

CONSTRUCTION COMMUTERS

110. Those who serve full-time on theocratic construction projects and who provide their own accommodations are enrolled as full-time construction commuters (BCL). These are special full-time servants who arrange for their own accommodations and regularly assist five days a week (or 40 hours per week) on a construction project, whether at a branch office or at Kingdom Halls, Assembly Halls, remote translation offices, Bible school facilities, or other theocratic construction projects. BCLs include those who work on the construction site or those who support construction activities (such as by working on project development, in the construction office, in the kitchen, or by doing cleaning or purchasing) and whose assignments will end at the completion of the construction project in their area. Approval by the Personnel Committee is required for these servants, for which the branch will submit a Full-Time Construction Commuter (BCL) recommendation form (A-73).

111. Those who serve part-time on a construction project one or more days each week on a continual basis, who commute to the project from their own accommodations, and who may need access to the Bethel computer network are referred to as part-time construction commuters (BCC). Included are those on the construction site and those supporting the construction activities (e.g., project development, construction office, kitchen, cleaning, purchasing, and so forth) whose assignments will end at the completion of the project. Such ones should complete an Application for Volunteer Program (A-19). If a part-time construction commuter is needed for more than six months, the Branch Committee should send a recommendation form (A-90) to the Worldwide Design/Construction Department, which will in turn forward its recommendation to the Personnel Committee. Volunteers who work part-
time on Kingdom Hall projects and who do not need access to the Bethel computer network should not receive this enrollment. Rather, they should be designated as Local Design/Construction volunteers.

**DWELLING TOGETHER IN UNITY**

112. The Dwelling manual is considered a part of Branch Organization. However, if there has been a change to what is printed in Dwelling regarding a procedure or a policy, the newly approved instruction should be followed. Regular and temporary Bethel family members may receive a paper or electronic copy of the Dwelling manual. Full-time and part-time commuters may receive a copy of the Dwelling manual during the time they are commuting to Bethel. Temporary volunteers—more than three months (BBW)—may also receive a copy of the Dwelling manual during the time they are working at Bethel. Additionally, all construction servants, all construction commuters, or construction volunteers who assist with the work at Bethel for a period longer than three months may receive a copy of the Dwelling manual for their use while they serve at Bethel. The manual should be returned to the Bethel Office when a person discontinues his Bethel service. If he received an electronic copy of the manual, he should be directed to destroy the file.

**MICROSOFT OFFICE 365**

113. In order to have access to Office 365 or other software used by the branch office, Bethel consultants, remote volunteers, or others caring for assignments from the branch office should be added to the congregation domain. The overseeing department should contact the individual's congregation, requesting that he or she be added to the congregation domain. At that time, the following should be conveyed to the congregation: (1) No jw.org roles should be added solely because the individual has been added to the domain. (2) If the individual moves to a new congregation or no longer qualifies, he or she should be removed from the congregation domain.
CHAPTER 5

PUBLISHING COMMITTEE

1. The Governing Body is determined to act as a wise steward of dedicated resources and to give priority to the activities that contribute the most to the spiritual welfare of God's people and to the advancement of the global preaching work. (1 Chron. 29:14-16; Matt. 24:45-47; Luke 16:10-12; Phil. 1:10) Budgeting helps the organization to prioritize spending and to avoid spending more than the brothers are currently able to support. (Prov. 21:5; Luke 14:28; 2 Cor. 8:11, 12) The Treasurer's Office supports the Governing Body and the branches in preparing the annual budgets, and it processes all Monthly Financial Packages (MFP) and Annual Budget Packages (ABP).

2. Under the direction of the Publishing Committee, the Treasurer's Office at world headquarters oversees a number of global financial programs, including the Global Assistance Arrangement (GAA), Global Investment Fund (GIF), and the Cash Management Centers (CMC). This office also develops and assesses internal controls to ensure compliance and to avoid fraud or error. The Global Risk Management Desk (GRMD) in the Treasurer's Office assists with the implementation of GAA policies established by the Publishing Committee, administers insurance-related issues for world headquarters and the branches, and cares for programs designed to promote life safety and to protect the organization's assets from financial loss. The Treasurer's Office is responsible for the administration of donation and charitable giving programs.

3. The Treasurer's Office supports branch Accounting Departments by developing the accounting guidelines in Branch Accounting Department Guidelines and by providing the recommended procedures and training materials on the Treasurer's Office Library. The Treasurer's Office also assists branch Accounting Departments by answering technical nonpolicy questions on the Treasurer's Office Global Help Desk.

ACCOUNTING DEPARTMENT

4. Oversight: The Branch Committee receives specific direction on financial matters and is responsible for using dedicated resources wisely and within the approved budget. The committee should ensure that all accounting is accurate, that the financial activity of the branch is properly reflected in the accounting records, and that it is compliant with organizational and legal requirements. The Branch Committee should also be aware of the outcome of internal and external audits.

5. The Branch Committee should carefully select the Accounting Department overseer. (1 Cor. 4:2) He must be a spiritual man—trustworthy, tested, well-organized, and attentive to detail. He should preferably be someone other than the Branch Committee coordinator. (2 Cor. 8:18-22) The overseer should be a Bethelite or a full-time commuter so that he is available to provide direction. He must be able to keep matters confidential. The Branch Committee contact for the Accounting Department should work closely with the Accounting Department overseer to make sure that the personnel needs of the department are met within the approved staffing guidelines provided by the Publishing Committee.

6. The work of the Accounting Department may be broadly divided into five
categories: (1) **Oversight**, which includes compliance with organizational guidelines and directives as well as external laws and regulations, budgeting, financial analysis, risk management, general office support, and real estate; (2) **General Accounting**, which includes general ledger, fixed assets, and reporting; (3) **Accounting Services**, which includes accounts receivable, accounts payable, and allowances; (4) **Cash Management**; and (5) **Related Field Entities Support**, which includes supporting congregation entities and others in the field. How the Accounting Department is organized depends on the amount of assigned work and the number and ability of the personnel within the department. Each category may include several roles. A role does not usually require a full-time person, and often a full-time person performs many roles in the Accounting Department. However, these roles must be assigned in such a way so that sufficient separation of duties is maintained. For example, in many branches, the brother who handles the Branch Risk Management Desk (BRMD) is someone other than the department overseer. For further details on these responsibilities, see *Branch Accounting Department Guidelines*.

**7. Compliance:** The Branch Committee is responsible for complying with organizational policies, guidelines, and specific direction regarding financial matters as well as respective external laws and regulations. Similar to the way the Treasurer's Office at headquarters works under the direction of the Publishing Committee and with other departments to establish financial compliance guidelines and internal controls, the Accounting Department under the direction of the Branch Committee should work along with other departments, such as Legal, Local Design/Construction (LDC), and Purchasing to ensure financial compliance in the branch. Often the Branch Committee contact for the Accounting Department can assist with good communication between the departments on these matters. The brother asked to care for compliance in the Accounting Department should have a reasonable understanding of the laws relating to financial aspects of the work in countries under the branch territory, including corporate and tax laws. In many branches, the Accounting Department overseer handles this responsibility. The authorities expect an organization's financial records to mirror its activities. Inconsistencies often lead to problems. The Accounting Department overseer, or someone working closely with him, should be familiar with these matters. At times, the branch may use experienced professionals, preferably brothers, as consultants to help ensure that the branch complies with the local statutory or legal requirements for financial records and for reporting to the government. (See 5:11, 28; Matt. 22:17-22; Rom. 13:1-7) All those who work in the financial area should be made aware that failure to comply with legal requirements could lead to serious consequences including financial penalties and the loss of tax-exempt status.

**8.** There are many types of taxes levied by governments, such as taxes on personal or corporate income; sales, use, and excise taxes on purchases or sales, including Value Added Tax (VAT); social security taxes; estate taxes; property taxes; and duty on imported goods. Tax issues may also arise in connection with donations, gifts, and real estate. Since governments provide tax relief for a variety of reasons, the branch should endeavor to take advantage of exemptions or immunity when it legally qualifies for such. Most countries extend favorable tax treatment to those engaged in religious endeavors full-time. This relieves the branch of some financial burdens and affords its endeavors tacit legal recognition. The branch should not pursue exemptions to which it is not entitled or exemptions that might otherwise jeopardize...
its standing with the authorities. Structuring financial transactions with clarity and simplicity helps to create a legally defensible tax position. It is also important that the branch clearly complies with government regulations. The branch should ensure that the structure of the legal status of the local organization is one that will most likely result in exemption for a religious organization. While it is important to follow the principle mentioned at Matthew 22:21, the point is not to be overly cautious in this area. The branch should think in terms of how it can carry out necessary functions in a way that does not automatically involve setting things up to pay taxes. When taxes are due, the amount paid should be as low as is legally permissible, and the procedures should be as simple as possible. When there is a reasonable legal basis for not paying tax, the branch should pursue that approach.

9. The branch should keep the Publishing Committee informed of significant developments, especially if there is a potential for losing tax exemption. Unresolved questions relating to tax matters should be promptly addressed to the Publishing Committee for comment. The Global Tax Group (GTG), made up of members from the Treasurer’s Office and the WHQ Legal Department, assists the Publishing Committee with tax matters.

10. The internal controls described in Branch Accounting Department Guidelines and the recommended procedures in the Treasurer’s Office Library are designed to ensure compliance and avoid fraud and error in handling financial matters. The Accounting Department will assist the Branch Committee with implementing internal controls and regularly assessing them. The Branch Committee should make sure that all events of noncompliance—theft, fraud, or misstatement in the financial records—are investigated, handled, documented, and communicated to the Publishing Committee. A report to the Publishing Committee should include (1) what the investigation revealed, (2) who is suspected of being or known to have been involved in the matter, (3) to what extent the secular authorities were involved, and (4) what steps the Branch Committee has taken to prevent such noncompliance from occurring in the future. If a member of the Bethel family was involved, the Personnel Committee should be copied on the report; if a special full-time servant in the field was involved, the Service Committee should be copied on the report. (See 4:31-38, 99; ks10:5:20) The Branch Committee should also ensure that all necessary internal and external audits are performed regularly and are well-supported by the affected departments. The branch audit should be completed at least annually or as directed by the Coordinators’ Committee.

11. The Publishing Committee should be informed any time a new external audit is required. The branch Legal Department should be consulted in advance of any government audit to help ensure that all legal requirements for the audit are being met by the government representative. If the branch is obliged to disclose the financial records, these should be transparent and easy to follow.—See 5:7, 28.

12. Budgeting: The branch plays an important role in carefully budgeting and in making wise purchasing decisions. The Annual Budget Package (ABP) is used to report anticipated spending on operations and projects for the upcoming service year. The ABP should be completed each year in July and submitted to the Treasurer’s Office for approval by the Governing Body. For some areas of spending, the branch will receive guidance from the headquarters department that has oversight of that area of work. The Publishing Committee will inform all branches annually of what spending will be managed by world headquarters and of what spending will be managed by the branch.
13. The branch provides funding for all Kingdom Hall and Assembly Hall construction in its territory, based on an annual budget developed and approved through the Worldwide Design/Construction Department (WDC). All congregations have the opportunity to support the construction of these theocratic facilities through resolutions for monthly donations.

14. The Governing Body appreciates that money is needed for branch operations and to expand the work through field missionary, special pioneer, temporary special pioneer, circuit, and regional activity. However, at the same time, it desires that all funds be used carefully. It is appreciated when the Branch Committee keeps unnecessary expenses to a minimum. The funds being used are contributed by the brothers from all parts of the world. They have made sacrifices to help with the Kingdom work, so these funds should be used to the greatest advantage. Branch Committees should review the actual expenses each month compared to the budget projection. The committee members should decide what they need to do to stay within the approved budget, particularly in areas of the work that are not under the direction of a headquarters department. For example: Can shipping costs be lowered? Can incidental trips be combined to save time and transportation costs? Are purchases necessary and worth the price paid? The Treasurer’s Office will communicate any adjustments to a branch’s approved budget when new initiatives are introduced by headquarters departments during the year. They may also contact a branch if spending is exceeding budget forecasts so that steps may be taken to stay within the approved budget. Similarly, the Branch Committee should contact the Treasurer’s Office as soon as possible if the branch will spend significantly more than its approved budget. The purpose of this communication is, not to get approval for additional spending, but to make sure that the Treasurer’s Office is able to project properly the financial standing of the organization. Construction budgets for branch, Kingdom Hall, and other projects are administered under the supervision of the WDC.

15. Financial Analysis: The Branch Committee should carefully consider costs when making decisions. This is especially true when a decision will result in an ongoing expense rather than a one-time purchase. Occasionally, tracking the cost of major products, jobs, and services is used to establish a manufacturing cost for shipping invoices and an hourly rate for personal services, to set a budget, to reduce waste, or to simplify operations. There is no need, however, to undertake detailed cost accounting every time an item is needed. Any financial analysis that is done should take all factors into consideration to ensure that a good decision is made. The Publishing Committee should be asked for assistance in analyzing costs for a major decision or an independent review of a cost analysis. The Treasurer’s Office provides analysis of certain standard expenses, such as personnel and support rates, on the Treasurer’s Office Library.

16. Risk Management: The Global Risk Management Desk (GRMD) provides day-to-day assistance to the Branch Risk Management Desk (BRMD) within the Accounting Department. The BRMD is concerned with matters related to safety and loss prevention and safe operation of vehicles as well as handling incidents and insurance matters at any facility or location where theocratic activities occur, including branch facilities, Kingdom Halls, Assembly Halls, remote translation offices, approved construction projects, and rented facilities. The Branch Committee should encourage all departments and entities within the branch territory to collaborate with the BRMD on these matters before a loss occurs. This enables the branch to utilize risk man-
agement techniques and to comply with initiatives and insurance arrangements already in place. Each year, the BRMD and the Branch Committee safety contact should meet with department safety contacts to review trends in accidents and near misses. The Branch Committee contact for the Accounting Department and the Accounting Department overseer may also attend these meetings. Based on these trends, the BRMD may recommend safety training for certain departments.

17. After an incident involving accidental loss, branch departments should actively communicate with the BRMD, which is the main channel of communication with the GRMD. Any serious bodily injury, major property damage, or other accident with the potential of bringing liability to the organization should be reported immediately to the BRMD, which will notify the GRMD immediately.

18. The BRMD should be informed when new activities are being considered that may change the likelihood and severity of damages that may occur at a branch, such as proposed major construction, large purchases of land or equipment, the rental of large equipment for construction or other activities, the use of drones, or enlarging the scope of operations. It should also be informed before entering into shipping contracts for high-value items, major projects, or marine cargo shipments. The BRMD communicates with the GRMD on these matters.

19. Each year, the Branch Committee should work closely with the BRMD to develop a recommendation for the suggested GAA donation. This recommendation is approved by the GRMD before notifying the congregations. Annually, the GRMD will provide instructions regarding what information should be provided to the congregations. The GRMD should be contacted for clarification if it is unclear whether a payment to care for an injury or a property or an automobile loss should be viewed as a GAA expense.

20. If a natural disaster causes property loss, the BRMD should assist those taking the lead in handling the disaster relief by investigating the availability of a governmental disaster fund to help with repair costs, providing assistance with any approved branch relief arrangements, and assisting the LDC with construction methods that can be used to prevent similar damage in the future or relocation if recurrence is likely and unavoidable.

21. The branch should contact the Treasurer's Office before purchasing any insurance policies, except for mandatory auto liability insurance. The organization's international liability insurance is usually sufficient to satisfy insurance requirements for our various activities. The GRMD will consider a request in accord with guidelines from the Publishing Committee and will provide direction as needed. If the BRMD and the Branch Committee believe that any part of an existing insurance structure may need to be modified because of legal restrictions, local customs, or any other reason, the Treasurer's Office should be notified in writing well in advance of the date on which the proposed insurance will become effective. The correspondence should explain the type of insurance to be purchased or renewed, any special circumstances that the branch believes should be considered relative to the need for the insurance, and its cost in U.S. dollars.—See Branch Accounting Department Guidelines.

22. Life safety and loss prevention are core values for all in the organization. The goal is to maintain an accident-free environment with minimum loss to all premises—including branches, Assembly Halls, Kingdom Halls, remote translation offices—and throughout all operations, such as construction and renovation projects, maintenance, printing, driving, and so
forth. This can be accomplished if each one realizes that his attitude toward life, safety, and loss-control reflects his spirituality. As the “Grand Creator,” Jehovah God considers life to be sacred. (Eccl. 12:1; Ps. 36:9) As his servants, we reflect our spirituality when we adopt that same view. (Eph. 5:1) Therefore, in all our activities, we do not take unnecessary risks or disregard established safety standards. (Deut. 22:8; Eccl. 10:9) We sincerely love our brothers; thus, we endeavor to apply Scriptural principles so as to protect ourselves and others from physical harm. (Prov. 3:21, 22; Phil. 2:4) Each of us has a moral and spiritual responsibility to work safely; to take all reasonable measures to prevent accidents, injury, and losses; and to use dedicated funds wisely.—See 5:173 and Global Life Safety and Loss Prevention Guidelines (A-120).

23. The Publishing Committee realizes the importance that Jehovah puts on the sanctity of life. The Branch Committee should assign one of its members to ensure that each department receives and puts into practice the safety guidelines made available by the organization. He will also coordinate safety issues between departments. Ensuring that dedicated funds are used wisely requires taking prudent measures to prevent loss. To assist in standardizing the global approach, the Global Life Safety and Loss Prevention Guidelines (A-120) and its associated second and third level documents were developed to bring together all the excellent initiatives that world headquarters and various branches have been working on over the years. These documents allow for policies, guidelines, procedures, and training materials already created to be shared. These guidelines are intended to improve safety methods in order to prevent even minor injuries as well as to prevent major losses, such as those resulting from fires and falls.

24. Real Estate: The Worldwide Design/Construction Department (WDC), under the oversight of the Publishing Committee, coordinates the purchase and sale of all real estate. In the Accounting Department, the Branch Real Estate Desk (BRED) handles the day-to-day real estate related work, such as routine leasing arrangements, record keeping, evaluating donations, and working closely with the Local Design/Construction Department (LDC). The BRED maintains accurate records for all properties and ensures all organizational data related to land, buildings, auditoriums, and property improvements are entered into the Property Management (PM) module of HuB. Additionally, the BRED is responsible for ensuring that all necessary documentation and legal or procedural requirements are in place in order to maintain ownership of or to sell any property. Before a person deeds real estate or proposes to make a donation of property to the branch, the BRED will ensure that local laws are considered. It will work with the branch Legal Department as necessary to determine if there are any tax issues, liability issues because of environmental concerns, titling problems, and so forth. The BRED should work closely with the branch's local legal resources and the LDC to resolve any issues related to our right and ability to sell.—See 5:162.

25. General Ledger: A standard set of accounts has been established to allow branches to report financial activity consistently to the Treasurer’s Office. These accounts should be used as the local set of accounts in each branch unless legally required to use a government-issued set of accounts. The accounts include approved funds, such as the Relief Fund. New funds on the general ledger should be set up only with the advance approval of the Publishing Committee.

26. Since our literature is distributed at no cost, no value should be carried on the general ledger for work-in-progress and finished literature. This helps others to understand clearly that
27. Reporting: The Accounting Department completes a Monthly Financial Package (MFP) for each reporting legal or theocratic entity. After the reports have been approved by the Branch Committee, they should be sent to the Treasurer’s Office by the 20th of the following month. The Treasurer’s Office then prepares financial reports. These are considered by the Publishing Committee and are helpful in planning the best use of funds available to Jehovah’s Witnesses for the worldwide Kingdom work.

28. External reporting is sometimes required by law. If it becomes a legal requirement to submit financial statements outside of the organization because of a change in governmental requirements or the creation of a new legal corporation, draft financial statements and accompanying reports should be sent to the Publishing Committee for review and approval prior to their submission to the government, unless previously approved by the Publishing Committee. Financial statements should be submitted again to the Publishing Committee for review only if there is a significant change in the reporting requirement, such as when additional information is required. Branch corporations should use August 31 as their financial year-end unless local regulations direct otherwise.—See 5:7, 11.

29. Accounts Receivable (Donations): On appropriate occasions, the Branch Committee may help the local brothers to understand their privilege to “honor Jehovah with [their] valuable things.” (Prov. 3:9) In some countries, the income of the brothers may be low, limiting what they can do. However, they should not want to leave the financial responsibility entirely up to brothers in other countries. With proper education, patience, and time, those with limited means can be helped to see how they too can have a share in expanding the Kingdom work by their contributions. (Luke 21:1-4) At no time should funds be solicited, making the brothers feel that they are being pressured. However, they can be informed as to how the organization operates and their privilege in this connection. The Branch Committee is responsible for monitoring the financial activity in the branch territory, including donations. Requests for new donation methods should be sent to the Publishing Committee for approval.

30. Accounts Payable: All branch expenses should have sufficient supporting documentation and approvals. The Accounting Department is responsible to distribute the allowances to members of the Worldwide Order of Special Full-Time Servants of Jehovah’s Witnesses and other temporary volunteers in their territory. The Branch Committee coordinates allowance policies and approval as described in Chapter 9.

31. Many of our faithful brothers suffer medical problems beyond their financial means. If needs arise as a result of a natural disaster, the matter will be handled as part of a relief project under the direction of the Coordinators’ Committee. However, at times, the Branch Committee may get pleas for assistance in connection with the necessities of life because of other circumstances. Although the first responsibility for such matters rests with the family of the individual, at times assistance may also be available through the government, social agencies or, lastly, the congregation. When the individuals have exhausted these possibilities, it is left to the discretion of the Branch Committee to handle such matters. If the committee feels that it is appropriate to assist deserving ones financially to help them obtain critical medications or to help with the cost of an operation, it may grant up to USD 3,000. Any request for humanitarian
aid above this amount should be referred to the Publishing Committee with an explanation and recommendation. Branch Committees will need to handle such matters with discretion and confidentiality so that the provision is not abused. Generally, this arrangement should be the exception rather than the rule. This information is not for publication to the congregations. However, the Branch Committee may act upon a congregation-initiated request for help. This is in harmony with the generosity and kindness shown by the first-century congregation.—Rom. 12:13.

32. Cash Management: So that “there may be an equalizing,” the Publishing Committee has arranged for all surplus funds held by branches to be consolidated to the Cash Management Centers (CMC). All branches that do not have sufficient funds to pay for their expenses in any month can receive assistance from this arrangement. (2 Cor. 8:13-15) A monthly ending cash limit is approved by the Publishing Committee and is provided with the annual budget approval for each geographic location. The Branch Committee is responsible for ensuring compliance with the monthly ending cash limit. Requests for funds from the CMCs to pay for expenditures previously approved by the Publishing Committee should first be approved by the Branch Committee and then sent directly to the Treasurer's Office. Any branch with surplus funds should notify the Treasurer's Office so that these funds may be sent to the CMC.

33. Jehovah's Witnesses in many lands entrust their contributions for advancing the Kingdom work to various corporations of the organization. Other arrangements will be made if conditions in a country change or the legal agencies are no longer available for use.

34. The Branch Committee approves the setup and balance of all imprest fund arrangements used by remote locations and departments. For each imprest fund, the Branch Committee will approve an operations cash account with a maximum balance at the branch.

35. The Accounting Department is responsible for recommending to the Branch Committee an appropriate commercial bank or banks to work with and for maintaining a good relationship with them. The Treasurer's Office is responsible for approving all new bank relationships that a branch may wish to pursue.

36. There is no need for a branch to have an investment program, since surplus funds are sent to the CMCs. Normally, a branch will not hold securities. Donated securities, such as stocks or bonds, should be liquidated before the end of the month in which they are received. If funds are being held for a special purpose, it may be possible to obtain a safe yield on these funds. Any exceptions or questions regarding this should be directed to the Treasurer's Office.

GLOBAL HEALTH CARE OFFICE

37. The Global Health Care Office (GHCO) is a world headquarters department that works under the direction of the Publishing Committee. It assists the Personnel and Service committees as well as the branches in matters related to health care for special full-time servants. A Branch Committee contact for the GHCO and a backup should be assigned in each branch. The GHCO's responsibilities include:

- Investigating high-quality, low-cost options when a special full-time servant needs health care that exceeds the branch spending limit or requires travel to another branch territory. See Health Care Guidelines (A-110), chapter 4, for more information on when and how to submit a health-care request to the GHCO.
- Researching and making recom-
mendations regarding health-care policy.

- Developing guidelines for branches, based on approved policy.
- Working with Branch Committee contacts for the GHCO and the Health Care Desk (HCD) to ensure that local health-care arrangements are in harmony with guidelines. This may include periodic training for some HCD personnel.

38. **The Health Care Desk (HCD)** functions under the oversight of the Branch Committee and in accord with guidelines provided by headquarters. The HCD receives and handles health-care requests from all special full-time servants within the branch territory, regardless of enrollment, and evaluates options for care. This might involve negotiating with health-care providers or making use of free or subsidized health-care programs and services. The HCD works closely with the Bethel Office, the Service Department (Field Ministers Desk), and the Local Design/Construction Department, as well as any established in-house health-care service. In small and medium-sized branches, the work of the HCD can be cared for by two brothers working part-time, the second brother serving as a backup. In larger branches, it may be necessary to form a small office to care for this work. In branches overseeing fewer than 30,000 publishers, it may be practical for the same brother(s) to care for the work of both the HCD and the Hospital Information Desk (HID). However, the Branch Committee should monitor the workload to ensure that the HID’s effectiveness is not negatively impacted. It is preferred that the global health case manager(s) be assigned to the HCD. See **Health Care Guidelines (A-110)**, chapter 1, for more information regarding the role of the global health case manager.—See 9:40-45 for further information regarding the provision of health-care for members of the Worldwide Order.

### GLOBAL PURCHASING DEPARTMENT

39. In view of the growing needs of the organization as well as the challenging economic times, it is necessary to take a global look at purchasing what is needed for the work. The Global Purchasing Department is a headquarters department that works under the direction of the Publishing Committee and provides direction and practical assistance to branch Purchasing Departments. Direction on purchasing matters is based on research and consultations with branches and with brothers who have business experience throughout the world. The Global Purchasing Department’s goals are (1) to make quality products and equipment available at reduced costs; (2) to simplify work for the branches by prequalifying suppliers and products, based on approved specifications and maintenance support capabilities; (3) to coordinate procurement efforts related to construction of theocratic facilities; and (4) to assist branch Purchasing Departments with their ongoing local purchasing needs. To care for this work, the following five main initiatives are in place. Further direction on the operation of branch Purchasing Departments is provided in **Purchasing Guidelines (PD-1)** and on the **Purchasing Guidelines Training** website. Please follow these guidelines closely.

40. **International Purchasing Arrangements:** These are agreements established with large multinational companies. The objective is to provide preferential pricing and terms even to remote branches. Most branches can order locally under business agreements that include either local or regional maintenance support. While some supplier arrangements are global in scope, many are regional. International supplier arrangements, along with local supplier arrangements developed by the branch Purchasing Department assist the Local Design/Construction Department in

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supporting the construction and operation of all theocratic facilities in its branch territory.

41. The Publishing Committee is interested in seeing that these arrangements are used to the fullest extent possible, thus providing the greatest benefits and savings for the organization. The Branch Committee should encourage departments within the branch as well as those in its territory to consider the arrangements posted on the Supplier Arrangements section of jw.org prior to pursuing other options. All those involved with purchasing or specifying goods, equipment, or construction materials for the branch and the field should be given access to the website. These brothers should check jw.org periodically, since new arrangements are added and refinements are made to existing arrangements on a regular basis.

42. Emerging Market Opportunities: When purchasing equipment, construction supplies, or commodities, considerable savings can be obtained by benefiting from emerging opportunities and global market trends. Rather than multiple branches trying to purchase from these countries individually, an organizational approach improves the purchasing opportunity while simplifying the work for the branches. The Global Purchasing Department oversees the work of remote global purchasing offices operating in some lands. Branches in whose territory a remote global purchasing office operates are responsible for providing needed food, lodging, and other practical support.

43. Global Purchasing Paper Desk: This central desk cares for business transactions associated with the purchase of press paper. It comes under the supervision of the Global Purchasing Department and works closely with the International Printing Department and the Treasurer's Office. This desk is currently based at the Britain branch. All Nonliterature Branch Requests (AB-3a) for press paper should be submitted to the Britain branch for handling. In addition to requesting paper, all global paper supplier invoices should be directed to the Global Purchasing Paper Desk for validation and payment. Each printing branch should continue to forecast its paper needs for the year and include those costs in its respective operating budget.

44. Primary Purchasing Branches (PPB): Each branch is assigned by the Publishing Committee to a PPB. The PPB should be considered the first option for filling Nonliterature Branch Requests (AB-3a) in the region. After consultation with the PPB, it may be determined that some requests need to be filled by other branches. The Global Purchasing Department works closely with each PPB to improve service to branches of Nonliterature Branch Requests (AB-3a), reduce shipping costs, and identify and implement international supplier arrangements within their region. Branches are encouraged to contact their PPB with any questions related to these matters. The PPBs also support Purchasing Departments by training purchasing members to assist branches in their region.—See also the Local Design/Construction Department Guidelines (DC-3).

45. Global Purchasing Department Regional Support: Regional support teams, made up of qualified branch Purchasing Department members throughout the region, work under the direction of the Global Purchasing Department. The branches where these members serve receive a staffing allocation that allows for this additional work, and these members are listed as Global Purchasing Department Regional Support in HuB. The Branch Committee and the Purchasing Department overseer where these members serve provide shepherding and care for them. These teams look for ways to assist branches in their region with purchasing matters. This includes training on matters related to requisitions, purchasing, receiving, inventory, busi-
ness skills, and using HuB. *Purchasing Guidelines* (PD-1) and the Purchasing Guidelines Training site are the tools used for training. These teams also assist branches in the region with business support, such as complex contract negotiation, account management of international supplier arrangements, large capital purchases, procurement strategies, and implementation of logistics opportunities. Each regional support team works closely with other regional headquarters departments, such as the Regional Design/Construction and Regional Broadcasting departments. The branch may communicate to the Global Purchasing Department or their regional support team any ideas, suggestions, or challenges that it faces regarding purchasing matters.

**INTERNATIONAL PRINTING DEPARTMENT**

46. The International Printing Department (IPD) operates under the direction of the Publishing Committee. It may be asked to care for the details relating to the production and shipment of magazines and literature items in the following areas: Printery Office, Graphics, Pressroom, Bindery, Shipping, and in the purchase of some literature items. It also cares for the technical details of the global purchasing arrangements for paper, printing plates, cartons, and ink. The Publishing Committee may also ask the department to follow through on implementing various decisions having to do with regional printing and literature production, such as the purchase and installation of equipment.—See 5:113.

**LITERATURE TO BRANCHES**

47. Rendering Good Service: Printing and shipping branches should feel a sense of responsibility to maintain adequate inventories without overstocking and to provide good service. Supplying branches are responsible for working with their requesting branches to keep items in stock. Although some noncritical items may go out of stock for a short period of time, Bibles and other field publications should be kept in stock in order to fill congregation requests as they come in. The supplying branch is expected to process requests quickly and to provide consistent delivery times even if it seems that a requesting branch may have an adequate supply on hand.—See 5:53.

48. A major focus of the branch should be the prompt processing of branch and congregation requests. If it is necessary to bring in extra help during rush periods, do so. If good service cannot be maintained, this should be communicated to the Branch Committee. Providing good service must be balanced with keeping delivery costs reasonable.

49. **Regional Printing**: Under this arrangement, printing branches are responsible for producing literature for a specific region rather than in a certain language. This spreads the workload involved in producing literature more evenly among the printing branches. Because of varying circumstances, a few branches will continue to produce their own literature locally and will not be involved in the regional printing arrangement. Regional printing does not always include periodicals.

50. Under regional printing, it is practical to print items in some languages in more than one region. For example, there may be a large enough production run of an English publication that the same publication can be printed in Asia, Europe, and North America. The following factors should be taken into consideration: size and cost of the production run, shipping costs, and service to the congregations.

51. Each month, world headquarters receives inventories of literature on hand from each warehouse branch. This information is used to monitor stock levels at the branches. Additionally, all printing branches regularly submit a monthly production report to
headquarters. These reports help in the assessment of the workload being carried by the various printing regions.

52. Warehouse Arrangement: The warehouse arrangement has resulted in a reduction of stored literature in numerous branches and in the number of people needed to process literature and magazine requests. This is because congregation literature and magazine requests are being filled at a central warehouse branch rather than at numerous local branches. Generally, larger warehouse branches have the equipment necessary to fill congregation and Branch Requests (AB-3) more efficiently. This arrangement also allows for congregations to request a wider range of publications, since warehouse branches are able to stock a greater variety of publications.

53. Warehouse Branch Responsibility: The warehouse branch should be concerned with giving good service to the branches that are its clients. It should work with each client branch to establish a well-defined schedule that outlines the following: when congregations should have their requests submitted to the local branch office, when a request should be submitted to the warehouse branch, when a request will be packed and shipped, and approximately when congregations will receive their shipments. This schedule should be closely followed and monitored to ensure that congregations are receiving their requests on time.—See 5:47.

54. The warehouse branch may need to prepare and ship literature and magazines according to specific requirements provided by the client branch. This may include making adjustments to benefit the client branches, such as changing the frequency of shipments, adjusting the way congregation requests are packaged, and changing the way packages are stacked onto pallets to assist in delivery. It is better for this additional work to be done at the larger warehouse branches than at the smaller client branches. If possible, the shipments received by the client branch should already be prepared for delivery to the congregations. Thus, the method for shipping literature, magazines, and the *Life and Ministry Meeting Workbook* must be established with the aid of the client branch.

55. Client Branch Responsibility: The client branch is responsible for dealing directly with the local congregations regarding literature and magazines. Each month, as literature and magazine requests are submitted by the congregations, the client branch should verify the requests, apply literature request limits, and manage delivery-address issues before forwarding the requests to the warehouse branch. This is normally done using features in the Hub program. In most cases, the client branch is responsible for receiving the pre-packaged literature and magazine shipments from the warehouse branch and then arranging delivery to the congregations.

56. Good Communication: When a change in an established arrangement or a new procedure is needed to provide literature and magazines to the congregations, both the warehouse branch and the client branch should take the initiative to communicate with each other. One branch should not assume that the other branch is caring for a matter. The client branch should regularly provide comments to the warehouse branch regarding the condition of the shipments when they arrive and any difficulties with importing, including additional costs. The client branch should also relay any problems and discrepancies that the congregations experience in obtaining literature.

57. Regular attention should be given to Branch Requests (AB-3) for items that are pending because they are out of stock. The printing branch and the requesting branch should feel free to communicate with each other regarding the status of items that are delayed.
It is also good to take the initiative to notify branches of items that are going to be delayed for an unusually long period of time.

58. The client branch should communicate in advance with the warehouse branch regarding any future needs, including arrangements related to conventions and assemblies. This would include, for example, when a group or a congregation is being formed in a new language, since the warehouse branch may not have items in stock in the new language.

59. Literature Inventory Control: The function of inventory control is to monitor stock levels of all publications in order to maintain adequate inventory on hand to fill branch and congregation requests quickly. At the same time, balance is needed to avoid accumulating an overstock that cannot be used in the near future. Generally, literature is considered to be overstocked if the inventory exceeds a one-year supply. Depending on local circumstances, the responsibility for inventory control may be a part of the Shipping Department or, in a printing branch, the Printery Office.

60. On at least a monthly basis, stock levels should be reviewed to ensure that there is a sufficient supply of publications that will be used in the field ministry and at congregation meetings. Each time literature is requested, the following should be considered: present stock at the branch and in the congregations, rate of movement, storage facilities, publications that will be used in the field ministry or at upcoming congregation meetings, and whether a request has already been submitted to replenish stock. If there is any uncertainty regarding the movement of an item, it would be best to submit a conservative request, keeping in mind the option of electronic downloads.

61. If the branch has no organized group or congregation activity in a language for which literature is requested occasionally, only a few basic items for that language—such as a primary Bible study publication or some brochures and tracts—may need to be stocked. If no immediate need is evident, a publication should not be stocked in the branch just because it has become available in a new language.

62. Preventing Overstock: Request quantities should not be based on enthusiasm or the expectation that every person who speaks a language will accept a copy of a publication in that language. If a branch is uncertain about the movement or use of an item, only a small quantity of that item should be requested, even though doing so may result in having to request a supply of that item again within a few months. It is better for the supplying branch to make another shipment or to do another printing than for a branch to be overstocked with an item for several years.

63. Significant overstock has occurred with publications used for the Congregation Bible Study. Initially, the movement will be high, and then after the first few studies, demand will diminish greatly. This has especially been seen in the case of publications that are not designed for use in the field ministry after being considered at the Congregation Bible Study. It is important to review correspondence from the Governing Body committees to discern the intended use of these publications. Taking note of whether a publication will be used in the field ministry can help a branch to determine how much stock should be maintained. Also, take into consideration the encouragement for publishers to download literature electronically.

64. Special-Request Items: Extra caution should be used when requesting costly items or dated publications. Because it is desired that the branches use up the stock of Examining the Scriptures Daily during the year it is released, this item should be requested prudently.
65. Branches should not stock expensive publications that have to be purchased. The brothers can obtain such items on their own rather than having the branch provide this service. However, a branch may still purchase and provide foreign-language Bibles if (1) there is sufficient demand, (2) the New World Translation is not available in a certain language, and (3) the Bibles are not readily available from local vendors. To keep costs to a minimum, the purchased Bibles kept in stock should not be a deluxe edition; nor should such Bibles be offered in the field ministry. They are available only as a special-request item for baptized and unbaptized publishers and progressive Bible students who do not have a Bible. Individuals qualified to receive such a Bible should not feel obligated to make a contribution equal to the cost of the Bible if their circumstances do not permit such. Each one may make a contribution in harmony with his ability to do so.—2 Cor. 9:7.

66. Production-Ready List: The Production-Ready List is primarily used to inform branches of new publications to be printed. Two months before files for printing new publications are ready, the translation branch informs the International Printing Department and copies the printing branches. Additionally, if a file maintenance branch or a printing branch becomes aware of an item that has not yet appeared on a Production-Ready List, it should also inform the International Printing Department to ensure that nothing has been overlooked.

67. Branches that maintain their own inventory should closely review the Production-Ready List and submit Branch Requests (AB-3) for needed items no later than the due date. Client branches should also keep up-to-date on what is being printed. If specific congregations or groups in a client branch's territory would benefit from an item that will be produced, the client branch can notify the warehouse branch of this need.

68. Production Approval Process: When new items are listed on the Production-Ready List or when a reprint is needed, the print quantities are calculated by the printing branch. A printing requisition does not have to be submitted to the Publishing Committee, since approval to produce the item has already been given and the printing branch has the necessary figures to calculate the print quantity.

69. Minimum Print Quantities: For a publication with little demand, the minimum print quantity should be considered before a printing job is issued. Meeting this minimum print quantity may require that a two-year supply be requested. Branches should not hesitate to print the minimum quantity for publications that are essential to the work in the field or to the spiritual progress of the brothers. Note the minimum printing quantities on Chart 5.1.

70. It is recommended that one or two members of the Branch Committee be involved in the review process when items are being submitted on Branch Requests (AB-3) or when quantities are being determined for items that may be printed locally.

71. Branch Shipment Information: The importing branch should be thoroughly acquainted with all important matters regarding ocean-freight companies, import licenses, and deliveries. Anything that the exporting branch should know must always be put on the Branch Requests (AB-3). This includes the date needed, if applicable. If literature is needed for a special campaign or a Bible will be released at a convention or other event, the request should also include the start date of the campaign, the date of the first convention, or the date of the other event. It should not be assumed that the supplying branch understands the requesting branch's requirements. Additionally, since customs regulations and import laws change frequently, importing branches should help exporting
branches by informing them immediately when new regulations or controls are implemented.

72. Exporting branches should be thoroughly familiar with export laws for shipments made. The exporting branch should ensure that all shipping instructions are clear on receipt of the Branch Requests (AB-3). If the shipping method on the approved request needs to be changed to an expedited service, the requesting branch will either give or obtain any additional approvals needed, depending on the additional cost involved. Before preparing a shipment for a branch to which it has not previously shipped items, the exporting branch should request direction from the importing branch. Routine matters can be communicated between branches via e-mail.

73. Nonliterature Items to Branches: Requesting branches depend on timely delivery of nonliterature items. Providing helpful service requires close cooperation between the Purchasing and Shipping departments of the supplying branch. Supplying branches should make it a priority to meet the required date for Nonliterature Branch Requests (AB-3a). If the required date cannot be met, the requesting branch should be given advanced written notice and offered options for delivery. The Purchasing Department should negotiate freight contracts to improve service and reduce costs where practical. The Shipping Department in branches that make regular export shipments should use the Export Module in HuB when processing shipments for Nonliterature Branch Requests. Using this feature provides the status of shipments to client branches, improves the quality of cost accounting, and provides important information to world headquarters departments. The Nonliterature Branch Request Workload form in HuB assists supplying branches to monitor the status of the Nonliterature Branch Requests (AB-3a) that they fulfill.

74. Insurance and Claims: The Treasurer's Office maintains a Cargo Policy to cover losses and to provide proof of insurance coverage where required during international and domestic transportation.

LITERATURE TO CONGREGATIONS

75. Importance of Literature and Magazine Distribution: The Governing Body desires to have the Watchtower magazine available in as many languages as possible because it is the organization's principal magazine. The Awake! magazine is an excellent help in stimulating interest in the truth and in spreading the good news. Along with these magazines, the primary publications used to start and conduct Bible studies in each country should be readily available for use in the territory. Publishers and pioneers should have these publications available to use whenever interest is found, with a view to starting a Bible study.

76. Monthly Literature Announcements and Release Letters: The warehouse branch should inform the client branches about new publications that have become available. Each branch office should keep the congregations up-to-date regarding literature and magazines that are available for them to request. Many branches send information about publications in a monthly "Announcement to All Congregations," which may be posted on the information board.

77. Literature Releases: The Publishing Committee provides direction to all branches regarding literature releases. With the exception of Bibles, distribution of hard copy convention releases has been discontinued. In most cases, publishers are able to download releases electronically.

78. Following a publication's release, congregations may request printed copies for publishers who need one and a few additional copies for
congregation stock. Branches served by the warehouse arrangement should determine reasonable request limits with the help of their warehouse branch. Printing quantities will be based on actual requests.

79. Congregation Literature Inventory: Each month, congregations should do a physical count of their literature on hand and post the quantities on their Monthly Movement of Literature form (S-28). Each year on March 1 and September 1, congregations should submit their inventory quantities to the branch office, if possible, via jw.org. Branches that cannot receive inventories via the website should request an inventory from their congregations via hard copy once a year on September 1. The branch office can use the inventory to help determine whether congregations are over-requesting.

80. Analyzing the amount of literature in the congregations can assist the branch office in making wise decisions in regard to providing the literature needed to support the preaching activity, while at the same time reducing overstock (an excess supply for more than one year) in the congregations. If it is determined that congregations are over-requesting, it would be good for the branch office to review the request limits that they are applying to the amount of literature that congregations can request. If the branch becomes aware of certain literature items that are overstocked in specific congregations, they may provide reminders to share literature with neighboring congregations. In some cases the branch may write to those congregations and request that the literature be returned to the local branch.

81. Literature and Magazine Request Guidelines (S-56): Each branch is responsible for providing direction to congregations regarding the proper handling of literature and magazine requests. The S-56 contains detailed instructions regarding how congregations should request literature. The English version is posted on the MDS site. Warehouse and client branches should work together to determine whether adjustments to these guidelines are needed to fit local circumstances.

82. Literature-Coordinating Arrangement: The purpose of this arrangement is to maintain a common supply of stock items at a Kingdom Hall in an effort to reduce inventory. One congregation should be designated as the language-coordinating congregation for each language and will be responsible for requesting and distributing stock items for all congregations of that language. However, all congregations are responsible for submitting their own requests for foreign-language items and special-request items for their publishers.

83. Along with the service overseer, the literature servant of the language-coordinating congregation is responsible for ensuring that there is a sufficient supply of literature and magazines for use in the field ministry. He is also responsible for ensuring that the common literature supply area is not overstocked. In order to determine how much literature to request, he should be alert to any upcoming special activity such as a probable increase in the number of auxiliary pioneers during the circuit overseer’s visit. He fills out a Literature Request Form (S-14) and gives it to the service overseer for approval. The request is then submitted to the branch office, using jw.org.

84. Processing Literature Requests From Congregations: The congregations should be provided with a schedule of when they need to submit their literature requests to the branch office for processing. In many branches all congregation requests are received through the jw.org website. If congregations are submitting hard copy Literature Request Forms (S-14), the branch should enter these within a few days of their arrival. The branch office should
have a procedure in place to verify the reasonableness of quantities requested. Each branch can determine what quantity checks should be performed, based on the need in the local territory. To avoid overstock, the branch office should apply request limits on certain items requested by the congregations.

85. A well-defined schedule for shipping should be provided to the congregations indicating when their requests will be processed and shipped to different regions. The branch should monitor this schedule and make adjustments to ensure that the schedule is followed.

86. Processing Congregation Requests for Periodicals: Adjustments to magazine requests should be processed promptly so that they become effective with the next available issue. Therefore, effort should be made to enter requests from the congregations within a day or two after the requests are received at the branch.

87. It would be good for the branch to evaluate the quantity of overstocked magazines reported by congregations on their Monthly Movement of Literature (S-28) form. If it appears that many magazines requested are left over, reminders should be provided in order to help congregations submit more conservative requests. These reminders would be given with a view to assisting congregations to request magazines wisely.

88. Processing Requests From Congregation Members and Non-Witnesses: When a congregation member sends a request for literature to the branch, he should be directed to obtain the item through his local congregation. The congregations can occasionally be reminded of this direction. When a non-Witness, who is not yet associating with a congregation or having a Bible study, requests single copies of basic literature items from the branch, these items may be supplied. This may be done by mailing the requested items to his address or by asking the local congregation to provide them. If two or more copies of a publication are requested or if a publication is requested in multiple languages, the requester should be directed to contact the local Kingdom Hall.

89. When a person writes to the branch requesting publications for someone other than himself, he should be informed that the branch does not honor third-party requests. Generally, to follow up on requests from non-Witnesses, the branch sends a Please Arrange for a Qualified Publisher to Call on This Person (S-70) form to the local congregation, indicating what was requested.

90. If someone asks about the cost of our publications or expresses a desire to purchase our literature, it should be explained that our literature is made available at no charge and that the worldwide Bible educational work of Jehovah’s Witnesses is supported entirely by voluntary donations. Donations that accompany a literature request should be acknowledged. If it appears that the money received is a payment for literature, the literature can be sent. However, the funds should be acknowledged as a donation. Each branch may determine the minimum amount of a donation for which an acknowledgment would be sent. While some branches have found it advisable to send out acknowledgments for donations in the amount of USD 5 or more, other branches may wish to acknowledge smaller amounts.

91. Processing Requests Received at the Tour Lobby: The local Branch Committee should determine which literature items are made available in the tour lobby and how much literature is appropriate for a visitor to obtain. It is sufficient to offer some basic literature items for the public and field service items for Bethel family members. If a person requests items that are not stocked, he should be encouraged
to submit his request through the local congregation. Literature that is designed specifically for publishers should be obtained, not at the tour lobby, but through the local congregation only. This includes items such as badge cards and durable power of attorney (DPA) forms as well as other medical documents.

92. Processing Requests From Vendors: It would not be appropriate to supply our literature to vendors who intend to sell it. The branch may advise the vendor to direct individuals who have an interest in our literature to contact a local Kingdom Hall to fill their needs.

93. Shipping Costs: Shipping literature and magazines to the congregations is a large expense. Therefore, literature and magazines should be shipped in the most economical way practical. The shipping method and the associated costs should be reviewed periodically, perhaps every couple of years, to determine whether better service could be provided and shipping costs reduced. If it is felt that major adjustments are needed, the recommendations may be submitted to the Publishing Committee.

94. Although the need for expedited shipments should be kept to a minimum by good planning and monitoring of regular requests, there are occasions when it is necessary to use an expedited service to meet the congregations’ needs. For example, such service may be necessary for foreign-language field items and for replacement shipments of the *Life and Ministry Meeting Workbook* and magazines. Congregations requesting this expedited service should be charged for the shipping cost. However, if it is the branch office that determines the need for this service, the branch will absorb the cost. For example, no charge would be billed to congregations for shipments of the *Life and Ministry Meeting Workbook* when expedited service is the only viable method to ensure that it is received in time for use by the local congregations.

**PURCHASING**

95. Most branches have a separate Purchasing Department. It is the responsibility of this department to (1) obtain goods or services from suppliers, (2) care for business relationships, including those with service providers such as energy and logistics companies, (3) negotiate contracts, (4) operate receiving docks, (4) look after nonliterature inventories, (5) distribute commonly used supplies, and (6) sell items no longer used by the branch. Very small branches, however, may simply have brothers or sisters care for various parts of this work in addition to other assignments.

96. Accomplishing the Kingdom work requires the use of a significant amount of funds. It is the desire of the Governing Body to provide what is needed. We trust that those involved in approving requests and doing the purchasing will exercise care in how these funds are spent. Even in branches where large sums of money are involved, it is important to pay attention to small purchases and not to be wasteful. Those purchasing for the branch should obtain goods and services at the best overall value, while providing prompt and helpful service to requesting departments.

97. Purchases involving the daily operation of a branch as well as requisitions for items up to USD 3,000 are approved by the Branch Committee or the Country Committee unless given other authorization. This limit applies to the requisition total, not individual items. Requisitions should not be divided with the purpose of remaining under the spending limit. At the discretion of the Branch Committee, trustworthy brothers may be appointed as requisition signers. These brothers should have a delegated approval limit within the branch's approval level. Ultimately, the Branch Committee is accountable for
all approved requisitions. Although the replacement of some small machinery or equipment can be approved by the local committee or appointed requisition signers, requests for any purchase involving the acquiring of property, enlargement of branch buildings, obtaining additional machinery and equipment, computers, vehicles, or any other major purchases for the home or printery should be submitted to the Publishing Committee for approval. The same is true when replacing existing equipment or disposing of property, machinery, and so forth. The reason for the request should be given, as well as an explanation of all the associated costs, including shipping costs, duties, taxes, and a realistic anticipated return from any trade-in or sale of old equipment. If the prices are estimates, an explanation of how the prices were determined should be supplied, including copies of any documentation that supports the estimate, such as Internet Web pages or catalog pages. Requests that are related or are part of a system should be submitted together so that the Publishing Committee can easily ascertain the overall cost of the items being requested. Additional guidelines have been provided regarding information needed for specific requests, such as Vehicle Guidelines (PD-30). Donated items or equipment are not exempt from the approval process. In the case of donated vehicles, it is generally preferred that the donor sells the vehicle and donates the proceeds to the branch. Nonliterature Branch Requests (AB-3a) related to construction projects should be reviewed with the Regional Design/Construction Department prior to submission.

98. Obtaining materials and services on time and at a good value is essential to the work of all departments and construction groups. Because of this, the Branch Committee contact for the Purchasing Department should be someone who can dedicate the time needed to become well-acquainted with the work. He should also stay updated on the contents of Purchasing Guidelines (PD-1) and the Purchasing Guidelines Training website. While he does not need to be a procurement expert, he should be able to apply the concepts in those guidelines to the needs in the branch and the field. He should also strive to broaden his understanding of the procurement needs of departments. This greatly helps the Branch Committee to make decisions on how to care for these needs in harmony with direction from headquarters. The Branch Committee contact should also meet regularly with the Purchasing Department overseer and his assistant. Among other things, this will allow him to stay up-to-date on the status of the work and to give attention to personnel matters.

99. Among other things, those overseeing the Purchasing Department should ensure that the department (1) provides "helpful services" to other departments (1 Cor. 12:28), (2) obtains approved goods and services on time and at the best overall value, (3) maintains a positive and spiritual work environment, (4) is flexible and scalable to support the work, and (5) strives to perform the work with the fewest members reasonably possible.

100. Some departments, by the nature of their work, require more materials and services than others. It would be good for the Purchasing Department overseer to meet separately with the oversight of each of these departments periodically. The goal should be to discuss matters that require attention and to learn details of upcoming work that will need support. These brief meetings can encourage and strengthen a spirit of collaboration and unity.

101. Fundamental Business Practices: Boaz, Jeremiah, and Ezra were careful in the way they handled money and recorded transactions. For example, rather than trying to bypass the nearer relative and buy the land secretly,
honorable Boaz fairly presented the facts publicly. (Ruth 4:1-12) Jeremiah negotiated a fair and reasonable price, documented these terms in accordance with local requirements, and ensured that transactional records were available for future reference. (Jer. 32:9-12) Ezra ensured that the millions of dollars' worth of treasures entrusted to his care were safeguarded with proper controls. (Ezra 8:25-34) Likewise today, those handling dedicated funds should imitate these faithful examples by conducting business in a way that always brings glory to Jehovah's name.—1 Cor. 10:31; Eph. 5:10.

102. While local market conditions may vary, the purchasing process should follow a standard approach. This includes (1) providing research assistance to the requesting department, (2) reviewing the requisition, (3) issuing a Purchase Order, and (4) receiving the goods. The details of these functions are explained in Purchasing Guidelines (PD-1) and on the Purchasing Guidelines Training website.

103. It is preferred that cash or credit cards not be used for significant branch purchases unless there is no alternative. Many developing countries are transitioning from cash to electronic means of payment. Therefore, investigate if alternative payment terms and methods would be acceptable to suppliers in your area. Various payment options are considered in order of preference in Purchasing Guidelines (PD-1). See Branch Accounting Department Guidelines (badg) for instructions on proper cash control.

104. Bible Principles in Business Dealings: Business dealings should always be conducted in harmony with Bible principles. Precautions should be taken to reduce the possibility of problems developing. This is true even when engaging in business dealings with brothers. Many of our brothers are eager to assist the work by offering to sell or donate goods or services to Bethel. Their assistance is greatly appreciated. Business dealings, however, should never leave the organization or the brothers involved open to accusations by the authorities, other brothers, or opposers. Goods or services that are offered to the branch should be clearly defined in writing. Also, before contracting with a brother or his company, a thorough business review process should be followed as one would do with any supplier to ensure that the branch is getting the best value.

105. When a business arrangement with a brother is contemplated, consideration should be given to how it may appear to others. We honor Jehovah and uphold our brothers' reputation by not creating a real or perceived conflict of interest in business dealings. As an example, a brother acting as an advisor or a temporary volunteer at the branch while directing business to himself or to one of his companies could be perceived as being involved in a conflict of interest, since he has information or influence generally not available to others. Normally a brother can act as a consultant, volunteering his services to assist for a period of time (temporary worker), or he can be a supplier or a contractor used by the branch. However, he should act in only one of these three roles. Like the apostle Paul, we seek to avoid “having any man find fault with us... for we 'care for every thing honestly, not only in the sight of Jehovah but also in the sight of men.'” —2 Cor. 8:20-21.

106. Those involved in specifying materials or selecting suppliers should avoid accepting personal favors, loans, or gifts of more than a nominal value from anyone who is providing goods and services to the organization. (Ex. 23:8) Those caring for business matters follow Jesus' example of not using his powers to his own benefit. (Luke 4: 3, 4) Even if not illegal, activities that are out of harmony with the principles of trust, integrity, and good judgment must be avoided. (Matt. 7:12) The earthly part of Jehovah's organization...
has a fine reputation in the community, and that reputation must be maintained.

107. Determining What to Purchase and From Where: To use dedicated funds to the greatest advantage requires advance planning and, at times, consultation with others. (Prov. 15:22; 21:5) Branches should be conservative and request only the items that are needed. Is the item needed to accomplish the work, or are there practical alternatives? Can the item be shared between departments? Is it practical to rent the item or to buy a used item? Would it be more cost-effective to hire an outside firm to do the work? What are the specifications for the item that is needed? Is there verification that the equipment is of the right size and appropriate for the intended application? Would local publishers view this expenditure as excessive? (1 Cor. 10:23) How will replacement parts or a warranty be obtained? The Primary Purchasing Branch, Regional Design/Construction Department, or the Global Purchasing Department Regional Support team can assist in answering these questions.

108. It is usually practical to obtain equipment and supplies that are produced locally if the overall cost and quality is reasonable. To obtain the best value, consideration should be given not only to the price but also to the quality of a product, the service, and the availability of spare parts. Long-standing relationships with reliable suppliers are often valuable. Some suppliers, however, initially offer good pricing and service to get branch business, with the goal of gradually raising prices or reducing service levels. Therefore, it is wise to check with other suppliers periodically to ensure that the pricing, quality, and service rendered is still competitive.

109. There are advantages to having local suppliers deliver items to the branch where possible rather than sending brothers out to shop. As delivery service is being offered in more lands, suppliers should be asked whether such service could be provided. If the supplier does not deliver, perhaps arrangements can be made with a local delivery company where appropriate.

110. Trade shows can provide opportunities to obtain information and technical assistance as well as to establish contacts with suppliers. However, with increased information available on the Internet, the time and cost involved in attending a trade show needs to be weighed carefully. Where there is a need to attend a trade show, the number of attendees should be kept to a minimum and approval to attend should be given by the Branch Committee or the supervising committee at world headquarters.

111. Requesting an item from another country through Nonliterature Branch Requests (AB-3a) may be advantageous because of high prices, poor quality, or lack of local availability. The Primary Purchasing Branch should be utilized as much as possible to fill such requests.

112. Nonliterature Branch Requests (AB-3a) should include the following information on the request: why the item is needed, all costs (that is, purchase price, shipping costs, duties, taxes, and a realistic anticipated return from any trade-in or sales of old equipment), manufacturer, make, model, part number, a basic item description, shipping method, date needed, and, if applicable, electrical details (that is, voltage, frequency, and phase). When ordering replacement parts, the manufacturer, model, and serial number of the equipment should be included. Product information sheets, parts diagrams, drawings, and website references are helpful when available. Providing complete, detailed information makes it possible to order the item from the supplier quickly. Failure to include needed information on Nonliterature Branch Requests (AB-3a) may delay approvals. When determining the...
“Required by” date for delivery to your branch, it would be good to consider the following steps that may be needed depending on the value or complexity of the request: (1) review and approval at your branch (often one to three days), (2) technical review by a world headquarters department (up to two weeks), (3) headquarters approval, (4) manufacturing (for items not in inventory at the filling branch), (5) shipping time in transit, (6) customs clearance, and (7) any other possible steps. If after considering these steps you determine that the items to be requested cannot be delivered in time for your needs, please contact the filling branch prior to submission of the request. They may be able to recommend other options to meet your needs.

Nonliterature Branch Requests (AB-3a) prepared by your own branch should be created or reviewed by your Purchasing Department before they are sent to world headquarters. Your Purchasing Department should assist in determining where to buy the items (for example, from a Primary Purchasing Branch, via an international purchasing arrangement, and so on) and validate that the necessary details are included. In some cases, your Purchasing Department may identify materials that may be obtained from local inventory or through local suppliers instead of requesting them from other branches. Each Nonliterature Branch Requests (AB-3a) should state whether the request is within an existing budget or not.

113. International supplier arrangements have been established for paper, printing plates, ink, kitchen and laundry equipment, seating, and other items. Many of these arrangements allow branches to purchase items and obtain services through local or regional authorized dealers while receiving discounted pricing based on the organization’s global volume. Information regarding such arrangements is outlined on jw.org. These arrangements should be used to their fullest, thus providing the greatest savings for the organization. Therefore, all those involved in specifying and purchasing items should consider the arrangements on jw.org prior to recommending other options. Each branch is in the best position to determine which of these purchasing arrangements is most appropriate. If it appears that another manufacturer or product will provide greater value, the reasons for the preference should be explained on the Nonliterature Branch Requests (AB-3a).—See 5:46.

114. In some countries, many items are readily available for purchase via the Internet. In some cases, Internet-based suppliers may be more reliable and have less expensive products when compared with a local supplier. However, caution is needed. While websites may advertise low prices, it is essential to determine the reliability of the supplier prior to making a purchase. Is the Internet-based supplier a legitimate business? Does the supplier's website have a phone number to call if there is a problem? What is their return policy? Will the warranty be voided if the item is imported? Is it also important to consider all the shipping costs and duties associated with importing an item. If the Internet-based supplier is located in another country and questions arise about the company or the product, the branch overseeing that country should be contacted. Depending on the volume and savings that can be experienced, that branch may be asked, in advance of any purchase, whether it is cheaper for that branch to purchase the items or to act as the freight forwarder for the items purchased.

115. Significant savings in money and time can be achieved by coordinating the suppliers used in the construction and maintenance of Kingdom Halls, Assembly Halls, and field missionary homes. Some suppliers operate nationally or regionally and are willing to provide better purchasing terms when approached by the branch. Further details on this matter can be found in Local
Purchasing for Bethel Family Members: In some countries, it may be difficult for Bethel family members to purchase some items on their own. For example, the branch may be located a long distance from stores or shopping areas. Or perhaps family members are not able to obtain banking cards and thus cannot make online purchases. In view of these circumstances, a branch may decide that the Purchasing Department should assist with some personal purchases. These would be limited to suppliers that the branch is already using for branch operations. On the other hand, assistance with personal requests should be limited in lands where it is easy for the family to do their own buying. This is often more advantageous for the Bethelite. For example, a private purchase may result in a better warranty. If the branch assists with personal purchases, care should be taken to avoid conflicts with accounting or tax laws. Additionally, requests from departments should have higher priority than personal requests.

Some branches provide a commissary (Bethel Shop) as a service to members of the Bethel family. Historically, the Bethel Office (Bethel Home) has taken the lead in organizing the commissary, overseeing the personnel, and choosing the items to stock. However, the Branch Committee should consider whether it would be more efficient to merge the inventory handling of the operation under the oversight of the Purchasing Department. Regardless of which department oversees the commissary, the Purchasing Department should care for the buying of items and the maintaining of bulk inventories used to replenish the commissary. Where possible, an effort should be made to have a consistent list of items and to adjust that list only when the needs of the family change. Preference should be given to obtaining items from suppliers who are able to deliver to the branch instead of sending brothers out to shop in markets.

Advanced Purchasing Issues: Some business transactions conducted by the branch are complex and must be carefully documented in writing. For example, there may be a need to document various aspects of the business transaction clearly, in addition to price—such aspects as payment terms, delivery, return policy, installation, and warranty support. In other cases, it may be necessary to hire outside laborers or contractors to work on branch property, to purchase an expensive piece of equipment, or to engage the services of a firm. In these situations, it is good to have a detailed, written contract containing a statement of work and to have all parties sign it. When outside laborers work on branch property, care must be taken to limit the risk to the organization should they get injured, injure others, or cause damage to branch property. In some countries, courts can award large damages to injured parties. If insurance is common in your country, does the outside worker or contractor have adequate coverage and are all certificates on file at the branch? Have the outside workers agreed not to hold the branch responsible? It is often good to involve the branch’s Legal Department and the Branch Risk Management Desk to assist with these matters. For major contracts, the Global Risk Management Desk in the Treasurer’s Office can assist as indicated in the Branch Accounting Department Guidelines (badg). Instructions in Guidelines for Procuring Contracted Services (PD-2) and Safety and Outside Contractors (A-125) may also be of assistance.

Some complicated purchases or contracts require complex negotiations. These may include negotiating with suppliers where there are no other local options, high-cost or high-risk transactions, and purchases of items considered strategic or highly sensitive
to the branch. This could include contracts for design or construction services. In such instances, it is often good to benefit from the advice of others at the branch who have practical experience in the matter as well as those who have good business skills. (Prov. 11:14) Contact the Global Purchasing Department Regional Support team for assistance in how to care for negotiations that are more complex.

120. Keeping on hand a small inventory of supplies that are used by one or more departments can save time and money. The Purchasing Department should be responsible for the inventory, as this helps reduce duplicate stocks and staffing. Very small branches, however, may simply assign a brother or a sister to care for the entire branch inventory in addition to other assignments. (Neh. 13:13) Items are considered for inventorying if they are frequently used, if the usual acquisition time is unacceptable (such as for critical spare parts), or if purchasing larger amounts at one time is cost-effective. Typically, no more than a four-month supply should be maintained. A simple reorder-point system factoring in usage, lead time, and price will ensure that the correct quantities are stored. As the rate of usage determines the amount of stock, it is essential that inventories, including stocks of critical spare parts, are maintained and reviewed on a regular basis. Further assistance with managing inventories can be obtained from the Global Purchasing Department Regional Support team.

121. The branch facilities should be examined periodically to identify any equipment or items that are not needed. Items that are in excess of what is required may be disposed of in several ways. These items may be used by other departments or branches, returned to the supplier, sold, or scrapped. Branch Committee approval is needed to dispose of an item prior to pursuing these options. In the case of the disposal of large equipment and vehicles, Publication Committee approval is required before initiating the sale.

122. Department Members: Those caring for purchasing, receiving, and inventorying materials are handling donated funds. They must be trustworthy and diligent in caring for their assignment. The overseer must appreciate the need to serve the interests of the organization as a whole, including the many departments within the branch that rely on the Purchasing Department for goods and services. (Jas. 3:17, 18) He must be a good communicator, conscious of training others, able to delegate where necessary, not opinionated or a procrastinator. An understanding of business matters and computer skills is helpful. He will avoid sharp practices, maintaining respect for Bible principles and legal requirements.—Titus 3:1, 2.

123. Getting Help: Good communication is essential in making sound purchasing decisions. Therefore, assistance may be requested from the Primary Purchasing Branch or the Global Purchasing Department Regional Support team. Routine purchasing matters, such as clarifying specifications, questions about specific suppliers, requests for pricing, and reporting claims, may be cared for by e-mail. The department e-mail address used should be an address monitored by more than one person in the Purchasing Department as well as appropriate Branch Committee members rather than a personal e-mail address. Written correspondence should continue to be used when requests are made for extensive research or when direction is needed. Further instructions on the day-to-day operation of the Purchasing Department can be found in the Purchasing Guidelines (PD-1) and on the Purchasing Guidelines Training website. Ensure that all in the Purchasing Department are familiar with and use these resources. In addition, other departments that work closely with the Purchasing Department should receive a copy of Purchasing Guidelines (PD-1).
Bible prophecy indicates that the work of the earthly part of Jehovah's organization will accelerate as we near the end of this system of things. (Isa. 60:22; Hab. 2:3) We see this taking place. As the number of Kingdom proclaimers increases, more facilities are needed. The acquisition, renovation, or new construction of Kingdom Halls, Assembly Halls, school facilities, and remote translation offices supports the growth in the field.

Since this work requires great effort as well as dedicated funds, advance planning is essential. Therefore, each branch is requested to have a master plan for Kingdom Halls, Assembly Halls, and field residences for special full-time servants. Annual budgets are also required for ongoing maintenance and small projects at the branch. From these master plans, a recommended budget is prepared annually, outlining the funds needed for the next three years. When a larger construction project is identified, clear definitions of scope, accurate cost estimates, studies of life-cycle costs, and realistic schedules are needed. The Regional Design/Construction Department (RDC) assists with this. It is expected that once approved, projects will be monitored and completed within the proposed scope, budget, and schedule. Each project should be planned with the goal of zero injuries, in both a spiritual and a physical sense. In view of the dynamic nature of the work of the organization at this time, we have to plan, design, and construct in a way that allows for flexibility as we follow Jehovah's fast-moving celestial chariot. (Ezek. 1:20, 28) Proper attention to maintenance must also be given in order to preserve the substantial investment made.

Jehovah is the great Designer, Architect, and Builder, as well as the Maintainer of his creative works. (Heb. 11:10; fn.) We look to him for direction on how to accomplish this significant work.

The Worldwide Design/Construction Department (WDC) is a headquarters department that works under the direction of the Publishing Committee. It oversees the construction, renovation, maintenance, and real estate activities of all facilities worldwide. This includes the acquisition and sale of property as well as the planning, designing, engineering, constructing, renovating, and maintaining of buildings on those sites.

There is a Regional Design/Construction Department (RDC) in Africa, the Americas, the Asia/Pacific region, and Europe. Each of these world headquarters departments operates as an extension of the WDC to oversee the work of construction, maintenance, and real estate in a specified region. Their primary role is to support and provide direction to branches with regard to planning, construction, and maintenance of Kingdom Halls, Assembly Halls, and branch related facilities, as well as the purchase, sale, and rental of property, and to provide training in these areas. They also assist with the preparation of planning options reports, concept design proposals, design programs, and they oversee the preparation of construction documents and detailed cost estimates. They coordinate renovation schedules as well as maintenance training visits and support.

The Local Design/Construction Department (LDC) functions under the direct oversight of the Branch Committee but in accord with the guidelines provided by headquarters. The Local Design/Construction Department Guidelines (DC-3) provide direction on the operation of the LDC. This department coordinates the planning, property acquisition and sale, design, construction, maintenance, and operation of Kingdom Halls, Assembly Halls,
field residences for special full-time servants, and other small projects, as well as provides assistance with disaster relief efforts in a branch or a territory. The LDC takes the lead and works in close cooperation with the Service Department to develop any master plans for Kingdom Halls, Assembly Halls, and residences for special full-time servants. (1 Pet. 3:8) The master plans identify the needs in the field for new construction and major renovations and help establish the priorities. The LDC also makes sure that the approved plan for the year is executed. The LDC works closely with the RDC and the Branch Committee to coordinate all projects under its care.

130. The Branch Committee assesses the needs and directs disaster relief work by means of the Disaster Relief Desk. In most cases, the LDC will coordinate any needed reconstruction activities. The Disaster Relief Guidelines (S-180) provide direction.

131. Oversight of the LDC: The responsibilities assigned to the LDC require extensive work and cost, a large number of people, and cooperation with other Bethel departments. Therefore, it would be advantageous for the LDC overseer to be a Branch Committee member, provided that he has the capability and sufficient time to handle this assignment. In view of the importance of this assignment, consult with the RDC before making changes in the oversight of this department.

132. Role of the Branch Committee: The Branch Committee is responsible for the operation and maintenance of all theocratic facilities within the branch's assigned territory. The committee approves the master plans for the LDC program, which include the yearly recommendations for spending on Kingdom Halls, Assembly Halls, and field residences for special full-time servants. The committee also approves the master plan for local projects handled by the facility contact/desk and Maintenance Department and the yearly recommendation for funding requests. The Branch Committee should carefully monitor the number of personnel at the branch facility and any remote translation offices to ensure that it is in harmony with staffing guidelines provided by the Governing Body committees. The committee assures that adequate safety and training programs are in place and that all adhere to these programs.

133. The Branch Committee should try to anticipate necessary changes to the facilities some years in advance to allow adequate time for finding suitable solutions. If approval is given to investigate the Branch Committee's request further, the WDC will be directed to serve as the representative of the Publishing Committee to review the branch's needs, develop options to meet those needs, and implement the approved solutions. At times the WDC will initiate these discussions at the direction of the Publishing Committee.

134. To assist with planning, the WDC assigns a representative to work with two Branch Committee members and a representative from the RDC. These brothers form a Planning Work Group that investigates solutions to the facility needs within a branch territory. As projects develop, the WDC will delegate as much work as possible to the RDC, local construction oversight, the local branch, and in the case of large branch expansion projects, Construction Committees. This will help speed up the work.

135. During the investigation and development of a project, the two Branch Committee members designated as contacts for communicating with the WDC are responsible for providing updates and seeking the direction of the entire Branch Committee as needed. The WDC will schedule meetings with the entire Branch Committee on significant matters or at significant milestones in the different phases of a project. At
these meetings, it is imperative that Branch Committee members ask any questions or make clear any reservations they have regarding a project so that these can be addressed during the planning phases. As representatives of all the occupants of the proposed facilities, the Branch Committee will have good suggestions that should be factored into the planning. The Branch Committee should always feel free to contact the WDC when questions arise.

136. The Branch Committee needs to give its full support to ensure that projects proceed as approved. Branch Committee members will not be expected to serve on Construction Project Committees or Construction Committees. Nevertheless, the Branch Committee will continue to be consulted at key junctures. Construction Project Committees will work under the oversight of the WDC. Construction Committees will work under the oversight of the RDC.

137. Project Development: This consists of seven phases: (1) Investigation, (2) Planning, (3) Concept Design, (4) Design Development, (5) Construction Documents, (6) Implementation, and (7) Closeout. How these phases are implemented depends on the type and size of the project. Once an option has been selected, a concept design proposal will be prepared for each major project. It includes a summary of the project cost, scope, and schedule and sets out the parameters of the project.

138. Project Approvals and Cost Tracking: Proper approval, budgeting, and cost tracking for construction help to assure that dedicated funds are used to the best advantage. The Project Tracking module of HuB is used to approve building and property related projects and to track their costs. Approval for most projects is requested by submitting a Project Approval Request (DC-41). Larger projects are approved at headquarters during the concept design phase, and thereafter DC-41 forms are submitted for funding approval in accord with the approved concept design. The branch may also choose to use this module for local maintenance projects. When the total cost of a project is higher than the branch approval level, the project should be reviewed by the RDC before the project request is submitted to headquarters via HuB for approval. Additional details with regard to obtaining project approvals are shown in the document Branch Facility Work Types (DC-40).

139. Each year the RDC will work with individual branches to develop a construction budget that should include all materials and fixed assets to be purchased for the project, whether it will be capitalized or expensed in the accounting records. The monthly financial activity related to an approved project along with a brief progress report will be submitted to headquarters through HuB. In some cases, such as some Kingdom Hall projects, where project expenses are tracked with a separate software outside of HuB, each month the branch will enter a summary of the financial activity for each project in HuB. A Project Report (DC-43) is also required monthly for all projects with a budget greater than USD 1 million. At the close of a project, the branch will update HuB to indicate that the project is complete. A Final Project Report (DC-44) should be submitted in HuB for all projects approved by headquarters. In some cases, the WDC may ask the branch or the RDC to explain why the project was or was not completed as planned. For all projects, including locally approved projects, a final report that includes lessons learned should be reviewed by the departments involved so that improvements can be incorporated into future projects.

140. Once the scope, schedule, and budget of the project have been documented and approved, they should not be changed. Without reducing the quality of the approved design, every effort should be made to complete the project.
below or within the original budget through careful project management, procurement planning, contract administration, standardization, and the use of global and regional purchasing arrangements. The brothers assigned to implement a project will be required to adhere closely to the approved scope and to the approved schedule so that there are no unnecessary delays, which add to the cost and will inconvenience the branch. If adjustments must be made because of developments outside our control, a Project Change Order Request (DC-42) should be submitted for approval. If the project was originally approved at headquarters, the request should be reviewed by the RDC prior to being submitted to the WDC.

141. Overruns: If the scope of a project does not change but the project will be over budget, the overruns should be acknowledged in writing by the oversight that originally approved the budget. If the overrun takes the project above the branch's approval limit, a memorandum should be reviewed by the RDC and submitted to the WDC for acknowledgement. The document will address (1) the reasons for the overrun, (2) what has been done to reduce the overruns as much as possible, and (3) what lessons have been learned to avoid this in the future.

142. The LDC cooperates with the Service Department to maintain master plans outlining where Kingdom Halls, Assembly Halls, and field residences for special full-time servants are needed. Based on this plan, the Branch Committee consults with the RDC each year to prioritize the work and to develop and submit a spending plan for the next service year to the Publishing Committee. The spending plan details the current needs in the branch territory in the following areas: (1) the number of properties expected to be purchased; (2) the number of planned new Kingdom Hall projects; (3) the number of planned Kingdom Hall major renovation projects; (4) the number of planned assembly venue projects; (5) the number of planned special full-time servant field residence projects (including circuit overseer apartments); (6) the number of maintenance facility inspections to carry out; (7) the number of construction servants, Construction Groups, and Assembly Hall servants needed to support the program effectively; and (8) the total amount in USD projected to be spent on the above activities during the service year.—See 5:155; 6:154.

143. Based on the approved annual spending plan, the Branch Committee may approve individual projects (either LDC or branch projects) with a budget of less than the maximum amount that will be assigned to the branch each year. Projects that exceed the spending limit should be submitted to the WDC for consideration. All congregations will have the opportunity to support the global construction program by means of a monthly donation by resolution from their congregation funds for this purpose. Contribution boxes should also be set up for specific local projects.

144. Facilities Maintenance: The premature deterioration of facilities and equipment is costly to the organization. The Branch Committee has the responsibility to emphasize the importance of maintenance at each facility in its branch territory and to make sure that a maintenance program is being followed. Scheduled maintenance along with timely repairs preserves the significant investment in buildings and equipment. By practicing good preventive maintenance, materials and equipment can achieve or even exceed their life expectancy. Materials and equipment should not be replaced prematurely. The Branch Committee should be conscious of the overall condition of each facility in its branch territory. The Branch Committee should ensure that sufficiently trained and qualified people are assigned to handle maintenance. The RDC will assist branches with implementing these principles.
145. Just as the LDC is the single point of contact that the Branch Committee uses to care for facilities in the field, the branch should designate a Branch Committee member to be the facility contact, a single point of contact for issues related to operating branch facilities. The contact would oversee the work of the Facility Desk as outlined in chapter 4 of the *Facility Maintenance Guidelines* (DC-91). Generally, the Branch Committee member who is selected should be one of the two members of the Planning Work Group who works along with the WDC in planning facility needs.

146. The branch Maintenance Department focuses primarily on maintaining the branch facility by following the yearly schedule developed for preventive-maintenance tasks for the facility. Facility-condition inspections identify areas in need of attention and are part of the yearly tasks that should be carried out by the Maintenance Department. Apart from routine maintenance, inspections, and repairs, the maintenance staff should have minimal involvement in projects, such as replacement of finishes, reconfiguration of interior work spaces, and upgrades of building systems and equipment. In an effort to maintain as small a maintenance staff as possible, when these small-scale projects become necessary, it may be best to outsource this work to companies, commuters, or temporary volunteers. Depending on the nature of the upgrade to the building systems or the replacement of equipment, design input and personnel support from the RDC may be required. Requests for large or costly equipment replacements and system upgrades should be reviewed by the facility contact and the RDC to determine whether this work fits into the overall life-cycle plan of the building.

147. The RDC will maintain close contact with each branch to provide the needed support. Each year the RDC will work with the branches to work out a recommended facilities budget for maintenance related work. All (nonproject) machinery or equipment fixed assets and routine (nonproject) building repair and maintenance expenses should be included in the facilities budget request. Implementing a routine preventive-maintenance program involves less time and stress than caring for unexpected breakdowns. The WDC’s maintenance training program provides a yearly comprehensive schedule for preventive maintenance specific to the needs of the facilities. This information can be used to develop an in-house training program. Each branch should endeavor to perform its own maintenance of buildings and equipment. However, if assistance is needed with ordering parts, doing technical repairs, or arranging for specialized training, please contact the RDC. Additional direction related to maintenance is provided in the *Facility Maintenance Guidelines* (DC-91).

148. Training and cross-training are essential and need to be included as part of the work of the Maintenance Department. It is the responsibility of the branch to render support to all facilities in its branch territory. The branch Maintenance Department is responsible for the maintenance of facilities at the branch location.

149. The LDC is responsible for the maintenance of facilities in the field, including Assembly Halls, remote translation offices, dedicated school facilities (that are not at the branch), field residences, and literature depots. To the extent possible, local volunteers should provide the maintenance support for these facilities. If additional skilled support is needed, the LDC should contact the branch Maintenance Department. If further assistance is needed, please contact the RDC. The Branch Committee can best determine how to organize the work in the branch territory.—See 6:156.

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150. Remote Translation Offices (RTOs): Whenever practical, the facility used for translation work should be located where the target language is actively used. The Branch Committee may initiate a request to establish a remote translation office, perhaps even relocating a translation team from the main branch facility. This also makes more space available at the branch. Although RTOs are considered branch facilities, they typically should not be set up or operated like a branch.

151. There are many ways facilities can be used as RTOs and residences. There is much flexibility regarding the use of commuters and the manner in which support services are provided. This flexibility helps to keep the facility needs as simple as possible. Additional direction with regard to remote translation offices is found in the Remote Translation Office Facility Guidelines (DC-15). Good cooperation and prompt follow-through by all involved will help ensure that approved RTOs are set up and put into operation as quickly as possible.

152. Kingdom Halls and Assembly Halls: Kingdom Halls and Assembly Halls are centers of true worship in the local community. The Branch Committee should be attentive to the condition of existing meeting places and to the need for new ones. By practical planning, attention should be given to using existing Kingdom Halls to their maximum seating capacity by reasonably increasing the number of publishers per congregation as well as the number of congregations per Kingdom Hall. Although our meeting places should be simple, they should have a level of personal comfort conducive to theocratic education. There should be adequate sanitation, including clean water to wash hands. There should be provisions for clean drinking water in harmony with local practices, good sound equipment (when used), adequate shelter from normal weather conditions, and good ventilation and lighting. Video equipment should be provided where possible in line with established policy. The meeting places must be relatively easy to clean and maintain so that they are acceptable as places of worship. Further details related to organizing the Kingdom Hall construction program are outlined in the Kingdom Hall Design/Construction Guidelines (DC-14).

153. Each branch should have a limited number of standard plans adapted to local conditions and expectations. The halls should be sized slightly larger than the expected regular meeting attendance and ideally located for use by more than one congregation.

154. Although Assembly Halls can be convenient, they are not always cost-effective. In many cases, suitable venues can be provided by renting local facilities. However, if renting is not viable, it might be appropriate to consider building. Assembly Halls should be well-located, simple, practical, easy to maintain, and of modest appearance. If a need arises for an Assembly Hall near a border with an adjacent country, an analysis should be done to see whether it is feasible to share the facility across borders. Planning in this way helps not to impose expensive or time-consuming burdens on the brothers. In some cases, it may be practical to construct a Kingdom Hall with a covered expandable seating area for use by one or two circuits. The RDC will assist in planning and providing design criteria for Assembly Halls and expandable Kingdom Halls. Further details can be found in Assembly Hall Design/Construction Guidelines (DC-13).

155. In addition to expediting the work, attention should be given to reducing the cost of Kingdom Halls and Assembly Halls by considering the standardization of design and materials; by using global, regional, and local purchasing arrangements; and by making use of local resources.—See 5:142.
156. The number of Bethelites in the LDC should be kept to a minimum. The focus should be on having those in the field accomplish as much of the work as possible. Local congregation volunteers should provide most of the labor and be involved in all aspects of the work. The Local Design/Construction Department Guidelines (DC-3) provide direction on the operation of the LDC and the use of local workforce.

157. The RDC should maintain close communication with the LDC. The RDC may assign a representative to visit periodically to review the progress of the Kingdom Hall and Assembly Hall program and provide assistance to the branch.

158. It is recognized that for the efficient operation of Construction Groups and field representatives, travel is needed. In general, the branch should provide the necessary vehicles or direct that public transportation be used for the majority of work-related needs. While it is expected that the vehicle assigned to each Construction Group would be used for the daily commute to the project and for most necessary transport related to theocratic construction assignments, it is understood that in some cases brothers will have their own vehicles that can be used. If using a personal vehicle is more cost-effective than using other transportation, a reimbursement based on the approved rate may be given.

159. Bible Schools: The Service and Teaching committees generally prefer to keep the number of permanent buildings for school facilities to a minimum. Generally, Assembly Halls rather than branch facilities should be considered as sites for school facilities. If it is decided that a permanent facility is necessary, the WDC will work with the RDC and the branch to determine the optimum size, capacity, and location of the facility.

160. While it is desirable to minimize expense, the basic requirements for a school include a classroom with adequate seating and reasonable space between students, good lighting and ventilation, adequate audio and video equipment, sanitary bathroom facilities, and modest accommodations with study areas for students and instructors.

161. Real Estate: The WDC coordinates all real estate purchases, sales, leases, financial analyses, and broker relationships, as well as the sales of any donated properties that are not suitable for or needed by the organization. The WDC is assisted by qualified brothers in the RDCs, who are familiar with the unique business, cultural, and real estate environment in their assigned region.

162. The day-to-day real estate record-keeping should be handled by the Branch Real Estate Desk (BRED) in the Accounting Department of each branch.—See 5:24.

163. Kingdom Hall and Assembly Hall properties that are part of the approved annual budget can be purchased with Branch Committee approval after thorough consideration of their suitability, based on information supplied in a Property Evaluation (DC-31) and a Building Evaluation (DC-32) if the acquisition includes existing buildings. These property purchases are coordinated by the LDC. If the cost of a Kingdom Hall or an Assembly Hall property is greater than the maximum approval limit assigned to the branch each year, the Branch Committee recommendation should be submitted to the RDC. When a very expensive or complex project is being considered, the Branch Committee will work with the RDC to submit a concept approval request by means of a Kingdom Hall Construction/Renovation Proposal (DC-24) prior to expending substantial effort developing the project. All property purchase requests should be made by means of a Project Approval Request (DC-41).—See 5:166.
164. The LDC initiates the sale of Kingdom Halls, Assembly Halls, and special full-time servant field residence properties that have been identified as unneeded in harmony with the master plan. If the fair market value of a property is greater than the maximum approved sale amount assigned to the branch, the Branch Committee recommendation should be sent to the RDC for direction before marketing. All property-sale requests should be made by means of a Project Approval Request (DC-41). The sale of branch properties that are no longer needed will be coordinated by the WDC.

165. Other property should be purchased only in conjunction with an approved project. The WDC and the RDC will work with the branch to determine how best to identify needed property or existing buildings for a project, such as a remote translation office (RTO), school, or depot. Generally, the Branch Committee is in a good position to make a recommendation regarding the best location for a given project. In many cases, experienced brothers in the field are well-qualified to identify and determine the suitability of a property.

166. Donated properties should be evaluated in the same manner. If it appears that a donated property should be retained for organizational needs, a request should be handled in the same manner as a property being considered for purchase.—See 5:163.

167. Rental of property by means of an annual or a multiyear contract can be a cost-effective way of filling the need for a branch, a Kingdom Hall, or a remote facility, such as an RTO, a school, or a depot. If the need is temporary, renting is often the best solution. However, renting for many years is usually avoided. The branch and the RDC will review all rentals annually. An evaluation of the benefits of renting versus purchasing should be made for each project. If the monthly rental amount is greater than the USD 1,000 per month approval limit for each new project, the Branch Committee recommendation should be submitted to the RDC for further direction and approval from headquarters. Congregations should rent Kingdom Hall locations that they can afford. For exceptional situations—when there are no alternatives and the Branch Committee determines that congregation(s) cannot cover the full cost of renting a Kingdom Hall—the Branch Committee may wish to recommend subsidizing a portion of the rental cost. In such a situation, details can be provided to the Publishing Committee for approval.

168. Volunteers: In addition to those whose Local Design/Construction Volunteer Applications (DC-50) have been approved, there are four categories of workers available for local and international construction projects. These are: (1) construction volunteers, (2) part-time construction commuters, (3) full-time construction commuters, and (4) construction servants.

169. If a construction volunteer is skilled and has indicated that he or she would be willing to accept a foreign assignment, the branch should forward an electronic copy of his or her application to the WDC. Construction volunteers who have proved effective in an assignment and are well-organized, skilled, and available for long-term assignments may be encouraged to submit an Application to Become a Member of the Worldwide Order (A-8).

170. Consideration can be given to appointing single sisters as construction servants who have served as construction volunteers for at least three months. However, discretion should be used so that only single sisters who have the needed spiritual, emotional, technical, and health qualifications to do well in long-term assignments are encouraged to apply. Single sisters who are approved for a foreign assignment would generally be assigned to a branch...
construction project where the branch has verified that it is able to care for them adequately.

171. Although the need for construction varies, maintenance of facilities is always of importance. It is vital that brothers and sisters see the need to make themselves available for this work. Branch Committees can do much to keep this need present in the minds of the brothers in general. It is helpful periodically to prepare a letter that outlines the need in the branch territory and includes some encouraging expressions from those in the work. The LDC should put emphasis on training through the local construction arrangements with a view to making skilled brothers and sisters available for other assignments.—2 Tim. 2:2.

172. Although the WDC may assign construction volunteers, construction servants, and expatriate construction servants to any theocratic construction project, it is the responsibility of the Branch Committee to oversee the spiritual welfare of these individuals serving in its branch territory. Therefore, arrangements should be made for construction servants, Assembly Hall servants, and Bible school facility servants to receive regular shepherding visits by members of the Branch Committee, representatives of the LDC, or other mature elders selected by the Branch Committee. Regardless of the urgency of a project or the abilities of an individual, the high spiritual standards required for those in special full-time service should never be lowered. —See 9:113, 117.

173. Safety: As Jehovah's servants, we adopt his view regarding the sacredness of life. Our view of safety is therefore a reflection of our spirituality. With regard to construction and maintenance, safety is always of greater importance than speed or convenience. The Branch Committee should take the lead in reflecting and encouraging a culture of safety by means of its comments, by support of continuous safety training, by providing safe equipment and protective gear, and by its willingness to remove from the workplace those who flagrantly disregard safety procedures. The minimum safety requirements to be followed on all construction and maintenance projects are outlined in Working Together Safely—Standards for Theocratic Construction and Maintenance (DC-82). However, all should also be fully informed with regard to the A-120 series of documents. (See 5:22.) It is the responsibility of the Branch Committee to see that these guidelines are applied appropriately in the given circumstances.

174. A primary goal on any maintenance or construction project is to have zero injuries. Three key factors in fulfilling this goal are the attitude of those in oversight, preparation to avoid accidents, and careful attention to avoid near-miss accidents. For this reason, the Job Hazard Analysis (DC-83) was developed. The DC-83 allows those who oversee a group of workers to plan each task with the goal of avoiding risks or mitigating risks if they cannot be avoided by a change in the work plan. The preparation of DC-83 forms and the review of them with the workers should be a regular part of the work plan on any project. If new workers are assigned to a task, the key points of the DC-83 should be reviewed with them before they start.

MISCELLANEOUS

175. Air Conditioning, Stoves, and Other Electrical Equipment: In any country where the variation in climate makes air conditioning desirable or if specific individuals require it for health reasons, the Branch Committee can make a recommendation to the Publishing Committee. If air conditioning is approved, the branch will pay for the equipment, installation, maintenance, and cost of operating it. The installation should be made by the branch in each case. The Branch Committee
will need to take into consideration whether structural changes are necessary. Also, the capacity of the electrical wiring in the building should not be overloaded.

176. In view of the revised food arrangements in most branches, the installation of stoves (or similar equipment for cooking) is now considered necessary and should be provided by the branch. The type of equipment will depend on local customs and the building infrastructure. We do not want to rewire buildings for the sole purpose of installing stoves. However, a stove may be provided in a Bethel residence room in the case of a major renovation or new construction.

177. Normally refrigerators, microwaves, and other electrical equipment are personal items to be obtained at cost to the individual. However, no charge will be made for operating stoves or air conditioners or for such services as dry cleaning (if a branch has its own equipment) and alterations to clothing. Such services will operate on a contribution basis.

178. If dry cleaning is handled outside of Bethel, the branch may pay for the first two pieces of dry cleaning per person per month. Two pieces would include one suit or two separate garments. Any costs for dry cleaning beyond that amount would be covered by the individual Bethel family member.
### CHART 5.1

**Print Quantities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Publication(s)</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bibles</td>
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<tr>
<td>Books</td>
<td>large-print(^1), be, bhs, bhslp, bhsls, lvs, lvsls, od, sij, sijls, sijyts, es, eslp, ks10, pt14(^2), rsg(^3)</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>2,000, 200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>500</td>
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<td>DVD</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracts</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) Available in languages in which the large-print edition of *The Watchtower* is produced.

\(^2\) If fewer than 200 copies of *pt14* are needed in a language, the Teaching Committee has approved for these to be produced as loose-leaf binders.

\(^3\) If fewer than 200 copies of *rsg* are needed in a language, the Publishing Committee has approved for these to be produced as black-only brochures.
SERVICE COMMITTEE

BRANCH AND SHEPHERDING VISITS

1. Branch Visits: The Service Committee assigns headquarters representatives to make visits to branch and country offices. Such visits are usually arranged each year. Periodically, headquarters representatives may also be assigned to visit some remote translation offices. The headquarters representative's primary work is to encourage the Bethel family, to aid the members of the Branch Committee in caring for their assignments, and to see that matters are being conducted in accord with the Scriptures and in harmony with direction from the Governing Body. (Acts 16:4, 5; Rom. 1:11, 12; Phil. 1:8-11) During his visit to the Bethel departments, the headquarters representative makes himself available to the members of the Bethel family who wish to speak about their service or personal matters. To get a firsthand report of the progress of the Kingdom work in the field, the headquarters representative will meet with some of the circuit overseers. During the visit, he will also meet with the field missionaries. (See 6:3.) Following his review of branch operations, the brother will provide a brief report to the Branch Committee, outlining points of commendation. As needed, the headquarters representative will also report on any significant matters that he feels may be adversely affecting the progress of the preaching and disciple-making work as well as the smooth operation of the work at the branch.—1 Cor. 14:40.

2. The Branch Committee should prepare well for the branch visit, in harmony with direction received from the Service Committee. (See 7:71-75.) Prior to the headquarters representative's arrival, the Branch Committee should have already completed the Branch Visit Questionnaire (A-26) for the current service year.

3. All Bethel family members (BBF, BBR, and BBT) as well as full-time commuters (BBL) serving in remote offices are invited to come for a branch visit once every three years. This also applies to remote servants (BRS), all field missionaries (FMF and FTF), and all circuit overseers in foreign service (CWF, FCF, FIF, and IWF). When invited, these individuals will attend either at the branch office or at another designated location, such as a remote translation office. On occasions when they are not invited to come for the visit, they are to be tied in for the main talks or receive a video recording of those talks. They may also speak with the headquarters representative by videoconference or telephone, if they wish to do so. Since circumstances vary, each Branch Committee decides how these arrangements will be organized in order to ensure that each one is invited to come for a branch visit every three years. If a visit to a remote translation office or country office is arranged, those in that region who qualify can enjoy the branch visit at that location, not at the branch office. This would serve as their visit for that three-year period.

4. At the end of his visit, the headquarters representative will provide his additional comments on the Branch Visit Questionnaire (A-26). He will also give a letter to the Branch Committee, providing his observations and commendation as well as counsel if needed. The A-26 files and his letter to the Branch Committee are to be sent to the Service Committee, which in turn will send
each respective section of the report to the appropriate Governing Body committee. The Governing Body committees will not send routine acknowledgments of the report. If a matter is raised that requires specific direction from world headquarters, the Branch Committee should write to the appropriate Governing Body committee.

5. Shepherding Visits: Governing Body members are usually assigned to make two shepherding visits per year to selected branches for the encouragement of the Branch Committees and Bethel families. (1 Pet. 5:2, 3) Such visits are about one week in length. With regard to the timing of the shepherding visits and the annual branch visit by a headquarters representative, an effort should be made to schedule these visits at least four months—but no less than three months—apart from each other. The shepherding visit will require less preparation than a typical branch visit. For example, field missionaries and Bethelites serving in remote offices are not invited to the branch office during the shepherding visit. In addition, prior to the visit, there will be no need for the Branch Committee to complete a Branch Visit Questionnaire (A-26). A copy of the latest A-26 should be made available to the Governing Body member on his arrival. There is no need for the branch office to arrange an extensive schedule of visits to Bethel departments. Rather, at the time of his arrival, the Governing Body member will inform the Branch Committee of how he will carry out the visit.

6. A feature of the shepherding visit is a special program for congregations. If possible, the special program should be streamed to locations throughout the branch territory. In years when both a branch visit and a shepherding visit are scheduled, the special program held during the branch visit will be kept small, perhaps being held at a nearby Assembly Hall. That program will not be streamed to other locations.

FIELD MISSIONARIES

7. The Service Committee appoints field missionaries and determines the lands to which they will be assigned. Branches that wish to request additional field missionaries should submit the Request for Field Missionaries (S-218) form to the Service Committee by April and November of each year.—See 6:12; 9:54.

8. Temporary Field Missionaries: Newly appointed field missionaries are invited to accept a three-year assignment. The HuB enrollment code for these temporary field missionaries is FTF. When a temporary field missionary has been in his assignment for 30 months, the branch office will write to him and ask him to submit a letter stating whether he would like to continue in the missionary work or would prefer to return home. If the individual decides to return home, the Service Committee should be informed. If the individual would like to continue as a field missionary, the Branch Committee should consider his effectiveness over the previous 30 months and make a frank recommendation to the Service Committee. In both cases, whether the individual desires to continue as a field missionary or not, the Service Committee will reply. The Service Committee will make the final decision concerning an individual’s future service as a field missionary.

9. In all cases, after the Service Committee has replied, a member of the Branch Committee or another mature elder from the Service Department should make a shepherding visit on the missionary. This visit could be made in conjunction with the annual shepherding visit. (See 9:118; John 21:16) Married couples should be met together. The missionary’s circuit overseer or another mature local elder should accompany the branch representative on the visit.

10. Hour Requirement: The field missionary hour requirement is 130 hours.
a month. Sisters who are 40 years of age or older have a requirement of 120 hours a month. It is understood that a field missionary who serves as a congregation elder may at times be needed for additional short-term theocratic assignments. For example, he may need to serve on a special committee or a Disaster Relief Committee, help with circuit or convention organization, assist in the construction or renovation of his own Kingdom Hall, or serve as a substitute circuit overseer. In addition, he may be needed for a brief period of time to train local elders to care for their responsibilities on a Hospital Liaison Committee. In exceptional situations, the travel time to attend an assigned circuit assembly, regional convention, or Kingdom Ministry School may be unusually long. If such assignments prevent him from making his hour requirement, a brief explanation as well as the number of hours spent should be included on the monthly report submitted on jw.org or on his monthly S-212 report. An explanation should also be written in the “Remarks” column of the Congregation’s Publisher Record (S-21) card. However, the hours spent should not be included in the “Hours” column. The branch will also mark the HuB records accordingly.

11. If a missionary with less than 15 years of special full-time service is consistently unable to meet his monthly hour requirement because of serious and debilitating health problems, perhaps for six months or so, then the Branch Committee should follow the direction outlined in 9:96. For those who are 50 years of age or older or who have 15 or more years in special full-time service, a reduced hour requirement may be appropriate. To determine a reasonable hour goal, the branch office should receive a recommendation from the missionary’s body of elders and one from the circuit overseer before submitting the recommendation to the Service Committee. For reporting purposes, a field missionary with an approved reduced hour quota will continue with the FMF enrollment code. Periodically, the branch should review the field missionary’s circumstances to determine whether the reduced hour quota is still needed or whether a further reduction should be recommended to the Service Committee. In most cases, a reduced hour requirement is better than no hour requirement at all. The recommendation that a field missionary have no hour requirement is usually reserved for field missionaries who have extremely limiting circumstances because of advanced age or life-threatening health issues and whose hour requirement has already been progressively reduced.

12. Missionary Assignments: Field missionaries are a valuable resource, and the Branch Committee must give careful consideration to where they will be assigned. Assignments should enable the missionaries to accomplish the most good in stabilizing and strengthening preaching and congregation activities in densely populated areas. Missionaries should not be assigned to areas where their health and safety will be endangered. The Branch Committee should thoroughly consider such factors as the publisher-to-population ratio, the language fields that need to be targeted, and the availability of suitable housing. Specific congregation assignments for field missionaries are made by the Branch Committee. Missionaries do not select their own congregation assignments. Before any reassignment of field missionaries is finalized, a branch representative, preferably a member of the Branch Committee, should discuss the proposal with the missionaries involved to address any questions or concerns. There is no need to consult with the Service Committee about such reassignments unless the field missionaries raise a concern about the proposed move. (Prov. 13:10; 15:22) The Service Committee should be consulted when submitting requests to transfer
a field missionary to Bethel for more than three months.—See 4:7; 6:7.

HOSPITAL INFORMATION SERVICES

13. Under the supervision of the Service Committee, Hospital Information Services (HIS), a world headquarters department, provides direction, practical assistance, and periodic training to Hospital Information Desks (HIDs) and, through them, to Hospital Liaison Committees (HLCs). This arrangement (1) supports the Bible-based position to ‘abstain . . . from blood’ and (2) helps to correct misconceptions about the position of Jehovah’s Witnesses on medical care. (Acts 15:29) HIS maintains a database of current medical articles on transfusion-alternative treatment strategies from respected medical journals. HIS also supplies HIDs with useful medical publications, medical article citations lists, video programs on transfusion alternatives, and favorable court decisions involving patients’ rights. To accommodate urgent requests for information on medical alternatives to transfusion, HIS maintains telephone accessibility 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

14. Hospital Information Desk (HID): An HID is established at each branch to oversee the Hospital Liaison Committees within its assigned territory. The Branch Committee oversees the work of the HID. Give careful thought to the selection of the brother to oversee the HID, since he will interact frequently with medical professionals and individuals in high station. He should be a well-qualified speaker and teacher who is not easily intimidated. Since it may take years for the overseer of HID to become skilled in caring for the assignment, the Branch Committee should not be quick to replace a qualified brother.—See Hospital Information Desk Guidelines (hidg) for additional instructions and policies.

15. Since the support and medical information provided by HIS is primarily in English, the HID overseer or his assistant should be reasonably proficient in spoken and written English, if possible, in addition to the local language.

16. While there is no arrangement for HID representatives to visit HLCs, the Branch Committee may grant approval on a case-by-case basis for an HID representative to visit an HLC that is in urgent need of training or that is finding it difficult to assist the brothers to obtain medical care without blood transfusions.

17. When the HID requires assistance with emergency cases or other urgent situations involving the blood issue, the HID should contact HIS immediately by e-mail or by telephone, following up with official correspondence. HIS will provide any needed materials. Therefore, HIDs should not do extensive searches for medical information or begin working on any other materials related to HID or HLC activity without permission from the Service Committee. The HID should be accessible to HLCs and hospital professionals in its branch territory 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. HIS should be informed immediately of any changes to the 24-hour contact information published on jw.org.

18. If the HID becomes aware of a high-quality, peer-reviewed, local-language medical article and the Branch Committee believes that the article would be useful, such an article, along with a brief English summary, may be sent to HIS for approval. Articles should focus on one or more of the following: (1) drugs, devices, or techniques that reduce or eliminate the use of donor (allogeneic) blood; (2) ethical/legal concerns, patients’ rights, or informed consent issues; (3) transfusion hazards; (4) the cost-effectiveness of transfusion-alternative strategies; or (5) an outline of how to perform a specific medical or surgical procedure without the use of donor (allogeneic) blood.
19. The HID maintains a list of consulting doctors. These doctors are respected, highly skilled, well-known advocates of nonblood management and are willing and able to explain effectively to less experienced doctors the use of transfusion alternatives. When emergencies or complicated cases arise, the HID may provide an HLC with the name of a consulting doctor. If there are no consulting doctors available in the country, the HID may contact HIS or a nearby HID for assistance. Each HLC maintains a list of cooperative doctors. These are doctors in the local area who have agreed to care for Witness patients. Thus, when Witnesses seek a cooperative specialist or medical facility, the HLCs can supply the names of several doctors or medical facilities that can provide the needed specialized care. For cooperative physicians and facilities outside their assigned area, HLCs may consult with neighboring HLCs or with the HID. Only the HID should consult a nearby HID or HIS as needed.

20. Annual Videoconference With HLCs: HIS provides material and instruction for a videoconference that each branch office should hold with the HLCs in its territory every service year. The videoconference, which will be conducted by the HID overseer and the Branch Committee member who oversees the HID, will give HLC members the opportunity to become acquainted with the brothers who oversee their work. Other members of the HID staff may be assigned to cover a portion of the material. The videoconference also serves to encourage those serving on HLCs and promotes a cooperative spirit between them and the branch office.

- The videoconference is for HLC members only. These brothers must be able to communicate in the language of the country that is spoken by medical professionals. Thus, there is generally no reason to translate the program into several languages. However, if the Branch Committee determines that the videoconference should be presented in more than one language and if the presenters do not speak the target language, the Branch Committee may assign a qualified brother to do voice-over interpretation in the same way that JW Broadcasting uses a single video as a master for vernacular languages. Since this process will take time, each language may be presented at a different time. All language presentations should be recorded and placed on jw.org for any HLC members who may not be available for the original broadcast.

- Recordings of each year’s videoconference in each language should be retained in the Event Media section of jw.org so that any newly appointed HLC members can view them.

- The videoconference may originate from the branch office or from a nearby Kingdom Hall or Assembly Hall. You may find it practical to use the auditorium where the Bethel family Watchtower Study program originates. HLCs near the broadcast site may be invited to attend in person. The other HLCs in the branch territory can tie in to the program at connected Kingdom Halls. You may use JW Stream (http://stream.jw.org) to transmit the program as long as no additional equipment must be purchased. The Local Broadcasting Department, or those who fill this role, can create a username and password that you can distribute to HLC members who will log in to
JW Stream to view the program from remote locations. After the broadcast, the Local Broadcasting Department can provide a copy of the video recording to those responsible for posting it to the Event Media section of jw.org.

21. Hospital Liaison Committees (HLCs): The Branch Committee determines the number of HLCs needed in its branch territory. When an HLC needs additional brothers to help care for the workload, the HLC makes recommendations to the branch office, using the general guidelines set forth below. The HLC should consult the circuit overseer to ensure that the recommended brother is qualified to serve in this capacity. The HLC then sends the recommendation to the Hospital Information Desk (HID), using the Hospital Liaison Committee Recommendation (hlc-21) form. If the HID is in agreement, the recommendation is forwarded to the Service Department for comments. If there is no objection to the appointment, two members of the Branch Committee may approve it. While it is unlikely that any brother would have ideal circumstances and possess all the desired qualities, he should measure up to a reasonable degree.

- He should be an articulate, spiritual man who is respected in the area.—1 Tim. 3:7.
- He should be courageous, not easily intimidated, willing and able to speak with doctors, lawyers, and judges.—Ex. 4:10-12; Prov. 29:25.
- He should truly love the sheep and be willing to respond to an emergency at all hours.—Prov. 3:27; 19:17; John 13:35.
- He should be accessible. If a brother is often away on business or is difficult to contact, this would limit his ability to assist in an emergency. Brothers who have a flexible work schedule, work part-time, or are semiretired are usually in a better position to meet with hospital personnel whenever required. This is an important qualification.
- He should be loyal in maintaining confidentiality.—Ex. 18:21; Prov. 25:9.
- He should work well with others. Cooperation and unity are needed to accomplish the work.—1 Cor. 1:10; 12:12-26.
- He should live in or near the city where major hospitals are located, unless special circumstances warrant an exception.
- Some medical background may be helpful, but it is not necessary.
- He should not have so many other responsibilities that he would not be able to carry out this assignment.

If there are not enough elders available, the Branch Committee should write to the Service Committee, explaining the situation. In exceptional situations, the Service Committee may give approval to use a very well-qualified ministerial servant to serve temporarily as an HLC member.

22. HLCs are set up in most major cities to (1) act as a liaison between health-care providers and Witness patients and their families when requested; (2) assist Witness patients in locating doctors willing to provide treatment without blood transfusion; (3) provide medical articles to doctors, in accordance with copyright laws; (4) arrange consultations between local doctors and experienced specialists; (5) assist Witness patients in transferring to another medical facility if this becomes necessary; (6) make presentations to medical professionals, health ministries, social welfare officials, legal personnel, and others about our position on medical care and/or blood transfusions; and (7) appoint elders to serve as Patient Visitation Group (PVG) members. HLCs coordinate the activity of the PVGs and meet with the members.
at least once a year to review needs, offer encouragement, and keep these elders abreast of HLC activity. HLCs refrain from endorsing doctors, procedures, facilities, pharmaceuticals, herbal products, or alternative medical therapies. In all matters of health care, members of the HLCs avoid imposing their conscience on others.—See Hospital Liaison Committee Guidelines (hlcg) for additional instructions and policies regarding HLCs.

23. During a local blood-related medical crisis, the branch office may designate HLC members to respond to media inquiries. The Branch Committee would likely direct the HID and the HLC members to work closely with the Legal Department and the Public Information Desk on such media matters. —See 3:91, 101, 105-110, 112-115.

24. Annually, toward the beginning of the year, bodies of elders receive a reminder from the branch office to download the updated list of local HLC members from jw.org. In lands where Internet access is limited, the branch office will provide the latest list.

25. Patient Visitation Groups (PVGs): Hospital Liaison Committees (HLCs) organize PVGs in key cities to provide spiritual support for hospitalized Witness patients from outside the local area. During hospital visits, the PVG elders endeavor to provide emotional and spiritual support and, at appropriate times, pray with Witness patients and relatives. The PVG arrangement does not replace the responsibility of the local congregations to visit and care for the needs of their publishers who are in the hospital.

26. Bloodless Medicine and Surgery Programs (BMSPs): Hospitals in some lands have established BMSPs, blood conservation programs, and patient blood management programs. This means that the hospital administration, the coordinator(s) within the hospital, and/or various specialists have made a commitment to provide medical or surgical care without donor blood transfusions to patients who request such care. At times, business organizations make contracts with hospitals to develop and maintain BMSPs. Even when staffed by Witnesses, such organizations are not spokesmen for Jehovah's Witnesses.

27. Hospital Liaison Committees (HLCs) should not endorse or participate in the meetings of BMSPs or share with them the HLCs' confidential lists of cooperative doctors. The activity of these entities must remain separate from Hospital Information Desks, HLCs, and the congregations. (km 9/87 p. 4; km 6/77 p. 4) The branch office should write to the Service Committee if there are some unusual circumstances warranting a different approach.

28. Attending Medical Conferences: At times, a medical conference may be scheduled that features blood conservation or transfusion-alternative strategies. Such conferences often include discussions about Jehovah’s Witnesses. Having an HID or HLC representative in attendance may be helpful to provide information and to correct any inaccuracies. The Branch Committee should be very selective as to the type of conferences and the number of conferences it approves for the Hospital Information Desk (HID) to attend each year, so that Bethel family members are not away from their regular assignments too frequently. Only conferences directly related to the blood issue should be considered. If a conference is held in another country, the Branch Committee should seek in writing the approval of the Service Committee to have a representative attend. The letter to the Service Committee should include assurance that the Branch Committee has sufficient funds in its budget to cover the costs associated with attending the conference.

29. Presenting at Medical Conferences: If an HID or HLC representative
is invited to give a talk on the position of Jehovah’s Witnesses on medical matters and the Branch Committee agrees, a copy of the draft text should be sent to the Service Committee for approval. This is not necessary if the brother uses the standard HID/HLC PowerPoint presentation.

30. **Sponsoring a Medical Conference:**
   The branch office should not sponsor a medical conference or symposium. HLCs should not initiate a special campaign to invite doctors in their area to an event and should refrain from advertising or giving the impression that they endorse or promote an event, even when Witnesses are the organizers. Furthermore, the branch office should not incur transportation, registration, or lodging expenses for physicians to attend these events. If the Branch Committee believes that an exception may be warranted, the Service Committee should be consulted.

31. **Setting Up Display Booths at Medical Conferences:**
   The branch office should be very selective regarding the type and the number of medical conferences for which it will seek approval to set up a booth. Only conferences attended by doctors who regularly deal with the blood issue are to be considered. Before contracting with the sponsors to exhibit, the branch office should seek approval from the Service Committee, submitting the name of the conference, dates, location, expected attendance, total anticipated costs for exhibiting, and other relevant information concerning the event. The letter to the Service Committee should include assurance that the Branch Committee has sufficient funds in its budget to cover the associated costs. Only the approved booth graphics and signage should be used. Any modifications should be approved by the Service Committee. If a large exhibit booth is requested from a custodial branch, sufficient lead time should be allowed (at least three months). Only the approved presentation kits should be used as handouts. Branches may write to Hospital Information Services for suggestions on what to include in the information packages for doctors.

32. **Medical Devices and Supplies:**
   Hospitals in developing countries may ask the branch office to donate medical devices, equipment, or other supplies. Before making any commitment, the Branch Committee should write to the Service Committee for direction.

33. **Pharmaceuticals:**
   In developing lands with limited access to basic pharmaceuticals, a branch office may wish to store a small supply of specialized medicine (such as EPO or iron) and/or other basic medical supplies. However, before requesting permission from the Service Committee, the branch office should check with regulatory health agencies in the country to determine the legal requirements that regulate storing these items. If the Service Committee approves the request, the branch office should be judicious in the amount of medicine kept on hand, perhaps storing only a six-month supply or enough for two or three patients. The branch office should submit a Nonliterature Branch Request, along with a note referencing the letter of approval from the Service Committee, to replace any items used. Brothers may express their appreciation for this arrangement by donating financially to defray the cost of replenishing the stock of medicine and supplies, though such a donation is not a requirement to benefit from this arrangement.

34. **Websites:**
   Since jw.org provides helpful information for medical professionals, neither the branches nor the Hospital Liaison Committees (HLCs) should place information about the Hospital Information Desk or HLC activity on any other website unless the Service Committee grants approval.

**SERVICE DEPARTMENT**

35. Under the direction of the Branch Committee, the Service Department
cares for matters related to the preaching work and the activity of congregations, elders and ministerial servants, circuit overseers, and pioneers. The Service Department takes a keen interest in the spiritual growth of the congregations and provides valuable feedback to the Branch Committee as to what is needed to accelerate the preaching and disciple-making work. It also arranges assemblies and conventions and various theocratic schools. Brothers in the Service Department prepare responses to reports and inquiries from the field that relate to the preaching work and congregation activities. The Service Department works closely with the Local Design/Construction Department to determine where Kingdom Halls and Assembly Halls are needed and their priority. The Governing Body provides direction on such matters through the latest publications on congregation organization, various guidelines, and letters. If there is no clear policy on a matter, the Service Department should forward its questions to the Branch Committee. The Branch Committee may need to consult with the Service Committee or another Governing Body committee for direction.

Department Organization

36. Overseer: A member of the Branch or Country committee will be appointed to serve as the Service Department overseer. (See 2:13.) In most branches, an assistant overseer should be appointed to care for the workload, especially when the overseer is away from the office. In larger branches, two brothers may be appointed by the Branch Committee to serve as assistant overseers. (See 2:15.) Good communication, coordination, and cross-training by oversight will ensure that the workload is distributed evenly and that the department is not overstaffed. In large branches, the Branch Committee may appoint experienced, well-qualified brothers to serve as contacts. These contacts help to oversee the Service Department under the direction of the overseer and his assistant overseers. Each contact would coordinate the work of specific desks, in addition to caring for his own responsibilities. Based on the recommendation of the Service Department overseer, the Branch Committee determines the number of contacts needed, their responsibilities, and their level of authority. —See Service Department Guidelines, chap. 2, par. 1.

37. Deskmen: In a small branch office, the overseer may be able to handle the work of a Service Department deskman. In most branches, however, the Branch Committee will appoint other qualified elders to serve in the Service Department as deskmen who will care for the reports and correspondence from a number of circuits. The number of circuits assigned to a deskman varies according to the brother’s workload, capabilities, health, and age limitations.

38. A deskman should be an experienced elder known for his loyal adherence to theocratic direction. He must be courteous, loyal, and courageous in giving sound Scriptural direction. He must be well-organized and diligent in caring for his responsibilities. He may have gained experience as a Service Desk secretary for several years. Experience has shown that there are benefits for some of the deskmen to have served in the traveling work prior to Bethel. Deskmen should give thorough training to the secretaries in the department with the objective of helping them to take on greater responsibility in the future. (2 Tim. 2:2) In most cases, such a training program would make it unnecessary routinely to transfer circuit overseers to Bethel. Deskmen should give thorough training to the secretaries in the department with the objective of helping them to take on greater responsibility in the future. (2 Tim. 2:2) In most cases, such a training program would make it unnecessary routinely to transfer circuit overseers to Bethel. Deskmen should give thorough training to the secretaries in the department with the objective of helping them to take on greater responsibility in the future. (2 Tim. 2:2) In most cases, such a training program would make it unnecessary routinely to transfer circuit overseers to Bethel. Deskmen should give thorough training to the secretaries in the department with the objective of helping them to take on greater responsibility in the future. (2 Tim. 2:2) In most cases, such a training program would make it unnecessary routinely to transfer circuit overseers to Bethel. Deskmen should give thorough training to the secretaries in the department with the objective of helping them to take on greater responsibility in the future. (2 Tim. 2:2) In most cases, such a training program would make it unnecessary routinely to transfer circuit overseers to Bethel. Deskmen should give thorough training to the secretaries in the department with the objective of helping them to take on greater responsibility in the future. (2 Tim. 2:2)
the recommendation will then be sent to the Personnel Committee. (See 4:10.) When considering this option, the Branch Committee should keep in mind that not all circuit overseers and their wives will be able to adapt to Bethel life.

39. A deskman should be careful to avoid giving his own opinion on service-related matters. His counsel must be sound, based on the Bible and theocratic guidelines. (1 Cor. 4:6) To ensure that proper theocratic direction is relayed to the field, a proofreading system should be established. One deskman may proofread the work of another.

40. Service Desk Secretaries: As the workload increases, a brother may be assigned as a secretary to a deskman. Although he may be younger in years and may not have the same level of experience, a secretary must have the spiritual qualities required of a deskman. While it is preferred that a Service Desk secretary be an appointed elder, he would generally not need to be an older brother with many years of Bethel service or field experience. A modest young brother with fine spirituality and the potential to qualify in time to serve as a deskman may be used. His duties would include opening and sorting mail, attaching relevant background material, typing letters, filing, entering information into the computer, and so forth.

41. Desk Groups: As the number of deskmen increases, it may be practical to arrange them in groups of five or six and have them circulate difficult cases. The more-difficult cases can be considered at a weekly meeting. (Prov. 13:10) At the discretion of the Branch Committee, the more experienced Service Desk secretaries could be included in the group meetings in order to further their training. If those in the Service Department cannot resolve a complex issue by using published direction or if a case is of major importance, they will refer the matter to the Branch Committee. The Branch Committee, in turn, may need to consult with the Service Committee for direction.—See 2:21; 6:61.

**Handling Telephone Calls and Correspondence**

42. Telephone Calls: A telephone call should always be answered in a kind and loving way. Even though the brother taking the call is busy and it may interrupt his work, reflecting warmth, respect, and concern for the brothers and others is important. One should be as helpful as possible to the individual calling. If the caller is from outside of Bethel, it is not wise for a deskman or his secretary to give his name unless the caller is a circuit overseer. However, there is no objection to providing an outside caller with the desk symbol of the deskman.

43. A telephone memorandum should be made for all telephone calls that deal with important matters and for calls in which direction is given and a record is necessary. The memorandum should include the name of the caller, the caller's telephone number, the congregation, the nature of the call, who took the call, and any direction that was given. If the caller presents a weighty matter, he should be requested to write to the branch office.

44. Incoming Mail: In smaller branches, the Service Department overseer may be able to handle routine mail. In most branches, it may be necessary to have a mail desk or a correspondence clerk assigned to open postal mail. A similar arrangement may be needed to process and route incoming electronic correspondence. Incoming mail is handled in the date order of receipt and according to its urgency. If at all possible, those working in the Service Department should make it their goal to reply to correspondence within two weeks.

45. Requests for Kingdom Hall Addresses and Meeting Times: In most cases, the branch office may provide
any inquirer with basic information about Kingdom Hall addresses and meeting times, or the inquirer may be instructed on how to locate the information on jw.org. There is no objection to replying by e-mail to written requests for such basic information.—See 3:55; 6:49.

46. Correspondence From Other Branches: When another branch writes to an individual in the branch territory, the letter will usually be sent to the Service Department for forwarding to the addressee. In most cases, such letters can be sent directly to the addressee. If there are any concerns about the information being provided or about the addressee, it would be best to send the letter through the congregation, with appropriate direction to the elders.

47. If the letter to the individual is accompanied by a courtesy copy for the branch, the original should be sent to the addressee, as directed above, and the courtesy copy filed in the BRANCH CORRESPONDENCE FILE. If the letter to the individual is not accompanied by a courtesy copy to the branch, this means that it was received electronically and printed in the office. The letter may be mailed as outlined above. A photocopy does not need to be made for the BRANCH CORRESPONDENCE FILE, as the electronic file copy will be retained according to the retention policy.

48. Letters sent to those living outside the branch territory are usually not mailed directly to the individual. Rather, after the letter is approved, it is sent to the overseeing branch office to be forwarded to the person or his congregation body of elders. (See 6:45-47.) Exceptions to this general policy are outlined in 6:49-50.

49. Inquiries From Publishers in Other Countries: It is important that all those who consider moving to a foreign land prayerfully count the cost and seek Jehovah's direction. (Luke 14:28; Jas. 1:5; od p. 100; km 8/11 pp. 4-6) The branch office should be helpful and respond promptly to any publisher who inquires about serving temporarily or permanently where the need is greater. If a written inquiry is accompanied by a favorable letter of recommendation from the Congregation Service Committee, the Service Department may provide such information as Kingdom Hall addresses, meeting times, and contact information of the coordinator(s) of the body of elders. The Service Department should be sure that any areas being recommended for assistance are safe for foreigners. The reply letter may be sent directly to the publisher via e-mail or surface mail. If the branch office is uncertain about the qualifications of a particular publisher, the letter should be sent to the inquirer's branch office, indicating that the letter should be forwarded to the individual or to his body of elders.—See 6:45.

50. While branches are authorized to provide general information to publishers about the country and congregations needing assistance, the branch is not authorized to provide extensive additional assistance, such as issuing sponsorship or guarantee letters; supplying residency, visa, or other legal forms; locating pioneer partners; and arranging suitable accommodations. These are personal matters that require careful investigation by the publisher before he or she moves to another country. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the individual publisher, not the branch office, to obtain information about visa requirements and work permits.—Gal. 6:5.

51. Certificates or Letters for Jehovah's Witnesses: On occasion, publishers and others associated with a local congregation may request that the body of elders or the branch office provide them with a signed letter or certificate that confirms or explains in some way the person's relationship with the Christian congregation. For example, local authorities in some areas.
may require that an elder who performs weddings or one who conducts meetings in prisons register and provide some proof of his ordination as a minister. A publisher or pioneer who is moving to serve where the need is greater in another country may request that the body of elders or the branch office provide him with a letter confirming that he is one of Jehovah’s Witnesses in good standing. The immigration authorities in some countries may ask a person who is regularly attending congregation meetings to provide a signed statement from the body of elders confirming that fact. In some lands, baptized Christians are called upon to explain to the authorities their personal and conscientious objection to military service. In neutrality cases, it may be helpful for the authorities to receive a letter or a certificate from the congregation or the branch office confirming that the conscientious objector is an ordained and baptized minister of Jehovah’s Witnesses or a full-time preacher of the good news. The Branch Committee is responsible for carefully determining (1) if the elders or the branch office should be involved in replying to such requests; (2) if so, the approved wording to be used; and (3) for whom such letters and certificates may be provided. In most cases, the elders or the branch would issue such documents only for publishers in good standing. Any such letters or certificates approved by the Branch Committee should be limited to explaining the facts and not go into detail about a brother’s or a sister’s personal convictions. (1 Pet. 3:15) Furthermore, any document provided by the branch office on the letterhead of one of the organization’s local legal entities should not in any way imply that the organization is sponsoring the person financially or legally. (Gal. 6:5) Publishers and pioneers who move on their own to another land should not be represented to immigration authorities as “missionaries” because they are not sponsored by the organization as is done for those who are in the Worldwide Order of Special Full-Time Servants of Jehovah’s Witnesses. If the Branch Committee needs further guidance on such matters involving publishers, pioneers, or others in the field, it should write to the Service Committee. Matters related to the support of members of the Worldwide Order are further described in 3:81-85.

52. Circuit Overseer’s Report on a Congregation: The Report on Circuit Overseer’s Visit With Congregation (S-303) is used by the circuit overseer to give the Service Department a brief report on the spirit of the congregation and any encouragement or counsel given. It is necessary to acknowledge the circuit overseer’s report only if further correspondence would be helpful.

53. Appointments and Deletions of Elders and Ministerial Servants: Circuit overseers are appointed by the Governing Body to care for the appointments and deletions of elders and ministerial servants. (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5) The procedures to be followed by circuit overseers are outlined in Circuit Overseer Guidelines (tg).—See 6:74.

54. The Service Department receives the names, birth dates, and baptism dates of brothers who will be considered for appointment during a circuit overseer’s upcoming visit to a congregation. This information is received automatically when congregations use the Web version of the Recommendations for Appointment of Elders and Ministerial Servants (S-62) form to notify their circuit overseer of the recommendation. Congregations with limited Internet access may submit their recommendations to their circuit overseer by means of the printed version of the S-62 form, or the branch office may allow congregations to submit the information to their circuit overseer by means of a phone call or text message. Thereafter, the circuit overseer should immediately forward the information to the branch office. When received by
the Service Department, a check may need to be performed to confirm that there is no legal reason that the recommendation for a brother's appointment should not be considered. Such a legal check may require sending the information to the Legal Department. This legal check is not required on the names of (1) elders and ministerial servants who are recommended because they moved, (2) regular pioneers or those in other forms of full-time service who are recommended as ministerial servants, or (3) ministerial servants who are recommended to serve as elders. If there is no legal reason that the recommendation should not be considered, the Service Department should inform the circuit overseer accordingly. (If the Web version of the S-62 form cannot be used, the branch office may determine the best method of conveying to the circuit overseer that the recommendation may be considered.) The check made by the branch office is not a check of the person's age, marital status, previous appointments and deletions, or the like. That responsibility rests with the body of elders and the circuit overseer.

55. If there is a legal reason that the appointment of a brother should not be considered (such as a valid accusation of child abuse), the Service Department should investigate the matter further and determine whether or not the recommendation should be considered by the circuit overseer. If the recommendation may be considered, the Service Department should inform the circuit overseer accordingly without delay. If the recommendation should not be considered, the Service Department should inform the circuit overseer and the elders concerning the reason.

56. If there is insufficient time for the branch office to process a recommendation before the visit of the circuit overseer, the Service Department should inform the circuit overseer that the recommendation will need to be resubmitted in conjunction with the next visit.

57. If the circuit overseer will be away from the circuit for (1) less than a month, he may hold any recommendations in abeyance until he returns; (2) one to three months, the branch office should designate another circuit overseer (perhaps a neighboring circuit overseer or one who recently served the circuit) to consider any recommendations received from substitutes; or (3) more than three months, the branch office should assign another circuit overseer to visit congregations in the circuit. If a circuit overseer is unable to communicate with the affected congregations and substitutes before leaving his assignment, the branch office should take the lead in informing them.—See 6:139.

58. At times, the branch office will assign an appointed elder or a ministerial servant, such as a special pioneer, Bethel family member, or a graduate of the School for Kingdom Evangelizers, to serve in a particular congregation. In such cases, the Service Department should write to the circuit overseer to advise him that they recommend the reappointment of the brother. Thereafter, the circuit overseer may generate an appointment letter to the new congregation and will inform the Service Department using the Notification of Appointment or Deletion (S-2).

59. At times, a brother serving at Bethel becomes involved in misconduct and the Branch Committee decides that he can stay at Bethel, but no longer qualifies to serve in an appointed position in the congregation. In such a case, the Service Department would send a letter to the body of elders outlining the following: (1) that because of certain misconduct the Branch Committee has determined that the brother may stay at Bethel but his qualifications to serve as an appointed servant have come into serious question and thus the Branch Committee is writing to the circuit overseer recommending that he be deleted, (2) a concise explanation of the brother's
misconduct, (3) the arrangements that have been established at Bethel to provide spiritual help, and (4) that the elders should write the Service Department if the brother is still serving at Bethel when and if they recommend his reappointment. In a postscript to the circuit overseer, it should be recommended that he delete the brother at his earliest convenience.

60. Appeals Involving Deletions of Elders and Ministerial Servants: If an elder or a ministerial servant disagrees with his deletion by the circuit overseer, he should be asked immediately to write a brief letter to the Service Department, with a copy to the body of elders and the circuit overseer, explaining why he disagrees with the deletion. The announcement of deletion will be held in abeyance. Thereafter, the Service Department will select an experienced circuit overseer who, along with the original circuit overseer, will rehear the entire matter. These two brothers will listen to the brother carefully and deal with him kindly and justly. They may consult with the Service Department for advice. After the two circuit overseers have heard the brother’s concerns and reached a joint decision, there is no further appeal. If it is decided that the brother should be deleted, the announcement will be made at the next midweek meeting and the circuit overseer will inform the Service Department using the Notification of Appointment or Deletion (S-2).

61. In very rare situations, a special committee of three or four experienced elders may be needed to handle an unusual and complex case involving one or more congregations. For example, a circuit overseer may alert the Service Department about a serious matter that has called into question the Scriptural qualifications of multiple elders or perhaps even an entire body of elders. If the deskman believes that a special committee should be appointed, he should consult with his desk group and his contact (if contacts have been appointed in the Service Department) before submitting the recommendation to the Service Department overseer for approval. (See 6:41: Service Department Guidelines, chap. 2, par. 1.) If the recommendation is approved, the Service Department would select the brothers who will serve on the special committee from elders whom circuit overseers have indicated are qualified to handle complex matters. The Service Department would provide direction to the special committee on its handling of the matter. After a thorough investigation and a meeting with the brothers involved, the special committee will then submit its comments and provide a recommendation to the original circuit overseer and another experienced circuit overseer selected by the Service Department. (See 6:60.) If needed, the circuit overseers may consult with the Service Department. However, the two circuit overseers, not the special committee nor the branch office, will make the final determination regarding the qualifications of the brother(s) in question and inform the Service Department accordingly.

62. In the event that a body of elders disagree with a circuit overseer’s decision not to remove a brother whose deletion they have recommended and about whom the elders appeal to the branch office, the Service Department should obtain the circuit overseer’s comments on the elders’ correspondence. What facts did the circuit overseer take into account in rejecting the recommendation the elders made? What efforts did he make to explain kindly the reasons for his decision to the elders? Is there a valid Scriptural basis to the recommendation made by the elders? Is the circuit overseer known to be kind, impartial, and just, or does he tend to be unyielding or to impose his personal viewpoints? With this information, the branch office can determine what counsel, if any, the circuit overseer or the body of elders should receive. It may be practical to
encourage the elders to continue demonstrating their submission to Christ’s headship by supporting the arrangement made by the “faithful and discreet slave.”—Matt. 24:45-47; w14 11/15 pp. 28-29.

63. Distributing Documents on JW.ORG: Branches are notified when new and revised forms, letters, and outlines are posted on MDS. The Branch Committee will determine whether the item can be used in the branch territory without any adjustments. If so, it may be possible for the Service Department to create a link to the item under the Documents tab on the website. Often minor adjustments are needed to the documents, such as the insertion of letterheads, signature stamps, and the like. Or there may be a need to substitute the word “Province” for “State,” to add a statement giving permission for the branch or congregations to keep personal data for individuals on file, to incorporate the monetary denomination used in a specific country, and so forth. In the case of these minor adjustments, the Service Department may make the necessary changes and then upload the document to the local jw.org directory and create a link on the site. If there is a need to alter a document or to create a new form because of unique local circumstances, the Branch Committee should request approval from the appropriate Governing Body committee.—See 6:160.

Processing Judicial Reports

64. Disfellowshipings and Disassociations: The elder serving as the chairman of a judicial committee (or “a committee” in the case of disassociation) is to submit one copy of the Notification of Disfellowshipping or Disassociation (S-77) to the Service Department. Usually there is no need for the elders serving on the committee to submit additional correspondence about the case.

65. Role of Service Desk Secretary: The Service Desk secretary will be responsible to review the S-77 form to make sure it is complete. If there is anything on the form that is not clear or is missing, the secretary will contact a member of the committee that submitted the form. It may be possible to obtain missing information by means of a telephone call. Once the Service Desk secretary has verified that the form is complete, he will enter the record into the electronic file used by the branch office. If the S-77 form is scanned into an electronic file, there is no need to keep a hard copy. Depending on local circumstances, it is left to each branch office to decide whether there is a need to send a brief acknowledgment to the chairman of the committee that the S-77 form has been received.

66. Role of Service Department Deskman: Though it is not necessary for the deskman to review all S-77 forms, the secretary should be trained to alert the deskman to any unusual or weighty cases. The following list is not comprehensive but simply provides some examples of cases that should be forwarded to the deskman for consideration and careful handling:

- There is a question as to whether there is a valid judicial charge or sufficient evidence to support the charge.—ks10 5:2-37.
- The S-77 form reveals that the committee did not inform the individual of the decision.—ks10 6:9-10; 7:29-30.
- The individual does not agree with the decision of the original committee and the appeal committee and is now appealing his case to the branch office.—ks10 8:14-15.
- The original committee and the appeal committee do not agree on the decision.—ks10 8:16-18.
- The committee has submitted correspondence about the case in addition to the S-77 report.
67. The Service Department deskman and desk groups should not be quick to second-guess how a committee cared for a particular matter unless it is clear from the S-77 form and any additional correspondence submitted that the published guidelines in the Shepherding textbook and current letters to bodies of elders were not followed. In such cases, the deskman should write to the committee in an effort to help them bring the matter to a conclusion. Thereafter, the deskman or the secretary will update the branch office's files accordingly.

68. With reinstatements, the deskman would not usually need to review the information submitted unless there are some unusual factors. One exception is when it appears that sufficient time was not allowed for the individual to prove that his repentance is genuine. (k suitability of the matter, the deskman may determine to provide the committee with some helpful reminders.

69. Use of HuB and JW.ORG E-mail: Branches using these tools will be able to process and store S-77 forms electronically. The following is a brief explanation of the procedure that they may choose to use:

- A member of the committee submits the S-77 form using jw.org e-mail.
- Upon receipt, the S-77 form is assigned to a Service Desk secretary for review.
- When the secretary has determined that the form is complete, he will enter the record in the electronic file used by the branch office, such as Tracking Persons. An incident could be created linking the form to the tracked person. In the case of a reinstatement, the secretary would update the electronic record and retain the notification in the electronic file system.
- If the S-77 form needs further review by a deskman, the secretary will pass this on to him. After the deskman has completed his review, he will return the correspondence to the secretary who will then update any electronic record of the matter.
- If needed, hard copies of S-77 forms can be scanned into HuB. A record of the matter can be entered into Tracking Persons. Any hard copy should be shredded.

70. Rescissions: If the Service Department determines that a judicial action was taken without valid basis, they should assist the elders to see why the wrongdoing did not warrant the formation of a judicial committee. If the elders agree, they should rescind the judicial decision. If a reproof was previously announced to the congregation, the elders should make the following announcement: “The announcement of judicial reproof involving [name of person] has been rescinded.” Any judicial restrictions that had been imposed should be removed, and the body of elders should determine if the publisher still qualifies for any special privileges he enjoyed before the action was taken. If a disfellowshipping was previously announced to the congregation, the elders should make the following announcement: “The announcement that [name of person] is no longer one of Jehovah’s Witnesses has been rescinded.” The body of elders should determine if the publisher still qualifies for any special privileges he enjoyed before the action was taken. The letter to the judicial committee will request that the committee reply in writing to the Service Department, providing the date when the rescission was announced. Once the date is received, the records should be updated.

71. Appeal Committees: The circuit overseer is authorized to appoint an appeal committee. For details on the formation of an appeal committee and the
correspondence to be received from it, see Circuit Overseer Guidelines, chapter 13.

Forming and Merging Congregations

72. A circuit overseer will assist in organizing the formation of a new congregation if and when it is advisable to do so. A completed Congregation Application Information (S-51) form may be submitted to the branch office. Generally, the circuit overseer will sign the application.

73. In congregations or groups with no appointed elders, one or more experienced ministerial servants (or a baptized sister if a baptized brother is no longer available) may be designated to handle some necessary matters temporarily. For example, the branch office may choose to send nonconfidential correspondence to the personal jw.org inbox of a well-qualified ministerial servant. Another option is to ask an elder in a nearby congregation to assist.

74. When the Service Department gives approval for the formation, dissolution, or merging of congregations, the circuit overseer will proceed with the appointment of elders and ministerial servants in their respective congregations, using the Notification of Appointment or Deletion (S-2). (See 6:53.) Good communication is needed by the Local Design/Construction and Service departments when considering these adjustments, especially when considering the merging of congregations. During such processes, these departments should keep the following in mind:

- The travel distance for publishers to attend meetings and share in the field ministry is an important factor to consider. The branch office needs to take an interest in the concerns of publishers, including elderly ones and large families with minor children, who may be required to travel greater distances. Merging congregations in a densely populated area with many Kingdom Halls is different from merging congregations in a large geographic area where Kingdom Halls are far from each other, requiring a significantly longer commute for some publishers.

- While there are advantages when publishers attend the congregation in whose territory they live, it should be made clear to circuit overseers and to elders that they may only recommend that publishers attend a certain congregation. In the final analysis, however, each family head is responsible to determine what is best for his family. Therefore, it would be inappropriate for circuit overseers to pressure others to attend a particular congregation.—See Jw.chap. 5, par 24; km 11/02 “Question Box”.

- Before the branch office makes a final decision to merge congregations, the local elders need to be given an opportunity to give input on the matter and should not feel that they were forced to accept a decision already made by the branch office.—Rom. 12:10; 1 Pet. 2:17.

If a merger is approved, care should be taken to see that all elders and ministerial servants are accounted for and appointed to serve with one of the congregations involved. The territory assignment for each respective congregation should be provided. In addition, various printed letters that the new congregation needs for its files should be sent. If there is a large amount of literature on hand, it would be best for the congregations to divide it instead of requesting additional literature for the new congregation. Any specific direction regarding legal considerations for titleholding congregations should be provided by the branch office in the S-392 letter sent to the circuit overseer.

(Revised August 2018)
75. Territory Assignments: The Service Department gives each congregation an assignment of territory to work. (See 6:158.) The Branch Committee and the Service Department monitor the preaching activity in the field, making all reasonable efforts to ensure that the branch territory is thoroughly covered.

76. Effective and Thorough Coverage of Territory: To ensure thorough coverage, branches should follow some general guidelines regarding the size of congregation territories. Local circumstances should be taken into consideration when determining the size of individual territories. Smaller territories give publishers the opportunity not only to cover territory but also to return to help cultivate interest that is found. If territories have fewer homes, publishers may feel more motivated to request a personal territory close to their home or workplace. Publishers may also need further training on how to keep accurate records and on how to give a more thorough witness when working from house to house. (od p. 91 par. 32; km 4/07 p. 8) If a congregation is unable to work portions of its assigned territory within two years and it is not possible to arrange for assistance from nearby congregations, the unworked territories should be assigned to nearby congregations or listed as unassigned territory.—See 6:80-81.

77. Foreign-Language Territory: The Branch Committee and the Service Department should take steps to be sure that immigrant communities or indigenous language groups receive a witness. (See 6:149-152.) The Service Department and circuit overseers should be guided by what is published on this subject in Circuit Overseer Guidelines, Circuit Organization Guidelines, the letter to all bodies of elders dated October 23, 2015, and the letter to all circuit overseers dated October 25, 2015. —See also km 11/09 pp. 3-5.

78. If there is a sizable population of foreign-speaking people in the branch territory and few publishers are available who speak their language, a foreign-language class may be held to train capable publishers and pioneers. Before a language class is held, the branch must identify and train language instructors. Potential instructors must meet the qualifications outlined in Instructions for Organizing Language Classes (S-567). A request to train the recommended foreign-language instructors should be submitted to the Service Committee for approval. The Service Committee will arrange for those who have been approved to attend the course “Teaching Methods for Accelerated Language Learning.” Following the training course, the branch may arrange to hold the foreign-language classes. (Helpful forms for organizing the classes are posted on MDS.) These classes should not be held at the branch office. They should be conducted in the foreign-language territory that is being targeted.—See 7: 142; tg chap. 15.

79. Seldom Worked Territory: If congregations are in need of assistance in working their assigned territory, the congregations and circuit overseers will report this to the branch office. The Service Department will consider what can be done to provide assistance. If it is not possible to make arrangements to assist the congregation to cover its territory and the territory has not been worked for two years, the circuit overseer should recommend to the branch office which sections of the congregation’s territory should be assigned to nearby congregations or listed as unassigned territory.—See 7: 142; tg chap. 15.

80. Unassigned Territory: The Branch Committee should make all reasonable efforts to cover all unassigned territory at least once a year. A letter may be sent each year to congre-
gations, inviting publishers to apply to work unassigned territory. This letter should include a list of the territories that need to be worked. Individuals willing to assist may indicate to the branch office which territory they would like to work, the number in their group, and the amount of time they can spend in an assignment. (Groups should not be made up solely of single brothers and single sisters.) A group captain should be designated. This information is to be given to the Congregation Service Committee for approval and forwarding to the branch. The Service Department considers the information, makes an appropriate territory assignment, and informs the group captain. After the assignment is completed, the group captain should submit a report to the branch office, outlining what was accomplished and any outstanding experiences.

81. Unassigned or seldom-worked territory could include large foreign- or indigenous-language communities of perhaps thousands of people who do not receive a regular witness. When publishers in your branch territory are invited to work unassigned or seldom-worked territories, there is no need to request the approval of the Service Committee.—See 6:76.

82. Isolated Publishers: The Service Department should send the names of isolated publishers to the congregations nearest them. Perhaps an elder or pioneer can visit them from time to time to encourage them and to work with them in the field ministry. The branch office should make arrangements for them to receive literature and any other necessary information. If practical, they could send their field service reports through the nearest congregation and obtain literature there as well. Otherwise, they may request literature from the branch office and report their field service directly to the branch each month, marking “isolated publisher” or “isolated pioneer” on the report. Only one person in the group should make arrangements for obtaining literature.

83. The role of the circuit overseer in caring for isolated publishers and pioneers is outlined in Circuit Overseer Guidelines. If reasonably possible, the circuit overseer should adjust his schedule in order to visit such ones each year. After receiving the circuit overseer's report for the annual visit, the Service Desk will send the isolated publisher, pioneer, or group a warm and encouraging letter. A record should be kept of all such publishers and groups, with a separate file for each, until such time as they can either be associated with a nearby congregation or be organized into a new congregation. Then the information in this file is put into the file for that congregation.

84. Special pioneers have been assigned to visit isolated publishers and groups, with good results. Where there is potential to form a new congregation, temporary special pioneers or special pioneers could be assigned.

85. When a regular pioneer requests a permanent assignment to care for an unassigned territory, the branch office will write a letter, enclosing an Isolated Territory Assignment (S-63). Only one regular pioneer would be given a certain isolated territory assignment. If more than one pioneer will be working in the same isolated assignment, the other pioneers are assigned by a letter from the office to work with the pioneer holding the territory. The pioneer holding the territory is responsible for making the necessary reports to the branch office on the progress being made in the territory.

86. Book Fairs and Special Witnessing Exhibits: Before agreeing to participate in such an event, the Branch Committee must obtain approval from the Service Committee. The request should be submitted as far in advance as possible but no less than one month
prior to the deadline for registering for the event. The Branch Committee should consider various factors, including the type of organization sponsoring the event, the cost, the estimated attendance, the length of time needed to prepare for the event, and the number of publishers required to staff a booth during the event. Usually it is best to limit participation in such events to only one or two key events each year. The letter to the Service Committee should include assurance that the Branch Committee has sufficient funds in its budget to cover the costs associated with participating in the event. Additionally, the following information should be provided:

a. The name of the organization that is sponsoring the event. If available, a link to the event's website should be included in the letter. The branch should ensure that participating in the event would not call into question our neutral position or associate the branch office with any religious interfaith, social movement, or political activity.

b. The dates and location of the event.

c. The estimated attendance.

d. The size of the booth being recommended. If there are options for booth size, the different sizes and prices of each should be provided. A modest-sized booth, perhaps no more than nine square meters, is preferred. If a larger booth size is recommended, the explanation should be included in the letter to the Service Committee.

e. The estimated total cost in U.S. dollars. The branch should provide a breakdown of the costs, including entry fees, taxes, equipment rentals or purchases, and the cost of constructing (or repairing) the display. To the extent possible, displays should be designed and constructed in a way that will allow for reuse. When informed of the voluntary and educational nature of our work, event organizers sometimes will reduce or waive certain fees. The letter to the Service Committee should indicate whether the branch inquired about a discount and the amount of any discount that will apply.

e. Preliminary sketches of the proposed display, including the dimensions. The branch should avoid giving the appearance of commercializing our ministry. (2 Cor. 2:17) Relatively simple, yet attractive, displays will reflect favorably on Jehovah and his organization. There may be skilled publishers in the branch territory who have the ability, knowledge, and expertise in designing or fabricating displays typically used at these events.

87. Harbor Witnessing: The Service Department should organize harbor witnessing in harmony with Harbor Witnessing Guidelines (S-374). If a harborswitnessing group recommends enrolling in a marine exchange or would like to pay for the storage of literature and/or witnessing equipment, the Service Department overseer or his assistant should carefully review the request before approving it to ensure that it is needed and reasonable. (Phil. 4:5) Any costs involved with harbor witnessing, such as obtaining suitable clothing, equipment, and proper permissions, will be the responsibility of the publisher. (Gal. 6:5) Publishers should not get involved with seaman's missions or other religious organizations in carrying out harbor witnessing.

88. Prison Witnessing: The Service Department should organize the preaching work in prisons according to the latest direction received from the Service Committee. (See the letter to all bodies of elders dated September 8, 2011, and the Prison Information (S-68) form.) A record should be maintained
of congregations assigned to care for each prison facility in the country. It should also be noted whether literature can be taken into the prison by the publishers or must be mailed directly from the branch office.

89. Special Campaigns: Unless directed to do so by the Service Committee, the Branch Committee should not request help from other branch offices to fill special needs in the field. In countries where there are few publishers and large densely populated areas to cover, the Branch Committee may feel that a special campaign would be beneficial. In some cases, it may be possible to invite native publishers who are living in other lands to return and share in the special campaign. Publishers in other countries who speak the local language may also be invited. The Branch Committee should send a recommendation to the Service Committee for its consideration and approval.

Conventions and Assemblies

90. Regional Conventions: Annually, circuit overseers submit the Convention Program Participant Ratings form (S-306) to the branch office. This form identifies the elders who are qualified as convention speakers and their individual ratings. In larger branch offices, these records are kept in Hub. Brothers who are approved Bethel speakers may be invited to inform the Service Department of the convention(s) that they will attend so that they may be assigned talks. If Bethel speakers volunteer to attend additional conventions using their own personal time away and at their own expense, they may be assigned where there is a need for convention speakers.—See 7:2-26, 80-81.

91. The Service Department will make assignments based on each brother’s speaker ratings and the convention speaker grid provided annually by the Teaching Committee. Generally, the chairman and the drama directors are assigned and notified first, followed by the Bethel speakers, and then local speakers are assigned the remaining parts. Service Department oversight will approve all convention speaker assignments before assignment letters are mailed out.—See 7:25, 80-81.

92. Circuit Assemblies: Two one-day circuit assemblies will be held each year. One assembly (CA-br) will have a visiting branch representative assigned to speak. The other assembly (CA-co) will be served by the circuit overseer without a branch representative being assigned. Arrangements are made according to the guidelines provided each year by the Teaching Committee. Helpful guidance is also found in Circuit Organization Guidelines (S-330).—See 7:27-35, 89.

93. The branch will assign the dates of circuit assemblies based on the number of publishers in a circuit and the size and availability of meeting locations. It may be necessary to divide a circuit into two or more sections and have separate assemblies. Circuit overseers will be notified preferably one year or more in advance in order to obtain assembly facilities. If possible, the two annual circuit assembly programs should be separated by at least three or four months. Circuit Overseer Guidelines has additional information.

Regular Pioneers

94. Direction regarding the appointment and activity of pioneers is found in the latest publications on congregation organization and in the letter to all bodies of elders dated May 15, 2017. Those leaving an assignment of special full-time service will not experience an interruption in their full-time service history if they are appointed as regular pioneers within three months. Regular pioneers who are sentenced to prison because of their Christian neutrality will have their full-time service history recorded as uninterrupted if they resume the full-time ministry within (Revised January 2018)
three months of their release from prison. (See 4:18-19.) Regular pioneers who accept alternative civilian service may continue serving as regular pioneers if they can reasonably meet the requirements for regular pioneers. When reviewing their overall activity, the elders should show consideration for their unique circumstances when determining whether they qualify to continue serving as pioneers. A person who is performing alternative civilian service may be appointed as a regular pioneer if he is otherwise qualified and is able to fulfill the hour requirement.

95. Transfers to Other Branch Territories: When a pioneer moves to another country, the local branch should send to the new branch the regular pioneer record from HuB. If questions arise about the pioneer's history, the new branch may communicate with the other branch offices that are involved.

Temporary Special Pioneers

96. Temporary special pioneers serve in the same manner as special pioneers. However, they are appointed to serve in one-year increments for up to a maximum of three years. This temporary assignment will enhance their qualifications, allowing them to gain experience and to be further evaluated by the branch office. It could be a steppingstone to a future assignment as a substitute circuit overseer, a special pioneer, a circuit overseer, or a field missionary or to Bethel service. Temporary special pioneers receive their assignment from the Service Department; they do not select their own. Individuals do not apply to become temporary special pioneers. Rather, well-qualified, local single regular pioneers and married regular pioneer couples without children are identified and invited to submit a Questionnaire for Prospective Temporary Special Pioneer (S-207).

97. Assignments: Single temporary special pioneers will ordinarily be assigned in pairs. If married, both mates would need to qualify to serve together as temporary special pioneers. Generally, temporary special pioneers are assigned to remote areas with a ratio of 1 publisher to at least 3,000 or more inhabitants to open up new territories, including those in foreign or indigenous-language fields. Most branches have territories that are seldom worked or are remote and isolated where there are interested ones and where there is good potential for forming a congregation. Many countries have densely populated urban centers with few publishers in the inner cities. In many lands there is a great need for qualified brothers to help men reach out to become ministerial servants and elders or where the brothers need more training to care for their congregation responsibilities.

98. Qualifications: A prospective temporary special pioneer is a well-qualified and effective local regular pioneer and is usually a graduate of the School for Kingdom Evangelizers or a graduate of the former Bible School for Single Brothers or Bible School for Christian Couples. The candidate should be a citizen of the country, between 21 and 45 years of age, baptized three years or longer, in full-time service at least two years, in good health—not having serious limitations or severe health problems—and able to maintain an active schedule.—See 6:111.

99. If a branch has additional needs in the field, circuit overseers may recommend others who are not graduates of the above-named theocratic schools by submitting a Personal Qualifications Report (S-326) to the branch office for review. There is no arrangement for appointing as temporary special pioneers those who have a minor child still living at home. It is preferred that the focus be on appointing single men and married couples who have the potential for taking on greater responsibility. However, if such ones are not avail-
able, well-qualified single sisters may serve as temporary special pioneers.

100. Any exceptions, including the appointing of foreign pioneers as temporary special pioneers, must be approved by the Service Committee. If there is an exceptional need that cannot be cared for locally, then the Branch Committee should submit a Request for Field Missionaries (S-218) form to the Service Committee. Unless directed to do so by the Service Committee, the Branch Committee should not request help from other branch offices to fill special needs in the field.—See 6: 109.

101. Quota: The Service Committee establishes the total number of temporary special pioneers that may be appointed in each country. If the Branch Committee sees a need to increase the quota of temporary special pioneers, a request should be sent to the Service Committee, stating the number to be added, why they are needed, the number expected to graduate from the School for Kingdom Evangelizers in the coming year, and the publisher-to-population ratios of the language fields where they would be assigned.

102. Graduates of the School for Kingdom Evangelizers: Based on the recommendations of the instructors, the Service Department will determine which graduates in each class could be recommended to the Branch Committee to serve as temporary special pioneers. For more details, see chapter 10 of School for Kingdom Evangelizers Office Guidelines.

103. Nongraduates of the School for Kingdom Evangelizers: A candidate who is a local regular pioneer will be evaluated by the Service Department, based on the Personal Qualifications Report (S-326) and any recommendation submitted by the circuit overseer. The Service Department will decide whether to recommend to the Branch Committee that a regular pioneer be appointed as a temporary special pioneer. If approved, the regular pioneer can be sent a letter (S-225) explaining the temporary special pioneer arrangement with the request that he fill out a Questionnaire for Prospective Temporary Special Pioneer (S-207). The completed questionnaire is to be carefully checked by the Service Department and thereafter reviewed by two members of the Branch Committee. If they approve, the Service Department will prepare a letter (S-220) appointing the temporary special pioneer and informing him of the location of his assignment, copying the elders of the congregation he will be working with and the circuit overseer.

104. File: A file folder is made to hold a copy of the assignment letter, the questionnaire, and other correspondence related to the temporary special pioneer. His enrollment code in HuB is adjusted to show his start date as a temporary special pioneer (FTS). A record of his monthly field service is maintained in HuB.

105. Hour Requirement: The temporary special pioneer hour requirement is 130 hours a month. Sisters who are 40 years of age or older have a requirement of 120 hours a month. It is understood that a temporary special pioneer who serves as a congregation elder in a remote area may at times be needed for additional short-term theocratic assignments. For example, he may need to serve on a special committee or a Disaster Relief Committee, help with circuit or convention organization, assist in the construction or renovation of his own Kingdom Hall, or serve as a substitute circuit overseer. In addition, he may be needed for a brief period of time to train local elders to care for their responsibilities on a Hospital Liaison Committee. In exceptional situations, the travel time to attend an assigned circuit assembly, regional convention, or Kingdom Ministry School may be unusually long. If such assignments prevent him...
from making his hour requirement, a brief explanation, as well as the number of hours spent, should be included on the monthly report submitted on jw.org or on his monthly S-212 report. An explanation should also be written in the “Remarks” column of the Congregation’s Publisher Record (S-21) card. However, the hours spent should not be included in the “Hours” column. The branch will also mark the HuB records and consider the remarks when performing the annual review. If a temporary special pioneer is assigned by the branch office to learn a new language in conjunction with his congregation assignment, he may be given a reduced hour requirement of 70 hours a month for up to three months.

106. Experiencing Difficulties: If a temporary special pioneer falls short of his hour requirement for two or three months or encounters serious health issues and is physically unable to meet the requirement, the Service Department may submit a recommendation for his deletion to two members of the Branch Committee for approval. It would be appropriate for the Service Department to write a letter to the temporary special pioneer, expressing appreciation for his service and encouraging him to continue working hard but directing that he return to the regular pioneer work. If the temporary special pioneer objects to the recommendation, he may submit a letter of appeal to the Branch Committee. The entire Branch Committee is responsible for making the final determination.

Special Pioneers

107. The Branch Committee is authorized to appoint special pioneers up to the quota approved by the Service Committee. (See 6:114.) Such individuals often have the potential to serve in other avenues of special full-time service, such as in the circuit work or as field missionaries. Those invited to serve as special pioneers must have the circumstances and desire to serve wherever the branch office assigns them, and they must be able to meet the hour requirement for this service. They receive their congregation assignment from the Service Department; they do not select their own. As members of the Worldwide Order, special pioneers are provided with a modest allowance to assist them with their living expenses.

108. Assignments: Single special pioneers will ordinarily be assigned in pairs. For married couples, both mates would need to qualify to serve together as special pioneers. Generally, special pioneers are assigned to open up new territories, including those in foreign- or indigenous-language fields in remote areas that have a ratio of 1 publisher to at least 3,000 or more inhabitants. Most branches have territories that are seldom worked or are remote and isolated but have interested ones and good potential for forming a congregation. Many countries have densely populated urban centers with few publishers in the inner cities. In many lands there is a great need for qualified brothers to help men reach out to become ministerial servants and elders or where the brothers need more training to care for their congregation responsibilities.

109. If there is an exceptional need, the Branch Committee may assign temporary special pioneers, special pioneers, and circuit overseers to any country overseen by the branch office. Care should be taken so that the costs involved in such transfers and the acquiring of legal residency are kept to a minimum. Since a key objective of the School for Kingdom Evangelizers and the temporary special pioneer arrangement is to help more local brothers and sisters to reach out to meet the needs within their own country, those who are assigned by the branch office to serve in another country should keep that focus in mind. Any exceptional situations should be referred to the Service Committee.—See 6:100.
110. Branch offices are not authorized to transfer special pioneers to other branch territories. Such requests or recommendations should be referred to the Service Committee.

111. Qualifications: Since the number of special pioneers who may be appointed is limited, the branch office has the weighty responsibility of appointing qualified candidates as special pioneers and reviewing their activity annually. (See 9:101.) With the exception of the age requirement, the qualifications outlined for temporary special pioneers also apply to special pioneers. (See 6:98-100.) When the quota allows for it, a new special pioneer will usually be selected from among well-qualified temporary special pioneers who are graduates of the School for Kingdom Evangelizers.

112. Those being considered to serve as special pioneers must have demonstrated a genuine interest in helping people, an ability to maintain the routine and meet the hour requirement, and a determination to stick with an assignment when things are difficult. We want dedicated, hardworking brothers and sisters to be special pioneers, not those who may be disinterested in the work or who are more concerned about material benefits than about the privilege of sharing in this spiritually upbuilding work. We desire to appoint those who are devoted to God and who take seriously their commission as ministers. The primary purpose behind the special pioneer work is to add impetus to the preaching of the good news in areas where little is being done. In addition, the rigorous schedule requires stamina and good health. In isolated areas, upbuilding association may be limited. Appointees should be encouraged to view themselves and their circumstances realistically.

113. While there is no automatic arrangement for individuals leaving Bethel service, the circuit work, or some other form of special full-time service to be appointed as special pioneers, consideration should be shown to regular members of the Worldwide Order who are at least 55 years of age and have 25 or more years in special full-time service. In the case of a married couple, such consideration should be shown if one of the mates meets these requirements. In such cases, the Branch Committee should assign one or two responsible elders at the branch office to meet with the person or married couple and kindly discuss their needs as they prepare to transition out of their current assignment. This meeting could be handled in person or, if necessary, by telephone or videoconference. When conducting the meeting, the elders should inquire if the individuals would like to serve as special pioneers. If so, it would also be good to inquire what they will need in the way of housing and financial assistance. If someone who is at least 55 years of age and has 25 or more years in special full-time service of his own volition asks for a special pioneer assignment, the Branch Committee may consider the request. Careful consideration should be given to each one's spirituality, experience, and personal circumstances. If questions arise as to whether a longtime member of the Worldwide Order qualifies to serve as a special pioneer, the Branch Committee should outline the concerns and provide a specific recommendation to the Service Committee. (See 9:3, 6.) If consideration is given to reassigning any Bethel family members who are 60 years of age and older to the field, the Branch Committee should first consult with the Personnel Committee.

114. Quota: The Service Committee establishes the total number of special pioneers that may be appointed in each country. If the Branch Committee sees a need to increase the quota of special pioneers, a request should be sent to the Service Committee, stating the number to be added, why they are needed, and the publisher-to-population

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ratios of the language fields where they would be assigned. Special pioneers who have been given a temporary reduction in their hour requirement by the Branch Committee are included in the quota. (See 6:121.) However, those approved by the Service Committee to serve indefinitely as infirm special pioneers are not included in the quota. —See 6:107, 122.

115. Appointing New Special Pioneers: If the Service Department identifies a need in the field that cannot be met by the use of temporary special pioneers, it can consider appointing special pioneers. A candidate for special pioneer service should be selected from those who have successfully completed three years in the temporary special pioneer work. If the Branch Committee approves the recommendation from the Service Department, the temporary special pioneer should be sent a letter explaining the special pioneer arrangement, with the request that he fill out a Questionnaire for Prospective Special Pioneer (S-208). The completed questionnaire is to be carefully checked by the Service Department, and if all is in order, it is forwarded to the Branch Committee for approval. If the appointment is approved, the Service Department sends the special pioneer an assignment letter, copying the elders of the congregation he will be working with and the circuit overseer.

116. In branch territories with just a few circuits, the branch office may have in mind assigning an appointed circuit overseer to serve temporarily as a special pioneer. Before doing so, please provide the Service Committee with information about the brother you plan to reassign. If the brother and his wife, if married, could be used in the circuit work in another land for perhaps up to three years, provide a recent Personal Qualifications Report (S-326), translated into English, along with a cover letter describing his qualifications, his citizenship, and the language(s) in which he is fluent. It may be that he could be used in a nearby country where there is a need for circuit overseers.

117. File: A file folder is made to hold a copy of the assignment letter, the questionnaire, the vow of poverty, and other correspondence related to the special pioneer. His enrollment code in HuB is adjusted to show his start date as a special pioneer (FS). A record of his monthly field service is maintained in HuB. —See 6:176.

118. Hour Requirement: The special pioneer hour requirement is 130 hours a month. Sisters who are 40 years of age or older have a requirement of 120 hours a month. It is understood that a special pioneer who serves as a congregation elder in a remote area may at times be needed for additional short-term theocratic assignments. For example, he may need to serve on a special committee or a Disaster Relief Committee, help with circuit or convention organization, assist in the construction or renovation of his own Kingdom Hall, or serve as a substitute circuit overseer. In addition, he may be needed for a brief period of time to train local elders to care for their responsibilities on a Hospital Liaison Committee. In exceptional situations, the travel time to attend an assigned circuit assembly, regional convention, or Kingdom Ministry School may be unusually long. If such assignments prevent him from making his hour requirement, a brief explanation, as well as the number of hours spent, should be included on the monthly report submitted on jw.org or on his monthly S-212 report. An explanation should also be written in the “Remarks” column of the Congregation’s Publisher Record (S-21) card. However, the hours spent should not be included in the “Hours” column. The branch will also mark the HuB records and consider the remarks when performing the annual review. If a special pioneer is assigned by the branch office to learn a new language in conjunction with his congregation assign-
ment, he may be given a reduced hour requirement of 70 hours a month for up to three months.

119. Reassignment: If necessary, special pioneers may be moved after three years. However, there is no need to adjust an assignment of a special pioneer unless circumstances necessitate such a move. If a special pioneer requests to be assigned to another congregation, the Service Department should consider the needs of the field, factoring in any extenuating circumstances.

120. Infirm Special Pioneers: If a special pioneer with less than 25 years of special full-time service is consistently unable to meet his monthly hour requirement, perhaps for six months or so, then it may be best for the person to leave the special full-time service. On the other hand, for those who are at least 55 years of age and who have 25 or more years in special full-time service, a reduced hour requirement may be appropriate. For reporting purposes, all special pioneers with an approved reduced hour requirement should be given the FSI enrollment code.

121. If a reduced hour requirement is needed because of temporary factors, such as short-term illness or caring for family responsibilities, the Branch Committee is authorized to approve a reduced monthly hour requirement for up to one year without consulting the Service Committee. This is with the understanding that the special pioneer will resume the normal special pioneer routine as soon as possible. This provision takes into consideration that unexpected events can overtake us all.—See 6:114; Eccl. 9:11.

122. It may be that a permanent reduction in a special pioneer's hour requirement is needed because of long-term factors, such as chronic or terminal illness or advancing age. Usually it is best for the branch to consult with the special pioneer's body of elders and circuit overseer before determining an appropriate reduced hour requirement. In some cases, the branch office may be more familiar with the person's circumstances and abilities, such as when a longtime Bethel family member or a circuit overseer is being transferred to serve as a special pioneer. In all cases, the recommendation that a special pioneer have a permanent reduction in his hour requirement and that he serve indefinitely as an infirm special pioneer should be sent to the Service Committee for approval. The recommendation should include a complete overview of the special pioneer's circumstances, the reason(s) for recommending infirm status, and the recommended reduced hour quota. In most cases, a reduced hour requirement is better than no hour requirement at all.—See 6:114; 9:87.

123. As needed, the branch office should kindly remind the elders and circuit overseers to ensure that the needs of the infirm special pioneers are being met and that any needed encouragement and shepherding are being given. (John 21:16) Once the Service Committee approves the initial reduced hour requirement, the Branch Committee is authorized to make any further progressive reductions to the monthly hour requirement without consulting the Service Committee. Removal of an hour requirement is usually reserved for infirm special pioneers who have extremely limiting circumstances because of advanced age or life-threatening health issues and whose hour requirement has already been progressively reduced.

Circuit Overseers

124. Circuit Overseer Guidelines and the latest correspondence from the Service Committee provide detailed information regarding the activity of circuit overseers.

125. Substitute Circuit Overseers: The qualifications for substitute circuit overseers are outlined in Circuit

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Overseer Guidelines. Generally, substitute circuit overseers are given access to Circuit Overseer Guidelines and to the letters addressed to all circuit overseers. Substitute circuit overseers should not be used to care for a circuit for more than three months.—See 6:133.

126. Circuit overseers may submit recommendations for new substitute circuit overseers using the Personal Qualifications Report (S-326). Before a brother is recommended to serve as a substitute circuit overseer or a circuit overseer, he must have attended the Ministerial Training School, the Bible School for Single Brothers, the Bible School for Christian Couples, the School for Kingdom Evangelizers, or the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead. The Service Department should check to see whether he is qualified to serve on special committees and has been recommended as a convention speaker. After the S-326 is evaluated and if everything is positive, the brother may be sent a Questionnaire for Prospective Substitute Circuit Overseer (S-324).

127. A brother recommended as a substitute circuit overseer will receive two weeks of training by an approved trainer prior to being appointed as a substitute circuit overseer. Only experienced circuit overseers approved by the Branch Committee will provide necessary training and evaluation. Those approved as trainers should be the most experienced and qualified circuit overseers. They should be selected from the list of circuit overseers who are approved to make shepherding visits on other circuit overseers. Substitute circuit overseers are appointed by the Branch Committee. The Service Department should submit the completed questionnaire and the S-326 forms from the circuit overseer, as well as any other information that would be helpful to the Branch Committee for its evaluation. If the brother is appointed, a letter should be sent to him informing him of this. Further details can be found in Guidelines for Processing Recommendations for Substitute Circuit Overseers and Circuit Overseers (S-385).

128. Circuit Overseer Guidelines outlines how circuit overseers can assist substitute circuit overseers who are not meeting the high standard expected of those serving in this capacity. If a substitute circuit overseer is reproved or disfellowshipped or is removed as an elder for any other reason, the date of his deletion as a substitute circuit overseer should be entered into HuB. The Service Department may refer complex cases involving a substitute circuit overseer's qualifications to the Branch Committee for consideration. If a single substitute circuit overseer becomes engaged to be married and desires to continue in the substitute circuit work, he should inform the Service Department right away. With regard to obtaining comments on the qualifications of the sister, the Service Department will follow the same procedure as when a single circuit overseer becomes engaged and desires to remain in the circuit work. (See 9:60.) The most recent Personal Qualifications Report on the brother should be reviewed. If it would be helpful, the brother's circuit overseer could be asked to provide updated comments.

129. In view of the great trust placed upon circuit overseers, the Branch Committee must give these recommendations very careful and prayerful consideration.—Luke 12:48b.

130. Qualifications: The qualifications for circuit overseers are outlined in Circuit Overseer Guidelines. Since the responsibility that is entrusted to circuit overseers of appointing and deleting elders and ministerial servants is a weighty one, those recommended should be kind, impartial, and just. (Ex. 18:21) When handling recommendations, whether for appointment or deletion, the circuit overseer must avoid imposing his personal viewpoints and opinions or setting arbitrary rules.
Before being recommended to serve as a circuit overseer, he should have proved that he strives to imitate Jehovah and His Son by caring for matters with love and patience. (Deut. 10:17; 16:18, 19; Isa. 42:1-4) In this way, he demonstrates deep respect and submission to Jehovah and to the Head of the Christian congregation, Jesus Christ.—See 2:30; 9:95; Eph. 1:22.

- All brothers recommended as circuit overseers should be graduates of the Bible School for Christian Couples, the Bible School for Single Brothers, the Ministerial Training School, the School for Kingdom Evangelizers, or the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead.
- Those recommended should display evidence of good judgment, spiritual depth, loyalty to God’s Word and organization, and soundness of mind. Such qualities are more important than having a compelling, charming personality.
- Those recommended for circuit work should have served as congregation elders for a minimum of three years and have at least two years in full-time service, preferably longer.
- The maximum age for those recommended is 45. As an exception, a well-qualified brother who has been in special full-time service for a considerable number of years may be recommended until the age of 50. Brothers who are 25 years of age or younger would usually not be recommended.—See 6:132.
- If the brother is married, his wife should be at least 21 years old, baptized three years or longer, and in full-time service for at least two years.

131. Circuit overseers may submit recommendations of substitute circuit overseers for circuit work, using the S-326 form. After the S-326 is evaluated and if everything is positive, the body of elders should be asked to provide its observations and its recommendation of the brother and, if married, his wife, using the S-326 forms. If a positive recommendation is received from both the body of elders and the circuit overseer, the brother should receive two weeks of training with an experienced circuit overseer. If all is well, he may be sent a Questionnaire for Prospective Circuit Overseer (S-323). See School for Kingdom Evangelizers Office Guidelines with regard to providing circuit training to graduates. Before a recommendation is sent to the Governing Body, the substitute circuit overseer should have served congregations a minimum of ten full weeks. An exception would be when a brother has previously served in circuit work or is a graduate of the Bible School for Christian Couples, the Bible School for Single Brothers, the Ministerial Training School, the School for Kingdom Evangelizers, or the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead and has already received ten weeks of training and may have served only a few weeks as a substitute circuit overseer since then.

132. Appointments: Circuit overseers are appointed by the Governing Body. (See 2:26, 30.) There is no need to supply more information than what is requested on the recommendation form unless there are unusual factors that the Governing Body should know. For example, if the Branch Committee is recommending a brother who is not yet 25 years old or a brother who is over 45 years of age, the reasons for making such an exceptional recommendation should be fully explained in a numbered letter. If a brother being recommended previously served as a traveling overseer, the reason for his deletion from that privilege of service should be explained in a numbered letter. Once the branch office has received an approved recommendation form from the Governing Body, the Service Department will then send the brother an appointment letter (S-308) along with instructions concerning his new assignment.—See 6:130.
133. Arrangements for New Circuit Overseers: Branches should have a reasonable number of approved circuit overseers available for use when needed, such as when a circuit overseer will be away for more than three months. (See 6:139.) Newly appointed circuit overseers should be given an FC enrollment. Field missionaries (FMF) who are appointed as circuit overseers should be given an FCF enrollment. If the newly appointed circuit overseer is waiting for a permanent assignment to become available, his circuit assignment should be listed in HuB as “unassigned.” The Service Department should inform a newly appointed circuit overseer who will be covering a circuit for three months or less that when generating letters of appointment or deletion, he should indicate the circuit designation on the letterhead. He should note in the letter that he is temporarily caring for the circuit. If a newly appointed circuit overseer is assigned to care for a circuit for more than three months, he should be assigned to that circuit. (See 6:125; 9:20.) Sometime during a new circuit overseer’s first year in the circuit work, he and his wife will be invited to the branch office for two weeks of training.—See Service Department Training for New Circuit Overseers (S-381).

134. Circuits That Span Branch Territories: On a case-by-case basis, the Service Committee may authorize the formation of circuits that include congregations and groups in two or more branch territories. In such situations, the enrollment “Visiting Branch Circuit Overseer” (FCB) should be assigned to any circuit overseer serving congregations in one branch territory who has a primary assignment under the supervision of another branch office. This enrollment will be assigned concurrently with his primary FC (or FCF) enrollment. Use of the FCB enrollment will allow a circuit overseer to create a separate jw.org account for each territory. The branch receiving the visiting branch circuit overseer should provide to the home branch the name of the circuit and the contact number for the local jw.org help desk. This will allow the home branch to complete the S-134 form letter, which is used to inform the affected circuit overseers of this provision.

135. Circuit overseers crossing branch boundaries should submit a separate Circuit Overseer Routing (S-300) form to each branch office outside their home branch territory, indicating only the visits they will make to congregations and groups in that branch territory. This is in addition to the complete S-300 form that they should submit to their home branch office, which should include the weeks that they are serving in another branch territory. The weeks spent outside of their home branch territory should be entered by the home branch as “Miscellaneous” events in HuB. When scheduling circuit assemblies for circuits crossing branch boundaries, each branch office should enter the circuit assembly separately into HuB. This will allow each branch office to keep track of the activity of the congregations under its oversight.

136. Correspondence and Personal Mail: Direction sent to all congregations, all bodies of elders, or other field entities should be made available to all circuit overseers so that they remain up-to-date on such matters. Any of the circuit overseer’s personal mail received at the branch office should be forwarded to his current address.

137. Size of Circuits: Circuits are generally made up of approximately 16 to 20 congregations, including isolated groups. One factor to take into consideration in determining the number of congregations to be placed in each circuit is the availability, capacity, and distance to the nearest Assembly Hall. In most cases, a circuit overseer should cover his circuit twice annually.

138. Routing: The circuit overseer submits his routing to the branch office...
three months in advance using the Circuit Overseer Routing (S-300) form. At the same time, he will send the congregation a Notice of Visit of Circuit Overseer (S-302) advising of the dates of his visit. Once the branch office and the congregations have been informed, the circuit overseer should adhere to the routing he submitted. If he feels that a change needs to be made to the routing, he should contact the Service Department and request permission.

139. Absences From the Circuit: A circuit overseer who is away from his circuit for more than three months may be given the “unassigned” circuit designation in HUB or another appropriate enrollment. (See 6:133.) The handling of appointments and deletions of elders and ministerial servants while a circuit overseer is away from his assignment is discussed in 6:57. Situations that may necessitate granting a circuit overseer or his wife a leave of absence are discussed at 9:77 and in Circuit Overseer Guidelines.

140. Questions About the Qualifications of Circuit Overseers: The branch office should follow up on any concerns or complaints received about a circuit overseer that raise serious questions about his qualifications. First, the office needs to obtain the facts. (Prov. 18:13, 17) In some cases, it may be best to write to the circuit overseer, informing him of what has been reported, and provide him with the opportunity to reply. Serious matters should be referred to the Branch Committee.

141. If what was reported is valid and has raised serious questions about a circuit overseer’s qualifications, it may be that a kind letter that outlines the observations and provides loving Scriptural counsel will be sufficient to address the concern. (Prov. 27:9; 1 Tim. 5:1; w99 1/15 pp. 21-24) If needed, the Service Department may ask an experienced circuit overseer or branch representative to discuss the matter privately with the circuit overseer and provide him with appropriate Scriptural counsel during the next scheduled shepherding visit. (See 9:114.) If the matter needs to be handled sooner, an experienced circuit overseer could be asked to care for the matter. When a personal visit is made, the assigned brother should submit a report to the Service Department that includes a summary of the counsel he provided to the circuit overseer. The report should also comment on how the circuit overseer responded to any counsel given. Following the visit by an experienced circuit overseer or by a branch representative, the branch office could follow up in writing to express sincere appreciation for the circuit overseer’s efforts in making improvement and to reinforce the counsel given. (1 Thess. 4:1) If this is not the first time that a similar concern has been brought to his attention, the letter from the Service Department could remind the brother of the previous counsel and encourage him to make a more concerted effort to improve. In such cases, the Service Department should copy the Branch Committee on such letters sent to assist the circuit overseer. If, over a reasonable period of time, the circuit overseer does not improve in spite of repeated efforts to assist him, it may be necessary for the Branch Committee to recommend to the Governing Body his deletion as a circuit overseer. A brief summary of the efforts made to assist him should be included in a numbered letter that is sent along with the Recommendations to Governing Body form.—See 2:30; 9:96.

142. On occasion, complaints may be received involving the wife of a circuit overseer. Out of respect for the headship principle, the Service Department will write to the husband, informing him of the negative report and asking for his comments. He may be encouraged to help his wife. (The brother assigned to make the next shepherding visit on the circuit overseer and his wife should receive a copy of any correspondence to the circuit overseer so that the
brother can offer assistance and counsel if needed.) Appropriate follow-up should be in harmony with the general principles outlined in the preceding paragraph.

143. When an allegation of serious wrongdoing is made about a circuit overseer, the Service Department should appoint two experienced circuit overseers to investigate. If it is established that there is substance to the report and evidence is available that a serious sin has been committed, the two brothers should notify the Service Department so that a judicial committee can be appointed. If there is insufficient evidence to prove that the allegations are true, the two brothers will make a full report of their findings to the Service Department for evaluation. Although a gross sin may not have been committed, it may be that the circuit overseer's conduct is seriously in question. In such cases, the report should be referred to the Branch Committee for its consideration and direction.—See 2:30.

144. If a circuit overseer confesses to serious wrongdoing, two experienced circuit overseers should be directed by the Service Department to investigate. After confirming the nature and extent of the sin(s) committed, they should report back to the Service Department. The Service Department will appoint a judicial committee consisting of three circuit overseers. Likely, the two who investigated the matter would serve on the committee. The committee’s decision, whether reproof or disfellowshipping, is reported to the branch in the normal way. The Service Department would designate a congregation that would hold the records in its confidential file. (It may be the congregation where the former circuit overseer indicates that he will attend meetings.) An announcement of reproof or disfellowshipping would also be made in that congregation. If the former circuit overseer seeks reinstatement, a local congregation judicial committee should hear the plea for reinstatement and seek observations from the branch office before reaching a final decision. If the decision is to reinstate, the appropriate notification should be sent to the Service Department.

145. Writing Letters to Former Traveling Overseers: In many countries, there are faithful brothers who formerly spent many years in the traveling work. To encourage such older brothers, branch offices may write a personalized letter from time to time. This shows that the organization is interested in their welfare and appreciates what they accomplished in the traveling work during a big part of their life.—Phil. 2:4; 1 Pet. 5:12.

146. Circuit Overseers in Foreign Service: When a field missionary is appointed as a circuit overseer, he and his wife are registered in HuB with the corresponding foreign service enrollments (FCF and CWF). On rare occasions, a Branch Committee may believe that there is a need to assign a circuit overseer to a distant country in the branch territory other than the land of his birth or citizenship. When such a need arises, the Branch Committee may recommend to the Service Committee that the circuit overseer and his wife be granted the foreign service enrollment. All such recommendations will be considered on a case-by-case basis. While citizenship and country of birth are considered, these are not the sole determining factors. The Branch Committee should carefully consider the following points to ensure that the recommendation is reasonable.—Phil. 4:5.

- Is the assignment in a distant land, making it reasonable to provide them with additional personal time away?
- Does the nature or relative difficulty of the assignment make it reasonable to provide them with considerations similar to those given to field missionaries?
• Will they be in the foreign assignment for a minimum of one year?
• Do citizens of the countries regularly travel back and forth with little or no legal restrictions?
• Why could a local circuit overseer not be used?

147. If after considering these points and any other factors relevant to the specific situation, the Branch Committee believes that there are good reasons to recommend that a circuit overseer and his wife be granted the foreign service enrollment, the brother and his wife should each fill out a Questionnaire for Prospective Field Missionary (S-214). A numbered letter should then be sent to the Service Committee along with the completed S-214 form(s) and a copy of the latest Personal Qualifications Report(s) (S-326). The S-214 and S-326 should be translated into English. In the numbered letter, a clear explanation should be given as to the reason for the recommendation. If the Service Committee approves the recommendation, the enrollment code in the HuB Person record should be updated to show the start date of the foreign circuit assignment. The foreign service enrollment stops when the foreign assignment ends.

Addressing Local Needs

148. Congregation Needs: If there is a serious matter affecting most or all congregations in the branch territory, the Branch Committee may outline the concern to the Service Committee and provide a recommendation as to how to address the local need. For example, the Branch Committee may recommend preparing an outline to be considered during the local needs part of the midweek congregation meeting. Some topics may be best handled by circuit overseers when they visit the congregations or at an upcoming Kingdom Ministry School. Generally, it is not wise to prepare new material featuring Scriptural direction on topics such as marriage, funeral customs, or superstitious practices common in the branch territory. The branch office should not organize special meetings with elders or circuit overseers without the approval of the Service Committee.

149. Evaluating the Need for Translated Publications: The Branch Committee should consider the following two principles before making a recommendation to the Writing Committee to translate publications into a language or to discontinue translation into a language. (See 8:12-19; Chart 8.1.)

First, it is unrealistic to expect that most of our publications will become available in all languages. Our goal is not to translate in the largest number of languages but to follow the lead of the holy spirit to reach the largest number of honesthearted people with the good news. (Acts 13:48; 16:6-10; 1 Tim. 2:3, 4) Language communities that do not demonstrate a potential to form stable groups and congregations have a very limited need for publications. In addition, we must be careful not to pursue languages that are dying or that are preferred simply because of ethnic or tribal rivalries or other factors that do not involve spiritual needs. Second, groups and congregations may be formed in a certain language even if there are no publications in that language as long as the brothers and sisters are able to benefit from publications in another language. For example, the brothers may be able to benefit from publications in the national or regional language. (See 7:44.) In such a case, the brothers would conduct their field ministry, give comments and talks, pray, and sing in their first language but use printed publications of another language during their meetings. This simple approach works well where the brothers are multilingual. In addition to their mother tongue, they may know either the main language of the country or a major regional language.

150. Based on the two principles outlined above, the Branch Committee must carefully evaluate the need before
recommending that the first publication or additional publications be translated into a language. To ensure that the Branch Committee has a clear understanding of the needs, the Service Department should obtain the facts from the field. Selected bodies of elders, circuit overseers, field missionaries, and special pioneers may be asked to comment on such factors as the following: What is the size of the language community? How many are dependent on the language? Can most benefit from another language? How many can read their own language? Do they prefer to read another language? Are there spiritually mature publishers who are native speakers or who speak the language fluently? If so, are they willing and able to support this language field, or do they prefer to attend meetings in another language? Are qualified brothers available to take the lead and to care for the spiritual needs of new ones? (Col. 2:6, 7) Are there already groups or congregations in this language in your branch territory? Are you aware of groups or congregations in this language that may be functioning in another branch territory?

151. Evaluating New-Language Publications in the Field: When a new-language publication has been prepared for use in the field, the Service Department should send the S-136 letter to the target-language congregations and circuit overseers, announcing that the newly translated publication is available. The outline “Teach God’s Word to ‘All Sorts of Men’” (S-137), which provides direction on promoting the publication by means of a campaign and practical suggestions to help publishers use the publication effectively in the ministry, should also be sent. The information contained in the Evaluation of New-Language Publications (S-138) form will assist the Service Department in evaluating the needs. It would be unwise to accelerate translation of publications into a language if there is little response in the field or if the publishers who speak it are not committed to attending meetings and preaching in that language. The Service Department should carefully consider these and other relevant factors before recommending to the Branch Committee that additional publications be translated into the language or, conversely, that efforts to develop that language field be discontinued. If the Service Department recommends that efforts to cultivate a specific language field should be discontinued and the Branch Committee agrees, there will be no need to request translation of additional publications. In the rare event that the Branch Committee believes efforts to cultivate a language field with a permanent translation team should be discontinued, the Service Committee should be consulted.

152. Evaluating Spiritual Progress in Language Fields: On an annual basis, the Service Department should provide a report to the Branch Committee on each indigenous- or foreign-language field in the branch territory. Are native speakers responding to the good news and progressing to dedication and baptism? If congregations and groups in a particular language field are not prospering spiritually, the Service Department should determine the reasons. What are circuit overseers reporting as to the needs of such groups and congregations? (tg chap. 15) What steps have been taken to address the needs? What more needs to be done? (See 6: 75-78.) The Service Department’s report to the Branch Committee should include recommendations regarding further steps that could be taken to cultivate each language field.

153. Overseeing the Needs of the Blind: A brother should be appointed to oversee the work of caring for the needs of the blind and visually impaired in the branch territory. In most cases, the brother should work in the Service Department. However, this work could be done by a brother in another department if necessary. Good communication and cooperation is required.
between the Service Department, the Shipping Department, and the Braille Department (if there is one) to care for the needs of the blind. Overseeing this work is not a full-time assignment, but depending on the size of the branch, one or two sisters may assist with gathering information as needed.

Other Desks in the Service Department

154. Field Ministers Desk: A desk may be designated to care for the needs of circuit overseers (including field instructors) and their wives, field missionaries, special pioneers, and temporary special pioneers. The desk assists with matters such as the allowance, health care, housing, leave of absence time, and visas for these special full-time servants. The desk also assists with the identification, training, and recommendations for appointment of substitute circuit overseers and regular circuit overseers. The Service Desks have the responsibility to identify the needs in the territory when assignments for special pioneers and field missionaries are considered.—See 5:142.

155. Convention and Assembly Desk: A desk may be designated to ensure that practical and beneficial arrangements are made for organizing and scheduling conventions and circuit assemblies. Helpful guidance is found in Convention Organization Guidelines (CO-1). The desk maintains all files pertaining to regional conventions, including speaker ratings (S-306), convention volunteer reports (CO-53), and so forth. Some larger branches may designate a Program Desk to care for the work involved with assigning convention speakers and interpreters.

156. Master Planning for Kingdom Halls and Assembly Halls: A brother in the Service Department should be designated as the contact for the Local Design/Construction Department (LDC). He will work closely with the LDC to develop a master plan of the number of Kingdom Halls and Assembly Halls that are needed and their priority. The master plan is submitted for approval to the Branch Committee. Once approved, the LDC will use this plan to prioritize and administer construction, renovation, and maintenance projects for Kingdom Halls and Assembly Halls in the branch territory. The brother in the Service Department will work closely with the LDC to review and study regularly the needs for Kingdom Halls and Assembly Halls in order to update the master plan.—See 5:149.

157. Speaking Assignment Desk: The Teaching Committee provides letters and direction that outline the arrangements for Bethel speakers. These guidelines should be followed regarding assignments, expenses, and so forth.—See 7:80-89.

158. Preaching Needs Desk: In addition to making assignments for seldom-worked and unassigned territories, coordinating efforts for special methods of witnessing within the branch territory, and assisting with master planning for Kingdom Halls and Assembly Halls, this desk cares for assigning territory boundaries and for producing territory maps. These maps should be prepared using the best map available in the country. Indicate on the state or province maps the territory assigned to each congregation and the boundaries of all circuits. Unassigned territory should also be indicated on this map or on a separate map. The names of circuit overseers followed by the circuit numbers may be placed within the boundary of the area they serve. A Congregation Territory Assignment (S-54) letter is sent to each congregation with the exact written description of the outlined territory. It may also be possible to send a map clearly outlining the congregation's assigned territory. The procedure for congregations to follow in adjusting territory boundaries is outlined on the form Territory Adjustment Request (S-6).—See 6:75.

(Revised August 2018)
159. Theocratic Schools Desk: This desk cares for various theocratic schools, such as the language seminars, the Kingdom Ministry School, the Pioneer Service School, the School for Circuit Overseers and Their Wives, the School for Congregation Elders, and the School for Kingdom Evangelizers.

160. Translation Desk: The Service Department is responsible for translating service-related material, such as school curriculums, forms, guidelines, letters, meeting outlines, and videos. Translation and checking should be handled primarily by part-time commuters and remote volunteers under the coordination of a brother in the Service Department, perhaps a deskman. The permanent project-team approach used by the Translation Department is not needed for most service-related material. This desk also assists with the management of jw.org and MDS postings.—See 6:63; 8:20-21.

161. Use of Sisters: Mature sisters may be used for some clerical roles in the Service Department, such as data entry of basic personnel information, territory mapping, and the translation and proofreading of nonconfidential forms and letters. However, sisters should not be involved in handling confidential material so as not to put them in an uncomfortable situation or to be a cause for stumbling to others.

Service Reports

162. Monthly Field Service Report: Branch offices should follow the instructions provided in HuB for compiling and sending the Field Service Report (S-81) to the Service Committee. The figures for the S-81 are taken from a careful compilation of the Congregation Reports (S-1) and the Field Missionary/Special Pioneer Reports (S-212). All publishers are encouraged to report through a congregation. Isolated publishers and pioneers send their reports on the publisher’s Field Service Report (S-4), indicating that it is from an “isolated publisher” or “isolated pioneer.” The figure for the “Public by Mail” column on the S-81 can be obtained from the month-to-month record of books, brochures, and magazines sent from the branch to the non-Witness public. In addition, all magazines or literature sent out in response to coupons are listed as “Public by Mail.” Comments about new peaks in publishers, general highlights of the work, or trends may be submitted in the “Remarks” column. Questions or significant figures should be sent to the Service Committee in a separate letter.

163. A separate Field Service Report (S-81) should be submitted monthly for each political entity under the oversight of the branch. Reports should be sent no later than the 28th of the following month. Late or missing reports may be included in the report for the following month. Be sure that any peaks shown do not include reports in excess of the total number of congregations for that month.

164. Annual Field Service Report: Branch offices should follow the instructions provided in HuB for compiling and sending the end-of-year figures.

Files and Filing

165. Since the files in the office are used by many to do their work, all correspondence must be promptly and correctly identified and filed so that it can be readily located. As a general guideline, items should be identified immediately upon their receipt in the office and filed within one week of their being completed. The secretary has the responsibility for this and should have a regular routine for filing.

166. Electronic Files: The Service Department should use the HuB Document Management System (DMS) for filing correspondence and other electronic documents. HuB DMS should be set up according to the latest guidelines provided by the Service Committee. If historical documents must be scanned, consult with the WHQ Com-
puter Department before undertaking such a project. Once hard copy paper­work has been scanned and verified, then it can be shredded. Electronic files should be retained only as long as out­lined in the remaining paragraphs under this section.

167. Paper Files: If the Service Depart­ment files are not maintained electron­ically, permanent congregation files are stored in a very secure, locked area of the branch. Each congregation file has four sections: (1) circuit overseers’ reports, (2) general correspon­dance, (3) reinstatements, and (4) disfellowshippings and disassociations. [See Chart 6.1.]

168. Circuit Overseers’ Reports: S-303 and S-2 forms and supplemental letters are kept in the front of the file in date order with the most recent at the front. When a new report is received, a red mark is made on the upper right cor­ner of the preceding report, and the new report is inserted in front of it. If the first report in the file has this red mark, then the most recent report has been removed.

169. General Correspondence: This material is filed directly behind the circuit overseers’ reports in date order with the most recent at the front of the general correspondence. The Congrega­tion Application (S-51), or in its absence the oldest Report on Circuit Overseer’s Visit With Congregation (S-303), is filed at the back of the general correspondence. If the last circuit overseer’s re­port prior to the elder arrangement in 1972 is available, it should be stamped “DO NOT DESTROY” and retained just in front of the S-51 form. Correspondence regarding an individual accused of child abuse should be marked “DO NOT DESTROY.”

170. Reinstatements: Whether recorded on S-77 forms or in letters from ju­dicial committees, correspondence related to reinstatements is filed directly behind the general correspondence and S-51 form in the date order of re­instatement, with the most recent reinstatement in the front of this section. The S-77 form and attached correspon­dance about those reinstated should be destroyed after five years, unless the Service Desk determines there is a spe­cific reason to retain the file. In such a case, the file would only be retained as long as it is necessary.

171. Disfellowshippings and Dis­associations: These are kept at the back of the file. The most recent disfellowshipping record is filed at the very back of the folder. When an individual is reinstated, the date of reinstatement is recorded on the S-77 form, which is then filed with the reinstatements, as noted above.

172. Hold File: Each Service Desk maintains a HOLD FILE for pending items. This file typically contains correspon­dance on matters for which the deskman has requested further information or comments from circuit overseas or elders. It may be best also to keep in the hold file a complete copy of any material routed to Service Department oversight or to the Branch Committee. Every month the secretary should go through the hold file, check­ing to see whether a response has been made. If the office has not received the requested information or comments within three months, he should check with the deskman to see whether a reminder letter should be sent. When sending a reminder letter to a body of elders, a courtesy copy is provided to the circuit overseer with a blind PS asking him to make certain that the elders respond promptly.

173. Files for Isolated Pioneers and Publishers: When it is not feasible for an isolated group of publishers to be cared for by a congregation, a file folder for each isolated publisher group that cannot yet be formed into a congrega­tion is made and arranged alphabeti­cally according to the name of the place where the publisher receiving mail for
the group resides. All correspondence to and from the group, as well as reports from the circuit overseer for his visits to the group, is placed in this file. When a group is established as a congregation, the contents of the folder are added to the CONGREGATION FILE. A file folder is also made for ISOLATED PIONEERS. The S-4 forms from isolated pioneers are kept for a year in this folder. These files are kept together and not with the congregation files.

174. Circuit Files: The S-2 forms showing the appointment of assembly overseers and assistant assembly overseers are kept in these files.

175. Branch Correspondence Files: When other branches send correspondence to your branch for forwarding to individuals in the field, they usually include a courtesy copy for your branch file. Such copies are filed in the appropriate folder of the BRANCH CORRESPONDENCE FILES, not in the congregation files. If much mail is received from other branches, it may be helpful to sort the mail into categories, such as Branch Accommodations, Donation Letters, Kingdom Hall Information Requests, and Miscellaneous. The respective retention policy should be followed for each category.

176. Special Pioneer Files: A file folder is made by the Field Ministers Desk secretary for each special pioneer or, if married, for each couple. The files are arranged alphabetically. The special pioneer’s current congregation assignment, his Application for Regular Pioneer Service (S-205), and the S-208 are a permanent part of the file. Also filed here are the two most recent S-326 forms submitted by the circuit overseer and the file copy of any personal encouragement letters sent by the Field Ministers Desk. (Based on the circuit overseer’s comments in the S-326 form received each service year, the Field Ministers Desk will determine if additional correspondence is needed.) General correspondence may be disposed of when the files are weeded according to the branch’s document retention policy.—See 6:117.

177. Active and Inactive Circuit Overseer Files: An active file folder is made for each circuit overseer by the Field Ministers Desk secretary. This folder contains correspondence from the circuit overseer pertaining to his circuit as a whole, including any S-326 forms that were submitted on the circuit overseer and his wife, the file copies of correspondence written to the circuit overseer in connection with these reports, and correspondence regarding his field activity or his personal affairs. When a circuit overseer discontinues the circuit work, the folder is placed in the inactive file.

178. Active and Inactive Substitute Circuit Overseer Files: An active file folder is made for each substitute circuit overseer. This folder contains the correspondence regarding his appointment, including the S-324, any S-326 forms, and so forth. When a substitute circuit overseer discontinues the circuit work, the folder is placed in the inactive file.

179. “Declaration Pledging Faithfulness” Files: If used, a “Declaration Pledging Faithfulness” is filed by the last name of the person on the declaration. A separate list of names of those in the file should be maintained.—See Correspondence Guidelines, pp. 74-75.

180. Files for Those Disfellowshipped and Disassociated: A permanent file of those disfellowshipped and disassociated is kept. If S-79a/b cards are used by the branch office, they are filed alphabetically by last name, first name, and middle name and should be stored in a very secure, locked room.

181. Weeding Section Files: Deskmen are responsible for weeding the congregation files for their section. Not to be weeded are any S-2 or S-52 forms. These are to be kept indefinitely in the congregation file. Any correspondence dealing with the transfer of appointed.
brothers from one congregation to another should also be kept indefinitely. At least the last five copies of the S-303 forms and supplemental letters are kept. Older S-303 forms marked “DO NOT DESTROY” are also kept. The schedule for file retention is to be followed. A secretary may weed the files if directed to do so by the deskman. However, the deskman must carefully check the items slated for shredding within a short time of their being weeded by the secretary so that nothing of significance is discarded. The secretary should not shred anything from the files without getting the approval of the deskman.

SCHOOL FOR BRANCH COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND THEIR WIVES

182. The Service Committee invites Branch Committee and Country Committee members and their wives to this eight-week course. There is no provision for a husband to attend without his wife. If married, the following requirements must be met by both mates:

- Currently in some form of full-time service.
- Possess a good understanding of English in order to participate in class discussions and fulfill various student assignments to a reasonable degree.
- In good health and able to travel to the United States without assistance or the need for medical care during the school.—Mic. 6:8; Phil. 4:5; w04 8/15, p. 24, par. 13.
- No dependents.

183. If the availability or eligibility of a Branch Committee or Country Committee member changes, the branch should update the Persons record in HuB. Until the Service Committee sends out an invitation to a specific class, there is no need for a committee member to submit the Questionnaire for the School for Branch Committee Members and Their Wives.—See 7:113.

WATCTOWER BIBLE SCHOOL OF GILEAD

184. Purpose of the School: The purpose of this 20-week school is to provide intensive training in Bible study and theocratic organization for experienced and well-qualified special full-time servants who have already proved that they are mature Christians. With this additional training, these individuals should be able to do more to stabilize and strengthen the field and branch organization. Students are chosen approximately six months prior to the start of each Gilead class. In March, selections are made for the October class. In September, selections are made for the April class.—See 2:28.

185. Basic Requirements:

- Married couples, single brothers, and single sisters between the ages of 25 and 50. As an exception, Branch Committees may recommend brothers whom they feel are qualified to serve as Branch Committee or Country Committee members, even if they are older than 50.
- All must have been in special full-time service for at least three consecutive years. Married couples must have served the last three years together in special full-time service.
- Candidates must have the potential for strengthening and stabilizing the field or branch organization to a greater degree and must have demonstrated that they enjoy serving their brothers and can help others in a kind way to learn and adhere to Scriptural and theocratic direction.
- They must be exemplary in all aspects of Christian living.
- A brother must be an elder who has been serving for a minimum of two consecutive years.
- Must be able to read, write, and speak English fluently.
- Must be in good health. Those who
have chronic ailments, who have physical or emotional disorders, who require regular visits to a doctor or a chiropractor, who suffer from severe allergies, or who require a special diet should not be recommended for Gilead training.

- Neither past graduates of Gilead nor current members of a Branch or Country committee should be recommended.
- Circuit overseers must have already attended the School for Circuit Overseers and Their Wives.

186. Selecting Candidates: When considering candidates to be recommended for Gilead School training, the Branch Committee should have clearly in mind the current and long-term needs at Bethel and in the field. (See 9:110.) The following points should be considered:

a. Individuals who are recommended must be fluent in English in order to benefit fully from the extensive 20-week course. Has the Branch Committee confirmed that the candidate is truly fluent? Will the candidate's current comprehension of English allow him to make a meaningful contribution class discussions and to handle his student assignments adequately?

b. In reviewing a candidate's strengths and limitations, spiritual qualities such as humility and submission to theocratic instruction are more important than a person's age, seniority, nationality, or secular education.—1 Sam. 16:6, 7; Acts 16:2; Jas. 3:17; 1 Pet. 3:4.

c. It is the Governing Body's preference that brothers who are being considered for appointment to the Branch or Country committee attend Gilead School. As an exception, a brother who the Branch Committee feels is qualified to serve on the Branch Committee or on a Country Committee may be recommended even if he is somewhat older than 50 years of age.—See 2:28.

d. Which special full-time servants would readily apply themselves to the intensive training at Gilead and, as a result, be spiritually strengthened so as to be of greater use to the organization?—Phil. 2:20-22; 1 Tim. 4:15.

g. With Gilead training, which brothers would serve as effective and discerning overseers in key Bethel departments, as deskmen in the Service Department, as field instructors, or as circuit overseers?

f. Since the spirituality of translators is critical to the production of high-quality spiritual food, which translators would benefit the most from an in-depth study of the Bible and organizational matters at Gilead?

h. Among the single sisters, which ones are excellent teachers in the field, balanced, modest, respectful of authority, sound in mind, and able to get along well with all types of personalities?

i. In lands where the Kingdom work is well-established and where there are many spiritually mature brothers and sisters, the Branch Committee should give consideration to recommending those who could fill needs in other lands after Gilead training.

187. Processing Questionnaires: Gilead recommendations are to be submitted to the Service Committee each year during the month of December. In December, each branch should submit recommendations for four married couples and four single persons. If a person indicates on the questionnaire that he does not have the circumstances to be sent to another country,
he may still be recommended for Gilead training if the Branch Committee firmly believes that the person will make a major contribution to the Kingdom work locally. In the event that a branch does not have any Gilead recommendations, a brief letter of explanation should be sent to the Service Committee.

188. If there are multiple brothers being recommended who the Branch Committee believes are qualified to serve on the Branch Committee or who will qualify within the next two years, recommend the order in which the brothers should be invited. The preferred order should be indicated on each brother's Gilead Student Recommendations (G-7) form.

189. Qualified candidates being considered should be provided with (1) a copy of the Questionnaire to Attend the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead (G-12), (2) a copy of the G-16 cover letter, and (3) the A-63 letter. To ensure that the Branch Committee has a complete picture of the strengths and limitations of those being considered, a Personal Qualifications Report (S-326) should be obtained from the candidate's local body of elders and circuit overseer. If the candidate is serving at Bethel, a report should also be obtained from his department overseer and elder group. If the candidate is a circuit overseer, it would be good to obtain comments from the Service Department on his qualifications and to review the latest Personal Qualifications Report on file.

Before the Branch Committee reviews the completed G-12 questionnaires, it should confirm that each question has been answered correctly and completely. The Branch Committee should review the G-12 questionnaires and other reports very carefully before making final selections. Each recommendation should be sent electronically to the Service Committee with a very brief covering numbered letter that includes the following attachments:

- **Gilead Student Recommendations** (G-7) form. The branch should provide specific comments on each candidate's qualifications and future potential and how the person would be used after Gilead. A brother can be described as having potential to serve on the Branch Committee if it is determined that he will qualify within the next two years. Gilead recommendations are valid until the following December. Only one recommendations form is needed for a married couple.
- **Questionnaire to Attend the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead** (G-12). In addition to this completed questionnaire, a quality full-length color photo should be included as an electronic file or scanned document. If the candidate has a valid passport, a copy of it should also be included with the G-12. If the candidate does not have a passport, there is no need to obtain one until he has been invited to Gilead.
CHART 6.1

ORGANIZATION OF PERMANENT CONGREGATION FILES

(4) DISFELLOWSHIPPINGS AND DISASSOCIATIONS
S-77 and disfellowshipping reports (Most recent at back of file)

(3) REINSTATEMENTS (Most recent in front)

(2) GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE (Most recent in front)
S-51 or oldest S-303 and last S-303 prior to elder arrangement (Behind the correspondence)

(1) CIRCUIT OVERSEERS' REPORTS
(Most recent in front; red mark in upper right corner on all but most recent)
CHAPTER 7

TEACHING COMMITTEE

1. The Teaching Committee provides instruction that highlights the practical value of the fine spiritual food that we receive from “the faithful and discreet slave.” (Matt. 24:45; 1 Tim. 4:16) For a summary of the Teaching Committee’s general scope of operation, see Chart 7.1.

CONVENTIONS

2. In its annual letter to all branches, the Governing Body sets out the program for the coming year, including information about future conventions and general arrangements for holding regional, international, or special conventions. For more information on how these events should be conducted, see Convention Organization Guidelines (CO-1).

3. Special conventions are held every year unless international conventions have been scheduled for that year. Special conventions are generally held in venues that hold up to 20,000, depending on venue availability. This number includes 3,500 to 5,000 foreign delegates, depending on the circumstances of the host branch. Branch-planned activities also take place on the days before and after a special convention. International conventions are held approximately every five years. They take place in venues that hold more than 20,000 attendees, including 5,000 or more foreign delegates. Branch-planned activities also take place on the days before and after an international convention. The organization will fund those in foreign service to attend an international convention of their choice.

4. Special full-time servants who are confirmed as delegates to an international or special convention may receive time away in addition to the usual time away or hour credits granted to attend one annual regional convention. The two provisions of time away are different and cannot be combined to attend only one event. Bethel family members, circuit overseers and their wives, field instructors and their wives, Assembly Hall servants, construction servants, construction volunteers, and Bible school facility servants who are confirmed as delegates will be granted one and a half days of time away to attend all program sessions. Special pioneers, temporary special pioneers, and field missionaries who are confirmed as delegates will receive a five-hour credit for each day of the special or international convention.

5. Convention programs address concerns from Branch Committees regarding specific needs in their part of the field. If a Branch Committee desires to adjust a program because of local needs, it should write the Teaching Committee for direction before proceeding. An abbreviated two-day regional convention program is sent to all branches, as this may be helpful to smaller language groups and territories. In the rare instance when it is necessary to hold a one-day convention, the Branch Committee should select which key parts to present from the two-day program.

6. Conventions should be practical and in good taste and should prove to be a spiritual blessing to those in attendance. These events should be held at a time of year when the majority of the brothers assigned will be able to attend. An annual report on the baptism and attendance figures for the convention series should be submitted via HuB soon after the last convention in the branch territory is held. The report should include concise, meaningful comments on
the effectiveness of the program and on how it was received locally.

7. Locations: When international or special conventions are arranged, one of the larger cities in the country would normally be selected. Regional conventions should be held in cities that can accommodate the anticipated attendance. In countries where restrictions make it impossible to hold regional conventions (and circuit assemblies), arrangements may be made to present abbreviated programs at Kingdom Halls or at other appropriate locations. Arrangements may be made for congregations to attend a convention in a country under the oversight of another branch office when a congregation is part of a circuit that spans branch territories or when there are other practical reasons. In such cases, the two branch offices involved may work out a mutually acceptable arrangement without seeking approval from the Teaching Committee.

8. Foreign-Language Sessions: A circuit overseer may recommend to the branch office that a foreign-language session be held in conjunction with a regional convention, for a target language, provided that: (1) a sufficient number of publishers and interested ones will be in attendance and (2) either qualified speakers or video recordings are available. This request should be submitted by mid-January, at least one year in advance of the scheduled event. It should include how many publishers and interested ones would benefit from this arrangement, how many qualified brothers would be available to give talks, how many parts each speaker could handle, and how many parts would be presented using video recordings. The circuit overseer should recommend a qualified brother who would serve as program overseer for the foreign-language session. He would work under the direction of the Convention Committee and in harmony with Convention Organization Guidelines (CO-1). If the branch office agrees with the recommendation, it would appoint the foreign-language program overseer. Based on the ratings received from the field, the branch office will assign the speakers for all foreign-language sessions or will specify which talks should be presented using video recordings. If recordings are not available, as an exception, the Branch Committee may approve simultaneous interpretation into a foreign language for some or all of the parts of the program. A qualified brother should oversee the arrangements for simultaneous interpretation, under the oversight of the convention chairman. If approval is given to hold a foreign-language session concurrent with a regional convention program on the same premises where a member of the Governing Body, a helper to a Governing Body committee, or a Branch Committee member is assigned to share on the program in the primary language, such talks should be simultaneously interpreted for the benefit of the foreign-language session. If qualified interpreters are not available, those talks will be assigned to local brothers or played from a video recording in the foreign language of the session.—See 7:29-30, 76-79.

9. Recordings: Each January, translating branches should post the schedule on PPD for uploading a video recording of the regional convention program to JW Stream. The video recording should be of one of the first convention programs in the branch territory, since this recording will be used by other branches that have relatively few qualified speakers in the target language. If a translating branch is scheduled to hold its convention much later in the service year, then a branch holding an earlier convention in the target language may make a recording that can be distributed locally. The recording should be made available, perhaps by means of JW Stream, for those who are unable to attend their assigned convention. If a publisher is assigned to a convention (or an assembly) along with his congregation but lacks comprehension in the language of the
convention, the elders may offer him recordings of the program in his mother tongue so that he can fully benefit from the spiritual food. Of course, learners should continue to attend the assigned convention with their congregation so as to benefit from association with fellow believers.—See 7:46.

10. Expenses: The branch will cover the expenses involved in holding conventions in its territory and will accept contributions from those in attendance. These expenses should be included in the annual budget submitted to the Treasurer’s Office and the Publishing Committee. Well-organized conventions are a real stimulus to the brothers and an encouragement to interested people. If the convention runs smoothly because of good organization and loving oversight, the brothers will generally support it well. It is appropriate to remind the brothers that it is a privilege to support the convention and the worldwide work monetarily.—Luke 16:9-13; 2 Cor., chaps. 8-9.

11. Attendees are encouraged to bring their own food and beverages. If because of local circumstances a branch finds it necessary to provide some basic food items or a beverage at regional conventions or circuit assemblies, a request should be sent to the Teaching Committee clearly explaining why this is needed and how the expenses will be covered. The Teaching and Publishing committees will consider the request.

12. Releasing Newly Translated Publications: When an approved translation of a publication that was not released simultaneously with the English edition is completed, the Branch Committee will need to determine how best to release the item. If the publication will not be available when regional conventions are held, it will usually be released by means of a general letter to the congregations. The release could also be announced at a special meeting held in connection with a branch visit or a shepherding visit. There is no provision for releasing a newly translated publication at a circuit assembly.

13. If a newly translated publication will be available by the time of the local regional convention(s), the Branch Committee may write the Teaching Committee, recommending that the item be released at the convention. This should be recommended only for new publications in the primary language(s) of the branch territory. Along with their recommendation, the Branch Committee should supply the title and language of the publication and indicate at what point during the program they recommend making the announcement. Usually, such releases should be announced during the final talk of the convention. However, for some items, such as songbooks or the Bible, the release announcement would likely be made at the end of the first morning session so that the brothers could begin using them right away. With the exception of Bible releases, there is no physical distribution of releases at conventions.

14. If it is known that a newly translated publication will be ready for distribution shortly after the local regional conventions, a release announcement is usually made during the final talk on the program, stating when the item will be available for request through the congregations. The wording for such brief announcements should follow the pattern used on past convention talk outlines or manuscripts.

15. If regional conventions of the same language will be held in various countries, the release announcement for a new or a revised edition of the New World Translation should be made first at a regional convention in the country overseeing that language. However, for any other translated publication, its release may be announced at the first convention of the season, regardless of the country, as long as the item is available in the language of the convention. Good communication and cooperation between the branches involved is encouraged.
16. Releasing the New World Translation: Generally, Governing Body members will only release “revised” editions of the entire New World Translation. However, if the New World Translation will be released in a new language at a regional convention and you have been informed that a member of the Governing Body will be in the region and may be in a position to attend the convention, you may submit a request to have him release the Bible. In conjunction with any New World Translation release by a member of the Governing Body, you should answer the following questions: (1) What is the estimated timetable for printing and shipping? (2) What are the scheduled dates for the first regional convention in that language? (3) In what city will the event be held, and what will be the venue? (4) What is the estimated attendance? (5) Will other locations be tied in with the main venue for the talks of the Governing Body member? (6) What transportation arrangements would need to be made to get to the convention city? Is travel safe? (7) Where will the Governing Body member be accommodated? (8) Are you aware of any local regulations that would impede the participation of a member of the Governing Body on the program? (9) If so, do you foresee the possibility of requesting an exemption from the local authorities?

17. Special Meeting to Release the New World Translation: Please note that if the Bible is ready for release at a time other than your convention season, a special program may be organized. If this will be the release of a “revised” edition of the complete Bible, it may be requested that a Governing Body member handle the release. If it is the release of a new language edition, a Branch Committee member could handle the release at such a special meeting unless a member of the Governing Body will be in the area and is willing and able to release the new Bible. Such an event may be scheduled as soon as printed copies of the new Bible are available for distribution. In this way, a branch would have two options: (1) Release an edition of the New World Translation in conjunction with a regional convention whenever that is practical or (2) hold a special event. When a special event is arranged, a large venue may be rented from which the program will originate. The program may be video streamed to Assembly Halls and Kingdom Halls within the branch territory so that as many publishers as possible can benefit. If the language of the release is also the primary language of a country outside the branch territory where the program is being held, arrangements may be made for Assembly Halls and Kingdom Halls in those areas to be tied in as well. The video stream could be delayed as needed for the benefit of locations in time zones to the west of the originating venue. In this way, many publishers fluent in the language of the release will hear the news simultaneously. For details on the program format, see Chart 7.2.

18. Convention Committee: The branch office should appoint a Convention Committee made up of the Convention Committee coordinator, the program overseer, and the rooming overseer. These elders should be good organizers and have sufficient time to care for the assignment. A circuit overseer may be assigned if necessary. It is essential that these brothers be spiritual men who fully manifest the fruitage of the spirit, even under pressure. The Convention Committee should be alert, capable of dealing with officials and other business concerns. In addition to providing oversight of the overall convention operation, the Convention Committee assigns all other department heads.

19. The committee members should be well-respected by the publishers and exhibit good teaching ability. If a brother appointed to a Convention Committee is rated as an average speaker, he should be used on the program in harmony with his speaking ability. If a brother is recommended to serve on a Convention
Committee because of outstanding spiritual and organizational qualifications but is not recommended to give a talk on the program because of his limitations as a speaker, the Branch Committee will need to think carefully about whether to appoint him. If he is appointed, perhaps he could be assigned to serve as a session chairman or to offer one of the prayers.

20. Accident Prevention and Security:
Safety is a priority and must be taken seriously. Give careful attention to the guidelines outlined in Convention Organization Guidelines (CO-1) for safety matters and for securing money, audio/video equipment, and other valuables.

21. Regional Convention Assignments for Branch Committee Members:
Branch Committee members should attend at least one regional convention of their selection at their own expense or through private funding. As with all Bethel family members, a day and a half of time away from work will be granted to Branch Committee members and their wives in connection with only one yearly regional convention of their choice.

22. In larger branches, Branch Committee members may **attend two additional conventions**. These conventions are assigned by the branch. For these two assignments, convention time and necessary travel time will be granted to the brothers and their wives. Convention funds should not be used to defray the Branch Committee member’s travel costs. If local private funds are not offered to cover the related travel expenses incurred from the two additional conventions attended by the Branch Committee member and his wife if she accompanies him, the expenses may be reimbursed by the organization. A Branch Committee member is not obligated to take two additional branch assigned conventions if he has been invited to attend additional conventions and is using private funds to care for his transportation costs.—See 9:88.

23. If it is practical for a Branch Committee member to use a branch vehicle in order to attend any of the additional conventions to which he is assigned, the fuel charge would be noted as an organizational expense. Such factors as the distance to be traveled and the length of time a brother would be away from his Bethel assignment would need to be weighed to determine whether it would be practical to use a branch vehicle. If the Branch Committee member is unable to drive, a Bethel driver may be assigned to assist him. If so, the driver would be granted the necessary time away from work.

24. At times, because of location or other circumstances, a number of regional conventions might not be visited by a Branch Committee member or another responsible Bethel representative. When that is the case, the talks given by a Branch Committee member could be streamed or played from a video recording to such regional conventions, as long as the technology is available. This provision would allow the audiences at those locations to have some exposure to a Branch Committee member.

25. Speakers Attending a Convention in Another Country: At times Bethel speakers, missionaries, and circuit overseers make personal plans to attend a regional convention outside of their branch territory. If a qualified speaker serving in one of these forms of special full-time service makes known that he will be attending a regional convention in another country, using his personal time away and private travel funds, his speaker’s ratings may be forwarded to that branch office. (It is not necessary to survey brothers in your branch territory to find out if they will be attending conventions in other lands.) The branch office in the country that he will be visiting may assign him a part on the program in harmony with his qualifications or interview him during one of the parts if there is a need. However, a branch need not feel obligated
to include such a visiting speaker on the program. (See 6:90-91.) There is no arrangement for foreign delegates attending international or special conventions to give talks on the program in the primary language of the convention. However, if there are foreign-language sessions at such a convention and there are not enough qualified local speakers fluent in one of those languages, it may be that a qualified visiting delegate fluent in the language could be included on the foreign-language program. Foreign delegates in special full-time service, such as missionaries, can be used in an interview if the part calls for it. The interview should be rehearsed well in advance.

26. Media Services for Regional and Circuit Events: Each year an updated package containing timely guidelines is made available to all branches via the Materials Distribution System (MDS).

CIRCUIT ASSEMBLIES

27. The Teaching Committee provides programs and outlines for two circuit assemblies each year. These events are to be conducted in accord with Circuit Organization Guidelines (S-330). Taking into account the recommendations of the circuit overseers, the Branch Committee will arrange to hold two one-day circuit assemblies a year for each circuit or section of a circuit. Normally, a branch representative will be sent to serve one of the events (CA-br) as the visiting speaker. A circuit overseer will handle the main talk(s) for the other assembly (CA-co). Where practical, the Branch Committee may assign speakers from the branch to serve circuit assemblies in other countries under its oversight, following the guidelines given in 7:33-34. Only circuit overseers or regular members of the Bethel family (BBR) who are currently appointed as branch representatives at circuit assemblies may be used for these assignments. (See 7:89 for guidelines on these appointments.) Translating branches should make arrangements to upload recordings of both circuit assemblies to JW Stream early in the service year, if possible. This recording can be used by other branches that have few qualified speakers in the target language. It can also be made available for those who are unable to attend their assigned assembly or who have limited comprehension of the language of the assembly to which they are assigned. An annual report on the baptism and attendance figures for the assembly series should be submitted via HuB shortly after the last assembly is held in the branch territory. The report should include concise, meaningful comments on the effectiveness of the program.

28. If it is felt that the published CA-br program should be adjusted for a certain locality, a proposal should be sent to the Teaching Committee for approval. In countries with only one circuit or where publishers are very poor and cannot afford to travel to three events in a year, the Branch Committee could consider any of the following optional arrangements: (1) obtain a video recording of an earlier CA-br program in the language of the circuit for showing at the Kingdom Hall(s) where the affected publishers meet, (2) merge the two yearly events for the affected circuit into one weekend, or (3) not hold the CA-br program. If circuits in a large city cannot make separate assembly arrangements because of local circumstances, then, as an exception, it is permissible for two or, at most, three circuits to have a combined assembly. The circuit overseer(s) should call the branch office to discuss which date should be used for the combined assembly and which parts each circuit overseer will present. The circuit overseers will decide who will handle the program parts that are to be given by local brothers and who will care for the various assembly departments.

29. Foreign-Language Circuit Assemblies: If a circuit overseer for a foreign-language field feels that an assembly would be well-supported and a pro-
gram could be presented using qualified speakers, interpreters, or video recordings, he should submit his recommendation to the branch office for approval. This request should be sent well in advance of the scheduled event, and it should answer the following questions: How many publishers and interested people would benefit from this program? How many elders qualify to give talks or interpret the program? How many parts could the appointed brothers present? How many parts would be presented using video recordings? Are the video recordings available from the translating branch? How many other publishers qualify to interpret the program? After determining that an assembly can be organized by appointed men and that it will be well-supported, the Branch Committee may grant approval to hold the assembly.—See 7:46.

30. Foreign-language circuit assemblies should aim to present a program similar to the program of the primary language, using qualified speakers to care for all parts locally. If this is not possible, sessions may be played from video recordings in the target language. Interspersing live talks by fluent speakers with video recordings improves the quality of the teaching and holds the attention of the audience. The assembly organization should function according to the usual arrangements, with the following provisions: Prayers should be given locally unless the program is being streamed live. The baptism could be held locally after listening to the recorded baptism talk, or the candidates could join with another language group for water immersion. When a pregroup, group, or congregation views a recording of a circuit assembly, the circuit overseer can determine how best to handle the Watchtower summary, based on the local circumstances. He has the option (1) to pause the recorded program so that a local elder can give a 30-minute summary talk, (2) to assign a local elder to conduct a 30-minute abbreviated Watchtower Study, or (3) to remind the publishers to study the current week’s article on their own.—See 7:8, 45.

31. As an exception, assemblies may be interpreted simultaneously if video recordings are not available. They would be held concurrently with the program in the primary language of the event. The sessions are usually held in a separate room or area of the venue and are organized so that they will not distract the audience attending the main program. When simultaneous interpretation is approved for circuit assemblies, a qualified brother should oversee the arrangement, under the direction of the assembly overseer. If possible, the brother selected should know the foreign language. The circuit overseer should meet with this brother to decide on such matters as a practical seating location for those listening to the interpretation, one with sufficient lighting and good sound. The brother overseeing the interpretation should schedule the assignments well in advance. If at all possible, qualified brothers, rather than sisters, should be used for the principal talks, particularly those of the circuit overseer or the representative from the branch. When qualified sisters must be used as interpreters, they should be referred to the published direction given on this matter. (w09 11/15 pp. 12-13) If a separate room or area of the venue is not available and the foreign-language attendees will be sitting in the main auditorium, the interpreted program could be broadcast over an FM transmitter to small FM receivers used with earphones.—See 7:76.

32. Travel Expenses Associated With Circuit Assembly (CA-br) Assignments: The circuit should cover the transportation expenses of the visiting speaker and his wife even if he uses a branch vehicle to travel to his assignment. The branch is authorized to fund or supplement any financial shortfall for circuits unable to cover these travel expenses. Therefore, even if the circuit cannot reimburse his travel expenses, a branch representative could be sent
33. Time Away for Circuit Assembly (CA-br) Assignments: Generally, Bethel speakers would need no more than a total of two days to travel to and from most circuit assembly (CA-br) assignments. (For these assignments, wives would also be granted the same time away from work as their husbands.) Assignments closer to Bethel may require little or no time away. In branches overseeing territories that span many time zones or in lands where travel is very difficult, more than a day’s time might be needed for a speaker to reach his assignment. In such rare cases, the branch representative should make a reasonable determination of the amount of travel time needed, considering such local circumstances as the reliability of the transportation, the schedules, and the travel costs. Occasionally, a brother from Bethel might be assigned to serve a circuit assembly (CA-br) in a remote area if he will be able to reach the assembly either en route to or returning from another distant assignment, such as a visit to a remote translation office. Also, if a brother will be taking personal time away in a distant part of the branch territory, some thought might be given to having him care for a circuit assembly (CA-br) being held in the vicinity.

34. If the circuit assembly (CA-br) is scheduled for a Sunday only and reaching the site will not require a significant amount of travel time, the brother would usually travel on Saturday as long as suitable transportation is available and travel costs would not be much higher than if he traveled on Friday. Typically, he would travel back to Bethel on Monday. When the event is scheduled for a Saturday only, the speaker would normally leave from Bethel on Friday so as to reach his accommodations for that evening at a reasonable time. Likely, he will return to Bethel on Sunday, providing circumstances allow for a reasonable itinerary that day. If it is normally possible to keep to the aforementioned travel schedule but a speaker opts to leave earlier or return later, he is expected to use personal time away from Bethel.

35. If the above guidelines do not answer questions that could arise regarding this subject, the Branch Committee should feel free to contact the Teaching Committee, explaining what is involved in a particular situation.—See 6:92.

CONGREGATION MEETINGS

36. Midweek Meeting: Unless there are extreme extenuating circumstances, congregations worldwide hold one midweek meeting sometime between Monday and Friday. Detailed instructions for the midweek meeting are set out in Instructions for Our Christian Life and Ministry Meeting (S-38). This meeting features the Life and Ministry Meeting Workbook (mwb) and is formatted as follows: It begins with song, prayer, and opening comments followed by Treasures From God’s Word, Apply Yourself to the Field Ministry, and Living as Christians, which includes a 30-minute consideration of the Congregation Bible Study. The entire meeting lasts one hour and 45 minutes, including the closing song and prayer.

- Treasures From God’s Word will usually follow the global schedule for Bible reading to help the brotherhood be “united in the same mind and in the same line of thought.” (1 Cor. 1:10) If the Bible or the references are not available in the language of the congrega-
tion, publishers may use another language to prepare for this part of the meeting. For some languages, translating branches may translate Bible citations and publication references and provide these in the document References for Life and Ministry Meeting Workbook (mwbr). The mwbr document may be distributed electronically to congregations in the branch territory, if desired. Otherwise, if a publication cited in the Life and Ministry Meeting Workbook is not yet available in a particular language, branches may select alternate source material, using a current publication that is available in the local language. Similarly, if the cited reference material for a question in the Life and Ministry Meeting Answer Sheet (Ima) is not available in the target language, a new question and answer may be formulated, based on the reference material available in that language, without having to submit the revised text to the Teaching Committee for approval.

- **Apply Yourself to the Field Ministry** will feature three sample conversation videos—the initial call, the first return visit, and the second return visit. The front page of the workbook will contain brief outlines of the sample conversations that will match the sample conversation videos. If a sample conversation is not effective in a certain language, it may be adjusted by the translating branch as long as the new conversation will be effective for publishers using that language around the world. If it is not possible to adjust the sample conversation video, it may still be played and discussed as an option to the adjusted written sample conversation, provided this would be helpful to the field. Apply Yourself to the Field Ministry will have **student assignments** as outlined in the meeting workbook. (The Bible reading at the end of Treasures From God's Word is considered a student assignment.) Generally, the branches should not adjust this program. The primary purpose of these assignments is to help publishers develop greater skill in the ministry. Students should base the initial call and return visit assignments on the sample conversations. They may decide whether or not to introduce a publication or video from our Teaching Toolbox.

- **Living as Christians** includes the Congregation Bible Study and one or two parts practical for Christian living. Some languages will consider a different publication for the Congregation Bible Study, and the schedule in the workbook should reflect this. The other meeting parts in this section may be modified by the Branch Committee to be more effective for a particular language field. If there is a need in the branch territory, rather than preparing substitute material for the workbook, the Branch Committee may prepare a letter to the elders, giving direction for the subject to be discussed during an upcoming local needs part. If videos featured on the midweek meeting need to be translated, branches may proceed with translating them into the target language without checking with the Teaching Committee. If regions of the branch territory do not have the ability to view videos, the Branch Committee may need to provide them with alternate material and direction, perhaps by means of a letter.

**37. Weekend Meeting:** After opening with song and prayer, a 30-minute Bible discourse is presented from one of the approved outlines on the list Public Talk Titles (S-99) or as otherwise provided by the organization for special occasions, such as the circuit overseer's visit. Normally, following the Bible discourse and after an intermediate song, the scheduled Watchtower
Study article is reviewed by the congregation as a question-and-answer session lasting one hour. The discussion includes the reading of all the paragraphs and all the scriptures marked “read” as well as a brief consideration of the review box. Paragraph reading should be uninterrupted. The “read” scriptures would normally be read after the paragraph reading and prior to considering the portion of the paragraph in which they are located. The scriptures marked “read” should not be read before the reading of the paragraph unless the scripture is cited at the very beginning of the paragraph, such as in a verse-by-verse discussion. The weekend meeting that features the public Bible discourse and Watchtower Study should not be combined with the midweek meeting except in extreme circumstances.

38. Visit of the Circuit Overseer: The above-mentioned formats vary only during the visit of the circuit overseer. On such weeks, the Watchtower Study is abbreviated to 30 minutes and paragraph reading is suspended so that the circuit overseer can give a final 30-minute service talk. During the mid-week meeting, the Congregation Bible Study is replaced with a 30-minute service talk by the circuit overseer. (tg 4:10) Family heads should consider the assigned Congregation Bible Study material during family worship. When several congregations meet in one Kingdom Hall, those not being visited will adjust meeting times as needed for that week. Any schedule of meeting times that involves rotation is worked out through the elders in a spirit of mutual concern and brotherly love.—Phil. 2: 2-4; 1 Pet. 3:8.

39. Audio and video transmissions or recordings of our regular congregation meetings may be made for those unable to attend physically because of illness or other circumstances. (Helpful comments appear on MDS regarding the technical aspects of these provisions.) Congregation meetings should not be made available to a wide audience on the Internet. Neither should recordings of congregation meetings be distributed indiscriminately. However, it is not necessary to monitor who has access to congregation meetings. Care should be exercised that conferencing systems and recordings do not become a convenient substitute for attending meetings in person. If congregations have not yet made arrangements to record congregation meetings for the benefit of the elderly, infirm, and those who are otherwise unable to attend, the elders may provide them with access to recordings in the target language on JW Stream. Viewing the meetings on JW Stream allows those unable to attend an opportunity to view any videos presented. In order to reduce the load on congregations with very few brothers qualified to handle meeting parts, the circuit overseer may give approval for groups and small congregations to view recorded meetings or portions of meetings even if the congregation holds meetings in one of the primary languages of the country.

40. Visual Aids: Unless specifically directed by the organization, no video footage should be used in conjunction with congregation meetings, assemblies, or conventions. Brothers who present talks at congregation meetings may display still images on-screen as visual aids if the necessary equipment is available at the Kingdom Hall. Still images are not to be used by speakers at assemblies and conventions, because these programs are specifically prepared by the Teaching Committee and the images could be misconstrued as being authorized by the organization. Sign-language meetings, assemblies, and conventions may continue to make judicious use of video footage and still images as a visual teaching aid for the special needs of deaf audiences.—See 7:93.

Meetings in Foreign Languages

41. Foreign-Language Groups: When there are only a few publishers working a foreign-language field, a group can be
formed under the supervision of a host congregation. (kg 11/09 p. 5 par. 10; tg chap. 15) Such foreign-language groups may hold their Congregation Bible Study in a separate room at the Kingdom Hall at the same time as the midweek meeting of the host congregation. In cases of severe space constraints, the group may hold this 30-minute meeting just prior to the host congregation’s midweek meeting. If this is not possible, a less preferred option would be to have the group meet just before or after the host congregation’s weekend meeting. A foreign-language group that has grown in size may need to be transferred to another host congregation that meets in a Kingdom Hall with a larger auxiliary room.

42. Newly Formed Congregations: If a group is making good progress, has responsible ones taking the lead, and has reasonable prospects for further growth, consideration may be given to forming a congregation. (tg chap. 12) Meetings should be conducted in the language of the congregation (or group) even if only a few publications are available. For example, the Congregation Bible Study may be conducted using just the first few publications on the translation priority list. Understandably, the schedule and the content for this part of the Life and Ministry Meeting would differ from those of the major languages. If different publications are needed, the Alternate Material for the Congregation Bible Study form found on MDS along with a proposed study schedule in English should be submitted to the Teaching Committee for approval.

43. In the event that no responsible brothers in the congregation are available to conduct the meeting on a particular day and video recordings are not accessible, an interpreter could be used so that most would be able to understand the comments of the assigned conductor or public speaker for that occasion. (See 7:76.) This would harmonize with the precedent found in 1 Corinthians chapter 14. Also, it should be noted that many languages have a suitable vernacular Bible translation or at least a portion of it. The brothers should be encouraged to use these Bibles at their meetings and in the field ministry.

44. When no publications are available in a certain language, meetings could be conducted using our publications in another language as long as most in the congregation or group are able to follow along. For example, an indigenous group may also understand a major language in which publications are readily available. However, all talks, prayers, question-and-answer sessions, and meetings should be conducted in the language of the group. As mentioned above, if the assigned conductor does not speak the language of the group, a qualified interpreter may assist him. Also, when a group is started, it may be possible for the brother assigned as reader for the Congregation Bible Study or the Watchtower Study to make a personal translation of the material under discussion, although this is not ideal. Once meetings are held regularly in the language of the group and the formation of a congregation is imminent, the Branch Committee should contact the Writing Committee, outlining the needs of the congregation and providing the names of any baptized Witnesses who could be used as translators.—See 8:13.

45. Video Streaming and Recordings: Conducting congregation meetings locally is preferable. However, if such is not yet possible and the congregations obtain the necessary equipment, a pregroup, group, or small congregation may request permission from the circuit overseer to view recordings of the meetings of a congregation in the target language. Under the direction of the Branch Committee, the circuit overseer approves which pregroups, groups, or small congregations in his circuit will view recordings of another congregation approved to stream meetings in...
the target language and to what extent. The circuit overseer must consider all of the factors surrounding the request in deciding whether to give approval for such an arrangement or not. Access to these recordings in the target language is available on JW Stream. Interspersing talks by fluent speakers with video streaming or recordings, whenever possible, raises the quality of the teaching and holds the attention of the audience. Prayers must be given locally unless the program is being streamed live.—See 7:30.

46. Translating branches should provide high-quality video footage of meetings (along with conventions and assemblies, including the annual pioneer meeting in conjunction with the circuit assembly) in harmony with the latest guidelines posted on MOS and PPD. In order to benefit congregations and groups worldwide, each translating branch should select a qualified elder, such as a circuit overseer or a Bethelite, to deliver the Memorial and the special talk in the target language. Branches should finalize the arrangements for posting a new Memorial and special talk to JW Stream by January of each calendar year so that congregations and groups that will use the recordings can be notified well in advance by the local branch office. These programs should be posted about one month before the scheduled date of the event. Besides removing prayers, the Memorial recordings should exclude the section of the talk subtitled “Observing the Memorial of Christ’s Death Today.”—See 7:9, 29.

DEDICATION PROGRAMS

Branch Dedications

47. Dedication programs are special occasions of great spiritual encouragement for Jehovah’s people. These programs are held in connection with newly acquired or newly built facilities that are fully owned by the organization. Months in advance of a branch dedication, an overview of the plans, including details about the program content, rooming for guests, feeding, and so forth, should be sent to the Teaching Committee for final review and approval. If an exception to the following guidelines is necessary, the Branch Committee should contact the Teaching Committee before proceeding.

48. If a four-page printed program is planned, the branch should submit the recommended text and a PDF of the proposed design directly to the Writing Committee. The text in the program sample will be reviewed and approved by the Teaching Committee, while the actual design of the program will be reviewed and approved by the Writing Committee.

49. Day and Time for Program: If possible, a branch dedication program should be held on a Saturday. A program approximately three hours in length should be arranged. If one or more talks need to be interpreted, the program may take another 30-40 minutes. The format may be adjusted to fit local circumstances. [See Chart 7.2.]

50. The chairman will give the opening words of welcome. Then for about 20 minutes, a member of the Branch Committee should relate the history of the Kingdom work in that country, followed by how Jehovah opened the way for a new branch to be constructed. If there are longtime missionaries present, approximately eight minutes can be dedicated to interview them. They may comment on their share in the early development of the work and relate any personal experiences involved. Then 30-40 minutes should be used to discuss the construction project itself. A member of the Branch Committee who was involved with the project is usually assigned this part. It could be developed as a discussion by three brothers, two of whom would be involved with oversight of construction organization. It may include a few interviews with key workers on the project. These interviews could highlight problems that were overcome, relate any
outstanding experiences that took place in obtaining equipment and accomplishing the work, or indicate how a witness was given to the community. This discussion could conclude by referring to the fine cooperation of the local brothers and the way Jehovah blessed the activity.

51. If there are a few Branch Committee members present from nearby branches, a representative from each may use from four to six minutes to relate outstanding experiences and reports about the progress of the work in those countries. This segment could be about 20 minutes in length. It would be followed by song, announcements, and the reading of any greetings, all of which should take no longer than 15 minutes.

52. Dedication Talk: If a member of the Governing Body is assigned to attend the dedication, he will give the dedication talk. This discourse is usually about an hour in length, but if interpreted, it may take 90 minutes or more. The Governing Body member will usually give the dedication prayer.

53. Invitations and Seating: The program will generally originate from the branch's main auditorium. Overflow seating may be set up in a Kingdom Hall or an Assembly Hall on the property of the branch being dedicated. Extra chairs may also be set up in dining rooms and in other locations on the premises. The number invited will depend on the size of the facilities, the number in the Bethel family, the size of the engineering and construction staff, and the number of visitors from other branches. In some branches, those in the field who have served faithfully in the truth for 40 or more years have been included. No other venue will be rented unless there are exceptional circumstances. If this is the case, write to the Teaching Committee, explaining the details and requesting that an exception be made.

54. The dedication program, a tour of the facility, and association with the Bethel family and others can encourage visitors to continue doing Jehovah's will. However, there is no need to arrange for a family day or family night program. These events for the Bethel family should be scheduled at another time, exclusively for the Bethel family and any approved guests. Entertainment programs for visitors require many hours of rehearsal and therefore should not be approved for presentation. By keeping the arrangements simple and on a high spiritual level, such occasions will be delightful and beneficial for all.

55. Printed Invitations: Some branches have printed badge cards for attendees, similar in size to the badge cards used at regional conventions. This helps to ensure that only those invited will be permitted entry. This can also be done for the special program on Sunday if seating is limited.

56. Food Arrangements: If Saturday morning is devoted to tours, there could be a light buffet meal at noon or light packed lunches for the dedication visitors. The dedication program could begin at 1:30 p.m. or 2:00 p.m. A light buffet meal in the evening would be appropriate for the Bethel family, the engineering and construction staff, and any overnight guests staying at the branch. However, there should be no arrangement for feeding everyone who attends the dedication program. If there are questions about this, please write to the Teaching Committee before plans are finalized.

57. Special Meeting on Sunday: If practical, a special program may be held on Sunday at a larger hall or stadium. As an alternative, the program could be held at the branch and video streamed to Kingdom Halls throughout the country if such technology is already in place. The program could begin at 9:30 a.m. or 10:00 a.m. The format for this special meeting may be as follows: After an introductory song and prayer, the chairman will extend a warm
welcome to the audience and make a few encouraging comments. Then he will introduce a 30-minute summary talk of the Watchtower Study for that week. Afterward, a 20-minute review of the dedication program that was held on the preceding day may be presented as a discussion between two Branch Committee members. Next, Branch Committee members or representatives from other branches may present four or five reports, as they did the day before. However, since those who attended the dedication will also be in attendance at this meeting, it would be best if different reports were given than the ones presented at the dedication program the day before. This segment could last up to 30 minutes, depending on whether interpretation is needed. After another song, announcements can be made along with the reading of any greetings. Then the guest speaker will give a one-hour service talk. The content of this talk will be different from that of his dedication talk on Saturday. If interpreted, this talk may take 90 minutes or more. (See 7:76.) The special meeting would end with a closing song and prayer. [See Chart 7.2.]

Assembly Hall Dedications

58. When a new Assembly Hall is built or an existing facility has undergone extensive renovation resulting in a significant change of its floor plan and overall appearance, a dedication program would be in order. Generally, there would be only one guest speaker assigned to an Assembly Hall dedication. Organization funds may be used to cover the travel expenses of only one Branch Committee member and his wife. Also, only one Branch Committee member should share in the dedication program. When the dedication speaker is a member of the Governing Body, the program should be held on a Saturday. In this case, one Branch Committee member may be assigned to present a report on the advancement of the Kingdom work in the area of the Assembly Hall. (See 7:60.) As described below, an additional special program should be arranged for Sunday of the same weekend if a Governing Body member is present for the dedication weekend. During that program, the same Branch Committee member may be assigned to present a 30-minute summary talk of the Watchtower Study for that week or an additional report on the work in the local branch territory. Other Branch Committee members may attend both programs if they wish, but they would not be assigned a part and their travel expenses should be covered by private funds. Please note that a Governing Body member would not normally be assigned to visit the branch and conduct morning worship in conjunction with the dedication of an Assembly Hall unless the facility is very close to Bethel. Any exceptions would need to be approved by the Teaching Committee.

59. The dedication program may be video streamed, if possible, to the Kingdom Halls of the congregations that will make use of the Assembly Hall. If video streaming is not possible, only those who can be accommodated in the Assembly Hall would be invited to the dedication program on Saturday. (If that is the case, to make it possible for more brothers to attend, the Governing Body member may agree to give his dedication talk again during a second program that would be presented later on Saturday, but this decision is left to the Governing Body member.) The Branch Committee determines who will be invited.—See 7:66.

60. Saturday Program Format: The dedication program need not be longer than two and a half hours. A brief history of the progress of the Kingdom work in the area may be presented, possibly including an interview of one or two longtime Witnesses. Experiences and comments by those being interviewed should be to the point. Participants should emphasize, not so much how the building was constructed, but
how Jehovah blessed the work and the effect the project has had on the community and on the brothers.—Acts 14: 27; see 7:58.

61. A video presentation or slide show should be no more than 15 minutes in length. Just a few of the main construction phases should be featured. The presentation should be dignified and the content in good taste, forasmuch as the program is an occasion to praise Jehovah for his blessing on the project.

62. The dedication talk may be up to one hour in length. If interpreted into another language, it will be somewhat longer.

63. The Assembly Hall is to be dedicated only once, by means of a prayer. When it is necessary to schedule a second program later in the day or on the next day, the speaker will explain that the building was dedicated at the preceding program.

64. Program participants should be exemplary Jehovah’s Witnesses. There is no provision for government officials or others to address the audience on any occasion, just as is the case at any theocratic meeting. If an official wishes to make a brief speech or offer expressions of appreciation at a dedication program, he may be received hospitably and given audience by a few responsible brothers in a separate room before or after the program.

65. Tours: A tour of the Assembly Hall or an open house may be arranged before the dedication program. If the program is scheduled in the afternoon, the open house could be organized in the morning. Or, if more convenient, it may be arranged on the day before or even one or two weeks prior to the dedication. If practical, arrangements can be made to serve light snacks or refreshments but no alcoholic beverages. Many brothers have found this to be a fine time to invite businessmen and officials who may have become familiar with our work and who may have expressed a desire to see the completed building. It is appropriate for an elder to be assigned to escort these individuals and to make their visit informative and pleasant. Other guests may also be given a brief tour by one of the attendants. Such tours are generally scheduled for the morning or early afternoon prior to the dedication program.—See 7:68.

66. Seating: The hall should be filled for the dedication program, but it may be necessary to limit the number invited in order to avoid overcrowding. In some cases, those invited are limited to those in special full-time service, elders, ministerial servants, regular pioneers, and their families, along with those who have been baptized for a certain number of years. Invitations are often extended to those who contributed much in the way of time, effort, or materials toward the construction.—See 7:59.

67. Sunday Program Format: If the visiting dedication speaker is a Governing Body member, an additional special program lasting about two hours (or two and a half hours if interpretation is required) should be arranged for Sunday. Depending on local circumstances and the practicality of the arrangement, the special Sunday program could be video streamed from the Assembly Hall that was dedicated to the Kingdom Halls of the congregations that will make use of the new facility. If local circumstances do not allow video streaming of the special program to most of the publishers in the congregations making use of the Assembly Hall and the country is one seldom visited by a member of the Governing Body, a larger facility could be rented for a special Sunday program if that is practical. [See Chart 7.2.]

Dedications of Remote Translation Offices (RTOs)

68. A dedication program may be organized in connection with a new remote translation office (RTO) as long as the premises are owned by the
organization. Hence, no dedication program will be arranged when a rental facility is being used. A Governing Body member, a Branch Committee member, or another qualified brother could be assigned to give the dedication talk in conjunction with a scheduled trip to the region, such as a visit to the missionaries or the translation team. Since there is no auditorium at an RTO, the program may be held at the Kingdom Hall closest to the RTO and should follow a format similar to that used for Kingdom Hall dedications. If necessary, the dedication program could be held at a rented facility near the RTO. Appropriate arrangements should be made for all in attendance to tour the RTO, preferably prior to the dedication program.—See 7:65; Chart 7.2.

Kingdom Hall Dedications

69. The most up-to-date guidelines on this subject, as provided to all bodies of elders and circuit overseers, should be followed when arranging for these events. Travel expenses for a Bethel speaker must be covered by the congregation or by private funds. If it is not possible to invite a speaker from Bethel, a circuit overseer or another qualified elder should be assigned to deliver the Kingdom Hall dedication talk. [See Chart 7.2.]

70. Normally, other facilities will not be tied in for these programs. But if there are extenuating circumstances warranting an exception, the Branch Committee may decide to give approval for one additional Kingdom Hall to be tied in. For example, when several congregations share in a project, it may not be possible to include all the publishers who worked on the building. Hence, it might be necessary to tie in a neighboring Kingdom Hall so that all can benefit from the dedication program. The Teaching Committee should be contacted for approval if the Branch Committee feels that something more than what is outlined above will be necessary.

BRANCH AND SHEPHERDING VISITS

71. Special Program: Arrangements should be made to hold a special program at a suitable location for the brothers living in the branch territory. Please note that dedication programs for newly acquired or newly built facilities should not be scheduled during a branch or a shepherding visit. Normally, all such events are arranged at a different time. If a Branch Committee feels that extenuating local circumstances would warrant an exception in this regard, an inquiry including all pertinent details may be submitted to the Teaching Committee.

72. If the cost is not excessive, the branch may rent one large facility, such as a stadium or a sports hall, relatively close to the branch office to accommodate a larger crowd. With a rented facility, if possible and the costs are not excessive, Kingdom Halls or Assembly Halls in other parts of the branch territory may be connected by an audio or audio/video tie-in. The rental of additional facilities for tie-in purposes is viewed as an exception based on extenuating circumstances. The Teaching Committee will decide on a case-by-case basis. As another option, if video streaming is possible to most Kingdom Halls, the program could originate from an auditorium or a Kingdom Hall on branch property instead of a large rented facility.

73. Transmission of Program: Since this is a special event, the Branch Committee may arrange for an audio or audio/video tie-in to Assembly Halls in other countries they oversee so that as many publishers as possible may hear the program. The program may be delay-streamed or video recorded for broadcasting later on the same day, on the next day, or on the following weekend at Assembly Halls and Kingdom Halls. Any questions or unusual circumstances related to the special program should be sent to the Teaching Committee.
74. Program Format: The program should include a 30-minute summary talk of the Watchtower Study for that week. A 20-minute report on the progress of the Kingdom work in the country can be included as well. The total time for the program would be approximately three hours, especially if the headquarters representative’s talk needs to be interpreted. Since the program would include the Watchtower Study summary and it is a spiritually rich program, the scheduled weekend meeting for the invited congregations will be suspended for that week. Therefore, depending on the itinerary of the Governing Body member or headquarters representative, it might be advantageous to schedule this program on a Sunday. If the special program is scheduled during the week, the publishers can be encouraged to concentrate on sharing in the field ministry on the weekend, since there will be no meeting.—See 6:1-6.

75. Branches that have more than one language group represented at these occasions may hold the program in the language spoken by the majority while arranging for simultaneous interpretation into other languages spoken in the branch territory, if practical. Generally, with the exception of the headquarters representative (who may not know the language of the land), all speakers should present their talks uninterpreted in one language (with simultaneous interpretation if needed) for the benefit of the majority present.

INTERPRETERS OF KEY TALKS AT SPECIAL EVENTS

76. Interpreters should be exemplary publishers approved by the Congregation Service Committee to assist in this way. Accurate knowledge of the truth of God’s Word is required in order to interpret Scriptural thoughts correctly into another language. It is essential that an interpreter have a good comprehension of both languages, particularly of the target language.—See 7:8, 31, 43, 57.

77. A copy of the talk outline may be given in advance to the assigned interpreter, who will use it for preparation purposes only. In addition, the speaker may be able to give the interpreter a copy of his personal notes prior to the presentation. Either way, those copies are only to be used by the interpreter to prepare for his assignment. Neither the copies nor a translation thereof should be used by the interpreter during the actual presentation of the talk. Rather, he should listen carefully to the speaker’s delivery and convey to the audience an accurate interpretation of the speaker’s statements. (See be p. 55.) Any copies of the talk outline or the speaker’s notes given to the interpreter beforehand should be returned to the speaker or destroyed after the program. Before the actual delivery of the talk, the speaker would do well to meet with the assigned interpreter to discuss details of his presentation, such as illustrations, numbers, and figures of speech. This guideline may be followed for all interpreted events.

78. It is preferred that the most qualified brothers be assigned to interpret talks given by members of the Governing Body or special representatives of the organization, even if it is necessary to use younger brothers. A brother’s depth of experience in theocratic and organizational matters does not necessarily make him the finest choice of interpreter. Those assigned should be able to communicate the emphasis, intensity, and emotion of the speaker into the target language, while not calling undue attention to themselves. Those who are selected for this privilege should be reminded of the principles expressed at Romans 12:3 and 1 Corinthians 12:28-31 so that they maintain a humble disposition while carrying out this special responsibility.

79. Interpreted Prayers: Any officially assigned visiting speaker at conventions, assemblies, and meetings may have his prayer interpreted, either consecutively or simultaneously. This also
applies to circuit overseers if they are visiting a foreign-language congregation or assembly.

BETHEL AND REGIONAL CONVENTION SPEAKERS

80. Evaluation of Regional Convention Speakers: Pertinent guidelines for bodies of elders and circuit overseers about “Recommending Local Elders as Regional Convention Speakers” and “Regional Convention Speaker Ratings” are posted on MOS. All elders serving at Bethel should be rated even if they have had only limited exposure on circuit assembly programs. Those serving in foreign-language congregations should be rated both for the language of their congregation and for the primary language of the country. Elders at Bethel can be appointed as regional convention speakers if they have a speaker rating of C+ or higher. Temporary volunteers serving at Bethel during the convention season may be asked to indicate the convention they will attend, and talks may be assigned to them according to the need and their qualifications. No formal evaluation of a speaker’s ability is necessary for members of a Branch or Country committee. They may be assigned parts based on their ability and the needs in the branch territory.

81. Evaluation and Selection of Bethel Speakers: Yearly evaluations received from the circuits for all brothers recommended as regional convention speakers can also be used as a basis for selecting new Bethel speakers. Those appointed as Bethel speakers would be ones who were rated higher than average in their circuits. An elder serving as a regular Bethel family member (BBR) who has been on a regional convention program for two years will be eligible for consideration as a Bethel speaker, as long as he meets the following additional criteria: (1) His speaker rating is B or higher; (2) he has served at Bethel for a minimum of three years, including consecutive periods of temporary service; (3) he has a reputation worthy of representing Bethel; and (4) he is able to hold an audience’s attention for one hour. Furthermore, when a brother is first notified of his appointment as a Bethel speaker, it is recommended that about six months be allowed to pass before his first assignment so that he may have time to prepare a suitable one-hour service talk. In view of this, when deciding whether a brother should be appointed as a Bethel speaker, those recommending Bethel speakers should give serious consideration to whether he could give an effective one-hour service talk. Since a brother’s qualifications for presenting a one-hour talk would need to be much higher than for presenting a short convention talk, an individual might be qualified to serve as a regional convention speaker but not as a Bethel speaker. As an example, those recommending Bethel speakers would do well to ask themselves if they view the brother in question as qualified to address their own congregations for one hour. Hence, as a general rule, a brother would qualify to be used on a regional convention program before he could serve as a Bethel speaker. Brothers called to Bethel from the circuit work, however, may be appointed as Bethel speakers upon completing Bethel Entrants’ School. (See 6:90-91.) When a brother is appointed as a Branch Committee member, there is no need formally to evaluate his speaking abilities for convention assignments; instead, the Branch Committee can determine which speaking assignments he is qualified to handle.

82. Weekend Speaking Assignments: Congregations near the branch office may request that approved Bethel speakers be assigned to give a service talk and public talk. A Speaking Assignment Desk may be set up in the Service Department for scheduling these assignments. (See 6:157.) When an assignment is made, the “Notice to Congregation of Bethel Speaker Assignments” (S-35) is sent to the congregation and
the “Notice to Bethel Speaker of Assignments” (S-37) is sent to the speaker. Generally, Bethel speakers would not receive more than three weekend speaking assignments per year. Likewise, individual congregations will be officially assigned up to three Bethel speakers each year. Bethel speakers may not be requested by name for these official Bethel speaking assignments.

83. Travel and Time Away: Bethel speakers may be sent to congregations within 200 miles (320 km) of Bethel, if that distance is practical. Whatever the radius from Bethel, the speaker should be able to travel safely to and from the assignment with minimal impact on his Bethel work. The brother (and his wife) should be able to arrive back at Bethel and get a good night’s sleep on Sunday evening. If the weekend meeting is held late on Sunday and the location is a considerable distance from Bethel, the speaker may return early Monday morning without taking personal time away as long as he is back at his work assignment after lunch.

84. Brothers who are regular Bethel family members serving at remote translation offices may be appointed as Bethel speakers and assigned to visit congregations within 200 miles of their location. However, the branch office may opt to make the travel radius less than 200 miles if local circumstances would make it difficult for the brothers to travel that far in a weekend and still return in good time to carry out their weekly Bethel routine.

85. Expenses: The speaker’s travel expenses (and his wife’s if applicable) should be covered by the local congregation. A resolution is not required for these expenses since it is part of the ongoing Speaking Assignment Desk arrangement. If for some reason the congregation does not reimburse the speaker, the branch may reimburse his travel expenses, having in mind the cost of public transportation, the distances involved, and the current price of fuel if a personal vehicle is used. If the congregation does not supply meals, the speaker may be reimbursed for that expense. The branch should write a kind letter to any congregations that fail to reimburse these expenses, reminding them of their responsibility and telling them that the branch has cared for the reimbursement in this case. However, when a congregation chooses to invite a particular Bethel speaker for a special weekend of activity apart from those arranged by the Speaking Assignment Desk, all travel expenses for the speaker (and his wife) should be covered either with private contributions or with congregation funds as approved by a resolution.

86. Bethel speakers are expected to share with the congregation in field service on the weekend of their public talks, according to local arrangements.

87. Video presentations and slide shows are not approved for use on Bethel speaking assignments. Saturday service talks should be Scriptural and encouraging discussions, generally only one hour in length. Such talks may be shortened to 30 minutes if they must be presented after the regular one-hour Watchtower Study.

88. Only approved Bethel speakers are to present service talks to the congregations. As an exception, visiting missionaries who are qualified may present a special service talk but only at the Kingdom Hall and at a time other than that scheduled for regular congregation meetings. For these special presentations, a missionary could use a few visual aids, including pictures from the area where he serves. However, such pictures should be in good taste and not overshadow the Scriptural message of his talk. Visiting missionaries might also give a brief report during a local needs part on the midweek meeting or after an unabbreviated Watchtower Study, if requested.

89. Circuit assembly branch representatives are selected from among the better-qualified and highest-rated
Bethel speakers or circuit overseers. In large branches, those considered for this privilege have served at Bethel or in circuit work for many years. At smaller branches, the Branch or Country committee may need to consider using brothers who have served for fewer years, bearing in mind that branch representatives should nonetheless be exemplary in their conduct and public speaking.—1 Tim. 4:12; see 6:92; 7:27.

MORNING WORSHIP AT BETHEL

90. General Guidelines: Diligence is essential in preparing information that is of benefit to the Bethel family. Those entrusted with this serious assignment ought to handle it in accord with the principle found at Romans 12:8. The assigned chairman should arrive at the table approximately ten minutes before the start of the program so that he can settle in and get any needed observations from the sound technicians or other responsible brothers at Bethel. Approved overnight guests staying at the branch may attend morning worship along with the Bethel family.

91. In most branches, morning worship begins at 7:00 a.m., with the chairman taking no more than a few seconds to welcome the family. He then calls on the brother assigned to offer a brief opening prayer of less than one minute. This prayer should include giving thanks for the breakfast meal to follow. In some branches where most in the family eat breakfast in their personal rooms and there is no provision for receiving a video signal, the family may gather afterward in a suitable location, such as a dining room or a Kingdom Hall, for the Morning Worship program before going to work.

92. Program: In most branches, at 7:20 a.m., the chairman introduces the full Morning Worship program. After the daily text is read, the chairman calls on each of the four assigned commenters to offer a comment of one minute or less. Branches with few in

the Bethel family may have two comments of two minutes each. Although it is appropriate to acknowledge each comment, care should be exercised not to exalt any one participant over the others. After the last one on the panel has commented, the chairman takes eight or nine minutes to develop a few Scriptural thoughts for the encouragement of the family. Scriptures should be read directly from a hard copy of the Bible or from an electronic device rather than from printed notes except when paraphrasing certain verses. The chairman should conclude his comments by 7:35 a.m. at the latest. Then, he will call on the brother assigned to read the printed comments from Examining the Scriptures Daily. The chairman then reads announcements if there are any. (See 7:93.) The program continues with a brother assigned to read a scheduled segment from the Bible. On Wednesdays, a brother will present a five-minute Bethel Spiritual Gems instead of a reading. Periodically, a ten-minute department report or branch visit report will be presented after the Bethel Spiritual Gems. [See Chart 7.3.]

93. Selected greetings may be read once a week at the discretion of the Branch or Country committee. Greetings and table announcements should be approved by a member of the Branch Committee or by the Bethel Office. The chairman should make announcements regarding memorial services or judicial action just before his concluding prayer. The occasional use of visual aids that are dignified and instructional is acceptable at morning worship. If someone uses something inappropriate or outlandish, the Branch Committee should arrange for appropriate counsel to be given. (See 7:40.) This format for morning worship at Bethel should be followed at other sites outside of Bethel, such as remote translation offices. While this same general format can be followed at the various field schools, the brothers should be guided by the instructions provided in the School for Kingdom Evangelizers Instruc-
94. Transmissions to Other Sites: Inasmuch as Morning Worship programs are designed for the spiritual benefit of members of the Bethel family and temporary volunteers at the branch, such programs should not be transmitted to outside locations other than as explained below. While local Morning Worship programs may be held at remote translation offices (RTOs) as long as sufficient qualified personnel are on hand, transmissions to and from the branch may also be arranged if such would not require a great expenditure. (See 8:93.) Where implemented, such a local arrangement should give all RTO personnel an opportunity to share in the program in a way similar to what is done at the branch. Please note that the program will usually originate from the branch, though on occasion program participants might be streamed (or prerecorded) from the RTO back to the branch. If a capable brother appointed as a Morning Worship chairman at the RTO would also qualify to conduct morning worship at the branch office, his morning worship may be streamed (or prerecorded) back to the branch if the cost is reasonable and the high standards for the program are maintained.

95. Those in special full-time service working remotely on construction projects, such as construction servants (BCS), expatriate construction servants (BCF), construction volunteers (BCV), and full-time construction commuters (BCL), may be tied in to the Bethel Morning Worship program up to four days each week. The Branch Committee may determine how many times a week those on a specific project will benefit from the Bethel program. During branch visits, all special full-time servants in these remote locations can benefit from the Bethel Morning Worship program during the entire visit. When a construction project is under way, each location should arrange for at least one local Morning Worship program each week. If there are also local volunteers working on the same project, they are permitted to enjoy the program along with those who are in special full-time service. If because of time-zone differences the program will be delay-streamed or a recording of the program is made, prayers should be said locally. Assembly Hall servants (BAS), Bethel remote servants (BRS), Bible school facility servants (BSS), and Local Design/Construction field representatives may view the Bethel Morning Worship program each day, since there is no arrangement for a local Morning Worship program. While Assembly Hall servants (BAS) are permitted to view morning worship as outlined above, local volunteers should not be invited to join them for the program.

96. The Branch Committee has permission to determine on a case-by-case basis which Bethel family members traveling for extended periods on branch assignments may have remote access to the Bethel Morning Worship program. When members of the Translation Department travel to work with temporary translation teams, they may tie in to the branch Morning Worship program along with the temporary translation teams although members of the team may not be in special full-time service.

97. Visiting Morning Worship Chairman: A headquarters representative will preside over the program on the days that he is assigned to visit the branch. A brother visiting from another branch is not to be invited to serve as chairman for morning worship—even if he is used in that capacity at his home branch—unless he is a member of the Governing Body or an appointed helper to one of the Governing Body committees and serves as a Morning Worship chairman in the United States.

98. Additionally, a brother visiting a remote translation office under the oversight of his home branch may be asked to conduct morning worship only if
(1) the branch has assigned him to make the visit, (2) he already serves as Morning Worship chairman at the branch, and (3) there are very few local brothers approved to conduct.

99. Recommendations of Morning Worship Chairmen: Recommendations of those who will serve as a chairman at a branch or at an RTO should be submitted on the most current Recommendations to Teaching Committee form. The details requested on this form should guide the Branch Committee and the Teaching Committee in evaluating who is qualified for this special privilege. Elders may be considered who have served in an exemplary way at Bethel for a number of years, who enjoy the respect of the Bethel family, who are viewed as solid spiritual men, and who are good teachers. Brothers serving as construction servants may be recommended if they are qualified. In addition, time spent in some form of special full-time service before coming to Bethel may be taken into account. Those recommended should be capable of giving good Scriptural encouragement to the Bethel family. There is no need to submit recommendations to the Teaching Committee for those who will preside over the Morning Worship program at local construction projects. The Branch Committee should use good judgment to appoint qualified brothers who will impart a spiritual gift to those serving on the projects.

100. Morning Worship Commenters: Brothers and sisters who are regular members of the family (BBR), as well as those serving as temporary Bethel family members (BBT), may be assigned to give a text comment upon completion of their first year of Bethel service. Construction servants (BCS), expatriate construction servants (BCF), full-time construction commuters (BCL), and construction volunteers (BCV) should be assigned to give comments at morning worship during their stay at the branch regardless of the length of time they have been assigned to serve at Bethel. Full-time commuters (BBL) may also be assigned as commenters during morning worship. Part-time commuters (BBV), on the other hand, may attend on the days they work at Bethel but would not usually be approved as commenters.

101. If the Branch or Country committee feels that an exception is warranted in the case of a potential Morning Worship commenter, the matter should be brought to the attention of the Teaching Committee for review. In smaller branches where commenters are not specifically assigned in advance, the Branch Committee can determine whether part-time commuters may participate.—See 7:109.

102. After a sister has given her first text comment, she has the option of sending a note to the Bethel Office requesting to be exempted from a future Morning Worship assignment.

103. Opening Prayers: At larger branches, after serving at Bethel and as an elder for five years, a brother may be assigned to represent the family for the opening prayer at morning worship.

104. Readings and Bethel Spiritual Gems Assignments: Generally, Bethel speakers are used to read assigned portions of the Bible at morning worship, present the Bethel Spiritual Gems assignment, and read at the Bethel family Watchtower Study. At times, a Branch Committee may decide that circumstances warrant using other qualified elders, those not yet appointed as Bethel speakers, for these assignments.

105. The Bethel Spiritual Gems assignment is based on the weekly Bible reading schedule for the Bethel family. It should feature outstanding principles in the account that build appreciation for Jehovah's qualities and standards while imparting Bible understanding. The material should be applied to the Bethel family, where appropriate.

106. Text Reading: Ministerial servants who have served at Bethel for
one year and who have passed a reading evaluation test may be assigned to read the daily text and the printed comments at morning worship.

**BETHEL FAMILY SPIRITUAL PROGRAMS ON MONDAY EVENING**

107. Bethel Family *Watchtower* Study: The weekly *Watchtower* Study is a customary feature of Bethel family life at all branches. Conductors are usually circuit assembly branch representatives. In smaller branches, Bethel speakers may also be assigned.

108. General Guidelines: It is especially important for those assigned as Bethel family *Watchtower* Study conductors to adhere closely to published direction, and these brothers should be encouraged to review such direction periodically. (Is 10:2:24-25; w03 9/1 pp. 21-22) Elders who conduct the *Watchtower* Study in their congregations view the Bethel family *Watchtower* Study as a model to follow. The conductor should prepare thoroughly. He should not introduce additional material from his own personal research, as it could overshadow what has been published in the study article. Extensive research has already been done in producing the study material, and the points to be emphasized are those included in the paragraphs under consideration. He should not comment excessively. In some branches, the *Watchtower* Study starts at 6:15 p.m. with the conductor’s welcoming expressions and introduction to the opening song and prayer. The call for the concluding song and prayer is at 7:15 p.m. Therefore, the Bethel *Watchtower* Study is conducted within 55 minutes (including appropriate brief comments on the artwork and good use of the teaching boxes). This requires that the conductor apportion the time carefully so as to allow for balanced coverage of the material. The conductor should prepare well, maintain eye contact with the brothers as they offer their comments, and warmly commend the participants. Conductors are to be reminded of these points as needed. Readers for the Bethel family *Watchtower* Study should be chosen from among appointed Bethel speakers.

109. *Watchtower* Study Commenters: In larger families, about 15 to 20 brothers may be assigned to participate as commenters. Regular Bethel family members (BBR), temporary Bethel family members (BBT), construction servants (BCS), construction volunteers (BCV), full-time construction commuters (BCL), and full-time commuters (BBL) may be used for these assignments. Part-time commuters (BBV) may attend but would not usually be approved as commenters.—See 4:49 and the exception in 7:100-101.

110. *Watchtower* Study Attendees: Those serving at the branch as regular Bethel family members (BBR), temporary Bethel family members (BBT), construction servants (BCS), expatriate construction servants (BCF), construction volunteers (BCV), full-time construction commuters (BCL), full-time commuters (BBL), and part-time commuters (BBV) as well as remote volunteers (BRV) and Bethel consultants (BOC) may attend the Bethel family *Watchtower* Study and other spiritual programs typically held on Monday evenings, provided that (1) such volunteers reside in close proximity to the main Bethel facility or a remote Bethel facility and (2) there is adequate space for such volunteers to join the Bethel family for the program. Believing marriage mates and well-behaved children still residing at home may join BRVs, BOCs, BBLs, and BBVs for the Bethel spiritual programs held on Monday evenings if there is adequate space for all such ones to attend. (This provision does not include attending morning worship at Bethel.) Each week, those in special full-time service working remotely on construction projects, such as construction servants (BCS), expatriate construction servants (BCF), construction volunteers (BCV), and full-time...
construction commuters (BCL), may be tied in to the Bethel family Watchtower Study and any additional spiritual program on that evening. Local volunteers working on the project who are not in special full-time service would not be invited to this program. If because of time-zone differences the program will be delay-streamed or a recording of the program is made, prayers should be said locally. Bible school facility servants (BSS), Bethel remote servants (BRS), and Assembly Hall servants (BAS) are also permitted to tie in to the Bethel family Watchtower Study under the same arrangements as outlined above for construction workers in special full-time service.

111. Bethel Family Lectures: These 45-minute lectures are designed for the Bethel family and are usually presented after the Bethel family Watchtower Study on Monday evening. The Branch Committee selects qualified Bethel speakers from those appointed as circuit assembly branch representatives. The outlines provided by the Teaching Committee are available on MDS.

SCHOOLS FOR THEOCRATIC TRAINING

112. Watchtower Bible School of Gilead: This 20-week course provides intensive training in Bible study and theocratic organization. Invitations to attend this school are issued by the Service Committee. The Teaching Committee is responsible for the curriculum.

113. School for Branch Committee Members and Their Wives: The Service Committee invites qualifying members of Branch and Country committees and their wives to this eight-week course in accord with current guidelines. (See 6:183.) The Teaching Committee is responsible for the curriculum.

114. School for Circuit Overseers and Their Wives (SCOTW): The Teaching Committee is responsible for the curriculum. The Service Committee oversees the scheduling of SCOTW worldwide. Unless the Service Committee has granted an exception, this school is not to be held on branch property. If permission was given in the past to hold this school at the branch and it has not been verified that this is still acceptable, the Service Committee should be informed of the current circumstances and, if desired, the branch may request that this arrangement continue. In the event that an exception has been granted and the school is held at the branch, arrangements should not be made for class introductions to the Bethel family. Instead, a general Morning Worship table announcement welcoming the new class as a whole can be made to the Bethel family at the beginning of the schooling period. If desired, a parting announcement could also be read to the Bethel family on the last day of class. None of the students should be assigned to give a report to the Bethel family. Additionally, only the brothers attending the SCOTW on branch property should be assigned to give a comment at morning worship. SCOTW instructors are appointed by the Branch Committee. They should be selected from the most qualified and experienced SKE instructors. They should have an excellent understanding of organizational procedures along with the wisdom and experience to assist circuit overseers and their wives with the challenging situations and problems unique to their assignments. Additionally, they should be among the most experienced men in handling difficult judicial cases and should be very familiar with the Shepherding book and other printed direction. Brothers serving as SCOTW instructors will discontinue their assignment on August 31 of the service year that they reach 70 years of age. —See 7:122.

115. School for Kingdom Evangelizers (SKE): While the Service Committee oversees the scheduling of these classes worldwide, any questions regarding the curriculum should be directed to the Teaching Committee. All reason-
able efforts should be made to hold the SKE in the field. The local Morning Worship program of SKE is viewed as part of the curriculum, so the branch Morning Worship program should not be streamed to SKE locations. In rare cases when an exception is granted to hold SKE at the branch and the students must attend the branch Morning Worship program, none of the students would be invited to present reports to the Bethel family or to offer Morning Worship comments. Any questions regarding these matters should be addressed to the Teaching Committee.

116. SKE Applicants: Qualified single brothers and sisters as well as couples between the ages of 23 and 65 who have been married for at least two years and have been in full-time service for at least the last two consecutive years may apply to attend this eight-week course. (Ps. 68:11) Any applicants between the ages of 50 and 65 must be able to provide for themselves and be in no need of financial or medical assistance from the organization. If enrolled in this school, they will continue to serve as regular pioneers wherever they are assigned by the organization but will not be invited to become members of the Worldwide Order of Special Full-Time Servants. Application forms and related material may be requested from the congregation secretary. Procedures for holding this course as well as for arranging graduations have been outlined in the School for Kingdom Evangelizers Instructor Guidelines (skieg) and the School for Kingdom Evangelizers Office Guidelines (skoeo).

117. SKE Graduations: When Kingdom Halls are not available for holding SKE graduations, a multipurpose room at an Assembly Hall may be used as long as its use does not interfere with any other scheduled event. If it is believed that circumstances warrant the use of the main auditorium of an Assembly Hall and such use would not interfere with a scheduled circuit assembly, the Branch Committee can make the decision without inquiring of the Teaching Committee. Attendance at these graduations should not exceed 350.

118. A Bethel representative may be assigned to serve an SKE graduation only when it is possible to care for his travel expenses in one of the following ways: (1) the graduation occurs on the same weekend as a circuit assembly served by the branch representative and the circuit covers the travel expenses; (2) brothers defray the travel expenses from private funds; (3) the Bethel representative uses his own funds to cover the travel expenses; (4) organization funds are used to cover expenses in conjunction with an official work assignment for the branch, such as visiting a remote translation office or missionaries near the graduation site. Where it is not possible to have a Bethel representative present, one of the regular class instructors will serve as chairman for the program, give the graduation talk, and hand out the graduation certificates.

119. In the event that a Bethel representative is present for the graduation, he might be able to conduct morning worship on Saturday from 7:45 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.; yet, it is up to him to decide if he can accept this responsibility, taking into account his other assignments that weekend—especially if he is also the visiting speaker at a circuit assembly (CA-br).

120. After breakfast and perhaps commencing at 8:30 a.m., the Bethel representative might also be able to present an encouraging talk to the class on a theme of his choice. Or he may prefer to give this talk toward the end of the morning, perhaps commencing about 11:40 a.m. If serving a circuit assembly (CA-br) on Saturday, he would need to give this discourse either before or after his first talk to the circuit. This Scripturally upbuilding talk may be up to 45 minutes in length.

121. On Sunday, the Bethel representative would ordinarily serve as chairman
for the graduation program, although there may be times when it would be better to have the “A” instructor serve as chairman. In either case, the Bethel representative would present a 20-minute graduation discourse.

122. SKE Instructors: The Teaching Committee appoints the instructors for the SKE, based on recommendations from Branch Committees. It is preferred that instructors be selected from circuit overseers who are excellent teachers. In order to help these ones qualify as instructors, the Branch Committee first appoints them as class observers. (See skeig 1:5-7.) Branch Committee members and other Bethel family members should not be recommended as instructors; nor should they be selected to be observers. To appoint a new instructor, the Branch Committee must send its recommendation to the Teaching Committee, using the School for Kingdom Evangelizers Instructors (G-29) form. After a circuit overseer observes an SKE class, the Branch Committee should obtain detailed comments from the two appointed SKE instructors of that class. If the comments are favorable and the Branch Committee wishes to recommend the circuit overseer as a regular instructor, it should provide the following detailed observations to the Teaching Committee: the units he taught as an observer, his teaching ability, whether he is an above-average instructor, his ability to accept counsel, and his wife’s interaction with the students and the instructors’ wives. The Branch Committee should also comment about whether he has a good comprehension of the Scriptures, stays up-to-date with our current understanding, and displays loving personal interest in others. While the Teaching Committee appoints SKE instructors, these same principles should be used by the Branch Committee as a guideline for appointing other field instructors in the branch territory. To delete an existing SKE instructor, the Branch Committee must send its recommendation to the Teaching Committee, using the G-29 form. If an instructor is deficient and is recommended for deletion, clearly indicate the problem and what has already been done to assist him. Who has observed the problem? Is this a recent development or an ongoing issue? What specific counsel and assistance has he received? How much time has elapsed since the counsel was given, and how did he respond? When circuit overseers who serve as field instructors reach 70 years of age, they should discontinue their assignment on August 31 of that service year. The brother and his wife may be assigned to serve as special pioneers. This should be done with sufficient advance notice so as not to impact any previously scheduled classes adversely. Some who are over 70 years of age may still qualify to instruct the one-week School for Congregation Elders (SCE).—See 7:132-135.

123. Bethel Entrants’ School (BES): The Teaching Committee has prepared a one-week school designed to give new Bethelites and those with a design/construction enrollment a spiritual outlook on their new form of service. Regular Bethel family members (BBR), temporary Bethel family members (BBT), expatriate Bethel family members (BBF), visiting members (BBB), full-time commuters (BBL), part-time commuters (BBV) who commute three or more days each week, construction servants (BCS), expatriate construction servants (BCF), full-time construction commuters (BCL), Assembly Hall servants (BAS), and Bible school facility servants (BSS), regardless of the site where they are serving, may be enrolled, provided that they are approved to serve for one year or longer and have not attended BES in the past ten years. If a special full-time servant is getting married to someone not in special full-time service and the couple are approved to remain in special full-time service, both would be enrolled in this course. If a marriage takes place between two individuals who have already attended BES, they would not be enrolled in the course or be required
to complete the one-year Bible-reading program for new arrivals. This also applies to regular special full-time servants transferring from one branch to another.

124. BES Curriculum and Schedule:
The one-week course should be covered during five and a half days, typically Monday through Saturday morning. New arrivals should attend the school within their first three months of special full-time service. There is no minimum number of students required to hold a class. Branches may use their discretion if they wish to delay a class in order to form larger classes. Each student should receive a copy of the school schedule and curriculum at least one month in advance. At the discretion of the branch and based on local needs and circumstances, BES instructors may be provided with specific direction on topics that the Branch Committee feels should be highlighted while teaching the school. New Member Lectures have been combined into this new curriculum. Therefore, it will not be necessary to present them separately as in the past.

125. Before completing their first year at Bethel or in the field, new members are expected to read the entire Bible, from Genesis to Revelation. Depending on the location of each student's assignment, either the LDC or the Bethel Office (along with the department elder groups) should monitor each student's progress at specified times throughout the year. The branch office should maintain a record of when each new member completes his Bible reading. Many often express appreciation for this arrangement. BES students are required to read the entire Dwelling manual immediately after their arrival at Bethel, while those with a design/construction enrollment should read the entire Continue to Put Your Heart Into the Work (cph) brochure or the Faithfully Maintaining Our Places of Worship (mtw) brochure.

126. BES Instructors: Two BES instructors should be selected by the Branch Committee to conduct the class. The instructors should be selected from among high-quality teachers at Bethel who have a good rapport with the Bethel family and have the circumstances to prepare well. Although seniority may lend weight to a brother's teaching, years of service should not be the primary factor. Select well-qualified teachers who are approachable. One substitute instructor should be selected to fill in as the need may arise. It is the Branch Committee's responsibility to select the team of three well-qualified instructors (two primary instructors and one substitute instructor) for the BES. In some branches only one team of instructors will be necessary. In other branches, a few additional teams of instructors may be necessary and used on a rotational basis, depending on the number of new arrivals to Bethel. Selecting a relatively small group of brothers who can serve as BES instructors at various times each year will increase the effectiveness of the BES, since these elders will become well-acquainted with teaching the spiritually rich course material to new arrivals. Conducting the BES will not be a full-time work assignment. So instructors should have a primary Bethel work assignment. However, work time may be used to prepare for the class. The two instructors should divide the classroom sessions they are to teach between themselves. If desired, they may rotate assignments for each successive class.

127. Helping Brothers to Make Spiritual Progress at Bethel: The Branch Committee should provide progressive training to brothers, starting from the day they arrive at Bethel. Good training will enable a brother gradually to take on more responsibility at Bethel and to become a more valuable asset to Jehovah's organization. While the advancement of individual brothers will differ according to each one's abilities and local circumstances, the Branch Committee should take a keen interest in helping each brother to be used as fully as possible. Chart 7.4, "General Progression of Teaching Privileges for
Bethel Brothers,” is provided to guide the Branch Committee when periodically reviewing brothers in the Bethel family and ensuring that no one is being overlooked for teaching privileges for which they may qualify. Of course, spiritual progress does not manifest itself only in the teaching privileges extended to a person but is expressed when that person demonstrates Christ-like qualities and aspects of the fruitage of the spirit in his work habits and dealings with others.—Gal. 5:22, 23; 1 Pet. 2:21.

128. Pioneer Service School (PSS): This school provides training for regular pioneers and special full-time servants. These include regular Bethel family members (BBR), expatriate Bethelites (BBF), temporary Bethel family members (BBT), full-time commuters (BBL), construction servants (BCS), expatriate construction servants (BCF), full-time construction commuters (BCL), Assembly Hall servants (BAS), and Bible school facility servants (BSS). Special pioneers, field missionaries, and wives of circuit overseers who have served as such for at least a year may attend the school again. Field classes should be held at central locations, usually Kingdom Halls. Regular pioneers are invited to attend PSS toward the end of their first year of pioneering. Multiple invitations may be extended to one who is in the aforementioned forms of service as long as he or she has not attended in at least the last five years and classes are not full. There should generally be 20 to 25 students in a class. However, in branches with a sizable number of pioneers, consideration may be given to increasing the class size to as many as 50 students.

129. The curriculum for this school is based on the textbook “Fully Accomplish Your Ministry”—2 Timothy 4:5. Capable instructors, usually circuit overseers, will conduct the course. This course is designed to be covered in six days. However, if local circumstances require an adjustment, the Branch Committee should consult with the Teaching Committee about the matter. Students have the option of receiving an electronic or a printed copy of the textbook.

130. Since some special pioneers and others attending PSS may have to travel some distance, the school instructors may need to organize rooming accommodations. It may be that local publishers will be happy to provide temporary accommodations. Where possible, students will not be asked to come from too great a distance. The branch will care for the travel and food expenses of special pioneers and field missionaries attending the schools. Congregations may also wish to contribute in some measure. The local circuit will cover the circuit overseer’s expenses. (See S-330 2:5.) The organization does not wish anyone to be unduly burdened in financing a PSS. Instructors should inform the branch office of the needs at each school location.

131. The Service Committee oversees the preparation of the annual pioneer session that is held in conjunction with the circuit assembly (CA-br).

132. School for Congregation Elders (SCE): This one-week school is for the benefit of appointed elders. Its curriculum is posted on MOS. Circuit overseers and Branch Committee members are generally not invited to this school, since they attend either the School for Circuit Overseers and Their Wives or the School for Branch Committee Members and Their Wives. All other elders serving at Bethel and in the field should be invited. Bethelites will be granted time away from work so that they may attend. Also, a time credit may be given to elders serving as special pioneers equivalent to one quarter of their monthly hour requirement. Regular pioneers may receive a 20-hour credit.—See 7:122.

133. It is preferred that a student attend the school to which he is assigned. Exceptions may be made if the Branch
Committee feels that such are warranted. For example, if a brother requests permission to attend an SCE being conducted in a different language within the branch territory and the Branch Committee agrees that his request is reasonable, the brother may be authorized to do so. If a student wishes to attend a school in another land and there is a good reason for this exception, the two branch offices may work out the necessary details. The brother should be informed that he will be assigned to one SCE only and that he will be responsible to cover all travel expenses involved.

134. On occasion, someone in special full-time service may request permission to attend an SCE in a nearby country where a class is scheduled in his dominant/preferred language. Such may be approved. The branch office may cover the brother's travel expenses and all entry visa costs. In determining where the brother will attend the SCE, the branch office should select the country with the most economical round-trip travel fares. If expenses would be unusually high, the branch office should send its recommendation to the Teaching Committee for consideration. If the brother is married and he chooses to bring his wife along, the couple would be responsible for the wife's travel expenses inasmuch as the husband's attendance at the SCE is not a branch work assignment. The sister would also need to take personal time away for the extent of the trip.—See 7:137; 9:88.

135. The Branch Committee selects SCE instructors from among experienced circuit overseers in the local territory, preferably those who serve as SKE instructors, if they are available. —See 7:122.

136. Kingdom Ministry School (KMS): The curriculum for this program is prepared for appointed elders and, at times, ministerial servants. It is presented in the form of lectures, videos, demonstrations, interviews, and class discussions. Circuit overseers and, at times, Bethel representatives are assigned to conduct this school.

137. Because the Service Committee schedules KMS, it will answer any questions about those who qualify to attend. Elders in a given area will convene for the school over a one- or two-day period; when invited, ministerial servants will meet for one day. The school may be conducted on a weekend or on weekdays, depending on local circumstances. The entire body of elders of a congregation should attend at the same time. Requests for permission (as an exception) to attend elsewhere may be handled in harmony with the guidelines given in 7: 133-134. The branch office may schedule school sessions in harmony with what is best locally, keeping in mind that all elders in the branch territory should attend the course in a comparatively short time, perhaps within three to five weeks. The branch should make arrangements for adequate facilities. Although Kingdom Halls are preferred, Assembly Halls may be used where practical.

138. The most recent KMS textbook is entitled “Shepherd the Flock of God” —1 Peter 5:2. (ks10) Refresher courses may be offered periodically, using other suitable material provided by the Teaching Committee. In countries under ban or serious restrictions, Branch Committees may supply congregations with at least one copy of the current textbook to be kept in a safe place for the local elders to use and study on their own. When the circuit overseer visits, he can help the elders by teaching them from the material they already have on hand.

139. Literacy Classes: The Branch Committee should inform congregations of the provision for learning how to read and write, and they should make definite arrangements for assisting those needing help. In multilingual societies, the best results usually come from teaching people to read and write the primary language spoken at home and in the community where they live. Classes may be held using the brochure Apply Yourself to Reading and Writing.
140. Different options are available for organizing literacy classes. Each body of elders should carefully survey the needs of any associated with their congregation and then make arrangements as needed. Material from the weekly Bible reading or from a publication such as Lessons You Can Learn From the Bible may be used for these classes.

141. Oftentimes, classes are held in conjunction with the Life and Ministry Meeting. When this is done, the class would be held in a separate room in the Kingdom Hall during the student assignments. The Kingdom Hall could also be used at other times during the week, as long as the arrangements would not conflict with another congregation’s meeting. Those needing additional help may be tutored on a personal basis. Keep in mind, however, that it would be ill-advised for two individuals of the opposite sex to meet alone unless they are close relatives.

142. Foreign-Language Classes: For details regarding this provision, see 6:78.

**AUDIO AND VIDEO PRODUCTION**

143. The Teaching Committee oversees production of English audio and video publications by Audio/Video Services (AVS) at world headquarters. These English publications serve as a template for all other languages. The Writing Committee oversees the translation of these publications, including the production of sign-language videos. New requests to translate and record a publication should be addressed to the Writing Committee.

144. Unless a branch is approved by the Teaching Committee to host a regional video team, branches should not purchase equipment or maintain full-time personnel for video projects. Approval should be obtained from the Teaching Committee before producing local branch videos, with the exception of simple training videos that follow the published guidelines. (See 7:149.) Such local branch video projects should be assigned to skilled personnel outside of the branch who would work on this project for a temporary period using personal equipment.

145. **Audio publications** include magazines, books, brochures, articles for the website, dramatic Bible readings, and song recordings. The Teaching Committee oversees the recording and distribution of English audio publications, whereas the Writing Committee oversees translation and vernacular audio recordings.

146. **Audio and Video on JW.ORG:** After a web page is created for a publication under the direction of the Writing Committee, AVS is responsible for uploading audio and video publication files in English, while translating branches upload files on a vernacular page in the target language.

147. **Regional Video Teams (RVTs):** Under the direction of the Teaching Committee, AVS supervises and assigns the work of approved RVTs. A branch should not assign work to the RVT or use team equipment or personnel (either full- or part-time) without approval from the Teaching Committee. Recommendations to increase the number of full-time RVT members or to replace the production overseer should be sent to the Teaching Committee for approval. Recommended adjustments to personnel in other roles will be approved by AVS. RVTs should obtain headquarters approval before informing the team members of any changes.

148. **Branch Tour Videos:** Branches desiring to produce an on-site tour video for visitors should request approval from the Teaching Committee. These videos should not describe the history of the work in the country but should show what currently transpires at the branch in support of the preaching work. A branch tour video should last ten minutes or less. When submit-
ting a new proposal, please keep the following in mind:

- New audio or video equipment should not be purchased for this purpose. If none is available at the branch, it may be possible to use the equipment and expertise of a local brother.
- Please send the Teaching Committee a narrative script in English and a description of the proposed visuals for review and approval before recording.
- If prerecorded music will be included, the orchestral music produced by our organization is often used. For any original music donated for such a project, the branch should obtain a signed release from the owner.

149. Training Videos: The Teaching Committee provides the following guidelines for producing simple departmental training videos. Each Branch Committee should ensure that any departments producing such videos adhere closely to these guidelines.

a. Consider whether producing a training video is really necessary. Training information may be conveyed more effectively by another means, such as in a document or PowerPoint presentation. In other cases, another department may already have a training video that can be reused, or there may be a commercially-available training video that will meet the needs of your department.

b. Plan carefully beforehand. Determine the scope and duration of what is needed beforehand. Do not begin production without a clear scope of the work in mind.

c. Keep the production work as simple as possible. It may be possible to produce an effective training video simply by recording a skilled worker performing a task and explaining each step in the process. Screen-capture software can be used to create a video of work being performed on a computer. Although your finished training video may later be helpful to other departments, it should not be produced with the intention of distributing outside your department. If there is a need for a training video that would be distributed outside your department, a clear scope of the work should be conveyed in an Audio/Video Services Project Request Form to the Teaching Committee. Audio/Video Services Dispatch will assist you with filling out the form.

d. Limit the number of people working on and participating in a training video. Reenactments or other video segments involving large numbers of cast or crew should be avoided. At maximum, one person from outside of Bethel may be invited for less than three months each year to assist with the production of training videos for departments. A crew should not be formed to provide lighting, makeup, grips, or specialized audio. If it is felt that more personnel will be needed, provide an explanation and a clear scope of the work when submitting the request to the Teaching Committee for approval.

e. Set a reasonable expectation of quality. The purpose of a training video is simply to convey information, not to impress or entertain. Elaborate props or camera, lighting, and sound equipment are not needed. Video should be captured in an economical format (for example, codec and resolution) that will not require excessive storage space. Many phones and tablets can capture video and audio of acceptable quality for training purposes.

f. Keep the postproduction work as simple as possible. Avoid the use of complex 3-D animations or visual effects that
are time-consuming to produce.
Avoid background music simply to make the video more entertaining. If music is needed, you may use orchestral music produced by our organization or royalty-free stock music instead of commissioning original compositions.

150. Suggestions for Video Programs:
A branch may receive suggestions from the field or from within Bethel for a video program. For example, there may be an exemplary publisher whose experience could be presented in a video interview or there may be a unique special event taking place in your branch territory. Before initiating any such video productions, the Branch Committee should write to the Teaching Committee and provide a one-page treatment describing the proposed video. The most recent video treatment template provided by the Teaching Committee should be used when submitting the suggestion, which includes Scriptural teaching points, story development, and the target audience of the proposed video. If approved, the Teaching Committee will forward the treatment to AVS for scheduling. The production of the video will not necessarily be assigned to the branch that submitted the idea. It is not necessary to forward donated music pieces to world headquarters. Branches can determine how to respond appropriately to those in their branch territory who submit music.

RADIO AND TV PROGRAMS
151. Questions concerning such programs may be sent to the Teaching Committee.

152. Periodically, all branches receive an updated listing of approved videos with guidelines on how to use them.

153. Approved programs should be shown unedited and without interruption except for station identification. No editing of any sort should be done without prior authorization from the Teaching Committee. None of the approved programs should be shown for commercial purposes. Permission will be granted to show our programs only in public service, educational, or non-commercial venues. They should not be shown in a context that could make it appear that we endorse any political or interfaith movement, hospital, or group.

154. The above guidelines should be provided to the broadcasting station for compliance every time one of the approved programs is to be aired. All branches have been sent a formatted sample of these guidelines for use as intended.

WHQ BROADCASTING DEPARTMENT
155. The Teaching Committee oversees the work of the WHQ Broadcasting Department, which does the following:

a. Establishes standards for broadcasting audio/video (A/V) equipment at world headquarters, branch-owned facilities, Assembly Halls, Kingdom Halls, and conventions. It works closely with Branch Committees and those involved in the design and construction process to ensure that the A/V equipment recommended by the Broadcasting Department is installed safely and is appropriate for the venue in which the equipment is installed.

b. Answers questions submitted by branches regarding the specification, installation, and operation of A/V equipment.

c. Recommends and coordinates the acquisition, rental, or loan of broadcasting A/V equipment for conventions and other branch-sponsored events. It provides this service to facilitate the sharing of equipment and to conserve dedicated funds.

d. Develops, maintains, and oversees the JW Stream website, accessible at https://stream.jw.org. This site provides small foreign-
language congregations, groups, and pregroups with video recordings of conventions, assemblies, and congregation meetings. Branches can also use this site to stream Bethel-sponsored programs.

e. Assists branches with technical issues involving video streaming.

f. Develops, maintains, and oversees software development of the Internet Protocol Television (IPTV) system. IPTV provides live and recorded programming from the Bethel video system and JW Broadcasting. While each Christian is responsible to exercise good judgment and train his powers of discernment, the Branch Committee should periodically review the content of material that is being provided on IPTV out of regard for the overall spiritual welfare of the Bethel family and visitors. The Branch Committee should inform the WHQ Broadcasting Department when adding commercial channels to the IPTV system.

g. Coordinates and schedules satellite broadcasting content worldwide. Satellite broadcasting is used in countries with limited access to the Internet for transmitting recorded programs from JW Broadcasting and live programs, such as branch visits and special conventions.

h. Records and distributes WHQ department meetings via JW Stream or jw.org event media.

REGIONAL BROADCASTING DEPARTMENT—EUROPE

156. The Regional Broadcasting Department—Europe (RBD-E), hosted by the Central Europe branch, operates as an extension of the WHQ Broadcasting Department. This department:

a. Implements the standards set by the WHQ Broadcasting Department for broadcasting audio/video (A/V) equipment at branch-owned facilities, Assembly Halls, Kingdom Halls, and conventions in Europe. It works closely with Branch Committees and those involved in the design and construction process to ensure that the A/V equipment recommended is installed safely and is appropriate for the venue in which the equipment is installed.

b. Answers questions submitted by branches in that region regarding the specification, installation, and operation of A/V equipment.

c. Recommends and coordinates the acquisition, rental, or loan of broadcasting A/V equipment for conventions and other branch-sponsored events in that region. The RBD-E provides this service to facilitate the sharing of equipment and to conserve dedicated funds. At times, the RBD-E may ask branches to adjust convention dates.

d. Assists branches in its region with first-level support for technical issues involving video streaming.

e. Reviews and approves the A/V designs for each convention venue in their region and determines whether the equipment should be supplied from the central A/V equipment pool or should be rented. The Local Broadcasting Department in each European branch submits these designs in harmony with the standards outlined by the Teaching Committee. —See 7:157.

LOCAL BROADCASTING DEPARTMENT

157. The Branch Committee may decide to form a Local Broadcasting Department if the workload warrants it. Smaller branches may not need to form such a department if they have brothers trained to care for this work on a part-time basis. This department:

a. Implements the standards set by the WHQ Broadcasting
Department for broadcasting A/V equipment at branch-owned facilities, Assembly Halls, Kingdom Halls, and conventions in the branch territory. It works closely with those involved in the design and construction process to ensure that the A/V equipment recommended is installed safely and is appropriate for the venue in which the equipment is installed.

b. Recommends and coordinates the acquisition, rental, or loan of broadcasting A/V equipment for conventions and other branch-sponsored events in its branch territory, unless the region is served by RBD-E.

c. Creates an A/V design for each convention venue in its branch territory, adhering to the standards outlined by the Teaching Committee.

d. Stores, maintains, and routes convention audio/video equipment so that it can be shared by multiple venues unless the branch is served by a regional broadcasting department.

e. Provides training, oversight, and coordination of the technical support personnel for spiritual programs originating at the branch. These programs include morning worship, Bethel family Watchtower Study, along with other spiritual and department meetings.

f. Designs, installs, and maintains the A/V equipment used for conference rooms, tour displays, and classrooms at the branch.

g. Maintains and oversees any cable television system and Internet Protocol Television (IPTV) system in the branch.

**WHQ TRAVEL DEPARTMENT**

158. The Teaching Committee oversees the work of the WHQ Travel Department, which involves the following areas of responsibility: (1) researching and securing air travel for headquarters personnel caring for their organizational assignments and (2) researching and securing air travel for those in foreign service who are eligible to be funded to an international convention of their choice.

**HOTEL REWARD POINTS AND VENUE COST ANALYSIS**

159. The Teaching Committee Office also provides assistance to branches in the following ways: (1) overseeing the collection and management of accrued hotel reward points and (2) reviewing convention venue rental expenses and assisting with hotel negotiations and usage.
## CHART 7.1

### General Scope of Operation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assemblies</th>
<th>Conventions</th>
<th>Meetings</th>
<th>Schools</th>
<th>Audio/Video</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prepares circuit assembly outlines and programs</td>
<td>Prepares outlines, manuscripts, dramas, and chairman’s introductions for regional conventions</td>
<td>Gives direction concerning congregation meeting programs and procedures</td>
<td>Watchtower Bible School of Gilead</td>
<td>Audio programs in English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepares outlines, manuscripts, dramas, and chairman’s introductions for regional conventions</td>
<td>Organizes international and special conventions</td>
<td>Prepares Life and Ministry Meeting</td>
<td>School for Branch Committee Members and Their Wives</td>
<td>Feature-length videos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizes international and special conventions</td>
<td>Approves Convention Organization Guidelines (CO-3) and the yearly Media Guide</td>
<td>Prepares outlines for regular public talks, special talks, and public talks by circuit overseers</td>
<td>School for Circuit Overseers and Their Wives</td>
<td>Oversees Audio/Video Services (AVS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approves Convention Organization Guidelines (CO-3) and the yearly Media Guide</td>
<td>Oversees branch dedications worldwide</td>
<td>Oversees branch dedications worldwide</td>
<td>School for Kingdom Evangelizers</td>
<td>JW Broadcasting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oversees branch dedications worldwide</td>
<td>Oversees Assembly Hall dedications worldwide</td>
<td>Oversees Assembly Hall dedications worldwide</td>
<td>Appoints instructors worldwide for all schools listed above</td>
<td>Regional video teams (RVTs) in select branches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oversees Assembly Hall dedications worldwide</td>
<td>Oversees dedications of remote translation offices worldwide</td>
<td>Oversees dedications of remote translation offices worldwide</td>
<td>Bethel Entrants’ School</td>
<td>Radio and television programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oversees dedications of remote translation offices worldwide</td>
<td>Provides guidelines for Kingdom Hall dedications</td>
<td>Provides guidelines for Kingdom Hall dedications</td>
<td>Pioneer Service School</td>
<td>WHQ Broadcasting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides guidelines for Kingdom Hall dedications</td>
<td>Provides guidelines for special meetings held in connection with branch visits</td>
<td>Provides guidelines for special meetings held in connection with branch visits</td>
<td>School for Congregation Elders</td>
<td>Assists branches with technical issues involving video streaming and audio/video equipment at assembly and convention venues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides guidelines for special meetings held in connection with branch visits</td>
<td>Oversees Bethel speaker arrangement worldwide</td>
<td>Oversees Bethel speaker arrangement worldwide</td>
<td>Kingdom Ministry School</td>
<td>Oversees the work of the Regional Broadcasting Department - Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oversees Bethel speaker arrangement worldwide</td>
<td>Provides guidelines for Bethel morning worship</td>
<td>Provides guidelines for Bethel morning worship</td>
<td>Literacy classes</td>
<td>WHQ Travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides guidelines for Bethel morning worship</td>
<td>Appoints all Morning Worship chairman worldwide</td>
<td>Appoints all Morning Worship chairman worldwide</td>
<td>Oversees Theocratic Schools Department</td>
<td>Researches and secures air travel for those caring for WHQ assignments and for those in foreign service eligible to attend international conventions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appoints all Morning Worship chairman worldwide</td>
<td>Prepares Bible reading schedule for the Bethel family worldwide</td>
<td>Prepares Bible reading schedule for the Bethel family worldwide</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Prepares Bible reading schedule for the Bethel family worldwide</td>
<td>Prepares schedule for the Memorial Bible reading</td>
<td>Prepares schedule for the Memorial Bible reading</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepares schedule for the Memorial Bible reading</td>
<td>Gives direction concerning Bethel family Watchtower Study</td>
<td>Gives direction concerning Bethel family Watchtower Study</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gives direction concerning Bethel family Watchtower Study</td>
<td>Approves Monday night Bethel lectures</td>
<td>Approves Monday night Bethel lectures</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approves Monday night Bethel lectures</td>
<td>Oversees Gilead graduation programs, including the selection of speakers and songs</td>
<td>Oversees Gilead graduation programs, including the selection of speakers and songs</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oversees Gilead graduation programs, including the selection of speakers and songs</td>
<td>Assists in the organization of the annual meeting programs, including the selection of appropriate songs</td>
<td>Assists in the organization of the annual meeting programs, including the selection of appropriate songs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assists in the organization of the annual meeting programs, including the selection of appropriate songs</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Hotel Rewards Points and Venue Cost Analysis

- Oversees the collection and management of accrued hotel rewards points negotiated by branches for convention attendees and other purposes
- Reviews convention venue rental expenses and assists with hotel negotiations and usage

### Interaction with other committees and departments

- Writing Committee: proofreads materials and posts to MDS
- AVS: proofreads and posts translation and production packages to MDS for audio and video publications
- AVS: transfers video files by posting these to MDS or AVMD
- Writing Committee: oversees content and production of sign-language publications
- Service Committee: invites Gilead and branch school students and determines assignments of Gilead graduates. It provides branches with guidelines for organizing and scheduling other schools locally

(Revised August 2018)
Sample Programs

Special Meeting to Release the Christian Greek Scriptures

10 min: Opening song and prayer. The chairman follows with a warm welcome to the audience and a few encouraging comments.

30 min: Watchtower Study summary. (Note: Regular congregation meetings in the target language will not be held that weekend)

10 min: Group interview of two or three local publishers who can comment on the challenges of other translations in the local language.

25 min: Release talk by a Branch Committee member, based on the outline entitled "A Bible in the Language of Everyday Life." (b17)

5 min: Song

10 min: After inviting the audience to be reseated, the chairman announces that the new Bible will be distributed at this time.

15 min: Talk by a Branch Committee member, based on an outline provided by the Teaching Committee entitled "Translating God's Word Accurately."

15 min: Talk by a Branch Committee member, based on an outline provided by the Teaching Committee entitled "Handling the Word of the Truth Aright." —2 Timothy 2:15"

40 min: Talk by a Branch Committee member on a topic of his choice

5 min: Brief closing comments by the chairman, followed by song and prayer.

Special Meeting to Release the New World Translation (Revised)

10 min: Opening song and prayer. The chairman follows with a warm welcome to the audience and a few encouraging comments.

30 min: Watchtower Study summary. (Note: Regular congregation meetings in the target language will not be held that weekend)

40 min: Talk by a Branch Committee member on a topic of his choice

5 min: Brief closing comments by the chairman, followed by song and prayer.

Special Meeting to Release the New World Translation (Not Revised)

10 min: Opening song and prayer. The chairman follows with a warm welcome to the audience and a few encouraging comments.

30 min: Watchtower Study summary. (Note: Regular congregation meetings in the target language will not be held that weekend)

15 min: As an optional feature, the 15-minute video presentation "Entrusted With Translating the Sacred Pronouncements of God." Romans 3:2, if translated in advance.

5 min: Song

10 min: After inviting the audience to be reseated, the chairman announces that the new Bible will be distributed at this time.

15 min: Talk by a Branch Committee member, based on an outline provided by the Teaching Committee entitled "Handling the Word of the Truth Aright." —2 Timothy 2:15"

10 min: Group interview of two or three local publishers who remember the original release of the New World Translation in the local language.

25 min: Release talk by a Governing Body member, based on the outline entitled "Hold Firmly to the Faithful Word!"

5 min: Talk by a Branch Committee member on a topic of his choice

40 min: Talk by a Governing Body member on a topic of his choice

5 min: Brief closing comments by the chairman, followed by song and prayer.

Chapter 7 7-36 (Revised August 2018)
Branch Dedication—Saturday

10 min: Opening song and prayer
20 min: History of work in the country. (Includes group interview of two or three longtime missionaries if available)
30-40 min: Construction project and experiences. (May include interviews with key workers)
20 min: Reports from other branches. (If available)
15 min: Song, announcements, and greetings
45-60 min: Dedication talk. (If interpreted, additional time may be needed)
10 min: Closing song and prayer

Branch and Assembly Hall Dedications—Sunday (Governing Body Member Present)

10 min: Opening song and prayer, followed by a few encouraging comments by the chairman
30 min: Watchtower Study summary (Note: Regular congregation meetings in the target language will not be held that weekend)
20 min: Review of the dedication program
30 min: Reports from other branches. (If available) and/or a report presented by a Branch Committee member about the work in the branch territory
10 min: Song and any needed announcements
60 min: Talk by the Governing Body member. (When interpreted, this service talk could take 90 minutes or more)
5 min: Closing song and prayer

School for Kingdom Evangelizers—Graduation-Day Program

10 min: Opening song no. 58* and prayer
10 min: Opening remarks by chairman
10 min: Local elder (or observer) interviews four students regarding how they have benefited from the course
30 min: Watchtower Study summary (Students of the class will be assigned specific paragraphs and then answer the corresponding questions asked by the conductor)
15 min: Local elder (or observer) interviews students on experiences they have had in connection with their field activity during the school
10 min: Song no. 57* and chairman reads any greetings received
15 min: Local elder (or observer) interviews students regarding adjustments made to attend school
10 min: Talk by Instructor B
10 min: Talk by Instructor A
20 min: Talk by chairman
10 min: Presentation of certificates by chairman
5 min: Class letter read by designated student
5 min: Concluding comments by chairman
5 min: Closing song no. 84* and prayer by chairman

* "Sing Out Joyfully" to Jehovah's songbook

Kingdom Hall, RTO, and Assembly Hall Dedications—Saturday

10 min: Opening song and prayer
20 min: History of work in the local area. (Includes group interview of two or three longtime Witnesses if available)
30-40 min: Construction project and experiences. (May include interviews with key workers)
10 min: Song, announcements, and greetings
45-60 min: Dedication talk. (If interpreted, additional time may be needed)
10 min: Closing song and prayer

(Revised August 2018) 7-37 Chapter 7
Typical Morning Worship Format

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Brief welcome by chairman and a prayer of less than one minute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:01 a.m.</td>
<td>Breakfast (in dining room or occupant rooms)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:20 a.m.</td>
<td>Scripture text is read</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:21 a.m.</td>
<td>Chairman introduces four* individuals for a comment of one minute or less (5 min.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:26 a.m.</td>
<td>Chairman's comments (8-9 min.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:35 a.m.</td>
<td>Reading of Watchtower comments followed by announcements (If any) by the chairman</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 7:37 a.m. | Bible reading (6-7 min.)
             | Wednesdays—Bethel Spiritual Gems (5 min.)                                                   |
| 7:43 a.m. | Concluding prayer (7:42 a.m. on Wednesdays unless there is a report or a special announcement) |

* Branches with few family members may choose to have two comments of two minutes each.
### General Progression of Teaching Privileges for Bethel Brothers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Privilege</th>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commenter at the Bethel family Watchtower Study</td>
<td>In larger families, about 15-20 brothers (BBR, BBT, BCS, BCV, BCL, BBL)</td>
<td>bo 7:109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text commenter at morning worship</td>
<td>BBR, BBT, BBL: On completion of first year of Bethel service BCS, BCF, BCL, BCV: Regardless of the length of time of assignment to serve at Bethel</td>
<td>bo 7:100-101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reader of the daily text and printed comments at morning worship</td>
<td>Ministerial servants who have served at Bethel for one year and who have passed a reading evaluation test</td>
<td>bo 7:106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer opening prayer at morning worship</td>
<td>At larger branches, after serving at Bethel and as an elder for five years</td>
<td>bo 7:103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional convention speaker</td>
<td>Elders who have a speaker rating of C+ or higher</td>
<td>bo 7:80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bethel speaker, receiving weekend speaking assignments to give a service talk and a public talk in congregations</td>
<td>Elders (BBR) who have been on a regional convention program for two years, (1) whose speaker rating is B or higher, (2) who have served at Bethel for a minimum of three years, (3) who have a reputation worthy of representing Bethel, and (4) who are able to hold an audience's attention and can give an effective one-hour service talk. Brothers called to Bethel from the circuit work, on completing Bethel Entrants' School.</td>
<td>bo 7:81-82, 84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bible reader at morning worship; Bethel Spiritual Gems assignments; Bethel family Watchtower Study reader</td>
<td>Generally, Bethel speakers</td>
<td>bo 7:104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circuit assembly branch representative (CA-br)</td>
<td>Better-qualified and highest-rated Bethel speakers; exemplary in their conduct and public speaking; at larger branches, after serving at Bethel for many years</td>
<td>bo 7:89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conductor of the Bethel family Watchtower Study</td>
<td>Usually, circuit assembly branch representatives; at smaller branches, Bethel speakers may also be assigned</td>
<td>bo 7:107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bethel Entrants' School instructor and new member lecture speaker</td>
<td>High-quality teachers at Bethel who have a good rapport with the Bethel family and who are approachable</td>
<td>bo 7:126-127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presents a Bethel family lecture</td>
<td>Qualified Bethel speakers who are circuit assembly branch representatives</td>
<td>bo 7:111</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Revised January 2018)
| Morning Worship chairman | Elders who have served in an exemplary way at Bethel for a number of years, who enjoy the respect of the Bethel family, who are viewed as spiritual men, and who are good teachers, capable of giving good Scriptural encouragement to the Bethel family | bo 7:99 |
CHAPTER 8

WRITING COMMITTEE

Web Publishing

1. The Web Publishing Department maintains the organization’s websites. (See 3:40.) It works with departments at world headquarters and in the branches to publish Web content in many languages. This material includes answers to Bible questions raised by the public, information about our headquarters and branches, and news releases about events involving Jehovah’s Witnesses. Selected publications can be read online or downloaded in various digital, audio, and video formats.

Writing Archives

2. Writing Archives is a work group within the Writing Department that is responsible for gathering, cataloging, and preserving material related to our theocratic history. Archival records and artifacts come from branches, congregations, individuals, and secular institutions. The Archives collection includes publications, clippings, documents, photographs, audiovisual recordings, and other items of historical value. Detailed life histories of longtime servants of Jehovah are also kept on file. Over time, such material is being digitized in order to provide electronic access and avoid damage to the original items. Archival research is used in preparing material for publication, display, and other educational purposes.

3. Many branches have assembled similar items of historical value during the preparation of Yearbook accounts and for other projects. The Writing Committee is interested in the preservation of such material, either at individual branches or at world headquarters. Consideration should be given to the proper organization and storage of such items, thus increasing their value for future research and publication. Such archival work should be assigned to a Bethel department, such as the Bethel Office.—See 3:60–65.

Writers

4. The Writers’ Workshop is the principal means by which individuals are identified and approved to write for our publications. When a Writers’ Workshop is scheduled to be held at a branch, the Writing Committee may invite that branch to supply names of individuals living in the branch territory who may have potential as writers. Writers from other branches may also be enrolled. It will then be determined by the Writing Committee who will be invited to attend the class and will be given a copy of Writing for Our Publications (A-41). Those recommended as potential writers should have writing ability and must be baptized and spiritually mature. They should be balanced, exemplary, modest, and not inclined to talk freely about their writing activity. In most cases, writers should be elders.

5. The Writing Committee assigns full-time writers, some of whom serve at a branch office. Full-time writers in a branch are designated as WHO Writing Department workers. These brothers and their work come under the direct oversight of the Writing Committee. If a Branch Committee would like to give a full-time writer additional minor work assignments, that is acceptable as long as the writer can complete his writing work on schedule. Please inform the Writing Committee before a full-time writer is recommended to be reassigned or to attend Gilead School.

(Revised August 2018)
6. Occasionally, one who is not a full-time writer may be given a writing assignment. The Branch Committee will receive a copy of the writing assignment in order to be aware of how people under its oversight are being used by the Writing Department. Details about the assignment, such as the topic or target publication, are confidential. However, the Branch Committee should inform the Congregation Service Committee of the due date of a writing assignment that is sent to a missionary, a special pioneer, or a regular pioneer. Likewise, the Branch Committee should inform the Bethel work overseer of the due date of a writing assignment that is sent to a Bethelite. The writer will be informed that he may ask for a time allowance from his regular assignment to complete the writing assignment, if needed.

7. At times, the Writing Department may contact a branch in order to identify newsworthy events or experiences for possible use in preparing an article that will help readers learn about the fine works of Jehovah's Witnesses around the world. When such an article is assigned to a writer, the Art Department will contact the branch to request that a photographer be assigned to obtain images to illustrate the article. The Art Department will work with the branch to have any images entered into the Image Services System (ISS). If you learn that a model in a photograph that was supplied has become disqualified, follow the guidelines provided in the letter dated HWC:HWG September 28, 2017, No. C-54749W.

8. Field service experiences that are outstanding may be sent to the Writing Committee for possible use, as outlined in the letter dated HWC:HWH August 8, 2017, No. C-53973W.

9. When articles are prepared that feature a first-person account, such as for a life story or for the series "The Bible Changes Lives," the Branch Committee will be asked to confirm that those featured are in good standing and that there will be no repercussions if the article is published.

Translation Responsibilities

OVERVIEW

10. While the Writing Committee oversees the translation of our publications worldwide, the Branch Committee oversees the translation work that has been assigned to its branch.

Note: Bracketed references can be found at the end of this chapter. [See List 8.1.]

DECIDING WHAT TO TRANSLATE

11. In addition to publications that will be printed or posted on jw.org, the Branch Committee supervises the production of audio and video material and publications for the deaf and the blind. The committee also coordinates the translation of materials for our website and for JW Broadcasting.

Starting Translation Into a New Language

12. The Branch Committee regularly reviews the spiritual needs of every language group under its care. The Service Department is responsible for determining what publications are really needed and which priority list (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, or H) best fits the situation of each language in the branch territory. [See Chart 8.1.] The findings are presented to the Branch Committee. [1]

13. In consultation with the Service Department, the Translation Department recommends potential translators to the Branch Committee, which then approves those who qualify. The candidates should (1) be baptized, (2) know the target language very well—perhaps as their mother tongue—and (3) be available for some weeks to receive
training and to translate their first publications. They may come from varying backgrounds (male, female, older, younger, single, married, and so forth).—See 7:44.

14. The Branch Committee requests permission from the Writing Committee to translate some of the publications specified on the priority list. It is essential to include the completed New Language Translation Request form. (The form is available on the Publication Processing Documentation (PPD) site, under TRANSLATION > TRANSLATION AND LANGUAGE OVERSEEERS > GENERAL.) Be sure to specify the format(s) being recommended for the publications and which priority list applies to that language.

15. All new translation teams must receive training before beginning translation. Therefore, specify whom you recommend to provide the training. This will usually be an experienced translator who can teach the translation techniques course. If you do not have someone qualified to do this, please request assistance from the Writing Committee.

16. Once permission is granted, arrange for training to be given where the translators are located, so that they do not need to travel far. Where possible, train more than three candidates in order to have enough translators to choose from for future projects. Provide equipment and accommodations for the trainer. The trainer teaches the candidates basic translation techniques and works closely with them as they translate their first publications.

17. The translated publications are reviewed by a panel of native speakers to ensure natural language. (See 8:43c.) The translation is corrected and proofread, and the project team gives the translated publications a final check. Then the publications are composed or, in the case of audio and video publications, recorded. When the project is completed, the temporary translators return to their previous assignments and the Service Department provides direction on how the publications are to be used in the field and monitors how they are received. [2]

Requesting Publications in a Language That Has a Temporary Team

18. When the Branch Committee requests additional publications in a language that has a temporary team, the request should be accompanied by a report as outlined by instructions from the Service Committee. (See 6:149-152.) There is no need to request permission from the Writing Committee to translate public talk outlines and material for assemblies and conventions. However, if you have begun translating these items in a language for the first time, inform the Writing Committee. Videos may be translated into any language if you have adequate personnel and resources to handle the work without neglecting other priority translation projects. Study questions and videos for the midweek meeting may also be translated by temporary teams. [3]

Requesting Publications in a Language That Has a Permanent Team

19. Before making recommendations to the Writing Committee,

a. Consult the document Priority List Guidelines, which is available on the PPD site. [See Chart 8.1.] Written languages and sign languages have separate priority lists. The Writing Committee regularly informs all branches of new publications under development, provides contents listings, and explains the purpose of each publication.

b. Consult with the Service Department to determine which publications should be translated.

c. Check with the respective language overseer(s) to determine whether the translation team
would be able to translate additional publications. [4]

d. For dated publications, specify the edition and the format in which it will be produced and the date of the first issue.

Once you have started translating dated and recurring publications (Examin­ing the Scriptures, Research Guide, Watch Tower Publications Index, assembly and convention material) make sure that these are being produced on time before requesting additional publications.

20. The Translation Department translates only publications used for field service, meetings, assemblies, and conventions, as well as materials for JW Broadcasting. Materials needed by Legal, Construction, Maintenance, Hospital Information Services, Correspondence, and the Service Department are translated by individuals in those departments or by part-time volunteers.—See 6:160. [5]

21. These volunteers, who are not part of the Translation Department, may have access to the section of the Watchtower Translation System (WTS) that deals with general translation. They are welcome to attend weekly team meetings of the Translation Department in order to stay up-to-date with the latest translation techniques and guidelines.

22. Sign-Language Translation: When starting translation into a sign language, a procedure is followed similar to that for spoken languages. The Writing Committee provides a separate priority list for sign languages and arranges for training when permission is given for the first publication in a sign language. Sign-language video production in each branch falls under the oversight of the Translation Department. MEPS Programming coordinates training for those who record and edit videos. [6]

Special Publications

23. Bible: Translating the New World Translation involves years of work. Languages approved to translate the Bible are allowed to have additional project teams, a secretary, and an elder to serve as the translation coordinator for the duration of the Bible project. The Branch Committee usually recommends the most qualified translators for Bible translation teams, made up of both brothers and sisters. It is permissible to use younger translators if they are well-qualified. [7] If you do not have enough qualified translators to translate the Bible and at the same time keep up with the approved publications, it may be necessary to produce fewer public magazines or to delay the release of other publications in order to complete Bible translation first. When the Writing Committee gives permission to translate the Bible, it arranges for initial and periodic training of the Bible translators by Writing Committee representatives. Branch Committees may request additional training when needed. Special consideration is given to add temporary teams for languages that work on the Study Edition of the Bible and/or Insight on the Scriptures. [8]

24. Selecting Magazine Issues: The Branch Committee decides which issues of the public edition of The Watchtower and/or Awake! will be published. Inform your printing branch what issues will be produced. [9]

25. Braille Publications: Braille publications can be transcribed using WTS. We make Braille publications available in any language in which we have printed publications, even if there are only a few blind individuals.

A branch desiring to transcribe publications into Braille should first request approval from the Writing Committee. The approval will be followed up with direction on how to proceed.

- While there is no priority list for Braille publications, it is best to begin with a small undated item, such as a tract or a brochure.
• Publications that can be transcribed into Braille generally include tracts, brochures, books, the *New World Translation*, *The Watchtower*, *Awake!* and the *Life and Ministry Meeting Workbook*.

• Specialized publications can also be transcribed, such as public talk outlines, invitations, programs, the *Pioneer* textbook, and the *Shepherd* textbook.

• On request, electronic text may be provided for blind and visually impaired readers who use Braille notetakers or computers with screen readers. These files can be posted on jw.org in notetaker (BRL) format and RTF format. [10]

27. Study *Watchtower*: The language used in *The Watchtower* should be clear so that readers will readily understand the message. The majority of people do not use academic or formal language but prefer everyday language. The English edition from January 2019 on has been adjusted to enable translators to achieve clear translation. [11]

28. Songbook: Detailed guidelines for translating songs are provided on PPD. Individual songs can be translated and posted on the jw.org website for use at congregation meetings and other spiritual events. [12]

29. Audio, Video, and Web Publications: For some languages, video and audio publications may be used effectively. Publications can be published on the jw.org website in audio format even if they are not produced in print or in other electronic formats. Each Branch Committee should analyze what site features are available in all the languages for which their branch is responsible and can approve any feature that would be valuable to a language field if this will not create a burden for the translation team. [13]

30. JW Broadcasting (JWB): The Governing Body views the material on JWB as spiritual food. Each language (including sign languages) approved to translate the full JWB program has a brother serving as a permanent translator in order to coordinate the translation work. Two part-time commuters (not temporary volunteers) should be assigned to work with him on a translation team. Based on the need, he may enlist the help of additional part-time commuters and remote volunteers to sustain regular production. When translating a JWB program, careful attention should be given to the main talk; experienced translators should be used for this part. As is the case with all videos, you should decide whether to translate the audio track or to use subtitles, depending on the preferences of the target audience, the technical possibilities, and the workload of the team. (For example, some languages will record a vernacular version of original songs, while others will simply provide subtitles.) If time permits and they have the necessary skills, this team may work on translating regional convention and assembly outlines. [14]

DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION

31. Each language overseer assigns individuals to specific project teams as needed.

32. Translation Capacity: The workload must be scheduled in such a way that team members do not regularly have to work overtime. The Branch Committee carefully monitors the workload of the translators to make sure that they are not burdened with unreasonable schedules.

33. Before starting any translation project, be sure that permission has been obtained for it. When permission is granted, obtain the source text of the publication from WTS or MDS. The master copy of the English Final mailing contains all corrections and approved updates.

34. Schedules: Local schedules for translating new and dated publications
are based on the schedules for English publications provided by the Writing Department. For most publications, the Writing Department sends two different mailings:

(1) Early mailing: This contains early text to start translation and a preliminary PDF of the composed pages. At this point the text and artwork are subject to change. Nevertheless, translators should start translation as soon as possible after this mailing is received. The compositor(s) prepare the early composition pages for an audible reading check and a mechanical check of the translation.

(2) Final mailing: This mailing contains the finalized text and artwork. The project team compares the final adjustments of the English text with its translation to ascertain whether any changes will affect the translated text.

35. Correction notices should be handled according to the guidelines provided by the Writing Committee. [15]

36. Translation errors in publications that have already been published in any format may be corrected with the approval of the Branch Committee. The New World Translation may be updated to include necessary corrections, not revisions reflecting translator preferences. Updates may be done once a year but only if needed. The printing date on the publishers’ page should be updated. [16] Complete retranslations requiring new copyright dates, corrections of serious translation errors that call for destroying copies in stock, and corrections to videos already produced need to be approved by the Writing Committee. [17]

Local Adjustments (Text and Art)
37. The Branch Committee recommends replacement material if the material in the English could cause problems in the local field. The Writing Committee will review recommendations for replacement text. Adjustments to important long-established Biblical and theocratic terms should be requested through a numbered letter to the Writing Committee. [18]

38. The Branch Committee may give local approval for adjustments in the following matters:
   - Replace textual illustrations or examples that may be inappropriate for the local field.
   - Replace references to our publications and links to a resource (such as an article, publication, audio or video file) that are not available in the target language.
   - Replace Scripture citations if the cited scriptures in the vernacular language do not support the point being made in English. Replacing “read” scriptures requires approval via the Translator Help Desk unless the change involves simply the citation range. [19]

39. When adjusting the text to adapt it to the local field, care must be exercised so that facts are not distorted.

40. In rare instances, artwork may be unacceptable for some cultures. The Writing Committee will provide alternate artwork only if an image would endanger the safety of the brothers. [20]

Translation Questions
41. The Writing Committee handles the bulk of the translation questions. They are sent directly via WTS by the language overseer to the Translator Help Desk.

42. Before sending a translation question to the Translator Help Desk, the project team checks to see whether the question has already been submitted by another team. The language overseer reviews the question for clarity and completeness.
a. During the translation process, editorial, cultural, legal, organizational, linguistic, procedural, and other questions need to be resolved.

b. It is important that questions be submitted using WTS so that they can be registered in the central database for efficient handling.

c. The Translator Help Desk distributes answers to all translation teams.

d. Answers for one language may be applied to another language that has the same question. Project teams do not need to ask permission to apply such answers. [21]

e. For dated publications, questions should be submitted soon after Early mailing, if possible within one week. [22]

f. Teams should not be discouraged or hindered from sending questions.

Ensuring High-Quality Publications

43. The Governing Body desires that all our publications be accurate, easy to read, and clearly understood by common people.

a. The language overseer makes sure that each project team has the necessary training, experience, and spiritual maturity to produce a natural, accurate translation.

b. Each translation team should actively seek feedback from the audience for whom they translate.

c. Publications that are in the Teaching Toolbox or that target a specific audience, such as young ones, should be reviewed by a small group of selected publishers who are representative of the field and of an age appropriate to the publication. The members of the review panel should preferably use the target language as their first language.—See 8:17. [23]

d. It is necessary that project teams keep in touch with how people in the field use their language.

e. Personal preferences are not to be imposed on the project team. The language overseer has the responsibility to ensure that all project teams produce translations that are appealing and at the same time in harmony with the way the language is generally used.

f. Project teams must take care not to use out-of-date expressions that are not understood by the majority of the readers.

44. Branch Committees rarely need to override the translation decisions of teams that have been carefully selected and thoroughly trained.

Workflow

45. All procedures for translation, checking, proofreading, composition, mechanical checking, and audio recording should be performed as directed in Translation Workflow, Composition and Mechanical Checking Workflow, and Audio and Video Publications Workflow. All in the department, including part-time volunteers and others who might be helping remotely, should be familiar with the latest version of these documents, which are posted on PPD.

46. The language overseer ensures that every publication is clean and press-ready before printing files are mailed to the file maintenance branch or digital media files are uploaded. He does this by making sure that all the necessary steps in the workflow are properly followed and that all involved in the process are thoroughly trained. Once the text leaves the translators for final composition, it should not be recalled for translation adjustments, except for changes needed because of correction notices. The goal is to send to the printing branch press-ready materials that can be printed without further correction. In exceptional cases, with approval from the Publishing
Committee, publications may be printed locally. Audio publications are usually recorded locally.

47. Printing branches do not proofread or perform mechanical checks on publications they print for other branches. The printing branch may make necessary adjustments to the publishers’ page to meet local legal requirements.

Office Equipment

48. Translators need a quiet office environment. Project teams should have sufficient office space to work without disturbing others. Such office space can be arranged in a variety of locations, including remote translation offices, Assembly Halls, Kingdom Halls, or other suitable facilities, depending on local circumstances. Everyone in the department should have:

- A suitable desk and comfortable chair
- Adequate lighting
- Good ventilation
- A computer as specified by the WHQ Computer Department

All requests for equipment to translate publications—whether in printed, electronic, audio, or video format—should be submitted to the Writing Committee. The Writing Committee coordinates requests for equipment and facilities with the Publishing Committee, the WHQ Computer Department, MEPS Programming, and the Worldwide Design/Construction Department.

49. Reference Materials: All translators should have ready access to reference works that are frequently needed. The following is a partial list:

- Standard vernacular Bible(s)
- The latest electronic English dictionaries
- An up-to-date English-vernacular dictionary
- Target-language grammar books and dictionaries
- The revised English New World Translation (2013 Edition)
- Watchtower Research (English, plus vernacular library synchronized)
- The research library for translators, which should be updated regularly
- A dictionary of English idioms
- A team dictionary [24]
- Where possible and relatively economical, translators should have Internet access on their computer. [25]

50. All members of the department should have full access to guidelines, translation training material, and correspondence that apply to their work. To this end, make sure that the members of the department including part-time volunteers are added to the role groups that correspond to their assignments so as to have access to PPD where possible.


52. Confidentiality: Translators must keep confidential what is being translated and who works on each publication. The following materials are confidential and are strictly for the use of the Translation Department:

- Publications being translated
- Correction notices
- Translator comments
- Translator Help Desk questions and answers
- Research information
- Training materials
- Information found on PPD pages

53. The above items are not for personal use and should not be distributed outside of the department. Every precaution should be taken to make sure
that confidential material, either on paper or by electronic means, is not divulged to and cannot be accessed by anyone who is not authorized. Failure to comply with these guidelines could lead to the termination of one’s Bethel service.

54. All members of the Translation Department, including part-time volunteers, must sign the Watchtower Information Resources Confidentiality Affirmation Statement and Acknowledgment of Use of Work Software before they start to work in the department.

TRANSLATION ORGANIZATION

55. The following functions are necessary:

- Translation overseer (and assistant[s] if needed)
- Language overseer(s)
- Team secretary(ies)
- Translation project team(s)
- Technical support (production coordinator, compositors, digital publishers, computer support, audio technicians)

Note: Translators serving Service Department, Legal Department, and Printery needs are part of their respective departments and not part of the Translation Department.

Translation Overseer

56. He supervises the Translation Department and usually serves on the Branch Committee. He cares for the following matters: the size of translation teams (number of full-time and part-time personnel), offices (recommends where they are located and what type of facilities are used), language needs (sign language, Braille, website, composition, digital publishing, audio recording), training (procedures, techniques, production), and the needs of all translation personnel. Although it is preferable, it is not a requirement that the translation overseer have translation experience. However, he must be up-to-date with translation guidelines, translation techniques, production workflow, and be thoroughly familiar with the circumstances and needs of the languages under his oversight. If his workload is too heavy, an assistant(s) may be appointed to help him. The assistant should be a brother who is familiar with translation work, is reliable, and responds in a timely manner to the needs of the translation teams. The translation overseer cooperates with the language overseers to ensure that schedules are met and that directives from the Branch Committee and the Governing Body are implemented. Capable language overseers may be used as assistants to the translation overseer. [27]

Language Overseer

57. He works under the direction of the translation overseer. The language overseer should have translation experience. He must speak the language well (ideally a native speaker), understand translation principles, have good oversight skills, and be able to organize the work efficiently. He must be able to organize personnel in a productive way, that is, to combine full-time personnel and part-time volunteers in an optimum manner. He must be communicative, loving, and kind. When a temporary team is formed, a trainer works with the team. [28]

58. Responsibilities: Each language overseer keeps the translation overseer informed of personnel needs and translation issues that require handling by the Branch Committee.

- His primary assignment is to ensure that the spiritual food is translated in an accurate, clear, and understandable way.
- His role is not simply administrative; it is a full-time assignment requiring interaction with the project teams on a daily basis. To facilitate such communication, his office should be located near most of the project teams.
• He thoroughly understands the translation process as set forth by the Writing Committee, and he is thoroughly familiar with translation principles and procedures.
• He does not institute his own workflow procedures.
• He ensures that proper procedures are followed when assigning responsibilities to Translation Department personnel.
• He assigns work to the project teams.
• He is responsible for ongoing translation training.
• He should be sensitive to direction and feedback from his oversight and the field, and he should be able to give clear direction.
• He should always be on the lookout for prospective translators who may serve either full-time or part-time.
• He should have access to MDS and PPD, as well as be given access to this chapter of Branch Organization.
• At times, he will participate in project-team meetings while translation is being done in order to ensure that the team functions well and is following proper procedures.

Substitute Language Overseer

59. A brother on one of the project teams should be trained to substitute as language overseer when the overseer is ill, away, or otherwise unavailable. This is not an extra position added to the department, as this brother is a member of one of the project teams.

60. The language overseer keeps his substitute fully informed of all matters concerning the department so that he will be able to replace the overseer seamlessly when circumstances require it. The substitute has access to MDS and PPD, just as the overseer has. He is authorized to make decisions in the absence of the language overseer.

Production Coordinator

61. He coordinates technical work assignments for larger teams, including downloading and uploading materials, composition, computer support, digital publishing, JW Broadcasting, JW Library, Watchtower Library, Watchtower ONLINE LIBRARY, audio recordings, and other work that does not involve translation. He establishes, monitors, and follows up with production schedules. In places where the RTO arrangements have been simplified, the language overseer and the production coordinator will administer all activities at the RTO.[29]

Team Secretary

62. This brother is well-organized and must be able to keep track of translation files, schedules, and correspondence.
• The secretary should be capable of communicating clearly in written correspondence.
• This assignment requires some skill in organizing and maintaining accurate electronic files.
• If a brother is not available, a sister may be assigned as secretary.

63. Responsibilities: The team secretary may assist with downloading and organizing electronic source materials from MDS, updating team dictionaries, backing up publications, sending completed materials to the printing branch, and scheduling, as well as keeping track of other correspondence.

64. At least one other person in the department should know the basic functions of the secretary. He or she should be kept up-to-date with procedures so as to be able to replace the secretary on short notice if necessary.

Project Teams

65. A project team is made up of three members who perform the roles of translator, checker, and proofreader. A detailed description of the various re-
Responsibilities of each member is presented in the Translation Workflow document. It is not necessary that all the members of the project team be full-time members of the department. Because of circumstances and at the discretion of the language overseer, a team might function with only two members for a short period of time. This might be due to sickness, vacation, or leave of absence, or it might be that one member of a project team is asked to help another team temporarily, such as when working with part-time volunteers.

66. Responsibilities: Working as a team of three, the team translates, checks, and proofreads its own work. It is therefore a requirement that the team members be able to work cooperatively in a team setting.

- Although the project team translates, checks, and proofreads together, each member performs a specific function in the process.
- Each member must have a good command of his or her own language, and at least two members of the team must clearly understand the source language. It is not expected that one individual will have all the skills needed to translate, check, and proofread.
- The project team is also responsible for the audio recording of the publications it translates.
- Each project requires different skill levels. Select individuals who will fit into a project team according to their skill level.
- Sisters can be used for most translation assignments, including the Bible.
- Whatever the translation assignment, each member of the project team must have a thorough understanding of Scriptural truth so that accurate and faithful translations can be produced.

67. It is expected that the cooperative translation process, as set forth in the Translation Workflow document, will be followed by the project team.

68. It is recommended that the project team members attend congregations that have meetings in their language and are using the target-language literature. This enables them to keep up-to-date with the language. It also means that they will personally use the target-language literature in the field.

69. Because brothers have the responsibility to teach in the congregation, at least one brother, preferably an elder, should work on each project team if at all possible. Branch Committees should search for qualified brothers who can be assigned to serve on project teams.

Technical Support

70. Composition: The compositor must be familiar with computers, be a quick learner, and be attentive to detail. He or she should have an eye for making the text appealing in appearance and layout. The compositor needs to work in close cooperation with the translation team and be able to follow instructions carefully. Each compositor must have a trained backup, who may be one of the team members or someone from another language team.

71. Compositors are fully trained to use MEPS and other software to produce printed or digital publications. One compositor prepares early and final composition. A backup compositor may do publication checking of composed pages.

- Compositors may be given other work assignments within the department, such as digital publishing or Braille transcription. However, compositors and their backups need to work regularly in composition to be up-to-date with the latest styles for our publications.
- If you do not have an experienced compositor who can help provide
training, please make your needs known to the Writing Committee.

72. Even when compositors are not physically near the translators, such as those working from a branch or a support RTO, they need to maintain good communication with the project teams.

73. Digital Publishing: Research libraries must be well-maintained and up-to-date. They are used to produce a variety of file formats for our website, the JW Library app, the Research Guide, Watchtower Library, Watchtower ONLINE LIBRARY, the Watch Tower Publications Index, and Braille transcription.

74. As more publications become available in a language, it will be necessary to have enough trained personnel on hand to care for digital publishing. Training material for this specialized work is available. If additional training is needed, please contact the Writing Committee.

75. Additional personnel is needed to produce the Watch Tower Publications Index. Those working on research libraries should not be assigned to work simultaneously on a translation project team.

76. Computer Support: The individual(s) providing computer support need to be familiar with WTS and other programs used by the translators. He may be a part-time volunteer but still must be reachable whenever the translators need help. He should be willing and helpful.

77. He is responsible to maintain the hardware and software used by the team. He ensures that the production files are backed up every day. He trains all personnel to use the translation programs provided by the organization. It is his responsibility to provide reliable computer support so that the team can be as productive as possible.

78. Audio/Video Production: This includes recording technicians and audio editors. They should be trained thoroughly on the equipment and software used to produce audio and video publications. In the case of sign languages, these technicians work on video production. [31]

### Finding New Translators

79. Only baptized publishers in good standing are used as translators.

a. Check to see if there are full-time servants who may qualify.

b. Check new applications (A-8) for prospective translators.

c. Those interviewing the applicants for work in the Translation Department should understand the needs of the department.

d. When looking for part-time volunteers, give consideration to former full-time servants who have experience and skills in translation. [32]

### Evaluating Prospective Translators

80. To evaluate prospective translators, have them work for short periods of time alongside experienced translators. [33]

a. The spirituality of the applicant must be carefully assessed. Humility and modesty are essential.

b. The prospective translator must be able to work in a team environment.

c. It is rare to find a translator who is skilled as a translator, checker, and proofreader. Usually, people have particular ability in only one of these areas.

d. The testing process should reveal whether an individual has potential in one of the areas. Training will be required, since it is not expected that fully qualified translators will be found. Individuals who have good basic skills can be trained.
When searching for sign-language translators, look for individuals who have keen insight into the way deaf people think and communicate.

Training New Translators

81. Potential translators who show aptitude during the initial evaluation may be invited for a longer training period.
   • New translators may at times be assigned to work on a project team as a fourth member.
   • After an initial training period, qualified translators meet with the language overseer to decide whether the trainee exhibits sufficient progress to warrant further training.
   • If it becomes clear during the initial training period that the trainee does not have the necessary aptitude, the training should be stopped and he should go back to his previous assignment. It drains valuable resources to train someone who does not have the aptitude.
   • Even though someone has good potential, it may take him or her 12 to 24 months to develop the needed skills in order to make a substantial contribution.

82. Training too many people at the same time places an unreasonable load on experienced personnel.

Replacement and Backup Personnel

83. When a member of the Translation Department needs to be replaced, it normally takes some years before the replacement reaches the desired level of proficiency. This can take a heavy toll on the other members of the department and on the quality of translation.

84. Even if the team already has its full complement of full-time servants, back-up individuals, such as part-time commuters, should be given training. They may be available to help out on a temporary basis when a regular member of the team is sick or away. They would therefore be able to fill in should someone leave unexpectedly.

85. When a department member gets married and asks to remain at Bethel, the Branch Committee should seriously consider what can be done to retain him or her if the prospective mate qualifies for Bethel. It requires much training to replace any experienced translator. There must be available accommodations for the couple and a work assignment for the mate. Even if a translator leaves Bethel, the branch should consider whether it is possible to retain his or her services as a part-time volunteer. If there are plans to reassign a qualified technical support person (production coordinator, compositor, secretary, digital publisher, computer support, or audio technician), the Branch Committee must first notify the Personnel Committee; it may be that another branch needs that person's services.

Training Members of the Department

86. All in the Translation Department need ongoing training, since it is important that they do not get into a rut and stagnate in their abilities.
   • The language overseer and his substitute are responsible for directing and monitoring the training of every individual under their oversight. The production coordinator is responsible for organizing the training of technical support personnel.
   • Please ensure that you select those who have specialized skills or, at least, have the aptitude to serve as compositors, translators, checkers, proofreaders, secretaries, computer support, digital publishers, audio technicians, coaches, or overseers.
Project teams should keep up-to-date with their language, the source language and, more importantly, with the truth as revealed through the faithful and discreet slave.

All must have direct access to the training materials provided by the Writing Committee.

Compositors must stay up-to-date with the latest methods and style adjustments made by the Writing Committee.

Special emphasis should be placed on providing training to part-time volunteers, even if they live far from the translation office or if they are used only occasionally. Their skills and abilities should be kept sharp and up-to-date. [34]

Training at Weekly Meetings

Material from translation questions and answers, translator comments, current translation problems, policy letters from the Writing Committee, and Translating for Our Publications and its appendices can be considered. [35]

Letters and comments from the field on the quality of the vernacular translation, as well as feedback from field-testing translated publications, should be regularly discussed.

Refresher courses on how to use WTS, research tools, and reference materials should be presented by experienced individuals.

Suggestions that would improve work habits, productivity, accuracy, and so forth should be scheduled for general discussion.

In addition to initial training, members of the department should be helped to stay up-to-date with the latest computer tools, policies, techniques, and directives from the Writing Committee.

The language overseer should arrange that all, including part-time volunteers, receive adequate training to make sure that they are familiar with the latest techniques and tools.

Those working on the Watch Tower Publications Index, the Research Guide, and Watchtower Library need to review carefully all aspects of their work for every new edition they produce.

Training Resources

The Writing Committee arranges for training on translation techniques, digital publishing, workflow, composition, audio recording, and organizing the department. The Branch Committee may ask the Writing Committee to provide this or other specialized training. The Writing Committee arranges training for new translation teams and for Bible projects.

REMOTE TRANSLATION OFFICES (RTOs)

Ideally, a translation team should be situated where the translators can attend meetings in their language, where they are exposed to that language, and where support by part-time commuters can be provided. Temporary teams and languages with only one or two project teams do not always require full-time secretarial or technical support personnel on-site. Depending on the need, a branch office or another RTO can serve as a support location. For example, a support RTO can provide secretarial work, composition, digital publishing, audio editing, computer support, or a combination of these, for a number of RTOs. For assistance on how to organize multiple RTOs or how to manage RTO facilities and personnel, contact the Writing Committee. When considering facilities for RTOs, consult the Remote Translation Office Facility Guidelines (DC-15). [36]
Remote Translation Office Organization

90. The Branch Committee should assign a qualified elder in each RTO to serve as a language overseer and another as a production coordinator. They should ensure that the needs of the translators are cared for so that the translators are able to focus on their work and not be unnecessarily distracted by nontranslation activities. The language overseer and the production coordinator ensure that the work at the RTO is well-organized. The Local Design/Construction Department is responsible for assigning someone to care for maintenance of the facility. [37]

Part-Time Volunteers

91. Part-time volunteers, often regular pioneers, may help with the translation work done at an RTO by serving as part-time commuters (BBV) or remote volunteers (BRV) on an ongoing basis.

Full-Time Servants

92. The branch cares for the housing needs of full-time servants at the RTO. Whenever a recommendation is made to the Personnel Committee for someone to serve as a full-time commuter (BBL), the branch should include a recommendation for an allowance that is enough to cover housing, meals that are not provided, transportation, and personal expenses.

Spiritual Programs

93. Ensure that all the Bethel spiritual programs are provided at the RTO. Morning worship and the Bethel family Watchtower Study should be conducted regularly. Where possible, RTOs can be tied in with the branch office for these programs.—See 7:94-96.
LIST 8.1

Bracketed References:
A copy of the following documents can be found on the Publication Processing Documentation (PPD) site.

2. Letter from Service Committee dated HSA:HSQ December 18, 2015, No. C-43031S.
8. Letter dated HWC:HWB December 1, 2015, No. C-42570W.


24. Information on maintaining the team dictionary can be found in the Appendix outlines.


32. Letter dated HLA:HLC November 7, 2015, No. C-41914L.


## HOW TO IDENTIFY LANGUAGE NEEDS

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### GROUP 1
- **Tracts, Listen and Live brochures**

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- **Web video: Why Study the Bible?**

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- **jw.org Level 1**

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### GROUP 2
- **Summary sheets from Teach Us**

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- **Web video: What Happens at a Bible Study?**

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- **Good News From God! and matching Web-video series**

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- **Web video: What Happens at a Kingdom Hall?**

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### GROUP 3
- **Brochure(s) appropriate for your territory**

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- **Teach Us (possible as brochures)**

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- **‘Make Disciples’ (baptism questions)**

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### GROUP 4
- **Life and Ministry Meeting Workbook**

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- **Study edition of The Watchtower**

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- **Selected Become Jehovah’s Friend videos**

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- **Specific books appropriate for your territory**

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### GROUP 5
- **Specific books appropriate for your territory**

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- **Public magazines**

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- **New World Translation**

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**D** = Printed publications  
**Ω** = Audio recordings  
**= Web pages on jw.org  
**= Videos
Priority List Guidelines

The information below will help clarify the chart “How to Identify Language Needs.” These guidelines are provided to help you decide what publications may be requested for every printed and audio language that you translate. Separate information is provided about sign-language translation.

Please do not make a list of all languages in your branch territory with the goal of providing literature in each language. Rather, let the field determine in which language publications are needed and what is needed. Each language group has its own unique needs. For example, some languages need only audio publications, while others additionally need printed publications. Also, some languages need only publications for field service, while others also need publications for meetings. These guidelines will help you balance literacy, education levels, language needs of individuals, priorities for the ministry, priorities for meetings, and several other factors. Focus on languages where people want to learn the truth in their language and where our publishers are getting results in the field.

The priority list is divided into the following five groups:

- Group 1: Publications to introduce people to the good news and to invite them to Public Meetings
- Group 2: Publications used to conduct Bible studies and direct students to Jehovah’s organization
- Group 3: Publications to deepen people’s love for God and assist them to make a dedication
- Group 4: Publications to strengthen the congregations and help the brothers grow to maturity
- Group 5: Deeper study books and the Bible

Explanation of the questions at the top of the chart

1. Can most benefit from another language?
   Some language groups are familiar with the main language of the country, which they may learn at school, or with a lingua franca that they use to communicate with people from other language groups. Although they use their own language when conversing with each other, they can easily use publications in another language for reading and during meetings.

2. How many can read their own language?
   Many individuals in some language groups cannot read at all. Also, some language groups use their own language when conversing with each other, but they prefer to use the “school language” for reading. This question is to determine whether the majority of speakers of that language can read or not, and thus whether we need to provide audio publications. It is important to recognize that some languages will never need any printed publications, but they will need audio publications.

3. Are there congregations in this language?
   If there is very little response from a language field and there are no congregations in that language field, we will provide minimal material.
Priority Lists

Every language has its own priority list (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, or H) that is determined by a variety of circumstances. Here is a brief explanation of each of these priority lists:

Priority A: This language group needs all publications (audio, video, print). This language may have thousands of publishers, many congregations, and circuits. The publishers are readers, and the majority are completely dependent on publications in this language.

Priority B: This is a new language field. No congregations have been formed. Only basic publications for the field are needed. If this field remains unresponsive, very few publications need to be provided.

Priority C: The publishers and public do not read their own language. This is an audio-only language.

Priority D: We are just starting to cultivate this field, and there are no congregations. This is an audio-only language.

Priority E: Even though they are literate in their own language, this language group is not strictly dependent on their own language for spiritual food. They can comfortably use publications in another language for meetings. (For example, language groups that are fluent with the official language of the country, such as Spanish, Swahili, or French.) However, if there are many established congregations and circuits, the Branch Committee should assess the situation and decide whether to recommend publications in the language.

Priority F: This language group is not strictly dependent on their own language. There are no congregations. We are just starting to cultivate this field. They are quite comfortable with publications in another language. At this point it is not necessary to provide publications for meetings in this language.

Priority G: Few can read their own language, but they can read printed literature in another language. There are few or no secular printed publications in this language, and/or illiteracy rates are high in the field. Publishers need audio publications for the ministry. Although there are many congregations using this language for the ministry, they use printed publications of another language during the meetings.

Priority H: People of this language group cannot read their own language. No congregations have been established. They need only a few audio publications for the ministry.

What Publications to Translate

Translation in new languages starts from the top of the list. Generally, most of the publications in Groups 1-3 will be translated, but it is not necessary to translate all the publications of a group at once. Months might elapse between translation sessions of part-time translators to allow the field to respond. Temporary translation teams convene to translate the next publications on the priority list only when the field provides sufficient evidence that additional translation is needed.

Translation Personnel

- Only part-time volunteers are used to translate the publications in Groups 1-3.
• Although permanent translation teams are formed according to the number of publishers, not more than one new team is formed at a time.

First Translation Effort
Candidates with some potential to translate are invited to convene at a facility close to where they live, such as a Kingdom Hall, Assembly Hall, RTO of another language, branch office, or another available facility. The branch sends an experienced trainer who teaches them how to translate, field-test, and record basic publications. After three weeks or so, when the project is completed, the candidates return to the field and the translated publications are produced and used in the ministry as directed by the Service Department.

Before recommending that additional publications be translated, the Service Department should request from the circuit overseers answers to the following questions and then pass on the reports of the circuit overseers to the Branch Committee:

- What is the response from the field?
- How many Bible studies are being conducted using publications in this language?
- How many attended the Public Meetings that have been held in this language?
- Are the publishers who speak this language attending the meetings and preaching in the field, thus showing their commitment to develop this language field?

If the response is good, the Branch Committee may recommend translating additional publications.

Note: If there is no response from the field, do not continue to translate into that language.

Second Translation Effort
After obtaining permission to translate more publications, the branch sends a trainer who assembles candidates as done previously. He may train the same candidates or, if more suitable ones became available, he trains them and produces the approved publications in a few weeks. As before, the translators return to the field and the translated publications are used in the ministry as directed by the Service Department. Again, the Service Department will communicate with the circuit overseers to monitor the response in the field and will pass on the reports of the circuit overseers to the Branch Committee.

Further Translation Efforts
Depending on the proficiency of the translators, the response from the field, and the availability of translators, the trainer may convene the part-time candidates after the branch obtains permission to produce additional publications. After two or three translation cycles, the following questions need to be answered to determine whether translation should continue:

- How many Bible studies are being conducted?
- Are students progressing to baptism?
- How many meetings are regularly conducted, and how regularly do the students attend meetings?
Note: If there is limited response from the field, do not continue to translate into that language.

If the response from the field is good, the Branch Committee should recommend that publications that can assist people to progress toward baptism be translated.

If brochures are translated, only one brochure at a time should be translated. Afterwards, the team members should return to the field. By that time, the trainer should have a good idea of the potential of the part-time translators.

Where practical, and if there is a demand, more than one team of part-time translators can work on brochures. If there are no part-time volunteers available, translation will be suspended until such time as they are available.

Note: The Teach Us book does not have to be translated in one sitting. It may be translated chapter by chapter as brochures, or the summary sheets can be translated separately. Photocopies of the translated materials can be made locally and used until the whole book is translated.

Note: None of the part-time volunteers will work permanently in translation. When they complete a project, they return to the field and may be invited to convene again some time later.

As the field grows to more than 100 publishers and more publications are provided, a permanent team may need to be appointed to translate dated publications, such as the Life and Ministry Meeting Workbook and the study edition of The Watchtower.

Permanent Teams

Appointing a permanent team is a major step for a language. Before recommending translation of dated publications, please answer the following questions:

- Does the language have a considerable number of congregations needing literature for the meetings?
- What evidence convinces you that the language group needs the study edition of The Watchtower in its language?
- Are the ones attending the meetings completely dependent on the literature in their language in order to prepare for meetings and to have a meaningful share in the meetings?

When a permanent translation project team is formed, the team will still operate from the Kingdom Hall or other available facility. The permanent team can be supplemented with part-time volunteers, according to their availability and circumstances.

The housing and working quarters of permanent teams are provided according to the guidelines provided by the Worldwide Design/Construction Department.
CHAPTER 9

PROVISIONS FOR MEMBERS OF THE WORLDWIDE ORDER

1. This chapter outlines for Branch Committees the arrangements that should be followed in caring for the needs of special full-time servants, all of whom are members of the Worldwide Order. (See 3:78-85.) In this chapter, reference to Bethel family members includes regular, temporary, and expatriate members of the Bethel family. This also includes full-time commuters and remote servants, even though they are not considered to be members of the Bethel family. Reference to circuit overseers includes their wives and field instructors. Reference to field missionaries includes temporary field missionaries. Reference to special pioneers includes temporary and infirm special pioneers. For a listing of full-time service enrollments, see Chart 9.2.

AGED AND INIRM

2. General Guidelines: The Branch Committee is to be concerned with those who are aged and infirm and have served for decades in special full-time service. Therefore, practical arrangements are made to care for the physical needs of these brothers and sisters who are members of the Worldwide Order. The goal is, not to provide the same services for the care of elderly special full-time servants in every country, but to ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to provide them with reasonable care.—Ps. 71:9.

3. Assembly Hall Servants and Bible School Facility Servants: These servants will discontinue their assignment on August 31 of the service year during which they reach 70 years of age. Consideration may be given to assigning the brother and, if married, his wife to serve as special pioneers. (See 6:113.) In an exceptional circumstance, a servant who is over this age may still have the experience, skills, and strength to continue caring properly for the heavy load of responsibility that goes with operating and maintaining a theocratic facility. Therefore, where warranted, you may request approval from the Personnel Committee for an exception.

4. Bethel Family Members: Members of the Bethel family should be given meaningful work assignments according to their abilities and individual circumstances. They should not be given work to do that does not really need to be done. All Bethel family members who are 70 years of age or older may take up to one day off each week for the field ministry or for personal use, if they desire to do so. The time may be taken as one full day or as two half days within the week and may be used in conjunction with personal time away. The Bethel family member should notify his overseer when he will be away, but no permission is needed from oversight for this arrangement. Moreover, there is no objection to a married Bethel family member who is 70 years of age or older sharing half of his day off with his mate who is younger than 70 years of age. In that case, the married couple should use the half day off work during the same time period. For example, a husband who is 72 years of age may choose to give half of his day off to his wife who is 68 years of age. However, the couple's time off from work must coincide, whether it is taken on a weekday morning or a weekday afternoon. It is not permissible for a married Bethel family member who is 70 years of age or older to give the entire

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day off to his mate who is younger than 70 years of age.

5. If they feel it necessary, brothers who are 70 years of age and older and sisters 50 years of age and older serving either as Bethel family members or as full-time commuters may leave their place of work before the Bethel workday officially ends in order to rest or to care for other personal matters. Or such older members may prefer to rest or care for personal matters after the noon meal before returning to work. It is left to the individual to determine how this personal time is used. This is done in the spirit of 1 Thessalonians 5:12, 13.

6. Circuit Overseers: Circuit overseers will discontinue their assignment on August 31 of the service year during which they reach 70 years of age. Consideration may be given to transferring the brother and his wife, if married, to serve as special pioneers.—See 6:113.

7. If a circuit overseer who is not yet 70 years of age is experiencing challenges because of age, chronic health problems, or other circumstances, the Service Department should review the situation. If he is a longtime special full-time servant, an encouraging letter can be sent acknowledging his challenges along with the assurance that he will be assisted with his needs if he transfers from the circuit work. This may move him to request an adjustment in his service. He should be invited to contact the Service Department for direction. If the circuit overseer is not inclined to discontinue, it may be good to address the matter during the next scheduled shepherding visit by an experienced circuit overseer or by a branch representative. If the circuit overseer accedes and decides to discontinue, he should submit his decision in writing. The Branch Committee will review any recommendation from the Service Department regarding his future service, including possible appointment as a special pioneer. If the Branch Committee approves the recommendation, the Service Department will write the circuit overseer a warm, encouraging letter acknowledging his many years of faithful service and outlining any arrangements that have been made for him and his wife.—See 2:30.

8. In cases where the circuit overseer feels strongly about remaining in the work even though this would prove detrimental to his health, the Service Department should present the matter to the Branch Committee. If it agrees, the Branch Committee should submit its recommendation for deletion to the Governing Body. (See 2:30.) If the Governing Body determines that the circuit overseer should discontinue, the Branch Committee may direct that the Service Department draft a letter for the Branch Committee's review, empathizing with his struggles and informing him of the decision made that is in his best interests and those of the congregations. The letter would provide information about a new assignment and arrangements in place that will help him and his wife in connection with the transition.

9. When a circuit overseer with less than 25 years of special full-time service needs to discontinue his service, perhaps to care for parents or because of a health problem afflicting him or his wife or because of pregnancy, he should notify the Service Department. The Service Department could recommend to the Branch Committee that the circuit overseer and his wife, if married, be encouraged to serve as regular pioneers and that consideration be given to offering them some transitional financial assistance.—See 9:37.

10. Construction Servants: The general age limit for construction servants is 55 years of age. To assist with larger organizational construction projects, consideration may also be given to having those who are over the age of 55 serve for one or more years or for the duration of the project. Due to the na-
ture of construction, servants who are no longer able to perform the work should be reassigned to another avenue of service or to the field. At the latest, these servants will discontinue their assignment on August 31 of the service year during which they reach 70 years of age.

11. Field Missionaries and Special Pioneers: At times, field missionaries and special pioneers who have served faithfully for decades begin to experience chronic health problems or the limitations of old age or disease. While there is no arrangement to provide housing and long-term care for such individuals at Bethel, the Branch Committee will take the lead in thoroughly investigating other options with the objective of providing an individual with personal and/or medical care while he remains in his field assignment. For example, could the local congregation provide needed assistance? (Mark 10:28-30) Are qualified local publishers or pioneers with medical training and experience available to assist? (1 Thess. 5:14) In some cases, consideration could be given to hiring a publisher or a pioneer to care for the long-term needs of the brother or sister. If a pioneer is involved, the branch may direct the congregation elders to show the pioneer consideration regarding his or her annual hour requirement. Consideration could be given to hiring nurse’s aides to care for the person in his field assignment. Such aides do not have to be Jehovah’s Witnesses. Simply put, the Branch Committee should consider what can be done locally, in the field, to meet the long-term needs of the elderly field missionaries and special pioneers in the best way possible. (Ecc. 5:18) Each case needs to be carefully reviewed and investigated before a recommendation to hire supplemental nursing care is sent to the Service Committee.—See 9:41, 54b.

12. In some cases, a longtime field missionary may request to live closer to fleshly or to spiritual family members who are eager to care for his physical or medical needs; this is appropriate and appreciated. (1 Tim. 5:3, 4) However, what if long-term specialized health care cannot be provided in the foreign assignment and the field missionary has no family members available to assist him? In such cases, thorough consideration will be given by the Service Committee to transferring the field missionary to another country, such as his home country, where health care can be provided while he serves in the field. As noted above, it may be possible to utilize the services of qualified brothers and sisters in the field who can provide the personal assistance that is needed. In an exceptional case that seems to necessitate transferring a field missionary to Bethel for long-term health care, the Governing Body will need to be consulted.

ALLOWANCES

13. General Guidelines: A person should be provided with his monthly allowance regardless of the time spent in the field service month by month and even when he takes personal time away, is on an approved leave of absence, or is sick, as long as he continues as a special full-time servant. Based on recommendations from the Branch Committee, the Publishing Committee approves the maximum amounts outlined on the Record of Allowances (A-29) form. One A-29 form is completed for each country where there are special full-time servants. The monthly allowances shown on the A-29 form include a personal and travel portion and, if applicable, a housing portion. The housing portion is based on two persons sharing housing and utility costs. Any adjustments to the rates, based on local circumstances and information in the Cost of Living Chart (A-40) or exceptions for high-rent areas, must be approved by the Publishing Committee. The Publishing Committee should be informed if local regulations require payment for social insurance, government pension payments, or personal
tax. As an exception, recommendations for remote servants (BRS), full-time commuters (BBL), and full-time construction commuters (BCL) are approved by the Personnel Committee, using specific forms. Once approved, allowance amounts for each of these individuals, broken down into personal allowance, travel allowance, and housing allowance, should be added to the A-29 for reference only.

14. When someone from a branch is assigned to serve at another branch for longer than one full month, he may (if that is his desire) receive the allowance that is given in the branch where he is temporarily assigned. Otherwise, he may continue to receive for the first three months of his temporary stay the allowance he would be entitled to in his home country. After that, he should receive the allowance of the country where he is temporarily serving. His PEA would also be adjusted to the rate of the new branch beginning with the fourth month of his stay. There is generally no need to provide any AEA allowance to a visiting special full-time servant. This does not apply to a circuit overseer who visits congregations in countries other than his home country. He would continue to receive the allowance rates of his home country regardless of how much time he may spend in another branch territory.

15. In some countries, there are full-time members in a branch office who live outside with their families. Usually, these are translators, and special arrangements are made for them. They do not come under all the guidelines for full-time members of the Bethel family who live in the Bethel home. Their provisions are specially arranged by the branch with approval from the Publishing Committee.

16. Assembly Hall Servants: The branch should give special full-time servants who live and serve at an Assembly Hall an allowance equivalent to that received by members of the Bethel family in the branch territory where they are serving. Since most Assembly Hall servants must also prepare most of their meals for themselves and care for personal needs (haircuts, dry cleaning, alterations, and so forth), the branch will provide an appropriate amount for these expenses, based on local circumstances.

17. Bethel Family Members: The basic Bethel monthly allowance is to help care for travel to meetings and for the ministry and to assist with basic living necessities that are not provided by the branch. It is calculated based on local circumstances and information in the Cost of Living Chart (A-40).

18. Bible School Facility Servants and Construction Servants: These servants receive an allowance equivalent to the allowance of Bethel family members in the country where they are assigned. Depending on local circumstances, reimbursements for expenses not typically accrued by Bethel family members may be provided. In addition to a monthly allowance, full-time construction commuters (BCL) may receive a travel and housing allowance similar to full-time Bethel commuters (BBL).

19. Circuit Overseers: The monthly allowance generally includes only the personal allowance for the circuit overseer and his wife, if married. The travel and housing portions are covered by the congregations if they are able to do so. If not, the circuit overseer can submit to the branch office whatever portion cannot be covered by the congregations.—tg chap. 9.

20. If a newly appointed circuit overseer needs additional financial support while waiting for a permanent circuit assignment, the Branch Committee may increase his allowance to assist with necessary living expenses. The total amount should not exceed the maximum monthly allowance provided to special pioneers in that country.—See 6:133.
21. If the branch office has an arrangement to assist circuit overseers with transportation, such as by providing a motorcycle or a vehicle, this provision would be available from the time that the circuit overseer takes up a permanent circuit assignment.

22. **Field Missionaries:** In addition to the monthly personal allowance, field missionaries may be given a travel allowance. Please see 9:54 to determine if a housing allowance is needed to cover the cost of rental and utilities.

23. **Special Pioneers:** In addition to the monthly personal allowance, special pioneers may be given a travel and housing allowance. The housing allowance may be given according to the average of the actual amount they pay for housing and utilities up to the maximum shown on the *Record of Allowances* (A-29) form. Any exceptions for high-rent areas should be referred to the Publishing Committee. If local laws permit, special pioneers may supplement their monthly allowance by engaging in some limited secular work as long as it does not interfere with their meeting the monthly hour requirement and fulfilling their congregation responsibilities. Allowance amounts are given regardless of the time spent in the field service each month and should be distributed at the end of each month without waiting for the monthly service report.

**AUTOMOBILE EXPENSE ACCOUNT (AEA)**

24. **General Guidelines:** When a Branch Committee sees the need, it can request approval from the Publishing Committee to set up an Automobile Expense Account (AEA). This is an additional travel allowance for qualifying vehicle or motorcycle owners serving as Assembly Hall servants, Bethel family members, Bible school facility servants, construction servants, field missionaries, or special pioneers. Approval from the Publishing Committee is required before granting any other financial assistance for travel to meet a local need.—See 9:38.

25. To qualify for AEA, an individual must have a properly licensed vehicle or motorcycle and a valid driver’s license. Requests for credit to attend meetings should be based on the distance to the individual’s assigned congregation. Other requests may include miles (or kilometers) traveled to elders’ meetings, field service, shepherding calls, and assigned circuit assemblies with his congregation. Special full-time servants may request credit for the mileage involved for travel to attend one of the organization’s schools. Privately arranged travel to give talks in other congregations or to assist other congregations with Kingdom Hall maintenance or construction or to attend regional conventions or to shop or visit friends would not be covered. AEA should not be requested for a special full-time servant to attend a regional convention except in the case of missionaries and special pioneers.—See 9:28.

26. Each individual will need to keep a daily and monthly record of congregation mileage activity in order to submit periodic requests for a credit of the AEA mileage provision. AEA requests should be submitted for the month that the congregation activity occurred instead of grouping multiple months together on one request. December’s AEA request should be submitted no later than January 25 of the following year. AEA allowances may not be carried over from one calendar year to the next. The credit is based on current fuel prices in various regions or countries under the branch as determined by the Branch Committee. A separate rate is generally needed for different fuel types, such as diesel and regular grade gasoline. The formula for calculating the AEA credit is as follows: qualifying miles (or kilometers) driven multiplied by the current fuel price (as determined by the

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Branch Committee), divided by the average miles per gallon (or average kilometers per liter) of the registered vehicle. A reasonable annual limit should be established by each branch for various categories of service. Requests for AEA credit may be submitted by filling out the Personal Financial Request (TO-4) or using electronic methods supported by headquarters.

27. Bethel Family Members: For Bethel family members, the cost of operating a vehicle is often supported by contributions from passengers. Those who do not have vehicles should use the portion of their basic monthly allowance that is designated for travel to help cover transportation costs by contributing to the owner of the vehicle in which they ride. Therefore, Bethel family members will need to be informed if the travel portion of the allowance is adjusted. To reduce costs, Bethel family members are encouraged to carpool whenever possible.

28. Missionaries and Special Pioneers: The AEA provision may also be requested by missionaries and special pioneers to cover fuel costs for travel to their assigned regional convention. If a circuit overseer eventually needs a replacement vehicle, perhaps the circuit will be in a position to help in this regard.—See 9:25.

EXPENSES

29. Circuit Overseer’s Vehicle: Congregations and circuits are encouraged to care for the expense of obtaining and maintaining vehicles for the circuit overseers, which would include tires, repairs, insurance, license, and so forth. In some branches, the Publishing Committee approves a branch-managed Circuit Overseer Vehicle Arrangement (COVA) that is funded by congregations passing monthly resolutions to the Circuit Overseer Assistance Arrangement (COAA). Where the COVA is not approved, a local circuit may choose to provide a vehicle. Usually, major expenses for such a vehicle would be submitted to the circuit when convenient rather than to an individual congregation. However, if some congregations and circuits do not have the resources to cover such expenses, the branch may be asked to assist with these. This applies to any personally owned vehicle used in the circuit work if the brother is in need of assistance to keep his vehicle operating. Requests to the branch for expenses over USD 1,000 should be submitted to the Publishing Committee on a Nonliterature Branch Request with an explanation for consideration. (Some branches were given a higher figure.)—See 9:25.

30. Funeral: The Branch Committee may approve the cost of a modest funeral, according to local circumstances, for a special full-time servant. Please write to the Publishing Committee for additional approval if the cost will exceed the local approval threshold. The branch office should take a special interest in comforting the surviving mate and seeing to his or her needs. If the Branch Committee has questions regarding the future service assignment for a special full-time servant who has been recently widowed, a recommendation should be sent to the appropriate Governing Body committee.

31. Personal Taxes and Insurance: Individual income taxes collected by the government on income as well as any kind of compulsory insurance (except for health) that applies to members of the Bethel family and others in special full-time service in the country should be included in the calculation of allowances. However, the individuals are responsible to make the actual payments.

32. We do not generally carry insurance on personal cars or property for members of the Bethel family or others in special full-time service. Any cost for such insurance is covered by the individuals. The organization does not accept responsibility for the loss of personal things kept by members of the
Bethel family. However, exceptions may be made on the recommendation of the Branch Committee to help those in special full-time service cover losses of essential personal items because of robbery, warfare, or natural disasters. It is appropriate to counsel those serving in potentially dangerous areas not to keep unnecessary items of value in the home, apart from what is needed for the ministry or what makes them feel at home in their assignment. Missionaries should not expect compensation for the loss of vehicles, jewelry, and other such items. Additionally, the branch is encouraged to instruct the missionaries to be modest in what replacement items they obtain.

33. Shipping and Moving: When a special full-time servant is approved to transfer to a new or temporary assignment, the branch office is authorized to spend up to USD 3,000 per person to cover shipping expenses (including import duties) associated with shipping his basic personal belongings. In most lands, such expenses would normally be far less than USD 3,000 per person. (With regard to construction servants, see the brochure Continue to Put Your Heart Into the Work.) Any request that exceeds this spending limit or any request to ship a personal motorized vehicle should be referred to the appropriate Governing Body committee for approval. If approval is given to ship a personal vehicle, the special full-time servant will generally be responsible for paying any import duty fees related to the vehicle shipment. Please see the Branch Accounting Department Guidelines (badg) to confirm when assistance can be provided for losses related to shipments of personal items in connection with theocratic assignments.

34. Since many countries have additional requirements for exporting and importing personal effects, the exporting branch should notify the importing branch before the effects are shipped and request its comments and direction.

35. If it is necessary for the branch office to move a field missionary or special pioneer to a new congregation assignment, the branch should cover the travel expenses involved. It is usually best to select a territory that is not too distant from his current assignment in order to avoid unnecessary expenses. The branch is also authorized to assist a departing missionary with the travel and shipping expenses involved in his departure. In exceptional cases and if requested, there may be a need for newly appointed temporary special pioneers to be assisted with their travel expenses. For example, such an individual may be assigned to another country in the branch territory. However, keep in mind that applicants to the School for Kingdom Evangelizers who indicate their willingness to accept an assignment in another country are often prepared to cover the costs associated with accepting such an assignment.—Luke 14:28.

36. As outlined in Circuit Overseer Guidelines (tg), a circuit overseer is welcome to submit to the branch office reasonable travel expenses associated with moving for reimbursement if the elders in the circuit do not offer to assist. (See 9:29, 39.) Since circumstances may vary in each country and region within the branch territory, the Branch Committee should provide guidelines for the Service Department so that these matters are handled kindly and reasonably. For example, in lands where the circuit overseer uses a vehicle to move to his new assignment, the organization is pleased to cover the cost of fuel and tolls. If food and lodging expenses are incurred during the move, these may be covered. In some lands, air travel may be required if other modes of travel are not practical. If legal documentation will be needed for the circuit overseer and his wife to take up a new assignment, the branch should assist the circuit overseer with such matters. Consideration should always be given to each circuit overseer’s
circumstances, including age, health, marital status, and years in full-time service. (Gen. 33:14; Phil. 2:4) In all cases, the brothers at the branch should be kind, practical, reasonable, and as helpful as possible, especially when the move involves travel to a distant assignment.—Prov. 3:27; Phil. 4:5.

37. Transitional Financial Assistance:
At the time that it is determined that an individual will discontinue special full-time service, the Branch Committee may see a need to provide the person, depending on his circumstances, with some transitional financial assistance. The amount is not to exceed the equivalent of a special pioneer’s monthly allowance including the amount allowed for housing. The Branch Committee is authorized to grant up to three months of such transitional financial assistance. The funds may be given in one lump sum before the person’s departure date from full-time service in order to avoid any legal issues. This arrangement is confidential and is not for the general information of those in special full-time service. It is not expected that the Branch Committee would need to extend this provision to every person departing special full-time service. If at the end of the three-month period there is an urgent need for transitional assistance to continue, the Branch Committee may consider approving up to three additional months. Beyond these two periods, the Branch Committee would need to provide a recommendation and detailed explanation to the appropriate Governing Body committee if further assistance were deemed necessary. If the branch office has an arrangement to provide basic health-care support to those in the Worldwide Order, the Branch Committee may feel that it is appropriate to allow the person to benefit from this arrangement also during the same period of time that he or she is granted the transitional financial assistance. A person is not expected to meet an hour requirement in the ministry in order to receive transitional financial assistance.—See 9:9, 48, 111-112.

38. Travel:
A special full-time servant may inquire about the possibility of receiving some financial assistance to cover unusually high travel expenses (such as travel by bus or airplane) to attend his assigned circuit assembly, regional convention, or Kingdom Ministry School. (See 9:24-28.) Since video streaming and video recordings are practical alternatives, it would be a rare exception for the Branch Committee to approve such requests. Any unusual situations and recommendations should be submitted to the Publishing Committee. To benefit Bethel family members who are serving as translators but who are not living in an area where their language is regularly spoken, such as in the branch facility, the Branch Committee may approve up to USD 50 as an annual supplemental allowance to assist the translators to attend a convention in their language. Branch Committees should inform the Writing Committee of the total annual cost of this arrangement along with their comments and observations. To assist Bethel family members to attend their regional convention, the Branch Committee may recommend a modest supplemental allowance to the Publishing Committee. The amount would assist the individuals to get to the closest convention. If a Bethel family member chooses to travel to a farther regional convention, the difference would be at his own expense.

39. A circuit overseer is welcome to submit to the branch office reasonable travel expenses for reimbursement if the elders in the circuit do not offer to assist.—See 9:36.

HEALTH CARE

40. General Guidelines:
While caring for personal health is primarily the responsibility of each member of the Worldwide Order, the Branch Committee should feel a keen desire to as-
sist. Arrangements should be made for members to receive good-quality health care as close as possible to their assignment. This includes those with foreign enrollments. However, if good-quality care is not available locally or the cost is high, a special full-time servant may be approved for treatment in another country. Additionally, if an expatriate special full-time servant requests health care during a visit to his or her country of origin, this may be approved when the cost is reasonable. These requests and all exceptions to this policy should be submitted to the Global Health Care Office and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. For more information regarding health-care requests, see 5:37-38 and Health Care Guidelines (A-110).

41. Branch Committees should regularly evaluate local health-care arrangements to ensure that they are practical, reasonable, and considerate. Providing such care needs to be balanced with making wise use of dedicated funds. (See 9:11.) Local arrangements should be clearly communicated to all members who qualify for health-care assistance. The Global Health Care Office is available at any time to assist branches in developing or implementing local health-care arrangements.

42. Branch Committees should not discourage necessary spending for health care in an effort to stay within the branch's yearly operating budget. While members may choose to contribute to the worldwide work, in most cases they should not be expected to pay for health care.

43. Provisional Members of the Order: Provisional members may receive assistance from the branch to care for periodic health evaluations, diagnostic evaluations, minor illnesses, and medical emergencies.

44. Since provisional members of the Order serve on a trial basis, any serious health problems or preexisting conditions that prevent them from fulfilling the requirements of their assignment may result in the discontinuation of their membership in the Order.

45. Volunteer Members: Volunteer members are responsible for their own nonemergent health-care needs as well as expenses for treating preexisting conditions (e.g., prescription medication that they were previously taking, dental work, eye exams, surgery, and so forth).

46. Branch Committees may care for unforeseen health-care needs that arise during the course of the volunteer member's assignment (e.g., medication for malaria, antibiotics, and so forth), especially when they are work-related (e.g., emergency surgery because of an accident while working on branch property, and so forth). If the volunteer member has health insurance or if there are available government programs, it may be possible to recover some of the costs.

47. Transitioning Out of Special Full-Time Service: If there is a need, the branch may provide basic health care to an individual during the period of time that he is receiving some transitional financial assistance.

48. When appropriate, assistance may be provided to help a person who is transitioning out of special full-time service to apply for government health-care programs. Any health-care support provided during this time is subject to the same approvals as that provided for those in special full-time service.—See 9:37.

49. Reporting Deaths: The Service Committee should be informed immediately, by means of a numbered letter, of the death of any who serve with a field missionary enrollment. Similarly, the Personnel Committee should be informed immediately of the death of any who serve as a member of the Bethel family. If a member of the Bethel family who passes away formerly served as a field missionary, this
should be clearly stated. When a special full-time servant with a design/construction enrollment passes away, the Worldwide Design/Construction Department (WDC) should be notified immediately, and a copy of the correspondence should be sent to the Personnel Committee. All death notifications should be sent by means of a brief memorandum or by completing the “Deletions” section on the appropriate personnel recommendation form. If the circumstances surrounding the death of a special full-time servant with a design/construction enrollment indicate that something more could have been done to prevent the death, whether through preventative measures or by means of better medical attention, the WDC will appreciate receiving the Branch Committee’s valuable input. The Personnel Committee and the WDC are very interested in any new lessons that may be learned with regard to the physical care that is being provided to such servants. Of course, the same concerns apply to any special full-time servant, regardless of his or her enrollment.

SAFETY DURING EMERGENCIES

50. General Guidelines: The Branch Committee must take a special interest in the welfare of all those who are members of the Worldwide Order. If such emergencies as civil unrest, acts of terrorism, or war threaten their safety and well-being, the Branch Committee must be alert and quick to provide practical assistance and clear direction. If the Branch Committee determines that there is an urgent need to evacuate special full-time servants in foreign service to a safer location or to relocate them, the branch office should immediately contact the Coordinators’ Committee by letter or by telephone and explain the situation, setting forth specific recommendations. The Coordinators’ Committee will consult with the Personnel and Service committees and provide further direction. If it is not possible for the Branch Committee to communicate with the Coordinators’ Committee, then the Branch Committee should do what is needed to protect the lives and safety of those in foreign service. A report on what transpired should be provided to the Coordinators’ Committee as soon as possible. For these reasons, each branch office should have and periodically review an emergency action plan. (Prov. 21:5) The branch should maintain up-to-date contact information for all of those in special full-time service so that they can be reached quickly in an emergency. While some in foreign service may feel either that they should or that they should not relocate or evacuate, ultimately the decision is a personal one. No one should judge others in this regard. (Matt. 7:1; 10:23; Rom. 14:10, 19; Gal. 6:5) Nevertheless, in most cases, it is best that Christians quickly heed the warnings and direction issued by the secular authorities and the responsible elders during times of civil unrest or emergency.—Rom. 13:1; Heb. 13:17.

HOUSING

51. General Guidelines: Accommodations that are rented, purchased, or constructed for special full-time servants in the field should be modest while not compromising the health and safety of the occupants. When considering options, Branch Committees will need to take into account the standard of living in the area and not give the appearance of luxury or of special treatment. If it is determined that housing will be needed in a specific area for at least 10 to 15 years, and renting is not a viable option, the Branch Committee may request approval to purchase an existing residence or to build the needed accommodations. Branch Committees in developing lands may consider the construction of Kingdom Hall apartments with a maximum size of 32 to 42 square meters (350 to 450 sq ft). In other lands, Branch Committees may consider the construction of Kingdom Hall apartments with a maximum size of 32 to 60 square meters (350 to
650 sq ft). The layout should be based on standard plans provided by the Publishing Committee. When the branch office is considering renting or purchasing apartments, these maximum sizes should be used as a guideline instead of being applied as a rule.—See Field Residence Design/Construction Guidelines (DC-16) for additional direction.

52. Circuit Overseers: Accommodations for circuit overseers should be arranged by each circuit. (tg chap. 1) However, where the living conditions of the publishers are unsuitable to accommodate the circuit overseer and his wife, Branch Committees may arrange for a modest apartment to be rented, purchased, or constructed as noted in 9:51, 54.

53. Construction Servants: Modest and appropriate residences should be provided by staying with local brothers in their homes, in residences owned by the organization, in mobile accommodations (caravans and tents), or possibly in a rented home or apartment. Accommodations should be clean and provide privacy for study. For a married couple, additional privacy is needed.

54. Field Missionaries: Generally, branches should endeavor to house a field missionary couple or two single field missionaries in a modest apartment or house. (See 9:22.) Branch Committees will follow the guidelines and options below:

   a. Field missionaries should be assigned to densely populated areas where their efforts may have a profound impact in stabilizing and strengthening preaching and congregation activities. (See 6:7.) After the Branch Committee has identified an area where field missionaries can be used effectively, a qualified brother should be assigned to research available housing options and the costs involved. This could include identifying Kingdom Hall apartments or apartments that local brothers are renting out. The Branch Committee should guide those who are assigned to research the matter so that the needs of the missionaries, such as safety, the distance to the territory, and the availability of public transportation, are kept in mind. Have in mind that some locations may be a little more costly but would allow the field missionaries to be more centrally located in their assigned territory. The Branch Committee, not the field missionaries, will make the final decision as to which accommodations should be rented.

   b. Consider the health and safety of the field missionaries. Are apartments or small dwellings suitable for a couple available in a reasonably safe location? A larger apartment or home to house more than one couple would be recommended only when safety and/or health issues require it or when providing separate housing is considerably more costly. For example, an older single or widowed missionary sister may not need to be assisted by local publishers as outlined in 9:11. However, for her safety and peace of mind, it may be advisable for her to share accommodations with a younger missionary couple. Additionally, in some lands it would be very expensive to set up smaller missionary homes in areas where electricity, water, and other basic utilities are not available. Therefore, the Branch Committee should exercise good judgment when considering these factors.

   c. The Branch Committee is authorized to spend up to USD 1,000 per month per couple for missionary accommodations. Please note that this approval limit includes the monthly cost of utilities. In most lands, a suitable apartment and utilities for two people would cost USD 200 to 500 per month. Higher expenditures
would be viewed as quite exceptional and possibly extravagant in developing lands. This approval level on rental agreements has been established on the premise that the Branch Committee will be careful to ensure that field missionaries are located where they can accomplish the most good and where the cost of accommodations and utilities will not be prohibitive. If you need further direction on this matter, please write to the Publishing Committee. The branch office should care for the payment of rent and utilities and help the field missionaries handle any legal agreements that may be needed to secure accommodations. If local circumstances require paying the owner several months of rent up front, this may be done up to a maximum of one year’s rental. Rental agreements that exceed USD 1,000 per month or USD 12,000 per year or recommendations that involve the construction of new missionary homes should be sent to the Publishing Committee. Clearly explain the needs, the options that have been considered, and the estimated cost for each option. If approval is given to investigate further, the matter will be referred to the Worldwide Design/Construction Department (WDC). Additionally, if it is concluded that a branch-owned missionary home should be used for some other purpose or sold, the recommendation should be sent to the WDC.

d. In cases where it might be less expensive for the individual renter to pay the rent instead of the organization doing so, the branch office may provide the missionary with the funds to cover the rent. As long as the monthly rent and utilities for field missionaries is less than USD 1,000 per month for two people, there is no need to show this on the Record of Allowances (A-29) form.

e. In the exceptional case that several missionaries are sharing a large home, the branch office may find it helpful to designate one of the missionaries as the home contact. It may also be practical for the branch office to provide funds for local expenses using an imprest fund. For details on establishing such a fund, see Branch Accounting Department Guidelines.

55. Branch Committees must be practical, kind, and generous in the supplying of suitable home equipment for the field missionaries. A standard approach will not work in all countries. Some field missionaries may have personal linens, furniture, and equipment that they want to use in their assignment. Newer missionaries may have very little and may need more assistance in obtaining these items. A rented apartment in one location may have heating, air conditioning, appliances, and access to laundry facilities. In other locations, the apartment may lack these provisions, and field missionaries will need to be provided with these basic necessities. The local situation and circumstances must be carefully considered. The branch office should avoid installing expensive equipment, such as water-filtration devices and backup electrical systems, in rented missionary homes. For rented accommodations, it is preferred that any additional equipment that the branch office obtains be limited to what is practical and what could easily be moved to another rented home. For example, while the branch office should not install expensive generators in a rented missionary home, a less-expensive portable generator that provides backup power for the refrigerator and air-conditioning may be obtained if needed. The same principle applies to other equipment, such as water filters. If there is a legitimate need for something beyond that, then please write to the Publishing Committee. If the Branch Committee feels that it is
reasonable to provide Internet service for a missionary home and the missionaries agree to cover the monthly costs, it may submit the recommendation with the details to the Publishing Committee for consideration, explaining the cost of installation and the monthly cost per person.

56. Special Pioneers: In general, the branch should not rent, purchase, construct, or renovate accommodations for special pioneers. They should be encouraged to locate and arrange for their own housing. An appropriate housing allowance consistent with local costs should be provided. However, where existing accommodations are available and are no longer needed for field missionaries or circuit overseers, there is no objection to using such accommodations for special pioneers on a temporary basis.

MARRIAGE

57. Assembly Hall Servants, Bible School Facility Servants, and Construction Servants: Anyone who desires to marry and remain in special full-time service should make his or her request to the Branch Committee, regardless of the length of time he or she has served. The two desiring to marry should each complete an Application to Become a Member of the Worldwide Order (A-8). If the Branch Committee decides to recommend that the engaged couple serve as members of the Order following their marriage, a recommendation will be sent to the Worldwide Design/Construction Department (WDC) along with appropriate comments regarding the qualifications of the applicants and the need for their services at Bethel. This should be done even if the mate will be replacing a member of the family who has departed or will soon be departing service. However, if the Branch Committee does not recommend that the engaged couple serve at Bethel following their marriage, it is not necessary to forward the recommendation to the Personnel Committee for approval. The Branch Committee may handle such requests without consulting with the Personnel Committee and may notify the couple accordingly. Of course, it would not be reasonable for one who is in his first year at Bethel to get engaged and apply to remain in his service following his marriage.

58. Bethel Family Members: Any member who desires to marry and remain a member of the Bethel family should make his or her request to the Branch Committee, regardless of the length of time he or she has served at Bethel. The two desiring to marry should each complete an Application to Become a Member of the Worldwide Order (A-8). If the Branch Committee decides to recommend that the engaged couple serve at Bethel following their marriage, a recommendation will be sent to the Personnel Committee along with appropriate comments regarding the qualifications of the applicants and the need for their services at Bethel. This should be done even if the mate will be replacing a member of the family who has departed or will soon be departing Bethel service. However, if the Branch Committee does not recommend that the engaged couple serve at Bethel following their marriage, it is not necessary to forward the recommendation to the Personnel Committee for approval. The Branch Committee may handle such requests without consulting with the Personnel Committee and may notify the couple accordingly. Of course, it would not be reasonable for one who is in his first year at Bethel to get engaged and apply to remain in his service following his marriage.

59. After their first year at Bethel, some who want to marry may prefer to leave Bethel, believing that this will make it easier for them to adjust to married life. They should feel free to do so. It is our hope that they will enter the pioneer work. But after a time, if
they would like to return to special full-time service, they should fill out new applications, which the Branch Committee will process in the usual way. The needs of the organization should be weighed when a Bethel family member wants to marry and remain at Bethel. If someone has training or skills that the Branch Committee feels are critical to getting the work accomplished, even though he may have been at Bethel a relatively short time, his request to remain at Bethel after marriage should be given serious consideration.

60. Circuit Overseers: If a single circuit overseer becomes engaged to be married and desires to continue in the circuit work, he should inform the Service Department right away. The Service Department will send a Questionnaire for Prospective Circuit Overseer (S-323) for him and his fiancée to fill out. Additionally, the Service Department will make discreet inquiries, confidentially writing to the body of elders of the sister’s congregation and to her circuit overseer about her qualifications. (If the sister is in her fiancé’s circuit, another circuit overseer who knows the sister could be contacted.) In addition to their letters, the elders and the circuit overseer should submit separate Personal Qualifications Reports (S-326). These reports, whether favorable or unfavorable, and the questionnaire should be submitted to the Branch Committee with a recommendation. The Branch Committee will review the sister’s qualifications, her reputation in the congregation and circuit where she serves, and her physical health and stamina. She should be at least 21 years old, baptized three years or longer, and in full-time service for at least two years. If there is a great difference in age between the two who are planning to marry, the Branch Committee should carefully consider whether this would cause negative talk or be a stumbling block to others. In all cases in which the circuit overseer has requested to stay on in the circuit work after he gets married, the Branch Committee should submit its comments and recommendation to the Service Committee for its decision. This should be done well ahead of the wedding date if at all possible. If the Service Committee approves that the circuit overseer continue in the circuit work following his marriage, then his wife would immediately be enrolled as the wife of a circuit overseer and they would start serving congregations right away. The Service Department will write the circuit overseer and inform him of the decision.—See 6:128.

61. If it is decided that a longtime circuit overseer should not remain in the circuit work after he gets married, consideration may be given to appointing him as a special pioneer. (See 6:113.) However, if the sister he is engaged to marry does not have many years in full-time service, she may continue as a regular pioneer. Any exceptional cases should be referred to the Service Committee.

62. Field Missionaries and Special Pioneers: If a field missionary or a special pioneer becomes engaged to be married, he or she should inform the Service Department right away. If desirous of continuing in the missionary or special pioneer work along with his or her prospective mate, the branch should immediately do as explained below:

- **If the prospective mate lives in the branch territory,** the branch should send him or her a Questionnaire for Prospective Temporary Special Pioneer (S-207) or Questionnaire for Prospective Field Missionary (S-214) to fill out. In addition, the prospective mate’s body of elders and circuit overseer should be asked to complete separate Personal Qualifications Reports (S-326).

- **If the prospective mate does not live in the branch territory,** the Branch Committee should obtain the Questionnaire for Prospective Temporary Special Pioneer (S-207)
that is on file and the S-326 forms from the respective branch office along with the Branch Committee's recommendation. In the case of a field missionary, the Service Committee will obtain the S-214 form from the prospective mate's branch office.

63. The Branch Committee will review the qualifications of the special pioneer or field missionary and those of his or her prospective mate, taking into consideration the reputation and the physical health and stamina of each one. The prospective mate should be at least 21 years old, baptized three years or longer, in full-time service for at least two years, in good health, and able to maintain an active schedule. If there is a great difference in age between the two who are planning to marry, the Branch Committee should consider carefully whether this would cause negative talk or be a stumbling block to others.

64. If the special pioneer and the prospective mate are well-qualified, the Branch Committee may enroll them as special pioneers together, effective the date of their marriage. If the Branch Committee determines that they do not qualify to serve as special pioneers after their marriage, then the branch should inform the special pioneer of the decision as soon as possible and determine a stop date prior to the wedding. If the special pioneer does not agree with the Branch Committee's decision or if the case is unusual, the Branch Committee may submit the matter along with its recommendation to the Service Committee. It is understood that in some exceptional situations, it may be appropriate for one mate to continue as a special pioneer while the other mate does not. If there is a situation that seems to merit such an exception, please provide details to the Service Committee.

65. In the case of a field missionary, all the reports (translated into English) along with the Branch Committee's recommendation and the prospective mate's S-214 questionnaire, whether favorable or otherwise, should be submitted to the Service Committee, which will make the final decision as to whether someone continues as a field missionary following his or her marriage.

PERSONAL EXPENSE ACCOUNT (PEA)

66. General Guidelines: The Personal Expense Account (PEA) is generally provided on an annual basis to those in special full-time service to care for non-routine personal needs. This arrangement for the support of members of the Worldwide Order is approved by the Publishing Committee. It is based on the Cost of Living Chart (A-40) and recommendations from the Branch Committee and is listed on the Record of Allowances (A-29) form for each country under the branch territory. The PEA amount provided will depend on the branch cost of living and on a person's seniority. [See Chart 9.1.] No changes should be made in credits for PEAs without first consulting the Publishing Committee.

67. The annual PEA amount is calculated based on the approved rate and the number of months that a special full-time servant is in his assignment during the calendar year. Once a year, at the end of the calendar year, this amount is added to the balance of the PEA for each individual or couple and made available for request. The available PEA balance may be kept either in U.S. dollars or in local currency. When the account is kept in U.S. dollars, a request from the account will be distributed in local currency at the current rate of exchange.

68. If approved by the Publishing Committee, the PEA balance may be paid out automatically with the December allowance payment after the annual amount is added. If required because of tax or banking requirements,
a Branch Committee may request approval to calculate and pay out the monthly PEA amount along with the monthly allowance payment.

69. A temporary Bethel family member (BBT) or temporary special pioneer (FTS) will receive PEA for the months that he serves in the enrollment. Temporary volunteers serving for less than one year who are not members of the Worldwide Order (BBW or BBC) would not qualify to receive PEA.

70. A person leaving special full-time service, including one who is disfellowshipped or disassociated, may request any available PEA amount. This would include an amount for the number of full months he served in the current calendar year. He may apply personal time away to the month of departure, but he cannot receive any PEA amount for months of personal time away that might extend past the month of departure.—See 9:75.

71. An individual's PEA is closed if he leaves special full-time service for a period of more than three months unless the Branch Committee receives approval for an exception from the Personnel Committee or the Service Committee for a leave of absence. The person may continue to receive PEA while he is on short emergency leave if it seems appropriate because of his years of service.

72. In the event of the death of a mate, the surviving mate may benefit from the balance left in the deceased mate's PEA. However, unclaimed PEA should not be included as part of the estate if there is no surviving mate.

73. Pass-Throughs: From time to time, a special full-time servant may wish to transfer funds to another branch, either for another special full-time servant or to pay a bill incurred with the other branch. Or the special full-time servant may wish to receive funds from another branch. For example, a relative or friend may wish to send the special full-time servant funds to support him in his foreign assignment. In such cases, the funds can be remitted to the special full-time servant through the respective branch.

74. The pass-through arrangement is a provision for special full-time servants only. The arrangement is not intended as a means to transfer funds to others, including relatives or friends, although funds may be received by a special full-time servant from someone who is not serving in this capacity. By restricting the use of this provision to special full-time servants, we avoid the appearance of a banking arrangement and preserve the nonprofit, religious status that our organization enjoys in most parts of the world. The arrangement is a loving provision for special full-time servants to continue to serve without distraction and not to be unnecessarily involved in mundane and other time-consuming matters, such as dealing with banks to handle international transfers.

PERSONAL TIME AWAY AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

75. General Guidelines: Personal time away is based on basic days granted each new service year along with additional days granted based on seniority or age. On September 1, all special full-time servants receive the appropriate number of days of basic personal time away for their present special full-time service enrollment. Personal time away credits for temporary Bethel family members (BBT) should not be prorated on September 1 for the remaining full months of their assignment. Personal time away for BBTs should be handled the same way as for regular Bethel family members (BBR) as explained in paragraphs 30-37 of the Dwelling Together in Unity manual. Those who enter special full-time service after September 1 are given a prorated amount of basic personal time away for the remaining full months in the current service year. This is credited on a person's start date in special full-time service. All such
newly appointed special full-time servants are granted a prorated seniority credit or a prorated age credit, whichever is greater, on the person's start date in special full-time service. Thereafter, the person will annually be granted the normal seniority credit or the normal age credit, whichever is greater, on September 1. Additionally, all special full-time servants who are newly appointed by world headquarters to have an enrollment code ending in the letter “F” (e.g., BBF, FMF, FCF, and so forth) are granted a prorated foreign-service credit on the person's appointment date. Thereafter, the person will annually be granted the normal foreign-service credit of seven additional days of personal time away on September 1. Special full-time servants who have taken a vow of obedience and poverty are released from these vows while taking personal time away. Anyone leaving special full-time service cannot use more than 24 working days of his accumulated personal time away to extend his departure from special full-time service. In the event of the death of a mate, the surviving spouse should be credited the balance of unused personal time away of the deceased spouse. The branch office should not recalculate personal time away balances when a transfer takes place from one form of special full-time service to another. The personal time away that a special full-time servant has already accumulated will be retained when he transfers to another form of special full-time service. The Branch Committee may find it necessary at times to limit the number of those who can be away from Bethel at any one time. Extenuating circumstances may arise that the committee can consider before deciding what is reasonable.—See 4:27; 9:70.

76. The Branch Committee is authorized to grant up to 90 calendar days of leave of absence time per service year. However, such leave time would usually be granted progressively, based on the circumstances, rather than immediately granting 90 calendar days away. There is no need for a person to use all of his accumulated personal time away to care for a serious health matter or a family emergency. However, it may be reasonable for the person to combine some of his personal time away with a leave of absence granted to him by the branch office. If the Branch Committee believes that more than 90 calendar days away are needed, it should make a recommendation to the appropriate Governing Body committee. In some cases, it may be better for the person or married couple to terminate special full-time service. These situations must be carefully reviewed and handled on a case-by-case basis.

77. In the case of Assembly Hall servants, Bethel family members, Bible school facility servants, and construction servants, the Bethel Office or those appointed by the Branch Committee are authorized to grant leave of absence time. In the case of circuit overseers, field missionaries, and special pioneers, the Service Department overseer or his assistant is authorized to grant the person up to 14 calendar days, including Saturdays and Sundays, of leave of absence in any service year. The Service Department overseer or his assistant and a member of the Branch Committee may grant these individuals up to 30 calendar days of leave in any service year. Any additional request for leave of absence should be handled by the Branch Committee. Any case that would involve granting more than 90 calendar days of leave of absence in any service year to circuit overseers, field missionaries, or special pioneers should be referred to the Service Committee. During an approved leave of absence, these individuals are not expected to meet the monthly hour requirement.—See 6:139.

78. Assembly Hall Servants and Bible School Facility Servants: Assembly Hall servants and Bible school facility servants receive personal time away
under the same arrangement as members of the Bethel family. They receive the same provision as Bethel family members do for time off to attend regional, special, and international conventions and, if needed, may receive a leave of absence. For more information, see the brochure Faithfully Maintaining Our Places of Worship (mtw).

79. Bethel Family Members: 

Members of the Bethel family are granted time off to attend one regional convention each year. This time should not be used for any other purpose. If a Bethel family member wishes to attend an additional regional convention, he must use his personal time away. When international or special conventions are held, please note that a special provision of time away from work is made for special full-time servants who are selected as delegates. (This is separate and in addition to the usual personal time away that is granted to attend one annual regional convention. The two provisions of time away are different and cannot be combined to attend only one event.) The special provision of time away is as follows: Bethel family members who are selected as delegates to attend a special or international convention will be granted one and a half days of personal time away in order to attend all program sessions at one such event.—See 9:86.

80. What if an individual in his first five years of Bethel service requests time away from work using days other than his accumulated personal time away? It could possibly be to care for a health matter or a family emergency, such as a death in the family. Each request for a leave of absence should be handled individually, taking into consideration the recommendations of the elders at Bethel, the individual's attitude, work habits, and general health, as well as the valuable experience, knowledge, and ability he may have gained and can contribute to the work. Thus, a leave of absence could be granted out of concern for the individual and for the Kingdom work. In some cases, it may be better for the individual to leave Bethel and reapply when he has his affairs in order again. When one is granted a leave of absence because he is in need of health care outside of the regular provisions at Bethel, the individual will pay his own expenses.

81. Bethel family members who have been in full-time service for 36 or more years may receive five additional days of time away from their Bethel work per service year for the purpose of caring for family responsibilities in connection with immediate relatives, such as parents, brothers, or sisters. However, this provision applies only to Bethel family members and not to others in special full-time service.

82. If a leave of absence has been granted to a married person to care for a health matter or a Scriptural responsibility and the mate feels that he or she should go along, this would be reasonable. However, the Branch Committee would have to approve this, taking into consideration what has been stated above. When a married individual has made a good contribution to the Kingdom work, more than the usual consideration might be shown to that one. This would especially be the case when a person has been in special full-time service for many years, though his or her marriage mate may be relatively new.

83. After a person has been at Bethel for five years, he is reasonably well-established as a member of the Bethel family. He may unexpectedly develop a health problem or be faced with a family emergency or a Scriptural responsibility that takes him away from his Bethel work for quite a time beyond the period allowed for personal time away. The longer a person has been at Bethel, the more consideration he can be shown.

84. In an exceptional case, a member of the Bethel family may need more than 90 calendar days of leave of ab-
sence time to care for a Scriptural responsibility. Because the brother (or sister) has many years of full-time service and is of value to the organization, the Branch Committee may wish to recommend to the Personnel Committee that the extended leave be approved. While there is no guarantee that he would be able to keep the room he leaves, it might be possible that for a period of a year, his room could be used as a guest room. Then, if he comes back within a year, he can return to the same room. He can either take his furniture with him or leave it in his room, or Bethel could store it if space allows. The Branch Committee should work out the details, keeping in mind the arrangement at Bethel and the needs of the individual. On the other hand, it may be that the person could leave Bethel and be encouraged to reapply as soon as matters have been cared for.

85. Circuit Overseers: The arrangements for personal time away and leave of absence time are outlined in Circuit Overseer Guidelines (tg). If needed, the branch office is authorized to increase a circuit overseer’s monthly allowance up to the amount provided to special pioneers during the time that he and his wife are on an approved leave of absence. There is no need for a circuit overseer and his wife to take personal time away in order to move to a new circuit. The branch office is authorized to determine how much time is reasonably needed for a particular move. Depending on the circumstances, some may need a few days; others may need a week or more. The circuit overseer should not be so exhausted after the move that he is not able to begin his new assignment with a positive frame of mind.—Mark 6:31a.

86. Construction Servants: Construction servants receive personal time away under the same arrangement as members of the Bethel family. (Those who are enrolled as expatriate construction servants (BCF) also qualify for the foreign-service credit.) They receive the same provision as Bethel family members do for time off to attend regional, international, and special conventions, and if needed, they may receive leave of absence time. (See 9:79.) For further information, see the brochure Continue to Put Your Heart Into the Work (cph).

87. Field Missionaries and Special Pioneers: The arrangements for personal time away and leave of absence time for field missionaries and special pioneers are outlined in letters to these special full-time servants. There may be no need for the Service Department to maintain personal time away records for infirm special pioneers who because of advanced age or chronic illness no longer have a specific monthly hour requirement. That matter can be decided by the Branch Committee.—See 6:122.

88. Time Away for Mates During Branch Work Assignments: The wife of a Bethel brother may travel with him on a branch work assignment at the branch’s expense whenever the trip will require ten or more working days. If a Bethel assignment requires that a married Bethel brother be away from Bethel for fewer than ten working days, any working days that are used by his wife to travel with him will be deducted from her accumulated personal time away. In addition, the couple will have to care for the mate’s travel expenses personally. After a brother has been on an assignment(s) totaling ten working days or more within a service year, his wife may accompany him if he again is assigned to be away from Bethel for a period of at least five working days. (See 7:134.) This policy does not apply to brothers in special full-time service who may be sent out on an assignment at the direction of the organization to care for various shepherding visits, Branch Committee members attending a convention assigned by the branch, or branch representatives caring for a CA-br assignment.—See 7:22; 9:118.
PERSONNEL REVIEWS

89. General Guidelines: Regardless of enrollment, the first three years after an individual’s entering special full-time service will be considered a tested-as-to-fitness period. Such ones will be provisional members of the Order during their first three years. Shortly before completing three years, they will be evaluated before being invited to become regular members. This three-year evaluation will be made for each individual, including each married person. While the membership of individual marriage mates may vary because of differences in each one’s total consecutive years of special full-time service, the enrollments of each mate should be the same.

90. During the tested-as-to-fitness period, Bethel department overseers (for those serving at the branch office), the Construction Committee or Construction Project Committee (for those serving on large construction projects), the Local Design/Construction Department (for those serving as Assembly Hall servants, Bible school facility servants, or construction servants), and the Service Department (for those serving as special pioneers, as field missionaries, or in the circuit work) will need to consider carefully the progress being made by individuals under their care. Appropriate training and counsel should be provided as needed. (2 Tim. 2:2; 4:2b) Toward the end of the three-year evaluation period, Branch Committees will review the comments and recommendations of those working with each provisional member so as to determine if the provisional member qualifies to serve as a regular member of the Order.

91. Before inviting a provisional member to become a regular member of the Order, the Branch Committee will want to consider his reputation and his physical health and stamina, as well as his aptitude for his specific assignment of service and his future potential. However, the extent of this evaluation will vary based on the individual and his enrollment. As an example, the evaluation of a member of the Bethel family in his early 20’s may require greater assessment than the evaluation of a circuit overseer, since the circuit overseer has already proved a measure of his qualifications based on his appointment to the circuit work and has already received an extensive review while attending the School for Kingdom Evangelizers.

92. After the tested-as-to-fitness period, if an individual does not qualify to serve as a regular member of the Order, he should be removed from the Order. As a reminder, the Branch Committee should make a recommendation to the Worldwide Design/Construction Department if the committee feels that an expatriate construction servant no longer qualifies to continue serving as such.

93. Except in the case of temporary special pioneers, on rare occasions, a Branch Committee may feel that additional time is needed to make an accurate evaluation of an individual. In such cases, as an exception, the Branch Committee may choose to extend the tested-as-to-fitness period for an additional year or two. During this time, specific counsel and assistance should be given to the individual. At the end of this extended period, a final decision should be made. Regarding personnel reviews for temporary special pioneers, see 9:104.

94. Circuit Overseers: A review of all circuit overseers should be completed and recommendations for deletion, if any, should be submitted to the Governing Body by August 1 of each year. The Branch Committee should ensure that it has all the facts and should be reasonable in its expectations, taking into consideration local circumstances. —Prov. 18:13, 17; Phil. 4:5.

95. A circuit overseer should be kind, impartial, and just. He should care for matters with love and patience.
He should be humble and discerning, known as a man who stands firm for Jehovah's righteous standards rather than insisting on his own opinions. (See 6:130.) These qualities are especially important in view of the weighty responsibility entrusted to him of appointing and deleting elders and ministerial servants. (Luke 12:48b; Acts 14:23) A number of factors should be considered, including the following: Does the circuit overseer display genuine zeal for the ministry? Does he take the lead in all facets of the ministry? Does he meet his hour requirement each month, taking into consideration time needed for assemblies, conventions, schools, and other theocratic assignments? Is he kind, reasonable, and patient in his dealings with others? Does he have a reputation as one who stands firm for Jehovah's standards, or is he known as one who imposes his personal viewpoints or sets arbitrary rules? If it is necessary, is he willing to live in the homes of the brothers? Is he content with what is provided? (Phil. 4:11, 12) Have there been significant deficiencies that have warranted counsel? If so, has he received appropriate counsel? Did he quickly apply it? Does he or his wife have significant health issues that consistently prevent them from fulfilling their assignment?—See 2:30.

96. If the Branch Committee notes a significant deficiency in the service of a circuit overseer and he has not been counseled previously on the matter, the Branch Committee should ask the Service Department to follow the steps outlined in 6:141. The Branch Committee should ensure that the circuit overseer is helped to understand the deficiency and that he receives specific suggestions that will assist him in making the needed adjustments. (2 Cor. 13:11) The situation should be monitored over the next year, and additional counsel given as needed. If there has been no improvement by the time of the next annual evaluation, the Branch Committee should recommend to the Governing Body the deletion of the circuit overseer. A brief summary of the efforts made to assist him should be included in a numbered letter that is sent along with the Recommendations to the Governing Body form. In such cases, the individual should not be able to say that he was unaware of the Branch Committee’s concerns, that his recommended deletion is the first he has heard of the matter, or that he has not been given opportunity to make needed adjustments.—Matt. 7:12.

97. Field Missionaries: Annually, the Branch Committee should evaluate each field missionary (FMF) who is under 50 years of age. Those who are 50 or older may be included in the review process if the Branch Committee believes that there is a need. This review should be completed and any recommendations for deletion should be submitted to the Service Committee by August 1 of each year. Temporary field missionaries are not included in this annual review.—See 6:11; 9:103.

98. In addition to reviewing the Personal Qualifications Report (S-326) submitted by the circuit overseer and by the Branch Committee member in conjunction with his annual visit, there are a number of factors to be considered, including the following: Does the missionary display genuine zeal for the ministry? Does he consistently meet his monthly hour requirement, taking into consideration other theocratic assignments, personal time away, and other relevant factors? Keeping in mind the nature of the territory, does he have a reasonable number of placements and make a good number of return visits each month? Is he a teacher in the field? Does he regularly start new Bible studies? Does he conduct progressive Bible studies? Does he work with the local publishers in the ministry? Does he have a reputation as one who promotes peace? Does his activity have a strengthening effect on the congregation? Have there been significant deficiencies that have warranted counsel? If so, has he applied the counsel? Does
he have significant health issues that consistently prevent him from fulfilling his assignment?

99. In some cases, the Branch Committee may note significant deficiencies in the service of a field missionary. In such cases, the Branch Committee should first determine if the individual has been counseled previously. If not, a member of the Branch Committee should be assigned to meet with the missionary. The missionary's circuit overseer or another mature local elder should accompany the Branch Committee member on the visit. While the tone of the visit should be kind and positive, the Branch Committee member should clearly explain the Branch Committee's concerns. The missionary should be helped to understand the deficiencies and be given specific suggestions that will assist him in making needed adjustments. (2 Cor. 13:11) The situation should be monitored over the next year and additional counsel given as needed. If there has been no improvement by the time of the next annual evaluation, the Branch Committee should recommend the deletion of the field missionary. In such cases, the individual should not be able to say that he was unaware of the Branch Committee's concerns, that his recommended deletion is the first he has heard of the matter, or that he has not been given opportunity to make needed adjustments.—Matt. 7:12.

100. When the Branch Committee decides to recommend the deletion of a field missionary, a separate numbered letter for each person or couple should be sent to the Service Committee. The letter should include complete details, explaining clearly the reasons for the recommendation, the efforts made to assist the missionary, and whether he agrees with the recommendation. If the individual does not agree and he wishes to submit a letter, his letter should be included with the numbered letter. After reviewing the Branch Committee's recommendation, the Service Committee will provide direction.

101. Special Pioneers: Annually, the Service Department should review the activity of all special pioneers to see whether they are productive and are fulfilling the requirements of their special form of service. (See 6:111.) The Branch Committee may feel that certain younger special pioneers with a minimum of three years in special full-time service could serve well as field missionaries in another country. The factors to be considered and the steps to be followed to make such recommendations are outlined in 9:109.

102. If concerns about the activities of a special pioneer are reported, the Service Department may write to the elders and/or the circuit overseer to obtain their observations. Once the facts are known, the Service Department may write a letter of counsel and offer helpful suggestions or may direct the circuit overseer to approach the pioneer privately about the area of concern. If the special pioneer is a single sister, the circuit overseer should be accompanied by a local elder. The special pioneer should be given the opportunity to improve over a reasonable period of time and be commended on any progress made. If there is no response to repeated efforts to assist the special pioneer and the Service Department is convinced that he no longer qualifies, a recommendation can be made to the Branch Committee that he be deleted from that privilege of service. In most cases, a special pioneer who is consistently unable to meet his monthly hour requirement because of serious and debilitating health problems, perhaps for six months or so, should leave special full-time service. If married, careful consideration needs to be given as to whether the other mate should continue as a special pioneer. What would be in the best interests of the couple and of the organization? Would it be good to transition both of them out of special full-time service? If the Branch Committee feels that one mate should continue as a spe-
cial pioneer while the other should not, it should provide a recommendation to the Service Committee. Extra consideration should be shown to those who are at least 55 years of age and who have 25 or more years in special full-time service. Any exceptional situations should be referred to the Service Committee.

—See 6:120.

103. Temporary Field Missionaries: When a temporary field missionary (FTF) has been in his assignment for 30 months, the branch office will write to him and ask him to submit a letter stating whether he would like to continue in the missionary work or would prefer to return home. If the individual decides to return home, the Service Committee should be informed. If the individual would like to continue as a field missionary, the Branch Committee should consider his effectiveness over the preceding 30 months and make a frank recommendation to the Service Committee. In either case, whether the individual desires to continue as a field missionary or not, the Service Committee will make the final decision concerning an individual’s future service as a field missionary. In all cases, after the Service Committee has replied, a member of the Branch Committee or a mature elder from the Service Department should make a shepherding visit on the missionary. This visit could be made in conjunction with the annual shepherding visit. (See 9:118; John 21:16) Married couples should be met together. The missionary’s circuit overseer or another mature local elder should accompany the branch representative on the visit.—See 9:97.

104. Temporary Special Pioneers: All temporary special pioneers are enrolled in an evaluation program that lasts up to three years. The program includes an annual review by the Service Department. The purpose of this evaluation program is to allow the Branch Committee to test the fitness, abilities, circumstances, and effectiveness of a temporary special pioneer and to determine how he may best be used in the future. It is not expected that all temporary special pioneers will be given an extension for a second or third year. During the annual review, the Branch Committee should extend only those who are effective in this role and who are qualified to take on greater responsibility. For more information, see chapter 13 of School for Kingdom Evangelizers Office Guidelines (skeog).—See 9:93.

105. After a temporary special pioneer has been in his assignment for ten months, the Service Department should request and review the Personal Qualifications Report (S-326) submitted by the circuit overseer. The department will determine whether the temporary special pioneer is reaching his hour requirement, is productive in starting and conducting Bible studies, is showing a keen interest in aiding those associated with the congregation, and is enjoying and promoting good relations with others. If the report is positive, two members of the Branch Committee can extend the temporary special pioneer appointment for another year. Only productive individuals obtaining good results should be given an extension in the temporary special pioneer work for an additional year. If the report is negative or if it is clear that a brother, a sister, or a married couple is not able to serve effectively in the temporary special pioneer work, it would be appropriate for the Service Department to write a letter directing that the individual or the couple return to the regular pioneer work. The letter would also express appreciation for their service.

106. At any time, the branch office may determine that a temporary special pioneer could be used more effectively in some other form of special full-time service. For example, brothers who are graduates of the School for Kingdom Evangelizers may qualify to receive training in the circuit work.—See chapters 10 and 13 of School
for Kingdom Evangelizers Office Guidelines (skeog).

107. It is understood that temporary special pioneers who have successfully completed the three-year evaluation program have proved themselves and have potential for greater service. The Branch Committee must determine how best to use them.

108. Some temporary special pioneers who have successfully completed the three-year evaluation program may be appointed as special pioneers. Other individuals may qualify for the circuit work, and the branch may appoint such individuals as special pioneers, inviting them to complete the Questionnaire for Prospective Circuit Overseer (S-323). If after reviewing the questionnaire the Branch Committee agrees that the individual qualifies to be a circuit overseer, it may submit a recommendation to the Governing Body. See 2:30; 6:123.

109. In exceptional cases, the Branch Committee may feel that certain temporary special pioneers who have completed the three-year evaluation program have the circumstances and stamina to serve well as field missionaries in another country. In most cases, each mate must be between the ages of 25 and 45. Fluency in English is not a requirement. In addition to their spiritual qualities, such individuals may speak a foreign language or be adept at learning new languages or their ethnic and family background or citizenship might equip them to fill a specific need in another land. The branch may appoint them as special pioneers and send them the cover letter for field missionary candidates (S-251), inviting them to complete the Questionnaire for Prospective Field Missionary (S-214). The completed questionnaire and, if needed, an English translation of the candidate’s responses along with a numbered letter should be submitted to the Service Committee, explaining in detail the qualifications, language abilities, ethnic and family background, and citizenship(s) of each individual. Please include an English translation of the latest Personal Qualifications Report (S-326) that was submitted by the circuit overseer. See 9:101.

110. Those who have completed the three-year evaluation program and who are fluent in English may in time be included in the Branch Committee’s consideration of exceptional candidates to be recommended for additional training at Gilead School. See 6:186.

PREGNANCY

111. General Guidelines: Field missionaries or special pioneer couples who learn that they are to be parents should inform the branch immediately. The couple should be given a period of three months to get settled, during which they will continue to receive their monthly allowance. During this three-month period, the couple will need to locate suitable accommodations and find employment, so it is not expected that they will meet their monthly hour requirement. If one or both mates wish to become regular pioneers, they will have an additional three months to make the transition and their full-time service history will continue uninterrupted. If requested, the branch office is authorized to assist a departing missionary with the cost of return travel to his home country and the costs associated with shipping his basic personal belongings. For information on transitional financial assistance, see 9:37.

112. There is no provision for former special pioneers to be reappointed while a minor child is still living at home. If in the past the branch allowed a special pioneer couple to continue in that work while raising one or two children, it would be good to review the special pioneers’ activity to determine whether they are still effective in their ministry. In all cases, it is up to the Branch Committee to evaluate the circumstances of special pioneers to decide whether they should remain in spe-
cial full-time service. For information on transitional financial assistance, see 9:37.

SHEPHERDING VISITS

113. Assembly Hall Servants and Bible School Facility Servants: Arrangements should be made for those who are serving as Assembly Hall servants or as Bible school facility servants to receive regular shepherding visits by members of the Branch Committee, representatives of the Local Design/Construction Department (LDC), or other mature elders selected by the Branch Committee. This arrangement should mirror the arrangement that is in place to shepherd all members of the Bethel family regularly.

114. Circuit Overseers: Circuit overseers and their wives, if married, should receive a shepherding visit at least once every two years. Such visits should be made during a circuit overseer’s regular visit to a congregation, not during the week of a circuit assembly. In larger branches, most circuit overseers will receive a visit from another experienced circuit overseer. The experienced circuit overseer in turn will receive a shepherding visit from a branch representative. Branch representatives assigned to shepherd circuit overseers may be members of the Branch Committee, experienced Service Department deskmen, or responsible brothers in the branch office who have had experience in the traveling work. Each branch representative would normally make no more than one or two such visits per year.

115. Circuit overseers or field instructors assigned to shepherd other circuit overseers should be men who are older in years and experienced as traveling overseers. They should be known as ones who maintain a good personal schedule of Bible study and meditation and who keep up-to-date with published information from ‘the faithful slave’ and with letters from the branch office. (Matt. 24:45) They should be balanced in judgment, show genuine humility, have a sincere interest in helping others, and have a high regard for the importance of the disciple-making work. (Phil. 4:5; Jas. 3:17; 1 Pet. 5:5) It is especially important that they be men who are compassionate and who are able to be encouraging and helpful to others.—Isa. 32:1, 2; Col. 3:12.

116. Construction Servants: It is the responsibility of both the congregation and the branch office to shepherd construction servants. Thus, while the congregation will provide shepherding to the extent possible, branch representatives, LDC representatives, and construction group overseers will need to play a larger role in such shepherding, since the construction servants are often away from the home congregation.

117. Field Missionaries: The Branch Committee assigns members of the committee to make annual shepherding visits on all field missionaries. (See 6:9.) Such visits are not made on circuit overseers in foreign service or on field instructors in foreign service. If it is practical, the visit could be arranged in conjunction with another assignment, such as a circuit assembly or a Kingdom
Hall dedication, perhaps using Friday or Monday to meet with the missionaries. Apart from travel time, usually no more than a day or two should be needed to meet with all of the field missionaries who serve in a particular city. After his meeting with the field missionaries as a group, the branch representative may spend any remaining time with the missionaries on an individual basis. The branch representative should make it his goal to provide each missionary couple or single missionary with specific, warm commendation. (Prov. 12:25; 1 Thess. 5:11) Following the visit, the branch representative will provide the Branch Committee with a completed Personal Qualifications Report (S-326) on each field missionary. If problems or concerns arise, the branch representative should not try to handle these on his own. Rather, he should report his observations to the Branch Committee, which will follow up as needed. If the branch representative is married, his wife may be given time off from her Bethel assignment to accompany him. While her husband is making the shepherding visits, she could spend time in the ministry, perhaps with other missionaries or with some of the local publishers.—See 9:103.

119. While it is strongly preferred that Branch and Country committee members make such annual visits, other mature and exceptionally kind elders working in the Service Department may be assigned to assist the committee members. This exception is made primarily for lands where there are a large number of field missionaries or where some members of the committee cannot care for this assignment because of age or health.

PETS

120. Pets are not allowed to live in any home or on any property owned or rented directly by the organization. This would include field residences used to accommodate special full-time servants, such as a Kingdom Hall apartment used to house a circuit overseer. If a special pioneer or field missionary receives a housing allowance from the branch office and rents an apartment where pets are allowed, he should wisely count all the costs involved in caring for a pet. Since most pets require time and resources, special pioneers and field missionaries should be encouraged to focus their limited time, energy, and resources on fulfilling their roles in special full-time service. Approval will not be given to the paying of increased rent so that pets can be accommodated.

121. If special full-time servants must live in an area where crime and break-ins are prevalent, they may feel that it is necessary to have a watchdog. If that is the case, the Branch Committee should make a request to the appropriate Governing Body committee on behalf of the special full-time servants, explaining why it would be necessary for them to have a watchdog on the premises. The special full-time servants would be responsible to care for the dog. Of course, watchdogs are not pets. Therefore, the dog’s primary place would be in the yard where he could effectively keep intruders away.
## CHART 9.1

### PEA Categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seniority</th>
<th>Maximum PEA*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-5 years</td>
<td>75 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-10 years</td>
<td>87.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 or more years</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Rounded in local currency, not to exceed this amount.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maximum PEA Per Month (USD)</th>
<th>Branch Cost of Living (USD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$30.00</td>
<td>Under $200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$35.00</td>
<td>$200-$300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$37.50</td>
<td>$300-$400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$40.00</td>
<td>$400-$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$45.00</td>
<td>$500-$600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50.00</td>
<td>$600-$700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$55.00</td>
<td>$700-$800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$60.00</td>
<td>$800-$900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$65.00</td>
<td>$900-$1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$70.00</td>
<td>Over $1,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### CHART 9.2

**Full-Time Service Enrollments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bethel Enrollments</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Committee Oversight</th>
<th>FTS</th>
<th>SFTS</th>
<th>Vow/Membership*</th>
<th>Allowance</th>
<th>Personal Time Away</th>
<th>Concurrent With Regular Pioneering</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bethel Family Member</td>
<td>BBR</td>
<td>LC</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Provisional or Regular</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Standard</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>First three years, serves as a provisional member of the Order; the standard tested-as-to-fitness period. After three years, may be invited to serve as a regular member of the Order. Replacements may be approved by the Branch Committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expatriate Bethel Family Member</td>
<td>BBF</td>
<td>LC</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Provisional or Regular</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Similar to BBR but assigned by the Personnel Committee to a foreign country. Receives certain additional provisions that take into consideration the special nature of the work in a foreign land. See 4:39-44.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary Bethel Family Member</td>
<td>BBT</td>
<td>LC</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Provisional or Regular</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Standard</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Similar to BBR but invited for a specific period of time with a definite start and end date, generally one year but no more than five. Used also for those who are average or coping with potential health issues. Qualified replacements who serve for one year may be approved by the Branch Committee. Extensions beyond one year must be approved by the Personnel Committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary Volunteer (three months or less)</td>
<td>BBC</td>
<td>LC</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Y*</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Volunteer serving at Bethel for three months or less, although typically the period is one to four weeks. Applicants approved by the Branch Committee. * May automatically receive a monthly reimbursement equal to the amount received by Bethel family members in the branch territory when the assignment exceeds a full calendar month (unless the volunteer specifically mentions that no reimbursement is needed).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary Volunteer (more than three months)</td>
<td>BBW</td>
<td>LC</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Volunteer</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>One day per calendar month</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Volunteer serving at Bethel for more than 3 months but no more than 12. Must be approved by the Personnel Committee if serving for more than six months. Serves under a vow of obedience but not under a vow of poverty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-Time Commuter</td>
<td>BBL</td>
<td>LC</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Provisional or Regular</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Standard</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Lives within commuting distance and arranges for own accommodations; works full-time at Bethel five days per week; receives most Bethel services. See Personnel Guidelines (p).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-Time Commuter</td>
<td>BBV</td>
<td>LC</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y*</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Lives within commuting distance and arranges for own accommodations; serves at Bethel a half day or more per week; receives limited Bethel services. Replacements may be approved by the Branch Committee. Personal time away records not maintained in computer. See Personnel Guidelines (p).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remote Volunteer</td>
<td>BRV</td>
<td>LC</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y*</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Lives outside of Bethel and arranges for own accommodations; does Bethel work remotely one or more days per week for up to one year; qualifications are reviewed each subsequent year. Replacements may be approved by the Branch Committee. * Personal time away records not maintained in computer.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* LC = Personnel Committee; SC = Service Committee
### Bethel Enrollments (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Committee Oversight</th>
<th>FTS</th>
<th>SFTS</th>
<th>Vow/Membership*</th>
<th>Allowance</th>
<th>Personal Time Away</th>
<th>Concurrent With Regular Pioneering</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Remote Servant</td>
<td>BRS</td>
<td>LC</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Provisional or Regular</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Standard</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Similar to BRV but works remotely full-time for Bethel five days per week, or 40 hours per week; receives provisions similar to special pioneers; qualifications are reviewed each subsequent year. Must be approved by the Personnel Committee.—See HLA-HLD July 22, 2015.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bethel Consultant</td>
<td>BOC</td>
<td>LC</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y*</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Lives outside of Bethel and arranges for own accommodations; does Bethel work remotely when a temporary need exists; qualifications are reviewed every three years when volunteer completes a new Application for Volunteer Program (A-19). Applicants approved by the Branch Committee.—See letter HLA-HLB February 29, 2016, No. C-44608L. *Personal time away records not maintained in computer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bethel Relative</td>
<td>BNA</td>
<td>LC</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Family member of a Bethelite, such as a minor child, but not a member of the Bethel family.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Design/Construction Enrollments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Committee Oversight</th>
<th>FTS</th>
<th>SFTS</th>
<th>Vow/Membership*</th>
<th>Allowance</th>
<th>Personal Time Away</th>
<th>Concurrent With Regular Pioneering</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assembly Hall Servant</td>
<td>BAS</td>
<td>LC</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Provisional or Regular</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Standard</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Serves at an Assembly Hall. Similar to a construction servant. Recommendation form forwarded by the Branch Committee to the Worldwide Design/Construction Department, which will obtain Personnel Committee approval.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bible School Facility Servant</td>
<td>BSS</td>
<td>LC</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Provisional or Regular</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Standard</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Serves at a stand-alone Bible school facility. Similar to an Assembly Hall servant. Recommendation form forwarded by the Branch Committee to the Worldwide Design/Construction Department, which will obtain Personnel Committee approval.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction Servant</td>
<td>BCS</td>
<td>LC</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Provisional or Regular</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Standard</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Serves on any theocratic construction project for one year or for the duration of the project. After initial assignment is completed, may be asked to serve on another assignment if still qualifies and there is a need for skills. Recommendation form forwarded by the Branch Committee to the Worldwide Design/Construction Department, which will obtain Personnel Committee approval.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design/Construction Enrollments (Continued)</td>
<td>Code</td>
<td>Committee</td>
<td>FTS</td>
<td>SFTS</td>
<td>Vow/Membership*</td>
<td>Allowance</td>
<td>Personal Time Away</td>
<td>Concurrent With Regular Pioneering</td>
<td>Description</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction Volunteer</td>
<td>BCV</td>
<td>LC</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Volunteer</td>
<td>Y*</td>
<td>One day per calendar month</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Serves on any theocratic construction project for three months or less; may be extended for up to six months; generally pays own travel expenses. * If the assignment exceeds a full calendar month, the volunteer will automatically receive a monthly reimbursement equal to the amount received by Bethel family members in the branch territory (unless the volunteer specifically mentions that no reimbursement is needed).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expatriate Construction Servant</td>
<td>BCF</td>
<td>LC</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Provisional or Regular</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Serves on any theocratic construction project in a foreign land for one year or more. After initial assignment is completed, may be asked to serve on another assignment in a foreign field if still qualifies and there is a need for skills. Recommendation form forwarded by the Worldwide Design/Construction Department to the Personnel Committee for its approval.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-Time Construction Commuter</td>
<td>BCL</td>
<td>LC</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Provisional or Regular</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Standard</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>A special full-time servant who arranges for his own accommodations and regularly assists five days a week, or 40 hours per week, on a construction project, either at a branch office, Kingdom Hall, Assembly Hall, or other theocratic construction project. Includes those on the construction site and those supporting the construction activities (e.g., project development, construction office, kitchen, cleaning, purchasing) whose assignments will end at the completion of the construction work in their area. Requires a full-time construction commuter recommendation form (A-73); needs Personnel Committee approval. — See Personnel Guidelines (p18).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-Time Construction Commuter</td>
<td>BCC</td>
<td>LC</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>N*</td>
<td>Y*</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Those who serve part-time on a construction project one or more days each week on a continual basis, commute to the project from their own accommodations, and may need access to the Bethel network. Such ones should complete an Application for Volunteer Program (A19). If a part-time construction commuter is needed for more than six months, the Branch Committee should send a part-time construction commuter recommendation form (A-90) to the Worldwide Design/Construction Department. *Personal time away records not maintained in computer. — See Personnel Guidelines (p18).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Enrollments</td>
<td>Code</td>
<td>Committee Oversight</td>
<td>FTS</td>
<td>SFTS</td>
<td>Vow/Membership*</td>
<td>Allowance</td>
<td>Personal Time Away</td>
<td>Concurrent With Regular Pioneering</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular Pioneer</td>
<td>FR</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Handled by pioneer</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Devotes prescribed number of hours (840) each year in the ministry. Appointed by local elders. Not part of the Order.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary Special Pioneer</td>
<td>FTS</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Provisional or Regular</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Standard</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Similar to FS but serves in one-year increments for up to a maximum of three years. During this time, is enrolled in an evaluation program that includes an annual review by the Service Department. At any time during the three-year period, may be recommended by the Branch Committee for consideration for another form of service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Pioneer</td>
<td>FS</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Provisional or Regular</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Standard</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Devotes prescribed number of hours each month in the ministry. (Standard of 130; 120 for sisters 40 and over). May arrange for own housing and is permitted to do limited amount of secular work. Assigned to congregation within branch territory by the Service Department.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infirm Special Pioneer</td>
<td>FSI</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Regular</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Handled by special pioneer or branch</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Similar to FS but given a reduced hour requirement because of health limitations, as recommended by the Branch Committee and approved by the Service Committee. Serves as a regular member of the Order. See 9:11.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circuit Overseer</td>
<td>FC</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Provisional or Regular</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Standard</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Appointed by the Governing Body to travel from congregation to congregation within an assigned circuit; assignment changes every three years. Should be a graduate of Gilead or School for Kingdom Evangelizers (SKE).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circuit Overseer Foreign</td>
<td>FCF</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Provisional or Regular</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Like FC but assigned to that country by the Service Committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circuit Overseer's Wife</td>
<td>CW</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Provisional or Regular</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Standard</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Wife of FC. Although a special full-time servant, serves as regular pioneer within the congregation being visited each week.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circuit Overseer's Wife Foreign</td>
<td>CWF</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Provisional or Regular</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Like CW but assigned to that country by the Service Committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Training School Instructor</td>
<td>FI</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Regular</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Standard</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Similar to FC but assigned specifically to instruct theocratic schools in the field for more than three months.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Training School Instructor Foreign</td>
<td>FIF</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Regular</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Like FI but assigned to that country by the Service Committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Training School Instructor's Wife</td>
<td>IWF</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Provisional or Regular</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Standard</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Like CW but does not transfer from congregation to congregation each week or have a monthly hour requirement. Works under the direction of her husband. If he is teaching at an Assembly Hall or branch facility, she may work one or two days a week there instead of in the ministry.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Training School Instructor's Wife Foreign</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Committee</th>
<th>FTS</th>
<th>SFTS</th>
<th>Vow/Membership</th>
<th>Allowance</th>
<th>Personal Time Away</th>
<th>Concurrent With Regular Pioneering</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IWF</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Provisional or Regular</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Like IW but assigned to that country by the Service Committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Missionary</td>
<td>FMF</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Provisional or Regular</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Devotes prescribed number of hours each month in ministry (standard of 130; 120 for sisters 40 and over). Lives in housing provided by the branch office. Assigned to that country by the Service Committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary Field Missionary</td>
<td>FTF</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Provisional or Regular</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Like FMF but serves for three years and then is transitioned to FMT or another form of service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Relative</td>
<td>FXR</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Family member of field personnel, such as the wife of a special pioneer, who needs to be tracked by the branch for some reason but is not in another suitable enrollment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Concurrent Enrollments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concurrent Enrollments</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Committee</th>
<th>FTS</th>
<th>SFTS</th>
<th>Vow/Membership</th>
<th>Allowance</th>
<th>Personal Time Away</th>
<th>Concurrent With Regular Pioneering</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visiting Member at Bethel</td>
<td>BBB</td>
<td>LC</td>
<td>Provisional or Regular</td>
<td>After one to three months in temporary branch</td>
<td>Handled by originating branch</td>
<td>Concurrent with original field enrollment</td>
<td>For temporary organizational visits to Bethel: branch school or circuit overseer school; assisting with a project; medical treatment. Use concurrently with originating branch special full-time service enrollment.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting Member In Field</td>
<td>FBB</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Provisional or Regular</td>
<td>After one to three months in temporary branch</td>
<td>Handled by originating branch</td>
<td>Concurrent with original field enrollment</td>
<td>For temporary organizational visits in the field: circuit overseer; SKE; assisting with a project; medical treatment. Similar to BBB, but for the field.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting Branch Circuit Overseer</td>
<td>FCB</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Provisional or Regular</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Standard</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Like FC but the circuit covers more than one branch territory and has been approved by the Service Committee.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School for Kingdom Evangelizers Student</td>
<td>SKE</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Dependent on one's membership immediately before school</td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-Time Service Transition</td>
<td>FRT</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Those in enrollments that include the option to serve as either provisional or regular members of the Order will serve as provisional members for their first three years of special full-time service, which is the standard tested-as-to-fitness evaluation period. Afterward, if approved by the Branch Committee, they will be invited to serve as regular members of the Order.*
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