

# Public Witnessing Guidelines

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1. When you are using a literature cart, stand, table, or kiosk, you should endeavor to be warm, friendly, and inviting. Although you do not approach people directly, warm smiles and good eye contact are essential. (*be* p. 125) If a passerby gives attention to the display, you should endeavor to start a conversation, perhaps by saying, “Have you ever wondered what the Bible says about that subject?” If you are doing informal witnessing within view of the literature display, you can direct attention to the literature cart or table. Avoid nonessential use of electronic devices and excessive conversation with other publishers, since such activities can hinder your effectiveness.

2. If an interested person requests a Bible study or a visit, a publisher should promptly follow up on the interest. If the interested person lives outside the congregation’s territory or speaks another language, you should arrange to have the interest followed up on by publishers from the appropriate congregation. When possible and practical, you may continue to cultivate the interest until the individual is contacted by a local publisher.

3. Some individuals may ask how our work is financed. If so, you may explain that donations can be sent to the address listed in our literature or you may direct them to [jw.org](http://jw.org) for more information. In the interests of personal safety and in view of the voluntary nature of our ministry, contribution boxes should not be set up, and you should not personally accept any donations.

## DISPLAYING LITERATURE

4. Discernment is needed to ensure that literature is not wasted, given away indiscriminately, or misused. The display should be neat and dignified. While Bibles should not be displayed, they may be kept on hand to offer to individuals who request one or who demonstrate sincere interest in the truth. Additionally, a modest supply of the *Return to Jehovah* brochure should be kept on hand (though not displayed) for the benefit of any inactive ones who may approach the literature display.

## SAFETY AT PUBLIC WITNESSING LOCATIONS

5. Usually two or more persons are assigned to work together. You should be watchful since conditions in a normally safe area can unexpectedly change. (Prov. 22:3; Eccl. 4:10, 12) In the interests of safety, it is generally best that carts and tables be placed so that you cannot be approached from behind. Some locations may allow for publishers to stand with their backs against a wall or witnessing carts could be placed back-to-back, allowing publishers to see in opposite directions. Publishers engaged in informal witnessing near the cart should be alert to monitor the activity around the cart. If possible, carts and tables near vehicle traffic should be placed behind concrete barriers or other protection.

## **DISRUPTIVE INDIVIDUALS**

6. Rather than debating with disruptive individuals, remain calm and friendly while endeavoring to kindly conclude the conversation. If the individual persists in causing a disturbance or becomes irate, it may be best to leave the area. If the individual becomes threatening, it may be necessary to temporarily leave the public witnessing equipment behind. Help from the local authorities may be requested in extreme situations.

## **DISFELLOWSHIPED INDIVIDUALS**

7. If you encounter a disfellowshipped individual who is interested in returning to the congregation, please show him the “Find a Meeting” link on [jw.org](http://jw.org) so that he can locate the nearest congregation.

## **THE MEDIA**

8. In general, it is best that you not accept a journalist's request for a personal interview. Instead, journalists may be directed to the “Newsroom” or “About Us” sections of [jw.org](http://jw.org) for information about the work of Jehovah's Witnesses. You should provide the elders with the journalist's contact information and a brief explanation of his inquiry.