

Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses



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December 14, 2003

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS IN THE UNITED STATES

Dear Brothers:

SUBJECT: DISTRICT CONVENTION ARRANGEMENTS

The secretary in each congregation will oversee matters related to the district convention and generate enthusiasm for it. When the December 2003 *Our Kingdom Ministry* insert is considered on the Service Meeting early in January, it should be announced that the secretary is caring for this responsibility. In the absence of the secretary, another qualified elder should handle these duties.

The secretary should follow through promptly on all the direction provided in correspondence from the convention headquarters regarding such matters as rooming and volunteer service. Adequate time should be allowed on meetings so he can read (NOT paraphrase) and explain all convention letters. All elders, especially the secretary, should familiarize themselves with the rooming arrangements in the December *Our Kingdom Ministry* insert.

A supply of Special Needs Room Request forms will be sent to your congregation in January. A copy of this form should be placed on the information board displaying the list of rooming headquarters addresses. The secretary will make these forms available only upon request, rather than leaving them on a counter, so he can have the Congregation Service Committee determine if there is truly a special need. The special needs provision is only for exemplary publishers, including their well-behaved children, who are approved by the service committee. When a legitimate need exists, the completed form should be signed by the secretary, the circumstances explained fully in the space on the form, and mailed to the appropriate convention headquarters listed on the back. Supplying this information is vital in caring for such special needs.

If the service committee determines a publisher does not qualify to receive the form, the secretary can arrange for someone to give the publisher the help he needs to secure his own accommodations through the regular rooming arrangement. He may only require assistance in making reservations, transportation arrangements, and so forth.

If the conduct of a publisher or a family member listed on the Special Needs Room Request form is in question, appropriate counsel should first be given to the individual by two members of the service committee to correct the problem. If the response is positive, the secretary can sign and forward the form. If the person does not respond to the counsel, the name of the individual can be removed and he should be informed that he should obtain his own accommodations. Any others listed on the form can decide whether they still want the form sent in or prefer to make their own arrangements.

If publishers listed on the form are from different congregations, the form should be approved by each service committee and signed by the secretary of each congregation. The last secretary to handle the form will send it to the convention headquarters.

If a publisher needs accommodations for a convention in a country not listed on the back of the Special Needs Room Request form, he may fill out the form, have the secretary sign it, and mail it to the branch office in that country. If a group wants to attend a convention in another country it would be best if the secretary would write the appropriate branch office requesting the needed information and/or forms.

Any deaf persons associated with your congregation will attend a separate sign-language convention. In view of this, the secretary may assist them in obtaining the Recommended Lodging List for the nearest sign-language convention. If any deaf publishers have special needs, the secretary can render assistance as outlined in this letter and in the December *Our Kingdom Ministry* insert in the section regarding special needs. This may involve their sending in a Special Needs Room Request form.

As the need arises, secretaries in convention cities will receive a supply of Accommodation forms from the convention to distribute when the publishers in their congregation are being requested to open their homes for those with special needs. Publishers offering their homes will obtain these forms from the secretary. The form should be filled out by the publisher and returned to the secretary, who will complete and return it to the convention headquarters.

The diligent efforts of the congregation secretary will greatly help to coordinate convention matters and will assist in making the program a spiritually uplifting occasion. Your cooperation with these arrangements is appreciated very much. May Jehovah's rich blessings be with you as you prepare for the upcoming district convention.

Your brothers,

*Christian Congregation
of Jehovah's Witnesses*

c: Traveling overseers

