

# Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses



Hse. No. J348/4 - Tema Beach Road - Nungua, Accra  
P. O. Box GP 760, Accra, Ghana Tel. No.: (0302) 712456-8; 7010110 Fax: (0302) 712454

July 5, 2005

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Re: Infirm Regular Pioneers

Dear Brothers:

In recent times there has been an increase in the number of requests from elders and circuit overseers for older pioneers to be placed on the infirm regular pioneer list. At this time we would like to share with you the information that was addressed to all circuit overseers in the letter of February 21, 1996 concerning those who qualify to be put on the list of infirm regular pioneers.

Some of those recommended are deserving of this special arrangement. In some instances, however, pioneers have been recommended to be put on the list of infirm pioneers without their knowledge and are surprised because they did not request this consideration. Also, some traveling overseers have recommended pioneers for the infirm list who were not at least 50 years of age or had not completed at least 15 years of full-time service. Others who fit the age and the 15 year service requirement have been recommended, yet they cannot be classified as infirm. As you can understand, when the request is denied, this is disappointing to the pioneer.

It would be good to keep in mind that this arrangement is not automatically made for pioneers who are no longer able to meet the regular pioneer hour requirement just because they are over 50 years of age and have completed 15 years in full-time service. The pioneer must be infirm, being unable to meet the hour requirement any longer because of becoming feeble and weak due to advancing age and serious health problems. It is true that having to stop pioneering after many years in the full time service can be disappointing. However, this arrangement is for those who have served for a good part of their life in the full-time service and cannot imagine themselves being anything but a pioneer.

In some cases, those who are older and desire to continue in the full-time service can be assisted to "make sure of the more important things" by setting priorities. (Phil. 1:10) This may call for adjustments that will enable them to spend more time in the ministry. For example, an older brother may not be able to reach the hour requirement for regular pioneers for a long period of time. This may be due to discouragement, family responsibilities or economic problems. In addition, he may be involved in other activities and has accepted other theocratic responsibilities that take much of his time and energy. It is good to remember that the infirm pioneer arrangement is not a provision so that pioneers can take care of sick relatives, do added secular work, and so forth. There may be many other younger elders in the congregation who are adequately qualified to carry some of the theocratic load that the older pioneer is now carrying. Making such adjustments could allow the older brother to spend more time in the ministry.

Clearly then, the infirm list should not be viewed as an automatic arrangement. If an older pioneer can no longer meet the hour requirement and is willing to transfer to the publisher ranks

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

July 5, 2005

Page 2

or serve as an auxiliary pioneer, he should be allowed to do so. Such individuals should be helped to see that doing so should not be viewed as a demotion. Nor should they feel embarrassed about such an adjustment since Jehovah is well pleased with whatever a person can do according to his ability and circumstances.—Compare 2 Corinthians 8:12; Mark 12:43.

When someone is placed on the infirm list, he should be given a reduced monthly hour requirement to reach. Keep in mind that the branch office does not act on the recommendation of the circuit overseer alone. It is necessary for the elders to give their recommendation. Of course, if the circuit overseer's letter expresses their thoughts on the matter, the Congregation Service Committee should also sign it, showing their agreement with what is recommended. What is said here also applies to special pioneers.

We hope that these points are helpful and appreciate the interest you show in the pioneers.

Your brothers,

*Christian Congregation  
of Jehovah's Witnesses*

c: All Traveling Overseers