



WATCHTOWER

BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

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SC:LLD November 20, 2008

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Re: New Arrangement for Notification of Disfellowshipping and Disassociation

Dear Brothers:

We would like to advise you of some adjustments that are being implemented in order to simplify the procedure involved in notifying the branch office of persons have been disfellowshipped or who have disassociated themselves from the congregation. These adjustments will also impact on the retention of documents related to such matters. We enclose 10 copies of the revised *Notification of Disfellowshipping or Disassociation (S-77)* along with a separate form containing adjusted *Instructions for Completing the Notification of Disfellowshipping or Disassociation (S-77) (S-77i)*. The congregation secretary should immediately destroy/shred all unused versions of the previous S-77 form.

There are three fundamental changes regarding the notification procedure. We encourage all elders to become familiar with the adjusted procedures which are summarised below.

1. Offences and Scriptural References

Under the heading “**DISFELLOWSHIPPING**” the judicial committee must identify the offence(s) for which the disfellowshipping action was taken, along with the appropriate Scriptural references. Only offences and Scriptural references listed on the S-77i (“Instructions”) should be used. Please note that **all** Scriptural references cited on the S-77i (“Instructions”) should be listed. For example:

Porneia (Lev. 20:10, 13, 15, 16; Rom. 1:24, 26, 27, 32; 1 Cor. 6:9, 10; Deut. 23:17, 18)
Drunkenness (1 Cor. 5:11; 6:9, 10)

At times, you will need to discern which offence is applicable. For example, “Child abuse” is not an offence listed on the S-77i (“Instructions”). In this case, the Scriptural offence will likely be shown as:

Gross uncleanness (Eph. 4:19, Gal. 5:19), or
Porneia (Lev. 20:10, 13, 15, 16; Rom. 1:24, 26, 27, 32; 1 Cor. 6:9, 10; Deut. 23:17, 18)

Nothing apart from the offence and Scriptural references listed on the S-77i (“Instructions”) should be recorded on this section of the form. Sufficient space has been provided to list several offences and Scriptural references. Before sending the S-77, the judicial committee chairman will review the S-77i (“Instructions”) and check off each box under the heading “Reporting.” After making a copy of the S-77 and summation (referred to the next paragraph) the chairman will post the two original documents to the branch office using a special blue envelope.

2. Summation

Previously, the judicial committee completed section 2 of the form by providing a summation of what took place. From now on, we would like the judicial committee to *always include a separate sheet* briefly summarising what took place. The summation should be concise and include the reasons why the judicial committee judged the person to be unrepentant. It would

rarely be necessary for a summation to be longer than one page. The summation should not be stapled or fixed in a permanent way to the S-77 form.

In some instances, specific details may be necessary. For example, if a person is being disfellowshipped for viewing pornography, your comments would need to give insight on why such wrongdoing was considered to be “Gross uncleanness.”—See our letter To All Bodies of Elders of June 7, 2006.

Usually, only the S-77 and summation will be sent to the branch office. However, where a person provides the elders with a letter of disassociation, this letter should also be sent to the branch office. As mentioned, a copy of each of these documents should be retained by the chairman of the judicial committee.

3. Document Retention

After the branch office processes the S-77 and summation, you will be sent a date-stamped copy of the S-77. In some cases, the branch office will add additional comments to the back page of the form. Once the date-stamped S-77 form is received, it should be placed in a sealed envelope in the congregation’s confidential file. The front of the envelope should be dated and show the name of the disfellowshipped person as well as the names of the elders who comprised the judicial committee.

All other documents regarding the case should be destroyed. This includes any notes that the elders who served on the judicial may have retained, previous copies of the S-77, and the summation. The chairman of the judicial committee will be responsible to ensure all documents, with the exception of the date-stamped S-77 form, are destroyed. The chairman should then sign and date the back page of the S-77. The only exception to this would be the signed letter of disassociation. This letter should be retained in the congregation permanent file.

May we take this opportunity to express our heartfelt appreciation for your tireless efforts to shepherd the flock in your care. (1 Peter 5:2) Please be assured of our warm love and best wishes.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B. & J. Society
OF AUSTRALIA

c. All Travelling Overseers

Enclosures:

- 1 x “Sample” *Notification of Disfellowshipping or Disassociation (S-77a)* [cream colour]
- 2 x *Instructions for Completing the Notification of Disfellowshipping or Disassociation (S-77) (S-77i)*
- 10 x *Notification of Disfellowshipping or Disassociation (S-77)* [blue colour]

PS to presiding overseer: After becoming thoroughly familiar with the contents of this letter and the enclosed letter dated LLD November 21, 2008, please make immediate arrangements for a meeting of the body of elders to read, discuss, and implement the direction provided in both of these letters.