

Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses



2821 Route 22, Patterson, NY 12563-2237 Phone: (845) 306-1100

May 8, 2013

TO ALL SPECIAL PIONEERS, TEMPORARY SPECIAL PIONEERS, AND FIELD MISSIONARIES IN THE UNITED STATES BRANCH TERRITORY

Re: Emergency action plan for special full-time servants

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

The wise man Solomon wrote centuries ago: “Shrewd is the one that has seen the calamity and proceeds to conceal himself, but the inexperienced have passed along and must suffer the penalty.” (Prov. 22:3) Emergencies can happen at any time and place. Therefore, it is prudent for all of us to prepare for emergencies before they arise. By each individual and family preparing for disasters, much can be done to deal with emergencies. This may include having the necessary supplies to shelter in place and having appropriate items prepared for immediate travel, such as a “go bag,” if quick evacuation becomes necessary.—g 9/07 pp. 4-7.

In view of the above and out of sincere concern for your welfare, the branch office under the direction of the Governing Body is developing an emergency action plan for special full-time servants in the branch territory. In the event of a disaster, we will need to confirm your welfare. Therefore, please regularly make sure that your emergency contact information on file with the branch office is up-to-date and accurate. We request that the contact information you supply for our records include an **e-mail address** (if applicable) and **telephone numbers** (both for home telephone and for mobile telephones, if applicable). You can now provide this information on jw.org. However, if you do not have access to jw.org, please write to the Service Department and provide the information requested above.

Your being prepared for a disaster includes your knowing whom to contact and how to notify them of your welfare. Even though you are in special full-time service and have closer contact with the branch office than most publishers, the branch office may be limited in what assistance it can directly supply immediately following a disaster. Thus, your first and most effective line of assistance will always be *your local body of elders, by way of your group overseer*, in view of their proximity to you. If it becomes necessary for you to evacuate an area to seek shelter elsewhere, your following the direction provided by local, state, and federal government agencies that declare mandatory evacuations and your following direction from the local elders will prove most beneficial.

The branch office is always very interested in knowing how you are doing in order to address any needs that arise. Every effort will be made to contact you quickly if an emergency or disaster occurs in your area. However, our knowledge of such may be delayed depending on the location and size of the event. We thus request that if an emergency happens in your area and you have not heard from the branch office within a reasonable amount of time, please contact the Service Department to apprise us of your situation and whether your immediate needs are being met locally. If no emergency needs exist, contact the Service Department between the hours of

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8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time by calling (845) 306-1000 and requesting to speak with your respective service desk. If during nonworking hours an emergency arises requiring immediate attention beyond what can be cared for through your congregation, do not hesitate to contact the branch office's emergency line at Patterson at (845) 306-1007. You will be asked to provide your name, the phone number where you can be reached, your location, and the nature of the emergency so that someone from the branch office can promptly return your call.

Many of you are likely aware that damage to a Kingdom Hall apartment or branch-owned residence is covered by the Kingdom Hall Assistance Arrangement. However, this program does not cover the loss of personal items. Thus, if you desire to insure your personal items, you may wish to investigate obtaining a renter's insurance policy locally. Please note that any additional expense incurred by doing so would be a personal expense and would not be reimbursed by the branch office.

It is our sincere hope that this information will be helpful to you. Your zeal for the ministry and interest in others is heartwarming, as Jehovah continues to use you in a mighty way to advance Kingdom interests. (Heb. 6:10) Be assured of the Governing Body's love and sincere interest in your welfare. We send our warm Christian love and best wishes.

Your brothers,
*Christian Congregation
of Jehovah's Witnesses*

cc: Bodies of elders
Disaster Relief Committees
Regional Building Committees
Traveling overseers

PS to body of elders:

We use this opportunity to thank you for all you are doing in support of any special pioneers or missionaries assigned to your congregation. Since such dear ones often have limited financial resources and are often long distances from their immediate family, they should generally be considered as those with special needs. Therefore, it is important that they be included in any emergency plan of action arranged by the local congregation.