

TESTIGOS CRISTIANOS DE JEHOVÁ

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October 27, 2013

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Re: Convention arrangements

Dear Brothers:

This letter replaces the letter dated December 14, 2012, to all bodies of elders regarding district convention arrangements. That letter should be removed from the congregation permanent file of policy letters and be destroyed.

The secretary in each congregation will oversee matters related to the convention and will generate enthusiasm for it. When the annual congregation convention assignment letter is read to the congregation during 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. All elders, especially the secretary, should familiarize themselves with the rooming arrangements and other instructions outlined in the annual letter to all bodies of elders regarding the Service Meeting part in connection with the convention. When a convention letter is received for the congregation, an announcement should be made at the next Service Meeting stating that this has been placed on the information board, mentioning the specific subject(s) it covers, such as parking, rooming, cleaning assignment, and so forth. If a specific letter directs that it should be read to the congregation, that should also be done.

PLEASE NOTE: The *Special Needs Room Request* (CO-5a) form will be available on jw.org for the secretary to download. A separate *Convention Headquarters Addresses* (CO-5b) list will also be available on jw.org the first part of March each year. That list should be printed and placed on the information board. The secretary will print the *Special Needs Room Request* form and make it available only when asked for, rather than leaving a supply on a counter. In this way 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 circumstances should be explained fully in the space on the form. Supplying this information is vital in caring for such special needs. The completed form should be signed by the secretary and mailed to the appropriate convention headquarters, whose contact information can be found on the list of *Convention Headquarters Addresses*. Contact information for conventions can also be obtained by using the Lookup feature on jw.org.

If the service committee determines a publisher does not qualify for the special needs arrangement, 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.

Re: Convention arrangements

October 27, 2013

Page 2

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 well 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 someone in special full-time service needs accommodations for a convention in a country not shown on the *Convention Headquarters Addresses* list, he may fill out the *Special Needs Room Request* form, have the secretary sign it, and then the individual can mail it to the branch office for that country. If a publisher not in special full-time service wants to attend a convention in another country, he can call or write the appropriate branch office requesting the needed information and/or forms.

Any deaf ones associated with your congregation will likely 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 special needs section of the annual letter to all bodies of elders regarding the Service Meeting part in connection with the convention. 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 (CO-4)* forms, with appropriate instructions, 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 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 convention each year.

Your brothers,

Testigos Cristianos de Jehová

cc: Traveling overseers

PS TO SECRETARY: This letter should be retained in the congregation permanent file of policy letters. Along with this letter you can also download from *jw.org* an updated *Index to Letters for Bodies of Elders* (S-22) at this time as well.