

Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses

The Ridgeway, London, NW7 1RN Telephone: 020 8906 2211



SSQ June 16, 2014

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Re: Costs associated with public witnessing

Dear Brothers:

It is very encouraging to hear how congregations have responded to the direction to engage in public witnessing in their assigned territory. We sincerely commend you brothers for organizing this form of ministry and are sure there is a fine witness being given as a result of your efforts. (Prov. 1:20) We have recently received several questions regarding public witnessing. Therefore, we are pleased to offer some direction on paying for insurance and other fees, as well as the cost of equipment.

One question concerns the paying of fees for public witnessing in certain areas. It has often been stated that we engage in the preaching work, not as agents of the congregation, but as a personal expression of our faith in Jehovah. Further, the letter to all bodies of elders dated May 1, 2014, regarding witnessing in public places, says in paragraph four: "Any application to use a mobile cart or to set up a table or kiosk to display literature must be filled out in the name of an individual publisher, not in the name of the congregation, any corporation used by the organization, or 'Jehovah's Witnesses.'" If a small administrative fee is needed in order to acquire space in a public area, it is to be paid by the individual publisher, not the congregation." In line with this, it would *not* be appropriate for the congregation to pay such fees or to reimburse a publisher for such an expense. If a particular site is found to be too expensive for individuals to cover the cost, it would be better to choose an alternative location.—See paragraph five of the May 1, 2014, letter.

This means that, if it is really necessary to take out insurance for public witnessing in a particular location, it should not be arranged by or be in the name of the congregation. An insurance policy aimed specifically at covering a congregation for public or other witnessing activity would not be appropriate, in harmony with the Governing Body's direction quoted above.

Another question that sometimes arises is in connection with the cost of public witnessing equipment. The document entitled *Public Witnessing Supplies* (S-80) provides information about the equipment supplied without charge by Jehovah's organization, and this will usually be all that is needed. The congregation can also obtain and use the artwork provided on jw.org for this purpose. We encourage you to "not go beyond the things that are written" in this area. (1 Cor. 4:6) We are delighted to see so much enthusiasm for this exciting avenue of ministry, and it is commendable that many brothers and sisters are getting involved. So that "all things take place decently and by arrangement," however, it is wise to stick to the guidance provided by the faithful slave, whom Jesus has appointed to oversee all aspects of our Kingdom preaching work.—Matt. 24:45-47; 1 Cor. 14:40.

We thank you for your cooperation with these instructions and take this opportunity to express our appreciation for your fine spirit in promoting public witnessing within your territory. We pray that Jehovah blesses your continued efforts with this exciting initiative to preach "this good news of the Kingdom."—Matt. 24:14.

Please be assured of our warm Christian love and best wishes.

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