

# TESTIGOS CRISTIANOS DE JEHOVÁ

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SDA April 8, 2020

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Re: Addendum to the March 24<sup>th</sup> letter regarding care for the congregation during Covid-19

Dear Brothers:

In our March 24, 2020, letter to you, the branch office shared a number of suggestions about caring for the congregation during the Covid-19 pandemic. We appreciate the courageous spirit you have shown in quickly implementing organizational adjustments as well as shepherding the congregation.—Josh. 1:9; 1 Pet. 5:2, 3.

At this time, we are providing you with the following additional direction.

**Channel of communication between the branch office and the field.** Beginning immediately, we will implement a channel of communication between the elders, circuit overseers, and branch office. In this connection, the body of elders should arrange for each group overseer to contact the members of his group once a week. We encourage you to do so on Friday or Saturday. The group overseer may do this by a brief telephone or video call, or a text message. He will inquire as to the welfare of each publisher, making sure they are cared for spiritually and determine discreetly whether they have any material needs. Afterward, the group overseer will share any specific needs or concerns to the coordinator. The coordinator will provide a summary of the condition of the congregation and outline specific needs to the circuit overseer. On Sunday, the circuit overseer will send a report to the branch office outlining (1) the current situation in the circuit, (2) identify if a publisher is in need of material or other help, and (3) communicate matters of concern. We trust this channel of communication will allow the branch office to regularly evaluate the needs throughout the branch territory and respond accordingly.

**Shepherding.** It is evident that this pandemic will continue for some time. Therefore, our dear brothers and sisters will need loving elders to shepherd them and provide well-prepared, timely spiritual instruction. We encourage you to *maintain regular contact* with each family in the congregation, making shepherding calls by telephone or video calls.—Prov. 27:23; *sfl* chap. 25 pars. 1, 2.

**Material needs.** If there is a publisher with material needs, please consider the follow steps:

1. Can help be provided by fellow family members, government programs, or individual publishers?
2. If such is not possible, is the congregation in a position to help?—*Organized*, chapter 12, paragraph 14.
3. After the body of elders has determined that the congregation is unable to provide help, as already mentioned above, the coordinator should inform the circuit overseer.

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**Field ministry.** Many today are in need of comfort. So now more than ever the Bible's refreshing message of hope will appeal to honest-hearted ones. (Matt. 11:28-30) As you conduct meetings for field service, please convey the same spirit that is outlined in the March 24<sup>th</sup> letter about a ministry of comfort. Encourage the publishers to show personal interest and to share with them an upbuilding and positive message from the Bible.

**Judicial matters.** It may be difficult to handle judicial matters because of restrictions the secular authorities have imposed. Consult with the branch office if you have a matter that needs urgent attention and cannot be held in abeyance.

We are confident that Jehovah's spirit will guide you and that the congregation will see the evidence of your love for them as you follow through with all the direction that you have received from the branch office.—Jas 1:5, 3:17; 2 Cor. 8:24.

Your brothers,

*Testigos Cristianos de Jehová*

c. Circuit overseers