

Instructions for Recommending New Congregations

Table of Contents

Requirements for Forming a New Congregation 2

Additional Considerations 3-4

Submitting a Recommendation 5-6

1. This information should be reviewed by bodies of elders and circuit overseers when considering the formation of a new congregation. When more than one circuit is affected, the circuit overseers involved should work together in preparing the recommendation.

REQUIREMENTS FOR FORMING A NEW CONGREGATION

2. All the requirements listed below must be met before the circuit overseer submits to the Service Department a recommendation to form a new congregation, whether the new congregation is being formed from a group or from a congregation.

- (1) A significant population—perhaps at least a few thousand individuals—is dependent on the language of the proposed congregation and lives in close proximity to the Kingdom Hall. Thus, it should not be necessary to travel long distances or to spend many hours in search work. If the proposal involves forming a congregation in a foreign or an indigenous language, a significant population in the language community should, in most cases, have little or no understanding of the language of an already established congregation in the area.
- (2) Either there is a significant number of publishers who depend on the language for their spiritual food or Bible students in the territory who depend on and prefer the language are attending meetings and progressing toward baptism.
- (3) A solid core of spiritually mature publishers is fluent in the language.
- (4) There is a sufficient number of appointed men (including at least one elder) to provide shepherding, handle meeting parts, and take the lead in the ministry. (Eph. 4:11, 12; 1 Pet. 5:1-3) In order to provide such spiritual oversight, the majority of the appointed men should be fluent in the language.—1 Cor. 14:9.
- (5) The new congregation is able to conduct all weekly meetings without depending on JW Stream. Local publishers are able to regularly care for meeting parts. With the circuit overseer's approval, the congregation may view recorded meetings or portions of meetings on JW Stream on occasion. However, the congregation should not be dependent on this arrangement.—*sfl* chap. 20 par. 25; chap. 24 pars. 13-14.
- (6) The study edition of *The Watchtower* and the *Life and Ministry Meeting Workbook* is available in the language of the congregation or in another language in which the majority of publishers are literate. (If these publications are not available in the language of the congregation, the brothers would participate in the field ministry, give comments and talks, and pray in the language of the congregation but use publications in the other language during their meetings.)
- (7) A Kingdom Hall or another appropriate meeting place is available for the congregation's use.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

3. When considering whether to recommend a new congregation, circuit overseers and elders should keep in mind that each publisher or family head must decide which congregation he and his family will attend. No one should be pressured to support a certain language field or congregation.—1 Cor. 11:3; Gal. 6:4, 5; w17.05 p. 10 pars. 10-13.

4. The examples listed below illustrate when a new congregation should not be recommended. Of course, these are merely examples; each situation must be considered individually.

- (1) After one or two years as a group, there are no Bible students attending meetings or progressing toward baptism. Although the majority of the publishers are fluent in the language, only a few or perhaps none depend on it for their spiritual food.
- (2) A group holds a weekly Life and Ministry Meeting and a monthly public talk in the language. Progressive Bible students are attending meetings. There is a solid core of spiritually mature publishers who are fluent in the language. However, there is only one appointed man, an elder, taking the lead in the group.
- (3) Progressive Bible students are attending a group's weekly public talk. Although there is a solid core of spiritually mature publishers, most are not fluent in the language and none are dependent on the language. There is an insufficient number of appointed men to provide spiritual oversight.

SUBMITTING A RECOMMENDATION

5. If it is decided to recommend that a new congregation be formed, the circuit overseer will verify that the information listed below has been prepared accurately before sending it to the Service Department for consideration. Leave the space for the congregation number blank on all forms for the new congregation.

- (1) **Congregation Application/Information (S-51) Form:** Provide a completed form for the new congregation and for each existing congregation involved in the proposal.
- (2) **Coordinator of the Body of Elders/Secretary Change of Address (S-29) Form:** Provide a completed form for the new congregation and for any existing congregations in which the coordinator of the body of elders or secretary is changing.
- (3) **Kingdom Hall Information (S-5) Form:** Provide a completed form for the new congregation and for any existing congregations for which the Kingdom Hall information is changing.
- (4) **Periodical Request Form (M-202):** Provide a completed form for the new congregation and for any existing congregations that are changing their magazine or *Life and Ministry Meeting Workbook* request. Or each congregation may enter its new or revised requests on jw.org when the congregation is informed that the new congregation is approved.
- (5) **Shipping Information (S-36) Form:** Provide a completed form for the new congregation and for any existing congregations that are changing their shipping address. Post office boxes should not be used if at all possible. The ship-to congregation in the Kingdom Hall where the new congregation will be meeting should also complete a copy of this form. All updated information, including the shipping address and all congregations in the Kingdom Hall Literature Group, should be listed. This form is required even if literature shipments will normally be sent to a Regional Literature Depot.
- (6) **Territory Adjustment Request (S-6) Form:** Provide a completed form for the new congregation and for each existing congregation in which the territory boundaries are affected, carefully following the steps outlined on the form. Since congregation names

should reflect their territory assignment, please verify that the names of the congregations involved will still be appropriate once the boundaries are adjusted.

6. The branch office will inform the congregation(s) and circuit overseer(s) if the new congregation is approved. The letter will include the date on which the congregation should begin functioning, along with further instructions. Updated territory assignments and other supplies will follow later.

S-50-E 7/21