

Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses



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February 28, 2017

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Re: Visiting Disfellowshipped or Disassociated Individuals

Dear Brothers:

In recent years, many disfellowshipped or disassociated individuals have returned to Jehovah after having seen Jehovah's Witnesses carrying out their ministry in public places. Others have approached the elders after reading a copy of the *Return to Jehovah* brochure or watching JW Broadcasting. (Luke 15:7) With such factors in mind, the Governing Body has determined that there is no longer a need for a formal arrangement to visit disfellowshipped or disassociated individuals each year.

Rather, elders should use good judgment in determining when and how to make brief contact with disfellowshipped or disassociated individuals. For example, if a disfellowshipped individual gives some evidence of changing his ways, an elder could remind the individual of how he can return to Jehovah. Such brief contact could be made while an elder engages in the house-to-house ministry. While shopping, an elder may see a disfellowshipped person who has not been contacted in years and choose to approach him. An older or infirm elder may find it more practical to make contact by telephone.

Elders should keep the coordinator of the body of elders updated when such contact is made. Of course, contact should not be made with active apostates, with those who are trying to lead others into sin, or with those who have made it known that they want nothing to do with the Christian congregation.

This direction replaces what is stated in the *Shepherding* textbook, chapter 10, paragraph 1. Each elder should cross that paragraph out and make the following notation in the margin: "See letter dated February 28, 2017, to all bodies of elders."

This letter has been added to the list of policy letters cited in *Index to Letters for Bodies of Elders* (S-22).

We send our warm Christian love.

Your brothers,

*Christian Congregation
of Jehovah's Witnesses*

c: Circuit overseers