

JEHOVAS ZEUGEN

ZWEIGBÜRO ZENTRALEUROPA

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AK:AP June 22, 2020

TO ALL CONGREGATIONS IN THE BRANCH TERRITORY

Re: Ministry During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Dear Brothers:

The past three months of the COVID-19 pandemic have changed the ministry tremendously for all of us. Although we face challenges, it is motivating to learn that you continue to have “plenty to do in the work of the Lord”.—1 Cor. 15:58.

Many carry out group service via video conferencing by writing witnessing letters together. Others meet to do return visits and Bible studies by phone and video calls. Some publishers work out individual text and voice messages together, which they then send to interested persons. Rest assured that all efforts to speak about our faith are very valuable - “a sacrifice of praise” for Jehovah that he highly appreciates.—Heb. 6:10; 13:15.

The house-to-house ministry will *not* yet be carried out until further information is received. However, you will certainly be pleased to know that in accordance with the instructions of the Governing Body, it is now again possible in our branch to do return visits, home Bible studies and cart witnessing out in our local territories.

However, all of this should currently only be done by publishers and for people who do not belong to a COVID-19 risk group. In addition, it may be wise to make these visits either alone, with a member of your family or someone that shares with you the same residence. All valid safety guidelines, such as distancing regulations, hygiene measures and possibly the wearing of a face mask should always be observed.

Out of deep concern for the health of publishers in a risk group, unfortunately they cannot yet participate in these reopened features of the ministry. You dear older and ailing brothers and sisters, please be assured that we can fully understand your burning desire to continue having a share in the ministry. We therefore sincerely ask the entire congregation to continue working closely together to involve these publishers also in the best possible way in field service activities that they can do. If you have any questions about the practical implementation of some features of the ministry, please contact your elders, who will be happy to provide you with suggestions.

You dear brothers and sisters, “let us not give up in doing what is fine, for in due time we will reap if we do not tire out”. (Gal. 6:9) Your zeal to continuously make known Jehovah's name in our branch territory moves us a lot. Please accept our warm love and may Jehovah continue to bless your efforts.

Your brothers,



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Attachment

c: Circuit overseers

Blind PS to the body of elders:

Please have this letter read at the next midweek meeting and on the weekend after the *Watchtower* study. The blind PS should neither be read to the congregation nor made available to publishers electronically.

In view of the expanded possibilities to carry out our ministry, please note that public witnessing using a table is currently not yet permitted. In addition, special metropolitan public witnessing (SMPW/ÖZB) is initially only carried out at selected locations determined by the branch office and in an adapted form. We will write to affected SMPW/ÖZB coordinators separately.

Please make the enclosed information sheet available to publishers who may participate in local cart witnessing and familiarize them with the content. When choosing locations, please be careful and be aware of and avoid possible infection. Also take into consideration public perception in your territory and avoid using locations in local risk areas and places where distancing regulations cannot be observed. Further useful information can be found in the attached information sheet.

Furthermore, we ask you as a body of elders to read and discuss once more the letters AK:SCO, dated May 29, 2020, and AK:AP, dated May 12, 2020. The suggestions in these letters will certainly help you to give publishers useful ideas on alternate field service methods and to use the information in your work with the field service groups. We thank you in particular for the practical help that you are giving to the publishers so they can joyfully put into practice the currently possible field service methods. (2 Cor. 1:24) Please accept a warm expression of our brotherly love.