

# Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses



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December 2, 2017

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Re: Using and Maintaining Kingdom Halls

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Dear Brothers:

1. This letter replaces the December 24, 2016, and August 1, 2017, letters to all bodies of elders and has been added to the list of policy letters that will be cited in *Index to Letters for Bodies of Elders* (S-22). Paragraphs 44-46 contain updated direction regarding video equipment at Kingdom Halls.

2. The branch office is responsible for approving and overseeing the construction of new Kingdom Halls and for ensuring that existing Kingdom Halls are being maintained properly and used wisely. Direction regarding these matters is provided to congregations through the Local Design/Construction Department (LDC). Representatives of the LDC may be used to inspect and gather information on existing and new meeting places. When elders take the lead by coordinating and being personally involved in the cleaning, maintenance, and security of the Kingdom Hall, this sets a fine example for all in the congregation.

3. **Ownership:** Each Kingdom Hall is dedicated to the worship of Jehovah. Whether the property title, or deed, is held in the name of a local corporation or trustee arrangement or it is held in 12/2/17-E-Gh

the name of a legal entity managed by the branch office, no congregation should conclude that it “owns” the Kingdom Hall. However, it is the responsibility of the congregations using the property to care for it and see that it is used in harmony with Kingdom interests.

4. As many as three or four congregations may be assigned by the branch office to use the same Kingdom Hall auditorium in order to make full use of the facility and to keep expenses to a minimum. The branch office will generally correspond with only one of the congregations using the facility regarding legal, property, and related matters. This may be the congregation that holds the title to the Kingdom Hall or it may be the congregation in whose territory the Kingdom Hall is located, depending on local circumstances. Usually, this congregation will hold the documents related to the Kingdom Hall and the property on which it is located. This is a practical matter and does not provide a basis for this congregation to make unilateral decisions related to the use and upkeep of the Kingdom Hall.

5. **Rented Facilities:** If a congregation needs to rent a facility for long-term use as a Kingdom Hall, the elders should contact the Local Design/Construction Department. If a congregation needs to rent a facility for a one-time use, such as for the Memorial, the elders should follow the instructions provided in *Renting Facilities for Theocratic Events* (TO-19).

6. **Cleaning:** The Kingdom Hall should be cleaned according to a regular schedule based on its use and needs. This usually involves a light cleaning after each meeting, a more thorough cleaning each week, and a major cleaning at least once a year. This cleaning should be carried out by volunteers from within the congregations meeting in the Kingdom Hall. All may have a share, including children who are properly supervised.

7. A schedule for Kingdom Hall cleaning should be posted on each congregation’s information board so that the congregation is aware of the arrangements in place. Some congregations choose to rotate the weekly cleaning arrangements according to field service groups. The cleaning should include both the interior and exterior of the building(s), as well as any storage, parking, or landscaped areas. If snow removal or other seasonal maintenance or cleaning is required, this work should be well-coordinated. Care should be taken to ensure the safety of all involved.—See paragraphs 33-35.

8. **Cleaning Coordinator:** Each congregation should assign an elder or a ministerial servant to serve as the cleaning coordinator. He is not responsible for performing all of the cleaning work himself, nor does he have the authority to make decisions that should be made by the body of elders. He should prepare schedules for the cleaning of the Kingdom Hall property and should ensure that adequate cleaning supplies, including safety equipment, and simple written instructions are kept on hand. (See paragraphs 33-35.) He should also monitor the cleanliness of the Kingdom Hall and provide kind reminders as needed.

9. **Maintenance and Repair Work:** A preventive maintenance program can lengthen the life of the Kingdom Hall and equipment. Regular maintenance also shows respect for the sanctity of life, since a lack of maintenance can result in unsafe conditions that put those who use the Kingdom Hall at risk. (See paragraphs 33-35.) A meeting place that is well-maintained reflects favorably on Jehovah God. Therefore, each congregation should take seriously the responsibility to care for preventive maintenance and repairs.

10. It is expected that the majority of the maintenance and repair work will be done by local volunteers from the congregations using the Kingdom Hall and that the costs for such work will be covered by the congregations. (See paragraphs 22-28.) If local volunteers having suitable experience and competence to coordinate or safely carry out the work are not available, the elders should

seek the direction of the Local Design/Construction Department (LDC) before any work is started. Any work that will cost more than three months' worth of average Kingdom Hall operating expenses requires the approval of the LDC.—See paragraph 22 and the chart “Summary of Work Performed at Kingdom Halls” at the end of this letter.

11. When it is necessary to hire a contractor to perform a service and the cost is such that the approval of the LDC is not needed, the elders should obtain written estimates and signed written agreements. The details of the estimates or bids should not be shared with others wishing to perform the work. It should be determined that the contractor has insurance and other needed legal protection. This should be done whether or not the contractor is a Witness. The congregation should be named as an additional insured on the contractor's insurance policy. If you have any questions regarding the contract wording or the specific requirements for your locality, please contact the Branch Risk Management Desk in the Accounting Department for assistance. In most cases, it is advisable for a dependable local brother to be on hand to monitor the work of contractors.

12. The body of elders should routinely ensure that the preventive maintenance program provided by the LDC is being followed. This involves verifying that maintenance tasks are being completed on schedule and according to the guidelines provided. It is important that the elders be enthusiastic about and supportive of the maintenance training provided by the LDC so that all in the congregation will be encouraged to take an interest in caring for the Kingdom Hall.

13. Immediate action should be taken if moisture-related problems are found. Left unchecked, moisture from water leaks, condensation, infiltration, or flooding can cause extensive damage. All leaks (from pipes, roofs, and so forth) must be repaired immediately by someone qualified and knowledgeable in this field. If the affected area is not cleaned and dried within 48 hours, further problems may result. In high-humidity areas, it may be necessary for the HVAC system to be set to run for a period each day, even when the hall is unoccupied. This will aid in drying the air and preventing dampness and mold. If you have a serious moisture problem that is beyond your ability to repair properly, please contact the LDC immediately for assistance.

14. For rented facilities, including rented parking lots, the elders should determine the level of maintenance and repairs necessary so as to have a safe and suitable place to meet. It is best to have the owner of the property care for such work. However, where this is not a viable option, the elders should seek an equitable arrangement with the owner. The terms of that arrangement should be put in writing prior to the commencement of work. Any wording in a contract that indicates the congregation is responsible for all liability should be avoided. If there are concerns with the wording in these agreements, please seek the assistance of the Branch Risk Management Desk.

15. **Maintenance Coordinator:** If the Kingdom Hall is used by only one congregation, an elder or ministerial servant should be assigned to serve as the maintenance coordinator. (Depending on the circumstances, this may be the same brother who serves as the cleaning coordinator.) In addition to coordinating maintenance activities, he is also responsible to coordinate any necessary repair work. He is not responsible for performing all of the work himself, nor does he have the authority to make decisions that should be made by the body of elders. It is imperative that the brother selected be well-organized and diligent, yet submissive to the body of elders. He should also be good at delegating work and training others. The body of elders should allow the brother sufficient latitude so that he can show initiative in caring for regular maintenance and repairs. He should ensure that an adequate amount of tools, including safety equipment, is available and should keep a record of completed maintenance tasks.—See paragraphs 33-35.

16. **Kingdom Hall Operating Committee:** If the Kingdom Hall auditorium is used by more than one congregation or if there are multiple Kingdom Hall auditoriums on the same property, an operating committee should be appointed for organizing the maintenance of all facilities on the property. (See paragraphs 33-35.) This would include all auditoriums, storage buildings, and residences. Each body of elders should select one or two elders or qualified ministerial servants to serve on the operating committee. However, the operating committee should consist of no more than five brothers. If there are more than five congregations using the property, then the combined bodies of elders should select the five brothers who will serve on the operating committee.

17. The combined bodies of elders should select the operating committee member who will serve as the coordinator of the operating committee. He should be an experienced elder who has good organizational ability and the availability for this assignment. He should humbly work in harmony with the other members of the committee and seek direction from the bodies of elders when needed. It is likely that the majority of the operating committee's communication can be done without meetings. However, the coordinator of the operating committee should (1) set up periodic meetings for the committee as deemed necessary to carry out their assignment, (2) make sure there is appropriate follow-through on decisions made, and (3) maintain good communication with the bodies of elders. If the bodies of elders agree that a joint meeting of all the bodies of elders is needed to resolve a matter, one of the coordinators of the bodies of elders would normally serve as the chairman of the meeting.

18. The operating committee should select one of their members to be responsible for the accounts. (See *Instructions for Kingdom Hall Operating Committee Accounting* [S-42].) If a congregation entity holds title to the property, this brother will also confirm that the *Annual Property Documents Work Sheet* (S-111) has been completed by the secretary of the titleholding congregation.

19. The operating committee should be given sufficient latitude to care for regular maintenance and repairs of the Kingdom Hall. They should be willing to show appropriate initiative but should not run ahead of the direction provided by the bodies of elders or the branch office.

20. It is not the responsibility of the operating committee to determine how the hall is to be used, when meetings are to be held, whether the building is to be used for weddings or funerals, and so forth.

21. The bodies of elders of the congregations sharing the use of the Kingdom Hall should record in a written agreement the decisions that have been made regarding Kingdom Hall matters. Among other things, the agreement should include a description of how the building will be cared for and used, when meetings will be held, any schedule for rotating meeting times, what the financial responsibility of each congregation will be in caring for the operating expenses, the amount of funds to be kept on hand in the operating account, and what the spending limits will be in connection with out-of-the-ordinary expenses. (See paragraph 28.) A copy of the agreement signed by the Congregation Service Committees should be retained in each congregation's file. The written agreement should be updated as needed in order to reflect the current decisions of the bodies of elders.

22. **Expenses:** Congregation expenses include the reimbursement of the circuit overseer, any resolved donations made by the congregation, Kingdom Hall operating expenses (such as costs for utilities, supplies, and services in connection with the operation, maintenance, and repair of the hall), and so forth. If more than one congregation uses the Kingdom Hall, each congregation should contribute a monthly amount to the Kingdom Hall Operating Committee account to care for Kingdom Hall operating expenses.—See paragraphs 25 and 26.

23. All congregations should endeavor to maintain a balance of congregation funds that equals two to three months' worth of average *congregation expenses*. If a congregation does not share the use of the hall with another congregation, the elders may determine that an additional amount equaling no more than three months' worth of average *Kingdom Hall operating expenses* should be retained for unexpected minor repairs.

24. If congregations share the use of a Kingdom Hall, the operating committee should endeavor to maintain a balance of funds that equals two to three months' worth of average Kingdom Hall operating expenses. The combined bodies of elders may decide to keep an additional amount equaling no more than three months' worth of average Kingdom Hall operating expenses for unexpected minor repairs.

25. The bodies of elders are responsible for determining the method used to calculate the amount of funds to be contributed monthly by each congregation to the operating committee account. There is no need to have the congregation approve a resolution. In some Kingdom Halls, it has been practical to divide the total amount of Kingdom Hall operating expenses for one year by 12 and then by the total number of publishers attending all the congregations in the Kingdom Hall. This does not mean that each publisher is expected to contribute a specific amount. Rather, the congregation as a whole can make the contribution based on its number of publishers, and all publishers may contribute as they are able. Whether this or some other approach is decided on, all the elders should lovingly take into consideration the size and circumstances of each congregation so that an equitable arrangement is established. The decisions made regarding monthly contributions to the operating committee account should be documented in the written agreement.—See paragraph 21.

26. In July of each year, the operating committee should determine the amount that will be needed each month to care for Kingdom Hall operating expenses for the upcoming service year, using the method previously agreed upon by the bodies of elders. The operating committee should communicate this amount to each body of elders along with the suggested amount to be received from each congregation. (See paragraph 25.) Each body of elders should respond as to whether they agree with the suggested amount. If needed, a meeting of the combined bodies of elders can be held to discuss matters.

27. There should be no reason for large balances of reserve funds to be held by congregations or operating committees, whether in a bank account or on deposit with the branch office. If funds accumulate in excess of the amounts described in paragraphs 23 and 24, the elders should consider whether to recommend that the congregation(s) pass a resolution to donate the excess funds to Kingdom Hall and Assembly Hall construction worldwide.

28. The elders should establish and document a spending limit per transaction for handling out-of-the-ordinary operating expenses. Any proposed expenditures that are in excess of the established spending limit and that are unusual in nature must be referred to the body(ies) of elders for discussion and possibly be directed to the branch office for approval according to current guidelines. When purchasing supplies and equipment, consideration should be given to using supplier arrangements provided by the branch office.

29. **Upgrades/Minor Renovations:** Minor renovation projects are typically scheduled by the Local Design/Construction Department (LDC), based on the facility evaluation that is performed every two years. Congregations should not install new elements, upgrade existing elements, or perform minor renovations (work that is beyond routine maintenance and repair) without approval from the LDC. This would include items purchased or donated to the congregation. The elders should explain to the LDC the need for the new element, upgrade, or minor renovation and then wait for approval and direction on how to proceed. If a project request is approved, it will then be

determined whether the congregation has the means to cover the expense before funding is provided by the branch office. Any use of congregation funds to cover such expenses must be approved by a resolution, even if approval from the LDC has been obtained for the project. The LDC will decide who will coordinate the project based on the scope of the work.—See the chart “Summary of Work Performed at Kingdom Halls” at the end of this letter. For direction regarding the funding of the installation of a video system, see paragraphs 44-45.

**30. Major Renovation/New Construction:** The branch office prepares and maintains a master plan of Kingdom Hall needs. This includes new Kingdom Halls needed based on congregation density and growth, existing Kingdom Halls needing major renovations identified through inspections made by representatives of the Local Design/Construction Department (LDC), and Kingdom Halls needing to be replaced. The master plan may show that existing Kingdom Halls can be better utilized through merging congregations or consolidating the use of Kingdom Halls. The benefits of merging or consolidation may include improved meeting attendance, higher quality meetings, better distribution of experienced brothers, and a reduction in the number of Kingdom Halls needing to be constructed.

31. New construction and major renovation projects are prioritized and scheduled by the LDC. Inquiries regarding when a Kingdom Hall is scheduled for a major renovation or construction project should be referred to the LDC. No congregation should purchase property, accept property as a donation, or undertake major renovation work on an existing Kingdom Hall without the full involvement of the LDC. Design standards and specifications are provided by the branch office, and construction work is overseen by Construction Groups appointed by the branch office. The branch office will handle the sale of Kingdom Hall property whenever this is deemed necessary. Funding will be provided by the branch office, although the congregation will be directed to set up a contribution box for the project.

**32. Inspections:** The Local Design/Construction Department will arrange for an inspection and evaluation of each Kingdom Hall every two years. While it is not necessary for each elder to be present during the inspection, it is important that the Kingdom Hall Operating Committee or the maintenance coordinator be present. Further instructions regarding the participation of publishers will be provided when the inspection is scheduled. The inspection will help to ensure that the preventive maintenance program is being followed. Each inspection will include a review of the Kingdom Hall ownership and property documents as well as a review of regulatory permits related to building systems to ensure that these are in order and to arrange for further assistance if needed. After the inspection, a report will be given to each body of elders. It is expected that the elders will follow through on the recommendations in the report and will promptly address any safety or maintenance issues found.

**33. Safety:** The safety of all persons using or cleaning the Kingdom Hall or performing maintenance or repairs on Kingdom Hall property must be a priority. The cleaning coordinator and the maintenance coordinator (or the cleaning coordinator and the Kingdom Hall Operating Committee) should see to it that no hazardous conditions exist in the hall or on the grounds. (See paragraphs 8, 15, and 16.) For example, walkways and parking lots should be well-maintained and kept free of any trip and slip hazards. Lighting around stairs and other areas having changes of level or uneven surfaces should be reviewed regularly. Likewise, the condition of any mats or carpets near the entrance of the building should be reviewed regularly. Storage of hazardous materials on the property should be avoided whenever possible. Any necessary chemicals used for cleaning or maintenance should be clearly labeled and stored in a secure location that is inaccessible to young children. All

elders, especially those who oversee Kingdom Hall cleaning or maintenance, should be thoroughly familiar with *Working Together Safely—Standards for Theocratic Construction and Maintenance* (DC-82). A printed or electronic copy of *Working Together Safely* should be provided to each member of the congregation who volunteers to assist with a maintenance or construction project or with other tasks that involve a measure of risk, such as working with power tools, using ladders, accessing roofs, or performing electrical work. If unsafe work practices are observed, appropriate reminders should immediately be shared with the volunteers.

34. A key aspect of working safely is identifying potential dangers and planning how to avoid them. Those overseeing Kingdom Hall projects that involve a measure of risk are to review each activity planned, determine the potential hazards related to each task, and identify the appropriate safety measures that will need to be implemented. This analysis will include ensuring that qualified individuals with the health and skill set needed to complete the work safely are chosen for the project. The *Congregation Job Hazard Analysis* (DC-85) and *Congregation Job Hazard Analysis Instructions* (DC-85i) forms should be used in performing these steps. (These forms are not intended to be used in connection with minor maintenance work and regular cleaning.) Additionally, before assignments are given for projects involving a measure of risk, those overseeing the work should provide volunteer workers with proper training and clear safety reminders, including appropriate points from *Working Together Safely*.

35. You may have questions or face challenges with regard to how to implement certain rules, such as those relating to fall protection for roof repairs, snow removal, or gutter cleaning. If so, please search out trusted local brothers and sisters who have practical experience in the type of work being planned. It is important that those with whom you consult have a reputation for safe work practices and the habit of implementing published rules and standards. If higher-risk services are required, the decision may be made to contract with a company that has all the necessary safety equipment and sufficient insurance coverage.—See paragraph 11.

36. **Security:** All openings should be secured before leaving the building. Some Kingdom Halls in higher-risk areas have installed electronic security systems. If installed, these systems should be maintained in good working order. Prior to installing a system, the body of elders should contact the Local Design/Construction Department to determine if it is warranted for their Kingdom Hall.

37. **Incidents:** An *Incident Report* (TO-5) should be completed for any incident occurring at a Kingdom Hall that involved or nearly involved substantial property damage, serious illness, or personal injury requiring medical treatment beyond minor first aid. *Incident Report Instructions* (TO-5i) should be consulted for every incident or near-miss. The completed report should be sent to the Branch Risk Management Desk in the Accounting Department within 72 hours of the incident.

38. When property damage occurs, quick action can go far in preventing further damage. Break-ins, thefts, incidents of arson, or other acts of vandalism should be promptly reported to the local authorities. The Local Design/Construction Department (LDC) can be contacted for direction. For damage that can easily be repaired without assistance from the LDC, please send copies of the written estimate and bills for the repairs along with the *Incident Report* to the Branch Risk Management Desk.

39. The Global Assistance Arrangement cares for property damage to Kingdom Halls, such as losses resulting from natural disasters, fire, moisture damage, and vandalism, and it also cares for expenses related to incidents involving personal injury at Kingdom Halls.

40. **Meeting Times:** Unless there are extreme extenuating circumstances, the Life and Ministry Meeting is to be held during the week and should not be combined with the public talk and *Watchtower* Study, which are to be held on the weekend. When there is only one congregation meeting in a Kingdom Hall, the elders should consider what meeting times will be most convenient for the majority and should present their recommendations to the congregation for discussion, possible adjustment, and final decision (by majority vote of the baptized publishers). When more than one congregation meets in the hall, the combined bodies of elders should meet and discuss meeting-time preferences before submitting their recommendations to their respective congregations. (1 Cor. 10:24) Some congregations find that rotating the time of the weekend meeting and/or the day of the midweek meeting each year is desirable. When a rotation is made, it should take place during the first week of January. The Service Department should be notified of changes to congregation meeting times using [jw.org](http://jw.org) or, if that is not possible, by submitting the *Kingdom Hall Information* (S-5) form. Good communication and cooperation contribute to mutual understanding and contentment, preventing the feeling that one congregation has certain advantages all the time. Good cooperation is also needed in connection with adjusting meeting schedules during a circuit overseer's visit to a congregation. (*od* p. 110 par. 9) A sign with up-to-date meeting times should be displayed in accordance with local codes.

41. **Phone Answering System:** In order to provide the best service for those calling the Kingdom Hall to obtain information about its location and about meeting times, an answering machine or voice messaging system should be utilized, if feasible. A recorded announcement should be provided for callers, giving the Kingdom Hall address, brief directions to the Kingdom Hall (if such are deemed necessary), and meeting times. During the Memorial season, the day, time, and location of the Memorial observance(s) should also be given. The information should be provided in the languages of all major language groups using the Kingdom Hall. An effort should be made to respond promptly to anyone who leaves a message requesting information. At Kingdom Halls used by multiple language groups, it may be best to use an answering system that features multiple outgoing messages and mailboxes. So that interested ones may receive personal contact, the recorded announcement(s) should, if possible, include an option for the caller to remain on the line or to press a specified button in order to speak to someone who may be present at the Kingdom Hall at the time of his call.

42. The recorded announcement(s) should be approved by the Congregation Service Committees of the congregations using the Kingdom Hall. Careful advance thought will ensure that the messages are well-composed and that their content and tone are gracious, thus representative of Jehovah and his organization. Recorded messages that use a warm, pleasing voice and that are spoken slowly and clearly will likely be well-received.

43. **Internet Service:** If the bodies of elders using a Kingdom Hall determine that having an Internet connection at the Kingdom Hall would benefit the congregations and that the congregations can afford it, the elders should present the publishers with a resolution to obtain such service. If Internet service is obtained, it may be made available for use by congregation publishers. However, please note the following direction in this regard:

- Access to the Internet should be password-protected.
- Only publishers in good standing should be permitted access.
- The password should not be announced publicly. Instead, it should be given to the approved publishers individually.



- The primary use of the Internet at the Kingdom Hall should be for theocratic purposes. Hence, if a publisher were to use the Kingdom Hall connection to access inappropriate websites, his connectivity privilege would be revoked.
- If it is determined that a publisher should no longer have access to the Internet at the Kingdom Hall, the elders should change the password. The publisher should not be allowed access until the elders are convinced that the individual has rectified his conduct.
- It would be wise to change the password periodically and redistribute it individually to those publishers approved to have it.
- If the Kingdom Hall is equipped with a computer that is connected to the Internet, appropriate Internet security practices should be implemented, such as those listed on page 28 of the August 2009 *Awake!* Additionally, Internet browsers provide various built-in security features, such as automatic pop-up blocking, privacy settings, flexibility in specifying websites that should be blocked, website certificate validation, and so forth. Also, most Internet service providers offer some advanced protection that may, for example, block fraudulent websites, prevent phishing attacks, put in place parental controls for blocking inappropriate (pornographic or violent) websites, and so forth. Although there is usually an additional monthly charge for these advanced security features, their benefits generally outweigh such costs.

44. **Video Equipment:** When constructing a new Kingdom Hall or performing a major renovation to an existing Kingdom Hall, the Local Design/Construction Department (LDC) will include an appropriate video system in the scope of work and budget for the project. Additionally, since video is essentially the “sound system” for publishers who are deaf, the LDC may also provide video systems in Kingdom Halls with a sign-language congregation. This would apply when installing equipment where none currently exists, such as for a newly formed sign-language congregation if it is expected that the sign-language congregation will continue in that same Kingdom Hall for several years. This would also apply to replacement of equipment for sign-language congregations when existing equipment is no longer functional. In all cases where the branch office provides the video system, each congregation meeting in the Kingdom Hall can express its appreciation for this arrangement when considering its monthly contribution toward Kingdom Hall and Assembly Hall construction worldwide. Most sign-language groups or pregroups can use existing equipment at the Kingdom Hall or personal equipment. If more equipment is needed, the elders should contact the LDC.

45. The installation of video equipment in a Kingdom Hall at any other time is the financial responsibility of the publishers who attend meetings at that hall. If the bodies of elders recommend the installation of video equipment and determine that the congregations can afford the equipment, they should first contact the LDC for approval. Any existing equipment should continue to be used as long as the equipment is functional and the audience is able to benefit from the content of our programs without distraction. The LDC can explain the video options for the Kingdom Hall and provide an appropriate video-system design and equipment list. A resolution to pay for the cost of the equipment using congregation funds should be passed by all congregations using the Kingdom Hall. Once the expense is approved by the congregations, equipment that is consistent with the specifications provided by the LDC can be obtained from a supplier. If video equipment is available through the branch office, the congregations should contribute for this provision. Congregations will not receive an invoice. Rather, a resolution to contribute to the branch office an amount based on the reference cost provided should be passed by all congregations using the Kingdom Hall. It is expected that the resolved amount would be sent to the branch office in one remittance or a few remittances, to

the extent possible. The resolved contribution should be recorded in the accounts records as an expenditure. Contributions related to video equipment should be recorded in the space provided on the form used for remitting funds to the branch office.

46. Please keep the following guidelines in mind if a video system is installed:

- The system should be configured so that minimal time will be lost when starting a video. For example, it is preferred, but not mandatory, that the primary video display(s) be positioned on one or both sides of the stage, not in the center. If an existing video display or screen is located in the center of the stage, this should be repositioned, if possible. Regardless of the configuration, the speaker should be able to remain at the lectern while the video is played.
- The digital yeartext should be displayed before the opening song, after the concluding prayer, and during the meeting when nothing else is being shown on the screens. This may eliminate the need to purchase signage to display the yeartext. For Kingdom Halls that have a video display in the center of the stage, it may be more practical to continue to display the yeartext with a physical sign.
- If the Kingdom Hall has Internet service, it is preferred, but not mandatory, that it be a wired connection and that the computer or media playback device in the Kingdom Hall be connected to the Internet with a wired connection.
- When possible, video files should be downloaded to a computer or other media device for playback rather than being streamed from jw.org. This will help prevent Internet connection problems from interrupting the meeting. It is recommended that *JW Library* be used as the media player. (See *Media Playback Using JW Library* [S-144].) The body of elders should assign a brother the responsibility of downloading any videos that are to be viewed during the meeting each week. He should do this well before the start of the meeting.
- Video playback equipment should be installed near the sound equipment. The brother running the system should start the video when directed to do so by the brother on the stage. Generally, the video equipment should not be operated from the stage.
- Reasonable security measures should be employed to reduce the threat of theft. For example, some congregations store video equipment in locked cabinets.

47. **Library:** Each Kingdom Hall auditorium should have space for a library. (*od* p. 61) The library should contain publications for each language group using the auditorium. The bodies of elders should determine whether the library will provide publications in printed form, electronic form, or both. Since many publishers and interested persons may neither use computers nor have electronic devices, the elders should give careful consideration to the needs of such individuals when making decisions as to the Kingdom Hall library, especially before deciding to eliminate printed publications. If the publications will be provided in electronic form, such as on a device with access to *Watchtower ONLINE LIBRARY* or on a computer by means of *Watchtower Library*, a printer should be made available. At least one responsible brother should be assigned to keep the library up-to-date and in good order.

48. In the event that the bodies of elders decide to eliminate printed publications from the library, care should be taken not to discard items that have historical significance. The branch office may wish to add such items to its library or to its archive of historical materials.

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49. In due course, *Instructions for Congregation Accounting* (S-27) and *Instructions for Kingdom Hall Operating Committee Accounting* (S-42) will be revised in harmony with the guidelines presented in this letter. For direction regarding Kingdom Hall dedications, safety precautions when attending spiritual programs, use of congregation property, and congregation meeting conferencing systems, see *Index to Letters for Bodies of Elders* (S-22).

50. It is our privilege to work alongside you in caring for these important matters, knowing that our Kingdom Halls play a major role in supporting true worship in this time of the end and bring praise and honor to our loving heavenly Father, Jehovah.—Mic. 4:1, 2.

Your brothers,

*Christian Congregation  
of Jehovah's Witnesses*

c: Circuit overseers

**SUMMARY OF WORK PERFORMED AT KINGDOM HALLS**

| Type of Work  | Definition  | Should the congregation contact the LDC for approval?  | Who provides the funding?                  | Who coordinates the work?  |
|---|---|--|--|----------------------------|
| <b>Scheduled Maintenance</b>                              | <p>Work that includes such tasks as performing scheduled inspections, adjusting, servicing, or cleaning existing building elements and/or equipment, checking proper operation of equipment or fixtures, or replacing consumable parts at regular intervals.</p> <p>Examples: Replacing air conditioning filters, cleaning ventilation grilles, replacing lightbulbs, checking plumbing fixtures, checking and adjusting door hardware, checking exit lights, changing engine oil on lawn mower, touch-up painting.</p> | <b>No</b>  | <b>Congregation</b>                        | <b>Congregation</b>        |
| <b>Repair</b>   | <p>Work that is required to restore an existing building element or piece of equipment to an acceptable condition. This may involve replacement of various components, but is not a complete replacement of the element, system, or equipment.</p> <p>Examples: Repairing broken light fixtures, leaking toilet cisterns, roof leaks, water heater element failures, or loose floor tiles.</p>  | <b>Only if the work will cost more than three months' worth of average Kingdom Hall operating expenses</b> | <b>Congregation</b>                        | <b>Congregation</b>        |
| <b>Minor Renovations, Upgrades, and New Installations</b> | <p>Work that involves making any alterations to the design of the building, performing end-of-life replacement of a building element or of building finishes, or installing new minor equipment.</p> <p>Examples: Replacing or installing carpeting, roofing (shingles, tiles, membrane), chairs/benches, air conditioning systems, building finishes, fences, parking lot surfaces, video systems.</p>   | <b>Yes</b>   | <b>Congregation</b><br>(See paragraph 29.) | <b>LDC or Congregation</b> |
| <b>Major Renovations, Upgrades, and New Installations</b> | <p>Work that is required to convert a facility that is not currently considered suitable into one that is suitable. It may include end-of-life replacements for multiple building elements and any work that involves changing the design intent of, expanding, or modifying the purpose or use of the facility.</p> <p>Examples: Replacement of all or most of the building's finishes or the entire roof structure (trusses), moving interior or exterior walls.</p>  | <b>Yes</b>   | <b>Branch Office</b>                       | <b>LDC</b>                 |
| <b>New Construction</b>                                   | <p>Work that involves construction of a new facility or significant expansion of an existing building.</p>  | <b>Yes</b>   | <b>Branch Office</b>                       | <b>LDC</b>                 |