

# TESTIGOS CRISTIANOS DE JEHOVÁ

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May 13, 2019

TO ALL CONGREGATIONS

Re: General Data Protection Regulation

Dear Brothers:

Sharing in the field ministry has always been a personal expression of each Christian's faith and desire to preach the good news of God's Kingdom. (Matt. 28:19, 20) Over the years, you may have become accustomed to collecting personal data in connection with your ministry. However, recent court decisions and the enactment of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) affect the collection and use of personal data in our branch territory. Thus, any suggestions we previously made on note-taking as related to the field ministry are no longer applicable.—Rom. 13:1.

**Accordingly, publishers should not collect personal data in connection with the field ministry.** This means not maintaining records that include a person's name, address, language, ethnicity, and so forth. It also includes not recording addresses where no one is at home.

Though no personal data is recorded, publishers are encouraged to cultivate the interest they find. A publisher could do so by (1) providing his contact information to the interested person and arranging a return visit, (2) directing the interested person to the address of the nearest congregation meetings, or (3) directing the person to [jw.org](http://jw.org).

As an exception, if a householder requests that no further visits be made to his home, the publisher should make a note of the *date and address only* and place it in the territory record so that publishers working the territory in the future will not call at that address.

We send our warm Christian love.

Your brothers,

*Testigos Cristianos de Jehová*

c: Circuit overseers

PS to bodies of elders:

The coordinator of the body of elders should arrange for this letter to be read to the congregation at the first midweek meeting after its receipt. Thereafter, it should be posted on the information board for one month. **This postscript should neither be read to the congregation nor be posted on the information board.**

*Territory Map Cards* (S-12) used for group and personal territory should show only geographic boundaries, such as street names. (*od* p. 91 par. 31) These cards should not include personal data such as a list of addresses of householders who speak a particular language.

When two or more congregations preach in the same neighborhoods, the *service overseers* in these congregations should communicate to work out a mutually acceptable system of covering the territory that does not involve maintaining records that contain the personal data of householders.—*sfl* chap. 23 par. 5; chap. 24 par. 1.

Please review the size of the individual territories used for house-to-house work. (*sfl* chap. 23 par. 2) In line with local circumstances, there may be advantages to preparing territories with fewer homes. For example, publishers may be motivated to request a territory close to their home or workplace. (*od* p. 91 pars. 31-32) In addition, since publishers do not collect personal data, territories with fewer homes may assist publishers to thoroughly search out “deserving ones” in the territory and cultivate interest.—Matt. 10:11.