

Service Missions: A Guide for Service Mission Leaders

This document provides a short overview of the program and your responsibilities as a service mission leader.

Service Missionaries

Some worthy young adult men and women who want to serve a mission are not able to serve a proselyting mission. The service missionary program allows them to use their talents and abilities to serve the Lord in other meaningful ways.

Service missionaries are unable to serve proselyting missions for physical or emotional health reasons or for other considerations. They may also be those who come home early from proselyting missions for similar reasons. The standards for worthiness are the same for all missionaries.

Service missions are not required for those who are excused from proselyting missions. No one should feel pressured to serve. Service missions are an option for those who want to serve the Lord in this way.



Your Role

As a service mission leader, you serve as the vital link between stake presidents, service missionary candidates, service missionaries, community and charitable partners, and Church operations to find future assignments and to match service missionaries with the best assignments for their unique circumstances. You'll help service missionaries meet the expectations of the organizations they serve.

You will also help stake presidents by regularly reviewing service missionaries' progress and well-being. The stake president is ecclesiastically responsible for the service missionaries in his stake.

Operations managers are responsible for Church or community service organizations. These could be a bishop's storehouse or a soup kitchen, among others. Operations managers help each service missionary have a rewarding experience while serving at the assigned location. They reinforce the service missionary's personal commitment to the standards in the *Service Missionary Handbook*.

Your Responsibilities

You have four primary responsibilities:

- Connect weekly with all service missionaries through face-to-face interaction and/or electronic means. Have regular progress interviews with each missionary. Understand how they are feeling about their assignment, if they are going, and if they enjoy it.
- Review with the operations manager how service missionaries are doing. Provide feedback. Resolve any issues with the stake president and operations manager.

- Foster relationships and service opportunities with Church operations and community charitable organizations.
- Provide a fulfilling and transformative mission experience. This includes missionary meetings or gatherings, temple service, service projects, and other unifying activities.

How to Support

1. Report to your Area Seventy. He called you, and you are responsible to him.
2. Work frequently and closely with your support advisers at Church headquarters.
3. Identify community and charitable organizations close to the missionary. Work with the organization and the Service Mission Office to get the required approval by the Church.
4. Train stake presidents and other priesthood leaders in the service missionary program. Help them find and encourage young adults who, because of their physical, emotional, or mental challenges, may not have thought about missionary service.
5. Encourage stake presidents and bishops to:
 - a. Invite service missionaries to speak in sacrament meetings at the beginning and end of their mission.
 - b. Have service missionaries give a report to the stake high council at the end of their missionary service.
 - c. Recognize service missionaries in every way a proselyting missionary is recognized. This should include having their names printed next to proselyting missionaries in bulletins and on plaques in meetinghouse foyers.
6. Collaborate with each missionary as well as his or her family, bishop, and stake president in recommending service assignments. Customize service assignments to the full capacity of the service missionary.
7. Ensure that assigned development counselors are in contact with the service missionaries and that they are meeting needs for job-related development.
8. Encourage service missionaries to attend institute classes where available, to have regular scripture study, and to establish a lifelong pattern for spiritual development.
9. Work closely with stake presidents in handling the change when early-returned missionaries are re-assigned to a service mission.
10. Counsel regularly with the stake president about each service missionary's progress.
11. Send monthly stewardship reports to the Service Mission Office and to your Area Seventy.
12. Handle administrative matters with the Service Mission Office (for example, assignment changes, transfers, extensions, early releases, and early-return withdrawals).
13. Collaborate with peer service mission leaders in regular webinars, missionary relocations, and information exchanges.
14. Share the service mission leadership responsibility with your spouse.

Questions?

- Contact your support adviser couple. They are available 24/7.
- Visit the Service Missionary Portal (after you have been given access). Many questions are answered there.
- Visit ChurchofJesusChrist.org/service-missionary.

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