

The Family Discipleship Charter

3rd edition

Copyright © 1995, 1998, 2009 by The Family International

All rights reserved. This document, or any part thereof, may not be reproduced in any form without the express written permission of The Family International.

First edition published January 1995 and second edition November 1998 as *The Love Charter*. Third edition published October 2009.

For information:

email: family@thefamily.org
website: www.thefamily.org

AM – Not for resale

Contents

Dad's Foreword	vi
Preface to the Third Edition	viii
Preface to the Previous Editions	ix
Explanatory Notes.....	x
Definitions and Explanation of Terms.....	xii

Responsibilities and Rights of Family Disciples and Discipleship Homes

Responsibilities and Rights of Family Disciples

Responsibilities of an Individual Family Disciple	3
Rights of an Individual Family Disciple	12
Rights of an Individual Family Disciple Within the Home.....	16
Responsibilities of Family Discipleship Parents	20
Rights of Family Discipleship Parents	25
Rights of Minors	27
Right of Mobility	30
Right of Redress	33

Responsibilities and Rights of Family Discipleship Homes

Responsibilities of a Family Discipleship Home.....	36
Responsibilities of a Family Discipleship Home Regarding the Welfare of its Members.....	42
Responsibilities of a Family Discipleship Home Regarding Children, Teens, and Parents	46
Responsibilities of a Family Discipleship Home Regarding Financial Matters.....	48
Rights of a Family Discipleship Home.....	53
Service Homes.....	57
Rights of Personnel in a Service Home.....	58
Sensitive Countries	60
Rights of Personnel in a Sensitive Country	61
City Councils.....	62

Responsibilities and Authority of Family Leadership and Services

Obligations of All Family Leadership.....	65
---	----

Responsibilities and Authority of International Leadership and Services

Authority of World Services Leadership.....	68
Succession of World Services Leadership	70
Make-up and Responsibilities of World Services	72
Responsibilities and Authority of the Reporting Office	75
Responsibilities of the Family Policy Council	76
Responsibilities and Authority of the International Board Chairpersons	77

Responsibilities and Authority of Regional Leadership and Services

Responsibilities and Authority of the Regional Shepherds	80
Responsibilities and Authority of the Regional Council	83
Responsibilities and Authority of the Shepherding Desk.....	85
Responsibilities and Authority of the Regional Desk	86
Responsibilities and Authority of the Coaches.....	87

Responsibilities and Authority of the Home Steering Council	90
Responsibilities and Authority of Home Shepherds	92
Responsibilities and Authority of Home Managers	94
Responsibilities of Board Pillar Representatives.....	95
Responsibilities and Authority of the Boards.....	96
Responsibilities and Authority of Board Members	98
Responsibilities of the National Coordinating Council.....	99

Family Discipleship Rules

Governing Principles of the Family Discipleship Rules	101
Offenses Warranting the Excommunication of a Family Disciple	103
Offenses Warranting the Placing of a Family Disciple on Probationary Status	105
Childcare Discipline Guidelines	108
Designations of Family Publications	110
Driving Rules.....	111
Financial Rules	115
Health and Hygiene Rules.....	118
Home Life Rules	122
Home Meetings and Activities	125
Home Size Rules.....	128
Marital Separation Rules for Couples with Children.....	131
Marriage Rules	132
Outreach Rules.....	136
Prophecy Rules.....	137
Rules Governing Attached Missionary Membership to a Family Discipleship Home.....	139
Sex and Affection Rules.....	142
Smoking and Drinking Rules	147
Voting and Election Rules	149
Word Rules..	157
World Services Reporting Rules.....	158

Charter Procedures

Procedure for a New Disciple Joining a Family Discipleship Home.....	160
Procedure for a Young Returnee Rejoining a Family Discipleship Home	164
Procedure for a Missionary Member Moving into a Family Discipleship Home.....	166
Procedure for a Missionary Member Home Becoming a Family Discipleship Home.....	168
Procedure for a Fellow Member Moving into a Family Discipleship Home.....	171
Procedure for a Fellow Member Becoming an Attached Missionary Member	173
Procedure for Using the Right of Mobility	174
Procedure for Granting or Denying Clearance	180
Procedure for Withdrawing Permission to Remain in a Country	182
Procedure for Defining a Metropolitan Area	183
Procedure for Opening a Home in a City or Metropolitan Area with a Family Discipleship or Missionary Member Home.....	185
Procedure for Becoming a Service Home.....	187
Procedure for Selecting a Board Chairperson	188
Procedure for Appointing a Board Member	189
Procedure for the Removal of a Board Member	191
Procedure for Designating or Revoking Sensitive Country Status.....	188
Procedure for a Home to Revoke a Person's Membership in the Home.....	195
Procedure for Placing a Family Discipleship Home on Probationary Notice.....	197
Procedure for Placing a Family Disciple on Home Censure	200
Procedure for Placing a Family Disciple on Probationary Status	202
Procedure for Moving a Family Discipleship Home to Missionary or Fellow Membership.....	204
Procedure for Moving a Family Disciple to Missionary or Fellow Membership	205
Procedure for Relinquishing Family Discipleship	208
Procedure for Revoking a Family Disciple's Family Membership	209
Procedure for Excommunicating a Family Disciple	211

Family Discipleship Board Criteria

Children and Parenting Board Criteria 213
 Church Growth and Outreach Board Criteria 217
 Coaching and Shepherding Board Criteria 220
 Communications and Community Relations Board Criteria 224
 Education Board Criteria 225
 Youth Services Board Criteria 230

Family Board Structure

Overview 234
 The Boards 237
 The Board Councils 239

Board Procedures

Frequency of Board and Council Meetings 242
 Oversight of the Boards 243
 Veto Power 244
 Conflicts 245
 Vetoing Decisions Made by a Board 246
 Reporting 247
 Organizing Events with Homes 248
 Board Meeting Rules of Order 249

Board Portfolios

Children and Parenting Board 255
 Church Growth and Outreach Board 257
 Coaching and Shepherding Board 260
 Communications and Community Relations Board 262
 Education Board 264
 Youth Services Board 266

Appendices

The Family International's Statement of Faith 269
 Definition of a Family Discipleship Pioneer Home 277
 20-Month Minimum Responsibility Guidelines 278
 Requirements for General and Active Members 289

Dad's Foreword

Three weeks before Dad's homegoing, he read the first edition of the *Love Charter*, making his corrections, suggestions, and additions. He then wrote the following note on his copy of the *Charter* and gave it to those of us who were working on it.

Wow! It's humongous! It took me three days just to proofread! Thanks! ILY! Terrific!—Almost terrifying!—Ha! PTL!! Tough!—But needed. It certainly is strict and specific!—I'd like to write a foreword explaining the need and the scriptural basis and precedents. OK?—Thanks! GBY!

In the days following, during Dad's regular class time with the Home, he went on to say:

Do you want to know what I think about this Charter? I agree that it's needed. In the long run, every government and even every major denomination found out they had to have a constitution or a charter, some body of law that governs them. That's what our Charter is: It's a constitution. It's our body of laws that you refer to when you have a problem. Our Family leadership felt we needed to have a basic body of laws so that when the Homes have a problem on any particular subject they can look it up and find out what the rule is.

Every government, every denomination, every organization always winds up in the long run finding out that they've got to have a body of laws to which the people can refer: "This is what we stand for. This is the way we see it. This is what we think is the right thing to do."—And now we've got it.

Your leaders have worked very hard to go through the MO Letters to find out what I've said about this or what the Lord said about that, and they've included it in the Charter. Our Charter is a summation of the way we should run our Homes and conduct ourselves, our rules.—The Revolutionary Rules! We've had them before, but they were briefer; they only covered one page when I wrote them! Ha!—Well, I must admit the Family was a lot smaller and less difficult to govern then.

This Charter should be helpful to our Family when they have problems. It should help make it easier for them to find solutions. Just about everything is covered in that Charter! I don't know anything they didn't cover.

A few days later he said:

We don't expect everybody to understand everything that's in the Charter, but it's there to refer to if there are any matters of controversy. But I do think we are going to have to require every shepherd to be familiar with it because they need to enact it, and the over-shepherds need to act as judges, helping to judge situations as they arise.

David Brandt Berg
Portugal, Autumn 1994

More from Dad (received later in prophecy):

Every rule in the Charter was based on "What would be the most loving thing to do?" Every person, every leader, every shepherd, no matter what the rule must ask himself, "Am I applying and administering this rule in love?" No matter how loving the rules were intended to be, if it's not administered in love, it has

lost its usefulness. It is null and void. You have lost the Spirit. You do not have the Lord's love. The most important thing is love.

[The Family] needs to study the Charter and understand the spirit of the Charter. It's a Love Charter! The only way it can bring forth the fruit that the Lord wanted it to bring forth is if it's put into practice in love and humility with everybody choosing to serve one another in love.

You've made it possible for all people to be judged fairly, against the same standard, no question; everybody knows what is expected. They also know if they cross over those lines, that there are rules and judgments in place. This is fair. It's equitable. So use it! Tell those that question, "You just do what the Charter says to do."

If these who sin are not judged in some way—corrected and chastened—it chips away the truth of the Charter—the veracity of it, the strength of it—it begins to lose its effect, for people must see that it is equitable.

You shepherds must have conviction to do that which is right. You must uphold the standard, the Word—not a false standard, but the standard of the Word, the standard laid out in the Charter, the standard of love based on the Word of God. People will respect you if you stand for the Word and if you show them love.

Preface to the Third Edition

Dear Family,

It's been over thirteen years since the first edition of the Family International's *Love Charter* was published in 1995. We're thankful to see that it has stood the test of time and opened the way for Family members around the world to follow the Lord in their lives and ministries, and operate according to their faith.

During these past years the Family has faced many battles and struggles, won many victories, and has grown wonderfully as a result. Each battle has helped propel the Family forward on our mission of reaching the world with the Lord's love and making disciples of all nations.

The Family has matured. The Lord has put the pressure on at times. He's demanded a lot of us and has insisted that we rise to each occasion—and He's always given us the means to do so through His Word and the spiritual weapons available to us. We've had to stretch our faith collectively and as individuals. We've had to make decisions of commitment to do whatever was necessary to build the Family into the fighting, victorious force it's meant to be, no matter what the cost or sacrifice. We've learned and have made the right decisions, as individual disciples and as a body, and as a result the Family of today is different than the Family of even just a few years ago.

The Lord now expects more of the Family than He did a few years ago or even just six months ago. We're more accountable now, we understand what's required of us, we understand how our Homes should operate, we have the spiritual and practical tools to do the job we've been called to do, and we have the blessing of knowing what the consequences are when we don't follow through on what's expected of us.—Put all that together with Family members' determination, commitment, and desire to obey the Lord fully, and the end result is progress.

The goal is not to perfect ourselves or our Homes, but rather to preach the Gospel to every creature, make disciples of all nations, proclaim and spread the truths we've been given as the children of David, overrun the Enemy's strongholds, and defeat him in the war for the hearts and souls of men. We're all members of the Lord's army and we're all in this together. The Lord's challenges apply to every one of us. We each have our place or position in the army. We all must train and prepare to fight upcoming battles.

This third edition of the *Charter* encapsulates the changes that the Family has gone through these past years. It includes all the amendments that have been published in GNs, notices, and LNFs since the 1998 edition, and many further changes and adjustments that reflect the Family's restructuring. We trust this new and updated *Charter* will be an aid and inspiration to you, as well as a testimony to the world of how Jesus has led us to manage the Family and to live discipleship in this day and age.

Peter Amsterdam

Editor's Note: The third version of the *Charter* is a substantial update to "Charter v2 with Amendments." However, it's important to note that although v3 of the *Charter* reflects changes within the Family up to the time of its online publication in October 2009, it does not reflect all aspects of the Change Program. Version 3 brings the *Charter* up to date with the Family's restructuring and changes since version 2 and will be subject to further change as the Change Program develops.

October 2009

Preface to the Previous Editions

The *Love Charter*—God’s Call to a Love Revolution!

(Excerpts from ML #2963)

Dear Family—each one of you who is so precious and means so much to me, to Dad, and to the Lord!

I asked my heavenly teamwork—my precious Jesus and my wonderful David, “What do You want me to tell the Family about the *Charter*?”

“Tell them that it is our gift of love to them,” came the reply. “It is the means by which they can be set free to truly love. It is My Word and the heart of David, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. Tell My Family that this *Charter* is a set of loving rules to help them to be happy, and to set them free from rules, to give them the right to love, rules to give them the responsibility to love. Tell them that it is our love for them.”

As you read and study this *Charter*, ask the Lord to help you feel the spirit of it—to help you to see Dad’s heart and life in its pages, the whole essence of what he and the Lord mean the Family to be. See it as a guide to direct us to the basics—the basics of love.—To love the Lord with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our mind; to love each other and bear each others’ burdens; to love our children and train them in the way they should go; and to love the lost by sharing the love of Jesus with them. Our *Charter* is a guidebook to help us lovingly live the Words of David.

The *Charter* is the mechanism by which we can live the Law of Love. You are being offered a vehicle that can transport you into a wonderful life of love! It is a structure that can help us do a better job of loving. On the other hand, if you see it only as an “end” and not as a “means to an end” it could then seem only a humongous list of rules and regulations, that, even though they were in the Letters all the time, have finally caught up with you, and will now have to be conformed to!

As always, the letter of the law is dead and cold without the Spirit. For example, God’s great love gift of salvation is used by some Christians to bless the world by sharing His love with the lost, while others use it to hinder the world through bondage to the legalism of the law, thus making His love of none effect.

Likewise, this *Charter* can be used as a vehicle to propel you to heights of love you’ve never known, or it can bring further bondage and unhappiness. The Lord said, “The *Charter* was made for the Family and not the Family for the *Charter*.” We will never set the world free with love if we are bound by the law. The fulfillment of the law must be love.

When you read the *Charter*, when you study it, when you think of it, when you apply it, think of love. It is our *Love Charter*, given by the Lord and Dad in love, written by Peter and our teamworkers in love, then labored over by your leadership in love, and studied and prayed over by many other Family members in love.

Now is the time not to just read about love, nor talk about it, nor call ourselves by it, but to do it! We believe that the *Charter* will help to bring this about. It will help you to have a truly happy Home, with loving and fulfilled mothers, fathers, young people and children who feel so happy and loved that their joy and peace and enthusiasm for life overflows on all they meet, as they go out with broken hearts to find Jesus’ sheep, who they can heal with His love.

Loving people is not time wasted. It benefits everyone. It gives happiness, joy, comfort, and security to those involved personally, and to those whom their lives touch. Your investment in loving others will reap great dividends and will touch and change many.

Maria David
Portugal, January 1995

Explanatory Notes

The *Family Discipleship Charter*, also known as the *Charter* (and previously known as the *Love Charter*), is written for Family disciples and Family discipleship Homes.

The *Missionary Member Statutes* and the *Fellow Member Statutes* are the governing documents for the Family's Missionary and Fellow members, respectively, and are separate from the *Family Discipleship Charter*. Each of these governing documents cover the code of conduct and procedure that members are expected to adhere to within their circle of membership. May they help guide us all to fulfill Jesus' two most important commandments: to love God and our fellow man.

The *Charter* defines the rights and responsibilities of members, the methods to be used in the governing of Family discipleship Homes, and the responsibility and authority of all levels of Family leadership. The rule that should be emphasized above all is the Law of Love. We should strive to make the Law of Love the cardinal rule by which we abide when fulfilling our responsibilities, when obeying the rules, and when exercising our rights.

While the *Charter* codifies the rules and procedures by which the discipleship Family is governed, the *Charter* is not meant to override, bind, or usurp the Word. It is rather meant to reflect the Word that is ever new and moving us forward in spirit. When interpreting the meaning of the clauses and rules in the *Charter*, we must do so in light of the New Wine. Fully living the Word is a prerequisite for discipleship within the Family.

The following explanations will help in the study of this document:

Format: the *Charter* is presented in two levels. The first, in **bold text**, are the root clauses, followed by the explanations in normal text. The root clauses carry more weight than the explanations because the clauses are the precisely worded statutes that make up the core of the *Charter*. Explanations are included where needed to clarify and help to catch the spirit or intent of the root clauses. There are examples, scenarios, and sometimes quotations from the Letters or WS advisories included within many of the explanations to help illustrate the practical application of the root clauses. Obviously, these examples do not cover every situation, nor are they meant to be laws in themselves. They are simply meant to help convey the spirit of the rule itself.

Age designation: although the application of the *Charter* is for Family disciples 16 years and older, older children, particularly 12- to 15-year-olds, should also gain a basic understanding of the "[Responsibilities of an Individual Family Disciple](#)" and age-appropriate parts of the "[Family Discipleship Rules](#)." The children's parents and shepherds should be teaching them to live by the general principles of behavior codified therein.

Local laws: the *Charter* covers the Family International's religious beliefs and policies for Family disciples worldwide. Since laws vary greatly from country to country, it's not possible to ensure that all *Charter* policies strictly conform to the laws in every country in which Family disciples reside. Family disciples and discipleship Homes should be mindful of the laws regarding their activities in the countries in which they reside.

"Responsibilities and Rights of Family Disciples and Discipleship Homes": defines the responsibilities that Family disciples, Family discipleship Homes, and Family leadership are expected to live up to as the standard of discipleship. It also explains the rights of the individual Family disciple and of parents and children, and includes the rights of a Family discipleship Home.

"Responsibilities and Authority of Family Leadership and Services": defines the responsibilities and authority of international and regional Family leadership, councils, and desks.

"Family Discipleship Rules": a summary of all Family rules and guidelines both for Family disciples and Family discipleship Homes.

"Charter Procedures": contains the various procedures that Family disciples, Family discipleship Homes, and Family leadership are expected to follow for everything from accepting new disciples into a Home, to granting or denying clearances, to movement between circles of Family membership, and more.

"Family Discipleship Board Criteria": contains the six board criteria, which define the standard for Family discipleship Homes within each of the six Family boards. The Family discipleship Home review is based on these criteria.

"Family Board Structure": from the former *Family Board Handbook*, expands upon the Family's original structure and is in place to service the Homes.

Appendices: a compilation of supplementary material.

Definitions and Explanation of Terms

Accounts payable: financial obligations owed to others that are due on given dates.

Accounts receivable: funds owed to you by others that are due to be received on given dates.

Activated program: for preaching the Gospel and feeding those interested with the Word through: 1) distribution of Family products and publications; 2) personal witnessing and soul-winning; 3) signing people up as subscribers or regular readers of the *Activated* magazine; 4) building an enduring local missionary work through the follow-up of those met, feeding them the Word, and bringing those with continued interest through the *12 Foundation Stones* and *12 Bridges* courses to a level of service that reflects their faith and commitment such as General membership, Active membership, Missionary membership, or Family discipleship.

Activated readers: subscribers to the *Activated* magazine or those who receive the *Activated* magazine on a monthly basis from a Home; this category is not considered a circle of Family membership.

Active member (AM): a Family member who has completed the *12 Foundation Stones* course; receives *Link*, the Family's monthly membership magazine; regularly fellowships with a Home; works and witnesses with the Family in some way; and contributes in some capacity via his support of a Family Home.

Age: when specified, such as "18 years of age," it always means those who have passed the birthday of the age stated.

Applicable liabilities: determined by whether the Home continues to benefit from the reason the loan was taken or purchase was made. An item or loan that the Home is making payments on and will continue to benefit from after a member departs may not be considered a liability the departing member is responsible for.

Area business manager (ABM): appointed by the regional shepherds, as may be necessary, to help supply administrative and financial services for a regional area.

Area referendum: voting procedure called for by a regional council on matters pertaining to a specific area or country.

Assets: all of a person's or Home's monetary reserves, surpluses, cash, accounts receivable, and material belongings.

Attached Missionary member (AMM): a Missionary member who does not live in a Missionary member Home, but who is attached to and reports and tithes to a Family discipleship or Missionary member Home, and is therefore included as an attached Missionary member on that Home's eTRF.

Board chairperson: one who coordinates a board, presides at board meetings, handles the board's communications, manages the board's day-to-day affairs, and ensures that the decisions of the board are implemented; the chairperson has the same voting rights as the other members of the board. Boards may be co-chaired.

Board committee: a group of board members assigned by a board to perform specific tasks or functions for the board; it may consist of board and/or non-board members, or both.

Board criteria: a set of criteria used to quantify the standard for Family discipleship or Missionary membership in each aspect of Family life covered by the board pillars. The board criteria for each board's portfolio can be found in their respective sections of the Family Discipleship Charter or Missionary Member Statutes.

Board member: a Family disciple or Missionary member, age 18 or above, who has been appointed to a board.

Board pillar: vertical structure of each of the six Family boards, including the international, regional, and in most cases the national level.

Board pillar representative: elected by the Home to be mindful of the criteria for the board he represents, to study the board handbooks and practical how-to pubs for that board, and to help raise the awareness in the Home about any Home lacks or needs regarding that pillar and the Home's ability to pass Home Review in that pillar.

Board secretary: person that prepares the agenda, records the minutes of the meeting, and keeps on file all official memos and reports made by the board; elected by the board from among its members.

Board treasurer: person who manages the finances of the board, keeping detailed accounts of all income, expenditures, and transactions made by the board; elected by the board from among its members.

Charter, The: common name for this *Family Discipleship Charter*.

Children: those under the age of 16.

Children and Parenting board (CP board): Family board pillar that assists parents, teachers, and Homes with counsel and prayer in regards to the care of their children, from birth through age 11, and offers training and counsel for parents and teachers; also offers counsel on health matters in the Home.

Church Growth and Outreach board (CGO board): Family board pillar that focuses on all aspects of the Family's witnessing, including reaching the world with the Gospel; doing follow-up and carrying out the Activated program; teaching non-live-in members; charitable projects and other outreach ministries; and distributing Family products and publications for the general public.

City: refers to an actual city, town, or village, not a metropolitan area.

Closed city: a city closed to further opening of Homes without regional council approval.

Closed metropolitan area: a metropolitan area where the opening of further Homes is not permitted without regional council approval.

Coach: a member of the Coaching and Shepherding board appointed by the regional shepherds to guide and counsel Home steering councils in their coaching circle concerning the shepherding and care of their Home.

Coach Training Program: a training program explaining the aspects of the job of a coach through a series of audio and video classes, and ongoing training through the coach website.

Coaching and Shepherding board (CS board): Family board pillar that provides training to the Home shepherds via the coaching program, focuses on the spiritual state of the Homes via the Coaching and Shepherding board criteria, and provides spiritual training for young adults; the regional board chairpersons are responsible to oversee and manage the shepherding desk of their region.

Comments and Suggestions: sent in by Family Homes on their monthly eTRF.

Common pot: an area fund to which all Family discipleship and Missionary member Homes have agreed by referendum to donate 3% of their monthly income to be used for such things as board structure; administrative, coaching, and shepherding support; regional services; local area projects, meetings, and fellowships; and special help to needy situations.

Communications and Community Relations board (CCR board): Family board pillar that promotes the Family's good name, assists Homes in the event of persecution, handles issues pertaining to contact with the media and officials, and offers advice on Family-related legal matters upon request.

Current operating expenses: total of the current month's rent, communications, utilities, food, transportation, and all other regular monthly expenses incurred in the normal running of a Home.

Debt: overdue or non-payment of any non-Family or Family financial obligations, including those to Family Production Centers, Family businesses, Family Homes, or other Family members. Credit given or payments to be made over time, do not count as debts, but as liabilities. However, defaulting on those scheduled payments results in the liability becoming a debt.

Declaration of Intent: to be read by new Active and General members, to help them understand what they are going into when considering to be a part of the Family.

Designated gift: a financial gift given for a specific purpose. Such donations must be used as designated by the donor.

Designated representative (DR): appointed for a specified time and purpose by a regional shepherd, whose authority extends only as far as outlined by the regional shepherd or the shepherding desk.

Education board (ED board): Family board pillar that focuses on the education of Family members by providing counsel, assistance, information, and resources, when available, to help the parents, teachers, and Homes with their education needs.

Education resource center: maintained by the ED board in each region to make educational materials and resources available to the national boards and Homes in the region.

eTRF (electronic Tithers' Report Form): to be completed monthly by Family Homes as instructed by their reporting office.

Excommunication: a disciplinary action administered by the regional shepherds, excluding a Family member from membership for specific infractions, and disallowing the excommunicated member from receiving literature designated for Family members only. Regional shepherds can also disallow contact with Family members, other than the excommunicated member's personal family, and with Family Homes.

Family Aid Fund (FAF): fund to which all Family discipleship and Missionary member Homes have agreed by referendum to donate 1% of their monthly income to be used for such things as pioneer gifts, HER funds, Tool Fund gifts, Homegoing gifts, Home loans, baby bonuses, and medical emergencies. World Services also donates 10% of its monthly income to this fund.

Family boards: a leadership and administrative structure consisting of six pillars—Children and Parenting (CP), Church Growth and Outreach (CGO), Coaching and Shepherding (CS), Communications and Community Relations (CCR), Education (ED), and Youth Services (YS)—by which initiatives for making progress within each pillar can be generated by those involved at the national, regional, and/or international levels.

Family disciple (FD): a Family member who lives communally in a Family discipleship Home and fulfills the membership requirements in the *Charter*.

Family Discipleship Charter, The (commonly known as the Charter): the official Family document that defines Family membership for Family disciples, and the foundation structure of the Family's government.

Family discipleship Home: Family disciples who live together communally, fulfill the requirements of the Charter, and receive their mailings and publications from World Services.

Family Home: where Family disciples or Missionary members reside together; a Family community.

Family International, The (commonly known as the Family): Christian and missionary fellowship that includes various circles of association and membership.

Family International's Statement of Faith, The: a comprehensive listing and basic explanation of the Family's fundamental beliefs, which all Family disciples, Missionary members, Fellow members, and Active members should believe.

Family outreach publications and/or products: written, audio, or video products intended for distribution to the general public; also referred to as outreach tools.

Family Policy Council (FPC): advisory body made up of the regional shepherds, the international board chairpersons, and others appointed by World Services Leadership to formulate and determine Family policy, subject to approval by World Services Leadership.

Family shepherds: Home shepherds, coaches, and the regional shepherds.

Family spokesperson: appointed by a regional council and the regional Communications and Community Relations board to speak on behalf of the Family International. The International Media Desk may also appoint a spokesperson to represent the Family in place of a regional spokesperson.

Fellow member (FM): a Family member who fulfills the membership requirements of the *Fellow Member Statutes*.

Fellow Member Statutes: official document, previously known as the "Fellow Member Statement," defining Fellow member responsibilities, rights, and the governance and standard required for Fellow members and their Homes.

Fundamental Family beliefs: biblical and revealed beliefs which Family disciples must believe and practice to retain Family discipleship.

General member (GM): associated with the Family through receiving Family literature regularly and/or working with the Family on missionary or humanitarian projects and who have agreed by consent to the general membership Declaration of Intent. General members contribute via gifts, goods, or tithes to a Family Home in some capacity; they are part of a Family Homes' congregation, though are not members of the Home itself.

Good News magazine (GNs): official World Services flagship publication for Family members, which is the primary source of spiritual instruction and guidance, policy, and direction for the Family.

Guardian: person specifically authorized by a child's parents to assume the responsibility of the parents in their absence.

Home censure: disciplinary measure given to a Home member by a simple majority of the Home council for infractions to "Responsibilities of an Individual Family Disciple" or the "Family Discipleship Rules."

Home council: body of the Home's voting members.

Home council meeting: held by a majority of the Home's members to pray, discuss, and decide matters related to the running of the Home.

Home Emergency Reserves (HER): reserve funds made available to Family discipleship and Missionary member Homes for use in the cases of an emergency.

Home manager (HM): elected to the Home's Steering council to manage the operational and practical aspects of the Home and help the Home in fulfilling the practical aspects of the Charter and board criteria.

Home Manager Training Program (HMTP): training course of audio and text classes on Home management which Home managers are required to work through.

Home regulations: Home rules adopted by a simple majority of the Home council which all Home members must adhere to.

Home review: examination process by which Family Homes are periodically reviewed and graded as to their performance within each of the six board pillars according to that board's criteria.

Home shepherd (HS): elected to the Home's steering council to shepherd the Home members and help to guide the Home in fulfilling the spiritual aspects of the *Charter*.

Home Shepherd Training Program (HSTP): training course of audio and text classes on different shepherding subjects, which Home shepherds are required to work through.

Home spokesperson: elected by the Home to represent the Home's local work or its affiliation with the Family International to the general public and any who inquire.

InfoStore: the Family's electronic publications library, replacing the HomeARC.

Intellectual property: original works of an author, artist, designer, composer, or producer.

International board (IB): the international level of the board structure, comprised of the international and regional board chairpersons and others appointed to the board by World Services Leadership.

International media desk (IMD): appointed by the international Communications and Community Relations board to coordinate media responses, provide media releases on international issues, and offer counsel to official Family spokespersons concerning media responses.

Junior teens: those 14 and 15 years old.

Legal age: when minors become legally recognized as adults in the country where they reside.

Liabilities: a person's or a Home's financial obligations, with specified terms of repayment.

Lit library: Home library containing Family literature and fully accessible to Family members, subject to circle of membership and age classifications. The electronic lit library, InfoStore, the previous HomeARC which InfoStore replaces, and the Family Members Only website (MO) are considered part of the Home's lit library.

Live-in non-Family young person: former-Family young person staying temporarily in a Family discipleship Home for a designated period of time while looking for employment or housing, or until able to adequately get set up elsewhere.

Mate: Someone committed to being together with another person, whether legally married or not. A mated couple is two people who consider themselves as each other's mate.

Members Only website (MO website): website for Family Homes and members for Family publications, notices, board news, photos, audio files, and testimonies. Family Homes or members are issued logons, passwords, and access levels based on their circle of membership, as determined by their eTRFs.

Metropolitan area: large city or urbanized area including adjacent suburbs and towns as defined by the regional council.

Minimum responsibility: 20-month period that a parenting teamwork, formed by a man and a single woman or a couple and a single woman, must parent together; from the time the single woman realizes she is pregnant until her child reaches his or her first birthday.

Missionary member (MM): Family member who fulfills the requirements of the *Missionary Member Statutes*.

Missionary member Home: individual Missionary member or multiple Missionary members living communally, who fulfill the requirements of the Missionary Member Statutes and report, tithe, and receive their mailings and publications from World Services; they may live with non-Family individuals, however, those individual's would not be considered part of the Missionary member Home.

Missionary Member Statutes: official document defining Missionary member responsibilities, rights, and the governance and standard required for Missionary members and their Homes.

MO Letters (MLs): letters of direction, counsel, policy, and inspiration to the Family. Primarily issued in the GNs and written for the most part by or commented on by Dad, Mama, or Peter.

Moderator: presides over a meeting and acts as a mediator in discussions; often the chairperson in a meeting of the board.

Motion: formal means of requesting that a matter or procedure be taken up by the board during a board meeting.

National: Family member who holds a passport to or has received nationalization from a country.

National area: specific geographical area, designated by the regional council and serviced by the national boards.

National board (NB): the national level of the board structure, comprised of members appointed from the Homes within the national area by the regional council that fulfills the responsibilities of national boards as outlined in the *Charter*.

National coordinating council (NCC): comprised of the chairpersons of the four national boards, as well as others the regional council may appoint, such as a Communications and Community Relations board representative, and a Coaching and Shepherding board representative; whose job is to coordinate schedules and activities planned by its national boards.

Net income: remaining funds after the Home deducts the 10% tithe, 1% FAF contribution, 3% common pot contribution, and seed corn amounts.

Preteens: those 12 and 13 years old.

Probation: disciplinary measure administered to Missionary members by the shepherding desk for *Missionary Member Statute* infractions for a specified period of time while allowing for continued membership. Repeat offenders may be subject to a change in status or excommunication.

Probationary notice (PN): 60-day notice given by the reporting office for a Home's late or missing eTRF, 10% tithe, 1% FAF gift, 3% common pot gift, or for not maintaining the minimum Home size; or given by the regional shepherds when a Home fails to live up to its membership responsibilities. If not rectified within the 60-day period the Home will lose its current membership status in the Family.

Probationary status (PS): disciplinary measure administered to Family disciples by the shepherding desk for *Charter* infractions allowing for continued membership but the loss of certain membership privileges. Repeat offenders may be subject to a change in status or excommunication.

Production center (PC): produces and/or provides outreach tools to the Homes; formerly called a Service Center or PPC.

Provisional disciple: new live-in Family member who has joined a Family discipleship Home for a designated trial period, after which he will become a full-fledged Family disciple with all the rights and responsibilities pertaining thereto.

Publications: includes printed literature, audio or video productions, e-publications, broadcast shows, websites.

Quorum: minimum number of members who must be present at a meeting before the meeting is considered "official"; for board and Home council meetings this will be a simple majority; for Home review criteria meetings this will be a two-thirds majority.

Regional area: geographical area designated by World Services, overseen by the regional shepherds and the regional council, and serviced by regional boards.

Regional board (RB): the regional level of the board structure, comprised of the chairperson(s) of each of the national boards for that pillar within the regional area and/or others appointed by the regional shepherds, and the regional board chairperson(s).

Regional council (RC): comprised of regional shepherds, the chairpersons of the six regional boards, the overseer of the regional desk, and any others appointed by the regional shepherds.

Regional desk (RD): handles regional communications and administrative services; the desks are overseen by their regional shepherds and their reporting office in matters pertaining to the administration of the region and its Homes.

Regional shepherd (RS): member of the Family Policy Council as well as a member of the regional council, appointed by World Services Leadership; regional shepherds are ultimately responsible for the shepherding and oversight of the Family in a regional area.

Reporting office (RO): administrative office where all Family Homes send their monthly TRFs and report their 10% tithe, and where Family discipleship and Missionary member Homes also report their 1% FAF gift, and 3% common pot contribution.

Road team: witnessing team that distributes Family publications and/or products, fundraises, and/or does follow-up while on the road and whose members all reside in a fixed Family Home and appear on their Home's eTRF.

Road team Home: reporting mobile Home with no permanent residence that is based within a specific region; they are required to have a coach, keep the "Home Size Rules" and all other Charter guidelines.

Seed corn: cost of distribution products, to be set aside each time a product is distributed in order to replenish the Home's stock.

Senior teens: those 16 and 17 years old.

Sensitive country: where political, religious, or cultural conditions may be potentially dangerous or problematic for the Family operating there, thus requiring specific guidelines on witnessing and/or Family activities.

Service Home: offers a service to the Family in a city, area, or internationally and is under the supervision of regional shepherds.

Sexual act: genital-genital contact, orogenital contact (between the mouth and genitals), or the intentional touching of the genitals to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of any person.

Sexual contact: intentional touching of the intimate parts of another person to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of any person, exclusive of "sexual acts."

Sexual interaction: anything sexual done with another person. This includes sexual acts, sexual contact, and deep kissing.

Shepherding desk (SD): handles regional Coaching and Shepherding board communications, Charter infractions, and shepherding-related matters within the region; they are overseen by the regional chairpersons of the Coaching and Shepherding board.

Simple majority: when the will of over 50% of the voting members determines the outcome.

Single parent: a parent with one or more children, who is not living with the child[ren]'s other parent.

Steering council (SC): comprised of the Home's shepherds and managers who guide the Home according to Family goals in the Word, the *Charter*, and the board criteria, as well as the goals and direction decided upon by the Home council.

Teen counselor: appointed by the Home to help shepherd and care for the Home's resident 12- to 17-year-olds and works in counsel with the Home's shepherds and the parents.

Teens: those 12 through 17 years old.

Tithe: 10% of a Home's cash income given to benefit the Lord's work, reported on the eTRF, and administered by World Services.

Tool Fund gift: a one-time gift given to all Family disciples and Missionary members from the Family Aid Fund to finance their initial purchase of witnessing materials.

Two-thirds majority: when the will of over 66.6% of voting members determines the outcome.

Voting member: Home member, age 16 years or above, who has fulfilled the requirements for Family discipleship.

Working reserves: up to, but not exceeding, one quarter of a Home's Home Emergency Reserves that a Home is permitted to use for needs other than for those covered by the Home Emergency Reserves provision with the stipulation that the complete loan must be paid back by the Home's April or October eTRF, whichever comes first.

World Services (WS): administrative body and publications arm of the Family.

World Services Administration (WS Admin): branch of World Services responsible for the Family's international administrative services.

World Services Finance Committee: committee within World Services that manages and/or oversees the distribution of the Family's tithes and gifts.

World Services Leadership (WSL): provides the Family with spiritual and practical leadership, determines Family doctrine and policy, and oversees World Services. Maria and Peter are the current World Services Leadership.

World Services Publications (WS Pubs): branch of World Services responsible for the production of all World Services publications.

Young adult (YA): those 18 through 20 years old.

Youth Services board (YS board): Family board pillar that provides activities and programs as well as discipleship and missionary training for Family young people ages 12 through 17, and where possible provides counsel and assistance to parents and Homes in the shepherding of their young people ages 12 through 17.

Responsibilities and Rights of Family Disciples and Discipleship Homes

The Family International is a Christian missionary movement dedicated to preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the world. Family members receive Jesus as their personal Savior and are baptized with the Holy Spirit. Additionally, Family disciples have chosen the Lord's call both to serve Him as disciples and to live communally in Family discipleship Homes, and therefore have responsibilities to both God and the Family, and certain rights guaranteed them in God's Word and our Family *Charter*.

Responsibilities and Rights of Family Disciples

Responsibilities of an Individual Family Disciple

"Responsibilities of an Individual Family Disciple" outlines what Family disciples are responsible to do if they wish to remain Family disciples. Of course, no one is perfect, and if at some time you fail in fulfilling some of these responsibilities it won't necessarily result in your losing Family discipleship. However, if you regularly fail to fulfill them, or violate or contravene them, you will be in danger of losing your Family discipleship.

A Family disciple should:

- A. Maintain a close connection with God through communion with Jesus and hearing from Him, prayer and praise, reading of His Word through both the Bible and the Letters, Scripture and Word memorization, and the minimizing and resisting of worldly, ungodly, and unedifying influences in his life; thus exhibiting the fruits of the Spirit, which are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance (Galatians 5:22–23).**

As Family disciples, each of us should strive to have a deep relationship with Jesus through prayer, praise, the written Word, and personal prophecy. As disciples we should pray and hear from the Lord, both individually and with others, and we should strengthen our spirits by spiritually feasting upon God's Word, privately and unitedly.

"The Lord is expecting a great deal from all of us, because 'unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more' (Luke 12:48). We are given an abundance of His love, His truth, and His Word. We must be the most well-fed Christians on Earth, and still the Lord continues to pour His Word bountifully upon us—both through the WS publications, as well as the Words you are personally receiving straight from our Husband and Lover. So with all that He gives us, He can certainly require that we work to achieve the spiritual goals He has set before us" (ML #3197:4).

Family discipleship is only for those who have made the decision to dedicate their lives to the Lord and His service as Family disciples, and to abide by the *Charter's* "[Responsibilities and Rights of Family Disciples and Discipleship Homes](#)" and "[Family Discipleship Rules](#)" in their entirety.

We should resist the Devil (James 4:7) by actively striving to minimize worldly, ungodly, and unedifying influences in our lives. These worldly, ungodly, and unedifying influences could be anything that pulls us away from the Lord or pollutes our spirit, mind, or heart with "junk food" of the spirit and hinders our connection with God. This would include reading unedifying or ungodly material, including pornographic material, in books, magazines, or on the Internet; watching of unedifying videos, movies, or TV; playing unedifying computer games; engaging in ungodly or unedifying communications; listening to ungodly music; browsing ungodly or unedifying Internet sites, using foul language, or engaging in other activities that are a reproach to the cause of Christ.

While not all novels, reading material, movies, TV, computer games, music, or Internet sites are necessarily ungodly or unedifying, and while undoubtedly in our day-to-day work and outreach we will come in contact with these influences, the excessive intake of any worldly influences is damaging to our discipleship, unedifying to our spirits, and thus we should minimize their influences in our lives.

The Lord said, "If you are to focus on the power of the keys, if you are to allow the words I speak to you to dictate your life, you must rid yourselves of all that stands in your way of this. Detach yourselves from other things that clutter your life—the cares of the world, the pride of life, anything that opposes My Word" (ML#3374:50). The excessive input of these worldly influences will weaken our spirits and hinder our connection with the Lord. Therefore we must minimize them in our lives in order to be the dropped-out disciples that Jesus has called us to be.

"If you are unsure about whether something is unedifying, go to the Word, go to the Lord, counsel with your shepherds and be open to what the Word, the Lord, and your shepherds say" (ML #3197:61). If you wish to keep your Family discipleship, you are required to minimize these influences in your life.

As with all other individual Charter responsibilities, discerning whether you are minimizing and resisting worldly, unedifying and ungodly influences in your life will be determined by the agreement of your Home shepherds and in some cases your Home council, and then the shepherding desk if a term of PS or reclassification may become necessary, not by you.

If other forms of Home and Charter shepherding and discipline have been exhausted and you are consistently not minimizing these worldly, ungodly, and unedifying influences, your Home will recommend your change to another circle of Family membership.

B. Believe that David was God's Endtime prophet, that Maria is God's chosen and anointed successor, who has inherited David's mantle as God's prophetess, and that Peter was commissioned by David and anointed by the Lord to work alongside Maria.

There are a number of differences between the churches and us, but the main one is that God gave us David, His Endtime Prophet, as our founder, shepherd, king, and leader. Through the years Dad trained Maria as his successor, and with his passing, the Lord has anointed her as His Prophetess, Shepherdess, "winetaster," and as the Family's queen. Years ago in prophecy through Dad the Lord said, "When David is taken from thee, you shall be known as a prophetess, and you shall be heeded as the Oracles of God and you shall become as another one—as the Prophetess of God!" (ML #111:22).

Not long before Dad went to be with the Lord, Dad also prayed for and commissioned Peter to carry on as the Family's king after he died. Dad prayed, "Jesus, bless Peter and anoint him for this task to carry on after me, And Mama, too, Lord. Anoint them, Jesus! Give them wisdom, Lord, and inspiration. Help them to hear Thy voice, that they may carry on to lead Thy people into the future" (ML #2993:40).

We know by the wonderful fruit of David's, Maria's, and Peter's ministries, the billions reached with the Gospel and the millions of souls saved through the Family, that they are called and chosen of God.

C. Believe and teach the Family's fundamental beliefs, both biblical and revealed, as published in the "Family International's Statement of Faith" or otherwise declared as such in a publication with an ML or GN number.

The Lord—through the Bible, Dad, Mama, and Peter—has poured forth an immense amount of teaching, training, guidance, spiritual truths, revelations, and direction. The Bible and the Letters embody our religious beliefs and doctrine. These beliefs vary in importance, but some are an integral and essential part of our faith, which as Family disciples we must believe and teach.

The "[Family International's Statement of Faith](#)" contains a listing and basic explanation of the Family's fundamental beliefs, including the following subjects: the Holy Scriptures, God and the Trinity, Creation, the fall of man, Jesus Christ the Son of God, salvation by grace, the Holy Spirit, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, gifts of the Spirit, the gift of prophecy, divine healing, keys of the kingdom, fruits of the Spirit, angels, departed saints, Satan and his demons, spiritual warfare, prayer, the Lord's Supper—communion, the Church: the fellowship of believers, the Great Commission, consecration, non-conformity to the world, discipleship, cooperative communal living, marriage and children, the sanctity of life, civil government and religious liberty, Jesus' Law of Love, perspective on sexuality, the Bride of Christ, and the Time of the End.

We also have other beliefs that are explained in published MLs, which we consider to be fundamental and essential. However, not every Letter or publication from World Services contains fundamental or essential beliefs. There are thousands of Letters that have been published on a myriad of subjects. Contained within these are a wide variety of teaching and revelations, dreams and spiritual experiences, and advice and counsel on both spiritual and practical matters. Some of these are fundamental and essential to our belief system and some are not.

For example, salvation by grace, eternal salvation, prophecy, and a belief in spiritual warfare, angels, and departed saints are all essential Family beliefs. You can't be a Family disciple unless you believe these truths. The same holds true with such doctrines as Creation, as outlined in Genesis, that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God, etc.

There are, however, times when Dad has made statements in the Letters to the effect of, "This is what I feel about this subject, but you don't have to believe it if you don't want to." Dad also had different hypotheses and theories on how things would play out in the Endtime. These speculations and scenarios were not considered fundamental Family beliefs, whereas Dad's direct revelation concerning our living in the Time of the End, which all Family members embrace, is essential.

As Dad said, "We all heartily agree on all the fundamentals and all the major doctrines and the things that are really essential. So we don't need to split theological hairs over some of these little things that I say. But what the Scripture says, that's it! You'd better agree with this!" (ML #2234:27).

D. Read the Bible, the Letters, and other Family publications, both old and new.

"Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Romans 10:17). In order to strengthen our faith, and to be in tune with the Lord and the directions that He is giving the Family, it is imperative that we read and study His Word, both the Bible and the Letters and other WS publications, as they contain a wealth of needed counsel, direction, and spiritual feeding.

For this reason it is required that members spend a minimum of 1½ hours daily in quality Word (private or united), praise, and personal communion with and hearing from the Lord, as outlined in the "Word Rules". This is not the recommended amount of personal time with the Lord; it is the minimum and should be quality time.

New disciples under one year in the Family must spend an additional one hour per day in the Word in order to complete study of the "Priority Reading List for a New Family Disciple or Missionary Member," as well as the *12 Bridges* course, if they did not complete it before becoming a Family disciple, and to complete their basic memory work.

E. Live in accordance with the Word by applying the spiritual and practical counsel given in the Letters to his daily life.

Not every Letter contains material that is designated to be a fundamental or essential belief. Every Letter does, however, contain spiritual or practical guidance, counsel, and instruction, which as Family disciples you are expected to conscientiously apply to your life and Home.

The *Charter* is not meant to override, bind, or usurp the Word, but is rather meant to reflect the Word and the authority of the Letters, and the role the Lord expects the Letters to have in guiding the Family. The "Responsibilities of Individual Family Disciples" is written in a way that is meant to go hand in hand with the Word as it comes out. These responsibilities express the discipleship life, and are for the most part, broad enough to continue to go hand in hand with GNs now and in the future as new direction from the Lord is given.

This means that when looking at a GN that articulates the Lord's will in some matter, instead of seeing it from the point of view of, "The *Charter* doesn't say we specifically have to do this," it should be looked at like, "The Lord says we need to do this, so let's see which responsibility of individual Family disciples, or which responsibility of the Family discipleship Home this falls under." There is a Charter clause that can be applied to pretty much every issue addressed in the GNs.

Of course, there are certain older Letters and publications written years ago that no longer apply in the same way today as they did then, as our God is a moving God and He guides us to change our methods and modes of operation and outreach according to the need of the day. The Letters continue to contain God's counsel for the Family for today, and as Family members we should do our best to please God by following His guidance as He pours it out to us in His Word.

F. Live by the principles of the Law of Love: to love and care for and interact lovingly and harmoniously with all members of the Home in which he resides and with Family members at large.

Dad succinctly explained the Law of Love in this way: "'Love doeth thy neighbor no harm,' for 'thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself': This is God's Law of Love! 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.' 'Against such love there is no law.' This is the Lord's Law of Love. Obey it and you can have total love, life and liberty in the Lord. These are God's conditions [Romans 13:10; Matthew 22:39; 7:12; Galatians 5:22–23]" (ML #302C:15).

Many have the idea that the Law of Love concerns only sexual matters. This is not so. The Law of Love governs all of our actions. It's the foundation of our unity and is the basis for all of our Family rules, rights, and responsibilities. This clause in the *Charter* is one of the most important, as it sets the tone for all that is to follow and influences all our interactions with each other.

The Law of Love is further defined in the GN series on the Law of Love (MLs #3201–3212) as well as in the Family Statement, "God's Law of Love—The Family's Foundation Principle." "The Law of Love is the guiding principle of our lives; it's what everything we do should be based on. The Lord says, 'You must learn the gift of encouragement. That's a very major part of My Law of Love.'—And what about comfort, simplicity, preferring one another, doing a little extra for your brother or sister, sympathy, compassion, and feeling the pain which others suffer? These are all important parts of the Law of Love as well" (ML#3201:24).

Living the Law of Love includes engaging in loving communications and refraining from gossip. Blurting out everything you know or everything you may have heard about a person or a situation can quickly develop into harmful rumors or gossip. This is not love, and the "pastor's pillow" effect of gossip can be very harmful.

It also includes living in unity with others, both in your Home and with the Family at large. The *Charter* grants a number of rights for our members to allow them to operate according to their faith. It also gives each individual authority over what happens in his Home through his right to vote on all Home decisions. The reason for these rights is not to create a "me first" attitude, where we put "our rights" above all other concerns. Unselfish love, the love that puts the needs of others before our own, the great love that lays down its life for others, the Love of God in our hearts, is the heart and soul of this Charter. Without love, it is just a listing of rules, regulations, and laws.

If we implement the *Charter* without love we will become an organization with members who are looking out mainly for themselves. If the Charter rules are followed with the main ingredient being the Love of God, it will result in a strong Family, with wise, loving, and full of faith brothers and sisters. Living the *Charter* is a test of our spiritual maturity. Daily we are faced with situations in which we have to decide if we are going to put our individual wants and desires above the needs of others, measuring our spiritual maturity by our prayerfulness, our unselfishness, and our love for others.

When we vote on matters within the Home, we must vote according to what we believe is God's will, and what is the loving and godly thing to do. Remember the Law of Love: "Love doeth thy neighbor no harm." With the *Charter*, we are each responsible to live the Law of Love. "By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love one to another" (John 13:35).

G. Engage in evangelism.

The Lord's Great Commission to all Christians is to "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). We have answered that call, and as such, we have a commitment to win others to Jesus by dedicating ourselves to the goal of preaching the Gospel to every creature.

The definition of evangelism is "zealous preaching and dissemination of the Gospel, such as through missionary work." We feel this is the appropriate way to express the concept of both witnessing to the unsaved and follow-up feeding, which includes teaching the Word to those who are saved. If you were in a situation where you had many sheep that were already saved and you were teaching them regular classes, you might not consider that "witnessing," but it would be considered evangelism. The main point is that we must all be working to "preach the Gospel to every creature."

"Engaging in evangelism" must be interpreted in light of the Word for today. For example, when the *Charter* was first written, the Activated program and the emphasis on follow-up and feeding the sheep didn't exist. So "engaging in evangelism" then did not include the Activated program and our present distribution materials, or our present methods of follow-up and teaching. Now it's very clear that the Lord is intent on the Family using the Activated program and follow-up in order to build well-rounded missionary works, so when interpreting the meaning of "engage in evangelism" today, we have to do so in light of the New Wine as reflected in the "Church Growth and Outreach Board."

H. Have a working knowledge of and live in accordance with the *Charter*.

Since the *Charter*, interpreted through the New Wine, defines your responsibilities, rights, and the rules that you must follow to be Family disciples, you should have a basic working knowledge of this document. This doesn't mean that one need to become an expert on the intricacies of the *Charter*, but neither will anyone be able to claim ignorance of the law if they fail to obey it.

WS has compiled and clearly explained in the *Charter* the Family's responsibilities and rights, as well as the rules, and it is each member's responsibility to familiarize themselves with them.

I. Reside in a Family discipleship Home and appear each month on a Family discipleship Home's monthly eTRF without exception.

This is further outlined in "[World Services Reporting Rules](#)," "[Procedure for Defining a Metropolitan Area](#)," and "[Home Size Rules](#)."

J. Share his material belongings with the Family in general and with the Home where he resides in particular by contributing his income to the Home's common finances according to Acts 2:44–45.

- 1. A Family disciple is responsible to be a good steward of any materials entrusted to his use or care.**

2. While 16- to 17-year-olds are not held responsible for the Home's financial decisions and obligations, they are still required to live according to Acts 2:44–45 when it comes to funds they raise or donations they receive.

Our Family believes in Acts 2:44–45: "All that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need." This is an essential verse in our Family way of life, as it governs the use and ownership of our material possessions. The goal of these verses—and of their companion verses, Acts 4:34–35, which say that "Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need"—is that everyone should have what he needs and that those who have more than they need should lovingly share it with those who lack.

"We are doing what the Lord wanted the Church to do in the first place, and which the Church did in the first place, in the days of the Early Church where they lived communally and 'no man called anything his own' (Acts 4:32) and 'owed no man anything save to love him' (Romans 13:8) and shared all things, just as it says in Acts 2.—They really lived communally and it worked, like it's working with us, because of the Lord and our love and sacrificial service and wanting to help others and help each other" (ML #2342:25).

As disciples, we share our material belongings with one another so that we will all have the things that we need and that no one will be in want. In some cases the word "share" would mean to "give"; in other cases it would mean to "make available for others to use."

If you are truly sharing all things, the management of the gifts, donations, and income individuals receive should not result in "haves" and "have nots." According to Acts 4:34–35, when members of the Home receive additional personal income it doesn't mean that they should keep it solely toward their own needs. The Home member should make their gift known to the Home to consider the needs of the overall Home and his fellow disciples, rather than just his own needs or wants.

When truly living Acts 2:44–45, rather than by the "split finances" or "personal quota" modes of operation—which result in certain Home members having personal funds which other Home members are not aware of—while the money may not all be physically handed over to the Home's bookkeeper, the finances have been declared in full and have been given to the Home in spirit, and the recipient of the funds is willing to counsel about their use and is yielded to considering the collective needs of the Home over his own wants. So in essence, the Home, as a body, knows the income these individuals have received, and the Home, as a body, decides together whether these individuals can keep all or a portion of such income.

The area of material possessions can be a real test of our love, unselfishness, and faithfulness. Do we have enough love to supply the needs of others by the giving of those things we have to fill their need? Are we unselfish enough to give even though it hurts, or conversely to refuse to receive an item because we know the giver needs it more than ourselves? Are we faithful stewards of the things we use?

Whatever material possessions you or the Home have ultimately belong to the Lord, and it is your responsibility to take good care of them, to be a faithful steward of them. When you have need of something and someone shares it with you, whether by allowing you to use it, or by giving it to you, it is your responsibility to take good care of it.

At times, questions will arise concerning to whom some item actually belongs. This will most often occur when someone is moving from a Home and wishes to take an item with them. In such cases the Home council should decide the matter by a two-thirds majority vote of the Home council, unless the items were previously agreed upon when the member joined the Home, or when the items were donated or purchased. Generally, with major items, the Home should consider what is best for the overall work.

We are expected to be good stewards over not only the Family's materials but also those things that are entrusted to our care by non-Family persons, such as rented housing, properties, and other materials. We need to be "faithful stewards and diligent caretakers of the materials, resources, properties, provisions, vehicles, etc., which the Lord gives or loans to us for His use!" (ML #197:23).

K. Conduct himself as a good Christian, showing outgoing love and concern for others and interact as lovingly and harmoniously as possible with all people.

As Christians and representatives of the Family, we are responsible to manifest the Lord's love to all men by being good samples of His love; to avoid actions, words, or attitudes that would stumble, hurt or confuse others, or reflect negatively on the Lord, His Word, or His work.

L. Fulfill his obligations and responsibilities, whether financial, legal, or otherwise. This includes handling finances or business dealings with other Family members in an honest and responsible manner.

An important part of your sample as a good Christian is to fulfill your obligations, legally, morally, financially, or otherwise, to others. For example, if someone lends you his vehicle, your duty as a good Christian is to return the vehicle in as good or better condition than when it was loaned to you. Or if you borrow a piece of equipment from someone and break it, the loving thing to do is to get it fixed or to replace it before returning it to him. Another example of fulfilling your obligations to others would be if you were to sell your car to another Family member. Your obligation to that person would be to ensure that you inform him of any defects or problems with the vehicle before selling it to him, and that he receives the title to the car, and that all other necessary paperwork is in order. Being faithful in business dealings with others—whether Family members or not—is an important part of your sample as a good Christian.

M. Fulfill the scriptural injunction to “bear one another’s burdens”—to put the needs of the Home and its members before his own.

God’s Word instructs us to “Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ” (Galatians 6:2). This is another Law of Love clause. As Jesus laid down His life for us, so we should lay down our lives daily for the brethren. As disciples, we should manifest our love one for another by doing all we can to make sure that we are aware of the physical, spiritual, and emotional needs of those around us, and we should do whatever we can to help care for them in their need. Since so much within the Home is decided by the Home’s voting members, it is even more important that we all are mindful of the burdens, hardships, battles, and needs of others in the Home, and that we are willing to put their needs and the good of the Home and building a winning team before our own wants and desires.

Dad said, “I always try to put myself in the other fellow’s shoes, and not expect any more of him than I would expect of myself, and not ask any more of him than I would want him to ask of me, were our positions reversed!” (ML #52:47).

N. Bear, with all other voting members of the Home, the spiritual, physical, material, educational, and financial responsibilities of the Home in which he resides.

Voting members have a great deal of authority in their Home through their right to vote. Throughout the *Charter* you’ll find that there are many issues that the Home is required to democratically vote on in order to decide a course of action. Because all voting members have the right to participate in deciding these matters, they are responsible for the results of their votes. So when a Home is doing poorly, either spiritually, physically, or economically, the blame will fall on the voting members of the Home, instead of solely on the Home’s steering council, because the policies of the Home are determined by the voting members and not only the steering council.

Though this clause is listed as one of the responsibilities of individual Family disciples, it should also be said here that the starting point for nurturing and living Family discipleship is the Home. While an individual may have the desire to be a disciple, the Home is where that discipleship is lived, and the discipleship lifestyle for the Family is defined by the unique qualities of that lifestyle that can only be lived out in a Family discipleship Home.

To provide the special sample of full-time discipleship the Lord has called us to, one must live in a Family discipleship Home, making the Home the foundation, springboard, and sample of modern-day discipleship as explained in the Words of David. The fruits of living the discipleship standard must be evident within the Home, and the only way for a Home to truly bring forth that fruit is if the individual members of the Home are disciples, together living the discipleship life. If the Home is not bringing forth the fruits of discipleship, that’s an indication the Home’s members are not disciples.

Our 16- to 17-year-olds are voting members of the Home and thus they, too, are equally responsible for the decisions of the Home and the outcome of those decisions. However, in the area of financial decisions there is a difference in the voting rights. Those 16 and 17 will not have a vote on the financial matters of the Home, but neither will they be held responsible for the Home’s debts and liabilities, as also explained in [“Rights of an Individual Family Disciple.”](#)

Even though our members under the age of 16, new disciples, and rejoining MMs or FMs are not yet voting members, you are encouraged to seek their opinions and participation in Home matters that concern them. Whenever practical and at the steering council’s discretion, our junior teens, new disciples, those on PS or HC, and rejoining MMs and FMs should be permitted to attend Home council meetings covering matters pertaining to them.

O. Actively participate in the governing and care of the Home in which he resides, which would include:

1. Accepting responsibility for the Home’s collective decisions and actions, and for the results of those decisions and actions.

2. **Living in accordance with the agreed-upon Home regulations and goals, and committing his resources, time, energy, knowledge, gifts, and talents towards reaching those agreed-upon goals.**
 - a. **If in disagreement and not willing to cooperate and support the joint decisions of the Home's voting members, voluntarily leaving the Home by moving to another Home or pioneering his own Home.**
3. **Performing, to the best of his ability, the duties and responsibilities assigned to him by the Home's duly elected steering council and accept shepherding by his Home shepherds.**

It is very important for Family disciples to fully understand that the Home in which they live belongs to all who live in it, and all voting members are expected to participate in its decision-making process. Your Home's steering council is only part of the membership of your Home, so your Home does not belong to the steering council; nor does your Home belong to levels of leadership above the Home; it's yours. As such, it is up to you to help govern your Home and make the decisions that affect it in order to have a winning team.

Because each Home member personally participates through voting in virtually all decisions governing all aspects of the Home, collectively each one bears responsibility for the outcome of those decisions. If the Home agrees to pursue some course of action and it later goes awry, then it is the Home's responsibility and each voting member of the Home is accountable. If things go so bad that the Home has to be corrected, all of the Home members will be corrected, not just the steering council. If the Home is mismanaged or becomes spiritually dead, then every person age 16 and over is responsible, because they elected their steering council and had a direct or indirect say in the decisions and resultant problems.

Home accountability means that each voting member of the Home bears responsibility for the goals, decisions, and functioning of the Home. The Home is the core of the Family. You have the right to participate in the governing of your Home, but you also bear responsibility for those decisions. It's because of this responsibility that you should feel obligated to participate in the decision-making process in the Home. Each one needs to be involved and to pray about the matters being brought up for discussion and to cast his vote, because each will be held responsible. If you just rock along and don't pay attention to or pray about the matters being voted on, you may find your Home reaping the results of unprayerful or unwise decisions.

The Home council determines the Home's basic nature, goals, and direction by a simple or two-thirds majority. If, for example, you collectively decide that one of your Home's goals is going to be pioneering new ways to reach the influential in your city then all are expected to contribute toward achieving that goal, within your capabilities and health.

The voting members of a Home also elect their steering council with the understanding that it is commissioned to spiritually shepherd and practically manage the Home within the authorized boundaries of this *Charter* and to help the Home fulfill the board criteria. This includes carrying out matters that the majority of the Home council agrees to. Home members are therefore expected to accept shepherding from their Home shepherds and to perform the duties assigned to them by their Home managers, both of which they have elected to these positions.

Since you participate in the governing of the Home through your vote, you are expected to abide by all joint decisions made by the Home council. Once your Home has voted on a matter, then you must comply with the decision made, even if you voted against it, because the majority of the Home council agreed to it. If you strongly disagree with the other voting members of your Home on a matter, you are free to move out of the Home in accordance with the terms of the "[Right of Mobility](#)" or give up your Family discipleship if you cannot find a Home whose goals you are in agreement with and can contribute towards.

Remember, though, that any Home you live in will not always vote on matters to your satisfaction, so you shouldn't decide to move out of your Home every time something doesn't go your way; and while moving to another Home is an option, as long as you are a member of a particular Home, you must live in accordance with the decisions made by that Home and trust the Lord for the final outcome to be what He knows is best.

P. Live in accordance with the agreed-upon goals of the area and the Family at large.

These would include any region-wide, country-wide, and/or city-wide goals that have been voted in by the respective Homes.

Q. Refrain from activities, appearance, or behavior that would be a reproach to the cause of Christ and/or reflect negatively on the Family.

Each of us should be a good example of a Christian and of a Family member, for our sample speaks much louder than our sermon. As much as possible, our actions should lift up Jesus, and should not defame, blemish, or be a poor reflection on the Lord or the Family.

In different areas of the world, this could mean refraining from different things. Wherever we live, we must take into account the traditions and culture of the community or country and refrain from behavior or speech that would unnecessarily offend individuals of that culture. This is part of trying to comply with the biblical counsel to become all things to all men (1 Corinthians 9:22).

R. Endeavor to overcome, including when necessary requesting united prayer against, personal weaknesses and besetting sins, so that they do not grow to cause physical or spiritual disruption in the Home, and/or physical, spiritual, or emotional harm to himself or others.

Family disciples are expected to work on their personal weaknesses and problems. If one member's personal problems get out of hand they could eventually cause problems for him and for the Home. If a member's weaknesses become too serious and long lasting, it could eventually warrant him losing his Family discipleship.

However, even if personal weaknesses are such that they do not cause spiritual, emotional, or physical disruption of the Home or themselves, members are still expected to work towards overcoming and gaining victories in these areas through the Word, hearing from the Lord, receiving counsel on the matter from their Home shepherds, and when necessary requesting united prayer.

"We occasionally have serious spiritual problems that become of sufficient magnitude to hinder our relationship with the Lord or with others.—In which case, we need to actually be delivered from them, and thank the Lord, we can be delivered. We can—and should—make progress and show some improvement even in the weak areas of our lives as we walk with the Lord and continue to grow spiritually. In fact, if we don't try to make progress and grow and continually strive to overcome such weaknesses, but we just resign ourselves to them and sort of give up in our struggle against them, we may find that they move from the category of being mere human frailties to the category of being serious spiritual problems" (ML #2553:35–36).

For example, if you have a problem with pride, and it's your besetting sin, but you are aware of it and are continually trying to keep it in check, and it's not causing major problems in the Home or even to yourself, then you aren't in danger of losing your Family discipleship. If, however, because of your pride, you are not yielded to the Lord's Spirit and are causing problems in the Home, the shepherds will talk with you, seek the Lord with you, and endeavor to help you to follow the Lord's counsel so you can overcome it. If you consistently refuse their help and counsel, or you don't seriously attempt to overcome your weakness and gain victories, you will eventually end up losing your place as a Family disciple.

S. Recognize that his body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, and as such not abuse it; keep a clean and presentable appearance, and actively and consistently endeavor to stay healthy and physically fit.

The Bible says, "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" (1 Corinthians 6:19–20; 3:16–17).

As Dad often explained, the Lord made man to need healthy food, sufficient rest, physical activity, and fresh air in order to remain healthy. As witnessing Christians, the care we take of our bodies, health, and appearance is part of our testimony, so we must do all we can to stay healthy and physically fit, and keep a presentable appearance.

"Responsibilities of a Family Disciple" outlines the need for healthy habits, including a good diet, eating the right kinds of foods, and getting plenty of rest and sufficient exercise.

T. Respect the privacy of others with regard to personal mail and email communications.

Home members should be able to communicate freely and privately via mail or email, without unnecessary intrusion from other members. When it comes to email that is on a communal computer, for example, it would generally be a breach of privacy to read someone else's emails or attachments unless you had permission from the person to do so. It would generally be intrusive to open another person's mail and/or read it without his permission. On the other hand, as with mail that is left open in a public place it is also the responsibility of each person to keep confidential email files on the Home's computer secure and closed.

According to the “[Rights of Family Discipleship Parents](#)” parents may read or monitor their minor children or teen’s email or mail if they feel it’s necessary.

There are also times when Home shepherds may feel they need to ask an individual about his personal communications. In this case, it is important that the individual’s responsibility to be open and honest and to accept shepherding is balanced with sensitivity and respect for that member’s right to privacy.

There may also be regional guidelines advising Home members how best to communicate when living in sensitive countries. It is understood that Home members would be expected to comply with these guidelines as part of their agreement to work in those countries.

U. Grant when necessary the use of his intellectual property, including songs, written material, illustrations, and/or multimedia creations that are designated or submitted for GP distribution, to the Family or to a company endorsed by World Services Leadership.

In order to be able to distribute our publications and products through commercial means, such as mass marketing, radio and TV broadcasting, book and other retail and online stores, etc., the companies endorsed by WSL to own the rights to Family GP products must also own the copyrights to or have licenses to use all of the songs or other materials on the audio/video product, or the written material and artwork on a printed publication.

Companies endorsed by WSL to own the copyrights to Family GP products must have written agreements with the authors/composers of the songs, written works, artwork, or multimedia creations, photos, etc., used in GP products, in order for those products to be sold commercially. To ensure that each of our new products is legally suitable for commercial distribution, we’re requiring that when a song is included in a GP product, paperwork must be signed granting a WS-endorsed company the right to use the song.

When a Family member chooses to submit material to be used in a Family publication or product, it must be of his own volition. The individual author or composer would keep the copyright itself, but give the WS-endorsed company the right to include the material in Family productions. Likewise, those who send in creative material that may be used in a GP publication will be sent a contract to fill in granting a company named by WS the rights to use that creative work in a commercial product.

Rights of an Individual Family Disciple

Those who fulfill the “[Responsibilities of an Individual Family Disciple](#)” have certain rights. In order to exercise these rights, however, you must fulfill the responsibilities of a Family disciple.

A Family disciple has the right to:

- A. Individual choice and self-determination. God endows every person with gifts and talents, which, along with his experiences, education, and training—physically, intellectually, and spiritually—help to compose the unique person he is. A Family disciple has the right to exercise personal initiative, faith, and choice in the use of his gifts, talents, education, and experience, providing these are consistent with the goals of the overall Family and the “[Family Discipleship Rules](#)” and do not contradict or interfere with the agreed upon goals and Home regulations of the Home in which he resides. If a Family disciple determines that he cannot exercise these rights in his present circumstances, he has the right to attempt to change his circumstances through Home council meetings, through the election of the Home’s steering council, through moving to another Home, or through the pioneering of his own Home.**

The term “individual choice” is used to stress that each and every Family disciple of voting age has the right to choose the things he wants to do. Of course, if you choose to do things that are not in line with the Family’s discipleship standard, then you will be unable to retain your Family discipleship and will be moved to a different category of Family membership, or if you wish, you can choose to leave the Family.

The definition of “self-determination” is: “Determination of one’s own fate or course of action without compulsion.” This is included to ensure you the right to make personal choices without anyone compelling you to do something you don’t want to do. The definitions of “compel” are: “To force, drive, or constrain; to necessitate or pressure by force; to exert a strong, irresistible force on.” As Dad said, “We have to choose for ourselves, find His will for ourselves, seek Him diligently to know His will, and to know what is best for us and others through our knowledge of His Word and personal experience. This is why He put us here, this is what we’re here to learn, and the major part of our training: how to make the right decisions through our personal contact with Him, our knowledge of His Word and His will, and our love for Him and others” (ML #238:9).

Throughout the Letters, Dad and Mama have said that each individual should determine his own course of action without anyone pressuring, forcing, or coercing him to do something he doesn’t want to do. We trust that you love the Lord enough and are spiritually mature enough to make the right decisions through prayer, His Word, and godly counsel. The only One Who should compel or constrain us to do anything is Jesus—“for the Love of Christ constrains us” (2 Corinthians 5:14). His Word and your love for Him are what should motivate you to do the right things; not because someone is making you do them, but because you choose to out of love.

Encouraging personal initiative, talent, and drive helps people to cultivate and develop areas of their personal interest or expertise, and where possible the Home should provide an environment in which the specialized gifts and talents of individuals—whether they be a gift of winning disciples, healing, music, public speaking, or whatever—can be nurtured and used for the benefit of the Home, the area, or the Family.

This doesn’t mean that you should “do your own thing” and act however you want without any concern for others or the Family. If you wish to remain a Family disciple, you must operate within the boundaries of the Family’s *Charter* and the Word that shows you how to live the *Charter* for today. As long as you do, you are free to follow the Lord as you feel led, without anyone forcing you to do anything you don’t feel is God’s will for you.

You have the right to exercise your personal initiative and faith and to be in a Home where you are best able to do so. If not, you have the right to try to change the situation through your voting power, or move to a different Home, or pioneer your own Home with those who are like-minded.

B. Determine by prayer, discussion, debate, and voting the basic nature, goals, direction, and activities of the Home, providing these are consistent with the goals of the area in which the disciple resides and of the overall Family.

You have the right to help decide the direction, the goals, and the basic nature of your Home, and the activities that your Home undertakes to meet those goals. You have the right to pray, discuss with others, and debate any issues in your Home council meetings before voting on a course of action.

As explained in the "[Voting and Election Rules](#)," when a Home council vote is taken on any matter, unless specified otherwise in the *Charter*, the majority rules. So if over 50% of the Home's voting members agree with something, then it is passed. This means that if there is a tie vote then the measure is not passed. There are some matters that require two-thirds of the voting members' agreement before passing, including all financial matters, certain personnel changes, and disciplinary matters.

Another very important stipulation of Home decisions is that they must also "be consistent with the goals of the overall Family"; that is, those goals stated in the *Charter*, those published in the GNs, or those specifically announced as such by WSL.

Members living in service Homes or sensitive countries may need to relinquish the right to determine their Home's basic nature, goals, direction, or activities according to the "[Rights of Personnel in a Service Home](#)" and "[Rights of Personnel in a Sensitive Country](#)".

C. Make the decision on medical matters involving himself and/or his children.

We believe that divine healing is a privilege available to all who believe in Jesus. The decision to avail yourself of that privilege is a personal matter between you and God. It is recommended that the individual hear from the Lord regarding his personal health issues or about those of his children, and follow the Lord's instructions according to his faith.

"According to your faith be it unto you" [Matthew 9:29]. As Dad said, "God wants you to make your own choice by faith according to your own faith—not mine, not ours, not somebody else's, but yours!" (ML #M:45). The first step when someone is sick would be to seek prayer from the Home. The Bible says, "Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church and let them pray over him" (James 5:14).

If the illness is such that you might wish to seek medical attention, it is advisable to pray with and seek counsel from your Home's steering council. In more serious cases where grave medical decisions must be made, we suggest that the Home pray and hear from the Lord in prophecy for the person. Receiving such prophecies can provide wonderful guidance and great comfort and assurance for the sick one. Sometimes prophecies can be rather mysterious, but because they are words given by the One Who knows our innermost heart and needs, specifically for the one with the sickness, as the "[Prophecy Rules](#)" outline, the interpretation of the prophecies and final course of action must be determined by the sick individual.

Because healing is a personal matter, the sick one, unless a minor, must make the final medical decisions based on his personal faith. The other members of the Home should continue to encourage and help the sick member no matter what decision he makes, even if the others feel it's the wrong one.

"[Rights of Family Discipleship Parents](#)" makes it clear that if you are a parent with children in the Family, the medical decisions regarding your underage children are your responsibility to make and should be made in your child's best interests. While faith and prayer and seeking the Lord concerning a sick child are very important, it can at times be equally important to get timely, professional medical advice to diagnose the sickness or problem.

There are legal factors to consider when making medical decisions for your children, including the ages when children can make their own decisions. As far as the Family is concerned, those who have reached the age of 16 are eligible to make their own medical decisions in countries where this is legal.

Of course, in an emergency, if an adult is unconscious, or otherwise incapacitated, then the husband or wife or parents, or in the case of a single, the steering council, are responsible to pray and make whatever medical decisions are necessary to help the individual. If an emergency concerns a child, it is the parents or legal guardians who have the responsibility to decide what should be done.

D. Communicate, without hindrance, directly with World Services Leadership and/or other leadership above the Home's steering council, and to have the email addresses of these persons readily available.

All Home members have the right to privately communicate with the coach, the regional shepherds, or the regional board chairpersons, and directly with Mama and Peter or WS, if they so desire. If someone

chooses to write to his leadership, no one should try to stop or hinder him or demand to read the letter before it is sent.

You have an open line of communication to leadership, so if you feel you need to write for any reason, you are free to do so. Each region should provide email addresses for you to write to if you desire, or you can write Mama at mama@wsfamily.com, Peter at peter@wsfamily.com, or WS at ws@wsfamily.com. Other than an acknowledgement that the message was received, a response is not necessarily guaranteed, but your message will be read, considered, forwarded to those concerned (unless you specify otherwise), and it will be prayed about.

For more information concerning writing your shepherds please see "Getting Stronger—Part 4," ML #3544b: 317, 338, 342–343.

Any official right of redress, as defined in the "[Right of Redress](#)," should be sent to the shepherding desk where it will be investigated as per the Charter guidelines.

E. Remain a Family disciple, providing he conducts himself as outlined in the "[Responsibilities of an Individual Family Disciple](#)."

If you are fulfilling the "[Responsibilities of an Individual Family Disciple](#)," and are keeping the "[Family Discipleship Rules](#)" you will not be moved to Missionary or Fellow membership, or be excommunicated, as you have the right to remain a Family disciple.

F. Apply to join a different circle of Family membership providing he conducts himself according to the appropriate governing rules.

Any Family disciple who wishes to move to a different circle of Family membership has the right to do so as long as he abides by the statutes governing that category of membership.

G. Depart from Family discipleship at any time he desires and no longer be part of the Family.

1. Minors, by law are under the authority of their parents and must receive parental permission before departing from a Family Home or their parents' care.

Anyone of legal age is free to leave the Family at any time he wishes. No one is forced to remain. In fact, if someone wants to go, we want and encourage him to do so. We are not in the business of trying to coerce anyone to remain in the Family who desires otherwise; on the contrary, we seek only those who have made a personal decision to be in the Family in whatever circle of membership they choose.

Dad wrote, "It's always been our personal policy, when we found someone wanted to leave, to simply ask them why, maybe answer any questions they might have or correct any misunderstandings which may be responsible, apologize for any of our mistakes which might have caused them to want to leave, but not to discourage them from leaving if they still want to" (ML #140:11).

If one or more of your minor children decide that they no longer wish to be in the Family and live with you in a Family discipleship Home, you could try to help them get relocated with others who will provide adequate care for them, such as with relatives, if possible. Or, they can temporarily remain with you in the Home providing you follow the Charter stipulations outlined in "[Responsibilities of a Family Discipleship Home](#)."

The purpose of allowing such an exception is not to have teens that prefer not to be in the Family living in the Home for an extended period of time, but rather to give you, the parents, time to set your teens up with relatives or in a situation outside the Home. On the other hand, if it looks as though it may take a considerable amount of time and effort to get your teens situated outside the Family, it will most likely be necessary for one or both of you to temporarily become a Missionary or Fellow member, while you are helping your teens get settled outside the Family.

If your children are old enough to strike out on their own, you should assist them in getting set up in a proper situation outside a Family Home. If that isn't possible immediately, you may seek permission from the Home and shepherding desk for your teen to remain in the Home temporarily, in order to make the transition as smooth as possible. Remember, they are still yours and God's children, even though they may have chosen another path of life, so you should show them love, concern, and care, while as much as you are able, helping them to move on. See also "When Teens Leave the Family" (ML #2942).

H. Report to the appropriate authorities and/or initiate criminal proceedings in his name or for his minor children, if he believes that a criminal act has been committed against them or against members of his personal family.

- 1. This legal action must be initiated by the individual, and cannot be taken on behalf of the Family Home he resides in or on behalf of the Family as an organization.**
- I. Initiate civil proceedings against a non-Family individual or organization, if a two-thirds majority of the Home council approves the action.**
 - 1. If the member does not receive a two-thirds majority approval, but still wishes to pursue the civil suit, the member initiating the suit would need to apply to join another Home or to join another circle of Family membership, or step outside Family membership until the proceedings have concluded.**
 - a. The Home should seek advice from its regional council via the regional desk concerning any potential impact of the suit on other Homes within the area, giving the regional council 15 days to respond. The final decision whether to continue with the civil suit will remain with the individual and his Home council.**

Because Family members live communally, bringing potentially costly or time-consuming legal civil action can result in others in their community being unwillingly or unwittingly drawn into the legal battle. Therefore all endeavors that affect the community at large must be voted on and approved by a two-thirds majority in a Home council meeting.

The Home should also inform their RC, via the RD, of the situation, seeking their advice concerning the potential impact of the suit on other Homes in the area. The RC's advice should be prayerfully considered by the Home council when voting on whether to approve their member initiating civil action against a non-Family person or organization. The vote of the Home is final, and if the vote is against the member taking legal action and the member wishes to continue, he will need to find another Home to accept him while he takes legal action. Alternately, he may step outside of Family discipleship and apply for another circle of membership until the proceedings have concluded.

- J. Initiate civil proceedings against another Family individual, if he wishes to. The member bringing the legal action may be required by the regional shepherds to step out of Family discipleship or membership to do so. Once the proceedings have concluded he may reapply for Family discipleship or apply to join another circle of membership.**

We believe that Family members should settle their personal differences by using all of the avenues provided by the right of redress rather than initiating civil action against one another. We believe it is unscriptural for one Family member to take another Family member to the civil courts, as the apostle Paul clearly states, "Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints? I say this to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you, not even one, who will be able to judge between his brethren? But brother goes to law against brother, and that before unbelievers. Now therefore, it is already an utter failure for you that you go to law against one another. Why do you not rather accept wrong? Why do you not rather let yourselves be cheated?" (1 Corinthians 6:1, 5-7 NKJ).

Nevertheless, if a Family member still wishes to pursue civil action against another Family member, he is free to do so. However, because of the ramifications the action could have on the Home and its members, on its ministries, or other Homes in the area, the Family member may be required to step outside of Family membership for the duration of the legal action. Once the issue has been concluded, he may reapply for Family discipleship or for another circle of membership.

Rights of an Individual Family Disciple Within the Home

A Family disciple who is a voting member in a Home has the right to:

A. Freely and regularly vote in the election of the steering council and board pillar representatives of the Home in which he resides.

"The steering council is the body that determines the general plan for the implementation of the overall goals and direction set by the Home council. When the shepherds and managers sit together, they make decisions that help to ensure that the Home is upholding the FD standard and fulfilling the board criteria and the *Charter*.

"During Home elections you should be thinking, 'Who are the people that would be the best spiritual shepherds?' And elect those people to the shepherding body. Then think, 'Who are good managers who can run the Home well?' Then elect those people to the manager body.—Together they make up the steering council that will work for you to keep your Home on track and progressing in fulfilling the FD standard, the board criteria, along with your Home's policies and goals.

"After electing your Home shepherds and Home managers, please elect a [board pillar representative] for each of the other five boards. [The CS board representative is always one of the Home shepherds.] The role of these representatives is to be mindful of the criteria for their board, to study the handbooks and practical how-to pubs for their board, and to help raise the awareness in the Home about any lacks or needs regarding that pillar. The board pillar representatives are to act as a prod for the Home, to keep the Home shepherds and Home managers aware of the needs of the Home within that board" (ML #3518:106, 115, 101).

B. Know the complete financial state of the Home in which he resides, including knowledge of all of the Home's monetary assets, liabilities, income, expenditures, and debts.

As financial matters are a very important part of the running of the Home, and can in many ways make or break a Home, it is imperative that all voting members of the Home, except those ages 16 and 17, be involved in the financial decisions. In order to make sound decisions, the voting members must know the complete state of the finances, so it is up to the steering council to keep them informed.

Dad said, "I want the Home members to know the state of their finances: Where it goes and how it goes and so on! I want them to know everything they can possibly know about, due to the fact that it is their business, it is their money, it is being spent on them and their business and their work" (ML #301A:24, 46).

As you read through the *Charter* you will notice that there are a number of financial matters that need to be decided upon through voting. A two-thirds majority of the voting members 18 years and older, instead of a simple majority, determines all financial votes.

Knowledge of the exact locations of Home funds and bank accounts may be private information, therefore it is limited only to members of the SC and others they feel may need to know. It is the Home managers' responsibility to keep the Home's finances safe and secure. But the details of the amounts of assets, liabilities, income, expenses, and debts are to be made known to all voting members.

Throughout the *Charter*, there is quite a bit said about finances, and especially about debts. Unfortunately, sometimes a Home has debts, and when it does, this can cause problems, which must be solved. We have attempted to give guidelines by which to solve those problems, but the goal is to keep your Home out of debt, and if you do, then many of the portions of the *Charter* concerning Home debts will not apply to you.

C. Determine, through voting, the Home's expenditures and other financial matters.

"Responsibilities of a Family Discipleship Home Regarding Financial Matters" defines the guidelines for the financial care and management of the Home.

1. 16- to 17-year-old members have no vote or responsibility in their Home's financial decisions.

Although 16- to 17-year-olds do not have a vote on financial matters, they retain the right to be informed of the state of the Home's finances. Likewise, they may engage in the discussions regarding finances and their views should be heard and considered.

2. All financial obligations belong to the entire Home and together Home council determines how to meet them.

a. 16- to 17-year-old members are exempt from all financial decisions and obligations.

All financial decisions and obligations belong to the Home as a whole, and the voting members 18 years and older, are collectively responsible to fulfill these obligations. Dad said, "This way everyone's faith and prayers can pull together to seek the Lord for the Home's needs. Everyone will be aware of the Home's financial needs and will be able to pray specifically and desperately!" (ML #2813:21).

The financial stability of the Home will be determined by how much the Lord blesses the Home, most likely based on their prayers and obedience, and how wise they are in how they use the funds the Lord supplies. Homes which are praying for finances and are obedient to the Lord's leading will most likely do well. Mama wrote, "Everyone can work in some way to help support the Home. Everyone can pray and search the Word for direction!" (ML #2929:43). But how prayerful and obedient the Home is will be determined by the decisions of its voting members. If your Home has financial difficulties due to poor decisions made, because a two-thirds majority of the Home council will have made those decisions, you must help bear the responsibility for those decisions.

Our Family policy has always been against being in debt. Dad has written a number of Letters about paying your creditors, those to whom you owe money for rent, utilities, or whatever. He has always advocated "cash and carry"—that you pay for what you buy, and if you don't have the money for it, you don't buy it. Dad said, "If there's anything you need to learn, it's how to live on a businesslike basis.—Common sense, no credit, cash and carry. Live within your income day by day, or week by week or month by month. Don't spend money you haven't got" (ML #701:23,67).

Generally Homes adhere to this practice and pay their bills on time. Unfortunately, there have been times when a Home has gotten into debt. Usually these same Homes do not do so well spiritually or organizationally either, and often end up closing, and their members move on to other Homes. However, the last ones remaining in the Home may then be stuck with the unpaid bills. "Brethren, these things ought not so to be."

Now there is a difference between being in debt and having liabilities. As defined in the *Charter* a debt is when you have a bill to pay and the payment is overdue. For example, if your telephone bill is due on a certain date and you don't pay it by that date, then it becomes a debt because it is the non-payment of a bill. If your rent is due on the first of the month, but you find that when the day comes to pay your rent you don't have the money, then you are in debt because you have an unpaid bill that is past due.

A liability is when you are responsible to pay a certain amount of money over time, paying a certain amount at a given time each month. For example, perhaps your Home took out a Home loan of €1,000 with the agreement to repay it at €100 per month over ten months. Although you now "owe" €1,000 it is considered a liability, not a debt, because the full amount is not presently due. You have agreed to pay your "bill" at the rate of €100 each month. However, if one month you do not pay your €100 Home loan bill, the payment of that "bill" would be late and that €100 would become a debt. The remainder of the €1,000 to be repaid would still only be a liability unless any part of it also becomes overdue.

Another example of a liability would be in cases when a Home receives distribution materials from their local production center on credit, and promises to pay a specific amount per month for these materials. As long as they are faithfully paying the agreed upon amount each month, then the total amount they owe to the production center is considered a liability rather than a debt. Liabilities only become debts when they are not paid on time and then become the non-payment or late payment of bills. As outlined in "[Procedure for Placing a Family Discipleship Home on Probationary Notice](#)," if your Home owes money to your production center, you won't be put on PN, providing you are staying current on your agreed upon payments.

While you remain part of the Home, you—collectively with every other voting member 18 and older—are responsible for your Home's debts and liabilities. This doesn't mean that each person in the Home has to bring in a certain amount of money to pay the debts or liabilities, as in some Homes there will be those whose main ministry is outreach, while others care for the children, and so forth. Those on outreach would generally be the ones to bring in the finances through the tithes, pledges, gifts, and contributions of those

who support your work, while those in childcare make it possible for the outreach teams to go out by caring for the children.

Hopefully Homes will stay out of debt. However, if yours doesn't, and you wish to leave your Home that has run up debts or has liabilities, then you are responsible to pay your portion of the outstanding debts and applicable liabilities before you leave, 16- to 17-year-olds excluded. Your Home came to a united agreement on its financial decisions, and thus you are responsible for a portion of these debts and liabilities. If the result of those Home decisions is that your Home goes into debt, you share in the responsibility.

This is by no means license to run up debts. We want to reiterate that it is not Family policy to be in debt, but if your Home does get in debt, then such debts must be paid off.

Debts also include overdue payments on money borrowed by the Home from a member of the Home (for example, from personal funds raised to move to another field, or funds that he had brought with him to the Home and which the Home had agreed that he could keep upon joining the Home) or from a member of another Home. When the money is first borrowed, it is a liability; but if you default on paying the funds back within the agreed time, then it becomes a debt. Therefore all rules pertaining to the paying off of debts would apply here as well.

For example, someone is raising funds to move to another Home and the Home's car breaks down. The Home doesn't have enough funds for the repairs, so it borrows some of the funds that the person in accordance with the *Charter* has set aside for his move and promises to pay the person back before he leaves. At that point, the funds borrowed become a liability. Once the person leaves the Home, if the repayment is overdue, it then becomes a Home debt.

It is because of this clause that we have set the voting age limit for financial matters at 18. We feel that while 16- to 17-year-olds can participate in financial discussions in Home council meetings and give their opinions, it would be best if they were not allowed to vote on financial matters and thus not be responsible for the outcome of the decisions. This way our 16- to 17-year-olds can learn about the Family's financial principles, as well as how the Home deals with its financial concerns in order to have a full understanding of it by the time they reach 18.

3. Should a member decide to move out of the Home, the member is personally accountable for, and must pay, his portion of the Home's debt and applicable liabilities.

If you choose to leave a Home, your portion of the Home debts and applicable liabilities will have to be determined by the Home council. The following is the formula for this: One portion equals the sum of the debts and applicable liabilities divided by the number of voting members 18 and over. So if you have 10 voting members who have reached the age of 18, and your Home has €1,000 in debts and applicable liabilities, then your portion is €100. (A total outstanding debt or liability of €1,000 divided by 10 voting members over the age of 18 equals €100 per person.) So before you can leave the Home, you must give €100 to the Home to cover your portion, unless the Home votes to free you from this payment.

"Applicable liabilities," as also referred to in the "[Procedure for Using the Right of Mobility](#)" and "[Responsibilities of a Family Discipleship Home Regarding Financial Matters](#)," are those liabilities for which a departing member is responsible for his part of until leaving the Home. For example, the Home decided that a member needed some costly dental treatment, but had to take out a Home loan of €500 to help cover the costs. Soon after receiving the dental work the Home member decides to move on, but before that loan has been paid back in full. Because the member personally benefited from the loan and the Home will not continue to benefit from it after he is gone, this loan would be considered an "applicable liability" and the departing member would be responsible for his portion of the loan.

On the other hand, if the Home bought a new car or a refrigerator, for example, and the payments were ongoing at the time a member wanted to move on, it's possible the member may not be held responsible to help with the remaining payments before leaving because the Home will continue to use and benefit from the use of the car or the refrigerator after the member moves, whereas the departing member would not. This could be considered the Home's liability and not that of the member who is moving on.

The Home council would make the decision should there be a question whether a liability is "applicable" to a departing member or not.

D. Bring up any matter for discussion to the Home's steering council. The steering council must present the matter for discussion within 15 days in a Home council meeting and have it brought to a vote.

While it may be most appropriate to suggest topics for Home council meetings to the steering council prior to a Home council meeting, allowing for a predetermined agenda to be followed in the meeting, anyone is free to bring up any matter for discussion in a Home council meeting. However, since the meeting will

probably be following a predetermined agenda, it may be inappropriate to stop everything and discuss and vote on that particular matter right then. In any case, whether the topic is submitted directly to the steering council or presented in a Home council meeting the topic would need to be discussed and voted on within 15 days.

After an agreement is reached in a Home council meeting, the decisions of the voting members are to be implemented. So even if the Home's steering council feels the Home should do one thing, but the voting members vote to do something else, then the decision of the majority of the Home council is what should be carried out. Dad wrote, "If we're going to be an effective body, every member must work together with all the other members—not just one, not just a few, not even the majority, but with all working together as a body, which Christ described as His Body, the Church, and with Himself as the Head" (ML #263:76).

Responsibilities of Family Discipleship Parents

The Family believes that children are a gift from God, and that it's a parent's mission and God-given duty to love, care for, and raise his or her children in a godly manner.

Primary responsibility for the welfare, training, and education of children rests with the parents. Due to the nature of the cooperative lifestyle in Family discipleship Homes, the raising of Family children is a community affair and parents may share the day-to-day care of the children with others in the Home. In this way members of the Home participate to varying degrees, according to their talents and abilities, in the care, training, and education of the children, and as such, share responsibility for the children's welfare. However, the final decisions and responsibility concerning the welfare, care, training and education of the children rests with their parents.

Each Home has a responsibility to provide an environment where both the parents and the Home can meet their responsibilities towards the children, both individually and communally. Positive contributions from Home members toward the care of the children are expected and welcomed.

Dad clearly stated in "One Wife" (ML #249) that we are all responsible for the care of Family children, and we need to treat each of them with love, respect, and understanding. The Lord gave children to specific parents, and primary accountability for them rests with the parents. Even if the parents have work or ministries which necessitate the help of others in the care and education of their children, ultimately the final responsibility rests with the parents to make sure that their children are getting the quality of care and education they need. As such the parents must ensure that their children are being properly cared for, and if they're not, it is the parents' responsibility to remedy the situation through any means available. Improving a situation could range from bringing the issue to the attention of the Home for alteration, a change in a parent's ministry to allow for increased care for the children, or the family moving to another situation where their children may be better cared for.

Parents must work with the Home to set the Home's childcare standards. While the methods and manner of raising children within a family unit in the Home is the responsibility of the parents, in the course of living communally parents will need to work together with the Home's other members, and at times decide together on issues that affect the Home or other family units.

Dad wrote: "Get together, decide what behavior and house rules need to be made, agree upon them and then enforce them. The main key is to get everyone in the Home together on it, make the rules together and agree together, because it's very hard to live together and have your children grow up in harmony if everyone doesn't train and discipline the children in the same way. You should be able to get together, agree to some guidelines according to the Letters, and be consistent" (ML #1707:21). If the parents don't agree with the Home's decision, they can try to get the Home to change the way they do things through discussion and vote, or they can move to or open a Home that operates more to their liking.

Parents or guardians are responsible to:

- A. Raise their children and teens in a godly manner according to the *Charter*, and to give them a knowledge of God through His Word.**
- B. Love, care for, and to the best of their ability supply their children's and teens' physical, spiritual, and emotional needs.**
- C. Protect their children and teens from any form of abuse—physical, sexual, spiritual, emotional, or psychological.**

Parents and/or guardians have ultimate responsibility for their children and must make any decisions necessary for their protection in consultation with the members of the Home and taking into consideration the needs, welfare, and best interests of all other children living in the Home.

- D. Provide training and sufficient opportunity for their children to be a witness and an example of Christian love and care in a manner appropriate to their age and local field conditions in accordance with the “[Rights of Minors](#).”**
- E. Ensure that their children and teens are properly and sufficiently educated academically, practically, morally, and spiritually on an ongoing basis.**
 - 1. It is required that the parents or guardians provide their children and teens with a preschool, elementary, and high school education in accordance with the guidelines outlined in the “[Education Board Criteria](#).”**

Depending on the need and/or situation, parents and guardians must consider all of their education options, which may include homeschooling, traditional schooling, hiring a tutor, or working with other Homes and parents to set up co-op schooling. If it becomes apparent that some parents are repeatedly negligent in their duty of providing their child or teen with an education through high school, the parents, and possibly the members of the Home in which they reside, will be in jeopardy of losing their Family membership.

- a. A teen’s high school education must be documented with a transcript and portfolio. A high school diploma or its equivalent is recommended.**
 - i. Parents or guardians must create a high school projection for their teen, and a copy of this projection must be sent to the regional Education board chairperson no later than three months before the student is scheduled to complete 8th grade.**

A “high school projection” is a plan of what subjects will be covered by the student during high school. The projection may be modified at a later date, but an initial projection must be completed during 8th grade to ensure that the needed forethought has been given to the student’s high school studies.

- b. Parents or guardians have fulfilled their responsibility to educate their teen upon his or her completion of high school, or once he or she has reached the age of 18, whichever comes first.**
 - i. A student’s high school education is considered complete once the parents or guardians have received written confirmation from the regional Education board that the student’s transcript and course description fulfills Family education requirements.**

The “High School Transcript Confirmation Form” may be found at [ED_board_forms](#) on the ED board’s HS3 website. The parents or guardian must send the completed form, along with a copy of the student’s high school transcript, to the regional ED board chairperson within 90 days of when the student has completed high school. The regional ED board will send acknowledgement to the parents and/or guardians of having received the transcripts within 45 days of receipt confirming that the transcript fulfills Family education requirements or, if it does not, giving counsel on any changes needed.

- ii. If a teen, upon reaching the age of 18, has not completed his high school education and/or has not received his desired certification, the teen should either:**
 - 1. Decide to continue his studies and/or obtain certification, in which case the Home must provide sufficient time for scholastic studies in accordance with the “[Education Board Criteria](#).”**

If the 18-year-old chooses to complete his high school studies, or obtain certification of his studies, the Home must provide, at minimum, the study time allotted him under the “[Education Board Criteria](#).” The Home must also be supportive of the 18-year-old’s endeavor.

– or –

2. Decide to discontinue his high school education. It is recommended that the young person pray and counsel with his parents or guardians before making the decision to end his high school studies. If a young person decides not to continue his high school studies at this time, the Home is no longer required to provide scholastic study time.

a. A student who has reached the age of 18 and does not wish to continue his high school education must be provided with an up-to-date copy of his transcript by his parents or guardians.

c. Specific exceptions to Charter-stipulated education requirements may be granted by the regional Education board chairperson in the case of learning challenges.

Although it is the responsibility of the Home to make sure that all children in the Home receive a proper education, it is ultimately the parents' responsibility to see that their children are educated and prepared for whatever path of life they choose, as also outlined in the "[Responsibilities of a Family Discipleship Home Regarding Children, Teens, and Parents.](#)"

Teens are entitled to receive a high school education that considers their gifts, abilities, and desires, and prepares them for whatever path they may choose in life. Parents should discuss the options for high school education with their teen, taking into consideration his or her aptitude and desires, and decide together which path of studies and which diploma or equivalent best suits him or her. Pursuing an education beyond high school is the responsibility of the individual according to his motivation, means, and what the individual may be able to work out with his Home.

A transcript, accompanied by a course description, is required as a concise record of the material covered during high school and the student's level of achievement in each course.

It's understood that as children grow into adolescence they bear increasing responsibility for the quality of their own education, nevertheless parents must fulfill their responsibility to provide sufficient opportunity, encouragement, and support for quality schooling regardless of whether or not their teens apply themselves.

It is ideal for a teen to finish his high school education by his 18th birthday. If a young person has not completed high school or has not received his diploma or equivalent by that time, it is encouraged that he continue his studies and do so. Nevertheless, when a young person reaches his 18th birthday, decisions concerning his education become his responsibility, although parents should continue counseling their teen regarding his or her education. The young person should be open to counsel from his or her parents, other concerned Home members, and the ED board when making decisions concerning his or her education.

In the case of a senior teen who doesn't live with his parents, the teen's guardian would assume responsibility for the teen's education.

F. Ensure that academic records of their children's and teens' educational progress are kept.

All children and teens should have up-to-date records of their academic progress. Besides being proof of the children's schooling and educational ability, good records also ensure that, should the parents and their children change Homes in the future, their teachers, whether in a homeschooling or traditional school environment, will know exactly where to resume the child or teen's studies. See the "[Education Board Criteria](#)" for the records that must be kept during the different stages of the student's education.

Parents don't necessarily need to personally fill out all of their children's homeschooling academic records, but it is ultimately their responsibility to make sure that it is being done. If the teachers or caregivers can't do it, then the parents must. The regional ED board will provide assistance for those who need help getting their recordkeeping set up.

Parents are responsible to inform themselves of the education laws of the country in which they reside. Some countries may require that homeschooled children be tested or meet other requirements.

G. Ensure that needed medical care is supplied.

1. Children four years of age and older require annual eye and dental checkups.

The care of our Family children is the responsibility of us all, and we must make a united effort to do all we can to properly care for them. Stating that children's medical care and needs are ultimately the parents' responsibility does not mean that the parents are solely responsible to finance these needs. As a community the Home jointly bears the responsibility in providing for a child's medical needs, whether financially or otherwise; however, the final responsibility for medical decisions related to children rests with their parents.

It is recommended that by the time children begin reading they be taken for an eye checkup. Although we recommend those four years and older begin getting regular checkups, there may be situations where you

as a parent may want to take your child in for an eye or dental checkup at an even earlier age. This would depend on your child's need. The intent is to ensure that your child's physical needs are being met.

Parents must also make the decision about whether or not to vaccinate their children against childhood or other diseases. They can do research and counsel with others and should seek the Lord for His Will, but the choice is up to the parents to make according to their personal faith and conviction.

H. Discipline their children according to the behavior and discipline standard agreed upon by the voting members of the Home in which they reside, providing it is in accordance with the "Childcare Discipline Guidelines."

Since Family disciples live communally and thus all members in the Home play a part in the care of the children and/or interact with them, it is necessary that discipline of the children be administered according to a united behavioral and disciplinary standard, decided on by the Home within the boundaries set by the "Childcare Discipline Guidelines."

It is not permitted to discipline a child more strictly than what is allowed in the "Childcare Discipline Guidelines." Any person who does so will be subject to discipline or be in jeopardy of losing his or her Family discipleship and/or membership.

If parents do not agree with the behavior and discipline standard that the Home has voted on, then it's their responsibility to work with the Home to change it or move to a Home where they agree with the Home's disciplinary standard.

Parents are also responsible to take action in handling their children or teens who commit dangerous or illegal offenses and/or whose example is a reproach as a Christian. Repeated failure by the parents to take action to improve the children's behavior will jeopardize their Family discipleship.

I. Ensure their children and teens have a basic understanding of the Charter sections appropriate for their age and endeavor to help their children and teens live by the principles of behavior codified in the "Responsibilities of an Individual Family Disciple" and the "Family Discipleship Rules."

The *Charter* was written for voting-member readership, but children should be made aware of and have a basic understanding of age-appropriate principles of behavior defined in the "Responsibilities of an Individual Family Disciple" and the "Family Discipleship Rules," parts of which have general principles of behavior that children should be aware of.

For a simplified version of the Charter's responsibilities and rights for children see "Learning about Our *Love Charter*" (*Kidz Book*, pp. 543–550) and "Preparing to Rule the World of Tomorrow—With the *Love Charter*" (*MLK Book 1*, pp. 241–256).

J. Supply their children and teens, and their guardians, with the parents' current address, telephone number, and/or email in the event the parents are traveling or are living in a different location than the children and teens.

Parents must ensure their children know how to contact them if they're not residing in the same Home or if the parents may be away for a significant length of time.

K. Inform their older children and teens of their rights and ensure that their rights are not being infringed upon.

Parents are responsible to inform their children by about seven or eight years old, according to the child's maturity, what their rights are under the *Charter*, so the children will know if their rights are being infringed upon.

See "Rights of Minors," "Learning about Our *Love Charter*" (*Kidz Book*, pp. 543–550) and "Preparing to Rule the World of Tomorrow—With the *Love Charter*" (*MLK Book 1*, pp. 241–256).

L. Properly counsel and guide their 16- to 17-year-olds in matters regarding sexual interaction.

See "Word Rules" for more on what Word to read with your 16- to 17-year-olds to help them understand the Lord's perspective on dating and sex. Parents should be counseling and guiding their teenagers on an ongoing basis during these years.

As voting members, it's important that senior teens understand the rules concerning sexual interaction as outlined in the "Sex and Affection Rules," "Offenses Warranting the Excommunication of a Family Disciple," and the "Offenses Warranting the Placing of a Family Disciple on Probationary Status."

Senior teens must clearly understand current laws and social mores regarding appropriate and inappropriate sexual behavior and attitudes.

M. Provide their 12- to 15-year-olds with an appropriate sex education.

Though age-appropriate sex education can, depending on the maturity of the child, begin at an earlier age it's important that 12- to 15-year-olds learn about their bodies and sexuality, and a godly perspective concerning sex and interaction with the opposite sex. The boundaries for sexual interactions with others should be clearly outlined to teens at this age.

Though the majority of the "[Sex and Affection Rules](#)," the "[Offenses Warranting the Excommunication of a Family Disciple](#)," and the "[Offenses Warranting the Placing of a Family Disciple on Probationary Status](#)" apply to adult Family members, it's also important that our 12- to 15-year-olds are clearly aware of the rules concerning sexual interaction, and that they understand the consequences for those who break those rules. It's also important that 12- to 15-year-olds receive age-appropriate education about current laws and social mores concerning sexual interaction.

Rights of Family Discipleship Parents

Family disciples who are parents or guardians have the right to:

- A. Be consulted and agree to any disciplinary action for behavioral infractions committed by their resident children.**

Any discipline given to children must be in accordance with the "[Childcare Discipline Guidelines](#)."

- B. Reside with their children and teens and have a current address, telephone number, and/or email address for their children and teens who do not reside in the same Home as them.**

Senior teens ages 16 and 17 have the right of mobility in accordance with the "[Procedure for Using the Right of Mobility](#)," if they have permission from at least one of their parents.

Teens, ages 14 and 15, do not have the right of mobility. Nevertheless, if they express the desire to live in another Home and their custodial parents give permission, they may do so, providing the receiving Home is in agreement and can provide suitable guardians.

There may be times when one parent may need to be away from his mate and children for a time in order to fulfill some mission or calling from the Lord, such as serving on a mission field that is unsuitable for children, or the parent may have gifts and talents that are needed temporarily in a special situation. In such cases, the decision to live apart from the children would be made by that parent in consultation and with the agreement of his or her mate and, if possible, with their children.

The only exception to the right of parents to live with their children and teens, is if the parents are permanently separated or divorced and have worked out a custody arrangement between them, and one parent may not be living with some, or any, of his or her children. In such a case, the non-custodial parent can't demand to live with the children that are in the custody of the other parent.

Marital separations are covered more fully in the "[Marital Separation Rules for Couples with Children](#)."

In the rare event that both parents are away from their underage children for any significant length of time, they should give written permission to someone in the Home to act as a guardian in their absence, authorizing that person to decide medical matters in the case of emergency.

- C. Be regularly informed of the spiritual, emotional, physical, and educational well-being of their children and teens.**

- 1. Parents not residing with their children or teens have the right to be kept informed by the parent, guardian, or the Home shepherds of their non-resident child or teen.**
- 2. If a teen decides not to remain in Family discipleship, his non-resident parents must be informed by the teen's Home shepherds of the teen's decision within seven days.**

- D. Receive assistance, within the abilities, resources, and available manpower of the Home in which they reside, with the physical and spiritual care and education of their children.**

Mama said, "Though our children, of course, have only one set of natural parents, they can have many spiritual parents. All of us can play some part in their spiritual parenting. Once we establish that these children belong to all of us and God holds us all responsible, regardless of who physically bore them, we'll have a little more to work with, a few more people to work with, and we won't be giving all the responsibility—physical, intellectual and spiritual—to only the flesh parents" (ML #2670:14–15).

Family parents are entitled to receive help from their Home in the physical, spiritual, and educational care of their children. The Home council must decide what constitutes "assistance" and the extent of the help that is possible for the Home to provide. For example, the parent might want someone to take care of his or her children full time and that he or she should only be responsible for them at parent time. The Home may look at it much differently. It is up to the Home's voting members to discuss and determine what assistance they can give.

The assistance a Home gives may not be equal in every case. For example, someone who is on full-time outreach, a full-time teacher, someone with a ministry that demands large blocks of concentrated time, or someone who is away from the Home on a road trip could need more childcare help than do other parents in the Home. A single parent may also need assistance during parent time, which a parenting teamwork could possibly relieve. Each situation will have to be worked out by the Home, and in doing so the main consideration must be the welfare of the children.

Although the Home should provide assistance, the ultimate responsibility for the care and well-being of their children rests with the parents.

E. Make the decision on medical matters concerning their children.

When a child is sick, the parents are to make the decision as to whether medical help is needed or not. The SC can counsel with the parents, and the Home can pray and hear from the Lord about the matter, but in the end, the parents are the ones who have the final say. As voting members, the assumption is that 16- and 17-year-olds will make their own decisions regarding medical matters which affect them. However, in countries where this is not legally permissible, the parents retain this responsibility, and if the teen is living away from his parents, the parents should give a letter granting an adult member of the Home the authorization to act in place of the parents in case of any medical emergency.

Parents should research the local requirements regarding immunization and make the decision about whether to immunize their children against childhood diseases. They can counsel with others and should seek the Lord for His Will, but the choice is up to the parents to make according to their personal faith and conviction.

In a case where the parents are living away from their child and the child requires emergency medical attention, the guardians should make the immediate decision, but should inform and counsel with the parents at the earliest possible opportunity, and continue to keep them informed.

F. Determine the amount of interaction their children will have with relatives.

It is up to the parents to decide how much interaction their children will have with their non-member relatives. "Interaction" covers both visitation and communication.

G. Read or monitor their children's correspondence, communications, and Internet usage.

Parents have a right to read or monitor the correspondence, communications, and Internet usage of their children. This covers incoming and outgoing mail, email, chatting, blogging, commenting online or on social networks, browsing, and any other types of Internet usage.

H. Grant or deny their 16- and 17-year-olds permission to engage in sexual intercourse in accordance with "[Sex and Affection Rules](#)" and local laws.

I. Grant or deny their 14- and 15-year-olds permission to date other teens ages 14 through 17 in accordance with "[Sex and Affection Rules](#)."

Rights of Minors

The care and well-being of minors—children and teens under the age of 18—raised in the Family is of paramount importance and the Home is responsible to ensure that the needs—physical, spiritual, emotional, and educational—of all its minors are provided for. The Home is also responsible to ensure that the rights of all Family minors are respected by all members of the Home.

Although children under the age of 16 do not have the same rights as voting members, it should be understood that as children get older they should be given a greater degree of personal autonomy. For instance, 12- to 15-year-olds should be given more responsibility and freedom of choice than 10-year-olds, and likewise 10-year-olds more than 6-year-olds.

Once someone reaches age 16 he or she has the rights of a voting member, which are covered in the ["Rights of an Individual Family Disciple"](#) and elsewhere in the *Charter*.

Children and teens have the right to:

A. Have their spiritual, physical, and emotional needs met.

Each child deserves to live in a safe, happy environment that is conducive to their proper upbringing. They are entitled to healthy and nutritional food, and their emotional needs should be amply met.

B. Be free from abuse of any kind—sexual, physical, spiritual, mental, or psychological.

The Family has a zero tolerance policy in regards to abuse in any form. The Family will immediately expel and excommunicate a member deemed guilty of sexually or physically abusive behavior towards children.

Should a member of the Family have a reasonable basis to believe that a minor is suffering abusive treatment, that member should immediately report this to the minor's parents, to his or her Home shepherds and to the shepherding desk.

Ultimate responsibility for decisions related to the well-being of their minor children lies with the parents or legal guardians.

C. Receive needed medical attention.

Children and teens should receive sufficient healthcare in order to help them remain in good health. When a child or teen needs medical or dental attention, he or she has the right to receive it. See also ["Rights of Family Discipleship Parents."](#)

D. Have time allotted on a regular basis for the reading of the Bible and age-appropriate Family literature.

As Mama explained: "We believe that our children's lives are very precious and therefore we put a special emphasis on teaching and training them in the 'nurture and admonition of the Lord' (Ephesians 6:4). The education we give them is based and centered on God's Word and godly principles" (Maria #76:15).

E. Receive training and ample opportunity to engage in witnessing activities appropriate to their age and aptitude.

Although it is mandated in the ["Outreach Rules"](#) that those 16 years of age and above witness a minimal of two hours per week or eight hours per month, witnessing is encouraged for all ages. Because children enjoy and benefit from witnessing, and it is part of their missionary training, it's recommended that they have the opportunity to go out witnessing whenever practical. While children have the right to witness, they cannot be pressured to do so against their will. For more on witnessing with children see the ["Responsibilities of Family Discipleship Parents."](#)

In sensitive countries or WS-exempted Homes the witnessing opportunities and methods available for children may be limited.

F. Be given sufficient time, opportunity, and educational materials to receive an education that allows them to become competent in a manner appropriate to their age, ability, and aptitude in the skills of language arts, mathematics, social studies, sciences, and other academic and curricular subjects, including practical-life skills.

All our children and teens have the right to an adequate education that allows them to be on par with their peers outside the Family in the core-curriculum subjects of math, science, social studies, language arts, and other subjects required at a level appropriate for their age by educational authorities. Thus a six-year-old should be educated at least to a standard of achievement equivalent to that of an average six-year-old, taking into consideration the child's ability and aptitude.

To ensure that a child or teen is given sufficient study time (regardless of the method of schooling chosen), it is required that he fulfill a minimum number of study hours per week until his high school education is complete. The minimum amount of school hours is listed in the "[Education Board Criteria](#)."

See also "[Responsibilities of Family Discipleship Parents](#)," "[Responsibilities of a Family Discipleship Home Regarding Children, Teens, and Parents](#)," and "The High School Journey" (*FSM* #425).

G. If a teen, obtain official certification for the schooling they receive, if they or their parents desire.

If a teen wants to get his home education certified, he has the right to do so. The parents and the teen should agree together as to the certification that is most appropriate. If it's not possible for the Home to provide the means to get such certification, the parents are free to move with the teen to another Home that can provide it.

H. Have regular, vigorous age-appropriate exercise, preferably in the fresh air for at least one hour, though preferably 90 minutes, not less than five times per week, health permitting.

See also "[Responsibilities of a Family Discipleship Home Regarding the Welfare of its Members](#)."

I. Reside with their parents and maintain contact with a parent who may not be living with them.

Dad wrote: "If the parents are going to separate, even a temporary three-month separation, they need to make sure to wisely and lovingly give some kind of explanation to the children" (ML #2339:94). And "in the case of a division of the children between two fit and agreeing parents, both the preference of the children and of each of the parents should be taken into consideration, and if possible an agreement should be reached between all in which both the parents and the children are as satisfied and as well cared for as possible" (ML #359:8).

Although children and teens have the right to live with at least one of their parents, they should understand that this does not necessarily mean that they have the right to choose which parent they live with. This is decided by the parents, though the views of the children and teens should be sought and taken into consideration. In the case of a permanent marital separation, the parents will decide upon the division of the children and teens, and once that decision is made, then the children and teens will live with their respective parent unless further mutually agreed upon arrangements are made. Such decisions should take the needs of the children and teens into consideration and should be made in their best interests. This is also covered in the "[Marital Separation Rules for Couples with Children](#)."

1. Each child or teen must be supplied with a current address to which he can send mail or email to an absentee parent.

Resident parents or guardians must make time available for their children and teens to contact his or her non-resident parents regardless of the non-resident parent's membership. Where practical and possible, children and teens should be able to visit the absentee parent on occasion.

J. If under 16 years old, have quality parent time and family days with their parents and siblings who live on the premises, or with their foster parents or guardians.

Though senior teens 16- and 17-years old can and often do spend family days with their parents and siblings it's not a requirement for them, whereas children under 16 years old are entitled to parent time. If the Home is fulfilling the "[Home Meetings and Activities](#)," then children will be having the needed time with their parents, brothers, and sisters.

- K. Privately and directly communicate, via mail and/or email, without hindrance, with World Services Leadership or their regional shepherds at any time on any matter, and to have their letters or email sent, or to have the address supplied to them upon request.**

Right of Mobility

A Family disciple has the right to:

- A. Move out of the Home he resides in, open a new Home, be a road team Home, or join another Family Home in accordance with the “[Procedure for Using the Right of Mobility](#).”**
 - 1. While a senior teen is a voting members in the Home, because he is not of legal age, he must have permission from at least one of his parents in order to move prior to submitting his 30-day notice.**

The right of mobility is one of the most important rights granted under the *Charter*. Knowing that you have the right to move from one Home to another, and that you can easily do so, makes it possible for you to remove yourself from a situation in which you are not happy or to pursue moving to a new place of service—whether Home, field, or ministry—that you may feel called to. The following numbered sections are helpful points to keep in mind when applying the “[Procedure for Using the Right of Mobility](#),” which outlines how to implement your right of mobility.

All members of a Home should be working to make the Home successful. They should be moving forward together and feel equally responsible to make the Home work, which builds a camaraderie which helps carry the Home to success. Successful Homes usually have a core of people who are committed to the Home, who stay in the Home and stick with the same team for a substantial period of time. When there are problems, the Home members work through them instead of just turning in their 30-day notices. Generally speaking, Homes that stick together, work together, and spiritually grow together for longer periods of time are the most successful.

The Home is, in actuality, a team made up of all the members of the Home. When the members of the Home live together, work together, obey together, and watch out for one another, they will form a winning team. A team that truly becomes one unit, with all members working toward the same goal of victory, will become strong; they’ll be winners. The Lord put us in Homes because He knows that while it is extremely difficult to fully live up to His standard of discipleship as individuals, when we are together, united as a team, and upholding one another, it is much easier. The role of the Home becomes vital to living the discipleship life.

Giving voting members the right of mobility will hopefully help motivate those who are shepherding and managing Homes to do all they can to have an inspiring Home whose members are progressing spiritually so that those in the Home will want to remain, rather than Home members becoming discontent and dissatisfied.

We want to encourage winning teams with fruitful ministries to stick together rather than constantly changing personnel, but we do want to give you the opportunity to move should you feel it’s necessary. If you are truly unhappy or discontent in your Home, and/or the Lord wants you to move on to another situation, you are free to do so.

Following are points to consider when praying about your right of mobility. The “[Procedure for Using the Right of Mobility](#)” outlines the steps to be taken.

1. While the right of mobility does not specifically apply to those under the age of 18, this does not mean that those under the age of 18, especially those 16 and 17, must always live in the same Home as their parents. It’s just that they don’t have the right to move upon demand. Teens are permitted to reside away from their parents providing the parents residing with them are in agreement, and the receiving Home agrees to accept them.

All minors living away from their parents must have a legal guardian through a power of attorney and/or other necessary paperwork in accordance with the laws of the country in which they live.

2. Since the Family is focusing on communal living and building Homes that are winning teams, in the event of difficulties with a new individual in the Home, the Home should be willing to give sufficient time for the individual and the Home to truly evaluate each other before asking the person to leave.

Sometimes people also land in what they initially feel may be an unacceptable situation and want to leave before giving enough time both to get to know the Home and before giving the Home their best. But if they do give it a try and still feel they should move, they may give their 30-day notice.

3. When moving to a Home you should do so with the determination that you are investing yourself in the Home and its ministries. As with any investment, it takes time for it to yield a dividend or to bear fruit; thus you should be prepared to remain in your new Home long enough to bear that fruit. You should commit yourself to working in that Home through the good times and the difficult.

Your first impulse should not be to give your 30-day notice and leave if things don't go as well as you'd hoped. You should first do all you can to change the situation through prayer, discussion, and example, and keep plugging away, investing in the work the Lord called you to and work hard at developing your "winning team." Dad said years ago in "Shtick," "You'd better stick it out until you know God wants you to leave a job and you know He's finished with you there and He's got something else He wants you to do" (ML #703:47). Each of us has a responsibility to the Home we live in, and should take into account what effect our departure will have on the Home and its ministries. If a number of Home members decide to leave it may mean that those remaining behind will not be able to sustain the ministries of the Home, and consequently those fruitful ministries will suffer or be lost, which may result in many people losing the opportunity to hear the Gospel.

However, if and when the Lord does lead you to move, you should take into account all the details required for you to accomplish your move before giving your 30-day notice. For example, if you plan to move far it will require raising enough funds for the fare, and if traveling to another country, clearance from the regional desk for that area. If you plan to move to another Home, you will need the agreement of the Home receiving you. All of this will take time, and in many cases longer than 30 days. So you would be well advised not to actually give your official 30-day notice until you have prayerfully counted the cost, made your plans, have the clearance procedures well under way, and are close to having your funds and clearance in hand.

4. Once you've given your 30-day notice, you have relinquished your right to vote in Home decisions, including financial matters, and are freed from all responsibility on decisions made by the Home from that day forward, other than your ongoing responsibility to keep Home regulations.

5. If a member of the Home's steering council gives his 30-day notice since he no longer has a vote in Home affairs, elections should be held within seven days to select a new steering council member as outlined in the "[Voting and Election Rules](#)."

6. Once the 30-day period is over you will be expected to leave the Home. There will be times when your plans don't work out the way you expect and you may find you have given your 30-day notice prematurely and thus you are not able to leave by the time the 30-day period ends. If you've come to the end of your 30 days and you can't leave for one reason or another, you once again become a voting member of your present Home and are again responsible for the decisions of the Home, including any new debts or liabilities incurred from that time onward. The Home can vote to extend the 30 days, if they so wish, and extend your stay at the Home without making you accountable for the decisions of the Home or for any debts or liabilities they incur.

It's also possible that the Home may be geared up for you to go and have new personnel on their way to take your place. In this case if you let your 30 days lapse the Home may decide not to extend your 30-day notice and you may need to move on.

Everything should be worked out in prayer and counsel, but considering that you were personally responsible for having submitted your 30-day notice, and such a move often greatly affects the Home, once your plan to move is in motion you may need to be ready to follow through on it regardless of possible last-minute changes to your plans. If your plans do change it would be advisable to let the Home know as soon as possible so they can do what they can to work out the situation as satisfactorily as possible for all concerned.

7. There may be an occasion when someone has caused problems in a Home, which played a major part in a Home not fulfilling its responsibilities or in breaking the "[Family Discipleship Rules](#)." If this individual realizes in advance that the Home is about to be placed on PN, he may decide to quickly put in his 30-day notice so he won't have to remain in the Home while the Home makes the necessary changes. In such a case, since this person played a major role in the Home's problem, but could theoretically avoid having to help rectify it if he were to give his notice right before PN goes into effect, the shepherding desk may

suspend the member's right of mobility in order for him to remain and help remedy the situation. See "[Responsibilities and Authority of the Shepherding Desk](#)."

8. When someone moves to another Home it is the responsibility of the steering council of the receiving Home to confirm that the incoming member is a bona fide Family disciple. It is recommended that the Home shepherds consider requesting whatever information they need about the incoming member, e.g., a résumé of his background in the Family or details of any debts or liabilities he might have from the member's present Home.

9. The "[Procedure for Using the Right of Mobility](#)" sets forth the methods for moving out of a Home, but this is not meant to apply to temporary movement. There will be occasions when someone will want to visit another Home for a period of time in order to perhaps visit loved ones or to help that Home in some way. Decisions regarding such matters are to be decided upon by the Homes involved.

Right of Redress

The term “redress” is defined as “to set right, to remedy or rectify” or “to provide reparation for a loss or wrong experienced.” This “Right of Redress” is in place so that if or when members’ rights are infringed upon, or they feel they were wronged in some way, they can report it and appeal to a higher body knowing that the matter will be looked into, and if needed, disciplinary measures meted out accordingly.

- A. A member whose rights are infringed upon, and those who observe the rights of others being infringed upon, which may result in physical, spiritual, psychological, or emotional harm, has the right and responsibility first to bring the matter before the person causing the harm, then before the Home’s shepherds, and, if deemed necessary, before the Home council, with the expectation that the matter will be remedied within a reasonable amount of time.**

Jesus said, “Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church” (Matthew 18:15–17). If your rights are being infringed upon, you have the right to speak up about it and to expect it to be remedied. If you see someone else’s rights being infringed upon, you have both the right and the responsibility to report it as well.

First, in scriptural fashion, you are to bring up the matter to the person who’s doing it, and then, if that doesn’t rectify the situation, you should bring it up to your Home shepherds. There may be times when you don’t feel you can bring the matter up directly to the person, in which case you can seek help from the Home shepherds. If the situation is serious enough, or the erring member doesn’t change his ways within a reasonable amount of time, the shepherds should bring the matter before all the voting members of the Home.

A “reasonable amount of time” depends on what the infringement is and what the harm is. If, for example, you see that someone is verbally abusing another member and shouting at him, a reasonable amount of time for that to be remedied is immediately. Whereas if the Home managers have not been informing the Home of the financial state well enough and a member of the Home feels that he isn’t being kept informed, which he has the right to be, he can bring it up to the steering council, as well as to the Home, and say, “I think we need to be better informed, so we need to have a Home council meeting to discuss finances.” In that case, a reasonable amount of time would be at most 15 days. It depends on the problem, how serious it is, and whether or not it’s causing harm.

- 1. If the matter is not remedied within a reasonable amount of time or is deemed a serious offense, the member has the right and the responsibility to write to the shepherding desk formally requesting that action be taken.**

- a. Such requests may also be sent to World Services Leadership, if so desired.**

If you feel the situation is very serious, or if it is not taken care of after you have followed the steps outlined in clause A., then you can take the next step of informing the SD of the situation. Your SD will pass your report to the RSs to look into. You should send a report as soon as possible.

“If you are personally convinced that something is really wrong with your leader’s actions or orders, and that God’s work is being damaged or His sheep are being abused, mistreated, or hurt as a result, then it is your duty to report it to a higher authority” (ML #2417:17). “Failure to report a crime is a crime” (ML #662:22).

- 2. The shepherding desk must investigate the matter within 60 days. The regional shepherds can extend the time, if necessary, to conclude the investigation.**
 - a. If, through investigation, confirmation is made that the rights of the member have been infringed upon, resulting in physical, spiritual, psychological, or emotional harm, appropriate and proportionate discipline must be assigned to the offending members. The offended member and those who had reported the offense must be informed of the action taken.**
 - b. If, through investigation, it is found that the entire Home was negligent in protecting the rights of the member, the entire Home must be appropriately and proportionately disciplined. The offended member and those who reported the offense must be informed of the action taken.**
 - c. If, through investigation, it is decided that the member's rights have not been infringed upon, the shepherding desk must inform the member who alleged he was offended, as well as those who reported the matter.**

Responsibilities and Rights of Family Discipleship Homes

Responsibilities of a Family Discipleship Home

A Family discipleship Home should be a sample to the world that true, living, applied Christianity, as portrayed in the New Testament, exists in today's world. True communal discipleship Homes show the world that there are Christians who are willing to live 100% for God, who are willing to give up the comforts and conveniences of selfish living to live a life of service to others. Our willingness to live by faith, to witness full time and to trust God to supply our needs as we share all things, is a testimony of the existence of a living, caring, very real God.

The Home and its individuals must bring forth the fruits of discipleship, the fruits of obedience, the fruits of obeying the *Charter* and the New Wine in spirit, the fruits of unity and living the One Wife vision, the fruits of using the spiritual weapons, the fruits of good witnessing, the fruits of putting the Lord first and serving Him to the best of their ability. It should be clear whether the Home is living the discipleship standard by looking at their fruits, both their outside witnessing fruits as well as the fruits of the Spirit within the Home. And the only way for a Home to truly bring forth that fruit is if the individual members of the Home are disciples, living the discipleship life. If the people within the Home aren't disciples, then the Home won't bring forth the fruits of discipleship. And if a Home is not bringing forth the fruits of discipleship, it's fairly certain, the folks in that Home are not disciples.

A Family discipleship Home should provide both a supportive environment and fellowship with others to help each other live full-time discipleship. It's a Home that's a team made up of all the members of the Home. When the members of the Home live together, work together, obey together, and watch out for one another, they will form a winning team. A team that truly becomes one unit, with all members working toward the same goal of victory, will become strong; they'll be winners. The Lord put us in Homes because He knows that while it is extremely difficult to fully live up to His standard of discipleship as individuals, when we are together, united as a team and upholding one another, it is much easier. The role of the Home becomes vital to living the discipleship life. (Based on ML #3479:69, 72, 76.)

A Family discipleship Home:

A. Lives together communally and fulfills the requirements of a Family discipleship Home.

- 1. A Family discipleship Home may temporarily stay with Missionary or Fellow members, or in a non-Family home for up to 30 days, but for no more than 30 days within any 60-day period.**

a. The shepherding desk may grant an extension.

This covers a situation when a Family friend or relative might invite an entire Home to live in his house perhaps while the Home is in transition between moves or on a temporary witnessing mission.

This clause does not cover the times when a Family disciple is away from the Home while visiting relatives. In that case refer to "[Home Size Rules](#)."

B. Abides by the minimum and maximum Home personnel requirements in accordance with the "[Home Size Rules](#)."

C. Elects a steering council and board pillar representatives in accordance with the "[Voting and Election Rules](#)."

- 1. The process of Home elections must begin within 15 days after opening a new Family discipleship Home.**

D. Informs the non-resident parents if their young adult aged 18–20, who's been living in the Home, chooses not to remain a Family disciple.

E. If a road team Home, must fulfill the Charter requirements of a Family discipleship Home.

1. A road team Home must base out of a specific region and is subject to the Charter's clearance and right of mobility guidelines.

A road team Home is one which has no fixed residence and is different from a situation where some members of a Home go out on the road for a period of time, but are still listed as members of a regular Home on that Home's eTRF. For example, two families living in caravans and moving from place to place would be a road team Home. They would send in their own eTRF and, as a Home based within a specific regional area, would need to have a Home email and mailing address. It's also important that the road team Home abides by point A.1 above, and doesn't stay in the residence of someone who is not a Family disciple for more than 30 days within a 60-day period.

Such a team would need the local Homes' agreement to do outreach in a city that already has an FD or MM Home in it. See "[Procedure for Granting or Denying Clearance](#)" and "[Procedure for Using the Right of Mobility](#)."

Road team Homes are not an exception to the Family discipleship requirements. They must also have a coach, pass their Home review, follow all the Charter Home size, meeting, and witnessing requirements, and work to build a verifiable work with tangible fruit.

F. Does not allow anyone to reside in the Home who is not a Family disciple or an authorized guest.

"Authorized guest" is defined in the following clauses 1 and 2.

1. A visitor who is not a Family disciple may stay in a Family discipleship Home for up to 30 days, but for no more than 30 days within any 60-day period.

a. The shepherding desk may grant exceptions.

b. An overnight visitor who is not a Family disciple and who is a minor, should either be accompanied by their parents or guardians, or have written permission from a parent or legal guardian.

The Home can allow visitors who are not Family disciples to stay in the Home for up to 30 days within a 60 day period; beyond that would require permission from the SD. Due to legal reasons, visitors who are minors and who stay overnight without their parents should have written permission from their parents or legal guardians if they are not related to an adult member of the Home. Of course, the decision on who is allowed to stay in the Home as a visitor and for how long would be decided by the Home council.

2. A teenager who decides not to be a Family disciple may, with the approval of the Home council and permission from the shepherding desk, continue to reside in a Family discipleship Home with his parents as a guest, provided the teen adheres to the following:

- Refrains from activities that would reflect negatively on the Family, including any illegal activities.
- Keeps a clean and presentable appearance.
- No smoking in the Home, on the property, or in Family-owned vehicles.
- No substance abuse or use of illicit or illegal drugs.
- No possessing weapons such as firearms or hunting knives.
- No drinking for minors, or over-drinking of alcohol for those of legal age, while in the Home.
- No cursing or using foul language in the Home.

- **No violent behavior or harming of others, as well as animals or property.**
- **No sexual interaction with Family disciples.**
- **No homosexual activities in or outside of the Home.**
- **No invited visitors or guests to the Home without permission, as determined by the Home council.**
- **No public expression of criticism of the Family, the Word, or Family leadership.**
- **Abides by any Home guidelines regarding audible non-Family music in communal areas of the Home.**
- **No viewing or perusing of ungodly videos, TV shows, books, or websites, and no unedifying phone conversations in public areas of the Home, or in private rooms if shared with others.**
- **Must abide by all other rules or regulations set down for the teen by his or her parents and/or the Home council.**

A Home cannot allow someone who is not a Family disciple to live in an FD Home permanently or for an extended period of time. However, exceptions can be granted by the SD and with the agreement of the Home council in the case where a teen that has decided not to be a Family member, or has become a Missionary or Fellow member and is living with his parents.

Non-FD teens should not be reported on the Home's eTRF. They do not need to meet FD requirements or other responsibilities of Family disciples, but they must agree to not break the rules listed above, or any other rules, requirements, or extensions to the above rules that are set down for them to obey by their parents and/or the Home council.

Although it is understood that they have chosen to no longer live according to the requirements of a Family disciple, and we respect their right to do so, while residing in an FD Home it is required that they not disrupt the discipleship life of the Home. Teens that wish to report as MM or FM while living in a FD Home may do so if they witness, do a monthly MM or FM TRF, and tithe accordingly.

G. Works in harmony with other Homes in the region, country, or city.

Homes within a city, country, or region are expected to work in harmony with each other. It is inevitable that there will occasionally be problems between Homes, which will need to be worked out, but when there are, it is expected that they will be prayerfully, lovingly, and unselfishly resolved between the Homes involved. If necessary, arbitration of problems may involve the coaches, the SD, or the RSs.

H. Lives in accordance with the *Charter*.

In keeping with Home accountability, the Home council must work to ensure that its members are living in accordance with the *Charter*.

I. Fulfills the reporting and tithing requirements in accordance with the "World Services Reporting Rules."

J. Maintains and regularly checks email and physical addresses at which the Home can receive World Services and area communications, notices, and publications.

K. Handles its finances in accordance with the "Responsibilities of a Family Discipleship Home Regarding Financial Matters."

L. Completes the Family discipleship Home reviews and sends them in on time.

To help the Homes better focus on their priorities, each of the six boards—CCR, CGO, CP, CS, Ed, and YS—have compiled criteria within their pillar reflecting the Letters and the *Charter* that Homes are expected to fulfill. You will find each board's criteria in the "Family Discipleship Board Criteria."

The Home review, conducted in each pillar, is to help illuminate any areas of weakness that a Home needs to raise their standard in. If a Home fails in any of the six pillars, the RSs will decide the consequences for the Home, bearing in mind any mitigating circumstances which may have legitimately affected the Home's

ability to fulfill the FD criteria. These consequences can include a warning, probationary notice, or change of membership to MM or FM. The consequence will apply equally to all members of the Home. The Home as a team is accountable to maintain the FD lifestyle and spiritual standard.

- 1. A Home that doesn't pass Home review and receives a consequence may appeal the decision in writing to their regional shepherds via the regional desk, explaining why they disagree with the decision. The regional shepherds will review the matter and will respond to the Home with the outcome within 30 days of the receipt of the Home's letter. The decision of the regional shepherds will be final.**

M. Regularly engages in evangelism.

As Dad taught from the beginning of the Family, "Our job, the job that God has given to each of His children, is to give His Word and His Love to others, to preach the Gospel [to evangelize], to sow the seed, to witness!—That's what God has called us for. Jesus commanded His disciples to 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel (good news) to every creature' (Mark 16:15).—And we must likewise do the same. For 'the harvest [of hungry, searching souls] truly is plenteous, but the laborers [the workers who will gather them in] are few' (Matthew 9:37)" (ML #731:126).

As explained in the "[Responsibilities of an Individual Family Disciple](#)," evangelism is "zealous preaching and dissemination of the Gospel, such as through missionary work." Every Home is expected to witness and preach the Gospel with zeal in accordance with the "[Outreach Rules](#)" and the "[Church Growth and Outreach Board Criteria](#)."

N. Endeavors to achieve the area goals of the region, country, and/or city in which the Home resides.

- 1. Area goals cannot violate or contravene the *Charter* and can only be established by:**
 - a. A published World Services' directive specifically declaring the goal.**
 - or –
 - b. An area referendum of the region-, country-, and/or city-wide Homes.**
 - i. The regional desk must inform World Services Administration of the outcome of any area referendum affecting regions or countries in accordance with the "[Voting and Election Rules](#)."**
- 2. All area goals, other than those mandated by World Services, are subject to a vote of confirmation.**

There are two ways an area goal can be established: The first is if WS publishes a directive declaring that the worldwide Family, or a certain region or country, must attempt to achieve a certain goal. On the rare occasion that WS might make such a decree, they will publish it electronically or in print, clearly stating that it is a worldwide, regional, or national goal. In other words, if WS issues such a decree, it will not be ambiguous. No one will be able to erroneously come up to you and say that you "must do such-and-such because it is a WS-declared area goal" unless such a goal has been clearly stated as such in an official publication.

The second method for establishing such a goal is through an area referendum. The rules governing area referendums are listed in the "[Voting and Election Rules](#)."

This means that other than a WS-established goal, an area goal cannot be established without a vote of the Homes affected. Once the majority of the Homes in a region, country, or city agree that a measure should become a goal, then all Homes in that area are expected to endeavor to achieve it. So if an area wants to have a united project or a "push" that everyone is expected to participate in, it must first be confirmed in an area referendum as an area goal.

One example could be an effort to raise extra funds to produce special witnessing materials. Any region, country, or city wishing to implement such giving would need to receive the Homes' agreement through an area referendum. The area referendum section of the "[Voting and Election Rules](#)" explains that area referendums on financial matters are established by a two-thirds majority of the area Homes. So in this case, two thirds of the Homes must agree before it becomes an area goal.—Whereas in non-financial matters, such

as coordinating witnessing areas within a given metropolitan area, a simple majority is the criterion. All area goals, other than WS-mandated goals, are subject to an annual vote of confirmation.

O. Allocates sufficient time for required Home meetings as listed in the “Home Meetings and Activities.”

P. Participates in at least one city council meeting during any given 90-day period, if located in a city or metropolitan area with more than one Family discipleship and/or Missionary member Home.

See “City Councils” for more about Homes participating in their city council meetings.

Q. Presents itself in an honest manner in its interactions with the public, is open about its membership with the Family, and acts responsibly and honestly in its financial dealings, provisioning, fundraising, distribution of Family publications and products, appeals for support, bookkeeping and other obligations related to for-profit or not-for-profit entities, humanitarian aid, and the receipt of government benefits, so as to reflect positively on the Family.

As a Family discipleship Home, you represent the Family in your interactions with the public. Although your local work or charitable project may operate under a local name, it is important that you make your membership in the Family known in your fundraising, provisioning, appeals, and involvement in non-profit, NGO, or other associations, unless your Home is operating under specific RC guidelines concerning how to present your Family affiliation.

It is important when requesting funding or goods that the monies or goods received are designated and used for the purpose for which they were requested. We are to “provide things honest in the sight of all men” (Rom.12:17), lest the Home’s actions reflect negatively upon the Family at large.

R. Refrains from engaging in activities that reflect negatively on other Homes in their region, country, or city, or on the Family in general.

The customs and mores of society vary from country to country, so something that is acceptable in one country may not be acceptable in another. Homes therefore need to be sensitive to the customs and values of the country in which they reside, and should avoid engaging in activities that are considered offensive. “We ought to conduct ourselves in these countries in such a fashion that the people of the country and its officials will be proud to have us there and thankful for us because we’re doing their country good” (ML #1202:41).

S. Obtains written permission from the regional council—or a production center authorized by the regional council—before engaging in any legal agreements in the name of Family entities or any Family-authorized companies that concern the distribution or sale of Family products, or before acting as an official representative—other than as a sales representative—of any Family companies.

T. Informs and seeks counsel from the regional Communications and Community Relations board before participating in national, international, or other major media interviews, documentaries, websites or forums, movies, books, written or verbal rebuttals, press releases, or articles in the name of the Family.

Dealing with the media can be precarious and can have repercussions if mishandled, thus Homes must counsel with and receive authorization from their regional CCR board before becoming involved in any major media interaction. This includes any media that will affect the country, other countries, or any other major media interviews. It also covers media outreach that is conducted in the name of the Family, or in the name of a local work that is known as the Family.

If the media interview is a local affair—for example, if the local newspaper wants to do an article on your Home’s charitable or missionary work outreach—this would not fall under the above guidelines and therefore the Home would not be required to seek prior counsel and approval from the CCR board. If, however, you live in a major city and the local newspaper is published nationally, then you would need to check with your CCR board before granting the interview, since such an article could have national ramifications.

When granting permission for a local article or interview, the Home needs to realize that they are only speaking on behalf of their local Home, and are not officially representing the Family International. Regardless of the coverage the article will get the Home should report about the interview to their CCR board and send them a copy of the article once it comes out. Even though the local Home can make a decision on the local article, the Home needs to realize that they are only speaking on behalf of their local Home, and are

not representing the Family International as an official spokesperson. Should the interview move outside the realm of your local work, you should let the interviewer know that you are not an official Family spokesperson and only speak on behalf of your local work. You could also refer them to the official Family spokesperson.

If a major or national newspaper wants to publish an article about the Family, it would be considered a major article and thus would have to be counseled about with your CCR board. For example, if you live in a metropolitan area with several Homes you should seek counsel from the CCR board before participating in an interview with a city-wide newspaper or city-wide TV station, since an interview of this nature could have an impact on the other Homes in your area. If a local TV station wants to film your children's singing group it would be fine for the Home to go ahead with it as a local decision, but if a national or international TV or radio station was requesting permission to film a documentary or TV show, it would have to be counseled about beforehand.

However, in a case of extreme emergency, such as your Home being raided, you may need to immediately speak to the press without awaiting CCR board approval. If such is the case, you should proceed as the Lord leads you and inform your CCR board as soon as possible afterwards. If an officially appointed spokesperson has been appointed to handle the media, you should work in counsel with him or her.

Under non-emergency conditions, if a major media outlet representative were to arrive at your door for an interview and your regional council has not appointed anyone in your Home as an official Family spokesperson, then your response should be to politely direct the inquirer to the official Family spokesperson for the country or region, much like an employee of a company would if questioned about his or her company.

It is advised that each Home have contact information where the Family spokesperson for the country or region can be reached. If you give the contact information of the spokesperson to someone, you should inform the spokesperson as soon as possible.

U. Informs their regional Communications and Community Relations board regarding the legal registration of organizations or associations set up for the purpose of representing the Home, its work or ministries, or the Home's members to the public or to local authorities.

1. Unless an organization or association has been specifically authorized to operate in the name of the Family International, the Family International has no authority over the organization's activities or decisions.

Except in rare cases where a legal entity is authorized to operate in the name of the Family International, all legal entities are operated by the boards and individuals involved and are legally and financially autonomous. Family members operating these organizations must comply with the legal requirements of the country and/or state in which they are established, and must "provide things honest in the sight of all men," striving to fulfill the legal and financial requirements of these entities to the best of their abilities.

Although Family members are required to inform their CCR board regarding the legal registration of organizations or associations, the Family International has no authority over or responsibility for the directives, mission statement, organization, or operation of such entities.

Responsibilities of a Family Discipleship Home Regarding the Welfare of its Members

A Family discipleship Home:

A. Provides for the spiritual, physical, and material necessities of all of its members to the best of its ability by:

- 1. Allotting sufficient time on a regular basis of not less than four times per week, during which the greatest possible number of voting Home members can assemble, as one or several groups, for united prayer, praise, inspiration, loving Jesus, or reading of the Word.**

Homes must faithfully allot time for reading of the Word, prayer, and praise, as well as inspiration and loving Jesus. Each Home should organize its schedule so as many as possible of the adults and teens can gather together for such meetings. Time and length of these meetings may be determined by the Home, but must occur at least four times per week. These meetings might be morning devotions, vespers, or other spiritual activities.

Dad said, "The church of God needs a session together of assembly and fellowship and inspiration and studying God's Word and praising the Lord! So by all means please get together for a little fellowship and inspiration and prayer and a little feeding on the Word together. As Paul said, "Neglect not the assembling of yourselves together." We need to get our hearts together and our minds together and our spirits together and our bodies together—we need to get together" (ML #1384:10–12).

The Home may decide that it's better for different age groups to have all or some of their Word time together. For example, if there are a number of teens in the Home, it may be decided that the teens should have a separate devotional time geared toward their needs. There may be times when devotional meetings might include almost everyone in the Home; others might just be for voting members. It is up to the Home and/or the Home shepherds to decide on these matters.

It is not mandatory that all new WS publications—including GNs—be read unitedly unless stated on the publication. The Home shepherds may decide that it would be beneficial for some new pubs to be read unitedly.

- 2. Allowing for a minimum of 10½ hours weekly or 1½ hours daily for Home members to commune with the Lord through united devotions and/or private reading of His Word and other World Services publications, prayer, praise, meditation, loving Jesus, and hearing from the Lord in prophecy.**
 - a. The Home should make sure time is available for Home members to spend a minimum of 3½ hours weekly or 30 minutes daily in intercessory prayer.**

Beside the need for the Home's members to gather together for united reading, every member also needs personal Word time. The Home must make sure time is available for its members to have this private reading, as well as prayer and prophecy time. Of course, it is up to the individual to use this time wisely and to make his or her Word time is quality time. The 10½ hours weekly of united and/or private Word time is the minimum.

Home members should also take 3½ hours weekly of intercessory prayer, either individually or unitedly. Intercessory prayer does not count as part of the 10½ hours weekly Word requirement.

- b. Disciples under one year in the Family must be allocated an additional seven hours weekly, or a total of 17½ hours weekly, in order to read through the "Priority Reading List for a New Family Disciple or Missionary Member," as well as to complete the *12 Bridges* course, if they have not done so prior to joining.**

New disciples need additional hours to get properly grounded in the Word. In order to make it possible for them to complete the study of the *12 Bridges*, if they did not do so before joining, and the "Priority Reading List for a New Family Disciple or Missionary Member," an additional seven hours per week of Word time must be allotted by the Home for this specific purpose. It's preferable that this additional Word time be on a daily basis, or at least spread throughout several time slots during the week, but may not be less than seven additional hours of Word time per week.

3. Supplying and maintaining a well-organized Home library of Family publications.

- a. The Home library may be kept in electronic form. However, all Home members must be able to freely access the electronic library just as they would a physical Home library.**
- b. All publications in the Home must have required portions deleted or modified in accordance with World Services pubs purge guidelines.**

A well-organized Home library is a vital part of the Home. If a physical library is either non-existent or is so disorganized that it's almost impossible to find the reading material you're looking for, or the electronic library is not easily and readily available, the Home members will be discouraged from getting into the Word, and will suffer spiritually.

It is the Home's responsibility to gather the Family publications necessary for as complete a set of pubs as available, both in English and—where needed and available—in their local language, and to keep them available and in order. Electronic versions of publications that have not been mailed to the Homes on paper should be kept in a specific and easily accessible secure location on the Home's computer, as should the complete electronic library.

All publications in the Home must be purged according to the WS pubs purge guidelines. All publications in the InfoStore electronic library have been purged according to WS pubs purge guidelines.

The CP board recommends in "How-to Aids for the CP, FED, and PR Boards" (GN 1126) that the children's library be easily available and accessible for the children.

4. Allotting each Home member 16 years or older a regular day off from Home duties, preferably weekly, but no less than once every two weeks.

Dad said, "None of us can stand the constant pressures of continuous demands on our time, strength, body, soul, and spirit to which we are so often forced to submit, without relief, by the press of time, necessity, need, and one emergency after another so prevalent in such a fast-moving and rapidly expanding work such as ours where the laborers are so few, the Harvest so big, and there's so much to be done to gather it in before the Storm! Even the Lord Himself could not bear the continual strain and virtue drain of a constant ministry to the multitudes, which is what your ministry really is, so He frequently had to get away from it all and take His disciples up into the mountains or out to sea or on a private visit to friends for a spiritual retreat, rest, and recuperation and inspiration—sometimes even all alone" (ML #169:5,2).

5. Maintaining a clean, safe, and healthy environment, and a physical standard of living that is a positive reflection on the Family.

Our Homes need to maintain a good physical standard. If a Home is in harmony with, and conforms to, the goals and rules of the Family they should be able to maintain a good standard as also underlined in the "Children and Parenting Board Criteria" and "Communications and Community Relations Board Criteria."

Dad said, "Cleanliness isn't next to godliness, it is godliness, it's part of being godly! So keep it clean! Keep your hands clean, your body clean, your food clean, the air clean, the yard clean, and the carpets as clean as you can. It's only God that ever keeps you, but for God's sake, give Him a little cooperation" (ML #1031:69).

6. Supplying nutritious, wholesome foods to eat, taking into account the special needs of babies, growing children, nursing and pregnant mothers, the elderly, and the sick.

It's a Family goal to preserve our physical bodies by eating foods that promote good health, vitality, and energy, which includes well-balanced meals, plenty of fruit and vegetables, and good water, while avoiding

junk foods, foods with high sugar content, artificial sweeteners, and refined, bleached, or processed sugar and foods.

Jesus said, "Eating right, exercising right, and living right will go a long way toward preventing ill-health and disease. If you do the things I'm showing you to do, it's certain that you will improve your health and you will find that you are getting sick much less. And there will be sicknesses and diseases down the line that will completely bypass you because of your good choices now" (ML #3626:90).

Mama went on to say, "Not only is it good for you to take care of your body and do what you can to build up your health, but it is also your responsibility in raising your children to teach them right from the beginning and to help them form godly health habits at an early age, so that they can grow into strong disciples" (ML# 3634:35).

See "Healthy Living, Part 2" (ML# 3634) for more complete counsel on how the right food, nutrition, and diet help achieve good health.

7. Supplying needed prayer, care, support, and medical attention to those who are sick or physically ill, impaired, pregnant, elderly, or in need. Decisions concerning whether to get medical advice or attention are determined by the members themselves, or in the case of children, by their parents or guardians.

If a Home member is sick, it is the Home's responsibility to support him or her physically and spiritually and supply the necessary prayer and care. If the member needs medical advice or attention, it should be made available. If he or she is in the hospital, Home members should visit regularly.

If a member is physically weaker, impaired, pregnant or has special physical needs, which would include nursing mothers and elderly members, the Home should not only meet his or her medical needs, but endeavor to meet his or her dietary and therapeutic needs as much as possible, and be understanding of his or her need for extra rest and/or a lighter workload.

The Home is also responsible to help meet its members' needs for prenatal, postnatal, dental, and eye check-ups, and any resultant medical or dental work, or eyeglasses needed. As outlined in the "[Responsibilities of Family Discipleship Parents](#)," children should have initial dental and eye check-ups no later than age four, and annually, or more often when needed, after that.

In the case of emergency medical needs, some of the Home's HER fund may be used in accordance with the "[Financial Rules](#)." However, since there are over six months' of advance notice for births, the Home should set aside funds in advance to cover the cost, as well as to take care of any other predetermined medical and associated legal or paperwork expenses.

8. Ensuring that its members get regular vigorous exercise.

a. Members aged 18 and over should get regular, vigorous exercise, preferably in the fresh air, not less than four times per week, health permitting.

i. The type, amount, and intensity of exercise and physical activity depends on the age, health, and physical condition of the individual. Each member's exercise should be appropriate to the individual's needs and capabilities.

b. Members under the age of 18 must have regular, vigorous age-appropriate exercise, preferably in the fresh air for at least one hour, though preferably 90 minutes, not less than five times per week, health permitting.

The goal should be to make exercise a daily or near-daily occurrence—for life. Ideally, everyone should have good, vigorous exercise every day. If you can't get that, the minimum is 4 days a week.

See "Exercise: If You Don't Have Time, Make Time!" (ML# 3627) for more complete counsel on ensuring that your exercise is regular and sufficiently vigorous to achieve good health. Mama explains there how exercise is essential to good health. "Dad harped on good exercise in many Letters, because many of us just weren't getting it. It can be easy to dismiss the importance of physical activity and to think that you can get along fine without it. It's not the same as going without eating or sleeping, which you feel the effects of immediately. But although the effects of a lack of exercise can be slower in coming, without a doubt they do come. Insufficient exercise is to blame for many health problems, illnesses, and long-term disabilities or afflictions, particularly as our bodies grow older.

"Exercise is important for people of all ages. The Lord made our bodies to need exercise. It's exercise, almost more than diet, that helps children's bodies grow strong. It's exercise that keeps our bodies active and capable of cleansing and repairing themselves throughout our lives" (ML# 3627:25–26).

9. Allotting sufficient time for its members to engage in evangelism in accordance with the "Outreach Rules."

10. Creating the conditions in which its members can carry out their responsibilities, exercise their rights, and govern themselves in accordance with the *Charter*.

The Home is responsible to operate in such a way that its members can abide by the *Charter*.

Responsibilities of a Family Discipleship Home Regarding Children, Teens, and Parents

Children, teens, and parents have certain rights granted them under the *Charter*, which the Home is accountable for and is responsible to work toward fulfilling.

A Family discipleship Home:

- A. Shall regard the welfare of; shall provide a loving, happy, and secure environment; and shall allocate sufficient time for the spiritual, emotional, intellectual, and physical development of its resident children and teens, providing the resources, materials, and personnel to fulfill these responsibilities.**

While it is ultimately the parents' responsibility to make sure their children and teens have access to the resources necessary for their development, the Home is collectively responsible to provide these. It is the Home's responsibility to schedule the time, and provide the resources and personnel to supply the means for its children and teen's spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and physical development.

"When it comes to our children, whether they have one parent or two, if they have a need, it's the job of all of us to be burdened and desperate about that need. These are our children, and we need to pray fervently for God's supernatural love that will help us to love them as we do our own natural children. We need to pray for them as we pray for our own, and be as desperate for solutions to their problems as we are for our own" (ML #2953:4).

- B. Ensures that its resident children and teens have sufficient time, opportunity, and educational materials to become competent in a manner appropriate to their age, ability, and aptitude in the skills of reading, language arts, mathematics, social studies, sciences, and other academic and curricular subjects, including practical-life skills.**

- 1. The parents, with the agreement of a simple majority of the Home council, will decide which method to use in educating their children.**

Different parents may want to use different methods to educate their children and teens. Any method of education is acceptable as long as it allows the children to become academically competent in a manner appropriate to their age, ability, and aptitude, and the Home council agrees by a simple majority to support the agreed-upon method of education for each child or teen.

As stated in the "[Rights of Minors](#)," children and teens are entitled to an adequate education; thus, the Home is responsible to ensure that they receive that education by whatever means are available. See also "[Responsibilities of Family Discipleship Parents](#)" and the "[Education Board Criteria](#)" for more detail on education requirements.

If it becomes apparent that parents are negligent in their duty of providing their child or teen with an adequate education, the parents, and possibly the members of the Home in which they reside, will be in jeopardy of losing their Family membership.

- C. Allows parents and/or teachers sufficient time for the keeping of the educational records of its resident children and teens.**

See the "[Education Board Criteria](#)" for more detail concerning what records must be kept.

- D. Regularly informs the non-resident parents of the spiritual, emotional, physical, and educational well-being of their child or teen residing in the Home.**

1. If a teen decides not to remain in Family discipleship, his non-resident parents must be informed by the teen's Home shepherds of the teen's decision within seven days.

- E. Allocates sufficient time for resident parents and their children and/or teens to have time together in accordance with "Home Meetings and Activities."**
- F. Provides witnessing training and allocates sufficient time for the Home's children and teens to regularly engage in suitable witnessing activities.**

By their sample, the Home motivates the children and teens to have a heart for the lost and to be instant, faithful witnesses. This includes training them to be courteous and hospitable to visitors coming to the Home and to those they meet outside. The Home should try to allocate time for their children and teens to witness, preferably on a weekly basis, though twice a month is a recommended minimum. Witnessing should include a variety of inspiring witnessing opportunities in a manner appropriate to both their age and the local field conditions. Any responsible method that would not be considered a reproach to the work in that country could be used.

As voting members, senior teens should have the opportunity to witness a minimum of two hours per week or eight hours per month, health permitting, as outlined in "Outreach Rules."

See also "Rights of Minors."

- G. Supplies assistance to resident parents in the physical and spiritual care and education of its resident children and teens.**

"We're the only way [the Lord] has of training and shepherding and parenting [our children]. He's expecting us to do a good job of it and He's holding us all responsible for the children He's given us. Each one of us is going to have to give an account to God for what we've done with our children. Have we played our part—no matter how large or small—faithfully, diligently, lovingly, and responsibly? Have we done our best to help our children?" (ML #2670:31).

- H. Recognizes that a single parent faces the challenge of raising his or her children and teens without the assistance of a spouse, and therefore may need additional assistance in the physical, spiritual, emotional, educational, and disciplinary care of his or her children and teens. The Home therefore endeavors to supply, to the best of its ability, additional assistance and to take into account the special challenges of single parenting.**

Single parents are faced with more difficulties than couples in raising their children. They can also be tempted to feel that they and their children are a burden to the Home. They may fear that they will be voted out of, or not be accepted into a Home because they may be considered a burden. Many single parents already feel that they must almost do "double duty" by working extra hard in order to prove to the Home that they are a blessing. This, along with being both a mother and father to their children, can be very taxing.

We must all recognize the difficulties and challenges that our single parents face and do all we can to help. We should put ourselves in their shoes and try to be loving and understanding of their and their children's needs. Our love should be "in deed and in truth" (1Jn.3:18) as we "bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ" (Gal.6:2).

Members of the Home individually and collectively are responsible to help supply the single parents in the Home with additional help in the care and raising of their children. All of the children in your Home are your children, because they are Family children. Every child needs a father and mother, and if he doesn't have both, the Home and its members are responsible to help fill the gap. The Home might want to arrange for the single parent to team up with another single or a couple in a parenting teamwork so the single parent would have regular help with and counsel about his or her children.

Our Homes need to take into account that our single parents face a special challenge in the care of their children and teens, and Home members should be compassionate and understanding if a single parent is not able to carry the same weight in the Home as a married couple or as a single person without children.

- I. Agrees together upon a behavioral standard for its resident children and teens, and disciplines its children and teens within the boundaries of the "Childcare Discipline Guidelines."**

Responsibilities of a Family Discipleship Home Regarding Financial Matters

A Family discipleship Home:

- A. Is financially stable, lives within its income, operates within a monthly budget, and meets all of its financial responsibilities and obligations by whatever legal means necessary.**

It is mandatory that Family discipleship Homes be financially indigenous, stable, and free of debt by living within the income the Home generates. The Home should operate within a budget agreed upon by its voting members and endeavor to meet all its financial obligations.

The financial management of a Home is very important. Each Home should decide upon a monthly budget and work to operate within that budget. This should include planning for upcoming expenses such as medical costs for the birth of a baby, travel, visa, and legal expenses such as passport renewals, and educational materials for their children's and teens' upcoming school year, so that such expenses don't contribute to the Home going into debt due to poor planning.

Dad said, "One of the best ways to practice austerity and make sure you're investing the Lord's money well is to keep a budget. If you're faithfully setting money aside for your bills and regular expenses, you'll be much more on top of it and you'll know exactly where you stand financially, which will help avoid the end of the month 'cram' when it comes time to pay your rent" (ML #2813:24). "The thing to do when you find you can't live within your income is to either cut your living down to the level of your income, or figure some way to raise the income" (ML #1271:2).

- B. Determines all financial direction and decisions by a two-thirds majority of Home council members 18 years of age or older.**

- 1. Voting members 16 and 17 years old may attend Home council meetings when finances are discussed, and participate in the discussion, but cannot vote on financial matters.**
- 2. The Home council may make expenditures or incur liabilities, with the understanding that each member has the personal responsibility to pay his portion should the Home as a whole be unable to.**

The following scenario should give a general idea of the way a Home's finances could work. A certain Home has 10 voting members 18 years of age or older. The Home managers propose a monthly budget to the Home, which the Home prays about and discusses, modifies according to the decisions made, and then votes on to approve. Of the 10 voting members 18 years of age or older, 6 of them focus primarily on outreach, while the other 4 focus primarily on the education and care of the children and other Home duties—being involved in witnessing, outreach, and follow-up as they are able. The 6 people on outreach are the ones who normally bring in most of the funds for the Home, since the 4 on childcare and Home duties don't have as much opportunity to give to fundraising. However, the 4 that focus primarily on "in house" ministries make it possible for the ones on outreach to do their work because they take care of the children and other essential Home duties throughout the day.

If for some reason the Home went €1,000 over-budget for the month, took out a Home loan, or otherwise authorized an expenditure for that amount it would be owed by the Home as a whole, and those on outreach would probably need to step up their fundraising activities to pay this amount off. The Home managers would not say, "Everyone is now responsible to pay off €100 each, so you who are teachers or

focus more on Home ministries must figure how you're going to pay your €100." The €1,000 would be the Home's responsibility collectively and it would be up to the Home to figure out how to pay it.

Ultimately however, each individual is personally responsible to ensure that the €1,000 is paid off and the Home doesn't fall into debt. So while the general responsibility for all expenses, debts, or liabilities incurred by the Home falls to the Home, the ultimate responsibility falls to each voting member 18 years of age and older for his portion, and should the Home disband or an individual leave the Home he is responsible for his portion of the remaining debts or applicable liabilities the Home has at that time.

3. The Home council can authorize its Home managers to make expenditures up to a predetermined amount.

Rather than necessitating that the Home meet together to determine every expense, the Home may decide to have the Home managers pay specified regular bills or expenses without having to get monthly approval via a vote of the Home.

Likewise, the Home may agree to authorize the Home managers to spend a specific amount of funds outside of the budgeted amounts the Home has agreed upon without having to seek prior approval of the Home. For example, the Home could authorize them to spend or give permission for others to spend up to, say, €200 a month. If they did, the Home managers would be authorized to allow someone to buy an item not already covered in the Home's agreed upon budget—costing up to €200—if he discovers a bargain while out. The Home manager would not have to ask the Home, since the cost of the item is under the €200 limit the Home has set. If the amount to be spent was over €200 they would have to ask the Home about it first.

The Home may likewise vote to allow the Home managers to authorize the spending of set amounts of the Home's budget, so if the Home has budgeted €100 for home improvements the Home managers can authorize the spending of that amount for that purpose. There may be other cases where the Home decides that someone else besides the Home managers might be allowed to spend a set amount, such as the Home's shopper. They may authorize him to spend €100 in the event he finds some item the Home has been looking for.

Mama wrote: "All adults should be aware of the financial state of the Home. And that means all the adults should know the specifics concerning how you're doing financially—how much money is on hand, how the money is being spent, how your Home budget and buffer are doing, what bills are owed, etc.—not just percentages, but actual amounts. All adults should feel responsible for the support of the Home, not just your outreach teams or your poor business teamworker" (ML #2929:39).

Whether or not you give the Home managers this authority, and the amounts you set, is completely up to the Home. The Home's finances belong to the Home and its members, and it's up to the Home to collectively decide how the funds will be managed.

C. Pays its monthly 10% tithe, 1% Family Aid Fund gift, and 3% common pot gift; keeps current on its Home loan payments; and has its Home Emergency Reserves intact.

- 1. In the case of no, low, or late tithe, Family Aid Fund gift, or common pot gift the Home will automatically be placed on probationary notice by the reporting office.**
- 2. If a Home loan payment is missed and not rectified within the following 60 days the Home will automatically be placed on probationary notice by the reporting office.**
- 3. If the Home does not have its Home Emergency Reserves intact by their April and October eTRFs the Home will automatically be placed on probationary notice by the reporting office.**
 - a. Funds borrowed as a working reserve from the Home Emergency Reserves must be paid back in full before the April and October eTRFs.**
 - b. The only exception would be if the Home voted to use up to half of their Home Emergency Reserves for a legitimate emergency and this has not yet been replenished by World Services.**

See "[Financial Rules](#)" concerning use and maintenance of the Home's HER.

D. Pays its bills on time, keeps current on its financial liabilities, and remains out of debt.

- 1. Overdue payments on bills and liabilities, on borrowed funds or loans, or on production center credit is considered debt. If the Home is in debt on two consecutive**

eTRFs, it will be in jeopardy of being placed on probationary notice by the shepherding desk.

- a. If the Home's non-payment of any of the above isn't rectified by the end of the 60-day probationary period the Home will automatically become a Missionary member Home.**

Dad said, "God's Word says that we are to provide all things honest toward them that are without, that the ministry be not blamed (2 Corinthians 6:3; 8:21), and so that you do not bring reproach on the cause of Christ as well as the name of the Family. This also includes your failure to pay bills or debts that you rightfully owe! You are to owe no man anything, save to love him" (ML #143:40–41).

Also, "You can't pay some bills in advance, but you better set aside for them and plan on the fact that it's going to be approximately so much. Set it aside so that you can pay it when it comes, instead of saying, 'Oh well, when the bill comes due, the Lord will supply somehow.' That's the way a lot of you were operating and all of a sudden the bottom dropped out. The bills came due, but instead of the Lord supplying, the Lord taught you not to do business that way" (ML #701:69).

Loans are financial liabilities that the Home is responsible to make payments on. By Charter definition liabilities that aren't paid on time become debts. The explanation of the difference between debts and liabilities is found in the "[Rights of an Individual Family Disciple Within the Home.](#)"

- 2. Should a Home member decide to move out of the Home, the member is accountable for, and must pay, his portion of any debts and/or applicable liabilities incurred by the Home.**

A "portion" here equals the total amount of Home debts divided by the number of voting members 18 years of age and over. "Applicable liabilities" may be determined by whether the Home continues to benefit from the reason the loan was taken or the purchase was made in the first place. For example, if the Home decided that a member needed some costly dental treatment, but needed to take out a Home loan of €300 to help cover the costs and soon after receiving the dental work the Home member decides to move on—but before that loan has been paid back in full—because the member specifically benefited from the loan and that benefit will not be available to the Home after he is gone, he would be responsible to pay his portion of the remainder of the loan liability before moving.

On the other hand, if a loan was taken out to buy a new car or a refrigerator and the loan was not fully paid off by the time a member wanted to move on, the member should not be held responsible to help finish paying off the remaining payments from that loan before leaving because the Home will continue to use and benefit from the use of the car or refrigerator after the member moves on.—Thus it is the Home's liability and not that of the member who is moving on. The Home council would be the one to make the ultimate decision should there be a question about whether or not a liability is applicable to the individual.

The Home council can determine what amount of the funds a departing member raises will go towards the payment of his debt or applicable liabilities, but it must be at least 50% of the net income. If he brings in €100 in a day of fundraising, the seed corn for tools and the tithe on that €100 will first need to be taken out. If the seed corn is €19 and the tithe, FAF, and Common Pot contribution is approximately €11 on the net income of €81, €70 will be left after these deductions. Of that €70 the Home would get 50%, or €35, towards paying off his portion of the Home's debt or applicable liabilities, decreasing the amount accordingly. The Home can give more than 50% of the net income toward the departing member's portion of the debt or liability, but not less.

It's advisable that a departing member plans ahead for these expenses to allow sufficient time to raise needed travel and landing funds before giving the Home his 30-day notice. It may take considerably longer than 30 days to raise the finances needed to save for the needed travel expenses and to pay the portion due of the Home's present debts and liabilities.

See also "[Procedure for Using the Right of Mobility](#)" and "[Rights of an Individual Family Disciple Within the Home.](#)"

- a. The Home council may, by a two-thirds majority, free a departing member from all or some of his portion of the Home's debt and/or applicable liabilities, providing the remaining Home members assume that portion.**

- 3. Should the Home disband, each voting member 18 years of age or older is personally accountable for, and must pay, his portion of any outstanding debts and/or liabilities incurred by the Home in accordance with the "[Rights of a Family Discipleship Home.](#)"**

- a. The Home council may, by a two-thirds majority, free a member from all or some of his portion of the Home's debt and/or applicable liabilities, providing the remaining Home members agree to assume that portion.**

If the time comes for the Home to close and all the bills aren't yet paid, then each member must assume the responsibility to pay for his portion of the Home's remaining debts and liabilities. In the case of a Home disbanding, all liabilities the Home may have are considered applicable to each individual and are the responsibility of all regardless of whether they were incurred prior to a member joining the Home or not. See also "[Procedure for Using the Right of Mobility.](#)"

There will be times that a Home must close immediately and the members arrange to move to other Homes on very short notice. In such a case, even though the members no longer live in the Home, they may still have a portion of debts and liabilities to pay off from the closing of their former Home. In such a case, the receiving Home has the right to know of the member's debts or liabilities ahead of time since the Home will need either to assume the amount due or allow time for the new member to raise the funds to pay it. See also "[Rights of a Family Discipleship Home.](#)"

- E. Keeps accurate records of its financial state and discloses to all voting members, 18 years of age or older, the financial standing of the Home, including all cash assets, income, liabilities, and expenditures, and upcoming bills on a regular basis of at least once a month.**

- 1. A two-thirds majority of the Home council determines whether a "regular basis" should be more often than once a month.**

As explained in the "[Rights of an Individual Family Disciple Within the Home,](#)" each voting member is entitled to know, and it is the Home's responsibility to disclose, a complete financial state of the Home. The Home should keep accurate records of its finances to be able to do this. It's up to the Home council to decide how often and in what way this information is to be disclosed, but is the Home managers' responsibility to ensure that this information is disclosed at least one time per month.

- F. Discloses to a voting member 17 years of age or older, who is considering joining the Home, the financial state of the Home and what his portion of the Home's debt and liabilities would be if he should decide to join the Home.**

Members 17 years or older, who are seriously considering joining another Home have the right to know 90 days before joining the Home the state of the finances for their potential new Home and what their portion of the Home's debts and liabilities would be upon joining the Home. A 17 year old would need to know this in order to make a knowledgeable decision on whether he'd want to move to the Home and take on that portion of the debt or liabilities after becoming 18 years old.

See also "[Procedure for Using the Right of Mobility.](#)"

- 1. A Home must disclose to a senior teen in their Home six months before turning 18 years old, the financial state of the Home and what, if any, his portion of the Home's debts and liabilities will be upon turning 18 years old.**

- G. Manages its finances according to Acts 2:44–45 and Acts 4:34–35, shares its material belongings with the Family in general and with those in the Home, and operates financially in such a manner that each Home member contributes his income to the Home to be managed by the Home council.**

As also explained in the "[Responsibilities of an Individual Family Disciple,](#)" the Family believes in and practices Acts 2:44–45 and Acts 4:34–35, helping to ensure that everyone in the Home has what he needs and that those who have more than they need lovingly share it with those who lack.

A Family discipleship Home should be making united decisions as to how all income to the Home and to its individual members should be used. When a Home accurately knows the state of their collective income and expenses it can take better care of all its members. Operating in this manner is a good testimony of a Home whose members are looking to take care of the varied and specific needs of everyone in the Home, including those who do not have access to donations or income from other sources. For this to work, Home members must put the needs of others before their own. That would include both the recipient of finances and the other Home members who are part of the decision making process. Home members must be truly thinking more of others than of themselves when deciding what to do with the Home's income.

There will be individuals within every Home who have particular needs, whether medical, legal, scholastic, or other, and these needs should be considered, prayed about, and filled through the Home's collective living

of the Acts 2:44–45 vision. A Home that is not able to care for the legitimate personal needs of all its members because some are keeping aside personal monies that the Home either is not aware of, has no authority over, or say in how they are spent, will become ripe for division. A lack of a sense of community and sharing within a Home fosters dishonesty and selfishness.

In summary, a Home whose members make known all their income to the Home, and then in Home council agree together on its use, is truly living according to Acts 2:44–45 and will reap the blessings of “continuing daily with one accord with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord [will] add to the church daily such as should be saved” (Acts 2:46–47).

Rights of a Family Discipleship Home

A Family discipleship Home has the right to:

A. Determine, by a two-thirds majority of the Home council, its basic nature and goals providing these do not contradict the *Charter* or agreed-upon area goals.

The Home is free to decide its main vision and thrust: what its main ministry or ministries will be and specifically what goals it will attempt to reach. Home members, for example, may decide their main ministry is primarily getting out *Activated*, follow-up, Consider the Poor, youth outreach, or a prison ministry or tool distribution, or perhaps a combination of different ministries. Such a decision is completely up to the Home. Bear in mind though, that a Home must be working to build a well-rounded missionary work as per the CGO board criteria, unless the Home is a Service Home providing other needed services to the country or region.

If the Home is seeking the Lord in prophecy concerning its primary goals and ministry, before implementing the directions of a prophecy received for your Home, the Home council, by a two-thirds majority, must be convinced that it is the Lord's will and should test the prophecy against the other ways to know God's will. If such a matter has brought about some confusion or conflict within the Home, it should be sorted out by seeking further confirmation or clarification from the Lord, prayer, and discussion together, as outlined in "[Prophecy Rules](#)."

The Home members collectively choose the way the Home operates. They decide upon its procedures, and determine its Home regulations, providing they operate within the broad guidelines established in the *Charter* and are endeavoring to reach the goals of the Family, as published in the New Wine, and/or area goals.

"Homes must be self-governing according to God's guidance! Your Home must learn to operate under its own leadership according to its own faith and by the ways and means that it feels are best for its particular habitat, soil, and surroundings" (ML #315C:11).

B. Establish Home regulations by a simple majority of the Home council, which Home members agree to abide by, so long as these regulations do not contradict the *Charter* or area goals.

The voting members of the Home can vote to establish Home regulations which they feel are necessary for the functioning of their Home. There are numerous Letters and other pubs that give guidance on all aspects of Family life that the Home may want to counsel about implementing by making them Home regulations.

Once such matters have been agreed to by a majority of the Home council, these Home regulations must be adhered to by the Home members. A Home does, of course, have the right to modify or drop such Home regulations at any time if a simple majority of the Home council agrees, or a two-thirds majority agrees in the case of Home regulations governing financial matters. A list of the Home's regulations should be kept in an easily accessible location for Home members' reference.

C. Choose by a two-thirds majority of the Home council to move the Home to a new location in the same city, or in any city in the same country that has no Family discipleship or Missionary member Home, providing it is not a closed city or in a closed metropolitan area.

- 1. If the Home wishes to move to a city within its present country of residence that already has a Family discipleship or Missionary member Home, Home members must follow the "[Procedure for Opening a Home in a City or Metropolitan Area with a Family Discipleship or Missionary Member Home](#)."**

Where a Home decides to live is up to its members. They can move anywhere within their present city, or to another city in the same country. The Home may want to inform their RD of their intent to move before informing the landlord of their house, as their RD may know of others also looking for a house in that city or area. The Home should also inform the Family member who signed the contract if they are not presently in the Home, and fulfill their legal obligations to the landlord.

If your Home is moving within the same city and has found a house in or near a neighborhood that already has a Home situated there, though you don't have to get permission from the other Homes in the city, it would be wise and loving to consult with the existing Homes and/or the city council as to whether or not it is agreeable to have the two Homes in such close proximity.

D. Choose by a two-thirds majority of the Home council to disband the Home. The Home's steering council must send a "Closing Home Form" to the regional desk prior to closure.

Home forms may be found at [RO-RD_forms](#).

1. At the time the Home sends its notice to the regional desk, a finance meeting must be convened with the Home's voting members to discuss the Home's financial status and determine the measures needed to pay all outstanding debts and liabilities, if they have any, by any of the following means:

a. Using as much as possible of the Home's financial assets above essential operating expenses toward the payment of its outstanding bills.

Common sense would dictate that the Home would first of all use whatever finances it has available, above what it is going to cost for them to operate for the remaining time the Home is open, toward paying their bills and/or debts.

b. Liquidating communal assets, as determined by a two-thirds majority of the Home council, to the extent necessary to pay any remaining debts and liabilities.

If the Home doesn't have the cash assets available to pay its debts or liabilities, and/or is not able to generate income through any other means, they should liquidate—which means to convert into cash by selling—their communal assets. Communal assets are any assets that belong to the entire Home, and could include such things as furniture, electronic equipment, kitchen equipment, or vehicles.

Some of the goods in your Home may belong to individuals and would not be communal assets of the Home. Determining which communal assets should be sold should be made through prayer, discussion, and voting and with a great deal of consideration for and by all concerned. Goods belonging to or on loan from another Home must be returned to them.

i. The Home Emergency Reserve must be returned to the regional desk in accordance with the "Financial Rules."

ii. The Tool Fund gift or the equivalent in relevant seedcorn value, should be distributed to each member, to take with them to their next Home.

If an individual or family is moving to a new country or continent where the distribution materials of their former Home/field are either not useful, due to format or language, or are inconvenient to travel with, the members may request to carry their Tool Fund gift in cash.

iii. Any other World Service-issued funds must be handled according to instructions given by World Services for the particular funds involved.

Neither the Home's HER nor Tool Fund gifts can be used to pay bills.

2. If the Home has a financial surplus and/or other assets, it may decide, by a two-thirds majority of the Home council, how to assure that the surplus and assets are divided as much as possible among all members of the Home according to their needs.

When deciding how to divide any financial surplus or Home assets among the Home's members, the HC should prayerfully take into account the needs of all the Home's members, children and adults, families and singles alike. Generally, any surplus should be divided among all Home members according to each one's need. This would include taking into consideration the needs and/or travel expenses of the individuals and families in a way that meets those needs as much as possible, while also considering such factors as each one's personal possessions, assets, and support base.

E. Disband, in extreme circumstances, before all of its outstanding bills and financial obligations are covered. In such a case the Home must:

- 1. Make provision to pay or arrange payment for any further outstanding debts or liabilities after using as much as possible of the Home's financial assets and liquidating their communal assets to pay those debts or liabilities.**
 - a. If after the above steps are taken, there is still a shortfall to pay off the Home's outstanding debts or liabilities, the Home may apply to their regional shepherds for a Home loan.**

Home loan forms can be found at [RO-RD_forms](#).

- 2. As determined by a two-thirds majority of the Home council, assign to all voting members 18 years of age or older their portion of any remaining liabilities, including any outstanding Home loan amounts.**
 - a. Home members must assume their portion as a personal liability. In such a case, a listing of the Home's members, the amount of their personal liabilities, and the agreed-upon payment plan must be sent to the regional desk.**
 - b. A member's failure to pay his portion of the Home's debts or liabilities may result in the loss of his Family discipleship. If such is the case, the member may reapply for Family discipleship once his portion of the Home's debts and liabilities has been paid.**
- 3. Designate Home members to take care of the remaining business relating to the closure of the Home.**
- 4. Members are responsible to inform any Home that they intend to join of the amount of their personal debts and liabilities.**

There may be situations where the Home is obligated to disband before all of its debts and liabilities are paid. For example, the political situation within a country becomes such that it is necessary for a Home to quickly close and its members leave the country. This would mean that the Home would have to close even though some bills and liabilities are outstanding. In such a case, after the Home has paid off whatever they are able to within the available time period, they may apply for a Home loan from their regional shepherds to pay off the rest.

Hopefully, following the steps in clause C above will make it possible to pay off most of the debts and liabilities so if it's necessary to take out a Home loan the amount will be manageable. The details and amounts will have to be worked out between the Home and the regional shepherds. The amount applied for must be approved by a two-thirds majority of the Home council members 18 years and older.

The Home can vote to assume the incoming member's liability in accordance with the "[Procedure for Using the Right of Mobility](#)."

F. Determine by a two-thirds majority of the Home council, the personnel make-up of the Home.

- 1. New personnel cannot be invited to join the Home, or be received as Home members, without the agreement of a two-thirds majority of the Home council.**
 - a. In the case of uncertainty the receiving Home's steering council should verify with the regional desk that the potential member is a Family disciple. They may also ask the incoming member and/or his previous Home shepherds for additional information.**

When trying to decide such an important matter as whether or not to accept a new member into the Home, the Home should talk with the potential new member and/or ask his former Home for info about him, and most importantly pray and ask the Lord for His direction and will through prophecy.

For more information on FD Homes receiving FMs or MMs into the Home see the "[Procedure for a Missionary Member Moving into a Family Discipleship Home](#)" or the "[Procedure for a Fellow Member Moving into a Family Discipleship Home](#)."

2. **The Home council may revoke the Home membership of any person residing in it, if conducted according to the “[Procedure for a Home To Revoke a Person’s Membership in the Home.](#)”**
 3. **The Home council may recommend that a member’s Family discipleship be revoked and that the member be a Missionary or Fellow member in accordance with the “[Procedure for Moving a Family Disciple to Missionary or Fellow Membership.](#)”**
- G. Create Home newsletters, appeal letters, flyers, pamphlets, audio-visual promotional materials with limited local distribution or designed for distribution to the Home’s contacts or local websites.**
1. **The Home may include quotations and artwork from Family publications in their local productions and may translate these from the original publication without prior approval.**

See “[Home Life Rules](#)” for guidelines concerning Homes or individuals with their own websites, which makes it clear that websites or blogs originating at a Home, group, or individual level that reflect on the Family, either by name, by linking to an official Family website, by stating the individual or Home’s membership in the Family, or which posts Family literature must be a good reflection of the Family.

If a Home’s newsletter, appeal letter, local pamphlet, or audio/visual tool is only going to be sent to their Home’s contacts, be used only for local distribution, or be posted on the Home’s website, the Home may approve it. This includes advertisements for your local work, like your show group, your youth club, etc. It would also cover material sent to the Home’s friends and contacts.

If the Home, or members of the Home, wish to use quotations from the FD/MM/FM publications in a newsletter or local pamphlet they may do so with the agreement of the Home’s steering council. If these quotations appeared first in an original English publication and have not already been translated into the needed language by an approved translator, the Home’s steering council may decide upon a suitable translator to translate them.

H. Translate and duplicate World Services produced tracts, *Reflections*, and *Family Activity Reports*.

Homes may translate WS-produced tracts, *Reflections*, and *Family Activity Reports* that aren’t available in their local language. All other Family International copyrighted distribution materials will be produced by or via an approved production center.

I. Decide by a simple majority to permit voting members to read the monthly eTRF before it is sent off.

Service Homes

- A. A service Home operates under the auspices of the regional shepherds, who have the ultimate responsibility in determining the service Home’s basic nature, goals, direction, and service Home activities.**

- 1. The regional shepherds may designate a Home as a service Home according to the “[Procedure for Becoming a Service Home](#).”**

A service Home provides a service that benefits the Family nationally, regionally, or internationally and as such is accountable to more than itself for its activities. A production center may fall under this category, as could other specialized Homes such as an RS base or a Home set up for the purpose of supplying a service to the area—though depending on the circumstances these services don’t necessarily have to be housed in a service Home.

Even though a service Home operates under the auspices of the RSs, the Home must still live up to the standard in the *Charter* and pass Home review on its own merits.

- 2. World Services Leadership may, in counsel with the regional shepherds, designate a service Home, whose services don’t fall under the auspices of the region, as a worldwide service Home.**
- a. The spiritual oversight, coaching, and conducting of Home reviews for a service Home whose services fall under the auspices of World Services Leadership will fall to the care of the regional shepherds.**
- b. “[Rights of Personnel in a Service Home](#)” will apply.**

If WSL appoints a service Home to provide a worldwide service, the spiritual oversight of the Home, coaching, and conducting of Home reviews will still fall under the auspices of the local regional shepherds. The Home must also live up to the standard in the *Charter* and board criteria, and pass a Home review on its own merits.

- B. In the case of service Homes that are fully supported by World Services, World Services Leadership reserves the right, when deemed necessary, to make or overrule decisions affecting the basic nature, goals, personnel make-up, and finances of the Home in order to ensure that the service to the Family is maintained.**

Rights of Personnel in a Service Home

- A. Due to the nature of a service Home, someone accepting to be a service Home member must understand that while he is a member of a service Home he may need to relinquish specific rights granted by the *Charter*, if deemed necessary by the regional shepherds. These rights are:**

Service Home personnel still retain their individual rights and any other right in the *Charter* not listed in clauses 1 through 5 below. Those rights may not be withdrawn by the RSs.

Being in a service Home is purely voluntary, so if anyone does not wish to be in a Service Home and to relinquish the rights specified below, he is not obligated to accept a position in or to remain a member of a service Home.

A Home can only become a service Home in accordance with the "[Procedure for Becoming a Service Home](#)."

1. The right to determine the basic nature, goals, and direction of the Home.

The Home may decide Home goals and activities as long as their decisions don't interfere with their ability to effectively provide the services mandated by the RSs.

2. The right to choose to move the Home to a new location.

3. The right to choose to disband the Home.

The location of a service Home and the decision to keep the Home open or to close it are under the jurisdiction and authority of the RSs. The RSs should be open to suggestions and ideas that the service Home members may have about such matters.

4. The right to elect the Home's steering council.

The RSs have the authority to appoint the full steering council, although in most cases the Home may be able to vote in the steering council of their choice. Alternatively the RSs may choose to appoint one or two people to the steering council and let the Home elect the others. How the Home's steering council is structured is up to the RSs. The Home may elect its own board pillar representatives.

5. The right to determine the personnel make-up of the Home.

- B. The regional shepherds can at any time withdraw permission for any member to remain in a service Home.**

1. If permission is withdrawn, the means of the departure are governed as follows:

- a. The Home may absolve the member of responsibility for his portion of the Home's debts and applicable liabilities. If the debt or liability is a direct result of that person's actions, the Home council may vote that the member retains the debt or liability.**
- b. The Home must allow sufficient time for the member to engage in fundraising activities on a regular basis for the purpose of raising a reasonable amount of finances to pay off any debts or applicable liabilities and/or supply the member**

with a reasonable amount of financial assistance to help toward a move to another Home.

- i. A "reasonable amount" is determined by a two-thirds majority of the service Home's Home council. "Sufficient time" will also be determined by the Home council, providing the regional shepherds agree with the decided length of time.**
- ii. If the member is engaged in fundraising activities for the purpose of departure from the Home, at least 50% of the net income he generates is to be used to pay off his debts and applicable liabilities and/or facilitate his move to another Home.**

See also "[Procedure for Using the Right of Mobility](#)" for more concerning a departing Home member's fundraising activities.

- 2. If the member cannot find another Family discipleship Home that will accept him, he may choose to become a Missionary or Fellow member.**

Sensitive Countries

- A. Due to the political, religious, or otherwise sensitive nature of some countries, opening and operating Homes or road trips in these countries can be potentially dangerous or problematic. The regional shepherds, with World Services Leadership agreement, may designate such countries as "sensitive."**

Dad said, "I would certainly advise you to be very cautious in your missionary work and witnessing and distribution of literature in any such areas which have strong dictatorial governments lacking in personal freedom and are virtually closed countries to the Gospel, and particularly those of another predominant religion" (ML #1004:71).

There are a few countries throughout the world that would be considered sensitive, in that it would not be wise to allow Homes to be opened without supervision in any city of that country or conduct any ministry of their choosing without working closely with the RSs.

In these types of situations, the Homes and their personnel may need to relinquish some specific Charter rights. Homes in sensitive countries don't automatically relinquish all their rights, but the RSs do have the right to revoke specific rights according to the situation. See "[Rights of Personnel in a Sensitive Country](#)" concerning which rights may be suspended.

A country can only be classified as a sensitive country through the "[Procedure for Designating or Revoking Sensitive Country Status](#)."

Rights of Personnel in a Sensitive Country

- A. Someone volunteering to work in a sensitive country must accept that while working in a sensitive country he may be required to relinquish specific rights granted by the *Charter*, if deemed necessary by the regional shepherds. These rights are:**
 - 1. The right to determine by prayer and discussion the basic nature, goals, direction, or activities of the Home where those activities might be deemed unwise or would endanger the safety and security of that Home or of other Homes in the country.**
 - 2. The right to open a Home, to be a road team Home, or to visit as a road team within the country according to the "[Procedure for Using the Right of Mobility](#)."**
- B. The regional shepherds retain the right to at any time withdraw permission for a Family member to remain in a sensitive country according to "[Procedure for Withdrawing Permission to Remain in a Country](#)."**
 - 1. The regional shepherds may not remove a member who holds a passport to the sensitive country from that country. However, if the national member flagrantly or repeatedly disregards clauses A.1 or A.2 of this section, he may be in jeopardy of losing his Family discipleship.**

Because of the nature of sensitive countries, the RSs are not required to give a member the usual 30 days to leave the country.

City Councils

A. A city or metropolitan area that has more than one Family discipleship and/or Missionary member Home is required to create a city council consisting of one representative from each Home within the city or metropolitan area.

- 1. If there are a large number of Homes in the metropolitan area and/or the travel distances make it difficult to meet, the Homes may decide to divide the area into two or more city councils.**
- 2. A Home's representative would be chosen by a simple majority of that Home's Home council.**

The purpose of the city council would be, among other things, to meet to discuss issues that the council deems should be discussed and/or decided upon, which could include discussing ideas for building a stronger and more dynamic work within the city or metropolitan area; coordinating local outreach and provisioning; coordinating local meetings for friends, GMs, and AMs of the Homes involved; discussing matters of Home cooperation and fellowship within the city; coordinating activities and events for the children and teens; and discussing local business.

The city council should include representatives from all the FD and MM Homes in the metropolitan area, not just those within the city limits. An exception would be if the Homes decide to divide the area into two or more city councils as outlined in A.1 above.

It's up to the Home council to decide who to send from the Home to the city council meeting to represent the Home for those meetings. The Home's decision of who to send to represent the Home could be based on any number of reasons, including the agenda for the meetings, available personnel, etc.

B. Family discipleship and Missionary member Homes within the city or metropolitan area must attend and participate in city council meetings

- 1. City council meetings must be held at least once every 90 days.**

City councils are encouraged on a monthly basis, with at least one required within any given three-month period.

- 2. The Homes' city council representatives must elect a city council chairperson through a majority vote for a six-month term. A chairperson may be re-elected to consecutive terms.**

A recommendation is that city councils consider keeping the same city council chairperson for consecutive meetings, if the council meetings are proving to be effective. This would be opposed to frequently voting in a different chairperson, which could add a measure of randomness to the council meetings.

The city council may also want to elect a council secretary to keep the notes of the meetings, which could be sent around to the city's Homes so all members know what was discussed and the conclusions reached.

C. The chairperson's authority and responsibilities are to organize the city council meetings and keep a record of all decisions made, copies of which should be sent to all Family discipleship and Missionary member Homes in the city, and be available to pass on to the next elected chairperson.

- 1. The record of all city council decisions and meeting notes must also be made available for the regional council upon their request.**
- 2. Members of the city council, including the elected chairperson, have no authority over the Homes other than that which the Homes agree to grant them.**

The city council is not an additional level of shepherding and does not have any shepherding authority over the Homes in the area.

Responsibilities and Authority of Family Leadership and Services

Obligations of All Family Leadership

Family leadership must:

- A. Endeavor to carry out their duties in a loving, prayerful, and competent manner, and to the best of their ability properly and lovingly shepherd those whom they are responsible for.**

Love is the most important attribute of godly leadership, and Family shepherds need to be loving shepherds. They also need to be faithful, prayerful, and competent, and to do their job to the best of their ability. "We need people first of all with love! If they haven't got love to begin with, they're nothing and they can do nothing! I don't want anybody in our leadership anywhere in the Family that's not working for that one reason, trying to save souls, the lost to begin with, and trying to help the soul savers!—Really, sincerely, honestly concerned about them, not just doing some kind of formal, mechanical job, going through the motions without the power thereof (2Timothy 3:5)" (ML #1819:24,25).

- B. Operate within the authority granted them by the *Charter*.**

"We have to have certain standards for leadership, and they shouldn't be leaders unless they can keep those standards and operate according to those rules" (ML #1202:61). One of the main purposes for the *Charter* is to clearly define the responsibilities and authority of shepherding and leadership, so that everyone will know the boundaries Family leadership must operate within. Shepherds cannot take or exert any more authority than is granted to them in the *Charter*, and must operate within its boundaries.

- C. Encourage individuals and/or Homes to live in accordance with the *Charter* and the current board criteria by endeavoring to apply the spiritual and practical counsel given in the Word to their daily lives.**

It's very important that shepherds encourage the Family to live in accordance with the *Charter* and with the spiritual and practical guidance, counsel, and instruction in the board criteria. If they find that someone or some Home isn't, they must point them to the Word and implement appropriate disciplinary action when necessary. These disciplinary measures must be applied in accordance with the proper procedures listed in the *Charter*.

- D. Endeavor to answer questions and give counsel on how to solve spiritual and personal problems by encouraging the inquirers to hear from the Lord on the matter and directing them to the appropriate Bible passages or World Services publications that offer guidance and counsel on the matter; when needed, offer prayerful, Word-based advice, in counsel with their co-shepherds; or seek counsel from a higher authority on matters that no World Services publications address or are matters or questions beyond the experience and/or authority of the shepherd.**

It is not a shepherd's job to make decisions for individuals or Homes that they should be making for themselves. Leadership needs to avoid—in fact, refuse—to make decisions that they are not supposed to make. Nor are the shepherds to demand that people do certain things. One of the main purposes of the *Charter* is to allow and encourage people to make their own choices according to the Word and their personal leading of what the Lord shows them through personal prophecy, reading His Word, and the other ways to know God's will as listed in the "Seven Ways to Know God's Will."

The primary job of a shepherd is to point people to the Word and to other Family pubs in order to lead them to the counsel that has already been written, and to encourage them to hear from the Lord on the

matter. They can also direct people to the appropriate board if they have any questions concerning board matters.

Of course, if nothing has been published on the matter at hand, or the member wishes to ask for counsel in the case of the Word not being explicit on the matter, or for help in interpreting prophecy, the member can and should seek counsel from a shepherd who may have some experience or knowledge of the matter, and may have some prayerful counsel to give the person. When a shepherd needs to give an individual or a Home counsel on some matter, they should be very prayerful and sure that their counsel is Word based and that they have heard from the Lord concerning it. If they do not have experience in the matter, or are not sure of what counsel to give, the shepherd should ask the Lord and/or pass on the question to a higher level of leadership.

In either case, the person or the Home should make the final decision on a matter, not the shepherd. "Spiritual leaders of any kind must have a tremendous knowledge of the Word and be able to give the Word. That's the ministry of people who are shepherds: They have to feed the sheep. Then [the individuals or Homes] have to make their own decisions on the basis of the light that you give them and the food and the Word you give them. They have to make their own decision" (ML #1002:33).

- E. Ensure, to the best of their ability, that the rights of the members and/or Homes within their jurisdiction are upheld and are not being infringed upon.**
- F. Endeavor to live in accordance with the counsel in the GNs and other World Services publications on the subject of wise and loving leadership.**
- G. Take time daily for personal prayer and fellowship with the Lord regarding matters relating to their shepherding.**

It is required that Home shepherds take time daily (outside of their daily devotions) to fellowship and hear from the Lord concerning the shepherding of their Home. "The main job of a shepherd is to keep in touch with the Lord—to begin the day with sweet music—praise and fellowship. We have to learn how to first of all rest at the Lord's feet. The secret of calm and peace and rest and patience and faith and love is that resting in the Lord!—Getting calm before the Lord, praising the Lord and seeking the Lord first. And then you just impart this to the sheep—it's a spirit—you impart that very atmosphere" (ML #98:4,2).

Responsibilities and Authority of International Family Leadership and Services

Authority of World Services Leadership

If deemed necessary, World Services Leadership has the authority to:

A. Amend or suspend all or part of the *Charter*.

It is inevitable that as time goes on, and the needs of the Family change, that changes will be needed in the *Charter*. We may also discover that there are points which we thought would be workable that turn out not to be and will need to be changed. Suggested changes in the *Charter* are welcome and can be recommended and suggested by anyone. This is your *Charter*. It has been written to help you in your service to the Lord, and if parts of it are not workable, become outdated or need revamping, we want to change it. So after using it for a while, please share with us any changes you feel should be made. WS Leadership, in consultation with the RSs and the rest of the Family, will make any changes to the *Charter*.

WS Leadership also has the authority to suspend the *Charter* should there ever be a need. This would be highly unlikely, but should something occur in the future that we do not foresee now, WS leadership reserves the right and has the authority to suspend this *Charter*.

B. Declare a state of emergency in any region, country, city or Home; thereby suspending all, or part of, the *Charter* for a specified area and period of time, and to inform the Homes affected.

There are times when emergencies arise, as was the case with the persecution in Argentina, and because of the nature and seriousness of the situation, direct intervention of Family leadership was necessary. Leadership needs to be free to make decisions and instruct people to do whatever is necessary to manage areas in emergency situations. During such times it may not be possible to allow everyone to vote on every decision that has to be made, as among other reasons, there may not be time to do so.

In a situation like this, World Services will declare a specific country, city, or Home to be under a state of emergency, and state that the *Charter* is being suspended for a specified period of time. The *Charter* will not be suspended indefinitely. If the emergency is still in existence after the specified period of time, World Services will inform those affected that a new specified time period is in force. If World Services does not set a new time, then the state of emergency is terminated once the original specified time period expires.

Referring again to the persecution in Argentina as an example: it was necessary for WS to intervene, as virtually all of the leadership was incarcerated. Decisions had to be made and action taken without consulting with everyone involved. Had the *Charter* been in effect at the time of the raids in Argentina, WS would have declared Argentina in a state of emergency.

Once the brethren in Argentina were released and felt it expedient to leave the country, it meant that quite a number of Family members needed some place to land. In a similar case in the future, World Services might put surrounding countries under a state of emergency and suspend the part of the *Charter*, which states that Homes have the right to vote to accept new personnel. Family members would have to have a place to go, so World Services could mandate that the Homes in those localities take in some of the refugees until further housing could be found for them.

C. Appoint to and/or remove from office any Family leadership.

D. Veto or annul any decision made by the regional shepherds or international board chairpersons, as well as any area goals.

E. Countermand any regional shepherd or international board chairperson appointments.

F. Arbitrate any matters that regional shepherds or international board chairpersons are not able or authorized to decide.

There may be times when WS leadership will need to relieve a regional shepherd from their position, or veto or override one of their decisions. This rarely happens, and if it does, WS will explain its reasons to those involved, and if necessary to the whole Family, in order to account for its actions.

Succession of World Services Leadership

A. World Services consists of:

- 1. World Services Leadership: Maria and Peter and their personal teamwork.**
- 2. World Services Homes: Those responsible for the creation and production of World Services publications and outreach tools, and related administrative matters.**
- 3. Regional shepherds: appointed by World Services Leadership to administer a regional area.**
- 4. International board chairpersons: appointed by World Services Leadership to administer a board pillar.**

B. In the event of death or incapacitation or any other reason that would render their leadership impossible, and in the absence of more current instructions from Maria or Peter, the transfer of Family leadership authority will be as follows:

- 1. Maria: Peter would become the official head of the Family.**
- 2. Maria and Peter: An interim leadership council, consisting of Maria and Peter's personal teamwork, and one delegate from each region's regional shepherds and World Service unit will be convened at the earliest possible opportunity. The regional shepherds and World Service units will choose their delegate by a simple majority.**
- 3. Maria, Peter and their personal teamwork: An interim leadership council, consisting of one delegate from each region's regional shepherds and World Service unit will be convened at the earliest possible opportunity. The regional shepherds and World Service units will choose their delegate by a simple majority.**
 - a. This interim leadership council will decide, by a two-third majority, any World Services Leadership decisions until such time as a new World Services Leadership structure is in place.**
 - b. The interim leadership council will, within 30 days of convening, through counseling and seeking the Lord formulate a proposed top World Services Leadership structure, which will then be presented to all of the regional shepherds and World Services Leadership. After prayer and counsel, they will vote on the proposal.**
 - i. If a two-third majority agree to the proposed leadership structure, the proposal will then go to the Family worldwide for ratification. Each voting member will vote, and if a two-third majority agree, this top leadership structure will govern the Family.**

- ii. If a two-third majority do not agree, the interim leadership council will continue to handle any World Services Leadership decisions and a new proposal will be set forth in the same manner within 30 days.**
- 4. Once a new World Services Leadership structure is determined, each member of the World Services Leadership teamwork must be confirmed annually, before February 1st, by a two-third majority of the World Services Leadership and the regional shepherds.**
 - a. If a member is not confirmed for another term, the World Services Leadership and regional shepherds must nominate, and second, new candidates and vote by secret ballot. The nominee receiving the most votes will become part of the World Services Leadership teamwork.**

If Maria and Peter were to become incapacitated or otherwise unable to continue to lead the Family, even temporarily, and they had not set forth in a written statement who should govern the Family, the above procedures would be put into effect.

The interim leadership council referred to in the above clauses would at the earliest possible opportunity gather together for prayer and counsel. They would unitedly make the decisions that World Services Leadership normally makes, and they would formulate a proposed plan for the structure and personnel that would then constitute World Services Leadership.

Make-up and Responsibilities of World Services

- A. World Services is the executive body of the Family, whose main function is to provide spiritual direction and international administration. This is achieved primarily through the production of publications, as well as through international administrative services, and the appointment of regional shepherds to provide pastoral and administrative services within their assigned area.**

World Services is responsible to:

- B. Publish, electronically or otherwise, the Words that God has given to our Prophet and Prophetess.**

World Services' foremost responsibility is to publish the Word that the Lord has given Dad, and continues to give to Mama. If times get so rough or finances so low that World Services cannot publish any other material or provide any other leadership, we will continue, by God's grace, to always publish the Words that the Lord gives.

- C. Determine the fundamental Family beliefs.**

There have been many different MLs published on a great number of subjects. Some of these Letters present fundamental and essential Family beliefs. It is World Services' responsibility to determine which matters, among the many topics covered in the Letters, are to be considered fundamental beliefs that members must believe to retain their Family membership.

- 1. Any new prophetic revelations must be approved by Mama and Peter and officially and expressly disseminated by World Services as such before they will be considered a fundamental Family belief.**

The Lord gives Mama and Peter His Words and messages for the entire Family, and He gives local prophets His messages for their situation. Prophecy received in the Homes should be judged according to the written Word, the Bible and the Letters, both old and new. Prophecy that goes beyond these should be submitted to your leadership and/or Mama and Peter before it is acted upon. Any major changes that come about in the Family will be given and confirmed in the GNs by Mama, our "Winetaster." (See "Three Gifts of the Lord's Love!" ML #3005:106–129, GN 647.)

- D. Formulate, determine, establish, update and publish Family rules, responsibilities and rights, which Family members are required to follow to retain their Family membership. Changes in Family rules, responsibilities and rights are valid only when stated in a World Services publication that they are amendments to the *Charter*.**

If WS intends for something to be considered a rule, it will be clearly explained within the pub that the particular item is now an amendment to the *Charter*. If it does not specifically state that it is a rule, then whatever is written is not to be regarded as a de facto Family rule, but as helpful guidance and wise counsel.

- E. Publish, electronically or otherwise, general counsel for the Family, which Family disciples and/or Homes apply according to their own personal choice and decisions in order to fulfill their responsibilities and abide by the rules of the *Charter*.**
- F. Provide counsel, guidance, recommendations and directives to regional shepherds, when necessary, on important national, international or regional matters.**

Attempting to help and assist the RSs in the shepherding of their areas is one of the major roles that WS leadership plays. There are times when WS leadership offers counsel and advice directly to specific Homes or individuals through the RSs, but generally such counsel is given to the whole Family through the GNs and other pubs.

G. Process information from the Family discipleship Homes' monthly reports.

The RO receives and reads your TRFs, and World Services in turn gathers statistics and other information from the RO to monitor the progress the Family is making, how much literature is distributed worldwide, how many souls we're winning, etc.

H. Process information from Missionary and Fellow Member monthly reports, and send Missionary and Fellow Members appropriate World Services publications.

I. Manage and disburse the Family's tithes, the Family Aid Fund, and other offerings as follows:

- 1. World Services' operating and living expenses, equivalent to the standard of living of an average Family Home.**
- 2. Creation, production and distribution to the Family of publications and outreach products.**
- 3. Financial assistance to Family missions and missionaries.**
- 4. Regional or country projects.**
- 5. Family Aid Fund for pioneer gifts, Home Emergency Reserves, Tool fund gift, "passed on" gifts, Home loans, baby bonuses and, funds permitting, medical emergencies.**
 - a. Home loans must be applied for from the regional desk and not taken from the Home Emergency Reserves a Home may be holding.**

Home loan forms may be found at [RO-RD_forms](#).

6. World Services reserve.

The tithes which come in each month are used to cover points 1–4. Once these needs are met, if there is any surplus it is put into the WS reserve. This reserve acts in the same way a Home's buffer does. It allows WS to have a minimum reserve to cover WS operating expenses for one or two months should tithe income drop drastically. When this reserve grows beyond this need, the funds are generally given to the Homes, usually in the form of free distribution materials, Home emergency reserves, mission gifts, etc.

WS is also responsible for the management of the FAF, which is handled separately from other WS income. The FAF is a separate fund, into which WS pays 10% of its income each month and the Homes pay 1% of their income. It is used for HER Funds, Tool Gift fund, Home loans, pioneer gifts, and emergency expenses when possible.

J. Produce original outreach products.

K. Allow or disallow the use of intellectual copyright material, and related business matters, in the name of, or owned by, the Family or World Services, or any company and/or title of the Family.

The copyright of such Family publications—written and audio and video—and all trademarks of Family materials, such as World Services, Life With Grandpa, etc., as well as Treasure Attic and Kiddie Viddie trademarks and copyrights, are held by Family authorized companies. As such, these companies presently retain the right to give or deny permission for their use and to authorize or disallow any business matters relating to these copyrights or trademarks.

L. Collect the permissions from Family members who contribute to collective Family works. Members who submit written, audio or video material for publication by a company associated with the Family agree to also sign a written agreement to transfer use of, and/or the copyright itself, to a company set up for this purpose. In the absence of an

agreement to the contrary, all articles submitted to such a company will be considered as transferred in exchange for the benefits and consideration of Family membership.

All materials that are submitted for use in a Family publication or audio/video production, including but not limited to written, audio and video works, will be regarded as exchanged for the benefit of the work, free studio time and as one of the responsibilities of Family membership should you choose to submit them.

When you choose to submit a work for the purpose of Family publication, for example, an author sending in a song to be used for an TCD, or an article submitted for a written publication, it must be of your own volition. And you must be willing to sign a written agreement to allow the use of the material by a WS-endorsed company which has been set up for this purpose. In the case of songs, since these are often used in GP productions even if originally meant for an TCD only, you will be asked to sign an agreement giving a WS-endorsed company the right to use the song, before it can be recorded in a Family studio. In the case of written works, should one be slotted for GP publication, you will be sent a request to assign the right to use the work at that time.

Responsibilities and Authority of the Reporting Office

The reporting office is responsible to and/or has the authority to:

- A. Process Home monthly reports, including forwarding eTRF comments and suggestions files to the appropriate boards and regional desks.**
- B. Keep records of no, low, or late monthly reports, tithes, 1% FAF or 3% Common Pot contributions according to "World Services Reporting and Mailing Rules;" of Homes being in debt for two consecutive months according to the "Financial Rules" and of Homes being under or oversized according to the "Home Size Rules."**
 - 1. The reporting office will send notification to Homes, with a copy to their regional desk, of automatic probationary notice for these Charter infractions.**
 - 2. The reporting office will notify the regional desk if an infraction has been resolved within the 60-day period. If the Home has not made the specified changes necessary, the Home and all its members will automatically be moved to Missionary or Fellow membership, depending on the infraction.**
- C. Oversee, advise, and work with the regional desks in all matters of business that pertain to their offices.**

While the RSs oversee and are ultimately responsible for their RD, the RO oversees the RD in matters pertaining to the business of their offices and the handling of Home reports and finances.

- D. Communicate with the Homes on matters having to do with their monthly reports, tithes, and offerings, with copies being sent to the appropriate regional desk.**
- E. Work with the regional desks to coordinate the opening and closing of Homes.**
 - 1. A Home requesting a new Home number may write directly to the reporting office. The reporting office would then request specific information from the Home.**
 - 2. Upon receipt of the information requested, the reporting office will send the information to the appropriate regional desk to verify the Home's standing.**
 - a. If the reporting office receives the initial request via the regional desk, they will assume that the regional desk has verified the Home's standing and will send the new Home its Home number and reporting instructions.**
 - 3. Once the Home's standing has been verified by the regional desk, the reporting office will send the Home its new number and reporting instructions.**
- F. Communicate with Family print centers about Home mailings and address lists.**
- G. Regularly publish, electronically or otherwise, information provided by the Homes as to available personnel and their personnel needs.**

Responsibilities of the Family Policy Council

The Family Policy Council, made up of the regional shepherds, the international board chairpersons, and other advisors appointed to the council by World Services Leadership, is responsible to:

- A. Convene, upon notice from World Services Leadership, for counsel, prayer, and discussion.**
 - 1. World Services Leadership will appoint a Family Policy Council Steering Committee from members of the Family Policy Council and other advisors. The steering committee may formulate and propose Family policy and initiatives to present to the full Family Policy Council.**
 - a. The steering committee will also act as body of counsel to World Services Leadership concerning matters pertaining to World Services' services to the Family.**
- B. Give advice and counsel to World Services Leadership concerning the governance of the Family and the formulation of Family policy, direction, and goals.**
 - 1. Any changes to published Family rules, responsibilities, rights and board criteria become valid only after approval by World Services Leadership and stated in a World Services publication.**
- C. Convene and confirm new World Services Leadership according to Maria and Peter's pre-arranged written or recorded instructions, should they be incapacitated, for succession of the Family's leadership.**
 - 1. If there are no pre-arranged instructions, the Family Policy Council will convene and elect new Family executive leadership in accordance with the "[Succession of World Services Leadership](#)."**

Responsibilities and Authority of the International Board Chairpersons

The international board chairpersons are responsible to and/or have the authority to:

- A. Fulfill the **"Obligations of All Family Leadership."**
- B. As members of the Family Policy Council, advise World Services Leadership concerning the governance of the Family and the formulation of Family policy, direction, and goals in accordance with **"Responsibilities of the Family Policy Council."**
- C. Determine decisions concerning their board pillar with a simple majority of the international board members.
- D. Regularly inform World Services Leadership of their personal activities and all matters having, or with the potential to have, a major effect on their or any other pillar.
- E. Inform World Services Leadership of their board's activities and decisions.
 - 1. World Services Leadership has the right to veto those decisions.
- F. Determine content and provide material to World Services in accordance with the **"Make-Up and Responsibilities of World Services"** for electronic or printed publications that meet the needs of the Family serviced by that board.
- G. Determine, update, and maintain in counsel with their international board members their board pillar's Home review questionnaires.
- H. Check with the chairpersons of the other international boards before implementing any important policies or activities decided on by their board.
- I. Coordinate their board's activities, carry out the day-to-day business of the board, handle the board's communications, and ensure that the decisions of the board are implemented.
- J. Confirm the regional shepherds' appointment of a regional board chairperson.
 - 1. If a regional board chairperson wishes to resign or will be moving to a different region, the international board chairpersons must ensure that the former regional chairperson's board responsibilities, information about ongoing activities or programs, board email address, board newsgroup and/or website access, and board chair gift are passed on to the newly confirmed regional chairperson.
- K. Promote activities and initiatives that help the Family's Homes fulfill the board criteria.
- L. Initiate, by a simple majority of their international board members, a veto of a decision made by a regional board.

- 1. If the regional board does not agree to the modification or veto the matter must be submitted to World Services Leadership.**

Responsibilities and Authority of Regional Family Leadership and Services

Responsibilities and Authority of the Regional Shepherds

Regional shepherds are responsible to and/or have the authority to:

- A. Fulfill the “**Obligations of All Family Leadership.**”
- B. As members of the Family Policy Council, advise World Services Leadership concerning the governance of the Family and the formulation of Family policy, direction, and goals in accordance with “**Responsibilities of the Family Policy Council.**”
- C. Determine major decisions concerning their regional area by simple majority vote of their regional teamwork of shepherds, unless otherwise specified in the *Charter*. In the event of an irreconcilable tie vote, the regional shepherds must submit the question to World Services.
- D. Regularly keep World Services informed of their personal activities and the general activities of their regional area.
- E. Immediately inform World Services of all matters having, or with the potential to have, a major effect on their or any other region.
- F. Communicate with the coaches, Home shepherds, board chairs, and Homes within their regional area.
- G. Lovingly administer disciplinary action as needed to individuals in a manner appropriate and proportionate to the offense.
- H. Appoint, remove, or replace coaches, providing they first inform the international Coaching and Shepherding board chairpersons.
- I. Judge all matters concerning excommunication of Family members within their regional area in accordance with the appropriate procedure in the *Charter*, in the *Missionary Member Statutes*, and in the *Fellow Member Statutes*.
- J. Judge all matters concerning former Family members applying to rejoin a Family Home and the movement of Family members within their region to Missionary or Fellow membership in accordance with the appropriate *Charter* procedures.
- K. When necessary and feasible, supply to the best of their ability their area’s Homes with World Services publications in the local language.
- L. Operate a regional desk to assist them in handling *Charter* procedures, and with communications with Homes, Home shepherds, boards, and World Services.
- M. Appoint area business managers as may be necessary, to help supply administrative services for the regional area.

- N. Operate a shepherding desk to assist the chairpersons of the regional Coaching and Shepherding board in shepherding matters pertaining to the Homes in their regional area.**
- O. Open, operate, or close service Homes in accordance with the “[Procedure for Becoming a Service Home](#).”**
- P. Recommend the designating or revoking of sensitive country status within their region, in accordance with the “[Procedure for Designating or Revoking Sensitive Country Status](#).”**
- Q. Make disbursements from World Services finances or the common pot held by them for the specified purposes for which the finances have been allocated.**
- R. Make the final decision concerning the outcome of the Home review on the individual Homes within their region.**
- S. Appoint the regional board chairpersons and other regional board members who are not national board chairpersons, to the boards within their regional area.**
 - 1. Regional shepherds must inform World Services and the international board chairperson of the respective board concerning regional board chairperson appointments.**
 - a. If the regional shepherds don’t hear back within 14 days, they may proceed with the appointment.**
- T. Decide to withdraw a member’s permission to remain in any country within their area in accordance with “[Procedure for Withdrawing Permission to Remain in a Country](#)” unless:**
 - 1. The member is a national of or holds a passport of the country.**
 - 2. The member is a spouse or child of a national or a passport holder of the country.**
- U. Grant or deny clearance to any person requesting clearance to their region, in accordance with the “[Procedure for Granting or Denying Clearance](#).”**
- V. Decide if a Home may be opened in a city or metropolitan area that already has a Family discipleship Home when there is a disagreement between the Homes in the city and the regional council, in accordance with the “[Procedure for Opening a Home in a City With a Family Discipleship Home](#).”**
- W. Authorize Homes to duplicate their own outreach tools when warranted, and approve any non-World Services audio or video tools produced in their area for mass distribution.**
- X. Provide additional assistance to single parents and their children seeking a Home.**

The RSs do not have authority to demand that a Home take new members into their Home, but they are free to approach a Home and ask them to consider taking in certain personnel, particularly in the case of single parents. Each Home has to make that decision of its own volition, but should, of course, act in a loving manner and pray about and consider the request. The RSs may not always be able to find a Home for a single parent, but they can actively try to offer assistance in this respect.
- Y. Appoint designated representatives to act in their stead for visitation or investigative purposes as may be necessary.**
 - 1. The designated representative’s authority extends only for the period of time and specific purpose outlined by the regional shepherd.**

A regional shepherd or SD, if the DR is appointed by the SD, must notify any Homes of the reasons for the DR's visit and the specific authority that is being granted to them. The DR will have no jurisdiction or authority outside of the authority granted them for their visit.

- Z. Appoint coaches and designate the Homes they coach, as well as remove or replace coaches, providing they first inform the international Coaching and Shepherding board chairpersons.**
 - 1. The international Coaching and Shepherding board chairpersons have the authority to nullify the decision within two weeks.**

Responsibilities and Authority of the Regional Council

The regional council is made up of the regional shepherds, chairpersons of the six regional boards, the overseer of the regional desk, and others the regional shepherds may appoint to sit on the regional council, as long as the additional members do not make up a majority of the regional council's membership. See "[The Board Councils](#)." The regional council will elect a chairperson, for a term of one year, to chair their meetings and to act as coordinator between the regional boards.

The regional council is responsible to and/or has the authority to:

A. Determine decisions by a simple majority vote, unless otherwise specified in the *Charter*.

1. In the event of an irreconcilable tie vote the regional council must submit the question to World Services Leadership.

All regional council members hold equal decision-making power within the regional council, but, as outlined in "[Responsibilities and Authority of the Regional Shepherds](#)," because the body of regional shepherds are ultimately accountable for the welfare of the region, in the unlikely event that it would be necessary to do so, the RSs have the authority to veto a decision made by the regional council.

A regional council decision that is vetoed by the RSs would be different than an irreconcilable tie vote where an RC may be deadlocked and unable to come to a majority consensus concerning a particular issue, even after bringing the subject back to the Lord for further prayer. In the case of a deadlock, there is no decision for the RSs to veto and the question should be referred to WSL for counsel.

2. A two-thirds majority vote of the council is required in the case of decisions regarding financial matters.

B. Make disbursements from any World Services finances held by the regional council for the specified purposes for which the finances have been allocated.

C. Set up and organize the national boards and national board areas within their region, and appoint and confirm national board members and chairpersons.

1. Changes to the structure of the national board areas must be ratified by the international board chairpersons.

The board structure is in place to benefit the Homes and facilitate the work, but, for example, if the Homes in a particular region may be very spread out it's foreseeable that the staffing, expense, and time involved operating some national boards could become an unnecessary burden on those Homes. In these cases the RC, with the agreement of the IBCs, has the authority to modify the national board structure within that region to suit the needs of the region and its Homes and may find it best to merge or even drop some national boards altogether.

2. The regional council can decide whether a Missionary member may sit on any board other than the Coaching and Shepherding board.

Missionary members can sit as members of a board, if appointed by the RC; however Missionary members may not sit on the CS board.

D. Meet at least twice a year in order to assess the progress, goals, and direction of the board pillars within their regional area.

- E. Promote regional and national board programs and goals, work toward promoting unity, communication, and coordination within the region.
- F. Establish Family discipleship area goals in accordance with the “[Responsibilities of a Family Discipleship Home](#)” and the procedures outlined in the “[Voting and Election Rules](#),” Missionary member area goals in accordance with the *Missionary Member Statutes*, and Fellow member area goals in accordance with the *Fellow Member Statutes*.
- G. Decide, in counsel with World Services Leadership, all matters regarding the registration of organizations or associations in the name of the Family International.
- H. Resolve conflicts on the national coordination councils.
- I. Designate cities or metropolitan areas as “closed,” providing they have informed World Services Administration of such, in accordance with the “[Procedure for Opening a Home in a City or Metropolitan Area with a Family Discipleship or Missionary Member Home](#).”
 - 1. If the regional council doesn’t hear back within 15 days, they may proceed with closing the city or metropolitan area.
- J. Define the limits of metropolitan areas, in accordance with the “[Procedure for Defining a Metropolitan Area](#).”
- K. Determine whether a Family discipleship or Missionary member Home can open in the metropolitan area or city with an existing Family discipleship or Missionary member Home in accordance with the “[Procedure for Opening a Home in a City or Metropolitan Area with a Family Discipleship or Missionary Member Home](#).”
- L. Decide whether regional council guidelines should be adopted for any of the countries within the region regarding associating with the Family in their witnessing or outreach.

Your RC will inform you if there are specific guidelines in your country or region concerning how to present your association with the Family. If your RC has not informed you of this, at the Home review your Home will be evaluated as to its progress in making known your association with the Family in your fundraising, outreach, charitable projects, and all other missionary activities.
- M. Initiate the veto of a regional board decision in accordance with “[Veto Power](#).”
- N. Arbitrate conflicts between a national board and a regional board in accordance with “[Conflicts](#).”
- O. Appoint, in counsel with the regional Communications and Community Relations board, spokespersons to speak on behalf of the Family International within their region.

Responsibilities and Authority of the Shepherding Desk

The shepherding desk is an arm of the regional Coaching and Shepherding board which handles communications concerning shepherding of the regional area. The shepherding desk consists of the regional Coaching and Shepherding board chairperson(s) and a staff to help carry the administrative workload of the shepherding responsibilities.

The shepherding desk is responsible to and/or has the authority to:

- A. Investigate all accusations of excommunicable offenses in accordance with the appropriate *Charter* procedures.**
- B. Investigate and decide all matters concerning probationary status in accordance with the appropriate *Charter* procedures.**
- C. Begin the “[Procedure for Moving a Family Disciple to Missionary or Fellow Membership](#)” upon confirmation that the individual is failing to fulfill the “[Responsibilities of an Individual Family Disciple.](#)”**
- D. Begin the “[Procedure for Moving a Family Discipleship Home to Missionary or Fellow Membership](#)” upon discovery that the Home is failing to fulfill the “[Responsibilities of a Family Discipleship Home](#)” or the current board criteria.**
- E. Begin the “[Procedure for Placing a Family Discipleship Home on Probationary Notice](#)” upon discovery that the Home is failing to fulfill the “[Responsibilities of a Family Discipleship Home,](#)” the current board criteria, or that collectively the members of the Home are not upholding the “[Responsibilities of an Individual Family Disciple.](#)”**
- F. Recommend to the regional shepherds the withdrawal of a member’s permission to remain in any country within their area, in accordance with “[Procedure for Withdrawing Permission to Remain in a Country.](#)”**

Responsibilities and Authority of the Regional Desk

The regional desk handles area communications and services. Its overseer is appointed by the regional shepherds and is a member of the regional council.

The regional desk is responsible to and/or has the authority to assist the regional shepherds with:

- A. Communications, reporting, and business.**
- B. Processing of the biannual Home review forms.**
- C. Processing of all clearance requests.**
- D. Processing of applications from Fellow or Missionary membership to Family discipleship within the regional area.**
- E. Processing of applications for Fellow to Missionary membership within the regional area.**
- F. Processing of applications for former members to rejoin the Family within the regional area.**
- G. Conducting the process for any new Home opening in a city or metropolitan area which already has a Family discipleship or Missionary member Home.**
- H. Processing of all FD/MM/FM office-related TRF comments and suggestions pertaining to their regional area.**
- I. Verification of Home and member information for their reporting office or for World Services.**
- J. Ensuring that every Home in their regional area has the correct reporting procedures for their monthly report, tithe, and special gifts.**

Responsibilities and Authority of the Coaches

Note: There are further changes to be made to this section to reflect “[Introducing the New Mandate of the Coaches](#)” (LNF #305) in full. Please refer to the LNF for the coach’s complete mandate.

Coaches are members of the Coaching and Shepherding (CS) board and are appointed by the regional shepherds. The main job of the coach is to advise the Home’s steering council in matters that pertain to the running of their Home, which includes providing an outside opinion for the steering council as a body; acting as a safeguard while the Home review has been suspended; helping the steering councils stay united, spiritually strong, and working well; helping the steering council maintain a proper balance between the spiritual and the practical; reminding the steering council that the spiritual standard cannot drop below an acceptable level; underscoring the importance of good Home management; emphasizing the equality of the Home shepherds and the Home managers; and providing a boost for steering council members in the spiritual aspects of their jobs..

Steering council members do not elect their coach; they are only involved in the confirmation process. A coach will be confirmed in accordance with the “[Voting and Election Rules](#).” When the regional shepherds appoint a coach, the coach’s duties begin immediately. The coach will coach the steering councils in his coaching circle unless the coach is either removed from his coaching responsibilities by the regional shepherds or is not confirmed in the vote of confirmation.

If a simple majority of the steering council members in the coach’s coaching circle confirm his appointment, he will remain their coach. If the coach does not receive a majority approval from the steering council members he coaches, the regional shepherds will appoint a new coach for those Homes. Not receiving the majority vote of the steering council members in his coaching circle does not automatically mean a coach will be relieved of his coach position. After prayerfully considering the situation, the regional shepherds may assign that coach to another coaching circle.

Coaches are responsible and/or have the authority to:

- A. Fulfill the “[Obligations of All Family Leadership](#).”**
- B. Fulfill their responsibilities as members of the Coaching and Shepherding board and the duties of the coach program.**
- C. Coaches may not sit on other boards.**
- D. Communicate with and train the Home shepherds of the Homes they coach in matters relating to spiritual shepherding and in fulfilling the “[Coaching and Shepherding Board Criteria](#)” and ensure that are doing their job of making sure that the spiritual aspects of the other boards’ criteria are fulfilled in the Home. Personally shepherd the Home shepherds in their coaching circle.**

The primary duty of a coach is to help counsel, instruct, guide and train the Home shepherds of the Homes in their coaching circle. They will do this by staying in touch with the shepherds, either by e-mail, phone, or seeing them personally. They will meet, discuss, and pray together, as needed. The coach will offer counsel or help to direct them to the printed Word. The coach can help remind them to hear from the Lord on shepherding matters, but he has no authority over the Home’s decisions. He is not to direct the Home shepherds regarding the direction of the Home, but rather he is to give counsel to the Home shepherds

regarding fulfilling the CS board's criteria and to check up on the Home shepherds to make sure they are doing their job of ensuring that the spiritual aspects of the other boards' criteria are fulfilled in the Home.

The relationship between the Home shepherds and the coach should be similar to the relationship that the Home shepherds have with each other, that they are open to receiving counsel, safeguarding, instruction and correction from one another. The coach can help to spiritually shepherd the Home shepherds, and they can spiritually shepherd him. And the Home shepherds spiritually shepherd each other.

- 1. If there is a conflict between Homes, the steering council of the respective Homes should first attempt to work out the conflict. However, if they cannot resolve the matter on their own, they may ask their coach for help. The involvement of the coach, however, is limited to counseling and praying with the steering council to help them work with their respective Homes in resolving the conflict.**

If the conflict is between Homes from different coaching circles, the two coaches may counsel with each other and the steering councils of their respective Homes to help them work out the problem.

- a. If, after the coaches have offered counsel and help to their respective steering councils, the matter is not resolved, then it should be referred to the regional shepherds.**

The RSs may counsel with any RC members as needed, depending on the nature of the conflict, and then take the necessary steps to resolve the conflict. In most cases this may mean placing the Homes involved on PN.

- 2. If there is conflict within a Home's steering council that they cannot resolve themselves, the coach will attempt to work with the steering council to resolve it.**
 - a. If the conflict is ongoing and the coach must get involved with the steering council to help resolve it, the coach must immediately notify the Home council that there is ongoing conflict in the steering council which they have been unable to resolve on their own.**
 - i. The steering council has 21 days to resolve the conflict from the time the coach first gets involved and notifies the Home council of the conflict.**
 - ii. If after 21 days the steering council has not resolved their conflict, the steering council will be dissolved and the Home must hold new elections within seven days.**

It's inevitable that there are differences of opinion when you have a team of people working together, as you bring together different personalities and modes of operation. This, however, does not automatically mean that there is ongoing conflict in a steering council. An ongoing conflict would not simply be any disagreement or misunderstanding between two or more steering council members. For there to be ongoing conflict in a steering council, it would mean that there is disunity or disagreement that those involved cannot work out, or cannot bring themselves to lovingly work through and reach resolutions on. If it reaches the extent that it affects their unity and working relationship, then the steering council would be in ongoing conflict.

- E. Train Home shepherds on how to initiate or administer appropriate discipline to errant Home members, as well as ensure they report probationary status or excommunicable offenses to the shepherding desk.**
- F. Suggest to the Home shepherds that they recommend to the Home a change of membership for an errant Home member who is violating, contravening, or failing to fulfill the "Responsibilities of an Individual Family Disciple" or the "Family Discipleship Rules" if they see that the Home is not taking this possibility into account when dealing with the individual.**

It is not the responsibility of the coach to let the Home shepherds know when someone needs a change of membership. This responsibility lies with the Home shepherds and the Home. However, the coach has the right to suggest a change of membership for a member if he believes that it is needed and the Home is not taking the necessary steps themselves. However, his suggesting that the Home shepherds look into it does not mean that the coach shares the responsibility. The Home is accountable to shepherd its members,

including recommending that those who are not living the FD standard be moved to another circle of membership, if after faithful shepherding they have not made the strides necessary to remain a Family disciple.

- G. Report monthly to his regional Coaching and Shepherding board chairperson(s) informing them of his personal activities and interaction with the steering councils that he coaches, as well as responding to any points he may be asked to respond to or report on by the Coaching and Shepherding board chairperson(s).**
- H. Faithfully check his email and answer matters pertaining to his coaching duties in a timely manner.**
- I. Fulfill assignments given by the regional Coaching and Shepherding board chairperson(s) and/or the shepherding desk.**

There will be instances when a coach might be requested by the CS RBC to act as a designated representative (DR) for different reasons, or he may be asked to visit one of the Homes in his coaching circle. Although traveling will not be a major part of the coach job, it will come up from time to time, and a coach should be willing to fulfill this responsibility when needed and possible.

Responsibilities and Authority of the Home Steering Council

The steering council is made up of two bodies—the Home shepherds and the Home managers. When referring to the “steering council,” we refer to these two entities together; together they form the body that determines the general plan for the implementation of the overall goals and direction of the Home set by the Home council, as well as the fulfillment and implementation of the *Charter* and current board criteria in their Home. If these two bodies are kept informed and unified regarding the Home’s needs, activities, decisions, priorities, problems, and initiatives, then the needs of the Home will be well covered and coordinated.

The steering council is responsible to and/or has the authority to:

A. Fulfill the “Obligations of All Family Leadership.”

B. Operate within the authority granted them by the *Charter*.

The steering council cannot take or exert any more authority than is granted to them in the *Charter*, and must operate within its boundaries.

C. Make decisions concerning the Home, its needs, the implementation of the overall goals and direction of the Home as agreed upon by the Home council, and the fulfillment and implementation of the *Charter* and current board criteria.

1. Decisions should be made by simple majority vote, unless otherwise specified in the *Charter*.

Though the steering council “determines decisions concerning the Home, its needs, the implementation of the overall goals and direction of the Home as agreed upon by the Home council, and the fulfillment and implementation of the *Charter* and current board criteria,” ultimate responsibility for the Home remains with the Home council.

The Home council sets the overall goals and direction of the Home; however, it elects a Home steering council to oversee the implementation of those goals and the direction their Home has established. Therefore it is the responsibility of the Home’s steering council to meet, counsel, and pray together concerning how to guide the Home in reaching the decided-upon goals, as well as fulfilling the *Charter* and the board criteria.

2. The implementation of those decisions is to be divided between the practical and the spiritual, with the Home managers taking care of the practical matters and the Home shepherds taking care of the spiritual matters.

a. If there is a question as to what falls under the practical or the spiritual, the steering council must decide by a majority vote whose responsibility the matter falls under. If the body cannot come to an agreement, the issue must be taken to the Home council.

After decisions are made in the steering council meetings, the management team is responsible to carry out the practical aspects of the policy that was decided upon, and the shepherds would take care of the shepherding aspects of the decisions made.

The goal is to keep the two “arms” of the steering council separate, so that each team, the shepherds and the managers, can work at doing their job without either one being encumbered with the details of the other. The majority of the time the two arms of the steering council don’t operate as one body.

D. Endeavor to live in accordance with the World Services publications on the subject of wise and loving leadership.

E. Take time daily for personal prayer and fellowship with the Lord on matters relating to the care and handling of their Home.

With prayer being such an important and essential part of our lives, members of the steering council should pray individually and together for the well-being of the Home's members, and for the Lord's wisdom, direction, and love concerning the care and management of their Home.

F. Bring up all matters submitted for discussion or vote in a Home council meeting within 15 days.

Each of the Home's voting members has the right to bring matters up for discussion in the appropriate Home council meeting, and to have it brought to a vote within 15 days.

Responsibilities and Authority of Home Shepherds

The Home shepherds are a team of two or more members who together make up the Home shepherding body within the steering council. It's up to the Home shepherds to lovingly and diligently care for and shepherd the Home and to apply all aspects of the Word to the Home and its members.

Good shepherding is a key to a Home being a winning team. As Mama has said, "If the spirit is right, the work will be right." In other words, if the spirit of the Home and its members is strong, obedient, full of faith, praiseful, etc., then the other aspects of the Home in the practical and other ministries will be right and will have the Lord's blessing. If the spirit is right and the Home has the Lord's blessing, then they'll be firmly on the path to fruitfulness and progress in all areas, including the practical aspects of the Home and its work. In the final analysis, it's the Home shepherds and the Home members who are the ones ultimately responsible for the spiritual state of the individuals and the Home overall.

Home shepherds are responsible to and/or have the authority to:

- A. Fulfill the "Obligations of All Family Leadership."**
- B. Ensure that the Home's members are fulfilling the spiritual aspects of the *Charter* and of the current board criteria, and are living in accordance with the Word by endeavoring to apply the spiritual counsel given in the Letters to their daily lives.**
- C. Love, care for, and shepherd their Home members and each other in their personal weaknesses, especially those that cause physical or spiritual disruption in the Home, and/or physical, spiritual, or emotional harm to themselves or others.**

The Home shepherds are responsible to do all they can to ensure their Home members are happy, well cared for, and loved. Home shepherds are expected to help their Home members, as well as each other, overcome their personal weaknesses and be strengthened in the areas of their spiritual lives that they need help in through loving application of the Word.

- D. Lovingly and faithfully shepherd, correct and discipline, in a manner appropriate and proportionate to the offense, individuals who fail to fulfill, or who violate or contravene, the "Responsibilities of an Individual Family Disciple," the "Family Discipleship Rules," or agreed-upon Home regulations, or who fail to live in accordance with the Word by endeavoring to apply the spiritual and practical counsel given in the Letters to their daily lives.**
 - 1. If the offending member does not agree that the discipline is appropriate or proportionate, he may bring the matter before the Home shepherds. If an agreement cannot be reached, the Home shepherds must convene a Home council meeting within three days to settle the matter. If a simple majority agree with the Home shepherds, the discipline is to be carried out. If the majority disagree, an alternative discipline must be found and agreed upon.**

Home shepherds have the authority to discipline those in the Home who are not abiding by the *Charter* or the Home regulations enacted by the Home. The discipline must be appropriate and proportionate in each case. Often a verbal warning or reproof done lovingly, even if it must be firm, will suffice for the first offense.

"We must be sure that [correction is] in the right spirit with the meekness and the quietness of a tender and gentle and loving and contrite heart in all humility.—To be sure that we're in the right spirit as we correct

those around us for their mistakes and their errors and their sins, even as God does us and as we would want others to do unto us for ours.—Loving and forgiving one another for Christ’s sake, even as He hath forgiven us for our sins” (ML #1250:43).

“With a lot of people’s problems, you can just talk to them a little bit and you tell them the solution and they want to do better and they repent and change. With others, you talk to them and you pray with them and perhaps there’s a short-lived victory, but then the problem returns over and over again. When there is that kind of problem, there needs to be something more than just talking and talking and praying and praying with them” (ML #1887:2).

Some examples of discipline that Home shepherds may need to enact include: loss of Home responsibilities; extra Home duties; temporarily relinquishing an activity or privilege, such as missing a recreational activity or an outing, etc. It is also a good idea to assign an appropriate reading list to help strengthen the Home member.

As mentioned, the Home has the authority to vote in its own Home regulations as long as these do not contravene the *Charter*. But in doing so, the Home members must understand that they are expected to abide by those regulations once implemented, and that the Home shepherds will have the authority to discipline those who disobey them.

Whenever discipline is assigned, it must be appropriate and proportionate to the offense. If the offense was very minor, then the correction must reflect this same degree of disciplinary action. If the Home shepherds assign a form of discipline which the offender feels is not appropriate or feels is excessive for the offense, he can discuss the matter with them.

The Home shepherds should hear out the member as to the reasons why he feels the discipline is not appropriate or proportionate. The member should also listen to the Home shepherds’ reasons for their choice of discipline, and both sides should prayerfully and lovingly consider the reasons of the other.

If an agreement on the disciplinary action cannot be reached, the Home shepherds must call a Home council meeting within three days to settle the matter. Both sides should be heard in the meeting and the Home should discuss it and come to a decision by means of a majority vote.

E. Recommend that a Home member be moved to Missionary or Fellow membership in accordance with the “[Procedure for Moving a Family Disciple to Missionary or Fellow Membership](#).”

F. Immediately report any accusations of offenses warranting excommunication or probationary status to the shepherding desk.

If someone within a Home reports that a Home member has committed an excommunicable or PS offense, the Home shepherds must immediately report it to the shepherding desk, who will see that the matter is investigated fully and that the appropriate Charter procedures are followed.

Responsibilities and Authority of Home Managers

The Home managers are a team of two or more individuals who make up one of the two entities within the steering council. The Home managers are responsible for all aspects of the organization and practical running of the Home, including such practical things as scheduling, finances, business, Home care, etc., as well as to ensure that the practical aspects of the *Charter* and the various board criteria are fulfilled.

The Home managers are responsible to and/or have the authority to:

A. Fulfill the “*Obligations of All Family Leadership.*”

B. Endeavor to carry out their duties in a loving, prayerful, and competent manner.

Home managers need to be loving, faithful, prayerful, and competent, and do their job to the best of their ability.

C. Manage the Home and its members physically and organizationally.

The Home managers must diligently care for the functioning of the Home so that it operates well organizationally, allowing everyone to effectively and efficiently do their job. The Home members have a great deal of say in the management of their Home. They elect the Home managers and expect them to carry out the agreed-upon decisions.

D. Ensure that the Home is fulfilling the practical aspects of the *Charter* and the current board criteria, and that its members are living in accordance with the Word by endeavoring to apply the practical counsel given in the Letters to their daily lives.

Responsibilities of Board Pillar Representatives

Note: For detailed information concerning the responsibilities of the board pillar representatives see ["Changes to the Criteria Monitor Positions"](#) (LNF #299).

Responsibilities and Authority of the Boards

A. Within the board structure, each Home and Family member retains all the rights and responsibilities granted them under the *Charter*. Family leadership and the boards must abide by their responsibilities and within the authority given to them in the *Charter*.

1. The authority of each board and its members extends only within the realm of its particular portfolio.

The boards are to do all they can to be of service to the Homes and help them to the best of their ability, as well as give advice to the Homes on matters pertaining to their portfolio.

2. Each board has authority to make decisions by a simple majority vote on matters within their portfolio. However, they must inform the board directly above them of their decisions.

a. If the upper board disagrees with the decision of the lower board, and the lower board does not wish to modify or reverse its decision, the upper board may, with a simple majority vote, initiate a veto of the decisions of the board below it in accordance with the "Conflicts."

3. Only the members of a board have the authority to vote on decisions made by that board.

4. A board may, with a simple majority vote, decide to invite a non-board member to attend the board meetings to give input and counsel on a topic they are discussing. However, the person invited would not have a vote on the board.

a. The chairperson of a regional board may attend, uninvited, the board meetings of their national boards.

The chairperson of the upper board may suggest that the board invite someone to sit in on a meeting, but the board must vote and make the final decision on whether or not to invite them.

B. The authority of the national board extends only to its pillar within the national area.

1. The national board will pray about the needs of its area relating to its pillar, establish its priorities, and come up with plans and programs to propose to the Homes in the national area.

C. The authority of the regional board extends only to its pillar within the regional area.

1. The regional board will pray about the needs of its region relating to its pillar, establish its priorities, and come up with plans and programs relating to its portfolio for the regional area.

The IB may suggest policy relating to its pillar for the RBs to implement in their regions. Regions throughout the world vary greatly, however, and taking that into consideration, it is the RBs themselves that

must pray about and decide how that policy would be best implemented in their particular regions and be tailored to fit their needs.

- 2. The regional board is responsible for its national boards within the region and has the authority to review any decisions made by the national boards, recommend they be changed, or veto them if they are not in agreement with the lower board's decision. The regional board also has the authority to pass down ideas for programs to be implemented by the national boards and recommend plans for their implementation.**

Each national area is different and has different needs, and taking that into consideration, the final decisions on how the ideas and programs are to be implemented rests with the NBs themselves.

D. The authority of the international board extends to all regions within the pillar it represents.

- 1. The international board has the authority to make decisions regarding policy relating to its pillar and pass that policy on to its regional boards to be implemented.**
 - a. World Services Leadership must be informed of the international board's decisions and has veto power over those decisions.**
- 2. The international board is responsible for all the regional boards within its pillar, and has the authority to review decisions made by them, recommend changes to those decisions, or veto them if they are not in agreement with the decision of the lower board.**

E. It is the responsibility of the boards to be thinking and praying about their board's portfolio in relation to the Homes in their areas, which includes the responsibility:

- 1. To pray about ways to help Family Homes fulfill the board criteria and to promote activities and initiatives to meet those needs.**
- 2. To pray about materials and publications connected to their pillar that World Services Publications or the local board or area can produce, which would help the Homes.**
- 3. To regularly meet as a board to discuss matters pertaining to their board, the state of the pillar within their area, and to devise and promote programs to improve the state of that aspect of Family life.**
- 4. To be in close communication with each other and the Homes via email or phone as needed.**
- 5. To make decisions on matters pertaining to their portfolio within their area.**
 - a. If a board doesn't feel they can make a decision on a matter they should consult with the board above them.**
- 6. To report on their activities as board members, and the decisions of their board via the meeting minutes.**
- 7. To inform the board above them of decisions made by their board before putting them into effect.**

Responsibilities and Authority of Board Members

- A. It is the responsibility of each member on a board or council to strive to fulfill their board or council responsibilities to the best of their ability.**
- 1. Board members who do not fulfill their responsibilities will be replaced according to the "[Procedure for the Removal of a Board Member](#)."**
 - 2. Board members have the responsibility to get the agreement of a majority vote of their Home council to accept their appointment to a board.**
 - a. Board members may only be on boards for the area in which they reside.**
 - 3. Board members have a voice and a vote in the decisions made by the board on which they sit. They do not have a voice or a vote in the decisions of other boards or a right to get involved with those boards.**
 - 4. Board members do not have shepherding or other authority over the Homes and their members.**

Board members assist the Homes in matters relating to their pillar. Matters not relating to the board member's portfolio should be referred to the appropriate board, and if a shepherding matter to the CS board.

- a. The shepherding of individual board members is the responsibility of the Home shepherds of the Home where the member resides.**

The Home shepherds can and should shepherd board members. Just because a Home member is on a board does not mean that that person does not need to be shepherded.

- 5. A board may request assistance from their regional shepherds if they feel that one of their members is having problems that are affecting the board and which neither they or that member's Home can rectify.**
 - a. If the problems a board member is having are serious enough to warrant their being removed from the board the regional shepherds can submit their recommendation to the national board or to the regional board, either of which have the authority to initiate the process of the removal of board members in accordance with the "[Procedure for the Removal of a Board Member](#)."**
- 6. A board member placed on probationary status for breaking Charter rules will automatically lose their position on the board. When the member has finished serving their term on probationary status, the regional shepherds will decide whether he may be reinstated to the board.**
- 7. If a board member is placed on Home censure by their Home, they do not automatically lose their position on the board.**
- 8. If a Family discipleship or Missionary member board member becomes a Fellow member, he will automatically lose his position on the board.**

Responsibilities of the National Coordinating Council

A. The national coordinating council is not an authoritative body, but rather a forum for communication, coordination, and interaction of the chairpersons of the national boards.

The sole purpose of the NCC is to keep each of the pillars informed of the other pillars' programs and plans, and to iron out any potential conflicts that may come up between the various national boards.

B. The national coordinating council is responsible to:

- 1. Keep its council members informed of each national board's activities and programs, so that all boards in the national area understand what the other boards are doing.**
 - a. Before a national board organizes an event for the Homes in its area, it must first check with the national coordinating council coordinator in case the timing for the planned event conflicts with events planned by another national board in the area.**

The coordinator works with the national boards to help them sort out conflicts in the schedules of the different events planned by the national boards. Irresolvable conflicts on the NCC should be referred to the regional council.

Family Discipleship Rules

Governing Principles of the Family Discipleship Rules

When you read the *Charter* you must not only look at the responsibilities and rules, but also at the recent Letters that explain how to live and apply those responsibilities and rules to Family life today. An example of this is witnessing. The "[Responsibilities of a Family Discipleship Home](#)" states the Home must regularly engage in evangelism, and the "[Outreach Rules](#)" outline what the witnessing requirements are, but in order to know how to apply these Charter responsibilities you must look to the New Wine to see what direction the Lord has been leading in the area of witnessing, be it in regards to getting *Activated* subscriptions, follow-up, getting out Family materials, or building a lasting work. If you are only keeping the guidelines of the *Charter*, but are not applying the New Wine to your Charter-directed witnessing activities, then you are in fact not adhering to the *Charter*.

The "[Family Discipleship Board Criteria](#)" helps to further define the application of the *Charter's* requirements in conjunction with the New Wine for today.

A. Charter responsibilities are to be fulfilled by all Family disciples to the best of their ability and Charter rules are to be adhered to by all Family disciples, with rare exceptions or in unavoidable circumstances.

1. Disciples who choose to flagrantly or continually break the rules or who persistently disregard their discipleship responsibilities will face disciplinary action in a manner appropriate and proportionate to the severity and/or frequency of the offense, up to and including the loss of their Family membership.

There are both behavioral and procedural rules. The procedural ones are quite structured, with some of them, like the "[Home Size Rules](#)," carrying automatic penalties if disobeyed. For example, if someone moves out of your Home and the population is reported as undersized, and after four months the population of the Home has not risen back to at least the minimum of six voting members 18 years or older, the Home will automatically be placed on probationary notice.

The rules are to be followed by everyone, from leaders to new disciples. Although we have tried to make the behavioral rules as precise as possible, some of them are by their nature more subjective. Unlike the "[Offenses Warranting the Excommunication of a Family Disciple](#)" or "[Offenses Warranting the Placing of a Family Disciple on Probationary Status](#)" there are times when exceptions can be made to the behavioral-type rules in unavoidable circumstances. As hard as you might try to keep those rules, it's inevitable that at some time or another you will break one. When you do, you need not fear that you will lose your Family discipleship. However, if you persistently disregard or blatantly break the rules you will face appropriate disciplinary action up to and including the loss of your Family membership.

Much counsel and training has been given on the ministry of Home shepherding both in the Word and the HSTP, and Home shepherds should seek to apply this counsel to the best of their ability. Often a time to talk and share the Word and pray with the offending member will suffice. In addition, Home shepherds could assign reading lists to the offending Home member to help strengthen him in his weak area and give him specific questions to ask the Lord in order to get His direction for him personally. But if someone is deliberately ignoring a clause in the "[Responsibilities of an Individual Family Disciple](#)" or flagrantly disregarding one of the "[Family Discipleship Rules](#)" after being corrected for doing so, it will result in some form of discipline ranging from admonishment or Home censure, at the Home level, to PS, being moved to another category of membership, if eligible, or loss of Family membership, or even excommunication, depending on the severity and frequency of the offense.

Your Home could also be placed on PN or be moved to another circle of membership if it is not fulfilling its responsibilities as a Family discipleship Home or is allowing the members of the Home to consistently break the rules or disregard their responsibilities.

2. **Rules in “Offenses Warranting the Excommunication of a Family Disciple” and “Offenses Warranting the Placing of a Family Disciple on Probationary Status” are to be kept at all times by all Family disciples, with no exceptions.**
 - a. **Because they are minors, those under the age of 18 who commit offenses warranting excommunication may either be excommunicated, lose their Family membership, or be placed on probationary status, depending on the age of the offender and the severity of the offense.**
 - i. **If the offense was deemed to be abusive mistreatment of a child the individual must be excommunicated.**

If the *Charter* says you will receive PS or excommunication for breaking one of the rules under these categories you will be penalized accordingly. If you commit an excommunicable offense you will be excommunicated, and depending on the nature of the offense that excommunication will likely be permanent.

There may be the situation where, after a predetermined period of time, and depending on the nature of the offense committed, it may be possible for someone who was excommunicated to rejoin a circle of Family membership. The decision to reinstate someone who was excommunicated must be agreed to by at least a two-thirds majority of the RSs within that region after prayerful consideration of both the request and the circumstances surrounding the individual’s original excommunication. The decision to allow an excommunicated member to rejoin a circle of Family membership, if it may happen, would not be an arbitrary opinion on the part of the RSs. Their decision must be based on guidelines established specifically for this purpose by the Family Policy Council.

Individuals who have been excommunicated for abusive mistreatment of a child will not be eligible for reinstatement to any circle of Family membership at any time.

B. Family discipleship responsibilities and rules are only those specifically mandated in the *Charter*.

Family disciples are expected to live within the parameters of the *Charter*. Even if you are obeying all the “[Family Discipleship Rules](#),” you and your Home must also live up to the Charter responsibilities as defined in the “[Responsibilities of an Individual Family Disciple](#)” and “[Responsibilities of a Family Discipleship Home](#)” in order to remain Family disciples or a Family discipleship Home.

Any matter not addressed in the *Charter* isn’t a Family discipleship responsibility or rule. The recent Letters give up-to-date application of how to fulfill the responsibilities and rules, but it is up to each individual and/or Home to decide how or if other matters that aren’t addressed in the *Charter* should be made rules for their lives or Homes. Of course, you will want to pray about all such matters, counsel about them, and look in the Letters and Family pubs to see the counsel given and endeavor to apply it to your lives, but ultimately it’s up to your Home to make a decision on how to apply that counsel.

Offenses Warranting the Excommunication of a Family Disciple

See the ["Governing Principles of the Family Discipleship Rules"](#) for a broader understanding of the application of our Family responsibilities and rules.

A Family disciple will be excommunicated by the regional shepherds for:

A. Abusive mistreatment of a child.

As stated in the ["Rights of Minors,"](#) Family children have the right to grow up in a safe and secure environment, free from abuse of any kind—sexual, physical, spiritual, mental, or psychological. The Family has a zero tolerance policy towards child abuse. Abusive mistreatment of a child, whether through the excessive use of force when disciplining, sexual abuse, or any other abusive mistreatment will result in excommunication.

B. Those age 18 years and over engaging in any form of sexual interaction with those under the age of 14.

C. Those ages 16 and 17 engaging in a sexual act with those under the age of 14.

D. Those age 18 years and over engaging in a sexual act with those ages 14 through 17.

- 1. If a member 21 years or over engages in a consensual sexual act with a 16- or 17-year-old, depending on the ages of the individuals and the circumstances surrounding the situation, in exceptional cases the member 21 or over might receive a lesser discipline of probationary status or loss of Family membership.**
- 2. If a member 18 years old engages in a consensual sexual act with a 15-year-old, depending on the circumstances, the 18-year-old might receive a lesser discipline of probationary status or loss of Family membership.**

The Family's age of consent is 18 years. The only two exceptions to the Family's age of consent rule pertain to an 18- to 20-year-old engaging in sexual interaction with a 16- or 17-year-old in accordance with the ["Sex and Affection Rules."](#)

The Family prohibits those 21 years of age and older from engaging in any sexual act with those under the age of 18. Those 21 and over who engage in any sexual act with those under the age of 18 will receive excommunication unless the provisions in subclauses 1 or 2 are judged to be applicable.

In a majority of the countries of the world 16 is the age when a person may choose to have consensual sex with another person who has also reached the age of consent. In the Family, although we allow 16- or 17-year-olds to have sexual relations with those ages 18 through 20 (with the consent of their parents), they are not permitted to engage in sex with those over the age of 20. Thus it is an excommunicable offense for those 21 and over to engage in a sexual act with a 16- or 17-year-old.

If, however, the sex is consensual, the age of those involved and circumstances surrounding the situation will be taken into account and might result in probationary status or loss of Family membership, instead of excommunication. Similarly, the circumstances surrounding the situation will be taken into account if an 18-year-old engages in a consensual sexual act with a 15-year-old. It may result in probationary status or loss of Family membership, instead of excommunication.

However, the allowance for the possibility of a lesser sentence in exceptional cases should not be considered the expected discipline or be viewed as tolerance toward an excommunicable offense. Sexual interaction with those out of age range is excommunicable and will be sentenced accordingly.

E. Committing intentionally endangering or life-threatening acts, other than the legally sanctioned use of reasonable force in defense of self, others, or property.

Family members should not commit intentionally endangering or life-threatening violent acts for any reason, except in the rare case of legally defending themselves, or others, or their property. For example, you may, of course, resort to the use of physical restraint or force if someone is about to hit you—or any innocent helpless person, for that matter—over the head with a bat or is trying to grab your children or set fire to your property. Dad stated, “When an unwelcome visitor invades your property and starts breaking down doors, windows, socking disciples, and ripping off your sheep, don’t hesitate to defend yourselves until the police come. You may have to use a little force to prevent even greater violence. Try not to hurt anyone, but definitely, forcibly restrain them from further trespassing and violence with whatever force it takes to do so” (ML #143A:61,79).

F. Activities that foster schism within the Family, including the continual voicing of doubts, criticisms, or skepticism, in a destructive manner designed to foster strife or doubts about Dad, Maria, Peter, the Word, or the Family.

- 1. Members are encouraged to ask questions and seek clarification or counsel, as well as voice objections or raise concerns about matters they feel need to be changed or addressed. This should be not be done in a way that results in strife or the spreading dissent or doubt, but should be addressed to the appropriate shepherds.**

“Questions are legitimate if you are undecided or uncertain about an issue, and you truly want to know the answer. If handled in the right manner and the motive of your heart is to sincerely find the answer through the right channels, there is nothing wrong with expressing your questions. Handling such questions ‘in the right manner’ means talking to the right people—those who are strong in faith and who would likely have the answers or be able to find them. It’s not right to talk about your questions or doubts with people who are weak in faith or the Word, who might be stumbled.

“There is a difference between legitimate questions that are asked out of sincere, pure motives, and skeptical, distrustful questions that are generated by the Enemy for the purpose of trying to weaken the questioner and stir up division. The person who has legitimate questions will be open and will seek to understand. They’ll want to receive and believe the answers; they want the doubts dispelled. But the person whose questions are not legitimate is the one who already has his mind made up, who doesn’t seek answers, but who seeks to use his questioning as an avenue to preach a message of defiance or doubt, and pour forth the voice of Satan” (ML #3088:25–26).

G. Engaging in substance abuse.

- 1. Depending on the severity of the abuse, or whether it was a repeat offense, the individual may receive probationary status or loss of Family membership.**

“Substance abuse” covers the full range of possibilities—legal and illegal drugs and intoxicants. Some drugs and intoxicants are not illegal, but the use of them is considered abuse. For example, sniffing glue or taking certain over-the-counter drugs for non-medical reasons can result in getting high. Even though not always illegal, those activities would be considered substance abuse. The severity of the offense will be taken into consideration and will result in either PS, loss of Family membership, or excommunication.

H. Engaging in male-with-male sexual acts.

It is our Bible-based belief that God strictly forbids male homosexuality. Male homosexuality or “men with men working that which is unseemly” (Romans 1:27) is forbidden. Those found guilty of male-with-male sexual interaction will receive PS, loss of Family membership, or excommunication, depending on the severity of the offense.

Offenses Warranting the Placing of a Family Disciple on Probationary Status

Probationary status is a disciplinary measure administered by the shepherding desk for serious Charter offenses. See "[Governing Principles of the Family Discipleship Rules](#)" for a broader understanding of the application of our Family responsibilities and rules, and "Offenses Warranting the Excommunication of a Family Disciple" for a list of excommunicable offenses.

A Family disciple will be placed on probationary status for:

A. Committing violent acts or repeatedly threatening violence against others.

Committing acts of violence, except in the unavoidable case of legally defending themselves, others, or their property is not acceptable in the Family. Those found guilty of violence will receive punishment in the form of PS, loss of membership, or excommunication, depending on the severity of the act, or whether there is a reoccurrence.

If a mate was defending himself or herself from spousal violence, it could be judged self-defense and possibly not be grounds for disciplinary action.

Those found guilty of repeatedly threatening violence against others will receive PS, and if threats of violence continue the member will be in jeopardy of losing his or her Family discipleship or of being excommunicated.

B. The inappropriate use of force in disciplining children.

This clause covers the inappropriate use of force when disciplining children. Child discipline in the Family is covered in the "[Childcare Discipline Guidelines](#)." The use of unacceptable means of disciplining a child, which may be potentially harmful to the child, is grounds for probationary status and serious infractions will result in loss of membership or excommunication.

C. Engaging in sexual interaction with a teen, aged 14- through 15-years-old, if aged 21 years or older.

Anyone 21 years of age or older found guilty of sexual interaction—but not a sexual act—with those ages 14 through 15 will be placed on PS, or depending on the situation and the age of the offender, may be in jeopardy of losing his or her Family membership or of excommunication in accordance with "[Governing Principles of the Family Discipleship Rules](#)."

Anyone 21 years of age or older who engages in a sexual act with a teen, ages 14 through 15, will be excommunicated.

D. Engaging in sexual contact with a teen, aged 14- through 15-years-old, if aged 18- through 20-years-old.

Anyone aged 18- through 20-years-old found guilty of sexual contact with a teen ages 14 through 15 will be placed on PS; and repeat offenders will be in jeopardy of losing their Family membership or excommunication in accordance with "[Governing Principles of the Family Discipleship Rules](#)."

Those 18 years of age or older who engage in a sexual act with a teen ages 14 through 15 will be excommunicated.

E. Engaging in a sexual act with a teen, aged 14- through 15-years-old, if aged 16- through 17-years old.

A 16- or 17-year-old may have limited sexual interaction with a 14- or 15-year-old only in accordance with the "[Sex and Affection Rules](#)." Engaging in any sexual act not in accordance with the "[Sex and Affection Rules](#)" will result in probationary status.

F. Engaging in sexual contact or acts with those who are not Family disciples.

A Family disciple 18 years of age or older may, with specific permission from the regional shepherds under exception circumstances only, engage in sexual contact or acts with a specified non-Family disciple in accordance with the "[Sex and Affection Rules](#)." Engaging in sexual contact or acts not in accordance with the "[Sex and Affection Rules](#)" will result in probationary status.

G. Engaging in a sexual act with another Family disciple after having had sex with someone who is not a Family disciple and prior to being cleared by HIV testing.

1. Engaging in a sexual act with a Family disciple after having had sex with someone not yet cleared by HIV testing and known to have had sex with someone who is not a Family disciple will result in probationary status.

A Family disciple who has engaged in a sexual act with someone who is not a Family disciple or with someone known to have had sex with someone who was not a Family disciple, but who has not yet been cleared by HIV testing, must refrain from engaging in a sexual act with another until he or the person he had sex with has been cleared by HIV testing. Breaking this rule and putting others at risk will result in PS.

The RSs can judge the length of the term for an FD who has engaged in a sexual act with someone who is not a FD, giving him or her between three to six months of PS for the offense. However, if someone has sex with an outsider and then has sex with another FD, this will be judged as two separate offenses and the minimum length of PS will be nine months—three months minimum for engaging in a sexual act with non-FD and six months for having sex with another FD after having had sex with an outsider before being HIV tested.

H. Engaging in a sexual act with a new member or someone rejoining Family discipleship, who has been in the Home for less than six months.

A sexual relationship with a new member joining the Home could divert his or her attention from the most needed aspects of discipleship training, which includes getting into the Word, building a relationship with the Lord, and learning to live within the Family. Sexual or romantic relationships during those first six months are viewed as an unneeded distraction for a new disciple.

Another important reason for this rule is because all new members need to be cleared by HIV testing before joining and then again six months after their first test.

In specified instances, a Missionary member rejoining a Family discipleship Home may be granted an exception by the RSs to this "new or rejoining member" rule in accordance with "[Sex and Affection Rules](#)."

I. Alcohol abuse.

1. In accordance with the "[Smoking and Drinking Rules](#)," if a Home member is overdrinking and the Home has done all they can to shepherd the member, including applying appropriate disciplinary measures, but the problem continues, the shepherding desk is authorized to discipline the member with probationary status.

2. In accordance with the "[Driving Rules](#)," driving under the influence of alcohol may be disciplined with probationary status and the suspension of driving privileges.

Drinking while driving, or driving under the influence, is not only extremely dangerous, but is as highly illegal in most countries. Homes should be well aware of and abide by the local laws concerning alcohol limits when driving.

Regardless of amounts consumed, the tolerance and reaction to alcohol vary from person to person. Family members must be moderate in their alcohol consumption. Overdrinking is not permitted in the Family.

J. Engaging in male-with-male sexual interaction.

1. Depending on the severity of the sexual interaction, or whether it was a repeat offense, the individual will face loss of Family membership or excommunication.

It is our Bible-based belief that God strictly forbids male homosexuality. Male homosexuality or "men with men working that which is unseemly" (Romans 1:27) is forbidden. Those found guilty of homosexual activity

will receive punishment in the form of PS, loss of Family membership, or excommunication, depending on the extent of the sexual interaction.

K. Knowingly failing to report offenses warranting excommunication or knowingly covering for a probationary status offense of others will result in probationary status.

"Failure to report a crime is a crime" (ML #662:22). If a Family member sees or knows about anyone who has committed an offense warranting excommunication it is his duty to report it, or if it is discovered that a member knowingly covered for a situation where an offense warranting probationary status was committed and didn't report it to his shepherds, he will be placed on PS, and depending on the situation, may be in jeopardy of losing his Family membership.

L. Disregard for the restrictions on the distribution of Family literature as outlined in "Designations of Family Publications."

Childcare Discipline Guidelines

- A. Child discipline in the Family International, as outlined in the “Family Discipline Guidelines” (ML #2919), must be reasonable, age appropriate, and proportionate to the offense, always balanced with love, understanding, and respect.**
- B. The Home must establish a united behavioral and disciplinary standard. This involves agreeing on Home rules, defining appropriate correctional methods, and establishing clear limits for any correctional discipline.**

The purpose of child discipline in the Family is child training and character building. The Home must decide together on the behavioral standards, Home rules, and accepted disciplinary measures for the children in the Home within the guidelines published in the “Family Discipline Guidelines” (ML #2919).

Whatever method of discipline is used, it must always be reasonable and proportionate, and must never be carried to extremes. Discipline should always be balanced with love, understanding, and respect. Children should be treated with respect at all times, including during discipline. In all cases, it is essential to ensure that the punishment is appropriate to the age and maturity of the child, proportionate to the offense, and reasonable in all circumstances.

Any person found to administer discipline in an unacceptable manner or one that could be harmful to a child is in jeopardy of being placed on Home censure, or in more severe cases, of being placed on probationary status or of being excommunicated.

It’s important to note as well that laws concerning child discipline vary greatly from country to country, and Homes should be mindful of these laws in the countries in which they reside.

C. Parents, teachers, and others working with children should:

- 1. Be familiar with the childcare discipline standard as articulated in the *Charter*, as well as the Home’s childcare discipline guidelines. Failure to heed these guidelines could result in disciplinary action being taken by a Home against a negligent parent or adult.**

All Home members should be familiar with the childcare discipline standard and are responsible to monitor the correction of children and report to the parents any serious neglect or excesses they encounter, or concern they have.

- 2. Inform the children of the behavioral rules of the Home, and be sure they know the consequences for disobedience.**

Children should also be made fully aware of all house and behavioral rules and know the consequences should they not obey them. Correction should always be given in love and be well balanced with praise and prayer. The goal of child training is happy, self-disciplined children who want to do the right thing.

Some common correctional methods include:

- giving verbal instruction—letting the child know clearly what you expect;
- expressing disappointment or displeasure in a verbal warning;
- children may receive simple correctional taps or swats at the time correction is needed, as long as it is done calmly;
- loss of privileges;
- imposing extra duties without taking away from the child’s schooling, exercise, or rest time;
- restricting conversation for a few minutes; and

— disruptive younger children can be given time out and be separated from their peers for a short time, but they should not be left alone.

Designations of Family Publications

A. Family publications are designated for specific readerships.

- 1. Family disciples, Missionary members, and Fellow members may receive publications designated as FD/MM/FM. They may read or have all Family publications, subject to each publication's age designation and restrictions.**
 - a. Publications designated as FD/MM are sent only to Family discipleship and Missionary member Homes.**
- 2. Active members may receive publications designated as AM or GM. They may read or have FD/MM/FM publications, subject to each publication's age designation and restrictions, at the discretion of the Active member's Home.**
- 3. General members may receive publications designated as GM. They may read or have AM or FD/MM/FM publications, subject to each publication's age designation and restrictions, at the discretion of the General member's Home.**

A publication designated as FD/MM/FM will automatically be sent or made available to all FD, MM, and FM Homes. An FD/MM/FM publication will not be sent to or automatically be made available to AMs or GMs, but the publication may be given to an AM or GM, at the discretion of the Home and subject to the publication's age designation and restrictions.

B. Restrictions on the distribution of Family publications pertain to all Family members and are as follows:

- 1. FD/MM/FM/AM publications may not be posted online except by World Services Administration's permission.**

This restriction pertains to posting FD/MM/FM/AM publications anywhere online, including personal, area, or Home websites, blogs or social networking sites, as well as posting FD/MM/FM/AM publications on someone else's website, blog or social networking site.

- 2. FD/MM/FM/AM publications are for members and may not be distributed to the general public except with World Services Administration's permission.**
- 3. FD/MM/FM/AM publications may not be knowingly given to those who seek to hinder the Family.**

C. World Services Publications may change the designation or use of any Family publication, or make exceptions to any of the above rules.

Driving Rules

A. Men or women driving a motor vehicle on a public road must have a valid driver's license for the class of vehicle being driven, and must be familiar with and obey the driving regulations of the country.

Only those with valid driver's licenses should be allowed to drive on public roads. An unspoken Family rule seems to have developed that only men should drive. We would like to dispel this notion, which is why you will notice that the rule states that both qualified men and women may drive.

B. Any vehicle that is in use on public roads must be properly registered and insured according to the laws of the country.

C. All vehicles in use must be safe, well maintained and in good running condition, otherwise they should not be used.

Dad has written extensively on vehicle safety. Unfortunately, for many Homes the criterion for using a vehicle is "does it move and will it get us where we want to go?" Driving a vehicle is dangerous enough without driving one with faulty or weak brakes, no lights, or bald tires, etc.

If your Home is using a vehicle, it is the Home's responsibility to make sure it is legally registered, insured and safe. Perhaps a good way to judge if a car is safe is to ask yourself if you would feel confident enough to take Mama or Peter for a ride in it. We recommend that your Home appoint a vehicle deacon to make sure the cars are well maintained.

D. Only prayerful, careful, and safe drivers should be permitted to drive. Any driver who causes an accident should generally have his driving privilege suspended for an appropriate period of time, which is to be decided upon by the Home.

Some people who have valid driver's licenses really aren't very good drivers. So if someone is not prayerful and/or careful or safe, then the Home may vote to revoke their driving privilege, at least for a given period of time.

If a driver causes an accident, they should lose their driving privilege for a period of time, which should be decided by the Home's voting members. This does not mean that any driver that is involved in an accident should lose the privilege. A driver may be in an accident that was not his fault. If he was stopped at a traffic light and someone smashed into the rear end of the car, that's not his fault, he just happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time, though there may be a lesson to be learned from it.

But any driver who causes an accident, or who has to be repeatedly warned about reckless or unsafe driving, including speeding or not tuning in to his or her driving, should have his or her driving ability questioned. If someone hits somebody or smashes into another car, it brings up the obvious question of why it happened. Was the driver not paying attention? Was he or she being unsafe, unprayerful? Is the Lord trying to get through to him or her on something, etc.? As driving is such an important responsibility, in that you risk your life, the lives of your passengers and the lives of those that are around you and in other vehicles, anyone who causes an accident should have their driving privilege suspended for a period of time. As Dad admonished, "The driver's seat is one of the most responsible and dangerous positions in the world! Take it seriously and ask God for help" (MOP 4:1).

The appropriate period of time would have to be decided by the Home. If someone causes a minor accident, denting a fender, maybe he shouldn't drive for a short period of time, but if he causes a major accident, maybe he should have his driving privilege suspended for six months, a year, or longer. However, the penalty cannot always be determined only from the seriousness of the accident. Perhaps the lesser

accident was just the Lord's mercy on the Home, but indicates a much more serious problem with the driver. The Home will have to decide.

Drivers should be safety conscious at all times, and may need to go above and beyond the local regulations and customs in countries not known for their traffic safety standards.

Driving in bad weather conditions can be very hazardous. When there is hard rain or when fresh snow is falling, avoid driving if you have a choice. Try to determine in advance the weather conditions where you plan to drive to. Getting caught in a storm front, freezing rain, etc., can be disastrous, and you could find yourself in terrible driving conditions, even though the place you came from wasn't experiencing bad weather when you left.

Driving is serious business in which everyone involved is in a potentially dangerous situation, and therefore requires a great deal of prayerfulness. It would be good for the driver and the passengers to make it a habit of frequently praying aloud for the Lord's help and protection. Passengers should be mindful of the driver and should not distract him; they should be watchful and in prayer for the driver. The person sitting in the front seat next to the driver should consider it his or her job to be the "driver's buddy" and assist the driver in every way possible and needed. Sometimes it's important to talk to the driver to keep him from dozing off at the wheel, especially if driving in the evening or in very hot weather.

"Any one of you who gets a traffic ticket should have to pay the penalty for breaking the law, and also write a full report for your Colony shepherd or supervisor, telling exactly how it happened.—And if you persistently prove you're a poor driver or even accident-prone, you should be grounded either permanently or until you've proven you have learned your lesson, repented, and can drive safely. Maybe you should even have to read this Letter through about ten times or memorize the parts you need or violated!" (ML #150:57.)

E. A new or inexperienced driver must complete 20 hours of supervised driving with a competent Family driver, and must satisfy this Family driver's assessment of their driving.

- 1. Hours of driving training at a recognized driving academy or school may be counted toward the 20 hours of supervised driving time.**
- 2. An already experienced driver who has a valid driver's license and considerable Family driving experience, and who receives a recommendation from the Home's steering council that he/she is a safe, competent driver, does not have to meet the 20-hour requirement.**

F. A simple majority vote of the Home's members will enable a new driver to become a driver for that Home.

The term "new driver" used above not only applies to those who have just recently acquired a driver's license, which would generally be a senior teen or YA, but also those older Family members who may have had a driver's license for a number of years, but due to lack of actual driving experience may no longer be a qualified driver. In such a case, a Home may decide that these drivers need to have some recent hands-on experience before they can drive a van full of children or take witnessing teams out, etc. They may therefore vote in the same requirements that a new driver is expected to meet before getting approval as a Home driver—that is, 20 hours of driving time, plus approval from the steering council.

The supervised driving time would not necessarily need to be official "driver training," but can be on-the-job practice. For example, an 18-year-old could do provisioning pickups with an experienced licensed driver in the car, who could instruct the new driver during the course of the day's driving. However, we do not recommend that new or inexperienced drivers drive a van full of people.

While we are stipulating that a steering council member and a competent Family driver can approve a "new" driver, after he or she has had 20 hours of driving experience, the Home itself should also be in general agreement with the individual driving. Any voting member in a Home has the right to bring up in a Home council meeting the subject of driving and/or a specific driver if they feel he or she doesn't drive safely, to be discussed and/or voted on by the Home. In other words, those riding in a vehicle driven by a designated Home driver should have a reasonable amount of confidence in the driver's abilities, and if they don't, they have every right to bring it up for discussion in the proper forum.

G. Because driving after having drunk alcoholic beverages can impair a driver's driving abilities and lead to serious accidents, Family members should refrain from driving after drinking alcoholic beverages. The *Charter* recognizes, however, that in some cases it might be necessary for a member to drive after having drunk some alcohol. In such cases the following rules must be adhered to:

- 1. Members should appoint a designated driver whenever they attend any type of fellowship or party where they will drink alcoholic beverages, or are in any situation where alcohol is being served and any of them will be required to drive afterwards.**
 - a. No one is allowed to drive a vehicle for 8 hours after having drunk more than the alcohol equivalent of 12 ounces (375 ml) of wine, 24 ounces (750 ml) of beer (that does not exceed 6% alcohol), or two ounces [60 ml] of hard liquor that day.**
 - i. If a driver drinks up to the alcohol equivalent of 6 ounces (190 ml) of wine, 12 ounces (375 ml) of beer (that does not exceed 6% alcohol), or one ounce (30 ml) of hard liquor, they must wait at least one hour after finishing, without drinking any alcohol, before they can drive.**
 - ii. If a driver drinks the alcohol equivalent of 7 to 12 ounces (200 to 375 ml) of wine, 13 to 24 ounces (390 to 750 ml) of beer (that does not exceed 6% alcohol), or one to two ounces (35 to 60 ml) of hard liquor, they must wait at least two hours after finishing, without drinking any alcohol, before they can drive.**
 - 1. Those under 21, inexperienced, or new drivers with less than one year of driving time are not permitted to drive if they have drunk any alcohol whatsoever.**
- 2. In countries where the law of the land regarding drinking and driving is stricter than the Charter rules, the law of the land must be obeyed.**

Alcohol consumption is a major cause of motor vehicle crashes and injury. About half of all motor vehicle fatalities occur in crashes in which a driver has consumed a measurable level of alcohol prior to the crash. Following is some important information concerning the amounts and affects of alcohol on an individual's body.

Blood alcohol concentration (BAC), or the amount of alcohol in an individual's body, is measured by the weight of the alcohol in a volume of blood. There is no precise formula to determine BAC, as levels vary from person to person, which can vary within an individual on a case-by-case basis depending upon that person's gender, weight, metabolism, time period over which the alcohol was consumed and the amount of food in their stomach prior to drinking. Although a person's BAC can be estimated, the level cannot be determined solely by the number of drinks consumed, and cannot be precisely calculated by a person's height and weight.

Blood alcohol concentration directly correlates to the degree of impairment an individual displays when driving after drinking. Although an individual may not exhibit gross signs of inebriation, he/she is nevertheless impaired, even at a low BAC level. Studies show that the relative risk of being killed in a single vehicle crash for drivers with a BAC level between .05 and .09 is 11 times that of drivers with .00 BAC level. As BAC increases, the degree of impairment also rises dramatically, as illustrated by the graph on the following page.

In general, a 60 kg. (132 lb.) person has approximately the same blood alcohol concentration after two drinks as an 80 kg. (176 lb.) person does after three drinks. Two drinks, or the equivalent of two six-ounce glasses of 13% wine (or two cans of beer, or two ounces of hard liquor) raises an 80 kg. person's BAC level to .05, and to .08 for a 60 kg. person.

It is imperative, therefore, that no one drive for a minimum of one hour after consuming the alcohol equivalent of six ounces of wine (There are four six-ounce glasses of wine in a 750 ml bottle. A six-ounce glass of wine is also the alcohol equivalent of one 12-ounce [375 ml] can of beer [that does not exceed 6% alcohol], or one ounce [30 ml] of hard liquor). If you have consumed the alcohol equivalent of two glasses of wine, two beers, or two ounces of hard liquor, you must wait two hours without drinking any alcohol before driving. Any driver who drinks more than the alcohol equivalent of 12 ounces of wine (or 24 ounces of beer [that does not exceed 6% alcohol], or two ounces of hard liquor) cannot drive for at least 8 hours.

A driver, especially when carrying passengers in his vehicle, shoulders a serious responsibility for their lives, and they are dependent on his or her prayerful care. There are already many potential dangers when driving, and if the driver has been drinking, those dangers are multiplied many fold. Many countries and areas of the world have very strict rules concerning drinking and driving, and severe consequences for driving after drinking over their prescribed limits.

It is strongly suggested that Family members not drink any alcoholic beverages if they are to drive later that day or night. However, there are times when members are attending a fellowship, going to a party,

eating out, etc., where alcoholic beverages will be served. In such cases it is the members' responsibility to make sure one person on the team is the designated driver. Ideally, the person who is the designated driver should not drink at all before bringing his passengers home from a situation where alcohol has been served; but if the designated driver does drink, it should be very little, and the driver should allow sufficient time for the alcohol to assimilate and the effects of the alcohol to pass in accordance with the rules listed above. Those under 21, inexperienced, or new drivers with less than one year of driving time, are not permitted to drive if they have drunk any alcohol whatsoever.

The affects and limits of alcohol on the individual vary considerably according to the person's weight, body mass, foods they've recently eaten, alcohol tolerance, etc., and most countries where there are strict laws concerning drinking and driving take this into account when testing for the alcohol limit. The laws concerning alcohol limits for those driving a vehicle in the country, city, or state where you are residing must be strictly adhered to, unless they are more lenient than the Charter, in which case these rules must be followed.

Breaking these rules will be considered a serious offense and as such will be disciplined with Probationary Status in accordance with the "[Offenses Warranting the Placing of a Family Disciple on Probationary Status.](#)" It will also result in suspension of all driving privileges for no less than 3 months for a first offense and up to one year for any further offenses.

Financial Rules

- A. Any Home with four or more voting members may apply to their regional shepherds for a Home loan. Home loans may not be taken from the Home Emergency Reserves without specific regional shepherd permission.**

The Home should use the Home Loan Application form found at [RO-RD_forms](#) when applying for a Home loan.

- B. Will be given stewardship over an emergency fund called the Home Emergency Reserves (HER), which funds belong to World Services.**
- 1. In the event of a field or Home being declared under emergency conditions as per the "Authority of World Services Leadership," World Services Leadership reserves the right to recall all or part of the Home Emergency Reserves for use in the emergency.**
 - 2. A Home's use of Home Emergency Reserves must be according to the provisions listed below. Funds used according to these provisions do not have to be repaid by the Home and will not be considered debts. Home Emergency Reserves that are not used according to these provisions will be considered debts that the Home and its members will be held accountable to repay.**

It's important that Homes are prepared for emergency situations. Part of that preparedness could be to set aside a percentage of the Home's budget as savings to be used for emergencies, so the Home isn't entirely dependent on the limited amount of the Home's HER that may be available during an emergency.

- a. In case of an emergency the Home can use up to, but not exceeding, one-half of their Home Emergency Reserves at any time without permission from their regional shepherds.**
 - i. The Home council may, by a two-thirds majority, decide what they consider an emergency. Within 15 days, the Home's steering council must report to the regional shepherds that they have declared an emergency and explain the nature of the emergency and the amount of funds withdrawn from their Home Emergency Reserves.**
 - 1. Funds used under this emergency provision must be deemed to be an emergency by the regional shepherds. The regional desk will inform the Home within 15 days with a decision.**
 - a. If the regional desk determines that the use of the funds does not qualify as an emergency, the Home has the option to cover the expenditure or ask the regional desk if the expense can be converted into a Home loan. If neither option is applicable, the expenditure by the Home will become a debt and must be repaid.**
 - b. If the regional desk determines that the use of the funds do qualify for an emergency, the expenditure will be replenished by World Services.**

- 2. Once a Home has used up the authorized half of their Home Emergency Reserves limit, no further withdrawals can be made without permission from the regional shepherds.**
- b. If an emergency arises and cumulative expenditures would put the Home over their emergency limit of half of their Home Emergency Reserves, the Home council may, by a two-thirds majority, ask permission from their regional shepherds to use the remainder of their Home Emergency Reserves.**
 - i. A Home may request further financial assistance from the Family Aid Fund if their Home Emergency Reserves are not sufficient to cover the emergency expenses.**
 - c. If a steering council member uses any part of the Home Emergency Reserves without the agreement of two-thirds of the Home council and the approval from the regional shepherds if over the emergency limit, the steering council member will be immediately removed from the steering council and will not be eligible for re-election for a period of not less than one year.**
 - i. The amount of funds used will become that member's personal debt and must be paid in accordance with the "Procedure for Using the Right of Mobility."**
 - ii. The Home council can, by two-thirds majority, decide to take this on as a Home debt.**
 - d. When a Home closes and disbands, the balance of Home Emergency Reserves, after legitimate expenditures are approved by the regional shepherds, must be returned to the regional desk.**
- C. A Home is permitted to use up to, but not exceeding, one-fourth of their Home Emergency Reserves for needs other than for those covered by the above Home Emergency Reserves provision. This portion of the Home Emergency Reserves will be referred to as the Home's "working reserves."**
 - 1. The Home council can decide by a two-thirds majority to borrow from their working reserves with the stipulation that the complete loan must be paid back by the Home's April or October eTRF, whichever comes first.**
 - b. If a Home's working reserves aren't replenished in full by their April or October eTRF, whichever comes first, and no bona fide reason can be supplied, the Home will be automatically placed on probationary notice.**

If a Home borrows from its HER working reserve only a month or two before the payback deadline, it still must be fully reimbursed by their April or October eTRF. The eTRF monthly checklist asks, "Do you have your HER intact? If not, please explain." Your finance desk will be checking all FD Homes' April and October eTRFs to see if any Homes answered no to that question. If they have answered no, and have not included a bona fide reason for why it's not intact, the reporting office will notify them that they have been automatically placed on PN, and they will be given 60 days to pay back their HER working reserve in full.

The HER working reserve does not supersede the Home Loan Fund, which is still available to the Homes.

- D. The Home must maintain at least the total amount of the Tool Fund gifts allotted per person. If an individual moves, either the seedcorn value in distribution materials or the cash value of their Tool Fund gift must be transferred with the individual to his new Home.**

Members moving to a new country or continent where the distribution materials of their former Home/field are either not useful—due to format or language, or are inconvenient to travel with—may request their Tool Fund gift in cash.

- E. The amount of funds to be collected by a Home member for travel, landing funds, or the purchase of a personal item, as well as the methods and procedures used to collect them,**

and the disbursement of such, is to be decided upon by a two-thirds majority of the Home council.

Allowances need to be made in certain situations where a Home member might have to build up some personal savings for a specific purpose, such as saving funds for traveling and landing funds for changing fields, or the purchase of a personal item such as a guitar or a caravan, or something along those lines.

To avoid occasions where a member is pressured from the shepherds to donate his personal funds to help pay the rent or other bills, all Home voting members 18 years of age and over will need to be involved in these decisions, so that everyone is aware of all aspects of the situation. The person should explain to the Home why he needs to collect the funds, how much he needs, and how he intends to get and save these funds. Then the methods and procedures for collecting and saving these funds, how the funds can be spent, and the amounts that are collected must be decided upon by a two-thirds majority of Home council members 18 years of age and older.

If the member's plans change and he decides to remain in the Home or will require less funds than the original amount voted on, the balance of funds which the Home allowed the member to set aside should be returned to the Home and distribution made in accordance with the "[Procedure for Using the Right of Mobility](#)."

- 1. Solicited designated gifts must be used for the purpose for which they were designated according to the prior agreement of the Home.**
- 2. Unsolicited designated gifts must be used for the purpose for which they are designated.**

Designated gifts are to be given to whom and for what they were given. And if you want or need them for something else, then you must not allocate them to something else without asking the permission of the donor.

If the gift is solicited—that is, the member is specifically asking someone for a donation for a specified purpose—then he should do so in counsel with the Home. If the gift is unsolicited—that is, someone gives it for a specific purpose, but the member or the Home did not ask for it—it must also be used for the purpose it was given. If there are funds left over after the item is purchased, these funds should be used as the Home sees fit, as with all other Home income.

In regards to unsolicited designated gifts, Home members should keep in mind the "One Wife" vision and take into account the needs of other Home members, and particularly the children of their Home, and share the abundance of the gifts they get with others in their Home, and thereby train our children to be giving and unselfish.

The principle of designated gifts is that a gift to an individual should be used for the purpose it was given, but once the item is purchased, it becomes the property of the Family, and of the Home in particular. If the Home decides the member can take it with him when he leaves the Home, then the member is free to do so. However, if the Home feels the Home's need is greater, then the Home can vote for the item to remain in the Home. In praying and counseling about this, the departing member's ministries, calling, and talents should be taken into consideration before the Home brings the matter to a final vote. For example, in most cases an inspirationalist would be allowed to take his guitar, a secretary her computer, and a handyman his tools.

Living Acts 2:44–45 and sharing our material goods can sometimes be a complicated issue, since there are many different factors in the equation that need to be taken into consideration, so the Home has to pray and seek the Lord about the decision together. It's really up to your Home to make the decision. But please keep in mind that the Lord will bless you and your Home if you apply the Law of Love in these matters as you seek to find the solution that is best for all—for the individual, those who gave the donation, the Home, and the overall work. The main factors in making such a decision are love and a sacrificial, giving attitude that prefers the needs of others more than your own.

Health and Hygiene Rules

In addition to these health and hygiene rules, there are many other guidelines and much counsel given in the Letters and other WS publications on the subject of healthy living. While those guidelines are not included here as rules, that counsel is extremely beneficial and should be read and researched, considered, and followed whenever applicable.

- A. Any Home that has a member with a fever or contagious disease must inform any other Homes involved before personnel moves or visits take place between their Homes. Homes reserve the right to deny permission for the member of another Home to visit on the grounds of sickness.**

Try to avoid spreading infectious diseases to other Homes. If members of your Home have a fever or a sickness that is infectious, it would be best to avoid visiting other Homes. Be prayerful and understanding in these matters, and if a Home asks you not to visit due to sickness in either their Home or yours, please comply graciously. Everyone doing his part to prevent the spread of contagious sickness goes a long way to show love and respect to other Homes and Family members.

If a non-Family person requests to come to your Home when someone in the Home has an infectious illness, you should tell him that a member of the Home is ill and suggest that it might be wiser to postpone the visit. If he still wants to come, you can accommodate the request if you wish, but at least you have informed him of the illness.

- B. A Family disciple who may have contracted a sexually transmitted disease (STD) should counsel with the Home's steering council, be tested accordingly, and should refrain from sexual acts until cleared by the appropriate testing.**

- 1. A member who has had herpes, either HSV-1 (fever blisters or cold sores) or HSV-2 (genital herpes) must inform his or her partner before engaging in a sexual act that he or she has had either cold sores and/or genital herpes.**
 - a. Herpes-free people may choose not to use a condom while having intercourse with a partner who has had genital herpes. If the herpes-free person wishes to engage in sexual acts with another herpes-free person within two months after this, he or she must inform the new partner of the unprotected sex with a previous partner who has had herpes.**
 - b. Mated members should agree together before one of them engages in sexual interaction with another partner who has had herpes, either genital herpes, or fever blisters, or cold sores.**

Fever blisters and cold sores (HSV-1) are blisters that appear on or near the lips that become crusty and develop scabs. These herpes blisters are different from canker sores, which are usually inside the mouth, and other sores or discoloration on the lips that are not herpes related.

If two partners are engaging in sexual acts and one has had a herpes outbreak and the other hasn't, they may, if they choose, use a condom as a means of protection during sexual intercourse. If you have been completely healed of herpes—that is, you haven't had an outbreak of herpes in a number of years—it is still required that you inform your partner that you have previously had herpes; and it is still the prerogative of the other person to ask that you use a condom if engaging in sexual intercourse.

- C. A Family disciple who has contracted hepatitis C or B must:**

- 1. Get a yearly blood test to monitor the virus' activity.**
- 2. Inform any Home he or she plans to move to that he or she has hepatitis. The Home reserves the right to deny permission for the member to move to the Home on the grounds of his hepatitis.**

The risk of HCV or HBV transmission is generally very low when certain precautions are being taken. It's important to not share personal items such as toothbrushes or toothbrush cups, razors, dental floss, and similar items of personal hygiene. An infected person can lead a normal life and does not need to feel different than any other member of the household.

Other than noting the symptoms, which could be mistaken to be something flu-like, it's not always easy to know whether the hepatitis virus may have become active. A blood test is the only reliable way to know, and it is recommended that a Family person with HCV or HBV get yearly blood tests. It is advisable that the member's mate also be tested.

When someone has been diagnosed with chronic hepatitis and the case is dormant, there should be little reason for him to alter his lifestyle. There's often a prolonged latent or inactive period and during this time, which may last 20 years or longer, individuals with hepatitis generally do not experience symptoms or feel ill. However in some cases the virus continues to multiply to the point that in time liver problems become apparent—which is generally referred to as the active stage. The risk of transmission is equal whether the disease is dormant or active.

The risk of transmission through saliva or protected sexual intercourse is virtually non-existent, but it is important that caution be taken that there is no contact with the blood of a HCV- or HBV-infected person with the blood of another person, through a cut, scratch, abrasion etc. Those who have the virus should cover any cuts carefully, not have unprotected sex, except with their mate, if the mate agrees to it and they get a confirmation from the Lord. The mate in that case should also not have unprotected sex with others.

For some people with hepatitis the only treatment needed may be to eat a nutritious diet, avoid alcohol, caffeine, oily and fried foods, as well as foods high in protein, which are hard on the liver to process. A diet rich in fruits, fruit juices, and vegetables is recommended along with moderate and regular exercise, even though one of the symptoms of hepatitis is a feeling of fatigue.

- 3. Inform his or her partner before engaging in sexual acts, that he or she has hepatitis.**
 - a. A condom must be used while engaging in sexual intercourse, unless with his or her mate.**
 - b. The mate of a member who has contracted hepatitis must inform a prospective partner that his or her mate has hepatitis before engaging in sexual acts.**
 - c. Mated members should agree together before one of them engages in sexual acts with another partner who has contracted hepatitis. They must also use a condom.**

Anyone with hepatitis should inform any potential sharing partners that he or she carries the virus. The one with hepatitis must act completely on the faith of the non-infected party as to whether to have sex at all and how far, and, unless engaging in sex with his or her mate, if they have sexual intercourse the man must use a condom.

If an infected person and mate have unprotected sex, the infected person's mate must notify a potential sharing partner that he or she shares unprotected with a hepatitis-infected person. The partners must get a confirmation from the Lord before sharing and use a condom while doing so.

- D. A prospective new member, a Missionary or Fellow member, or a former Family member 16 years and older applying to join a Family discipleship Home must, before moving into the Home:**

- 1. Test negative for HIV.**
 - a. All members of a Missionary member Home upon becoming a provisional Family discipleship Home must, in accordance with the "[Procedure for a Missionary Member Home Becoming a Family Discipleship Home](#)" test negative for HIV and send a letter to the shepherding desk stating that.**

- 2. Report the state of his or her health and medical condition to the Home and confirm whether he or she is free from contagious disease.**
 - a. A provisional disciple must be tested for hepatitis C and B.**
 - i. If the provisional disciple tests positive for either hepatitis C or B, he or she can only be voted into the Home by a two-thirds majority of the Home council, with a confirmation from the Lord in prophecy.**
 - ii. The prospective disciple must agree to abide by clause D in these rules.**
 - iii. The Home should inform the shepherding desk that the prospective disciple has hepatitis C or B.**

A prospective disciple must report the state of his health and medical condition to the Home. Some might have a disease that would seriously hinder their ability to actively serve the Lord as a disciple, and it might be best that they not join a Family discipleship Home. The final decision would rest with the Home.

This would include knowing whether the prospective member has contracted hepatitis C (HCV) or B (HBV), in which case he may join the Family as long as a two-thirds majority of the Home council agrees, the Lord confirms it in prophecy, and if in all other ways the person is fit to be a Family disciple.

- E. A provisional disciple 16 years and older must refrain from sexual contact or acts with another Family disciple, except with his or her mate, for the first six months of joining a Family Discipleship Home and until:**
 - 1. Cleared by a second HIV test six months after taking the first HIV test.**
 - a. A written statement, signed by the provisional disciple and witnessed by a member of the steering council, must be sent to the regional desk declaring the outcome of the second HIV test.**
 - b. If a 14- to 15-year-old joining the Family discipleship Home with his or her parents may have engaged in sexual contact or acts the teen must be cleared by two HIV tests taken six months apart.**
 - i. If for some reason the parents don't want their 14- to 15-year-old to take an HIV test, or due to the sensitivity of the country the teen cannot be HIV tested, the teen must abstain from any dating permitted to 14- to 15-year-olds, and upon turning 16 be cleared by two HIV tests six months apart before engaging in any sexual contact or acts.**
 - 2. Tested for sexually transmitted disease according to advice from the Home's steering council.**

The provisional disciple should be tested for STDs to make sure that he is free from them. A new member cannot have sex during his first six months in the Home and should be tested for STDs before finishing his first six months in the Home. Which STD tests and when to take the tests will be determined by the steering council of the Home he is joining.

In the case of herpes, the new member may, after six months, share with another Family disciple providing the proper precautions are taken as per clause B.1 in these rules.

- F. A Family disciple who gets a blood transfusion for any reason, using blood from someone who is not another Family disciple must not engage in sexual acts with another Family disciple, except his or her mate, until cleared by HIV testing six months after the transfusion.**
 - 1. A member that is mated may have sexual relations with his or her mate, if his or her mate agrees. The member's mate must also agree not to engage in sexual acts with others until his or her mate has tested negative for HIV at the end of six months.**

- a. A written statement, signed by the member and witnessed by a member of the steering council, must be sent to the regional desk declaring the outcome of the second HIV test.**

Home Life Rules

A. Homes should take precautions to keep their mailing and other address lists secure.

The names, mailing addresses, and telephone numbers of provisioning and other contacts are your private business and therefore should be kept safe and secure. It's very important to keep such files secure, and encrypted when possible, and/or in a safe place, so they will not be stolen or fall into the hands of our detractors or others.

B. Members must endeavor to protect the safety and security of their Home and other Homes.

- 1. Homes wishing to pub their street, PO box or email address, or their telephone number in any regional or World Services publication, must have a majority agreement of their Home to do so.**

See [LNF#260](#) for more details on this.

C. Selah trash is to be burned or shredded regularly.

D. Members must keep their personal legal papers in order and up to date.

Members need to make sure that they have copies of their legal documents available. It's wise to carry sufficient and appropriate identification with you when you're off the Home's property. What you would choose to carry would depend on where you live. In many places a driver's license or local identification card will suffice. In other places a photocopy of your passport would be enough. If you have to carry your actual passport, please make sure it is kept in a safe place, like in a money belt, or in a neck pouch inside your shirt.

In some countries carrying identification is not required by law; however, it is a good safety precaution to carry ID at all times when out.

E. The Home council decides, by a two-third majority, if any of its members may take secular employment or engage in business ventures, which Home members may do so, and what employment or business ventures may be engaged in.

A Home member may desire to take a secular job, engage in a business venture or collaboration in order to participate in or facilitate the Home's mission, or as a means of financial support. In such a case, the Home council will determine by a two-third majority if this may be acceptable. If a Home member wishes to engage in a business venture or take on a job that the Home doesn't want him to, the Home council's decision prevails, but the member may seek out another Home if he doesn't want to abide by the Home's decision.

F. Home members should prayerfully select the movies, books, websites, music, computer games, and other forms of media entertainment they view, read, listen to, or play, taking into account the nature of the material and its appropriateness for the target audience.

- 1. Responsibility for a child's or teen's input and entertainment falls to his or her parents, who are encouraged to set guidelines that teach responsibility and discernment until the child or teen is ready to start helping to make those decisions personally.**

The responsibility for making wise choices in regards to worldly input falls to the individual. Prior to engaging in some form of media entertainment, be reading a non-educational book, browsing the Internet,

watching a movie, listening to non-Family music, or playing a computer game, it's important to make sure the content is not such that it would be damaging to one's spirit. It is as well important to ask the Lord if it is okay to do so and whether He has any counsel regarding it.

If a Home would like to watch a film unitedly, it's recommended that the film first be "screened" in order to make sure it is appropriate for those who will be watching, particularly if the planned audience will include teens or children. While this may be an inconvenience, it will save time in the long run from having to deal with the negative repercussions that a bad movie could have.

There is an extremely wide spectrum of non-Family music, some of which is godly and edifying and much of which is not. Family members are expected to be prayerful and discerning when selecting the music they to listen to.

Like movies or music, books and websites are also spiritual food. Certainly not all books or websites are bad, but because so many are not good, care must be taken in the choice of reading material.

Computer games can likewise be time-wasters and contain material that is detrimental to one's spirit. As such, it is important to prayerfully select the computer games you play as well as the amount of time spent playing such games.

G. Members of the Home should avoid visiting any place on the Internet used as a forum for anti-Family sentiment.

H. A website or blog originating at a Home, group, or individual level that reflects on the Family by name by linking to an official Family website, by stating the individual's or Home's membership in the Family, or which posts Family literature must comply with the following guidelines:

- 1. The website or blog must be a good reflection of the Family and any material posted should be in line with the *Charter*.**
- 2. Any postings must not contain information regarding a Home or individual member, including email or postal addresses, phone numbers, Home ministries, activities, or photos without that Home's or person's specific permission.**
- 3. Before posting or discussing information or details concerning upcoming area activities, the person posting must obtain permission from those conducting the activities.**
- 4. The Home council must be generally aware of the content on a website or blog created by a member of the Home and be in agreement with the member creating and/or administering the website or blog from the Home.**

The Internet has become a household reality and portends to grow in its scope and use. The number of websites, including personal blogs, created by Family members has also grown and some have become an uplifting place for Family members to go to for fellowship and/or news. Many of these websites have become a tremendous witness and, if well presented and maintained, can be powerful tools in helping our Homes and in promoting the good name of the Family.

Due to the fact that the Internet is within the public domain, and websites or blogs created by Family members or Homes can be accessed by anyone, they should reflect the Word and be in keeping with Family policy and beliefs, and present a positive testimony of your faith and our Family lifestyle, in order to be a witness to anyone who may visit it.

You should check with your Home shepherds if you have something you would like to post on your personal website or blog, but are unsure whether it is appropriate. Mama said, "Once something gets 'put out there' for others to see, it enters the same realm as conversations with others, and in some cases even public statements. If someone is broadcasting their viewpoints, and those viewpoints and opinions aren't in line with the Word, then they need shepherding, simple as that. It applies just as much to blogs and Internet postings as it does to conversations, letters, or any other area of your lives in which you can convey thoughts and feelings to one another.

"The Family and Family members are on stage almost continuously, and what's spoken in secret will at some time be shouted from the rooftops. Everything you say or do will be observed and judged by others, so what you say, do, or write as a Family member will reflect on the Family and others in the Family. A witness, a disciple, will always have that in mind. They will be conscious of their effect on others, and out of their love

for others and their love for Me, they will want their words and actions, whether in a question or as a statement, to be a vehicle to draw others closer to Me and to true freedom of spirit" (ML #3592:72).

I. Those turning 18 years of age, after personal prayer and consideration about whether they choose to remain in the Family, would need to sign the "Family Discipleship Contract" and send it to their regional desk, after which they are then eligible to vote on Home financial matters.

1. Those who decide not to sign the "Family Discipleship Contract" within 30 days of turning 18 years old will lose their Family discipleship and should begin the process of joining another circle of Family membership.

See also "[Responsibilities of a Family Discipleship Home](#)" regarding non-Family disciples living in an FD Home.

J. Homes or members of the Home may not share their Family "Members Only" website login ID or password with those who are not members of their Home.

The pubs, news, photos, and information available on the MO site is available to all Family Homes and members. However, in order to restrict access to only those who are eligible to log on to the site, it is required that each Home have their own access for use by their members.

As an added precaution, the Home should also regularly change their MO website password.

A member from another Home can either read the downloaded online GNs they are eligible for while in your Home, or take a printed or file copy of an online GN they are eligible for with them.

Home Meetings and Activities

A Family discipleship Home:

A. Devotes one day each month to prayer, praise, and thanksgiving.

- 1. Instead of designating one full day as your monthly prayer day, the Home may prefer two half days during the month.**

Mama said, "We would like to encourage you to start having a Prayer Day on a monthly basis, preferably on a regular workday instead of a rest day or family day. I'm afraid if we don't take time to pray, who knows what losses we're going to sustain just because we don't take that extra time. The time we put into prayer instead of work will count much more in the long run" (LNF #164). We suggest that your Home also take time on this day to hear from the Lord for any needed direction, counsel or words of encouragement that He may have for you.

B. Holds sufficient Home council meetings to discuss the needs of the Home and its members.

- 1. A simple majority of the Home's voting members must be present at Home council meetings.**
- 2. In accordance with the "[Rights of an Individual Family Disciple Within the Home](#)" a topic presented by a Home member to discuss must be brought before the Home council within 15 days.**

a. The Home council has the option to vote to postpone discussion of the point.

Regardless of how the Home chooses to organize their Home councils, the Home's steering council is accountable to ascertain and prioritize what needs to be covered and then to discuss and pray about those topics during their Home council meetings.

Home members may at any time bring up matters on any topic, including those relating to a board pillar, for the Home council to discuss and have them addressed within 15 days, unless the Home council votes to postpone the discussion.

- 3. It is recommended that a Home meets monthly to discuss Home financial matters.**

See "[Responsibilities of a Family Discipleship Home Regarding Financial Matters](#)" concerning keeping the Home informed of the financial state of the Home. If the Home chooses not to have a Home meeting to discuss financial matters, Home members should still be informed via some other means.

- 4. Any Home member who does not have Home voting rights, including new disciples, younger teens, or those on Home censure or probationary status may attend an appropriate Home meeting as nonvoting members with the agreement of the steering council.**

C. Provides for all children ages 13-years-old and younger a minimum of one hour of parent time at least 5 times per week, with their parents or guardians, or with a qualified adult if the parents or guardians are away from the Home.

Children need to spend time with their parents, and so must have at least one hour of parent time five times per week. Although we feel it's best that they have it daily, we don't want to be unrealistic by demanding it seven nights a week, which may not be practical. If the parents or guardians are not in the Home for a number of days, they or the Home should assign someone to have parent time with their children. They should take the children's wishes into account when assigning an adult to be with them during parent time.

- D. Provides for all children ages 9- to 11-years-old a minimum of one hour of personal time, which could include personal Word time, every two weeks with a parent or teacher or competent adult, and could be comprised of other members of their age group.**
- E. Provides for all teens ages 12- to 17-years-old a minimum of one hour of personal time every two weeks, or participate in a one-hour weekly open forum discussion comprising of other members of their age group.**

- 1. Personal time may be conducted by a shepherd, Teen counselor, parent, or other competent adult.**

Anything shared within personal time talks should be treated as confidential information within those who shepherd and parent the teens and should not be unnecessarily shared with others. Teens ages 12- to 17-years-old may put forth suggestions as to whom they would prefer to have personal time with. It may not always work out for them to be with the person they choose, but as much as possible the Home should try to comply with their wishes.

Mama said, "Besides the common problems that all children experience, most children are bound to have special problems, individual fears, and individual worries at some time.—And taking personal time with them is the only way that I know of to let the kids really unburden their hearts, and for you to see where they're at so you can effectively address their problems. How else can you do that, but by spending time with them? If you're going to get good results with your children and really help them get over their problems, you're simply going to have to make such time with them. All children need somebody special to be close to and occasions upon which they can pour out their hearts to someone who will patiently hear them out" (ML #2631:10, 26).

- 2. Each individual age group, from older children to senior teens, should vote on whether their group prefers open forums, or personal time, or some combination thereof.**
- 3. Teens ages 14- to 17-years-old should vote by age group on the topics to be discussed in their age group's open forum and must inform the Home shepherds of their decision.**
- 4. Teens ages 14- to 17-years-old should vote by age groups for those whom they feel are best qualified to lead the discussion and must inform the Home shepherds of their decision.**
- 5. If the Home shepherds have an objection to either the topic or the person chosen to lead the discussion, they should endeavor to settle the matter with the age group that chose the topic or person. If the matter cannot be settled through counsel and prayer, it should be decided by a two-thirds majority of the Home council.**

The teens can vote for who they would like to head the discussion, and they must inform the Home shepherds of their decision. If the Home shepherds have an objection to either the topic or the person chosen to lead the discussion, they may endeavor to settle the matter with the age group that chose the topic or person. This is not to bottle up the teens and make them only discuss things that the shepherds want them to discuss, but it is the shepherd's responsibility to shepherd the Home, and if the teens decide they want to have an open forum discussion that is inappropriate then the Home shepherds have the authority to object. Or if they feel the person that is chosen to head the meeting is not qualified to lead a discussion on a certain subject, they may object. In such a case, the Home shepherds should discuss their objections with the teens. If prayer and discussion can't settle the matter, then a two-thirds majority of the Home council should determine it.

Mama said, "In order to foster open communication in the Home among the adults and teens, and to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to express their feelings and to raise questions they feel need to be

addressed, each Home could have an open forum discussion in which adults and young people could participate, and each should feel the freedom to bring up any matters of concern on any subject they feel needs to be discussed, whether teen related or not, such as finances, scheduling, personnel, witnessing, persecution preparation, etc." (ML #2865:75).

- 6. Teens and children ages 9- to 13- years-old may put forth suggested topics for discussion in the open forums.**
 - 7. Some young people who participate in open forums may still need some personal time, so shepherds should put forth the effort to fulfill those needs.**
- F. Provides every member 18-years-old and above the opportunity to spend at least one hour per month of personal time with a Home shepherd or someone designated by the Home shepherds.**
- 1. The responsibility of adult personal time should be shared by all Home shepherds, or their designated representatives.**
 - 2. It is permissible to have personal time simultaneously with two adults together if they agree to this.**

It is important for the Home shepherds to have heart-to-heart communication with those in the Home. Therefore every member age 18 and over must have the opportunity to spend personal time with a Home shepherd, or someone the Home shepherd designates. The adult's preference of whom he or she wishes to have personal time with should be taken into consideration, though it may not always work out. Matters discussed in personal time should be treated as confidential information by the Home shepherds and should not be unnecessarily shared with others outside the circle of Home shepherds.

The Home shepherds don't have to divide adult personal time equally amongst themselves, but they all should be involved. The personal time does not have to be in one consecutive hour slot, but if necessary can be divided up into two or more sessions. If those involved are in agreement, then the shepherd can have personal time simultaneously with two people instead of one.

- G. Provides a minimum of two family days per month, though weekly is recommended, during which children and their parents or guardians spend the day together.**

Family days are a vital part of our Homes and are therefore required. It's best to have them on a weekly basis, but requiring it weekly could be unrealistic and may hamper road trips or other Home activities that last more than six days.

Home Size Rules

Note: See "[News flash: Pause on enforcing the minimum Home size/Homes changing status](#)" on the Change Program site for an important update to these "Home Size Rules."

A. Minimum Size: A Family discipleship Home consists of six or more voting members 18 years and older, who have signed the "[Family Discipleship Contract](#)" and are residing together.

To qualify for minimum Home size, a Family discipleship Home must have six voting members 18 years of age or older who have been in the discipleship Family for at least six months and who have signed the "[Family Discipleship Contract](#)."

1. Homes with members under 18 years of age must have at least two resident members over 25 years of age, unless the underage members are living with their parents, spouse, or sibling who are 18 years or older.

a. The shepherding desk may grant permission for a member under 18 to live in a Home even if the Home does not have two members over 25 years of age.

The young child of say a 22-year-old adult couple may live in a Home with other YAs without any 25-year-olds needing to be present. However, other than small children living with their young parents, or teens receiving permission to live with an older sibling, if there are not two people in a Home who are at least 25 there shouldn't be members younger than 18 without an SD exception to this rule. As with the few other restrictions on the 16- to 17-year-old age group, this rule is mainly for legal reasons. Refer to the "[Procedure for Using the Right of Mobility](#)" for details on permission necessary for teens joining other Homes.

2. If members leaving a Home result in the Home falling below the minimum Home size of six, but not less than two voting members 18 years or older, the Home may retain Family discipleship providing their fourth monthly report after they reported a drop in their numbers shows a population of at least six voting members 18 and above.

It may happen where a Home temporarily falls below the minimum Home size of six voting members 18 years or older. Regardless of the circumstances an FD Home can't have less than two Home members even temporarily. If it comes to that the Home must be closed down and its members move to other Homes.

a. If the Home has not reached the six voting member minimum after four months, it will be placed on probationary notice in accordance with the "[Procedure for Placing a Family Discipleship Home on Probationary Notice](#)." Home members will not lose their right of mobility.

If your Home is repeatedly going under the minimum Home size and then receives new members just in time to retain their Family discipleship, it will count against your Home at Home review, as it is an indication that your Home is not working together to build a winning team. To have a winning team and a stable work a Home needs to have enough members in the Home to allow for an inevitable fluctuation in personnel, but still remain above the minimum of six voting members 18 years or older.

3. If a Home member receives a simple majority of the Home council he may be away from the Home for up to 30 days at a time.

- a. A Home member who plans to be away from the Home for longer than 30 days must receive a two-thirds majority approval from the Home council.**
- b. A Home member who stays in another Family Home for more than 60 days will be considered a member of the Home they are staying in and must be reported as such on that Home's eTRF.**

If a Home is going to have a winning team, its members must work together to build their work and fulfill the Home's goals. It is spiritually weakening for individuals to be alone and away from the Home for extended periods of time, nor does it augment the building a local work or lend itself to a spirit of communal living. If Home members are away for extended periods of time, even for witnessing or other reasons, it weakens both the individual and the rest of the Home by making it difficult to truly live Act 2:44–45 and build a solid local work. If the Home allows its members to be away for long periods of time it most likely will not be able to fulfill its discipleship responsibilities and so may not be able to remain a Family discipleship Home.

At times there are understandable reasons for members to be away from Home for periods of time, such as while attending board seminars, camps, charity projects, witnessing trips, or shepherds on Home visitation. There will also be times that Home members will need to be away from the Home for such things as personal or Home business, visits to relatives, or medical reasons.

See also "[World Services Reporting Rules](#)."

- 4. When opening a new Home, a team of four voting members 18 years or older can function as a Family discipleship Home for their first four months before they are required to reach the minimum Home size of six voting members 18 years or older.**
 - a. If the new Home has not reached the six voting member minimum after four months the Home will be placed on probationary notice in accordance with the "[Procedure for Placing a Family Discipleship Home on Probationary Notice](#)." Home members will not lose their right of mobility.**
- 5. When opening a pioneer Family discipleship Home, a team of four voting members 18 years or older can function as a Family discipleship Home for their first six months before they are required to reach the minimum Home size of six voting members 18 years or older.**
 - a. Pioneer Home status must be applied for and be granted by the regional shepherds before the end of the new Home's fourth month as a Home.**

The Home must apply in writing to their RSs for pioneer Home status. See "[Definition of a Family Discipleship Pioneer Home](#)" for how to qualify as a pioneer Home.

- b. If the pioneer Home has not reached the six voting member minimum after six months the Home will be placed on probationary notice in accordance with the "[Procedure for Placing a Family Discipleship Home on Probationary Notice](#)." Home members will not lose their right of mobility.**

Extending the grace period to six months for the Home to reach minimum size will make it easier for teams to launch out to pioneer. But after six months, a pioneer team must have increased its population to six members 18 years or older or risk reclassification.

- 6. The regional council may grant permission for teams of two or three voting members 18 years or older to open a new Home. Such Homes will still need to bring their membership up to six voting member minimum within their first four or six months, depending on whether the Home is accepted as a pioneer Home.**
- B. Maximum size: A Home must not consist of more than 35 total members, unless it is a Service Home.**
- 1. A Service Home must not consist of more than 45 total members, unless approved by the regional shepherds.**
 - 2. If a Home exceeds the maximum personnel limit the Home will be placed on probationary notice in accordance with the "[Procedure for Placing a Family](#)**

Discipleship Home on Probationary Notice.” Home members will not lose their right of mobility.

This means that a Home expanding to over 35 members, or 45 in the case of a Service Home, is required to split into two separate Homes.

Something to keep in mind when judging the population of your Home is the ratio between the amount of personnel and the available rooms in the house. Your house should be big enough to comfortably house those in the Home. When pioneering or finding a new house be sure it is large enough for everyone in the Home to be comfortable and not overcrowded. Everyone should have a bed in a bedroom. Couples should have their own rooms; singles should at least have a room with other singles. No one should have to sleep on a mattress on the floor unless it's an emergency, your Home is in the early stages of pioneering a work, or it's local custom. If members of your Home don't have their own beds and places to put their things, then there are too many people or your house is too small for the amount of people you have and you need to find bigger housing.

Marital Separation Rules for Couples with Children

- A. Once a couple with children has determined that they will separate, they:**
- 1. Must reach a mutual agreement regarding the custody of the children from the marriage, taking into account the children's preferences and best interests.**
 - a. The separating couples should consider legalizing the child custody agreement by obtaining a legal divorce.**
 - b. If the couple does not wish to obtain a legal divorce, a written agreement, stating that the marriage is dissolved and giving details of the custody of the children, must be signed by both parties and two witnesses, using full legal names. Each party should retain a signed and notarized copy of the document.**
 - i. A copy of the signed agreement must be sent to their regional desk.**

Marriage Rules

Marriage, according to the Scriptures, is the union of a man and a woman, as husband and wife. Members may freely marry within the Family providing they do so in accordance with the rules listed below. Those who marry enter into a covenant together between themselves and the Lord, committing themselves to love, care, and be responsible for one another and their children, in a Christ centered union that glorifies God. Those who enter into such a covenant or contract should do so with the commitment that they will remain married and continue to function together as a married couple permanently. Nevertheless, there may be times when it becomes evident that a marital union is no longer glorifying God and is proving detrimental to children of the marriage, or in extraordinary circumstances one of the partners is called by God to a new direction in their work for Him. In such a case, the partners may wish to dissolve the marriage in accordance with the "[Marital Separation Rules for Couples with Children](#)."

Besides accepting Jesus as their Savior, getting married is probably one of the most important decisions a person will make. Before a couple marries, they should determine in their hearts before the Lord and express one to another that they are committed to one another permanently, unless or until the Lord shall call them to be apart.

The commitment of marriage is a commitment to love and a commitment to the responsibilities of love.— That responsibility to love and care for your partner in good times and bad, in sickness and in health, even if your emotional attachment lessens over the years. Marriage requires God's love, that ever enduring love that forgives, that overcomes bitterness, familiarity and failure, love that carries us through life's difficulties and keeps on loving.

Marriage is supposed to be for life, except for the most unusual circumstances, truly desperate and/or Scriptural exceptions! Everything humanly possible should be done to keep couples together, both for their sake as well as for the sake of the children and the work of God! (ML #154:78.)

Of course, there are relationship arrangements other than marriage. A man and woman may love one another and decide to room together, with the understanding that it is not a marriage but instead is a temporary union, which is their prerogative.

A. Two voting members wishing to marry must declare their intention to do so, to the Home's steering council, and then to the voting members of the Home. Once such a public declaration is made, the couple's engaged to marry begins. The period of engagement is to be not less than 90 days before the marriage.

- 1. Prior to their engagement, couples should get to know each other well in order to ascertain their compatibility.**
- 2. During their engagement, it is advisable for the couple to live in the same Home, to regularly spend time together in prayer, spiritual fellowship and interaction. The couple may room together, if they choose, for all or part of their engagement period, if they are within the same age group for sexual sharing, as per the "[Sex and Affection Rules](#)."**
- 3. It is recommended that at some time before the marriage the Home prays and hears from the Lord for the engaged couple, and a transcript of the prophecies given to the couple.**
- 4. If the couple decides at any time to end the engagement, they may do so. The Home must be informed that the engagement has ended.**

5. Once the period of engagement is completed and the couple decides they want to marry, the Home should hold a simple ceremony to acknowledge that the couple is now married. Couples are of course free to legalize their marriage.

In order to declare their intentions, and to ensure that there are no misunderstandings within the Home, two people who have decided they want to get married should first announce their decision to their steering council and then to all the voting members. This way everyone in the Home is aware that they have become engaged to marry and that they are officially entering an engagement period.

Since there have been a number of questions in regards to the terminology, whether this period should be called "Make It Work" or "going steady," etc., we felt that calling it an "engagement period" would wipe the slate clean from any preconceived notions that the Family has had.

Prior to the actual engagement, couples should get to know each other well, and only make their engagement declaration when they are quite serious about the matter and are pretty sure they want to marry. Engagement is an actual commitment to marry, but it allows a contemplative period of at least three months for the couple to seriously seek the Lord and to determine that it is definitely the Lord's will for them to marry. Of course, at any time after the engagement period begins, if either member concludes that it is not God's will they can call off the engagement.

The period of engagement must last for at least three months, and once the engagement period is over, the couple is free to marry.—This doesn't mean that the couple must get married after the three months expire; they can marry at any time after the engagement period is completed. It's up to them.

During the engagement period, the couple should regularly seek the Lord and read His Word together in order to build a spiritual foundation on which to base their marriage. They should read Letters on the subject of marriage and appropriate portions of other publications such as "Marvelous Marriage" and "How to Love." They should also seek counsel from their Home shepherds as to whether they feel that the potential marriage is of the Lord. They should also ask the Home to pray and hear from the Lord regarding the marriage. Having direct words from the Lord in prophecy is a great blessing, especially to refer to later when the marriage encounters difficult days. At such a time, having prophecies, visions or verses to look back on can provide a spiritual anchor for the marriage.

During the period of engagement it would be advisable for the couple to live in the same Home, though we cannot say they definitely must do so, as there may be some situations where this might not be possible. But regardless of where they live, they should try to regularly spend time together for prayer, reading of the Word, and spiritual interaction. The degree of interaction is up to the couple. Some couples, age permitting, may prefer to room together for their period of engagement; others may choose not to.

If either of those engaged already have children from a previous marriage, they would probably want to inform the children ahead of time about their plans to marry. Such changes can be difficult on children, and sometimes it's only when one of their parents decides to remarry that they fully come to grips with the fact that their parents are permanently separated. When children are involved, a lot of love, patience and explanation are necessary. The couple may decide that it's best not to move in together before they marry if they feel it will be difficult for the children.

If at some time an engaged couple decide that they don't want to marry, the Home should be informed of the decision.

B. Once the engagement begins, the steering council must inform the shepherding desk of the couple's engagement.

1. If the Home or shepherding desk have reservations about, or object to, the proposed marriage, it is their duty to express their reservations or objections to the couple, either as a couple or individually.

Although the Home shepherds have no authority to keep a couple from being married, it is certainly within their authority to offer advice and counsel on the matter. This especially holds true if they have reservations about or object to the marriage, in which case they are responsible to express their reservations or objections. But the final decision is, of course, up to the couple themselves.

In the case of a YA marriage, if their parents don't feel it's the best match or have objections, they should voice them to the couple; but since the two people involved are of legal age, the parents have no authority to forbid the marriage.

C. Members who have reached the age of 21 may not marry anyone under the age of 18.

We include this clause because, while it's possible for an 18- to 20-year-old to marry a 16- to 17-year-old, someone who is 21 or older cannot marry someone who is under 18. So a 23-year-old cannot marry a 16- to 17-year-old. If they want to marry, the couple will just have to wait until the younger one reaches 18.

D. Members who have reached the age of 18 who wish to marry someone above the permissible age range for sexual activity as outlined in the “Sex and Affection Rules” may do so providing they:

- 1. Enter into a six-month period of engagement.**
- 2. Live in the same Home, but not room together, during the first three months of their engagement.**
- 3. Refrain from sexual activity during the first three months of the engagement that involves the skin to skin touching of each other’s genitals.**

There are times an 18- to 20-year-old may fall in love with someone who is considerably older and may wish to marry them. In most countries, 18-year-olds are of legal age for marrying. In order to leave the door open for such a marriage, this clause has been included.

The restrictions placed on such marriages—namely, the period of engagement being at least six months, living in the same Home during the engagement, and refraining from serious sexual activity for the first three months—will hopefully deter any YA and older adult from getting involved for just sex.

Just the fact that there are some basic restrictions in place for this age group, as for the 16- and 17 - year-old marriages (see points following), shows that we consider it to be out of the ordinary and something that would need to be handled slowly and prayerfully.

E. Members ages 16 and 17 may marry those ages 16 through 20, providing they each receive permission from at least one parent.

- 1. They should receive permission from a parent before beginning the engagement period.**

Because 16- and 17 -year-olds are still fairly young and are considered minors in some countries, they must receive permission from a parent prior to the onset of their engagement.

- a. If neither parent of a 16- to 17-year-old resides in the same Home with their teen who wishes to marry, the Home’s shepherds have the authority to override the teen’s parents’ permission for the marriage.**

We’ve included this clause to cover a scenario similar to the following: A 16-year-old teen’s parents live in Japan and he, their teen son, has moved to Brazil. He joins a Home and falls in love with a girl in the Home. The girl is 17 and her parents live in that Home. The 16-year-old boy and the 17-year-old girl decide that they want to get married. The parents of the girl think it’s fine; however, the Home shepherds feels that the couple is not suited and the marriage is a recipe for disaster. In the meantime, the teen boy writes his parents and states that he’s madly in love with this girl and he thinks she’s definitely the woman for him, and the parents, without knowing much about the situation, having heard only their son’s side of things, write and say, “Okay, you have our permission.”

Because the Home shepherds feel that the marriage may not be a good union, and they have major objections to it, they can override the permission of the absentee parents, because the absentee parents are not there to personally judge the situation. If the teens get married and the marriage has problems, the Home in which they are residing is going to have to be the one to take care of the problems, so the Home shepherds should have a say in the matter.

Now if the situation were a bit different, and at least one of the parents of the 16-year-old boy were living in the Home in Brazil, the marriage could go forward even if the Home shepherds didn’t think it was a good idea, because parents of both teens are resident in the Home and both are in agreement to their teens marrying. So the Home teamwork only has the authority to stop the marriage if either of the teens do not have a parent living in the Home.

This authority only applies to senior teens wishing to marry. Once a young person is 18 years of age or older, marriage is entirely their decision, and no one can prohibit them from getting married.

- 2. Enter into a six-month engagement.**
- 3. After their six-month engagement period is completed, obtain final permission from their parent(s) to marry.**

In order to help two senior teens who may feel they are deeply in love—but who may in reality only be very infatuated with one another—from getting married too quickly, there are additional safeguards.

First, any teens under 18 years of age must have at least one parent's permission to begin an engagement period. Second, the engagement period has been doubled, to six months instead of just three. Hopefully this additional time will give the Lord time to fully show the young couple His will in the matter. And third, the teens must get their parents' final approval at the end of the six months before actually marrying. If the parents withdraw their consent, the marriage cannot go through, so must at least be postponed.

During their engagement, the 16- to 17-year-old couple is allowed to have the same sexual interaction as permitted for all other 16- and 17-year-olds.

Of course, becoming engaged in the first place is contingent on whether the 16- to 17-year-old has at least one of his or her parent's permission. If at least one of the 16- to 17-year-old teen's parents don't agree, then a teen under 18 years of age cannot become engaged to be married.

Outreach Rules

A. All Home members 16 years of age and above must witness outside of the Home a minimum of two hours per week or eight hours per month, health permitting.

1. The regional shepherds may give exceptions to this rule in the case of behind the scenes Homes, or for individuals who are actively engaged in some form of witnessing within the Home, for at least the equivalent number of hours.

Both individuals and Homes are to engage in evangelism. Witnessing is what we are here for, it is one of the major goals of the Family. In order to ensure that we are fulfilling this responsibility, it is a rule that we all seek to meet a minimum requirement for getting out witnessing on a regular basis. Although witnessing should be encouraged for all ages, Homes are required to get all their voting members out witnessing at least two hours per week or eight hours per month.

Because children of all ages enjoy and benefit from witnessing, and it is part of their missionary training, we strongly recommend that all children have an opportunity to go out witnessing whenever practical. Families can go out witnessing together, for example, giving out tracts in the park, taking the children along for follow-up appointments, etc. However, children cannot be forced to go out witnessing against their will, which is why we've set the minimum age in this clause to 16.

This mandatory witnessing requirement also applies to all. Due to the nature of the responsibilities of regional shepherds, they are not required to engage in outreach but they are encouraged to personal witness when possible.

The primary and first ministry of all of us is reaching the lost and reaching the people who need the Message! (ML #951:11).

Prophecy Rules

A. Family members have the final decision as to whether or not to implement the guidance given to them through prophecies received, either by themselves or through others, which will affect their lives or the lives of their children.

Using the gift of prophecy to help find the Lord's will is a great blessing. As with all prophecies, what the Lord says in prophecy to those seeking guidance in personal matters should be prayerfully interpreted. Whether or not to implement what the Lord has shown is completely up to the individual(s) the prophecies were given for.

Mama, our "Winetaster," has approved all prophecies that appear in a WS publication. WS leadership believes and supports and follows the prophecies they send out in the pubs as the Word of God, and encourage all Family members to also believe, support and follow them to the best of their ability and according to their faith.

B. A Home policy or decision that is given in or confirmed by prophecy, must be voted upon and agreed to by the Home's voting members, just like other Home policies or decisions.

Before implementing a major directional prophecy received for your Home, the voting members must be convinced that it is the Lord's will. The decision would require a simple majority unless it's a financial matter or other decision which the Charter requires a two-third majority vote on. If such a matter brings about some confusion or conflict within the Home, the Home should seek the Lord for further confirmation. If further prayer and discussion together and a Home vote can't sort it out, the prophecy should be passed on to your regional shepherds for their judgment.

1. Family members or Homes must not implement any prophecies that they receive which contradict the *Charter* unless they have first obtained World Services Leadership permission to do so.

If, for instance, a Home receives a prophecy that they are to increase the membership of their Home to 100 members, or if a Family disciple received a prophecy that they were supposed to have sex with a non-Charter Member, they must first obtain WS leadership permission before doing so, since this would be contravening the Charter.

2. Any new revelatory or directional prophecy received by a Family member must be approved by Mama and Peter and officially and expressly disseminated by World Services as such before it would be considered a fundamental Family belief, in accordance with the "[Authority of World Services Leadership](#)."

Any major changes in our Family rules or beliefs will be presented and confirmed in the GNs by Mama, our "Winetaster." (See "Three Gifts of the Lord's Love!," ML# 3005:106-129, GN 647, Lifelines 22.)

C. Have the final decision as to whether or not to implement the guidance given to them through prophecies received, either by themselves or through others, which will affect their lives or the lives of their children.

If a prophecy is given for a voting member or their children, the decision to implement or not implement the prophecy is completely up to them.

The member should seek the counsel of others who are gifted in interpreting prophecy, when trying to find the meaning of the prophecy. Both the person and those helping with the interpretation should set aside

their own opinions, desires and plans and be open to what the Lord has said, but ultimately the decision is up to the individual(s).

Using the gift of prophecy to help find the Lord's will is a great blessing. As with all prophecies, prophecies received for those seeking guidance should be prayerfully interpreted. Whether or not to implement what the Lord has shown is completely up to the individual(s) they were given for.

Before implementing the directions of a prophecy received by you or given to you through someone else, you must be convinced that it is the Lord's will for you, and test the prophecy against the other ways to know God's will. You should not let someone pressure you or coerce you through prophecy, or any other means, into doing something which you are not convinced is the Lord's will for you. The Lord expects each one to make the final choice as to what His will is for them.

Rules Governing Attached Missionary Membership to a Family Discipleship Home

The following concerns only Attached Missionary members (AMMs) reporting and tithing directly to a Family discipleship Home.

The *Missionary Member Statutes*, including the procedures for becoming a Missionary member and codes of conduct, apply to Attached Missionary members. The only differences between AMMs and MMs (who report as their own MM Home) are the rules below, which apply specifically to AMMs.

Because Attached Missionary members do not live in an MM or FD Home and are not a Home in themselves, those sections of the *Missionary Member Statutes* that specifically apply to a Home, do not apply to AMMs.

- A. A prospective member applying to become a new Attached Missionary member should follow the “[Procedure for a New Disciple Joining a Family Discipleship Home](#)” clauses C–G, or, if the individual is currently a Fellow member, “[Procedure for a Fellow Member Moving into a Family Discipleship Home](#).”**
 - 1. A current Family disciple or Missionary member may become an Attached Missionary member by finding a Home that will accept him as an Attached Missionary member.**
- B. All Attached Missionary members must report, tithe, appear on a Home’s eTRF, and fellowship with that Family discipleship or Missionary member Home monthly.**
 - 1. An Attached Missionary member is required to give his full 10% tithe to the Home monthly along with a report of his witnessing stats and activities for that month.**
 - a. The Home should report the member on its eTRF personnel roster as a Missionary member tithing to the Home.**
 - b. The Home should include the member’s stats on its eTRF, along with the witnessing stats of the other Home members.**
 - c. An Attached Missionary member is not required to give 3% of his income to the Common Pot or 1% to the FAF, and therefore is not eligible for FAF benefits, the Tool Fund Gift, nor automatically eligible for board services.**
 - 2. Failure by an Attached Missionary member to report and tithe to his Home for two consecutive months will automatically terminate his membership.**
 - a. In this case the Home should remove him from the Home’s eTRF personnel roster.**
 - b. The Home can later vote to reinstate an Attached Missionary member providing he is fulfilling the requirements of a Missionary member.**
 - 3. An Attached Missionary member is required to fellowship a minimum of once a month with the Home he is reporting to. If away for an extended period of time or in the**

case of unavoidable circumstances he should keep in touch with the Home via phone, mail, or email.

C. An Attached Missionary member may become his own Missionary member Home and tithe and report directly to World Services under the following circumstances:

1. He has been an Attached Missionary member for a minimum of one year.

a. The regional shepherds have the right to waive the one-year requirement.

An example where the RSs may waive the one-year requirement is if the Home that the Missionary member has been reporting to and working with moves to another city or country, or if an FD or MM becomes an AMM for a period of time, but then wants to report on his/her own as an MM Home.

D. All witnessing activities by an Attached Missionary member are under the auspices of the Home and are the responsibility of the Home, including:

1. If not in the same city as his Home an Attached Missionary member must obtain approval from the Family discipleship or Missionary member Homes in a city before conducting outreach in that city.

2. Supplying the Attached Missionary member with Family distribution products purchased from an authorized production center, unless the Home and the production center have a different agreed-upon arrangement.

E. An Attached Missionary member is eligible to receive all FD/MM/FM mailings from World Services and have Missionary member access to the Family Members Only website, and will have his own copy of mailings sent directly to him from World Services.

1. The Home which the Attached Missionary member is reporting to is required to send World Services a monthly mailing fee determined by World Services to cover the cost of the mailings to the Attached Missionary member.

a. If World Services does not receive the mailing fee for a particular month, mailings for the Attached Missionary member will not be sent for the following month.

2. In cases where it is not expedient for a Missionary member to receive World Services mailings at his own address, he may receive his mailings at the Home to which he reports.

3. Since an Attached Missionary member is not a Family Home, he will not be given a full Home library of older pubs, but he may keep copies of the mailings which he receives from World Services and have a copy of the InfoStore electronic library, which Missionary members are eligible for.

4. Since an Attached Missionary member is considered a member of the Home to which he reports, the Home may give or lend him copies of publications that he is eligible for.

Since AMMs receive their own mailings from WS, this usually wouldn't be necessary. But in the event of an AMM mailing getting lost in the mail or when there is a need to get FD/MM pubs that came out before the AMM began reporting as MM, the Home can give him copies of pubs he is eligible to receive.

F. An Attached Missionary member will receive shepherding from the Home he reports to. He is not automatically eligible for board services, but if he feels the need to contact or communicate with Family leadership above the Home, he may contact the regional desk directly.

G. An Attached Missionary member who would like to move into a Family Discipleship Home would follow the ["Procedure for a Missionary Member Moving into a Family Discipleship Home."](#)

H. If the Home the Attached Missionary member is reporting to will become a Fellow member Home, the Attached Missionary member has the following four options to choose from:

1. He may join a different Family discipleship or Missionary member Home as an Attached Missionary member, provided he is accepted by a two-thirds majority of the Home council.

– or –

2. If he has been an Attached Missionary member for at least one year, he may apply to the regional desk to become his own Missionary member Home.

a. If he has been an Attached Missionary member for less than one year, he may apply to the regional desk for an exception to become his own Missionary member Home.

– or –

3. He may report as his own Fellow member Home.

– or –

4. He may join the Home as a live-in Fellow member.

I. If it is determined that an Attached Missionary member has committed one of the "Offenses Warranting the Placing of a Missionary Member on Probation" in the *Missionary Member Statutes*, the "Procedure for Placing a Missionary Member on Probation" applies.

J. If it is determined that an Attached Missionary member has persistently or flagrantly disregarded the "Responsibilities of an Individual Missionary Member" or the "Missionary Member Rules" in the *Missionary Member Statutes* or for similar contravention of the "Offenses Warranting the Placing of a Missionary Member on Probation," the "Procedure for Revoking a Missionary Member's Family Membership" applies.

K. If it is determined that an Attached Missionary member has committed one of the "Offenses Warranting the Excommunication of a Missionary Member" in the *Missionary Member Statutes*, "Procedure for Excommunicating a Missionary Member" applies.

Sex and Affection Rules

A. The “Law of Love” is the governing principle for all adult sexual interaction. The basic tenet of the Law of Love in respect to sexual interaction is that actions are agreed upon by all the parties involved and precautions are taken so others are not hurt by their activities.

1. Members may only engage in sexual interaction that is mutually agreed upon by the partners and their mates or significant others, and is permitted for their age group.

The Law of Love is the godly principle by which our entire lives, as Christians, should be governed. Jesus summed it up very simply in the famous "Golden Rule," giving us the key to our relationships with others: "As you would that men should do to you, do you even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets," meaning that loving your neighbor as yourself fulfills God's laws. Ideally, this loving principle should guide all of our actions with others.

One aspect of the Law of Love that sets us apart from other churches is the freedom that we have to practice the Law of Love in our sexual interactions between consenting adults. The sexual freedoms the Lord has entrusted us with are a beautiful and fruitful part of our faith. Having the opportunity to share sexually within our Homes brings about a special level of unity and love.

Sharing sexually is a delicate matter since it deals with our emotions and the emotions of others. Because of this, the Law of Love also governs our sexual freedoms to ensure that others will not be hurt and that we will not be guilty of purposely or unwittingly hurting others. These “Sex and Affection Rules” are designed to help us live within those boundaries of the Law of Love.

The above clause stipulates that the parties involved must be in agreement with those engaging in any sexual interaction. An “involved party” would include the person’s mate or significant other. If a wife feels that a single brother in the Home may need sexual fellowship or if she has been asked by him to share sexually, then she would need the agreement of her mate or significant other, as he is an involved party; if he doesn’t agree, then she should not engage in it. Of course, according to the Law of Love the husband is encouraged to be open to sharing his wife with a brother in need. Likewise, the wife and the single brother should be loving enough to understand if the husband has difficulty with it.

In another case, let’s take a single woman and two single men in the Home. The single sister would like to share with one of the single brothers, but the other single brother happens to have intimate feelings for her and might feel somewhat jealous about this date taking place. In this case, however, the single woman does not need to get his consent or agreement because he is not an involved party. He has no say over what she does because he’s not her mate nor are they in a long-term or serious relationship, and therefore he does not need to be consulted.

However, you’ll notice that the second part of the above clause states that precautions must be taken so that others are not hurt by the activity. In this scenario, if the single woman and the single man are planning to have a date, they should be considerate of the single brother who has feelings for the girl and try as much as is possible not to hurt him.

We need to do all we can to avoid hurting others. Of course, sometimes people are hurt regardless of how lovingly we try to do things or the precautions we attempt to take. Let’s go back to the married couple spoken of before: the wife is planning to share with the single brother, and though the husband gave his agreement, it’s still possible that the husband might be hurt.—He might experience some jealousy, or generally find it difficult to share his wife with someone else. However if, because he believes in the Law of Love, he consents to be hurt, in a sense, by agreeing that his wife should share with a brother in need, then this is acceptable, and in fact, commendable. That’s the sacrificial side of the Law of Love and of sharing.

Of course, there may be times when the wife and the single brother might need to refrain in deference to the husband. This also is the sacrificial side of the Law of Love and might be the loving thing to do in a given situation.

Should the Home shepherds feel that a particular sexual relationship between Home members is hurting others in the Home or is causing problems, they should shepherd those involved and offer counsel in order to help solve the problem.

The application of the sexual aspect of the Law of Love is multifaceted and complicated. It is therefore important that all voting members thoroughly study the counsel given in the twelve-part series, "Living the Lord's Law of Love" (MLs #3201–3212). While we've included in this section those aspects of the Law of Love that are actual Charter rules, which should be kept at all times, there is an abundance of important counsel in this ML series which members should read, study, and apply according to their situation.

If someone does not want to share sexually, he or she should not be pressured to do so. If you desire to have a date with someone and that person does not wish to have a date with you, then you should not try to make this person feel that he or she is not being "sacrificial" or living according to the Law of Love. The flip side could be that perhaps you need to be more loving by being respectful of the other party's wishes, and more sacrificial by forgoing the date with that person.

B. No one may at any time pressure or in any way coerce a sexual partner to participate in any sexual interaction that he or she does not desire to engage in.

As explained earlier, sexual interaction may occur only if all parties are consenting. This covers the need for both partners to feel comfortable and in agreement with the type of sexual interaction they will engage in together.

1. Members should not engage in sexual intercourse unless both parties and their mates have discussed and agreed to doing so beforehand, as outlined in "Living the Lord's Law of Love, Part 4" (ML #3204).

C. A Family disciple single man has a mandatory responsibility towards any Family disciple single woman he impregnates, regardless of the circumstances that brought about the pregnancy, in accordance with the "20-Month Minimum Responsibility Guidelines."

The Lord says in "Living the Lord's Law of Love, Part 6" (ML #3206) that when a child results from the lovemaking of two single people, in most cases it is His will that the mother and father marry. However, if after having sought and heard from the Lord in prophecy and having received confirming prophecies from others, they are not sure that they should marry, or feel that it is not the Lord's will to marry, the man will be responsible to fulfill a mandatory minimum 20-month responsibility to the mother and child. The man will be responsible to help care for the mother physically, emotionally, and spiritually throughout her entire pregnancy, and then help to care for her and the baby until he or she is one year old, unless the mother specifically releases the father of this responsibility.

D. A Family disciple married couple has a mandatory responsibility towards any Family disciple single woman the man impregnates, regardless of the circumstances that brought about the pregnancy in accordance with the "20-Month Minimum Responsibility Guidelines."

If pregnancy results from the lovemaking of a married man and a single woman, the married couple has a mandatory responsibility towards that single woman, even if the husband and wife had not had an agreement that the husband could have intercourse with the single woman.

The couple will be responsible to help care for the mother physically, emotionally, and spiritually throughout her entire pregnancy, and then help to care for her and the baby until he or she is one year old, unless the mother specifically releases the couple of this responsibility.

E. No sexual contact should take place in public areas of the Home.

"You have one kind of affection openly amongst all your members—anytime, anywhere—and another kind you reserve for behind closed doors. Your everyday standard of natural, loving affection amongst your Home members during your normal daily interaction with each other is not supposed to signal or lead to sex, which is what you have behind closed doors" (ML #2857:44).

F. Members must refrain from viewing pornographic movies, videos, pictures, or reading pornographic books or magazines, or visiting pornographic websites. Pornographic movies, videos, pictures, books, magazines, or websites are defined as those in which the sexual organs are the main characters.

G. Family disciples are not permitted to engage in sexual interaction with someone who is not a Family disciple.

Sexual interaction includes any sexual activity. See also "[Offenses Warranting the Placing of a Family Disciple on Probationary Status](#)" concerning engaging in sexual contact or acts with those who are not Family disciples.

- 1. The regional shepherds may grant in rare instances and for a specified period of time that a Family disciple 18 years and older may engage in a sexual act with someone who is not a Family disciple.**
 - a. The Family disciple and, if mated, his or her mate must forgo sexual acts with another Family disciple for as long as the sexual relationship with the non-Family disciple continues and until the Family disciple and his or her mate are cleared by HIV testing six months after their last sexual contact with the non-Family disciple.**

H. Those age 18 years and over may not engage in a sexual act with those under the age of 18, as outlined in "[Offenses Warranting the Excommunication of a Family Disciple](#)." The only two exceptions to this rule are:

- 1. Those who are 18 through 20 years old are allowed to engage in sexual interaction with those ages 16 and 17 in accordance with these "[Sex and Affection Rules](#)."**
- 2. If a 16- or 17-year-old and a 20-year-old have been regularly engaging in sexual acts together and the 20-year-old turns 21, the 16- or 17-year-old may request permission to continue the relationship. The parents or guardians of the 16- or 17-year-old, in counsel with the Home shepherds, may grant permission if they feel it is appropriate.**

The Family's age of consent is 18 years. This means that anyone 18 years or older who engages in a sexual act with anyone under the age of 18 will be excommunicated, unless his or her actions fall under one of the above two exceptions.

I. For 16- and 17-year-old teens, sexual interaction is permitted only with consenting 16- to 20-year-olds.

It is our belief that our senior teens should be given the freedom to lovingly engage in sexual interaction with other consenting 16- to 20-year-olds, and that in doing so they will grow in maturity and learn to operate in accordance with the Law of Love.

Senior teens are encouraged to be open and honest with their parents and shepherds about their questions and issues concerning their sexual interactions so they can receive counsel and shepherding during this time.

Parents and shepherds should be understanding of the emotional issues and difficulties that will accompany sharing sexually with one another, such as battles of jealousy, of feeling left out, or of unloving actions. Parents should realize that they will need to help their teens overcome these battles—that their teens will need shepherding, understanding, prayer, the Word, counsel, and a listening ear.

Partaking of these freedoms, given to us through the Law of Love, is a sobering responsibility, because the decisions made could have life-changing consequences. Lovemaking may result in children, and those children will need to be cared for by mothers and fathers, and our teens need to understand that those mothers and fathers will be themselves. In other words, although teens have the freedom to engage in sexual interaction with one another, they must also realize that they will have to take responsibility for their actions.

Notice as well that the clause says "sexual interaction is permitted only with consenting 16- to 20-year-olds." It is very important to realize that not everyone within that age group is going to want to engage in sexual interaction and that some will want to wait until they are older or until they feel more prepared for it. Others will only want to dabble in it, while yet others will want to partake fully. The decision of whether to take this step is a very personal one based on each one's faith. No one should ever feel pressured one way or the other by anyone. If members are trying to convince others to have sex or to go farther than they want to go, or if they are applying pressure in any way, then those actions are unloving and are contrary to the Law of Love.

There's a great deal of Word on this subject which our senior teens are expected to read in order to help them fully grasp the depth of God's Law of Love and to be prepared to live in accordance with it. See also

“Word Rules” for other requirements that must be fulfilled during a senior teen’s 15th year, before engaging in sexual interactions at age 16.

- 1. 16- and 17-year-olds may not engage in sexual intercourse unless they have first counseled with and received permission from their resident parents or guardians, and after having read the Charter-required reading list. This permission is required regardless of whether the young people involved choose to use some form of protection.**
 - a. It is the responsibility of any 18- to 20-year-old who is involved with a senior teen to be aware of whether or not parental permission was obtained by the 16- to 17-year-old prior to engaging in intercourse.**
- 2. Even if permission to have sexual intercourse has been granted by the parents or guardians of a 16- or 17-year-old, the teens having sex must still agree together before beginning any sexual activity as to whether they will have sexual intercourse or not. If the teens haven’t talked about it ahead of time, then it should be clearly understood by both partners that they will not engage in any sexual activity that could result in pregnancy.**

Let’s explore the following hypothetical situations: There is a senior teen girl in a Home who has been getting close to a teen boy, and she has begun dating him. On the other hand the mother and father of this young woman have strong reservations as to whether their daughter is ready to take on the serious responsibility of a pregnancy should she engage in sexual intercourse with the young man in question.

Their daughter has not given much thought to the subject of marriage, nor has the young man who she has grown close to. They simply feel attracted to each other and like spending time together. Neither the young woman nor the young man in this picture are necessarily prepared and/or prayed up on the subject of possibly having a baby together should they have intercourse.

Due to the Lord’s counsel to the Family that pregnancy should in most cases result in marriage, the parents of this 16-year-old girl have a say in when and who their daughter should be allowed to have sexual intercourse with, especially since this is only the first year that she has begun having more serious contact with those of the opposite sex.

There is also the factor that should an unexpected pregnancy occur, it is likely that a great part of the soon-to-be-mother’s care will fall on the parents’ shoulders. Therefore their daughter having intercourse, while it is of course a personal matter between the daughter and her boyfriend, it is also a matter affecting more than just the daughter and the young man whom she is close to. The parents will be greatly affected and so should understandably have a say in what may be a long-term, serious decision affecting all of their lives.

While it may not be easy for senior teens to involve their parents or guardians in such decisions, it is a requirement which is for their benefit.

This policy does not hinder young people from spending time together and dating one another. However, they should counsel about their relationships with their parents or shepherds. This is simply letting them know that they need to receive permission from their resident parents or guardians before engaging in full intercourse. This stipulation should cause young people to realize that sexual intercourse is a serious responsibility, potentially taking their relationship into the realm of parenthood.

- J. Sexual interaction for teens ages 14 and 15 is only permitted with other teens ages 14 through 17, and is under the authority of the junior teens’ parents or guardians.**
 - 1. Sexual acts that include skin-to-skin touching of the genitals are not permitted.**
 - 2. Teens ages 14 and 15 are not permitted to have sexual interaction with anyone 18 years or older.**

Sexual interaction by teens, ages 14 and 15, is only permitted with other teens, ages 14 through 17, and is under the authority and responsibility of the 14- or 15-year-olds’ parents or legal guardians. Parents or legal guardians may allow their junior teens to date and have emotional and physical contact with other teens that the parents deem appropriate. However, the teens are not permitted to engage in any sexual acts that include skin-to-skin touching of genitals by the teens. While those 16 and 17 are permitted to have full sex with those ages 16 through 20, with parental permission, 16- and 17-year-olds are not permitted to do so with 14- or 15-year-olds.

Those 16 and 17 who break these rules will be subject to probationary status in accordance with the ["Offenses Warranting the Placing of a Family Disciple on Probationary Status,"](#) while those 14 and 15 who break these rules will be subject to disciplinary action to be decided upon by their parents or guardians in counsel with the Home shepherds.

K. While dating for those ages 12 through 14 is at the parents' discretion, no sexual interaction is allowed.

"Dating" here is only in the social context of being with or spending time together with another person. Only non-sexual affection is allowed for those under the age of 14 years. Parents may decide who their 13-year-old teen spends his or her time with.

L. A provisional disciple 16 years and older must refrain from sexual contact or acts with another Family disciple, except his or her mate, until cleared by STD testing in accordance with the ["Health and Hygiene Rules."](#)

See also ["Procedure for a New Disciple Joining a Family Discipleship Home."](#)

M. A Family disciple who gets a blood transfusion for any reason, using blood from someone who is not a Family disciple, must refrain from sexual acts with another Family disciple, except his or her mate, until cleared by testing in accordance with the ["Health and Hygiene Rules."](#)

N. A Home member who may have contracted a sexually transmitted disease or affliction must inform his or her partner of the affliction and refrain from further sexual acts until cleared by testing according to the ["Health and Hygiene Rules."](#)

1. If the member has contracted genital herpes, he or she can share with others provided he or she follows the guidelines in the ["Health and Hygiene Rules."](#)

The Law of Love dictates that we should not hurt others. Passing on a sexual affliction would be hurting others and should therefore be avoided. Those with a sexual affliction should take appropriate measures to avoid passing on their affliction to others. They should also inform their sexual partners about their affliction.

O. Female homosexual relationships are not permitted.

The Bible specifically prohibits male-with-male sexual activity, but there are no passages forbidding such activity between adult women. This rule is meant to reflect that difference, as we do not entirely prohibit all adult female-with-female sexual activity, unlike the rule regarding males.

As Dad said, it's fairly natural for some females to be affectionate and loving towards each other. It would therefore be acceptable for two women to hold hands or be arm in arm, or have their arms around each other, kiss, caress, or hug each other closely, even sexually. Whereas any sexual overtures between two men is prohibited. Of course, such female-with-female sexual interaction would need to be conducted in the non-public areas of the Home, just as any other sexual affection would. Since teen girls are just learning about their sexuality, teen girls under 18 should not get involved in female-with-female sexual interaction.

Although such affection between adult women is permitted, an actual lesbian relationship, in which the two partners were deeply involved to the exclusion of others, is prohibited. The definition of homosexual is, "Relating to, or having a sexual orientation to persons of the same sex." And as Dad has said, it is not natural for women to only desire sex with other women; such female homosexual relationships would not be considered as natural, and as such are not permitted.

Any non-prohibited female-with-female activity must be with mutual consent. No one should be coerced or feel pressured into participating, and as with any interpersonal relations those involved should be open to counsel and advice from their shepherds regarding the relationship.

P. Sexual perversions such as anal intercourse, sadomasochism, or bestiality, or any other unclean or unloving sexual interaction that may be harmful or dangerous are prohibited.

Smoking and Drinking Rules

A. Smoking any substance is forbidden.

This covers smoking cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco, or any other substance people can smoke. "Smoking and [illegal] drugs in the Family are against our laws and our rules and always have been" (ML #856:92).

B. In order to be moderate in alcohol consumption and to avoid its various negative effects, only one of the following are permitted as a weekly maximum alcohol limit for members 18- through 20-years-old, where legally permitted:

1. 12 ounces or 37.5 cl of wine.

– or –

2. 8 ounces or 25 cl of sherry, port or vermouth or other drinks that are not more than 20% alcohol.

– or –

3. 28 ounces or 84 cl of beer containing not over 6% alcohol.

These amounts of alcoholic beverages are the maximum allowed each week. This is not a recommendation to drink these amounts, it is just to establish the maximum allowable limits. Those under the age of 18 are not permitted to drink alcoholic beverages; however, in your own Home, on special occasions or celebrations, the Home could decide to let the teens drink a glass of wine or a punch which has some alcohol in it. Of course everyone, no matter what age, can partake of communion wine.

4. On "special occasions" members ages 18- to 20-years old are permitted to drink a maximum of 12 ounces or 37.5 cl of wine, 8 ounces or 25 cl of sherry (or similar beverage that does not exceed 20% alcohol), or 28 ounces or 84 cl of beer (that does not exceed 6% alcohol).

C. To avoid the negative effects of overdrinking, members must be moderate in their alcohol consumption. Alcohol abuse is not permitted in the Family.

1. If a member over-drinks, despite his or her Home shepherds' admonition not to do so, a majority vote of the Home council can mandate that the member either limit his or her alcohol consumption, abstain from drinking alcoholic beverages for up to three months, or they can place the member on Home censure if the offense warrants it.

2. If a Home member is overdrinking and the Home is not doing its duty in disciplining the offender, the shepherding desk can discipline that member by mandating that for a period of no more than three months, he either limits his alcohol consumption or abstains from drinking alcoholic beverages altogether. The Home will also be in jeopardy of discipline through probationary notice for failure to do its duty to discipline that member for overdrinking.

- a. A member who has been disciplined for overdrinking by the shepherding desk can appeal the decision, in which case the Home will vote on the matter. If the Home is in agreement with the shepherding desk, the appeal will be denied. If the Home disagrees with the shepherding desk, the regional shepherds will decide the matter.**
- 3. Those found abusing alcohol repeatedly, or if serious consequences result from their overdrinking, they will be disciplined by the shepherding desk, using probationary status, in accordance with the "Offenses Warranting the Placing of a Family Disciple on Probationary Status" and the member may be in jeopardy of losing their Family discipleship.**

It's the Home and the Home shepherds' responsibility to shepherd the alcohol consumption of those in their Homes, to ensure that abuse of alcohol does not occur. If a member over-drinks, despite his or her Home shepherds' admonition not to do so, a majority vote of the Home council can mandate that the member either limit his or her alcohol consumption, abstain from drinking alcoholic beverages for up to three months, or they can place the member on Home censure if the offense warrants it.

The shepherding desk also has authority to take action if a Home member is abusing alcohol and the Home is not doing its duty in disciplining the offender. The *Charter* gives authority not only to the Homes and their steering council, but to the regional shepherds as well in this regard. So if a Family disciple's drinking is hurting them, or if they are hurting others, or the drinking is causing problems in the Home and the Home is not disciplining the member the RSs can personally intervene and the shepherding desk will discipline the individual and the Home if necessary. Those found seriously or consistently abusing alcohol will be disciplined by the shepherding desk, using probationary status.

How do you know if you are overdrinking and abusing the privilege of alcohol? Jesus said, "By their fruits ye shall know them." The fruit it bears in your life and in the lives of those around you will be what determines whether you are overdrinking or not.

The tolerance and reaction to alcohol varies from person to person. One person may have no negative effects and be able to easily handle an amount that for someone else with a lower tolerance to alcohol would be too much and cause them to endanger themselves or others, or to be a bad sample. Just because someone drinks more, or more often than others, doesn't necessarily mean that person is overdrinking. On the other hand, if someone rarely drinks, but on the few occasions they do drink they drink much more than they can handle, just because they only drink occasionally doesn't mean that person is moderate.

Overdrinking cannot always be defined or judged simply by the amount of alcohol one has drunk, but more so by the effect. If an individual's drinking of alcoholic beverages causes them to become careless, angry, violent, foul-mouthed, depressed, withdrawn, unproductive, drunk to the point of being incoherent or getting sick, or they exhibit behavior that is a bad sample, offensive or hurtful, then the fruit borne in their lives is bad, and no matter how little they might think they drink, they are overdrinking. But if moderate drinking of alcohol, such as regularly having a glass of wine with one's meal or while fellowshiping with others, isn't bearing bad fruit in someone's life, then they are likely not overdrinking. You and/or your shepherds will need to judge the fruit in your life as a result of your drinking and act accordingly.

Even if only a little alcohol bears bad fruit in an individual's life, they will have to refrain from drinking more than their tolerance level. If you can't determine your tolerance level yourself, your Home or shepherds will do it for you.

Voting and Election Rules

A. The general voting rules are:

1. **The Home council, which is the body of the Home's voting members, will consist of all members of the Home 16 years or older.**
 - a. **A new Family disciple, or a Missionary or Fellow member becoming a Family disciple, gains the right to vote after being voted into the Home as a full-fledged member at the end of his time as a provisional disciple.**
 - b. **A Home member on Home censure or probationary status, though still considered a voting member of the Home, temporarily loses the right to vote on Home matters while censured or on probation, except during Home review and during the voting for the Home's steering council and/or board pillar representatives.**
 - i. **While a Home member is on Home censure or probationary status his vote on all Home matters, other than the Home review and Home elections, will be counted as an abstention in accordance with clause A.5 below.**
 - c. **Only voting members 18 and over may vote on financial matters, decisions concerning the movement of personnel in or out of the Home, or on matters concerning another Home member's Family discipleship.**
 - i. **16- and 17-year-old voting members will not be counted as part of the total number of the voting body when the Home council votes on financial matters or the movement of personnel.**
2. **A simple majority determines the outcome of a matter being voted on, unless specified otherwise in the *Charter*.**
3. **A two-thirds majority determines the outcome on any financial matter, when voting on Home goals, decisions concerning the movement of personnel in or out of the Home, matters concerning another Home member's Family discipleship, and any other Charter clause specifically requiring such.**
4. **It is up to the Home council to determine by a simple majority a fair, practical, and efficient method of voting, unless specified otherwise in these "Voting and Election Rules."**

Some voting procedures require the use of a secret ballot, but most do not; therefore each Home council may decide by a simple majority what method of voting it will use. Voting methods may vary depending on the type of issue being voted on and could among others include a discussion and simple show of hands or checking off a chart on the Home's bulletin board. There are a variety of options that can be used, and it is up to the Home council to decide by a simple majority which one they would like to use.

5. **An abstention in a Home vote or for an area referendum will not be included in the total count, decreasing the voting population by one for each abstention.**

- 6. If a voting member is absent from the Home at the time a vote is taken, he must be informed and allowed to cast his vote on the matter, either at that time or upon his return.**
 - a. A Home can still vote on a matter and enact the outcome. If, however, the vote of an absent member causes a change in the outcome of a Home's vote, the matter enacted will then cease.**
- 7. A Home member who is absent or not able to participate in the Home's voting process may, if he chooses, appoint a proxy to vote in his place. If a proxy is appointed, the member cannot change the vote once it has been cast for him.**
 - a. A proxy cannot vote in place of a member on financial matters, Home elections, decisions concerning the movement of personnel in or out of the Home, on matters of discipline, or on matters concerning another Home member's Family discipleship.**

A Home member who is not able to attend Home council or participate in the Home vote may enlist another member to cast his vote for him as a proxy. If, for example, a parent can't attend a Home council where a vote will be conducted because they are taking care of his children, the parent may give his vote to his mate or to another Home member to cast for him.

B. The Home shepherd, Home manager, and board pillar representative election rules are:

- 1. A Family discipleship Home will elect by secret ballot a minimum of two voting members 18 years and over to be their Home shepherds, and a minimum of two voting members 18 years and older to be their Home managers.**

You should choose people you love, trust, and respect to be your Home's shepherds and managers—those who have courage to make difficult decisions, which the Home shepherds or Home managers will have to make. They should be those who can encourage you to do your best for the Lord and His work and who will lovingly correct you when you're not doing your best. Home elections are not popularity contests. You have a serious responsibility to desperately pray for the Lord to lead and guide you to choose those whom He wants to shepherd and manage your Home.

All Home members need to understand the roles of the Home shepherds and the Home managers and what kind of people you should vote into these positions. You will need to understand that your shepherds and managers will need to have time available to shepherd the Home's members, manage the affairs of the Home, pray about their jobs, and hear from the Lord.

The individual who is willing to take on the position of a Home shepherd or manager is responsible to look at his or her schedule and other responsibilities and see if he or she can do the job. The Home council should determine how much time is needed for the Home shepherds and managers to fulfill their responsibilities, and counsel together regarding how they can be given that time. Those elected to shepherding or managerial positions could delegate some of their other responsibilities to others. If it isn't possible for someone elected to a position to gain the time they need to do the job the Home should find someone else for the job. It's not fair to the Home for someone to have the title if he or she is not willing or able to do the job or do the time.

This is not to say that the Home shepherds or Home managers can't do anything else in the Home, that they can't carry any of the physical load, that they can't teach the children, cook meals, or go out witnessing. Everyone in the Home has to carry a part of the load for the Home to run well and be well balanced. But those elected to be the Home shepherds or Home managers will need some time to dedicate to their steering council responsibilities, in order to serve the Home well.

When thinking about who to nominate and elect to the managerial positions, ask yourself if those you are choosing have the wherewithal, initiative, and faithfulness to propose and/or follow through and put landing gear on Home decisions concerning practical and organizational matters. Do you feel that they will think proactively about the needs of the Home, helping to ensure that short-term or immediate needs are taken care of, while also having an overall plan for how to help the Home get ahead in its organization and operations? Do you feel they will have the ability to think "big picture"? Do you feel they will take overall responsibility for the practical running of the Home, so that the Home operates efficiently? Do you feel they will have good work ethic and a commitment to excellence in carrying out their duties and responsibilities? Do you feel they will do their part to help the Home maintain the right balance, so that the Home's work gets done and the Home's needs are also met?

Ask yourself if those you are nominating and electing to shepherding positions will take responsibility, along with the Home members, for the spiritual growth of individuals and the Home overall? Do you feel they will keep a pulse on the overall spiritual progress of the Home, and help to provide spiritual direction to the Home? Do you feel they will uphold the FD standard and help the Home to do the same, particularly in the spiritual aspects of discipleship, so that the “spirit of the Home” is right and thus the work that the Home does will be right? Do you feel they will lovingly, faithfully, and humbly care for and shepherd individuals in the Home, including helping individuals to make spiritual progress and overcome their weaknesses? Will they have the personal conviction to speak the truth in love? Do you feel the Home shepherds and Home managers you elect will do all they can to ensure that the Home members are happy, well cared for, and loved?

United prayer for the Lord’s help and guidance should always accompany Home elections. If you feel your present Home shepherds or Home managers aren’t sufficiently living up to the shepherding and management standards as defined in the Letters, and that they aren’t striving to learn or grow in their responsibilities, especially for those who are new to their positions, you should ask the Lord if there are others in the Home who could do a better job, and vote in those whom you feel will best serve your Home.

By your collective decision of who shepherds and manages your Home, you take the responsibility of the Home on your shoulders. The Home as a whole is accountable for how fruitful it is and how efficiently it operates, and Home elections are the time when you enact your responsibility of prayerfully electing those you feel would do the best job.

Home members on Home censure or on probationary status are still “voting members”; they have just temporarily lost their right to vote in Home matters for the duration of their disciplinary time. According to the [“Procedure for Placing a Family Disciple on Home Censure”](#) and the [“Procedure for Placing a Family Disciple on Probationary Status,”](#) a Home member on Home censure or on probationary status may not be a steering council member during his disciplinary time, although he may be a board pillar representative.

- 2. A Family discipleship Home will elect by secret ballot a Coaching and Shepherding board monitor, a Children and Parenting board representative, an Education board representative, a Home spokesperson, a teen counselor, and a witnessing coordinator. These may be elected from any of the Home’s voting members age 18 and over, except the Coaching and Shepherding board monitor who must also be one of the Home shepherds.**
 - a. Homes that do not have 0- to 11-year-olds in the Home do not need to elect a Children and Parenting board representative.**
 - i. Since the Children and Parenting board criteria also covers health and cleanliness points for the Home, a Home without children should appoint a member of the Home to take on those aspects of the Children and Parenting board criteria within the Home.**
 - b. Homes that do not have 12- to 17-year-olds do not need to elect a teen counselor.**
 - c. Homes that do not have school-aged children or teens do not need to elect an Education board representative.**

Other than the CS monitor—who must be a Home shepherd—there are no restrictions on whom of the Home’s voting members 18 or over can be a board pillar representative or the number of positions he can hold. The Home shepherds and Home managers do not have to be board pillar representatives. Whether they are or not is up to the Home and would depend on the size of the Home. A Home could have Home shepherds and Home managers, and as many as five other board pillar representatives who are not Home shepherds or Home managers. The overall goals are that the board pillars are represented by the ones who are best suited to do so, while also sharing the load by having different people take different board pillar positions as much as may be possible.

A Home member on Home censure or on probationary status may be elected to board pillar representative positions in the Home, with the exception of the CS monitor who must be a Home shepherd.

Even though the responsibility and authority to make sure the boards’ criteria is implemented in the Home lies with the Home council, the CP representative, CS monitor, Education representative, Home spokesperson, teen counselor, and witnessing coordinator are also important positions in your Home. You should choose those whom you feel know the criteria for that pillar well or will study it, will keep abreast of new material or guidelines coming out, will do their jobs faithfully, keep abreast of how the Home is doing in

regards to the board criteria they are monitoring, and be faithful to point out lacks in the fulfillment of the criteria to the Home shepherds, Home managers, and Home council as needed.

- 3. Home elections for Home shepherds, Home managers, and board pillar representatives must be held prior to the Home's May eTRF.**
 - a. The process of Home elections must begin within 15 days after opening a new Family discipleship Home.**
 - i. Regardless of the date the new Home holds its first elections, the Home must hold its next elections or vote of confirmation in accordance with the timetable prescribed in these "Voting and Election Rules."**
- 4. Approximately one week before elections the Home must unitedly read clause B from these "Voting and Election Rules," decide the number of Home shepherds and Home managers the Home will elect, and then submit nominations for Home shepherds, Home managers, and board pillar representatives.**
 - a. All nominations must be seconded.**
 - b. Nominees have the right to decline nominations.**
 - c. The names of nominees must be posted publicly in the Home until the elections are held.**
 - d. A Home member can be nominated for more than one position.**
 - e. The Home may elect more than one person to a board pillar position.**

A large Home with a number of outreach ministries to coordinate may want to elect a team of two witnessing coordinators, for example, or a Home with a lot of teens may want to elect two teen counselors. A Home may also want to elect more than the minimum required Home shepherds and Home managers for their population. It depends on the needs of the Home.

The number of Home shepherds and Home managers does not have to be equal, but there must be at least two in each body.

- 5. During Home elections, each individual position should be voted on separately by secret ballot.**
 - a. A committee of two or three of the Home's voting members must count the votes. This committee will announce the results of the election to the Home council immediately after counting each round of votes.**
 - b. A Home member who does not vote in a Home election will have his votes counted as abstentions.**
 - c. Each of the Home shepherds should be elected first, each of the Home managers second, and each of the board pillar representatives third.**
 - i. A Home member cannot simultaneously hold both the position of Home shepherd and Home manager.**
 - d. The nominee who receives a simple majority vote for the position will occupy that position.**
 - i. In the event that no one of a field of three or more nominees for the position being voted on receives a simple majority of the votes, the nominee that received the least number of votes for that position should be removed from the ballot and a revote held with the remaining nominees for that position.**

ii. In the event of a tie vote between the remaining nominees, a runoff vote should be held for that position.

1. If the tie is unbroken after three runoff votes, the candidates will hold the position in question together.

There should first be a vote for the first HS position from the list of nominees, with each voting member casting one vote. If after a round of voting one of the nominees receives a simple majority of the Home's voting members, the committee will announce the winner and the total number of votes he or she received. It is not necessary to announce the number of votes received for those who lost the round. Next, in the same manner there would be a round of voting for the second HS position from among the remaining nominees, and so on until the number of HS positions the Home has decided on have been filled. If the case arises that after a round of voting for a position no one nominee receives a simple majority of the votes, the nominee that received the least number of votes must be removed from the ballot and a revote held with the remaining nominees until one of the candidates receives a simple majority of the votes for the position.

When voting for HSs and HMs, particularly in a smaller Home, there may be a time when there are only two nominations and two posts to fill for one or both of the steering council bodies. In such a situation, even though the number of nominees equals the number of posts to be filled, the process of voting must still be conducted. Each HS, HM, and board pillar representative must be confirmed by at least a simple majority of the Home's voting members.

If there is a situation where there are only the minimum number of nominees to fill the posts and none of the nominees receive a majority vote of the Home's voting members, the nomination and election process for that post must be repeated until all required positions are filled by someone who receives at least a simple majority vote of the Home's voting members.

6. Once the elections are held and the results announced, the terms of office will begin immediately.

a. Outgoing Home shepherds and Home managers must turn over all files and information, Home records, and Home Emergency Reserves locations held in their portfolios to the new incoming Home shepherds and Home managers within seven days of the announced election results.

7. Regardless of the reason, if a Home shepherd, Home manager, or board pillar representative position becomes vacant for longer than 30 days, the Home must hold an election within the following seven days to refill the position.

a. The term of office for a newly elected Home shepherd, Home manager, or board pillar representative will be subject to the Home's next elections or vote of confirmation as specified in these "Voting and Election Rules."

C. The semi-annual Home shepherd, Home manager, and board pillar representative vote of confirmation rules are as follows:

1. A Family discipleship Home will hold a vote of confirmation for its Home shepherds, Home managers, and its board pillar representatives by secret ballot prior to the Home's November eTRF.

a. The voting ballot should read:

- I confirm the body of Home shepherds: yes ___ no ___
- I confirm the body of Home managers: yes ___ no ___
- I confirm the body of board pillar representatives: yes ___ no ___

b. If any one of the three elected bodies is not confirmed by a simple majority vote, the Home will within seven days hold elections for that body in accordance with clause B of these "Voting and Election Rules."

- i. The term of office for a newly elected Home shepherd, Home manager, or board pillar representative will be subject to the Home's next elections as specified in these "Voting and Election Rules."**

When a Home engages in a vote of confirmation, they first vote for or against the specific body as a whole. If there is one member of one of the elected bodies who the Home members feel is not doing a good job and they would like him to step down from his position, the Home would need to vote to not confirm that entire body. For example, if the Home's voting members are not satisfied with the job of one of the HSs, they would vote not to confirm the body of Home shepherds. A new election would then be called for all the HSs, though not for the HMs or the board pillar representatives, if those two bodies were confirmed.

If Home members in the above case wish to re-nominate any of the previous shepherds who they feel should be reelected, they may do so, as well as any other of the Home's eligible members. If the Home decides not to confirm its HSs, and does confirm its HMs, the Home can still nominate one of the present HMs to be an HS. However, if that HM accepts the nomination and is elected, he must vacate his HM position, which will then need to be refilled by the election process.

D. The Home shepherd, Home manager, or board pillar representative vote of confidence rules are as follows:

- 1. A Family discipleship Home may call for a vote of confidence for its Home shepherds, Home managers, or its board pillar representatives at any time.**
 - a. A voting member of the Home may present a motion to the Home council calling for a vote of confirmation for any one or more of the three elected bodies of its Home shepherds, Home managers, or board pillar representatives to confirm whether the Home shepherds, Home managers, or board pillar representatives continue to have the support of the Home.**
 - b. If the motion is seconded and then confirmed by a two-thirds majority vote, the Home will within seven days hold elections for the body in question in accordance with clause B of these "Voting and Election Rules."**
 - i. The term of office for a newly elected Home shepherd, Home manager, or board pillar representative will be subject to the Home's next elections or vote of confirmation as specified in these "Voting and Election Rules."**
- 2. A Family discipleship Home must hold a vote of confidence for its Home shepherds, Home managers, and board pillar representatives by secret ballot 15 days after a Home has been placed on probationary notice.**
 - a. If the reason for probationary notice was resolved and the Home was notified within 15 days that the Home is no longer on probationary notice, the vote of confidence is not necessary.**
 - b. If the reason for probationary notice was not resolved within 15 days, the Home should proceed with the vote of confidence. The voting ballot should read:**
 - I confirm the body of Home shepherds: yes ___ no ___**
 - I confirm the body of Home managers: yes ___ no ___**
 - I confirm the body of board pillar representatives: yes ___ no ___**
 - c. If a simple majority vote does not confirm any one of the three elected bodies, the Home will within seven days hold elections for that body according to clause B of these "Voting and Election Rules."**
 - i. The term of office for a newly elected Home shepherd, Home manager, or board pillar representative will be subject to the Home's next elections or vote of confirmation as specified in these "Voting and Election Rules."**

The probationary notice vote of confidence must be held if a Home has not heard back from their reporting office, shepherding desk, or regional desk within 15 days of being placed on probationary notice

stating that they are no longer on probationary notice. The purpose of this vote is to make it possible to call for the election of either one or all of the bodies of Home shepherds, Home managers, and board pillar representatives in the case of the Home being placed on probationary notice.

While the Home as a whole is fully accountable for being placed on probationary notice—because the members of the steering council bear a great deal of responsibility in how the Home is run and in the fulfillment of the Home’s responsibilities and because the board pillar representatives do the same in monitoring the Home in its fulfillment of the boards’ criteria—part of the solution to correcting the problem that led to the probationary notice may be to change one or more of these elected bodies, if the Lord leads.

E. The vote of confirmation rules for coaches are as follows:

1. A vote of confirmation for coaches will be held by secret ballot by the steering councils in the coach’s coaching circle prior to the Home’s May and November eTRFs.

Although the Home’s coach is appointed by the regional shepherds, a vote of confirmation will be held by the steering councils in the coach’s coaching circle.

a. Each steering council member will individually email his vote to the shepherding desk, which will tally the votes. Any steering council member who does not send in his vote by the specified eTRF dates will have his vote counted as an abstention.

2. If the coach does not receive a simple majority confirmation of all the steering council members in his coaching circle, then the regional shepherds will appoint a new coach for those Homes within 60 days.

F. The area referendum rules are as follows:

1. When conducting the vote for an area referendum, the regional council must submit a written proposal to the concerned Family discipleship and/or Missionary member Homes and/or Fellow members stating the issues being voted on. The proposal, listing the pros and cons and the date by which all votes must be registered with the regional desk, must be read by each adult or voting member in the concerned circle of Family membership before they vote on the matter.

2. A simple majority of the total voting members 16 and over affected by the referendum will determine the outcome, unless the referendum is regarding a financial matter, in which case a two-thirds majority of the total voting members 18 and over affected by the referendum will determine the outcome.

a. A Home member who does not vote on the area referendum will have his vote counted as an abstention.

3. The tally of the votes for, against, and the abstentions to the referendum must be conveyed to the regional desk by the appointed date on the referendum.

4. Those members who do not respond to an area referendum by its due date, or those Homes who do not send in their Home’s correct tally of votes for, against, and the abstentions, will be counted as abstentions.

The RC can conduct a referendum affecting the FD and MM Homes and FMs, a referendum affecting only the FD Homes, only the MM Homes, or only the FMs, or any combination of these. Since the FD, MM, and FM population can vary greatly within an area, to accurately reflect the wishes of the majority of the area’s members, each of the affected Homes and members must send the tally of its members’ individual votes to the RD to determine the outcome of the referendum. If your Home has 31 voting members of whom 25 vote on the referendum, 12 for and 13 against, you would send the following tally to the RD: 12 votes in favor, 13 votes against, and 6 abstentions.

5. Once tallied, the outcome of the referendum must be announced to all participating Homes and members.

- 6. All area referendums are subject to an annual vote of confirmation conducted by the regional desk during the month of January. The referendum can be nullified by a simple majority of the total members 16 and over affected by the referendum, unless the referendum is regarding a financial matter in which case a two-thirds majority of the total members 18 and over affected by the referendum will nullify it.**
- 7. The regional desk must inform World Services Administration of the outcome of all area referendums affecting regional areas or countries.**

Word Rules

A Family disciple must:

A. Spend a minimum of 1½ hours daily or 10½ hours weekly in quality study and communion with the Lord.

"An amount of time spent on spiritual matters will no longer be the only measuring stick, but rather how your spirit is faring and whether you are progressing in spirit, growing in love, growing in faith, and becoming a better disciple day by day. If you're getting those results, then you're doing it right, even if your methods are unusual or more personally tailored to your schedule and needs. But if you're not getting those results, even if you're spending the required time, then something is wrong with your methods, because they aren't producing the desired fruit" (ML #3750:18).

See "Beyond Duty" (ML #3749–50) for full counsel concerning time spent on spiritual matters and communing with the Lord to progress in spirit.

1. Disciples under one year in the Family must be allocated an additional seven hours per week, or a total of 17½ hours per week.

a. If a new disciple has not finished reading the *12 Foundation Stones* or the *12 Bridges* courses before joining the Home, they should finish the courses during their first six months in the Home.

New disciples need to get their grounding in the Word before they get embroiled full time in other ministries. It's preferable that additional Word time be made available to them on a daily basis, or at least spread throughout several time slots during the week, but not less than seven additional hours of Word time per week.

B. Spend a minimum of 30 minutes daily or 3½ hours weekly in intercessory prayer.

C. During his or her 15th and 16th years, a teen must read through the *15- and 16-year-old Reading Lists*.

World Services Reporting Rules

- A. All Family disciples must tithe and appear on a Family discipleship Home's eTRF every month without exception.**
 - 1. A Family disciple who stays in another Family Home for more than 60 days will be considered a member of the Home they are staying in and must be reported as such on that Home's eTRF.**

See also "[Procedure for Using the Right of Mobility](#)" and "[Home Size Rules](#)."

- B. All Family discipleship Homes must maintain and regularly check email and physical addresses at which they can receive World Services and area communications, notices, and publications.**
- C. Family discipleship Homes are responsible to send in their 10% tithe, their 1% Family Aid Fund gift, their 3% common pot contribution, and their monthly eTRF on the dates set by their reporting office.**
 - 1. In cases of no or low or late tithe, Family Aid Fund gift, or common pot contribution, no or late Home eTRF; or for being in debt to the Home Loan Fund for two consecutive months; or for not repaying a working reserves loan by the time of the Home review, a Home will automatically be placed on probationary notice.**
- D. The reporting office, in consultation with the regional desks and World Services Administration, will determine the procedures and dates for Homes to send in their eTRF, gifts, and tithes.**
 - 1. Homes may decide, by a majority vote, to permit voting members to read the monthly report before it is sent off.**
 - 2. Family discipleship Homes must use the eTRF for their monthly reports. The reporting office can allow a Home to temporarily use a paper TRF in instances where using the electronic eTRF may not be possible.**

It's recommended that the eTRF be sent to the RO using the Home's Internet connection. If a Home does not have an Internet connection, the eTRF can be sent to the RO from a location outside the Home, such as from a local Internet café.

- E. The reporting office in counsel with World Services Administration will inform the Homes about changes in the minimum monthly tithe and the exchange rate for local currencies in each region.**

Charter Procedures

Procedure for a New Disciple Joining a Family Discipleship Home

When a person joins Family discipleship, he or she moves into an FD Home and becomes an integral part and influence on the Home that they join, and eventually on other Homes as well. Thus someone accepted as a new disciple must meet certain general criteria.

- A. The final decision of whether and when a potential disciple is accepted into Family discipleship rests with the Home that the new disciple joins. Acceptance is determined by a two-third majority vote, providing all the requirements listed in point B. of this section have been met, and the Home has prayed and received confirmation from the Lord.**

Taking a new disciple into the Home is an important decision that should be made in united prayer and counsel with the whole Home. It is imperative to always seek the Lord for His approval and confirmation through prophecy, visions or verses, asking the Lord to clearly and specifically speak, putting His stamp of approval on it.—Or to stop you if He doesn't want that person to join as a full-time member. Since you are making the final decision to allow this person to join—not just your Home but the overall Family—receiving such confirmation from the Lord is extremely important.

Some factors the Home will want to take into consideration are:

- The degree of the prospective disciple's commitment and desire to reach others for Jesus
- Their background, including any serious problems that would hinder their service for the Lord
- Their legal situation: marital obligations, military obligations, etc.
- Any problems with relatives or associates
- Their financial obligations and debts
- Health and any medical concerns

- 1. If a prospective member has been previously excommunicated, or is a former Family member, the regional shepherds must be informed before the prospective member can rejoin a Family discipleship Home.**
 - a. The steering council must check with the regional shepherds to verify that the prospective member is in good standing, one whose past history does not make him or her ineligible for Family discipleship.**
 - i. Unless the regional shepherds informs the Home's steering council within 45 days that the prospective member is ineligible to return to Family discipleship, the Home may proceed with implementing the "[Procedure for a New Disciple Joining a Family Discipleship Home.](#)"**
- 2. In some cases the Home may decide it is wise to wait for a period of time before accepting a new member into their Home, whereas in other cases they may allow them to join immediately.**

As you'll note, no time frame is given before someone is allowed to join a Home as a full-time member. So we're not ruling out the possibility of some people wanting to join immediately. But before they cut all worldly ties, forsake all, and become fully integrated into the FD Family, it would be best to have a period of time to get to know the Family better. This would also allow the Home to get to know the prospective disciple. If all the following requirements are met and two-thirds of the Home's voting members agree, an individual may join an FD Home as a full-time member.

A Home that is praying about accepting a former FD as a new member of their Home, must check with their SD before allowing that individual to join.

B. For a person to become a new disciple they must:

- 1. Have received Jesus as their personal Savior and been filled with the Holy Spirit.**
- 2. Be of legal age, or if not, have notarized parental permission.**

As Dad has counseled us, we can't accept underage new disciples unless they have notarized permission: "We cannot accept [anyone underage] without written, and preferably notarized permission.... Please don't do it!" (ML #124:8.)

Additionally, though a person may be of legal age to join, in many countries around the world it is best to also consider the local customs. For example, legal age may be 18 in the country where you reside, but due to close family ties the accepted custom may be for persons to remain with their parents until marriage or the age of 21 or more.

For this reason, the Home may find it wise to initiate communication with the parents and/or close relatives of prospective new disciples of all ages to make sure they have a basic understanding of the Family, to answer any questions, and to avoid misunderstandings. If the parents voice any major concerns, the Home might find it in their best interest to encourage the prospective disciple to be an Active member for a set period of time, during which time he could endeavor to lovingly explain his new found faith and commitment and help his parents to overcome their concerns at his desire to serve the Lord with the Family.

The local Family might want to meet with any concerned close parents/relatives or associates and explain the work to them before the prospective member is allowed to join. If parents and associates still disagree, the Home should pray and count the cost. If there could be potential problems that could affect other Homes in the area, the affected Homes should be consulted.

- 3. Have a basic understanding of the Family, its goals, way of life, and believe that David was God's Endtime Prophet and that Maria is God's chosen and anointed successor, who has inherited David's mantle, as God's Prophetess.**
 - a. In order to ensure that the prospective member has a clear understanding of the Family and our basic beliefs he should endeavor to complete the *12 Foundation Stones* course before joining the Home, or if not completed, do so during his first six months as a provisional disciple.**

The *12 Bridges* course is required reading for provisional disciples, after the *12 Foundation Stones*.

- 4. Show a sincere interest in reading God's Word and desire to engage in evangelism.**
- 5. Have a sincere desire to dedicate their life to serving Jesus with the Family.**
- 6. Have lived in a Family discipleship Home for a minimum of 21 days.**
 - a. These 21 days can be considered part of the provisional disciple's six months living in the Home before becoming a full-fledged Family disciple.**
- 7. Be free from substance abuse and/or the use of illegal or illicit drugs.**
- 8. Be free from contagious disease.**

A prospective new disciple needs to report his health and medical condition to the Home. Some might have a disease that would seriously hinder their ability to actively serve the Lord as a disciple, and it might be best that they not join as a Family disciple. Someone who has diabetes and uses insulin may still be an active member of a Home, while someone who has leukemia and needs regular hospital treatment might find it more difficult to serve the Lord effectively in the Home. The final decision would rest with the Home. A prospective new disciple with a contagious disease should not be permitted to move into the Home, of course.

- 9. Test negative for AIDS before moving into the Home, and again test negative after a six-month period.**

Potential new disciples must provide medical documentation to prove that an AIDS test was taken before moving into the Home. Anyone who has AIDS or is HIV positive would not be able to live in an FD Home.

10. Take a test for sexually transmitted diseases.

A prospective new disciple should also take a test for sexually transmitted diseases (STD) to make sure that he or she is free from them. Since the new disciple cannot have sex during the first six months in the Home, he or she could be permitted to join the Home even with a STD (other than HIV or AIDS), providing the STD is being treated. However, he or she would need to be test free of sexually transmitted diseases before being allowed to share with other members once his first six months are complete. In the case of herpes, after becoming a voting member he or she could share with other members providing precautions are taken as per the "[Health and Hygiene Rules](#)."

11. Have no debts.

In exceptional circumstances, a Home may, by two-third agreement of the voting members, agree to take on the liabilities of new disciples—such as vehicle payments, student loan, etc. Generally, though, the rule has always been that a new disciple "must be free of debts, payments, and family or legal obligations. 'Owe no man anything, save to love him'" (ML #S:7).

12. Have no legal or military obligations that would prevent them from being a full-time member of the Home.

There are some legal situations, which might not interfere with Family discipleship, such as jury duty or obligatory public service for a traffic violation. In some countries, a short term of military service is obligatory for certain ages, and they may still be able to attend to this requirement without too much disruption in their service to the Lord; in which case the Home could agree to accept them according to the circumstances.

C. Upon completing the above qualifications, the prospective disciple will become a provisional disciple and should be listed on the Home's eTRF.

D. Upon moving into the Home, the prospective disciple must list his or her assets using the "[Personal Possession Declaration for a New Family Disciple](#)." The assets listed on this declaration will remain his or her property to take with them should he or she decide to leave before completing six months in the Family, unless they decide to leave some of these assets with the Family.

New disciples who decide not to join the Family at any point during the first six months will be permitted to take with them any personal possessions that they have listed on their "[Personal Possession Declaration for a New Family Disciple](#)." The exception being that new disciples would only take whatever part of their cash assets that the Home and they agreed the new disciple would take with them should they leave the Family before becoming a Charter voting member. For example, if a new disciple joins a Home with €10,000, the new disciple and the Home should agree how much of the €10,000 would be kept for the new disciple should he or she decide to leave the Family before finishing their Babes Course and becoming a Family disciple, and what part the new disciple would give to the Home to use at the beginning of his or her Babes training.

1. Although new disciples do not have the right of mobility until they become voting members, the shepherding desk may authorize the member's movement to a different Home if deemed necessary or expedient.

E. Refrain from any sexual activity during their first six months in the Family.

1. New disciples joining as a couple may continue to have sex together during this period.

2. Towards the end of their first six months in the Family, new disciples must read through the "Living the Lord's Law of Love" GN series. Only upon completion of the series, and the other requirements in clause F. below, can they begin to have sexual activity with other Family disciples.

Near the end of their first six months in the Family new disciples must read through the "Living the Lord's Law of Love" GN series in order to get a full understanding of their responsibilities in sexual relationships.

Only upon completing the reading of this series can they begin having sex with others, providing of course they have been cleared by a second HIV test at the end of their first six months in the Family.

F. If a simple majority of the Home council agrees, after living in a Family discipleship Home for six months, completing the reading of the *12 Bridges* course, the *Charter*, the Law of Love series, and having tested negative for HIV six months after his first HIV test, the provisional disciple will become a Family disciple with full voting rights.

- 1. A written statement signed by the member and witnessed by a member of the Home's steering council must be sent to the shepherding desk declaring the outcome of the second HIV test before the member is allowed to engage in any sexual acts with other Family members.**
- 2. The new Family disciple should at this time complete the "Statement of Commitment for a New Family Disciple" and the "Family Discipleship Contract."**

At the point of becoming a new voting member of the Home, an agreement should be reached between the Home and the new member as to which of his or her possessions the new member would be permitted to take with him or her if he or she should decide to leave or move to another Home. During their time as a member of the Home, however, Acts 2:44–45 fully applies in that he or she should willingly give and share of all his or her possessions with others.

Procedure for a Young Returnee Rejoining a Family Discipleship Home

- A. Members ages 14 through 20, who have been out of Family discipleship for less than six weeks, may rejoin a Family discipleship Home they left from without losing their voting rights (for those 16 and older) or having to complete the "[Procedure for a New Disciple Joining a Family Discipleship Home.](#)"**
- 1. Special exemptions may be given by the regional shepherds for the returnee to rejoin a different Home from the one they left, providing a two-third majority of the new Home has voted in favor of receiving the new returnee.**
 - a. For those under 16, legal permission of at least one parent is required for the returnee to rejoin a different Home from the one they left.**
- B. Upon returning to a Family discipleship Home, they must:**
- 1. Read the first five sections of the "[Priority Reading List for a New Family Disciple or Missionary Member.](#)"**
 - 2. Show a sincere interest in reading God's Word.**
 - 3. Have a sincere desire to engage in evangelism and dedicate their life to serving Jesus with the Family.**
 - 4. Give their material possessions to the Home they join, with the understanding that they will permanently relinquish them, with the exception of those things the Home decides the returnee needs to keep.**
 - 5. Be free from substance abuse and/or the use of illegal or illicit drugs.**
 - 6. Be free from contagious disease.**
 - 7. Test negative for the HIV virus before moving back into the Home, and again test negative after a six-month period.**
 - 8. Refrain from any sexual activity until they are deemed free of the HIV virus after their second AIDS test.**
 - 9. Take a test for sexually transmitted diseases (STD), and refrain from any sexual activity until they have tested free of any sexually transmitted diseases, other than herpes.**
 - 10. For those 16 and over: Forfeit their right of mobility until the second AIDS test at six months shows that they are clear of the HIV virus.**
 - a. The shepherding desk may authorize the young returnee to move to another Home, providing that the shepherding desk first notifies the receiving Home that**

the member must refrain from any sexual activity until the second AIDS test, taken six months after his return, shows that returnee is clear of the HIV virus.

11. Have no debts. Any debts incurred while outside the Home must first be paid off before rejoining.

- a. The Home may decide, by a two-third majority, to take in a returning member who has debts, with the understanding that the member would work on repaying their debts while in the Home.**

12. Have no legal obligations, which would prevent them from being a full-time member of a Family discipleship Home.

In accordance with ML# 2942, "When Teens Leave the Family," teens or YAs who return to Family discipleship after having been out for no more than six weeks will need to fulfill the stipulations above.

Procedure for a Missionary Member Moving into a Family Discipleship Home

This procedure also pertains to AMMs applying to join a Family discipleship Home.

- A. A Missionary member who wishes to become a Family disciple by joining a Family discipleship Home must first find a Family discipleship Home that agrees by a two-thirds majority of the Home council to invite the Missionary member to join the Home.**

Home members should get to know the Missionary member before inviting him to join their Home.

- B. The Family discipleship Home and the Missionary member must apply to the regional shepherds via the shepherding desk for permission for the Missionary member to join that Family discipleship Home.**
- 1. The shepherding desk must respond to the Missionary member and the Family discipleship Home within 15 days of receipt of the Missionary member's application, acknowledging that it was received and passed on to the regional shepherds. The response must include the date that the application arrived, which date begins a 45-day processing period.**
 - a. During the 45-day processing period, the shepherding desk may ask for further information on the Missionary member from Homes or others who know the Missionary member.**
 - 2. If the application is denied, the shepherding desk will notify the Missionary member and the Family discipleship Home as to why the request was denied.**
 - a. The Missionary member will then be ineligible to reapply for Family discipleship for six months from receipt of the notice of denial.**
 - 3. If the shepherding desk does not deny the application within the 45-day processing period, the Missionary member may continue the process of joining the Family discipleship Home.**
 - a. Within 90 days after the expiration of the 45-day processing period, the Missionary member must either join that Home, or if unable to do so, find another Family discipleship Home that will accept him and allow him to continue the joining process.**
- C. Before moving into the Family discipleship Home the applicant must:**
- 1. Be free from contagious disease in accordance with the "[Health and Hygiene Rules.](#)"**
 - 2. Be free of debt, unless the Home agrees to assume the debt.**
 - 3. Have no legal, marital, military, or other obligations that would prevent him from being a full-time member of a Family discipleship Home.**

There are some legal situations, which might not interfere with Family discipleship, such as jury duty or obligatory public service for a traffic or misdemeanor violation. In some countries a term of military service is obligatory for certain ages, and a provisional disciple may still be able to attend to this requirement without too much disruption in his service to the Lord, in which case the Home could agree to accept him according to the circumstances. In another situation a prospective member may be in the midst of a marital separation or child custody battle that should be settled before the prospective member moves into the Home.

In most cases, though, it would be best for the prospective member to discharge any obligations they may have, legal, military, marital, or otherwise, and join the Family once they are free from such obligations.

- D. Once moved into the Family discipleship Home, the now provisional disciple becomes a non-voting member of the Home for three months.**
- 1. The provisional disciple must list his personal possessions using the "[Personal Possession Declaration for a New Family Disciple](#)." The assets listed will remain his property to take with him should he decide to leave before completing 90 days in the Home, unless he decides to leave some of the assets with the Home.**
 - 2. If at any time the Home deems that the provisional disciple is not living up to the *Charter* and the Family discipleship standard, the Home council may decide by a two-thirds majority that the provisional disciple returns to Missionary membership. The decision of the Home council will be final.**
 - a. The Home must notify the shepherding desk of such a decision.**
 - 3. The provisional disciple may have access to the Home's library and the MO website, and should read through the board criteria GNs during his first three months in the Home.**

Since there isn't a reading list for MMs who are joining an FD Home and MMs have received all the New Wine as it comes out, it'd be good for the now provisional disciple to read through the board criteria GNs (GN# 1099, 1104–1106) and get to know the *Charter* during his first three months in the FD Home. This should give him a well-rounded understanding of the FD standard.

- E. At the end of the 90-day period as a provisional disciple, the Home council will decide by a two-thirds majority whether the individual is living according to the *Charter* and discipleship standard. If so, he will become a full-fledged Family disciple with all the rights and responsibilities pertaining thereto, except the following:**
- 1. He must remain in the Home for an additional 90 days before gaining his right of mobility.**
 - a. The shepherding desk may authorize transfer to a different Home, if deemed necessary or expedient.**
 - 2. He must refrain from sexual contact or acts with others, except with his mate, until cleared of contagious disease in accordance with the "[Health and Hygiene Rules](#)."**
- F. An agreement should be reached between the Home and the disciple, as to which of his possessions the disciple may take with him should he decide to leave the Home.**
- 1. Acts 2:44–45 applies for the duration of the disciple's stay in the Home. He should willingly share his possessions with the Home and other members.**

Procedure for a Missionary Member Home Becoming a Family Discipleship Home

A. A Missionary member Home that wants to become a Family discipleship Home must fulfill the following requirements before applying for Family discipleship:

- 1. Have each Home member read through the *Charter*.**
 - a. Each Home member should also read through the board criteria GNs.**
- 2. Attest in writing to the regional shepherds that they believe they are living the Family discipleship standard as outlined in the *Charter*.**

Though the board criteria is in the *Charter*, the Home should also read through the board criteria GNs (GN #1099, 1104–1106). These GNs have the background and Word basis on which the Family discipleship standard is based that the criteria in the *Charter* doesn't include.

- 3. Maintain the Family discipleship minimum Home size of at least six members 18 years and older.**
 - a. Members under three months as a Missionary member do not count toward the Family discipleship minimum Home size.**
 - b. The Home should wait before applying to become a Family discipleship Home until any Fellow members applying to join the Home have completed the "[Procedure for a Fellow Member Moving into a Missionary Member Home](#)" in the *Missionary Member Statutes*.**
 - c. The Home must maintain the Family discipleship minimum Home size during its application period for Family discipleship.**
 - i. If the Home loses some of its members and as a result goes below the Family discipleship minimum Home size, the process will automatically end, the Home will return to Missionary membership, and may not reapply until it again has a minimum of at least six members 18 years and older.**
 - ii. Others may not join the Home during its application period for Family discipleship, though the regional shepherds may give exceptions for this.**
- 4. Be free of debt.**
- 5. Have no members with legal, marital, military, or other obligations that would prevent them from being in a Family discipleship Home.**

B. Having fulfilled the above requirements, the Missionary member Home may apply to the regional shepherds via the shepherding desk for permission to become a Family discipleship Home.

1. **The shepherding desk must respond within 15 days of receipt of the Missionary member Home's application, acknowledging that the application was received and passed on to the regional shepherds. The response must include the date that the application arrived, which date begins the 45-day processing period.**
 - a. **During the processing period, the regional shepherds may ask a designated representative to visit the Missionary member Home, and/or the shepherding desk may ask for further information from Homes or others who know the Home.**
 2. **If the application is denied, the shepherding desk will notify the Missionary member Home as to why the request was denied.**
 - a. **The Missionary member Home will then be ineligible to reapply for Family discipleship for six months from receipt of the notice of denial.**
 3. **If the shepherding desk does not deny the application within the 45-day period, the Missionary member Home may continue the process of becoming a Family discipleship Home.**
- C. Having begun the process of becoming a Family discipleship Home, the Home must:**
1. **Elect Home shepherds, Home managers, and board pillar representatives for the six board pillars within their Home in accordance with the "Voting and Election Rules."**
 2. **Complete the Family discipleship Home review.**
 - a. **If the Missionary member Home passes the Family discipleship Home review, the Home will qualify as a provisional Family discipleship Home.**
 - b. **If the Missionary member Home does not pass the Family discipleship Home review at this time, the Home will retain its Missionary membership and will not be eligible to reapply for Family discipleship for six months.**
 - c. **The regional shepherds must inform the Missionary member Home within 60 days of submitting their Home review whether or not the Home was granted provisional Family discipleship.**
- D. Having become a provisional Family discipleship Home, the Home will have all the rights and responsibilities pertaining to Family discipleship, except the following for the next six months:**
1. **Home members will not have the right of mobility.**
 - a. **The shepherding desk may authorize a member to transfer to a different Home if deemed necessary or expedient. However, the shepherding desk may not authorize a transfer from the Home if the transfer would result in the Home going below the Family discipleship minimum Home size.**
 2. **Home members must forgo sexual contact or acts with other Family disciples outside their Home until cleared by testing in accordance with the "Health and Hygiene Rules."**
 3. **If the Home must be placed on probationary notice during its time as a provisional Family discipleship Home, the Home will automatically revert to Missionary membership. The Missionary member Home will not be eligible to reapply for Family discipleship for six months.**
 - a. **This does not apply in the case where the Home is placed on automatic probationary notice by the reporting office for no, low, or late monthly report,**

tithe, 1% FAF, and/or 3% Common Pot contribution as long as the matter is resolved within 60 days.

- E. If the provisional Family discipleship Home passes their second Family discipleship Home review, the Home will become a full-fledged Family discipleship Home.**
 - 1. If the provisional Family discipleship Home does not pass their second Family discipleship Home review, the Home will regain its Missionary membership and will not be eligible to reapply for Family discipleship for six months.**
 - 2. The regional shepherds must inform the Missionary member Home within 60 days of submitting their Home review whether or not the Home was granted full Family discipleship.**

Procedure for a Fellow Member Moving into a Family Discipleship Home

- A. A Fellow member who wishes to become a Family disciple by joining a Family discipleship Home must first read the *Charter* and if, after prayerful consideration, he determines that he still wishes to become a Family disciple, he must find a Family discipleship Home that agrees by a two-thirds majority of the Home council to invite the Fellow member to join the Home.**
- B. The Family discipleship Home and the Fellow member must apply to the regional shepherds via the shepherding desk for permission for the Fellow member to join that Family discipleship Home.**
 - 1. The shepherding desk must within 15 days of receipt acknowledge that the application and statement was received and passed on to the regional shepherds. The response must include the date that the application arrived, which begins the 45-day processing period.**
 - a. During the 45-day processing period, the shepherding desk may ask for further information from Homes or others who know the Fellow member.**
 - 2. If the application is denied, the shepherding desk will notify the Fellow member and the Family discipleship Home as to why the request was denied.**
 - a. The Fellow member will then be ineligible to reapply for Family discipleship for six months from receipt of the notice of denial.**
 - 3. If the shepherding desk does not respond within the 45-day period, the Fellow member may continue the process of joining the Family discipleship Home.**
 - a. Within 90 days after the expiration of the 45-day processing period, the Fellow member must either join that Home, or if unable to do so, find another Family discipleship Home that will accept him and allow him to continue the joining process.**
- C. Before moving into the Family discipleship Home the applicant must:**
 - 1. Be free from contagious disease in accordance with the "[Health and Hygiene Rules](#)."**
 - 2. Be free of debt, unless the Home agrees to assume the debt.**
 - 3. Have no legal, marital, military, or other obligations that would prevent him from being a full-time member of a Family discipleship Home.**

There are some legal situations, which might not interfere with Family discipleship, such as jury duty or obligatory public service for a traffic or misdemeanor violation. In some countries a term of military service is obligatory for certain ages, and a provisional disciple may still be able to attend to this requirement without too much disruption in his service to the Lord, in which case the Home could agree to accept him according

to the circumstances. Or perhaps a prospective member may be in the midst of a marital separation or child custody battle that should be settled before the prospective member moves into the Home.

In most cases, though, it would be best for the prospective member to discharge any obligations he may have, legal, military, marital, or otherwise, and join the Family once he is free from such obligations.

- D. Once moved into the Family discipleship Home, the now provisional disciple becomes a non-voting member of the Home for six months.**
- 1. The provisional disciple must list his personal possessions using the *Charter's* "Personal Possession Declaration for a New Family Disciple." The assets listed will remain his property to take with him should he decide to leave before completing six months in the Home, unless he decides to leave some of the assets with the Home.**
 - 2. If at any time the Home deems that the provisional disciple is not living up to the *Charter* and the Family discipleship standard, the Home may decide by a two-thirds majority of Home council members that the provisional disciple returns to Fellow membership. The decision of the Home council will be final.**
 - a. The Home must notify the shepherding desk of such a decision.**
 - 3. The provisional disciple may have access to the Home's library and the MO and other related Family websites, and should read through the "Reading List for a Fellow Member Becoming a Family Disciple or Missionary Member" and the board criteria GNs during his first six months in the Home.**

It'd be good for the now provisional disciple to read through the board criteria GNs (GN# 1099, 1104–1106) and get to know the *Charter* during his first six months in the FD Home. This should give him a well-rounded understanding of the FD standard.

- E. At the end of the six month period as a provisional disciple, the Home council will decide by a two-thirds majority to confirm whether the individual is living according to the *Charter* and discipleship standard. If so, he will become a full-fledged Family disciple with all the rights and responsibilities pertaining thereto, except the following:**
- 1. He must refrain from sexual contact or acts with others, except with his mate, until cleared of contagious disease in accordance with the "Health and Hygiene Rules."**
- F. An agreement should be reached between the Home and the disciple, as to which of his possessions the disciple may take with him should he decide to leave the Home.**
- 1. Acts 2:44–45 applies for the duration of the disciple's time in the Home. He should willingly share his possessions with the Home and other members according to the need and agreements of the Home.**

Procedure for a Fellow Member Becoming an Attached Missionary Member

- A. A Fellow member wishing to report to a Family Discipleship or a Missionary member Home as an Attached Missionary member must first read the *Missionary Member Statutes*. If, after prayerful consideration, he determines that he wishes to apply for Attached Missionary membership he must find a Family discipleship or Missionary member Home that agrees to invite him to report to their Home as an Attached Missionary member.
- B. The Fellow member and the Home he is joining must write to the regional desk for permission for the Fellow member to join the Home as an Attached Missionary member.
 - 1. The regional desk must within 15 days of receipt acknowledge that the application was received and passed on to the regional shepherds. The response must include the date that the application arrived, which begins the 45-day processing period.
 - 2. The regional desk, if necessary, may ask for further information from others who know the Fellow member.
 - 3. If the Fellow member's application is denied, the regional desk will notify the member and the Home of the reasons within 45 days from the date the regional desk received the application. The Fellow member will then be ineligible to reapply for Attached Missionary membership for six months.
- C. If the Fellow member's application is accepted, or his application has not been denied within the 45-day processing period, the Fellow member must then fulfill the "[Procedure for a Fellow Member Moving into a Family Discipleship Home](#)," clauses D–G, or the "[Procedure for a Fellow Member Moving into a Missionary Member Home](#)," clauses C–E in the *Missionary Member Statutes*, depending on which Home he may be joining.

Procedure for Using the Right of Mobility

- A. A Family disciple may move out of the Home in which he resides, providing the following seven stipulations are met:**
- 1. The member is at least 18 years of age and gives 30-day notice in writing to the Home's steering council, stating his plans and destination, and sends a copy to his regional desk.**
 - a. At that point the member becomes a non-voting member in Home matters and is freed from any responsibility for new financial liabilities or debts the Home may incur after that date.**
 - b. The 30-day departure period can be shortened by a two-thirds majority of the Home council.**
 - c. A member who has given his 30-day notice does not retain the right to vote with the Home on board criteria questions during the Home review.**
 - d. A 16- or 17-year-old member must receive written permission from at least one parent or guardian before being able to move from the Home.**
 - i. If the parents of a 16- or 17-year-old do not live within the same region as their teen they may authorize the teen's Home shepherds to give permission for the movement of their teen within the regional area.**
 - 2. The member prepares to leave in an orderly fashion, by turning over pertinent ministry material and thoroughly explaining his ministries, duties, and responsibilities to the appropriate persons.**

Ideally the departing member should make arrangements with his Home to turn over his ministries and responsibilities sometime during the period of the 30-day notice. In the rare circumstances where it may take a departing member longer than 30 days to turn these matters over to someone else the departing member and the Home should discuss the matter together to come up with a plan and timetable agreeable to both, for transferring the departing member's responsibilities to someone else. In some cases this can be accomplished after the departing member has physically left the Home.

- 3. The Home and departing member agree together on which of the Home's friends or contacts should continue to be ministered to by the Home or by the departing member, and who would receive support from the contacts. The Home should endeavor to reach an agreement that accommodates the need of both the Home and the departing member. Above all, the friend's or contact's spiritual growth and personal desires should be taken into consideration.**

It's difficult, if not impossible, to cover every situation that may come up when dividing friends and contacts. Each situation must be prayerfully judged on its own merits and great care must be taken to try to reach a solution in love and through counsel and prayer that is acceptable to both the Home and the departing member, with the needs of all—and most of all, the sheep—taken into account.

Besides coming to an agreement about the financial factor of who the friends give their support to, there are a myriad of other subjects that need to be discussed concerning the follow-up of sheep when more than one Family member or Home is in contact with that person. Home members should do all they can to work in unity and prefer their brethren, as well as the needs of their friends, more than themselves. If a loving settlement cannot be reached between the two parties and it erupts into serious disunity this would be in violation of the "[Responsibilities of a Family Discipleship Home](#)," as well as the "[Responsibilities of an Individual Family Disciple](#)." In such a case, both parties may be subject to PN until their differences can be resolved amicably.

- a. **If the departing member has been ministering personally to any of the Home's contacts, he may continue to do so from a different city or country. However, he should ask the Home's permission before requesting financial help from these contacts and he may not prevent the resident Home from ministering to or appealing to the contacts for support, unless a contact has specifically expressed a desire to support the departing member and/or his new Home, in which case that contact should be transferred to the departing member.**
 - b. **If the departing member is moving to another Home in the same city or vicinity, he may continue to follow up on and minister to the friends and supporters he has been personally feeding and ministering to, as well as continue to receive whatever support his friends wish to give him. He should, however, encourage his supporters to support his former Home, should his former Home depend on that support; particularly if the Home he is moving to is already sufficiently supported. However, if the contact wants to support the departing member instead, the contact should be transferred to the departing member's new Home.**
 - c. **In cases where a Home divides in two, with the departing members opening a new Home in the same city or vicinity, they should agree together as to who will care for each contact. If they are unable to reach a decision they should equally divide the gifts they receive from these friends, if this is agreeable to their supporters. If a supporter does not agree to dividing it equally, he may support whomever he chooses.**
 - d. **If the departing members is moving to another city and will not be able to continue to have personal contact with his supporter, he may continue to minister to them via mail. However, he should ask others in the Home he is leaving to continue to follow up on the contacts and should ask his supporters if they would be willing to continue to support his former Home. If a supporter wishes to send the departing member some regular or occasional support it is the supporter's prerogative to do so.**
- 4. His portion of the Home's debts and applicable liabilities are paid.**
- a. **If debts have been incurred, the member wishing to leave must be given sufficient time, on a regular basis, to engage in fundraising activities until his portion of the debts and/or applicable liabilities have been paid.**
 - b. **The Home council may, by a two-thirds majority, free the departing member from any portion of the Home's debts or applicable liabilities.**
 - i. **At least 50% of the net income generated through the departing member's fundraising activities is to be used for no other purpose than the payment of his portion of the Home's debts and/or applicable liabilities. The remaining 50% would be for the Home's current operating expenses.**
 - ii. **Once the member's debts and/or applicable liabilities have been paid, at least 50% of the net income generated through the member's fundraising activities should be used to facilitate his move. The amount needed to facilitate the move must be agreed upon by the Home in accordance with the "[Financial](#)**

Rules.” The remaining 50% would be for the Home’s current operating expenses.

- c. A 16- or 17-year-old member is exempt from this requirement.
 - i. While a 16- or 17-year-old member is not held responsible for the Home’s financial decisions and obligations, if he is raising support to move to another Home he may keep no less than 50% of his net outreach income to facilitate their move.
 - d. Upon giving his 30-day notice to the Home, he will not be held responsible for the payments of any new debts or liabilities agreed to or incurred by the Home.
 - i. If for some reason the member remains in the Home past his 30-day notice, the member would regain his voting rights and would be responsible for any new debts or liabilities incurred by the Home after that date, unless the Home council agrees by a two-thirds majority to extend his departure date.
 - e. The member is free to depart when his 30-day notice expires and his portion of the Home’s debts and liabilities have been paid.
 - f. If the member’s plans change and he decides to remain in the Home, the funds which the Home allowed the member to set aside in preparation for the move should be returned to the Home. The Home council will decide by a two-thirds majority how the funds should be reallocated. If the member is making a move that will require less funds than he raised, he may keep the funds needed, and return the remainder to the Home.
5. The Home in which the member resides is not on probationary notice.
- a. A member of a Home that is on probationary notice temporarily relinquishes his right of mobility, unless the Home was put on probationary notice due to the Home’s population being undersized or oversized.
 - b. A member who has given his 30-day notice to move prior to the Home being placed on probationary notice retain his right of mobility.
 - i. The regional desk can temporarily suspend the right of mobility of a member who has given his 30-day notice to move just prior to the Home being placed on probationary notice.
6. The departing member is not on Home censure or probationary status.
- a. A member who is on Home censure or probationary status may, with the agreement of the majority of their Home council and the regional desk, receive permission to move to another Home, if the situation warrants it, where he will finish his time of censure or probation.
7. The member has worked out any necessary reporting arrangements with his former Home.
- a. While a member is in transit to his new Home and/or is making preparations to open his own Home, his former Home may allow him to remain on their eTRF for a maximum of two more reports after he has physically left the Home, providing the Home receives the transit member’s stats, tithe, 1% Family Aid Fund gift, and 3% common pot contribution during this time.
 - i. Once a member has been listed as outgoing on their former Home’s ETRF, he must either appear the following month on the ETRF of the Home receiving

him or have opened up his own Home in accordance with the **"World Services Reporting Rules"** and **"Responsibilities of an Individual Family Disciple."**

1. If, after being dropped from his former Home's eTRF, the member does not appear on another Family discipleship Home's eTRF by the next reporting date the member will relinquish his Family discipleship and will be moved to Missionary membership.
 - a. An extension of 30 additional days may be granted by the regional desk in exceptional cases.
2. If the departing member is opening his own Home, he has the option to temporarily stay with Missionary or Fellow members, or in a non-Family home for up to 30 days, but for no more than 30 days within any 60-day period in accordance with the **"Responsibilities of a Family Discipleship Home."**
 - a. The member must report as his own Family discipleship Home during this time.
 - b. The regional desk may grant an extension if they feel it is warranted.

8. If the departing member must raise a determined amount of funds to travel, he may keep no less than 50% of his net outreach income to set aside for his move.

Once agreed upon, the departing member could engage in fundraising and the same minimum 50% setup as described above in clause A.4 for paying off his portion the Home's debts or applicable liabilities would be used for setting aside travel funds. Once the agreed-upon amount of travel funds is reached the member would resume turning in all outreach funds to the Home and would no longer need time off from his ministry for fundraising. So if he has given his 30-day notice and has his funds according to whatever arrangements he worked out with the Home, then during the remainder of his 30-day period he would be at the disposal of the Home for whatever duties and ministries he might be needed for.

B. Family disciples may open a Home or be a road team Home in any city or metropolitan area within their present country of residence that has no Family discipleship or Missionary member Homes, providing they have four members 18 years of age or older and have notified their regional desk of their intention to do so, and that city or metropolitan area is not "closed" according to the **"Procedure for Opening a Home in a City or Metropolitan Area with a Family Discipleship or Missionary Member Home."**

1. A 16- or 17-year-old member may join such a home providing at least two members of the Home are 25 years of age or older and he has at least one of his parents' or guardian's written permission.
 - a. The regional desk may grant permission for a senior teen to live in a Home, even if the Home does not have two members over 25 years of age, provided the other right of mobility requirements have been met.

C. Family disciples may open a Home or be a road team Home in any city within their present country of residence that already has Family discipleship or Missionary member Homes, providing they are four members 18 years of age or older and they have the agreement of those Homes and the regional desk, in accordance with the **"Procedure for Opening a Home in a City or Metropolitan Area with a Family Discipleship or Missionary Member Home."**

It's important to note the **"Home Size Rules"** concerning the time frame requirements for a new Home to bring their personnel up to the minimum of six voting members 18 years and older.

1. A 16- or 17-year-old member may join such a Home, providing at least two members of the Home are 25 years of age or older and he has at least one of his parents' or guardian's written permission.

- a. **The regional desk may grant permission for a senior teen to live in a Home, even if the Home does not have two members over 25 years of age, provided the other right of mobility requirements have been met.**
- D. A Family disciple may join any Home within their present country of residence, providing two-thirds of the receiving Home's Home council agrees.**
 - 1. A 16- or 17-year-old member is entitled to this right providing there are at least two members of the receiving Home 25 years of age or older and he has at least one of his parents' or guardian's written permission.**
 - a. **The shepherding desk may grant permission for a senior teen to live in a Home, even if the Home does not have two members over 25 years of age, provided the other right of mobility requirements have been met.**
 - 2. Upon receipt of a request from another member to join a Home, the Home should respond within 15 days and make their final decision within 30 days.**
 - a. **The receiving Home should verify the member's discipleship status with the member's regional desk and may also ask the member, his present Home's shepherds, or the member's shepherding desk for additional information.**
 - 3. It is up to a member intending to move to a new Home to ask the Home or the Home's regional or shepherding desk for additional information about their prospective Home.**
 - a. **A member intending to move to a Home has the right to know before he moves in what his portion would be of the new Home's debts and liabilities. The receiving Home may, by a two-thirds majority of its Home council, agree to waive all or a portion of what would be the prospective member's portion of the Home's debts and liabilities.**

If the member would like to know more detail of how the Home operates or conducts its outreach, what ministries, or types of support the Home has he may write to the Home asking for more information.

 - 4. The receiving Home has the right to know about any debts or liabilities a prospective new member may be carrying. The Home understands that it must either assume the debts and liabilities or allow the new member sufficient time to engage in fundraising activities to pay the debts and liabilities upon joining the Home.**
 - a. **At least 50% of the net income generated through the member's fundraising activities should be used for no purpose other than the payment of the debts and liabilities, unless the Home has voted to assume his debts and/or liabilities.**
 - 5. Before a new member joins a Home an agreement should be reached between the Home and the new member as to which of his possessions the new member may take with him if he should decide to leave the Home.**
- E. A Family disciple may move to any country or be a witnessing road team for over 30 days in any country providing he has received clearance from the regional desk for that prospective country in accordance with the "[Procedure for Granting or Denying Clearance](#)."**
 - 1. Automatic clearance does not apply to sensitive countries.**
 - 2. Clearance is valid for one year from the date granted, unless specified otherwise by the regional desk issuing the clearance. If those who have been cleared don't arrive in the country within this time period, they must reapply for clearance.**

- 3. If a witnessing road team or road team Home will stay less than 30 days within any 90-day period in a country within their regional area, a request for clearance is not required.**
 - a. If a road team plans to visit a country in another regional area or in a sensitive country the road team must apply for clearance, even if the road trip will last less than 30 days.**
 - b. It is the road team's responsibility to determine whether the city or metropolitan area they are witnessing in has Family discipleship or Missionary member Homes before the road team begins any witnessing activities. If there are, the road team must first receive permission from those Homes to witness in the city or metropolitan area, and must inform the regional desk that they have done so.**
 - i. It is the road team's responsibility to be aware of and abide by all local area guidelines and goals.**
- 4. The regional desk cannot deny clearance to a Family member and his immediate family that wishes to return to a country which the member holds a passport to, but the regional desk cannot guarantee acceptance in a Home upon arrival.**

Procedure for Granting or Denying Clearance

A. A Family member may move to any country, or be on a witnessing road team for over 30 days in any country, providing he has received clearance from the regional desk for the prospective country.

Once clearance to a country has been obtained, a member is free to move to a Home that will accept him within that country, but it is the member's responsibility to find a Home that will accept him; the RSs or the RD cannot guarantee acceptance in a Home.

When seeking clearance to another country applications must include the clearance request form found at [RO-RD_forms](#). If the applicants would like to open a new Home, they must also fill out an opening Home form found at [RO-RD_forms](#).

Members planning to pioneer their own Home are responsible to ascertain whether the city they are planning to move to already has a Family discipleship or Missionary member Home, and if so, to follow the "Procedure for Opening a Home in a City or Metropolitan Area with a Family Discipleship or Missionary Member Home."

Member evaluation will generally be required for clearance to sensitive countries, but may also be requested by the regional desk for clearance to other countries as well.

- 1. When seeking clearance to another country, a member should send his clearance request to the regional desk for that country.**
 - a. If a road team or road team Home will stay less than 30 days within any 90-day period in the prospective country, a request for clearance is not required.**
 - i. If a road team would like to go to a country in another regional area or to a sensitive country the team must apply for clearance, even if the road trip will be there for less than 30 days.**
 - ii. It is the road team's responsibility to determine if a city or metropolitan area in the country they are in has Family discipleship or Missionary member Homes before they begin their witnessing activities. If there are Homes in the city, the road team must receive permission from those Homes to witness in the city or metropolitan area and inform the regional desk that they have obtained the Homes' permission.**
 - 1. It is the road team's responsibility to be aware of and abide by all local area guidelines and goals.**
 - 2. It is the road team's responsibility to be mindful of local laws and to respect the local customs and culture.**
- 2. Within 15 days of receipt of a clearance request, the receiving regional desk must respond to the applicant, acknowledging that his clearance request was received and passed on to the regional shepherds. The response must include the date that the clearance application arrived, which date begins the 30-day processing period within which the request must be granted or denied.**

- a. **The regional desk may ask the member's Home for further information or for an evaluation of the member.**
3. **Clearance is automatically granted if, after receiving a notice of receipt, the member does not receive further response to his request within the 30-day processing period.**
 - a. **In the case of a sensitive country, after receiving a notice of receipt, members must wait to receive final notification of clearance from the regional desk for that country.**
4. **The regional desk cannot deny clearance to a Family member 16 years and older who wishes to return to the country for which he or she holds a passport.**
 - a. **If the member is married and/or a parent, his or her immediate family will also be automatically cleared to that country.**

The regional desk cannot deny clearance to a member, nor their mate or children, who want to return to the member's passport country. However, you must notify the RD by submitting your clearance request form, which in this case serves as a notification of intent. Since you are automatically cleared you do not need to wait for a response from the RD before moving. A couple and their children would not be eligible for "automatic clearance" on the strength of a couple's child being a passport holder of that country.

5. **Clearance to move to a country is valid for one year from the date it was granted, unless specified otherwise by the regional desk issuing the clearance. If a member who has been cleared doesn't arrive within one year in the country to which he was cleared, he must reapply for clearance.**
- B. A Missionary or Fellow member applying for clearance to another country while also applying for Family discipleship or Missionary membership, must have already begun the process of becoming a Family disciple or Missionary member before being granted clearance to move.**

Procedure for Withdrawing Permission to Remain in a Country

- A. A member's permission to remain in a country may be withdrawn if the member is contravening the *Charter* or if the member's activities or presence in the country are deemed to be detrimental to the work in that country, and the member is not a national of the country.**
 - 1. A Family member 16 years and older may remain in the country for which he or she holds a passport.**
 - a. If the member is married and/or a parent, his or her immediate family may also remain in the country.**
- B. To withdraw permission, the following procedure must be followed:**
 - 1. The shepherding desk must write the member explaining the activities that he is engaged in that are detrimental to the work. Upon receipt the member must cease such activities.**
 - a. If the member does not cease the activities the member's permission to remain in the country can be withdrawn.**
 - b. If the member disagrees with the decision, he can write to the international board chairperson for the Coaching and Shepherding board within 15 days explaining why he disagrees.**
 - i. The member may remain in the country, but must cease the activities in question while the matter is being decided.**
 - c. The international board chairperson for the Coaching and Shepherding board will decide the matter in counsel with the regional shepherds and respond within 60 days.**
 - 2. If the member's permission to remain in the country is withdrawn, the shepherding desk must inform the member, specifying the date by which he must leave the country.**
 - a. Failure to comply will jeopardize his Family membership.**
 - b. Arrangements may need to be made by the Home for the member to raise funds for his move according to the "[Procedure for Using the Right of Mobility](#)."**

Procedure for Defining a Metropolitan Area

- A. The regional council may set the parameters of a metropolitan area within their region, if not already defined.**
 - 1. Unless otherwise set by the regional council, the parameters of a metropolitan area will be those officially recognized by the country the metropolitan area is located in.**

- B. A Family discipleship or Missionary member Home desiring that the adjacent city in which their Home resides be included in a metropolitan area must inform the regional council via the regional desk of their request.**
 - 1. Within 15 days of receipt of the request, the regional desk will inform all Family discipleship and Missionary member Homes in that metropolitan area of the petition to include the adjacent city in the metropolitan area.**

 - 2. Within 30 days of receipt of the petition, each Family discipleship and Missionary member Home must vote and notify the regional desk whether they agree to including the city in the metropolitan area. The vote must be conducted as a Home referendum in accordance with the "[Voting and Election Rules](#)," but is not subject to a vote of confirmation every six months.**

 - 3. The tally of the Homes' votes will go to the regional council for ratification.**
 - a. In the event of a tie vote the regional council may cast the deciding vote.**

 - b. If two-thirds of the regional council disagree with the majority vote, the disagreement will be referred to the regional shepherds to make the final decision.**

 - c. The regional desk will inform all the Homes of the outcome.**

- C. The regional council can initiate the procedure to redefine a metropolitan area whether or not a city already has Family discipleship or Missionary member Homes.**
 - 1. The regional council should consult with any affected Homes before initiating the procedure.**

- D. All Family Homes within a metropolitan area are free to conduct outreach within that metropolitan area in accordance with city council decisions.**

This makes it possible for a Home to open in a suburb or adjacent town within the metropolitan area and still be able to conduct outreach within the city itself, unless the city is closed, as outlined in "[Procedure for Opening a Home in a City or Metropolitan Area with a Family Discipleship or Missionary Member Home](#)." However, if a Home opens in a town that is not part of the metropolitan area, they must obtain permission from the Homes in the area before they can conduct outreach within the metropolitan area.

A road team Home or a witnessing road trip that wants to witness in a metropolitan area that already has an FD or MM Home must receive permission from the FD and MM Homes in the metropolitan area before doing so, according to the "[Procedure for Granting or Denying Clearance.](#)"

Procedure for Opening a Home in a City or Metropolitan Area with a Family Discipleship or Missionary Member Home

- A. A Family discipleship or Missionary member Home desiring to move to a city that already has a Family discipleship or Missionary member Home must send their request to the regional council via the regional desk.**
- 1. Within 15 days of receipt of the request, the regional desk will inform all Family discipleship and Missionary member Homes in that city of the petition to open a new Home.**
 - 2. Within 30 days of receipt of the petition, each Family discipleship and Missionary member Home must vote and notify the regional desk whether they agree to the new Home opening. The vote must be conducted as a Home referendum in accordance with the "[Voting and Election Rules](#)," but is not subject to a vote of confirmation every six months.**
 - 3. The tally of the Homes' votes will go to the regional council for ratification.**
 - a. In the event of a tie vote among the Homes, the regional council may cast the deciding vote.**
 - b. If two-thirds of the regional council disagree with the majority vote of the Homes, the disagreement will be referred to the regional shepherds to make the final decision.**
 - c. The regional desk will inform all the Homes of the outcome.**
- B. New Family discipleship or Missionary member Homes may not be opened in cities or metropolitan areas that have been designated as "closed" without regional council approval.**
- 1. For a city or metropolitan area to be closed, the regional council must first inform World Services Administration of its plan. If the regional council does not hear back within 15 days, they may proceed with closing the city or metropolitan area.**
 - a. If approved as a closed city or metropolitan area, no new Homes may open in that city or metropolitan area without permission from the regional council. All Homes already there would be able to remain.**
 - b. Family members from outside of the closed city or metropolitan area are not permitted to conduct outreach in that city or metropolitan area without permission from the regional council.**
 - c. All Homes in the region must be notified that the city or metropolitan area is closed.**

- i. Approval to keep a city or metropolitan area closed must be renewed annually before January 31st, in accordance with the "Voting and Election Rules."**
- 2. The regional council can at any time open a "closed" city or metropolitan area to new Homes, if the council feels it is no longer warranted for the city or metropolitan area to be closed. The regional council must inform all Homes in the region and World Services Administration of this change.**

Procedure for Becoming a Service Home

- A. The regional shepherds may initiate the opening of a service Home providing:**
- 1. They inform World Services Leadership of their intentions and the reasons for opening a service Home.**
 - a. If the regional shepherds don't hear back in 15 days, they may proceed.**
 - 2. All members invited to live in a service Home are notified in advance that the Home is a service Home and are informed of the basic nature of the Home and the services it will provide.**
 - 3. All members of the proposed service Home have agreed to relinquish whichever rights outlined in the "[Rights of Personnel in a Service Home](#)" that the regional shepherds deem necessary, for as long as they remain in the service Home.**
- B. The regional shepherds may grant permission for an existing Home in their area to become a service Home providing:**
- 1. They inform World Services Leadership of their intentions and the reasons for making the Home a service Home.**
 - a. If the regional shepherds don't hear back in 15 days, they may proceed.**
 - 2. The members of the Home are informed of the basic nature of the Home and the services it will provide, and the Home council agrees by a two-thirds majority to become a service Home.**
 - a. If the Home votes against the proposal the regional shepherds may assign the service to another Home or open a Home to provide the service.**
 - i. If the Home is already providing the service it must relinquish the service, the related contacts, and other pertinent materials.**
 - 3. All members of the proposed service Home have agreed to relinquish whichever rights outlined in the "[Rights of Personnel in a Service Home](#)" that the regional shepherds deem necessary, for as long as they remain in the service Home.**

Procedure for Selecting a Board Chairperson

- A. The regional shepherds are responsible to appoint the chairpersons of the national and regional boards within their regional area.**
 - 1. The regional shepherds can choose to either appoint all the board chairpersons for both the national and regional boards or allow any particular board to elect its own chairperson.**
 - 2. Every six months all national boards should hold a vote of confidence for its chairperson, to be decided by a majority vote. If the vote is one of no confidence, the matter goes to the regional board for consideration.**
 - a. If a majority of the regional board agrees, the national chairperson will be removed from his position, though not from the board itself.**
 - b. The regional shepherds may either appoint a new chairperson to the national board within 60 days or ask the national board to choose a new chairperson from among its members.**
 - 3. A Missionary member may be appointed as a national board chairperson.**
- B. World Services Leadership is responsible to appoint the international board chairpersons.**

Procedure for Appointing a Board Member

A. The regional council appoints all board members within its regional area and may appoint new members to the boards at any time.

1. The regional council can appoint additional members to a regional board as long as the appointed members, including the chairperson, are not more than the number of national board chairpersons that automatically sit on the regional board.

2. A Missionary member may be appointed as a member of a board.

Although the RC appoints all board members, the chairpersons of the NBs are automatically on the RB and therefore not considered appointed to the RB. The RC may appoint more members to the RB less than or equal to the number of NB chairpersons. MMs may be appointed by the RC to sit on any regional board except the CS board.

B. An agreement, by a simple majority vote of the Home in which a board member resides, is required before a board member can take up his appointment. If the Home does not agree to the member's appointment, that member may either decline the appointment or move to another Home where he will be able to obtain that Home's agreement for them to fulfill his board obligations.

C. Each board member is appointed for a term of one year.

1. The regional council will appoint all national board chairpersons and national board members to a term of office.

a. A Missionary member may be appointed as a national board chairperson.

2. The regional shepherds will appoint all regional board chairpersons and regional board members that are not national board chairpersons to a term of office.

3. Regardless of when a member is appointed, his term of office ends the following January 31st of each year. The member may be reappointed at that time for another term.

Every year the RC will review the performance of the NB members in their region as well as the needs of the region and who might be best suited to fill board positions. Similarly, every year the RS body will review the performance of the non-NBC regional board members and RBCs in their region as well as the needs of the region and who in the region might be best suited to fill these regional board positions. The review of all board positions is based on a variety of factors that includes availability of personnel, location, people's ability to do the job effectively, their performance on the job, their Home situation, someone else being better suited to fill the position, and the need for variety and change. The RSs and the RC may at that time reappoint the current board member(s) or chairperson(s) to a new term of office or may instead appoint new board members or chairpersons for the next term, as the Lord leads.

The decision to reappoint a board member for another term of office is not solely based on the member's performance, but is determined by all the factors involved. If you are not asked to serve another year on the

board, please don't take it as a point of personal failure. It's understood that serving on the board requires considerable time and sacrifice on your and your Home's part, and that sacrifice is much appreciated.

- 4. If a board member wishes to resign from the board or will be moving to another board area he should give 30-day notice to the chairperson of the board above and must pass on his board responsibilities to another board member.**
 - 5. If a national board chairperson wishes to resign from the board or will be moving to another board area he should give 30-day notice to his board, to his regional board chairperson, and to his regional shepherds.**
 - a. The regional board chairperson should ensure that the former national chairperson's board responsibilities, including information about ongoing activities or programs, board email address, newsgroup access, and board chair gift are passed on to the new chairperson.**
 - i. The regional council must replace the national board chairperson within 60 days of the chairperson's departure.**
 - 6. If a regional board chairperson wishes to resign from the board or will be moving to another board area he should give 30-day notice to his board, to his international board chairperson, and to his regional shepherds.**
 - a. The regional shepherds must suggest to World Services Leadership and the international board chairperson of the respective board an appointment to replace the regional board chairperson within 60 days of the chairperson's departure.**
 - i. If the regional shepherds don't hear back within 15 days, they may proceed with the appointment.**
 - b. The regional shepherds, in conjunction with the international board chairperson should ensure that the former regional chairperson's board responsibilities, including information about ongoing activities or programs, board email address, newsgroup access, and board chair gift are passed on to the new chairperson appointed by the regional shepherds.**
- D. An individual's participation on the boards is limited to membership on two pillars, and though the individual may sit on two boards in different pillars, he may only chair one of them.**

If the RSs feels that there is a need for someone on the national level to chair more than one national board, they may apply to the concerned international board chairs for approval. But if the RSs feel that there is a need for an NB chairperson to sit on an RB of another pillar, that person would then only be able to sit on one national board.

- 1. A regional board chairperson cannot be appointed to, sit on, or chair a national board.**

Procedure for the Removal of a Board Member

A. Board members who are failing in their duties may be recommended for dismissal from the board by either their board or by the board above.

The decision on whether to dismiss board members should be based primarily on whether they are fulfilling their duties as per the board. If they are having personal problems or having problems in their Home, as long as those problems are not affecting their ability to perform their duties properly and be a blessing to the area as a whole, then this alone is not criterion to warrant removal.

Board members do not have to be spiritual leaders and shepherds, or even the best all-around samples at all times. However, if the spiritual sample of a member of a board is having a detrimental effect on interactions with the Homes this person is meant to serve, even if they are a good board member, they may have to be removed from the board.

WS may remove a board member from their post if deemed necessary.

B. To remove a national board member:

- 1. In order for a national board to remove a member, a majority of the members of the national board must be in agreement. The regional board must, by a simple majority, also agree to the measure. If the regional board does not agree, the matter may be taken to the regional council to decide.**
- 2. In order for a regional board to remove a member of a national board under it, a majority of the regional board must be in agreement. A majority of the national board that the member is on must also agree to the measure. If the national board does not agree, then the matter may be taken to the regional council to decide.**
- 3. In the extreme case where all members on a national board are found to be incompetent, a simple majority of either the regional board or the regional council, can, with the agreement of a majority of the other body, decide to dismiss the entire board.**
 - a. If an entire national board is dismissed, the regional shepherds must appoint a new board within three months. In the interim period the chairperson of the regional board directly above the national board would do their best to fulfill the duties of that national board.**

C. To remove the chairperson of a national board if the board feels he is not performing his duties properly, there must be the agreement of the majority of the board members:

- 1. In order to remove a national board chairperson from the regional board, the regional board itself or the national board that the member is chairperson of must put forth a motion to remove them.**
- 2. If the regional board and national board disagree then the matter may be taken to the regional council to decide.**

If the chairperson of a NB is voted off the RB, he also lose his position as chairperson on the NB. However, he remains a member of the NB unless voted off of that board as well. In this case, the RSs would, within two months, appoint a new chairperson to the NB, or may ask the NB itself to choose a new chairperson from among its members.

- D. The regional shepherds have the right to dismiss the chairperson of a regional board if they feel the chairperson is not performing their duties properly. However, a majority of the regional board itself must also agree.**
 - 1. If the regional shepherds and regional board disagree the matter may be taken to World Services Leadership and the international board chairperson of the respective board to decide.**
 - 2. The regional shepherds have 60 days to appoint a replacement chairperson and must inform World Services Leadership and the international board chairperson of the respective board concerning their suggested appointment.**
 - a. If the regional shepherds don't hear back within 15 days, they may proceed with the appointment.**

Procedure for Designating or Revoking Sensitive Country Status

- A. The regional shepherds in counsel with the Communications and Community Relations regional board chairperson may designate a country in their region as a sensitive country, providing:**
- 1. They obtain the approval of World Services Leadership.**
 - a. Renewed approval must be obtained from World Services Leadership before January 31st of each year.**
 - 2. If Family discipleship or Missionary member Homes are already established in the country, then:**
 - a. A simple majority of the Homes in the country must agree by a Home referendum as outlined in the "Voting and Election Rules" that the country should be classified as a sensitive country.**
 - i. If the result of the referendum goes against the country being classified as a sensitive country, the country will temporarily be classified as sensitive until such time as World Services Leadership makes a final decision.**
 - 1. The regional shepherds must communicate with World Services Leadership informing them of the referendum's outcome. The Homes that voted against the measure may also communicate with World Services Leadership explaining their objection to the measure.**
 - ii. World Services Leadership will make the decision and respond within 30 days of receipt of the regional shepherds' communication.**
- B. All members who are invited to or given clearance to a sensitive country must be informed by the regional desk that the country is now a sensitive country and have the basic nature, goals, direction, and operating procedures of the country explained to them.**
- C. To remain in, or be given clearance to, a sensitive country, members must agree to relinquish the rights outlined in the "Rights of Personnel in a Sensitive Country" for as long as they remain in the sensitive country, if the regional shepherds deem it necessary.**
- D. Sensitive country status may be lifted providing the regional shepherds, or the Family discipleship or Missionary Member Homes in the sensitive country, ask for a Home referendum to be conducted to determine whether the country should remain a sensitive country.**
- 1. Once petitioned by the Homes, the regional shepherds must conduct a Home referendum within 60 days.**

- 2. If the Homes, by a simple majority, vote that the country should no longer be a sensitive country, following the Home referendum procedures outlined in the "Voting and Election Rules," and the regional shepherds agree, the country will no longer be classified a sensitive country.**
 - a. If the regional shepherds disagree with the Homes' vote, they must communicate with the Homes, informing them of the outcome of the vote and the reasons why they disagree. A copy of this letter must be sent to World Services Leadership.**
 - b. World Services Leadership will make the final decision.**
 - c. The country will remain classified as sensitive until such time as World Services Leadership makes a final decision.**

Procedure for a Home to Revoke a Person's Membership in the Home

- A. A Family discipleship Home may revoke by a two-thirds majority the membership of any person residing in the Home.**
- 1. At least two voting members must first propose to the Home's steering council that a member should be asked to leave the Home.**
 - a. The matter should first be discussed between the two individuals and the steering council to determine if there is anything that can be done to resolve the matter. The matter must then be brought to the member in question by one of the Home shepherds in an attempt to resolve it.**
 - b. If not resolved or the steering council and/or the proposing members still feel it's necessary to ask the member to leave the Home, the matter must be brought before the Home council.**
 - i. The Home shepherds must privately inform the member in question beforehand that the matter is going before the Home council.**
 - c. The Home shepherds should notify all voting members that the matter will be discussed and voted upon by secret ballot in a Home council meeting.**
 - i. The member may choose whether or not he would like to attend the meeting and present to the Home council why he feels he should retain his Home membership.**
 - 2. The member is free to give his 30-day notice to leave the Home if he so desires.**

"There's always got to be some kind of standard or criterion or rule, and of course it's right in the Bible. Now if you can bring your complaint to the person and they won't hear it, then the Bible says to go with two or three witnesses. If they won't hear them or receive them, then you're supposed to bring them before the whole congregation. It's not supposed to be just your little personal affair or matter, but it's a matter of the agreement of the Home on it" (ML #980:58, 65-66).

To vote someone out of the Home, at least two members must have proposed to their steering council that the person should not be part of the Home. After discussion, prayer, and hearing from the Lord, the steering council must inform the member and the Home that this suggestion will be brought up in a Home council meeting, unless the issue can be resolved beforehand.

During the Home council meeting, if the member chooses to attend, he is free to present his feelings on the matter. The Home council would then vote on it by secret ballot.

At any time before the Home council meeting, the member may instead decide to give his 30-day notice. In such a case it would no longer be necessary to bring the matter up at the Home council, since the member has already made the decision to leave. Departing members, those that are voted out of a Home or who decide to turn in their 30-day notice, are free to join another FD, MM, or FM Home provided they meet the requirements to do so.

- 3. If the Home council decides to revoke a member's Home membership the Home is responsible to:**

- a. Give the member 30 days to leave the Home.**
 - i. In the case that the member is not able to find another Home to go to within 30 days, the Home council may vote to extend the 30-day period.**
- b. Notify the shepherding desk of its decision within 15 days of the vote, specifying the reason for the decision.**
- c. Forgive the member for his portion of the Home's debts or applicable liabilities.**
 - i. If a particular debt or liability was incurred by the individual without the consent of the Home, the Home council may vote that the member retains the debt or liability.**
- d. Allow sufficient time for the member to engage in fundraising activities on a regular basis for the purpose of raising a reasonable amount of finances to facilitate his move to another Home, or supply the member with a reasonable amount of financial assistance to help toward his move to another Home.**

A "reasonable amount" is determined by a two-thirds majority of the Home council.

- i. If the member is engaged in fundraising activities for the purpose of his departure from the Home, at least 50% of the net income the member generates is to be used to facilitate his move to another Home and/or pay off any debts and applicable liabilities he retains.**

See also "[Procedure for Using the Right of Mobility](#)" for more concerning a departing Home member's fundraising activities.

- ii. If the member cannot find another Family discipleship Home that will accept him, he may choose to become a Missionary or Fellow member.**

The Home must allow the member enough time for fundraising to facilitate his move to the next Home. If the member has children, the Home is expected to help take care of the children, while the member engages in fundraising activities.

Alternatively, the Home may decide to supply the needed funds for the member's move and/or supplement the funds raised to help him on his way sooner.

Procedure for Placing a Family Discipleship Home on Probationary Notice

- A. A Home will automatically be placed on probationary notice for failure to fulfill the reporting, financial, and Home-size requirements outlined in **“World Services Reporting Rules,” “Financial Rules,”** and **“Home Size Rules.”** The reporting office will notify the Home that they are on probationary notice, with copies to the regional and shepherding desks.
- B. A Home can be placed on probationary notice by a regional shepherd using either of the following two methods:
 - 1. A regional shepherd, while visiting a Home, determines that the Home is violating, contravening, or failing to fulfill the **“Responsibilities of a Family Discipleship Home”** or the current board criteria, or has committed collective infractions in violation of the **“Responsibilities of an Individual Family Disciple”** or the **“Family Discipleship Rules.”**

A regional shepherd may appoint a designated representative to enact this procedure in their place in accordance with the definition of a designated representative.

- a. The regional shepherd will assemble the Home’s voting members and declare their intention to put the Home on probationary notice, specifically stating in which way the Home is in violation of the **“Responsibilities of a Family Discipleship Home”** or the current board criteria, or has committed collective infractions in violation of the **“Responsibilities of an Individual Family Disciple”** or the **“Family Discipleship Rules.”**
 - i. If the regional shepherd determines through discussion with the Home members that there are extenuating circumstances or valid reasons why certain responsibilities of the Home are not being fulfilled, the Home will not be placed on probationary notice.
 - ii. If the regional shepherd determines that there are no circumstances or valid reasons for the Home not to be placed on probationary notice, probationary notice will begin.
 - iii. The regional shepherd will notify the shepherding desk within ten days, with copies to the Home, specifying the reasons for probationary notice and the date it began.
 - b. If the Home wishes to appeal the decision, they may write the regional shepherds via the shepherding desk, explaining why they disagree. The regional shepherds will review the matter and the shepherding desk will respond to the Home with the outcome within 14 days of receipt of the Home’s letter.
- 2. If a regional shepherd intends to put a Home on probationary notice through written communication, they must specify to the Home how it is violating, contravening, or failing to fulfill the **“Responsibilities of a Family Discipleship Home”** or the current

board criteria, or has committed collective infractions in violation of the **"Responsibilities of an Individual Family Disciple"** or the **"Family Discipleship Rules."** The letter must also specify what changes the Home must make and the date that probationary notice will begin.

- a. If the Home wishes to appeal the decision, they may write the regional shepherds via the shepherding desk, explaining why they disagree, or any extenuating circumstances or reasons why certain responsibilities of the Family discipleship Home or its individual members are not being fulfilled or are being contravened. The regional shepherds will review the matter, and the shepherding desk will respond to the Home with the outcome within 14 days of receipt of the Home's letter.
- C. A Home can be recommended for probationary notice by a non-regional shepherd regional board chairperson who determines that the Home is failing to fulfill their board criteria.
1. The recommendation should be sent to the regional shepherds specifying how the Home is failing to fulfill their board's criteria and include a recommendation of what the Home must do to rectify the situation. The regional shepherds will respond to the regional board chairperson within 30 days, informing them whether or not they agree with the recommendation.
 - a. If the regional shepherds agree to put the Home on probationary notice, the shepherding desk must write to the Home with copies to the regional board chairperson, the regional desk, and the reporting office specifying to the Home how it is failing to fulfill the board criteria. The letter must also specify what changes the Home must make and the date that the probationary notice will begin.
 - i. If the Home wishes to appeal the decision, they may write the shepherding desk, explaining why they disagree, or any extenuating circumstances or reasons why they were failing to fulfill the board criteria. The regional shepherds will review the matter and the shepherding desk will respond to the Home and the regional board chairperson with the outcome within 15 days of receipt of the Home's letter.
- D. Once placed on probationary notice, the Home has 60 days to make the specified changes.
1. Members of the Home temporarily relinquish their **"Right of Mobility."** They may not join or open another Family discipleship Home during the period of probationary notice, unless the Home was put on probationary notice due to being either undersized or oversized.
 2. The Home must within 14 days hold a vote of confirmation for the Home shepherds, Home managers, and the criteria monitors in accordance with the **"Voting and Election Rules."**

A vote of confirmation must be held if a Home has not heard back from the RO, RD, or SD within 14 days of being placed on probationary notice that the matter has been resolved and they are no longer on probationary notice. The purpose of this confirmation vote in the case of PN is to make it possible to call for a new election of one or all of the bodies of HSs, HMs, and/or board pillar representatives.

While the Home is fully accountable as a whole for being placed on probationary notice, because the members of the steering council bear a great deal of responsibility in how the Home is run and in the fulfillment of the Home's responsibilities, and the criteria monitors in monitoring the Home in its fulfillment of the boards' criteria, part of the solution to getting off probationary notice may be to make changes in one or more of these elected bodies. On the other hand, the Home may vote to continue with the existing steering council.

- E. Once the changes are made, they must be verified within the 60-day period by either of the following two methods:**
 - 1. The Home is visited by a regional shepherd to determine through observation, investigation, and discussion with the Home members that the changes have been made.**
 - 2. Where visitation by a regional shepherd is not warranted, practical, or possible, the Home should write to the shepherding desk, signed by at least a two-thirds majority of the Home's voting members, explaining the changes that have been made.**
- F. If it is determined that the Home has made the specified changes, the shepherding desk must immediately notify the Home, and the Home's reporting office, that the Home is no longer on probationary notice.**
- G. If after the 60 days of probationary notice it is determined by the regional shepherds that the Home has not made the specific changes, the shepherding desk will inform the Home, their coach, the regional desk, and the Home's reporting office in writing of the Home now being a Missionary member Home. If the Home's infractions make it ineligible for Missionary membership, the Home will become a Fellow member Home.**

Procedure for Placing a Family Disciple on Home Censure

- A. Home censure is a disciplinary measure that can only be administered by the Home to a member who violates, contravenes or fails to fulfill the **"Responsibilities of an Individual Family Disciple"** or the **"Family Discipleship Rules."**
- B. A Home member can be censured for a period to be determined by a simple majority of the Home's voting members, not to exceed three months.
- C. While under Home censure, the member:
 - 1. Loses his or her right to vote on all Home matters.
 - 2. Loses his or her right of mobility unless they are a minor, in which case his or her parent(s) retain(s) the right to move their child to another location.
 - 3. Must read parts, or all, of the **"Reading List for a Family Disciple on Probationary Status or Home Censure,"** at the Home shepherd's discretion, as well as other publications that the Home's shepherds deem necessary.
 - a. The member does not lose access to any Family publications.
 - 4. May not be a steering council member during their disciplinary time.
- D. Members can be recommended for Home censure by the Home's shepherds, providing the following procedures are adhered to:
 - 1. The Home shepherds must clearly explain to the Home's voting members, with the member in question present if he or she so chooses, showing just cause why the member is being recommended for Home censure, and proposing for how long.
 - 2. After the matter has been discussed, the member in question should be informed that the Home is considering censuring him or her. The member should be given the opportunity to come before the Home to present his case or refute the accusations against them, if he or she so desires.
 - 3. The matter is to be discussed and voted on, by secret ballot.
 - 4. If a simple majority agrees with the recommendation, the Home shepherds must officially inform the member that he or she has been censured, explaining the reasons why and what is now required of him or her.
- E. A member that has been censured by their Home may exercise their **"Right of Redress"** if he or she is not in agreement with the Home's decision.

Home censure is a disciplinary measure for a Home member that is decided upon by the Home. When someone is censured, they automatically lose their right to vote and their **"Right of Mobility."** Home censure

should be for a predetermined length of time, not exceeding three months, and should be a penalty proportional to the offense. In most cases, a less severe correction should have preceded a member being censured, such as missing some activities, etc. It is also a good idea to assign an appropriate reading list to help strengthen the Home member.

Procedure for Placing a Family Disciple on Probationary Status

A. Family disciples can only be placed on probationary status by the shepherding desk, and only if the member commits one of the “Offenses Warranting the Placing of a Family Disciple on Probationary Status.” Probationary status will be for a period of three to six months per offense. For a member to be placed on probationary status, the following procedures must be followed:

- 1. If an offense warranting probationary status is not reported directly to the shepherding desk or to the regional shepherds by those involved, the Home shepherds must inform the shepherding desk of the offense, giving full details of the matter.**
- 2. Regardless of who initiates the probationary status, the shepherding desk must fully investigate the matter, communicating personally with the Home shepherds, the member in question, and anyone else involved.**
- 3. The shepherding desk, by a two-thirds majority, will decide whether probationary status is warranted, and the length and other conditions thereof.**
- 4. If the shepherding desk determines that probationary status is warranted, they will notify the member and his or her Home, specifying all conditions, including the duration of the member’s probationary status.**

B. While on probationary status, the member:

- 1. If placed on probationary status for a sex-related Charter offense, must refrain from engaging in all sexual contact or acts, except with their mate, if they have one.**
- 2. If placed on probationary status for engaging in sexual acts with a non-Family disciple, they must refrain from engaging in any sexual acts for six months. At the end of the six-month period, the member must be tested for HIV and receive documented proof that they do not have the HIV virus. They must also take a test(s) for sexually transmitted diseases. The STD test(s) the member should take will be determined by the member’s Home.**
 - a. A written statement, signed by the member and witnessed by one of the steering council, must be sent (via email or other means) by the Home shepherds to the shepherding desk declaring the outcome of the HIV testing before the member is allowed to engage in sexual acts with other Family members.**
 - b. A member who is mated and is placed on Probationary status for engaging in sexual acts with a non-Family disciple may have sexual intercourse with his or her consenting mate, providing they use a condom each time. The mate must also agree not to engage in any sexual acts with others until the member on Probationary status has been tested clear of HIV six months after the offense.**

- c. **In the case of a Family disciple having engaged in sexual contact or acts with a non-Family disciple, the Family disciple has the option of becoming a Fellow member rather than being placed on probationary status. If the member chooses to become a Fellow member, they should notify the shepherding desk of their decision. In such a case, the “[Procedure for Moving a Family Disciple to Missionary or Fellow Membership](#)” will be waived and the change of membership will take effect immediately.**

Because the Family’s Fellow members are permitted to have sexual interaction with non-Family members, in some cases, if a Family disciple feels that they would rather become a Fellow member in order to be able to pursue a relationship with a non-Family member, they have the option of doing so rather than being placed on probationary status and continuing on as a Family disciple. However, they cannot apply to be returned to Family discipleship for a period of at least six months.

- 3. **Must complete the “[Reading List for a Family Disciple on Probationary Status or Home Censure](#)” during their period of probationary status.**
 - 4. **Temporarily loses his or her right to vote on Home matters.**
 - 5. **Loses his or her right of mobility.**
 - a. **If the receiving Home is aware that the member is on probationary status and votes the prospective member into the Home according to Charter guidelines, the shepherding desk may give approval for the member to move to the receiving Home. The receiving Home, if in a different region, must also receive approval from their shepherding desk to receive the member.**
 - b. **If a senior teen is placed on probationary status, his or her parent(s) or guardian(s) still retain(s) the right to move the child to another location during this period.**
 - 6. **Must forgo all alcoholic beverages.**
 - 7. **Must abstain from movies and television, except for news or educational documentaries and videos that are part of their schooling curriculum.**
 - 8. **Must forgo surfing the Internet, as well as the playing of computer games.**
 - a. **Members may access the Internet for business or school purposes only and with the approval and oversight of the Home’s shepherds.**
 - 9. **May not be a steering council member during their disciplinary time.**
- C. Members who contravene the terms of their probationary status will face further discipline, applied in an appropriate and proportionate manner according to the severity and frequency of their offense. This may result in additional time spent on probationary status of up to six weeks.**

Procedure for Moving a Family Discipleship Home to Missionary or Fellow Membership

- A. A Home's Family discipleship can only be withdrawn and the Home and all its members recommended for Missionary or Fellow membership if the Home violates, contravenes, or fails to fulfill the "Responsibilities of a Family Discipleship Home," the "Family Discipleship Rules," or the current board criteria.**
- B. The following procedure must then be adhered to:**
- 1. The regional shepherds must write, or arrange to visit the Home if they feel it is necessary, to explain the reasons and show just cause for the Home's change of membership.**
 - 2. If, upon receipt of the recommendation for a change of membership, the Home does not contest the decision within 14 days, the change to a Missionary or Fellow member Home will become official.**
 - 3. If, upon receipt of the recommendation for a change of membership, a majority of the Family discipleship Home's voting members are in disagreement with the decision they may within 14 days send a letter of rebuttal to their regional shepherds via the shepherding desk.**
 - a. The shepherding desk must acknowledge receipt of the Home's rebuttal within 14 days.**
 - b. The regional shepherds, upon receiving the Home's rebuttal, must review the situation, taking into consideration the points in the Home's rebuttal, and make a decision on the Home's membership within 45 days from the date of receipt of the Home's rebuttal.**
 - i. While under review the Home will remain a Family discipleship Home, but Home members will lose their "Right of Mobility" until they receive the decision from the regional shepherds.**
 - c. Once the regional shepherds have made their final decision, they will notify the Home, and the Home will either remain a Family discipleship Home or will become either a Missionary or Fellow member Home accordingly.**

Procedure for Moving a Family Disciple to Missionary or Fellow Membership

A. A member's Family discipleship can only be revoked and the member moved to Missionary or Fellow membership if the member violates, contravenes, or fails to fulfill the "Responsibilities of an Individual Family Disciple" or the "Family Discipleship Rules." Recommendation for Missionary or Fellow membership can be made by a two-thirds majority of their Home and by adhering to the following procedures:

1. The Home shepherds must first have endeavored through prayer and shepherding to help the member live up to the "Responsibilities of an Individual Family Disciple" and the "Family Discipleship Rules" by informing them of the way in which they have been failing to live up to their responsibilities and what changes they should make in their life, and then to have allowed reasonable time for compliance.

a. If the member fails to comply, the Home shepherds must inform them that they are being recommended for Missionary or Fellow membership.

If a case arises in which a Home's members feel one or more of their Home shepherds should be moved to Missionary or Fellow membership, but find it difficult to bring this up in a Home council meeting, they may write to their coach or shepherding desk for counsel.

b. The Home shepherds must clearly explain and show just cause to the Home council of why they feel the member should be recommended for Missionary or Fellow membership. The matter is to be discussed, with the member in question being present and able to present their view, if they so choose. The recommendation will then be voted on by secret ballot.

i. All voting members of the Home, including the member in question, have the right to vote on the matter.

c. If a two-thirds majority of the Home's voting members agree with the recommendation, a letter stating the reasons for the recommendation and the outcome of the vote must be sent to the shepherding desk within 14 days. A copy must also be given to the member being recommended for Missionary or Fellow membership.

i. The shepherding desk must acknowledge receipt of the letter within 14 days.

1. The member being recommended for Missionary or Fellow membership has the right to send an appeal to the shepherding desk within 14 days of the Home's vote.

2. If the member sends an appeal, the shepherding desk must investigate the matter and inform the member and their Home of the decision within 45 days of receipt of the appeal.

Home debts or liabilities, with the remaining balance to be used to facilitate their move.

- i. The departure period can be shortened by a two-thirds majority vote of the Home if the member requests to leave earlier. The member must leave the Home by the end of the 30-day period unless the Home makes arrangements for the member to remain for a determined amount of additional time before moving on.**
- 4. If the member is moved to Missionary or Fellow membership, the Home and members are responsible to ensure that the departing member:**
- a. Prepares to leave the Home in an orderly fashion by turning over pertinent ministry materials, contacts, or other legal material, bank accounts, post office boxes, and funds belonging to the Home or to the Family, and thoroughly explains their ministries, duties and responsibilities to the appropriate persons.**
 - b. Has an address and related instructions for reporting as a Missionary or Fellow member.**

Once the decision has been made to move a member to Missionary or Fellow membership, the Home should continue to treat the person lovingly and kindly—as brethren. They are still part of the Family and are just moving to a circle of membership for which they may be better suited. An effort should be made to make their move as practical and easy as possible.

If it is a family, a single parent with children, or a young person changing membership, it would be helpful if an effort could be made to help them find a place to stay, or find them an initial landing place of some sort, perhaps with other Missionary or Fellow members. This will not be possible in every case, and in some cases they may not need the help, but the point is to be loving and kind to our brethren.

Procedure for Relinquishing Family Discipleship

When a member relinquishes their Family discipleship, the following procedure should be followed. This procedure applies to a Family disciple leaving the Family, as well as to an entire Home leaving the Family.

- A. The departing member and the Home should endeavor to part on as friendly terms as possible.**
- B. The Home should make a reasonable effort to help the departing member get situated outside the Home.**
- C. The departing member should leave in an orderly fashion by responsibly turning over their contacts and pertinent ministry material, and explaining their ministries, duties and responsibilities to the appropriate Home member(s).**
 - 1. In the case of a member moving to Fellow membership, the dividing of contacts should be made in accordance with "[Right of Mobility](#)."**
- D. If the departing member is holding any portion of the Home's HER funds, these must be turned in to the Home.**
- E. In the case of an entire Home relinquishing Family discipleship, any outstanding Home loans should be repaid at the time of departing, or if that is not possible, within the time originally agreed upon with the regional shepherds. The entire HER fund should be returned to the regional shepherds.**
- F. If the Home has debts, an agreement should be reached between the departing member and the Home as to the payment of the departing member's portion of the Home's debts and liabilities. The Home can either forgive the departing member's portion of the debt, or can agree with the departing member on a timetable for them to pay their portion of the debt to the Home.**

Procedure for Revoking a Family Disciple's Family Membership

A Family disciple is expected to live the Family discipleship standard as outlined in the *Charter* to the best of his or her ability. If a disciple flagrantly violates or contravenes their discipleship requirements he or she may be in jeopardy of having his or her Family membership revoked.

This procedure would not apply if the Family disciple in question has committed an offense warranting excommunication. In that case the "[Procedure for Excommunicating a Family Disciple](#)" would apply.

The inclusion of the "Procedure for Revoking Family Membership" in the Charter does not free the Home from its responsibility under Home accountability to ensure that those in their Homes are living the Family discipleship standard as laid out in the *Charter* and to initiate the "[Procedure for Moving a Family Disciple to Missionary or Fellow Membership](#)," if necessary.

This procedure is only to be used by the regional shepherds in extreme circumstances that warrant the revocation of an individual's Family membership.

- A. A Family disciple can have his Family membership revoked only by the regional shepherds for persistent or flagrant disregard of the "[Responsibilities of an Individual Family Disciple](#)" or the "[Family Discipleship Rules](#)," or for similar contravention of the "[Offenses Warranting the Placing of a Family Disciple on Probationary Status](#)."**
- B. If the regional shepherds determine that there may be grounds for revocation of a disciple's Family membership they must notify the disciple and his Home shepherds via the shepherding desk that they are initiating the procedure to withdraw the disciple's Family membership. They must at that time specify in writing how the disciple is or has been persistently or flagrantly disregarding the *Charter* as outlined in clause A above.**
 - 1. If the disciple or his Home shepherds wish to appeal the decision they may write the shepherding desk within 15 days, explaining why they disagree or to explain any extenuating circumstances or reasons why certain of the above responsibilities and rules are not being fulfilled or are being contravened.**
 - 2. The shepherding desk must investigate the matter by communicating with the Home shepherds, the disciple in question, and any others involved.**
 - a. The disciple may request to speak personally with a regional shepherd.**
 - i. The regional shepherd may appoint a designated representative to visit and report on the situation if the regional shepherd is not able to visit at that time.**
 - ii. If visitation is not possible or expedient the disciple will have to communicate via other means.**
 - b. During this time the disciple:**
 - i. Loses his right of mobility until the matter is decided.**
 - ii. Loses his right to vote on Home matters.**
 - iii. Is free to begin fundraising activities to facilitate his potential move.**

- 1. A minimum of 50% of the member's net income must be to facilitate his move. The amount of funds and the time needed to raise these funds can be determined by a two-thirds majority of the Home council.**

Once a Family disciple has been notified that his Family membership may be revoked, he may begin fundraising to help facilitate his potential move. However, until the matter has been decided he will retain his Family membership.

- 3. The shepherding desk must within 45 days inform the regional shepherds of its findings.**
- 4. Upon receipt of the shepherding desk's assessment, the regional shepherds will within 15 days of the close of the investigation decide by a two-thirds majority whether revocation of Family membership is warranted.**
 - a. If revocation of Family membership is agreed to by the regional shepherds, the shepherding desk will inform the disciple and his Home that his membership has been revoked in accordance with the findings.**

In this case the Home should decide how quickly the member should move out, with the understanding that according to the "[Responsibilities of a Family Discipleship Home](#)" a non-Family person may not stay more than 30 days in a Family Home.

- C. The departing disciple may keep any Family publications in his personal possession.**

Procedure for Excommunicating a Family Disciple

A. Family disciples can only be excommunicated by the regional shepherds, and only if the member commits an excommunicable offense.

1. Family disciples will be excommunicated from Family membership and from receiving all but AM and GP Family literature.

Those who have been excommunicated may have contact with Family members, unless expressly forbidden by the regional shepherds, which would be announced to the Homes. In such a case, the personal family members of the excommunicated person may still have contact with them, though not in a Family Home or where there are any other Family members.

Unless otherwise specified by the RSs, it is up to a Family Home to determine whether they will have contact with an excommunicated member, and to what degree. A Home cannot, however, allow an excommunicated member to join their Home as a member without approval from the RSs.

B. Only the Home's shepherds or the regional shepherds can initiate recommendations for excommunication. To recommend excommunication, the following procedures must be adhered to:

1. If an excommunicable offense has not already been reported directly to the shepherding desk or to the regional shepherds by those involved, the Home's steering council must inform the shepherding desk and the regional shepherds of the member's excommunicable offense, giving full details of the matter.

2. Regardless of who initiates the excommunication, the shepherding desk must fully investigate the matter, communicating personally with the Home shepherds, the member in question, and anyone else involved.

a. The member in question can request that a member of the shepherding desk visit him or her in order to speak personally with them if the member in question so desires.

3. The shepherding desk must inform the regional shepherds of its findings, and its assessment of whether the member has committed an excommunicable offense.

C. Upon receipt of the shepherding desk's recommendation, the regional shepherds, by a two-third's majority, will decide whether excommunication is warranted.

1. If excommunication is warranted, the regional shepherds will inform the member and his or her Home in writing that the member's Family membership is withdrawn.

Family Discipleship Board Criteria

Children and Parenting Board Criteria

Refer to the "CP and FED Home Review Criteria," GN 1106, for more detail concerning the Children and Parenting board's requirements and criteria.

A. Word:

- 1. The Home gives the children a solid foundation in the Word. The goal is that the children develop a personal relationship with Jesus.**
- 2. Children have the required daily quality Word time. Their Word plan is dynamic, making it alive, exciting, and as applicable as possible.**

Some examples would be studying the Bible and age-appropriate new Word and encouraging active participation through songs, skits, flannelgraphs, chalk talks, quizzes, games, animated presentations, research, note taking, and audio-visual material relating to their Word studies.

- 3. The Home ensures that the children are following and making progress through the Word and memorization plan in "Word Curriculum 2004," and that they are learning to use the spiritual weapons.**

B. Witnessing:

- 1. By example, the Home motivates the children to have a heart for the lost and be instant, faithful witnesses. This includes training the children to be courteous and hospitable to visitors coming to the Home, as well as those they meet outside.**
- 2. The Home provides the children with witnessing training and a variety of inspiring witnessing opportunities on a regular basis in an age- and local-field-appropriate manner.**
- 3. The Home organizes and ensures responsible oversight for their children while witnessing. Tracts and tools distributed by children are age appropriate.**

C. Parenting and Home responsibilities:

- 1. Parents use homeschooling to educate their children. In the case of an exception to home education, the parents keep regular and thorough records of the shepherding and training given to each child enrolled in outside school.**
- 2. Children are provided with opportunities to build interpersonal skills through socialization, fellowship, and friendships with children their own age.**
- 3. Children who attend outside extracurricular activities or develop friendships outside the Family circle receive proper supervision and shepherding from the Home and parents. The Home periodically reevaluates and prays about the overall fruit of these activities to confirm the Lord's leadings.**

4. Children, ages 6–11, have at least one hour of personal talk time every two weeks with a parent, teacher, or assigned competent adult.
5. Children, ages 11 years and younger have a minimum of one hour quality parent time at least five times per week with their parents or guardians, although more time is recommended.
6. All parents and their children or guardians have quality family days at least twice a month, although weekly is recommended.
7. Homes with children devote sufficient time and attention during Home meetings to ensure that the “[Children and Parenting Board Criteria](#)” is met within each 60-day period.
8. Expectant parents are aware of their legal/citizenship responsibilities with regard to their new baby and are taking care of any necessary legal matters and paperwork.

D. Training and discipline:

1. Parents and teachers shepherd the children in their training, character building, and spiritual needs by implementing the counsel in the Word, obtaining guidance through prophecy, and working in prayer and counsel with others.
2. The Home abides by post-renewal guidelines for age-appropriate movie watching and media usage, and is united in minimizing worldly and ungodly influences so as to protect its children from worldly and unedifying TV, videos, movies, music, computer and electronic games, and Internet browsing.
3. There is good communication and unity between parents, teachers, and other Home members regarding the care, behavior, and shepherding needs of the children. Any conflicts between parents and/or caregivers are lovingly resolved through counsel, prayer, prophecy, and childcare meetings.
4. The Home has a united behavior and discipline standard in accordance with the “[Childcare Discipline Guidelines](#)” and other pertinent Word on the subject. This standard is easily accessible when needed to be referred to, and is periodically reevaluated.
5. The Home’s behavior and discipline standard has been determined by, prayed about, and agreed upon by the Home, and is supported and followed through on by the Home’s voting members.
6. Parents and other Home members give the children consistent training in practical-life skills suitable to their age and ability.

E. Children’s welfare:

1. The Home provides sufficient personnel and resources to properly care for the children in a loving environment.
2. The children have their physical needs met, such as regular exercise, sufficient rest, and proper hygiene. They have adequate living quarters with good lighting and ventilation in a clean, safe, child-friendly, orderly environment.
3. The Home ensures that the children’s personal needs, such as neat and appropriate clothing and shoes and personal hygiene items, are supplied.
4. The Home provides a safe environment for its children and protects them from all forms of abuse.

5. **Children with special needs have the proper and sufficient physical, spiritual, and emotional care particular to their needs.**

F. Presentation and example:

1. **The children are neatly dressed, well groomed, courteous, respectful, and a good Christian testimony that reflects positively on the Family.**
2. **The children are taught proper etiquette and social courtesy.**
3. **The Home's members are examples of polite speech and good deportment to the children.**
4. **The children are taught respect for the traditions and culture of the community/country in which they live.**

G. Communal living:

1. **The Home strives to live the loving, giving principles of "One Wife," with extra help and care given to large or single-parent families, and pregnant and nursing mothers.**
2. **The Home is an example of and teaches the children the principle of Acts 2:44–45.**
3. **Parents manifest a spirit of unity and the sharing of their material possessions with other Home members to help instill these principles in their children by this example.**
4. **Although the Home collectively shares in the care and training of the children, the parents are the primary caregivers, and are therefore ultimately responsible for the welfare of their children.**
5. **Parents, teachers, and childcare helpers are provided with sufficient time for Word, prayer, exercise, rest, childcare planning, and witnessing.**

H. Health care:

1. **The Home provides all members with a nutritious, well-balanced diet, and avoids food/drink with high sugar content, as well as highly processed foods, except when unavoidable or on appropriate occasions.**
2. **Pregnant and nursing mothers are provided with adequate care and support, special dietary needs, a nutritious diet, and prenatal checkups, as well as postnatal care after the delivery.**
3. **The Home ensures that the expenses for any upcoming deliveries, including legal paperwork, will be provided for.**
4. **All Home members who are physically sick or have a medical condition or health need that requires attention receive the necessary prayer, care, support, and special dietary or medical attention or checkups.**
5. **Home members endeavor to stay healthy and physically fit, and are regularly hearing from the Lord concerning their health and any needed medical attention.**
6. **Home members four years and older are provided with dental and eye checkups annually or more often if needed.**
7. **All Home members 18 years and over have regular and sufficient exercise, as well as fresh air, not less than four times per week, health permitting.**

- 8. All Home members under the age of 18 have regular and sufficient exercise, as well as fresh air, for at least one hour, though preferably 90 minutes, not less than five times per week, health permitting.**

Church Growth and Outreach Board Criteria

Refer to the "CGO Home Review Criteria for Family Discipleship Homes," GN 1099, for more detail concerning the Church Growth and Outreach board's requirements and criteria.

A. A Family discipleship Home must work toward building a well-rounded, lasting missionary work consisting of the following four aspects of the Activated program.

- 1. Sowing the seed: Getting out Family publications and products.**
 - a. Distributing the *Activated* magazine, if available in your local language.**
 - b. Distributing other Family publications and products.**
- 2. Bringing people to Jesus: Personal witness.**
 - a. Personal witnessing, including being an "instant witness."**
 - b. Soul-winning.**
- 3. *Activated* magazine course.**
 - a. Offering the *Activated* magazine, whether via a subscription from the desk or a personal delivery program, to those you witness to, if available in your country.**
- 4. Church growth: Building a local work [follow-up].**
 - a. Teaching the *12 Foundation Stones* and the *12 Bridges* courses, and/or working toward bringing your flock to that level and toward General, Active, or Missionary membership.**
 - b. Follow-up in person and/or via other means on *Activated* subscribers/readers, General/Active members or other sheep, and/or actively participating in Activated meetings, Church of Love meetings, retreats, etc.**
 - c. "Reaching the rich" (including the middle/upper class and labor leaders); ministering to kings, supporters, provisioning contacts, etc.**
 - d. Winning disciples and General, Active, and Missionary members; training labor leaders.**

Following are some other witnessing ministries which a Home may or may not be involved in depending on their situation, and are not requirements for Family discipleship. This list is not comprehensive and Family Homes may be actively engaged in other witnessing ministries (current or future) as the Lord leads them.

- * Charitable projects
- * Provisioning
- * Paper or electronic mail ministry
- * Shows and performances, including puppet shows, clown shows, etc.

- * Seminars
- * Getting Family shows on radio/TV
- * Ministry of miracles (e.g., healing, etc.)

B. A Family discipleship Home should:

- 1. Ensure that the Home's main witnesses and follow-up shepherds are getting quality Word time and personal shepherding.**
- 2. Ensure that the Home's main teachers and follow-up shepherds are familiar with the content, structure, and goals of the *12 Foundation Stones* and the *12 Bridges* courses.**
- 3. Teach the meat of the Word in your witnessing.**
- 4. Hear from the Lord in prophecy for and with those you are ministering to.**
- 5. Teach your flock to witness, and go out witnessing with them. Teach others to teach others.**
- 6. Keep records of your sheep and their feeding and progress in some form, to ensure that you are faithfully and consistently following up on them.**
- 7. Ensure that your witnesses are presentable in dress and appearance, appropriate to your country.**
- 8. Witness in the name of the Family, with exceptions in sensitive countries.**
- 9. Introduce your friends, contacts, and supporters to the Family and our teachings at an appropriate time.**
- 10. Send testimonies and/or photos of your witnessing activities to your regional Church Growth and Outreach board, to your regional Communications and Community Relations board, and/or to World Services so they can be published, as much as you are able.**
- 11. Invest time and make a concerted effort to learn the local language of the field where you live, in order to "become one" and be effective witnesses.**
- 12. Use your charitable projects as a means to a greater end, such as to minister to people spiritually, to cultivate sponsors for your Home's missionary activities, etc.**
- 13. Read and observe the memos and advisories sent out by your Church Growth and Outreach board, local Activated desk, and production center.**
- 14. Counsel with the regional Church Growth and Outreach board and the Communications and Community Relations boards if your Home engages in any work with churches or religious groups.**

C. Regarding Attached Missionary members:

- 1. Ensure that your Home's Attached Missionary members are fellowshipping at least monthly with your Home, and are receiving faithful feeding and shepherding.**
- 2. Ensure that they are abiding by the standard outlined in the *Missionary Member Statutes*.**

D. Regarding General and Active members:

- 1. Ensure that your Home's General and Active members are receiving faithful feeding.**

- 2. Ensure that they are fulfilling the requirements of membership and conducting themselves according to the "General Membership Declaration of Intent" and "Active Membership Declaration of Intent," respectively.**

See "[Requirements for General and Active Members](#)."

- 3. Your Active members should be reported on your Home's eTRF so that they can receive their mailings from World Services.**

E. Witnessing Hours:

- 1. All eligible voting Home members should meet the Charter-required minimum of 2 hours per week, or 8 hours per month, of quality witnessing hours.**

See also "[Outreach Rules](#)" for additional requirements.

Coaching and Shepherding Board Criteria

Refer to "CS Home Review Criteria for Family Discipleship Homes" (GN 1107) for more detail concerning the Coaching and Shepherding board's requirements and criteria.

A. Manifest unity, the joy of the Lord, outgoing love, unselfish care and concern for others, and camaraderie as a Home.

1. Exhibiting the joy of the Lord. The overall spirit of your Home should be loving, happy, and united.

You should be caring for one another, sacrificing for the happiness of others, lovingly communicating with one another, working in teamwork with one another, and manifesting camaraderie of spirit. Those who visit your Home, whether other Family members or outsiders, should be able to recognize the Lord's Spirit manifested in your Home and members through the preceding qualities.

2. Living in unity with others, both those in your Home and other Homes, refraining from gossip, criticism, sowing division or doubts, harboring bitterness, or speaking negatively against Dad, Maria, Peter, the Word, leadership, or the Family.

B. Practice Jesus' teachings of forsaking all, living communally and by faith, and the principles of Acts 2:44–45 concerning finances and material possessions. Manifest faith in the Lord's ability to supply; be good stewards of what the Lord gives you; be generous.

1. Living the "Conviction vs. Compromise" series in spirit and practice, which means living communally like Jesus' disciples.

2. Living by faith in the Lord's supply; depending on the "God factor" and manifesting faith in the Lord's ability to provide your needs abundantly.

3. Sharing your finances and material possessions according to Acts 2:44–45, which includes new disciples "forsaking all" in full, as per ["Responsibilities of a Family Discipleship Home Regarding Financial Matters."](#)

Each person contributes his income to the Home's financial "pot" to be managed by the Home council as per the *Charter*, instead of what's commonly known as "split finances."

4. Taking good care of your Home members; as much as possible, ensuring that their needs are met.

5. Practicing good stewardship of the material blessings the Lord has given your Home.

6. Giving to those in need.

C. Live the Law of Love and the One Wife vision.

1. Treating the members of your Home and those outside your Home according to the principles of the Law of Love.

- 2. Treating the members and children of your Home and other Homes according to the principles of the One Wife vision.**
- 3. Willing to consider, be open to, and pray about receiving in your Home physically weaker members, large families, and single parents with children, and proceeding as the Lord leads.**

Older FGAs may be physically weaker, but they can bring special gifts, talents, and experience to your Home, even if they're going slower or have some health problems. To have single parents, large families, or several smaller families in your Home can be a "plus" and lead to God's blessing because it provides opportunity to live the One Wife vision, adds to your witness and sample, and can make a Home more well rounded and complete.

D. Live the words of David by having a spirit of obedience to the New Wine that is manifested in the Home through keeping the Word in first place, basing Home decisions on the Word, eagerly seeking the Lord's highest will, and making the sacrifices needed to stay on the cutting edge of discipleship.

1. Living the practical and spiritual counsel in the GNs.

Even if a new push or change is not articulated specifically in a Charter amendment, Family discipleship Homes are required to "live in accordance with the Word by endeavoring to apply the spiritual and practical counsel given in the Letters to their daily lives." See "[Responsibilities of an Individual Family Disciple](#)."

Do not be a "minimizer," trying to get by with just the minimum of the *Charter*. Don't grade yourself on the curve, but go the distance, following the New Wine as closely as possible.

2. Progressing as a Home in the use of the new weapons, including additional new weapons and moves of the spirit as they are introduced in the GNs.

3. Following through on assignments in the GNs within a reasonable period of time.

Such assignments usually include prophecy questions to ask the Lord, subjects to discuss at Home council meetings, goals and deadlines to set, etc. Your RSs, coach, or in some cases even the boards (if the topic falls under their pillar), might ask you about this and monitor your progress.

E. Be disciples. Stay true and uncompromised, be dropped out, do not manifest the world's spirit, attitudes, and materialism.

1. Being an overall sample of the unique qualities of the Family, including being a sample of full-time discipleship as per the teachings of David.

This means you are dropped out of the System, you live by faith, and avoid dependence on System jobs. You are different from the people of the world, with different goals, attitudes, priorities, and lifestyle.

2. Minimizing ungodly influences, as per the "Shooting Straight" series, parts 9–11.

Realize that the success of your sample as a discipleship Home will depend on the sacrifices, spiritual strength, and commitment of each resident disciple; therefore it's your responsibility as a Home to accept the New Wine regarding System input, to hear from the Lord about your intake of System input, to make commitments, and to be willing to help each other, so that you can hold on to the victories gained, both personally and as a Home, through the fast of worldly input during the renewal of 2004. Even System input that is "allowed" and that you receive the Lord's approval on should be minimized and kept in its rightful place, and only partaken of after asking the Lord, as well as counseling with your Home shepherds and others, as needed.

3. Refraining from going on anti-Family websites, and minimizing your contact and unnecessary fellowship with people who talk against the Word and who seek to tear down your faith and weaken you or your Home spiritually.

4. Allowing a Missionary or Fellow member, or a non-Family person, to temporarily live in the Home (shepherding desk permission required if for more than 30 days) only if it's not bearing bad fruit by distracting the Home from the Lord's work or weakening Home members or children through the visitor's lifestyle, comments, or System attitudes.

F. Create a winning team by lovingly and consistently giving and receiving shepherding from one another, and maintaining a spiritually strong Home.

1. Shepherding of the Home members by the Home shepherds who are responsible for both the shepherding and for making sure the spiritual requirements in each of the boards criteria are being fulfilled in the Home.

This includes focusing on the needs and training of the YAs, who are specifically under the care of the CS board.

a. The Home shepherds are responsible to adequately and lovingly shepherd the Home members according to the Word so that they can make spiritual progress and overcome weak areas.

Consider the following methods:

- * reading assignments
- * prophecies of instruction and encouragement
- * giving the individual questions to hear from the Lord about in prophecy
- * personal talk times
- * united prayer
- * loving correction or counsel
- * additional time off from Home duties for extra prayer time, Word, meditation, and reflection
- * making sure Home members feel loved, appreciated, and understood
- * having open forums where different topics are discussed
- * applying disciplinary measures, if needed, and with the assistance of the Home when appropriate, such as Home censure
- * initiating the procedure to move someone out of Family discipleship to a place of service that's more suited to his or her lifestyle.

2. Home members taking responsibility for the state of the Home, including its overall sample, fruitfulness, spiritual state, and progress, and for the Home's decisions and the effects of those decisions.

This is the concept of Home accountability.

3. Home members being their brothers' keeper by being honest with one another, being willing to shepherd each other, not covering up for one another but rather being willing to speak the truth in love.

4. Discussing, formulating, and voting on Home decisions and policies in Home council or other official Home meetings.

Do not run a "mom and pop shop" where decisions are made or the operating style is determined by the de facto "heads" without the genuine input, open discussion, and majority consent of the Home's voting members.

5. Home members are getting 1½ hours of quality Word time daily or 10½ hours weekly as per "Beyond Duty" (ML #3749–50).

New disciples under one year in the Family must be allocated an additional seven hours of Word time per week, or a total of 17½ hours per week in order to complete the required reading for new disciples within their first year, as well as their basic memory work.

6. Discussing weak or problem areas of the Home in Home council and making commitments to progress, agreeing on specific plans and setting deadlines.

7. Steering council members united and open to receiving shepherding and safeguards from other steering council members and Home members.

8. Steering council meeting officially as needed.

9. Home shepherds meeting regularly as the need arises.

10. Home managers meeting regularly as the need arises.

- 11. Home shepherds studying the Home Shepherd Training Program (HSTP) in accordance with "Getting Stronger, Part 5" (GN 1186).**
- 12. Home managers studying the Home Manager Training Program (HMTP) in accordance with "Announcing the Launch of the Home Manager Training Program" (World Services announcement).**
- 13. Home shepherds working with their coach in accordance with "Getting Stronger, Part 5" (GN 1186) and Home managers in accordance with "Introducing the New Mandate of the Coaches" (LNF #305).**
- 14. Having the required Home meetings as noted in the *Charter*, including devotions, Home council, and monthly prayer days (which may be split between two days).**
- 15. Having united times of intercessory prayer, devotions, and uniting together around the Word not less than four times per week.**

Your times of Loving Jesus inspirations and/or times when you get together as a Home for vespers or to wield the undefeatable weapon of praise can also count toward the four required meetings.

Communications and Community Relations Board Criteria

Refer to the "PR Home Review Criteria," GN 1104, for more detail concerning the Communications and Community Relations board requirements and criteria.

- A. A Family discipleship Home promotes the Family International and makes known their membership in their outreach, follow-up, charitable projects, not-for-profit or for-profit entities, NGOs (non-governmental organizations), co-work with other organizations, fundraising, provisioning, and appeals for funding.**
 - 1. A Home located in a country that has been deemed a sensitive country by their regional shepherds—with guidelines regarding associating with the Family in witnessing and outreach—should adhere to their local guidelines; a Home in a non-sensitive country that has received specific guidelines from their regional council regarding associating with the Family in their witnessing and outreach, should also adhere to their local guidelines.**
- B. A Family discipleship Home presents itself in an open and honest manner and acts responsibly in its financial and business dealings, provisioning, fundraising, product distribution, appeals for support, record-keeping, and other obligations, including those related to for-profit or not-for-profit entities, humanitarian aid, and the receipt of government benefits.**
- C. A Family discipleship Home is making progress in its persecution preparedness in line with pertinent GNs on this topic, being proactive in documenting its local work, and building good relations with the local community.**
- D. A Family discipleship Home must elect a public relations spokesperson who, in teamwork with the Home, represents the Home to the general public, contacts, friends, and any who inquire about the Home's local work and affiliation with the Family International. This person is responsible to ascertain that the Home is counseling with his or her local Communication and Community Relations board regarding contact with authorities or the media. He or she should be familiar with the Communication and Community Relations board criteria to assist the Home in implementing the criteria. The Home spokesperson is required to study the *Public Relations Course* in order to better fulfill his or her mandate.**
- E. A Family discipleship Home is a positive reflection of the Family to the public and the local community, and would be a positive reflection in the case of official scrutiny. The Home should be in line with Charter standards and local expectations in reference to such things as cleanliness, vehicle and property maintenance, adequate living conditions and accommodations, necessary legal and homeschooling documentation, and responsible witnessing with children.**

Education Board Criteria

Refer to the *Education Board Handbook* for more information on fulfilling the “[Education Board Criteria](#).”

A. Education of children ages 0 through 5:

- 1. The Home ensures that children are provided with a variety of age-appropriate, early-learning activities, such as picture facts, sight-reading, phonics instruction, pre-writing exercises, and early math preparation, as well as practical-life activities to develop motor and social skills.**

B. Education of children ages 6 through 11:

- 1. The Home ensures that each child is being properly educated. This includes providing a minimum of 14 hours per week of supervised scholastic studies throughout the school year and access to appropriate educational resources and materials.**
 - a. Children are taught the core academic subjects of language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science. Children are also provided with educational and creative opportunities, such as practical-life skills, art, music, excursions, outreach, and social activities, as well as physical education, with the goal of providing a well-rounded education and a balance between academic studies and practical training.**
 - b. If a child is not working at his appropriate age/grade level, parents and teachers determine the reasons why the child is not on par, and work together to provide extra tutoring and time to help the child progress.**

If the child is a slow learner or has a learning disability, it is important that this is recognized as early as possible so that the child receives necessary assistance, and so that correct teaching methods can be employed.

- c. If a child is not on par, his parents and teachers evaluate the situation and propose a plan to the regional Education board chairperson that will enable the student to catch up.**

The regional Education board chairperson will evaluate the plan, and either approve the plan or suggest changes as needed.

See “K. Education of children or teens with special needs,” if a child has learning challenges that make it difficult for him to become or remain on par.

C. Education of preteens ages 12 through 13:

- 1. The Home ensures that each preteen is being properly educated. This includes providing a minimum of 16 hours per week of supervised scholastic studies throughout the school year, and access to appropriate educational resources and materials.**
 - a. Preteens are taught the core academic subjects of language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science. Preteens are also provided with educational and**

creative opportunities, such as practical-life skills, art, music, excursions, outreach, and social activities, as well as physical education, with the goal of providing a well-rounded education and a balance between academic studies and practical training.

- b. If a preteen is not working at his appropriate age/grade level, parents and teachers determine the reasons why the student is not on par, and work together to provide extra tutoring and time to help him progress.**

If the preteen is a slow learner or has a learning disability, it is important that this is recognized as early as possible so that the student receives necessary assistance, and so that correct teaching methods can be employed.

- c. If a preteen is not on par, his parents and teachers evaluate the situation and propose a plan to the regional Education board chairperson that will enable the student to catch up.**

The regional Education board chairperson will evaluate the plan, and either approve the plan or suggest changes as needed.

See "K. Education of children or teens with special needs," if a preteen has learning challenges that make it difficult for him to become or remain on par.

D. Preparation for high school:

- 1. Parents or guardians create a high school projection for their preteen or teen while the student is in 8th grade. A copy of the projection is sent to the regional Education board chairperson no less than three months before the student is scheduled to complete 8th grade.**

The high school projection may be modified at a later date, if needed, but an initial projection must be completed during the student's 8th grade to ensure that forethought has been given to the student's high school studies, and that the planned education is well rounded and complies with the Family's high school standard. If a projection is modified at any time during high school, the updated projection must be sent to the regional Education board chairperson. The "High School Projection Form" may be found at [ED_board_forms](#).

E. Education of teenagers ages 14 through 17:

- 1. The Home ensures that each teenager is given a high school education. A Family high school education must total at least 18 high school credits.**

The 18 required high school credits are made up of:

- * 2–4 credits of math
- * 4 credits of language arts (could include 1 credit from a foreign language)
- * 2–4 credits of science
- * 2–3 credits of social studies
- * Plus electives needed to make a total 18 credits or more.

Up to 2 of the 18 required credits can come from Christian studies courses. One of the 18 required credits can come from physical education.

- 2. The Home ensures that students who have not completed their high school education or who have not received their desired high school diploma, or equivalent, receive no less than 18 hours per week of supervised scholastic studies.**

- a. The scheduled supervised scholastic study hours are applied toward the educational plan outlined in the student's high school projection.**

- 3. The Home ensures that its teenagers are provided with educational instruction and materials that enable them to become competent in all core academic subject areas and to make sufficient progress through their academic studies. Special attention is given to any students who are behind in the studies listed on their high school projection.**

- a. If a teen is significantly behind in his projected studies, parents and teachers evaluate the situation and propose a plan to the regional Education board chairperson that will enable the student to catch up.**

The regional Education board chairperson will evaluate the plan, and either approve the plan or suggest changes as needed.

See "K. Education of children or teens with special needs," if a teen has learning challenges that make it difficult for him to become or remain on par.

- 4. A transcript, including a course description which describes each course a student has taken, is created for the student upon completion of high school. A copy of the transcript, as well as the course description and a completed Transcript Confirmation Letter form, is sent to the regional Education board chairperson within three months of the student completing high school.**

The "High School Transcript Confirmation Form" may be found at [ED_board_forms](#).

- 5. The Home provides students, who have completed high school and have earned a high school diploma or equivalent (if they so desire), six hours of study time weekly for academic and/or vocational studies, as chosen by the student, if he or his parents so desire.**

F. Education of young adults 18 years and over:

- 1. The Home encourages young people who have turned 18, but have not finished their high school education, to complete high school.**
- 2. The Home provides students aged 18 who have not completed their high school education, but who desire to do so, or desire to earn a high school diploma or equivalent, with no less than 18 hours per week for their studies until the end of the school year in which they turned 18, or until they have completed their high school education, whichever comes first.**
- 3. The Home, to the best of its ability, supports young people who have completed the school year in which they turned 18, but have not completed high school or received a high school diploma, or the equivalent, and wish to do so. In these cases, the Home should come to an agreement with the young people involved on the amount of time to be scheduled for their studies.**

G. Language study:

- 1. The Home provides a minimum of two hours weekly local language study for all children and teens ages 6 through 15, until they can speak the local language well enough to capably converse and witness.**

"Local language" refers to the main language spoken in the country or area in which the children or teens reside.

Time for local language instruction is in addition to the weekly scholastic study requirements.

Preteens' and teens' local language study can be incorporated into their witnessing, as long as they progress satisfactorily in their local language skills.

- a. If children or teens are schooled in the local language, the two hours weekly of local language study are devoted to studying English so that the children or teens can benefit from the pubs and materials available for their age groups in English.**
- 2. The Home provides time for all national children living in their own country or language area, to learn to fluently converse, read, and write in their national language. This time is in addition to the minimum required scholastic study hours.**
- 3. Parents living outside of their national language area should try to speak to their children in their national language in order to teach them their mother tongue.**

H. Recordkeeping:

- 1. Parents, with the help of the teachers, are keeping up-to-date records of the education of their school-aged children.**
 - a. The records required for students ages 6 through 13 are:**
 - attendance record
 - school log
 - portfolio
 - b. The records required for students ages 14 through 17 are:**
 - attendance record
 - school log
 - portfolio
 - transcript with course description, compiled at the end of high school

School logs and portfolios should clearly show the progress of the students in their academic studies, extracurricular activities, life skills, and vocational studies, if applicable.

A school log is a consistent record of the student's educational activities, including text/workbooks used, tests given and the grades earned, educational audio-visual material used, extracurricular activities and excursions, educational games played, etc. Logs can be kept in a variety of ways, such as a homeschool diary or journal.

Portfolios can include academic tests, school projects, workbook samples, photo/video logs, essays, completed worksheets, and excursion brochures. Records for older students could include résumés or letters of recommendation.

For high school students, it is essential to keep a record of the courses covered each year, including the date started, the date completed, and the final grade earned. Other information that should be gathered throughout high school is the titles, authors' names, and table of contents for each textbook, workbook, or supplementary resource used. This facilitates the creation of the student's transcript at the end of his high school studies.

I. Parents and teachers:

- 1. Children and teens are provided with competent teachers who strive for excellence in their profession of teaching.**
 - a. Tutors/outside classes may be needed to teach some subjects, and should be provided if necessary.**
- 2. The Home provides time for resident teachers' school planning and recordkeeping, as well as sufficient time to meet Charter requirements for Word, prayer, rest days, witnessing, exercise, etc.**
- 3. There is frequent communication between parents and teachers regarding the educational needs and progress of the children. This communication might include informal weekly updates, classroom visitation, and/or monthly parent/teacher meetings, depending on the number of children in the Home, their ages, and their scholastic needs.**
- 4. Parents and teachers are aware of local education/homeschooling laws and regulations.**

J. Educational resources and presentation:**1. The Home ensures that a variety of learning resources are available to its children and teens.**

These learning resources could include materials such as textbooks, workbooks, art supplies, audio-visual aids, and how-to manuals. Some places you may find resources are public libraries, the Internet, bookstores, education fairs, and homeschool conventions and/or networking groups.

2. The Home provides classrooms and/or functional learning environments which are tidy, quiet, well lit, properly ventilated, and warm/cool enough that the students are comfortable while studying.

Space should be provided for learning materials. Study materials and reference books should be easily accessible.

3. Homeschooled students and their parents are able to explain and present the students' education.**K. Education of children or teens with special needs:****1. The Home provides children or teens with special needs the education they require specific to their needs.**

The parents and Home should research and decide together through prayer and counsel on an individual education program necessary for the welfare and training of a child or teen with special needs. This plan needs to be communicated to the regional Education board chairperson. An individual education program for a child or teen with special needs could include outside school/class attendance.

- a. The regional Education board chairperson may give permission for a student with learning challenges to follow an Individual Education Plan (IEP) that does not require the student to be on par, or allows for other modifications of the Family educational requirements.**
- b. The regional Education board chairperson may give permission for a high school student with learning challenges to follow an Individual Education Plan (IEP) that does not require the student to earn the minimum 18 credits.**

Youth Services Board Criteria

Refer to the "JETT/Teen Home Review Criteria," GN 1105, for more detail concerning the Youth Services board requirements and criteria.

- A. To shepherd and supply the needs of the 12- to 17-year-olds, a Family discipleship Home should:**
- 1. Have a voting member 18 years or older be a Teen counselor who represents the 12- to 17-year-olds, and tunes in to their shepherding, oversight, and needs.**
 - a. The Teen counselor works under the oversight of the body of Home shepherds, who are ultimately responsible for the spiritual shepherding of the Home and all its members. The Teen counselor should also counsel and work closely with the 12- to 17-year-olds' parents, who are ultimately responsible for their 12- to 17-year-olds, as well as work with the Home managers, and the other members of the Home when necessary in matters relating to the 12- to 17-year-olds.**
 - b. The Teen counselor or Home shepherds should regularly update any nonresident parents of their 12- to 17-year-olds' physical, spiritual, and emotional well-being.**
 - 2. Have a well-balanced schedule for the 12- to 17-year-olds that includes all aspects of Home life: spiritual training, academics, witnessing, Home duties, vocational training, physical education, fun and relaxation in order to help them be challenged and happy in the Family.**
 - 3. Lovingly shepherd their 12- to 17-year-olds using the Word, prayer, wise counsel, and hearing from the Lord in prophecy.**
 - a. This includes allotting personal talk time and/or open forums so the 12- to 17-year-olds can express their needs, questions, and concerns.**
 - 4. Invest time in their 12- to 17-year-olds so that their physical, emotional, and spiritual needs are met.**
 - a. Homes should be aware of and help to develop the interests, talents, and skills of their 12- to 17-year-olds, and strive to help them be happy, inspired, self-motivated, fulfilled, and challenged—the goal being that they are not bored or neglected.**
 - 5. Ensure that the 12- to 17-year-olds are receiving age-appropriate sex education, counsel, and shepherding in their interactions with the opposite sex. Parents/guardians or shepherds should also counsel and shepherd their 16- to 17-year-olds in matters relating to dating and sexual relations.**

See the "[Sex and Affection Rules](#)" clauses F–I for specifics regarding age guidelines for the 12- to 17-year-olds' interaction with the opposite sex.

6. Shepherd their 12- to 17-year-olds in minimizing and resisting ungodly and worldly influences in conjunction with the counsel and guidelines given in the Word and the *Charter*, and be in agreement as a Home on these matters.
 7. Ensure that parents/guardians or shepherds have prayerfully read and explained the Provisional Family Discipleship Contract with those turning 16 and that the teen has made a decision, within three months of turning 16, as to whether they will sign the Provisional Family Discipleship Contract.
 - a. If a 16- to 17-year-old has signed the Provisional Family Discipleship Contract, the Home must fulfill its responsibility to shepherd him and ensure that he abides by the guidelines therein.
 - b. If a teen turning 16 decides not to sign the Provisional Family Discipleship Contract, the parents must take the necessary steps regarding the teen's future outside of Family discipleship, as per the guidelines in the Provisional Family Discipleship Contract.
 8. Be diligent to know the state of their 12- to 17-year-olds. When spiritual or behavioral problems are discovered, the parents and shepherds should take steps to remedy the situation and help their 12- to 17-year-old overcome through the Word, prayer, hearing from the Lord, shepherding, personal time, appropriate discipline if the situation warrants, and seeking counsel when necessary.
- B. To teach the 12- to 17-year-olds Christian conduct and sample, a Family discipleship Home should:**
1. Teach their 12- to 17-year-olds to live by the principles of behavior in the Word and the "[Responsibilities of an Individual Family Disciple](#)." The Home is responsible to instill in their 12- to 17-year-olds moral and character-building qualities such as love for the Lord and the Word, respect, honesty, godly speech, responsibility, personal accountability, stewardship, faithfulness, diligence, obedience, and gratitude.
 2. Require their 12- to 17-year-olds to uphold the standard in the Word in regards to cleanliness, dress, and deportment so as to be a positive reflection of the Family. If there are questions or controversies in the Home in regards to these matters, the Home must discuss the matters and agree on a united standard concerning them in accordance with the counsel in the Word.
- C. To train the 12- to 15-year-olds, a Family discipleship Home should:**
1. Have a united behavioral standard for the 12- to 15-year-olds that has been prayed about and agreed upon by the voting members of the Home in accordance with the Word and the "[Childcare Discipline Guidelines](#)."
 - a. The Home behavioral standard should be explained to and discussed with the 12- to 15-year-olds. It should be documented, easily accessible, and reviewed periodically.
 2. Ensure that the 12- to 15-year-olds' parents, guardians, and shepherds uphold the Word-based behavioral guidelines that have been agreed upon by the Home in accordance with the *Charter*.
- D. To coach the 12- to 17-year-olds in their spiritual training, a Family discipleship Home should:**
1. Allocate the resources and personnel needed for the 12- to 17-year-olds in their Home to receive quality Word time, personal prophecy time, and intercessory prayer vigil daily.

- a. **A daily minimum of two hours of quality united and/or individual Word time should be scheduled for 12- to 15-year-olds. Intercessory prayer vigil and personal prophecy time are also included within these two hours.**
- b. **A daily minimum of 1½ hours of Word time, including personal prophecy time, plus 30 minutes of intercessory prayer vigil should be scheduled for 16- to 17-year-olds.**

Although 12- to 15-year-olds don't have a time requirement for their prayer vigil, like voting members do, they do still need to have some prayer vigil time daily, which can be included in their two hours of daily Word time.

2. **Provide opportunity for the 12- to 15-year-olds to work through the current Word Course and memorization program contained therein.**
 - a. **There should be a plan for the 15-year-olds to read the Charter-required reading lists for their age found in the Word Course.**
3. **Discuss, develop, implement, and regularly maintain a Word program designed to inspire in the 12- to 15-year-olds a hunger for the Word.**

Along with reading the New Wine, new pubs for their age group, and following the Word Course, this Word program could include such things as (but isn't limited to) songs, skits, active participation, research, note-taking, united times of hearing from Jesus, quizzes, games, animated presentations, movie clips, Bible reading programs, and much more, with the purpose of making their Word time as alive, exciting, and applicable as possible.

As provisional disciples and voting members of the Home, 16- to 17-year-olds generally have their Word time with the voting members of the Home. However, depending on the need, they may also benefit from Word classes tailored to them and their specific needs from time to time.

4. **Strive to teach their 12- to 15-year-olds the use of the new weapons as presented in the Family publications.**

The weapons of praise, prayer, hearing from the Lord, use of the keys, working with spirit helpers and building a personal relationship with Jesus, are all vital aspects of the spiritual training of our 12- to 15-year-olds.

- E. **To instruct the 12- to 15-year-olds in their witnessing, a Family discipleship Home should:**
 1. **Train their 12- to 15-year-olds in well-rounded missionary work by providing sufficient opportunity for them to—depending on their age, abilities and aspirations—actively participate in and contribute to the various aspects of the Home's witnessing ministries including outreach and personal witnessing, soul winning, Activated, follow-up, Bible classes, reaching the rich and labor leaders, Family product distribution, performing, charitable projects, provisioning, and road trips.**
 2. **The 12- to 15-year-olds' dress and deportment should be appropriate for the type of witnessing they are doing.**

Family Board Structure

Overview

The Family boards are structured to foster initiatives and progress in the six main areas of Family life. Board services can be generated at three different levels—international, regional, and national. These board portfolios or “pillars” of coaching and shepherding, community relations, teens, children and their parenting, education, and the Family’s growth and outreach are the six aspects of the overall Family life that affect every Family Home most.

The board structure provides opportunity for more Family members to be directly involved in the various aspects of our Family’s work and ministries, as well as creates a training ground for new leaders by spreading out the leadership load. It also allows the Family’s leadership to focus more on their portfolio and not have to be responsible for the management of the entire range of Family life and ministries.

A. The pillars within the board structure are overseen by boards at the international, regional, and national levels. These boards and the basic areas of Family life they cover are:

1. Children and Parenting board (CP)

Caring for our children, ages 0–11, and offering training and support for Family parents.

2. Church Growth and Outreach board (CGO)

All aspects of the Family’s missionary activities, including distributing Family publications and products, personal witnessing and soul winning, using the *Activated* magazine, and church growth and building a local work. This also includes disciple winning and training, follow-up, provisioning, charitable projects, feeding and shepherding of General, Active and Attached Missionary members, and generally, reaching the world with the Gospel.

3. Coaching and Shepherding board (CS)

Monitoring that Family discipleship Homes are adhering to the *Charter*, and providing coaching for the Home shepherds.

4. Communications and Community Relations board (CCR)

Relations with the media, religious freedom issues, persecution response, promoting the Family’s name and good works. The CCR board is also available to advise on legal matters for foundations, NGOs, and other organizations that are connected to or run by Family members.

5. Education board (ED)

Education of our children and teenagers.

6. Youth Services board (YS)

Supporting the Homes in the care and shepherding of Family young people ages 12 through 17 years of age.

B. Members of each board will communicate with each other via email and/or phone and meet as needed to discuss matters pertaining to their portfolio, ways to fulfill the Family’s needs in their area of responsibility, and implementation of projects and policies.

1. **It is the responsibility of the members on the boards to be praying about their portfolio in relation to the Homes in their areas, and coming up with ideas and initiatives on how to further improve that aspect of Family life.**
2. **Each board is accountable to those above them—the national to the regional, the regional to the international, and the international to World Services Leadership. Each board is responsible to implement to the best of their ability and with the Lord’s guidance through counsel and prophecy, policies passed down from the higher board, as well as to inform the chairperson of the higher board of the plans and programs the Lord has shown them to initiate.**

C. Each board must have a chairperson, a secretary, and a treasurer.

1. **The board chairperson’s responsibility is to chair meetings, handle the communications of the board, and manage the board’s day-to-day affairs.**
 - a. **The regional and international board chairpersons work with and oversee the board below theirs in their pillar.**

See “[Procedure for Selecting a Board Chairperson](#)” concerning the selection of board chairpersons.

2. The board elects the secretary of the board from among its members.

The secretary of the board prepares the agenda, records the minutes of the meeting, and keeps on file all official memos and reports made by the board.

Some chairpersons, especially on the regional or international level, may have a personal secretary to help them in their job. The chairperson’s secretary is different from secretary of the board, though they could hold both positions if they have been appointed to the board and are then elected secretary of the board. While the chairperson’s personal secretary could help take care of these particular tasks, ultimately one of the board members—either the chairperson or another member—would be responsible to ensure that the board secretary responsibilities are done.

The chairperson’s secretary, if not a member of the board, would have no vote in official decisions made by the board. If a board chairperson wishes for their secretary to attend board meetings, a majority of the board members must agree.

3. The board elects the treasurer of the board from among its members.

The treasurer manages the finances of the board and keeps detailed accounts of all income, expenditures, and transactions made by the board. The treasurer is responsible to report on the state of the finances held by the board at each meeting, as well as makes a detailed yearly finance report.

The board decides how financial decisions are made, how the board’s finances are spent, and what spending authorization the treasurer has.

D. The international boards are responsible for their portfolio for the Family as a whole in counsel with World Services Leadership.

E. The regional boards are responsible for their portfolio within a regional area.

1. **Regional areas are determined by World Services Leadership taking into consideration language, culture, geography, and nationality.**

F. The national boards are responsible for their portfolio within a national area.

1. **National areas are determined by the regional council taking into consideration the distribution of Homes within that region.**
2. **A national area might be one country, several countries, or just part of a country, largely depending on the number of Homes in that country.**
3. **Every Home must fall under a national or regional area, regardless of distances.**

4. The national boards are responsible to provide services to the best of their ability to all the Homes under their jurisdiction.

G. Councils are set up to support and work with the boards at the regional and national levels.

1. The regional council is responsible for the direction of the work in its region as well as to coordinate efforts between the regional boards.

2. The national coordinating council is a forum for information sharing and coordination of events or initiatives on the national level by the boards.

The Boards

- A. The national boards are made up of Family members 18 years or above appointed by the regional council. The only requirement for being on a national board is to have gifts and talents in the specific portfolio the board covers and a willingness to prayerfully fulfill the requirements stated for that board.**
- 1. Each national board member's appointment must be approved by a simple majority of the Home council in the Home in which they reside.**
 - 2. National board members are collectively responsible and accountable for the effective functioning of their board on a national level.**
 - 3. Each national board will have a chairperson appointed by the regional council.**
 - a. The national board chairperson is responsible to coordinate the activities of the board's members, carry out the day-to-day business based on the decisions of the board, handle the board's communications, report for the board, and ensure that the decisions of the board are implemented.**

The national board chairperson is responsible to pray about and make daily board-related decisions and conduct the business of the board, keeping the other board members informed of his actions, since it's not always possible to confer about these beforehand with the rest of the board.

The chairperson does not have any more voting power or authority than the other board members, but by default will handle many of the more minor details of implementing the board's decisions.

Decisions not related to implementing the board's daily business should be made in full consultation and with the vote of the board.

- B. The regional boards are made up of the chairpersons of each of the national boards under them. The regional shepherds may appoint additional members to the regional board who are not chairpersons of national boards, if they feel it is necessary. However, they cannot appoint a majority of the regional board members.**
- 1. Each regional board member's appointment must be approved by the Home in which they reside.**
 - 2. Regional board members are collectively responsible and accountable for the effective functioning of their portfolio and decisions of their board on a regional level.**
 - 3. The regional shepherds will appoint a regional board chairperson.**
 - a. The regional shepherds must inform World Services Leadership and the international board chairperson of the respective board concerning a potential replacement.**
 - i. If the regional shepherds don't hear back within 15 days, they may proceed with the appointment.**

- b. The regional board chairperson is responsible to coordinate the activities of the board's members, carry out the day-to-day business based on the decisions of the board, handle the board's communications, report for the board, and ensure that the decisions of the board are implemented.**

The regional board chairperson is responsible to pray about and make daily board-related decisions and conduct the business of the board, keeping the board informed of his actions, since it's not always possible to confer about these beforehand with the rest of the board.

The regional chairperson does not have any more voting power or authority than the other board members, but by default will handle many of the more minor details of implementing the board's decisions, without always being able to immediately consult with the board on every point.

Decisions not related to implementing the board's daily business should be made in full consultation and with the vote of the board.

- c. The regional board chairperson's job is not only to chair the regional board, but as well to visit, train, inspire, motivate, and interact with their national boards.**
 - i. The regional board chairperson is responsible to help and advise the national boards, but have no authority over their decisions.**
- d. The regional board chairperson may attend and participate in the national board meetings of the boards for which they are responsible, but does not have a vote on that board's decisions.**

The regional chairperson is not expected to attend every national board meeting, but may attend when possible or when led to.

- e. The regional board chairpersons are responsible to grade each Home within their region on the Home's response to that board's Home review criteria.**

C. The international boards are made up of the regional chairpersons from that particular pillar in each regional area.

- 1. World Services Leadership appoints the international board chairpersons and any additional members to the international board.**
- 2. International board members are collectively responsible and accountable for the effective functioning of their pillar and the decisions of their board at the international level.**
 - a. The international board is responsible to update the criteria for their board that Family Homes are expected to fulfill and will be evaluated on at Home review.**
- 3. The international board chairpersons are responsible to coordinate the activities of their board's members, carry out the day-to-day business based on the decisions of the board, handle the board's communications, report for the board, and ensure that the decisions of the board are implemented.**

The international board chairpersons are responsible to pray about and make daily board-related decisions and conduct the business of the board, keeping the board informed of his actions, since it's not always possible to confer about these beforehand with the rest of the board.

The chairperson does not have any more voting power or authority than the other board members, but by default will handle many of the more minor details of implementing the board's decisions, without always being able to immediately consult with the board on every point. Decisions not related to implementing board decisions should be made in full consultation and with the vote of the board.

- 4. It is the international board chairperson's job to inform the international board chairpersons of the other pillars and World Services Leadership of their board's decisions and directions.**

The IB chairperson should check with the chairpersons of the other IBs before implementing any major policies decided on by their board. Decisions made by one international board may affect another board, so it is imperative they are in sync with each other.

The Board Councils

- A. The national coordinating council is a forum for information sharing through reports, and coordination of schedules and events planned by its national boards.**
 - 1. The national coordinating council is made up of the chairpersons of the four national boards, as well as others the regional council may appoint, such as a Communications and Community Relations board representative and a Coaching and Shepherding board representative.**
 - 2. The national coordinating council elects one of its members to act as a coordinator for a term of one year. The coordinator helps sort out conflicts in the scheduling of events and other activities planned by the national boards, and chairs any meetings the national coordinating council may decide to have.**

- B. The regional council is a forum for the regional chairpersons to pray about and discuss the general direction of the region, be informed of pushes and direction of other boards in the region, and coordinate pushes or activities of the boards on a regional level.**
 - 1. The regional council is made up of the chairpersons of the six regional boards of that region, the regional shepherds based within that region, and the overseer of the regional desk.**
 - a. The regional shepherds may appoint additional members to the regional council if they feel it is necessary. However, the additional members cannot make up a majority of the regional council's membership.**
 - 2. The regional council will select a chairperson who will act as a coordinator between the regional boards and who will chair the regional council meetings.**

Responsibilities and Authority of the Boards and Councils

Board Procedures

Frequency of Board and Council Meetings

Boards and Councils may call additional meetings, if they feel the need, time and finances permitting. Generally, the more often a board or council meets, the stronger the board will be and the better able to carry out its responsibilities.

A. Any member of a board may call a meeting, but it must be agreed upon by the majority of the board members for it to take place.

- 1. If a board member wishes to call a board meeting, they must inform the chairperson, who must within 48 hours notify all board members that a proposal for a meeting has been made, and pass on the details of when and where the meeting is proposed to take place, the purpose of the meeting, and any other pertinent details.**
- 2. Board members should respond to the chairperson within seven days as to whether they wish to hold the meeting. A lack of response will be counted as a "yes" vote.**
- 3. After the votes have been tallied the chairperson will send an official notice to all board members on the outcome of the vote. If the board accepts the meeting proposal, preparations for the meeting will then go forward.**

The dynamics of travel and the time it takes to plan for and confirm proper travel arrangements varies greatly from area to area so board meetings should be planned as far in advance as possible for the sake of those needing to plan for and travel long distances. Sufficient advance notice may be up to two to four weeks for a meeting where the board members all live within the same city, or up two to three months for a meeting involving board members who live in other distant cities or countries within the board area.

B. Board meetings should follow the procedures outlined in the "Board Meeting Rules of Order" to facilitate the business of the board meetings and to ensure equal opportunity for all board members to contribute and participate in conducting the business of the board.

C. National boards must meet a minimum of one time a year.

Three meetings a year are recommended, but only two are required. Additional meetings could be via chat or some sort of "tele-meeting."

D. The national coordinating council is not required to meet. However, they may meet as often as the majority of their members feels they should, time and finances permitting.

Because the NCC is not required to meet, members are not required to attend NCC meetings.

E. Regional boards must meet a minimum of one time a year.

It's recommended that the regional board meet twice a year, but it is not mandatory.

F. Regional councils must meet a minimum of one time every six months.

G. International boards should meet a minimum of one time every two years.

Oversight of the Boards

A. It is the responsibility of the board directly above to oversee the work of the lower board.

- 1. The oversight of a board will fall primarily on the chairperson of the board directly above that board.**

Oversight of the board below extends mainly to the performance of the board, counseling with them, occasionally attending board meetings as a non-voting member, receiving reports from the boards on what is happening in their areas, and praying and seeking the Lord to help answer questions and give counsel.

- 2. If a board is not producing or providing the services to the Family that its mandate calls for, it is the responsibility of the chairperson of the board above it to point this out to the board or recommend that members who aren't fulfilling their responsibilities be removed from the board in accordance with the "[Procedure for the Removal of a Board Member](#)."**

Veto Power

In any structure where decisions are being made that affect the work of the Family, a system of checks and balances must be put in place to maintain the balance of responsibilities and authority. For this reason, veto power over the decisions of the boards is given to certain bodies.

However, this authority should be used judiciously. The goal of the Family board structure is for each board to manage its own affairs as much as possible without interference from above, as long as those decisions are beneficial to the Homes they serve. Only if a board's decisions are not in accordance with the Word or are in conflict with the direction and goals of the pillar or area as a whole, should there be any intervention in that board's decisions.

The body that is in disagreement with the decision and the body that made the decision should try to work out their differences in prayer and counsel without the need to resort to an official veto. In many cases there may need to be compromises on both sides in order to find a happy medium and the Lord's will in the matter. Vetoes should be used only as a last resort.

- A. Regional and international boards have the authority to initiate a veto of the decisions of the boards below them within the same pillar.**
 - 1. If the upper board moves to modify or veto a decision made by the lower board and the lower board does not agree to the modification or veto, the boards are considered to be "in conflict" and the matter must be taken to a third body to arbitrate in accordance with "Conflicts."**

- B. The international board and the regional council has the authority to initiate a veto of the decisions made by a regional board.**
 - 1. If the international board or the regional council moves to modify or veto a decision made by a regional board, and the regional board does not agree to the modification or veto, the board and the council are considered to be "in conflict" and the matter must be taken to a third body for arbitration.**

Conflicts

When there is a conflict between two bodies, the lower body may appeal the decision to a third body. If the third body agrees with the upper body, then the matter is closed. If the third body agrees with the lower body, then the upper body has the right to an appeal.

- A. If there is a conflict between a national board and a regional board, the matter may be appealed by the national board to the regional council.**
 - 1. If the regional council agrees with the regional board the matter is closed.**
 - 2. If the regional council agrees with the national board, then the regional board may appeal the matter to the international board chairpersons, in which case the international board chairpersons will decide the matter.**

- B. If there is a conflict between a regional board and the international board, the matter may be appealed by the regional board to the regional shepherds.**
 - 1. If the regional shepherds agree with the international board the matter is closed.**
 - 2. If the regional shepherds agree with the regional board, then the international board may appeal the matter to World Services Leadership, in which case World Services Leadership will decide the matter.**

- C. If there is a conflict between a regional board and the regional council, the matter may be appealed by the regional board to the international board.**
 - 1. If the international board agrees with the regional council the matter is closed.**
 - 2. If the international board agrees with the regional board, then the regional council may appeal the matter to the regional shepherds, in which case the regional shepherds will decide the matter.**

- D. If there is a conflict between a regional board and the regional shepherds, the matter may be appealed by the regional board to the international board.**
 - 1. If the international board agrees with the regional shepherds the matter is closed.**
 - 2. If the international board agrees with the regional board, then the regional shepherds may appeal the matter to World Services Leadership, in which case World Services Leadership will decide the matter.**

Vetoing Decisions Made by a Board

A. Decisions made by the board must be passed on to the board above it via the minutes of the board meetings.

- 1. The members of the upper board have 15 days to look over the minutes and decide if any decisions made by the lower board should be vetoed. If the lower board does not hear back within 15 days, they may put the decision into action. The exceptions to this rule are the Coaching and Shepherding and Communications and Community Relations boards.**

Because of the nature of the CS board, they do not have to wait for a response from the chairperson of the board above it before the decision is put into effect. However, they must still inform the chairperson above of the decision made and the action taken.

Likewise, because the CCR board may have to make immediate decisions regarding legal or media matters, the CCR board does not have to wait for a response from the chairperson of the board above it before the decision is put into effect. However, they must still inform the chairperson above of the decision made and the action taken.

- 2. If the upper board feels a decision made by the lower board needs to be vetoed, the board chairperson would put the decision of the lower board on hold. When the decision has been put on hold, the upper board has 15 more days to make a decision and get back to the lower board regarding modifications to the decision made.**

Once the upper board has given its recommendation of changes to be made, or decisions to be reversed, it is up to the board that made the original decision to discuss, hear from the Lord, vote, and decide whether to accept the upper board's recommendations or appeal to a higher level.

B. If there is a conflict between the upper board and the lower board, the upper board may decide, by a simple majority of its board members, to veto the decisions of the board below it, but that veto must have the consent of a third body.

Reporting

A. All board chairpersons must report to the board chairpersons above them on a monthly basis.

The monthly report may cover such things as the goals, programs, and activities of the board, but may also vary month by month to ask for extra or specific information as the chairpersons of the board above them may feel necessary.

B. All boards must send the minutes of their board meetings to the council members on their level as well as to the chairperson of the upper board. The exception to this will be the Coaching and Shepherding board, whose minutes will go only to the members of the board above.

The national boards send their minutes to the NCC members and the regional boards send theirs to the RC members. Any decisions made by the vote of the entire board, for example, decisions made via email, are considered minutes and should be handled as such even if no meeting was held to make those decisions.

Organizing Events with Homes

A board may hold meetings or organize events for the Homes in its area, but they have no authority to require any Home to participate. Home participation in those initiatives, while probably to their benefit, is entirely voluntary.

A. If a regional board wishes to organize an event, it may do so provided that the timing of the planned event has been coordinated through the regional council so that it does not conflict with events planned by the other regional boards.

1. When the dates for the event have been set the board must give sufficient advance notice to the Homes to be able to attend, if they so desire.

The dynamics of travel and the time it takes to plan for and confirm proper travel arrangements varies greatly from area to area so board events should be planned as far in advance as possible for the sake of those needing to plan for and travel long distances. Sufficient advance notice may be two to four weeks for a city-wide event, two to three months for a national area event, or six months up to a year for a regional event involving Homes in other distant cities or countries.

B. If a national board wishes to organize a national event, the timing of the planned event should be coordinated through the national coordinating council so that it does not conflict with events already planned by the other national boards. The national board should also inform its regional board of its plans.

1. The national coordinating council coordinator will let the national board know whether or not something else is already planned for the Homes at or around that time, and if so, ask them to choose another time, or to work it out with the other board concerned.

2. When the dates for the national event have been set, the board must give sufficient advance notice to the Homes to be able to attend, if they so desire.

“National events” would include camps, seminars, or larger meetings that would involve all or most of the Homes within a national area and tend to draw more extensively on a Home’s time, personnel, and involvement. Some events, though, may be as simple as someone on the CP board provisioning tickets to a city museum and inviting the children from the Homes within the city to go. In the case of activities of this nature it would generally not be necessary for the national board to coordinate the activity through the NCC and their regional board. They should still give as much advance notice as possible, but it may be less than two weeks, depending on the circumstances and the event.

For national events, sufficient advance notice may be two to four weeks for a metropolitan-wide activity, or two to three months for a national activity involving Homes in other distant cities or countries within the national area.

Board Meeting Rules of Order

A. Using prophecy:

If the boards are to be successful, board members need to be hearing from the Lord and implementing what He has to say about their decisions.

- 1. All decisions made by the board should be confirmed with the Lord. The confirming prophecies must be sent to the chairperson of the upper board and to the members of the board along with the minutes of the meetings containing the decisions made by the board.**

When it comes to decisions made by the board, both decisions to accept a motion and decisions not to accept a motion should be brought to the Lord for confirmation.

- a. If the members assigned to hear from the Lord on a decision receive seemingly conflicting prophecies, the question should be brought back to the Lord for further clarification.**
 - i. The counsel of the chairperson of the upper board should be sought in the case where a decision cannot be confirmed because of conflicting prophecies and the board cannot resolve the issue on their own.**

B. Board members' rights in a meeting:

- 1. All members of a board have equal rights, privileges, and obligations. One of the chairperson's primary responsibilities is to use the authority of the chair to ensure that all those attending a board meeting are treated fairly.**

Although the ultimate decision rests with a majority, all members have the right to be heard and have the right to present a differing opinion. The rights of all members—whether they are voting in the affirmative or are of a dissenting opinion—should be the concern of every member.

- 2. Every matter presented for decision should be discussed fully. The right of every member to speak on any issue is as important as each member's right to vote.**

Every member has the right to understand the background and intent of any question or proposal presented to a meeting, and to know what effect a decision may have. A member has the right to request information on any point he does not thoroughly understand. Moreover, all meetings must be characterized by fairness, good faith, prayer, and hearing from the Lord.

- 3. A simple majority vote decides an issue and should be confirmed with the Lord in prophecy. Each board member should comply with the final vote of the majority.**
 - a. If a decision is brought before the Lord for confirmation, and He gives new information or points to reconsider before implementing the decision, the matter should be taken up by the board for further prayer and discussion.**

C. Meeting preparation:

The most important thing a chairperson can do to ensure a successful meeting is to pray, seek the Lord, and do his homework before the meeting.

- 1. The chairperson should become thoroughly familiar with the business to be dealt with at the meeting, including any reports to be made by committees that the board has created, any points already submitted by members or groups of members, and if possible, any new business likely to be introduced.**

Preparation will enable the chairperson to stay on top of things while chairing the meeting, and to anticipate questions most likely to be asked or information needed. The chairperson should also ensure that key people or other non-board members needed for the meeting will be invited and/or attend.

D. Quorum of members:

- 1. Before a board meeting can conduct business, it requires a quorum.**

The requirement of a quorum is a protection against unrepresentative action in the name of the board by too small a number of board members. A board meeting cannot be held in the absence of a quorum.

- a. A quorum consists of a simple majority of the board's total members.**

If a board has three members, two must be present; if four or five members, three must be present; if six or seven members, four must be present; if eight members, five must be present, etc. It is advisable that certain members, such as the chairperson, secretary, and treasurer, be present in order for a meeting to be held, however, it is not essential, so long as there is a quorum of board members present.

In the absence of the chairperson and/or the secretary of the board, one member present must be elected by the board to act as a temporary chairperson and/or secretary of the board.

- b. Any member of the board may call a meeting following the rules outlined in the ["Frequency of Board Meetings."](#)**

E. The agenda:

The agenda consists of the items of business to be discussed at a board meeting. Usually the secretary of the board or the chairperson is charged with the responsibility of preparing the agenda. The person preparing the agenda can, of course, seek assistance.

- 1. All board members have the right to submit points to be added to the agenda and to be discussed at the meeting.**
 - a. The secretary or board member preparing the agenda should check which committees, if any, have reports to present at the meeting and add these to the agenda.**
 - b. If a board member cannot attend a meeting and therefore wishes for a point on the agenda to be put off and discussed at another meeting, that board member may ask for the point to be tabled. The motion to table that point must be approved by a simple majority of those attending the meeting. If the motion does not pass, then the point would be brought up for discussion.**
 - c. Any unfinished business from the previous board meeting should be included in the agenda.**
 - d. A final draft of the agenda must be sent to all members 15 days prior to the meeting.**
 - e. Until the board votes to adopt the proposed agenda at the meeting, the agenda is still a proposal.**
- 2. The board meeting begins with the consideration of the agenda where the members can, by simple majority, add points to, delete points from, or rearrange the order of points on the proposed agenda.**

- a. **Once the agenda has been adopted, any further change should be made by a motion, and must have a simple majority agreement of those attending the meeting.**
3. **The board can table an agenda point in their meeting at any time with the agreement of a simple majority, thereby laying a main point aside temporarily without setting a time for resuming its consideration, but with the provision that the point can be taken up again whenever the majority so decides.**

The motion to table a point has the effect of delaying action on it. Rather than either passing or defeating a point, a meeting may sometimes choose to postpone or even to "bury" the point by tabling it.

F. Voting:

1. **A simple majority of affirmative votes of the total number of board members is necessary to adopt a point.**

- a. **Each abstention decreases the number of board members by one for that vote.**

If there are seven board members in a meeting and three vote in the affirmative, two against, and two abstain the motion will pass even though three votes in the affirmative is not the majority of the board. It passes because there were two abstentions, and therefore the number of board members for that vote is five, of which three is a majority.

- b. **Each board member will have one vote.**

All votes should be made by a show of hands, and the secretary of the board or the person recording the minutes of the meeting should note alongside the decision how many votes were for the motion, how many were against it, and how many abstained.

- c. **The chairperson has the same voting rights as any other member.**

- i. **Co-chairpersons share a single vote together. If they are split on how to vote, their votes would count as a half vote each.**

While it is good for the chairperson of the board to express his opinion and view as a board member, it is important that the chairperson also plays the role of moderator. Because the chairperson chairs the meeting and therefore can be seen to influence the votes of the rest of the board, it's important that he encourages all views and opinions.

2. **Once the vote is made at the meeting, it is final, pending confirmation from the Lord, and may be enacted following the rules in the "[Procedure for Vetoing Decisions Made by a Board.](#)"**

- a. **For a motion to be passed and a decision made, a simple majority of the board members must vote in the affirmative.**

- b. **If a simple majority of affirmative votes is not reached on a point and there are board members absent from the meeting, the absent board members must first cast their votes before a decision may be reached.**

If there are ten members on a board, six votes are needed to pass a motion. If only seven members attend the board meeting and six of those seven vote in the affirmative, the point passes. However, if only four of those seven present at the meeting vote in the affirmative, the point does not automatically pass, because the affirmative votes are only 40% of the total board. In this case the point must be sent to the absent board members for their vote before the point can be decided.

If two of the three absent members vote in the affirmative, the point is passed. If only one votes in the affirmative, the point does not pass because it would only be 50% of the board and therefore not a simple majority voting in the affirmative. The same rule for abstentions as stated above would apply here.

- i. **An absent board member must lodge their vote within 15 days or be counted as an abstention.**

G. Meeting minutes:

- 1. The secretary of the board should record the minutes of the meeting including subjects discussed and decisions made, as well as any assignments that were given to the board's members or committees. The secretary should keep a copy of the minutes in the board's files.**
 - a. The board members should look over the minutes of the meeting and sign them to signify that the minutes are accurate, preferably before ending the meeting, while the matters discussed and the decisions reached are fresh.**
 - b. Within one week of the completion of the meeting the chairperson should receive any absentee votes or input concerning the meeting notes.**
 - i. If there are no corrections, additions, or pending absentee votes, the minutes will be considered final and a copy will be sent to the chairperson of the upper board, the council members on that board's level, and to all members of that board.**
 - ii. If there are changes or additions or pending absentee votes, the minutes must be sent to the board's members for further confirmation before they are sent to the chairperson of the upper board, the council members on that board's level, and to all members of that board.**

H. Order of business:

The chairperson should prepare the order of business for the meeting in advance.

A meeting's order of business includes the:

1. Call to order

The chairperson calls the meeting to order. The meeting should begin with prayer and hearing from the Lord for His keynote and counsel, general direction of the meeting, as well as for encouragement, leading, and anointing.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The proposed agenda should be handed out to each member or presented on some visual device, such as a whiteboard, chalkboard or PowerPoint-type presentation. The meeting should begin with consideration of the agenda. The chairperson will ask if any of the members have suggested changes to the agenda, including additional points, points to be deleted, or changes in the order.

- a. After any changes have been taken care of, a simple majority vote adopts the agenda. Once adopted, the business of the meeting is restricted to the items listed on the agenda.**

3. Review previous meeting's minutes

Minutes of the board's previous meeting should be circulated to the board's members to help remind them of the decisions made in the previous meeting, the assignments that were passed out, and any unfinished business that has not been executed. The notes need not be read at the meeting.

4. Announcements and chairperson business

The chairperson should give individual board members or committees an opportunity to make special announcements as well as making any of his own.

The chairperson should then summarize the major items of business not already conveyed to the board members that have been handled since the last board meetings. Members may ask for more information regarding the matters disposed of by the chairperson, and sometimes the board may choose to change the action taken by the chairperson.

5. Treasurer's report

- a. The treasurer should submit a detailed record of the financial business by the end of January of each year. This report should be checked by at least one board**

member other than the treasurer and a copy be sent to the chairperson of the upper board.

The chairperson will call upon the treasurer to present a report on the board's finances, if applicable. If the board decides, the report may be passed on to the board members prior to the meeting. However, if the board members have any questions regarding the report, they should be made at this time.

For a regular meeting, the treasurer's report need only be a simple statement of the income and disbursements since the last financial report, the balance of money held in the board's account, and some information about projected expenses.

6. Committee reports

If there are committees that have been assigned a special task by the board, they should present their report to the board at this time. If the board decides, committee reports can be passed on to the board members prior to the meeting. However, if board members have any questions regarding the report, they should be made at this time.

7. Closing assignments

Once the business of the meeting has ended, the board will assign tasks and prophecy assignments on matters discussed and decisions made to various board members and committees, as well as set deadlines for when they should be completed.

All decisions made should be confirmed with the Lord before the board members leave the meeting site, and the prophecies received should be turned in to the chairperson to include with the minutes of the meeting. This can be done either at the meeting itself in united hearing from Him, or assigned to at least two board members to bring to the Lord once the meeting is over, but ideally should preferably be done before leaving the meeting site, or, if not possible, within the next 15 days.

Board Portfolios

Children and Parenting Board

The focus of this board is to assist parents, teachers, and Homes with counsel and prayer in regards to the care of their children, from birth through age 11, and offer training and counsel for the parents and childcare personnel. See the "[Children and Parenting Board Criteria](#)."

A. Responsibilities of the national Children and Parenting boards:

Childcare standard: Offer counsel to the Homes in how to maintain the *Charter* and childcare standard in childcare.

Counseling: Assist the parents and Homes in the spiritual and physical training of their children.

Criteria: Provide assistance and counsel to the Homes, as requested by the Homes or by the regional board, in matters pertaining to the CP criteria, with the goal of helping the Homes to be able to fulfill the criteria to the best of their ability, as well as to pass Home review.

Field questions: Answer parenting, childcare, pregnancy/childbirth-related questions from the Homes or pass them on to the regional board for further counsel if necessary.

Health care: Encourage the Homes to maintain a high nutritional standard and to care for those who are sick, impaired, or in need.

Ideas and suggestions: Give input, including ideas, suggestions, or prophecies, to the regional board concerning the childcare needs of the Homes and pass on ideas for pubs, materials, or resources that may be needed.

Initiatives: Pray about and discuss ways to help the Homes achieve the *Charter* and childcare standard, and how to promote policies, initiatives and decisions made by their board and/or pillar, in the national area.

Materials: Instruct and inspire the Homes concerning the availability and use of Word and training materials produced locally, regionally, internationally, or by World Services Publications.

Missionary and witnessing training: Assist the parents and Homes in the missionary and witnessing training of the children with such things as ideas, tips, and how-tos.

Parental support: Offer counsel to the parents regarding the needs of their children and how best to meet those needs.

Projects and activities: Work with the Homes to organize activities, programs, or fellowships for parents and children in their national area.

Reporting: Report monthly to the chairperson of the regional board and send minutes of board meetings and decisions made to the entire regional board and to the members of the national coordinating council.

Teamwork: Meet together at least three times a year for prayer and discussion, as well as communicate regularly via mail, email, or phone as needed.

Training: Work with the Homes to organize seminars, workshops, or other meetings involving teachers, parents, and students for interaction and exchange of information. Collaborate with the regional and/or international boards to put regional goals into action.

B. Responsibilities of the regional Children and Parenting boards:

Comments and suggestions: The chairperson will receive TRF comments and suggestions relating to childcare and is responsible to hear from the Lord, respond to the Homes, and answer their questions, counseling as needed with the national board chairperson of the area the Home is included in, or pass the comments, suggestions, and/or questions to the national board chairperson to pray about and answer. Shepherding issues should be sent to the shepherding desk.

Criteria: Provide counsel and assistance to the Homes in order to help them fulfill the CP criteria to the best of their ability. Pray about ways to help their region (and/or each national area) as a whole to strengthen the

criteria points in which the Homes are weak by means of counsel, newsletters, seminars, meetings, visitation, etc.

Goals and initiatives: Work with the Homes to organize seminars, workshops, or other meetings involving teachers, parents, and students for the purpose of interaction and exchange of childcare and parenting information and training. Collaborate with the international board to put applicable regional goals into action.

Home review questionnaires: The chairperson is responsible to process the Home review questionnaires from the Home and pass on their recommendations to the review board. The chairperson also provides counsel to the Homes about the questionnaire as needed, such as clarification on questions which the Home may have improperly answered, advice on which aspects of the criteria the Home may want to focus on, and advice on how to improve in criteria areas the Home may be weak on. The regional chairperson may also warn the Home if they are at risk of getting a failing grade next review due to being weak in certain critical criteria and so suggest steps that the Home may want to take in order to avoid that. The chairperson is also responsible to answer questions the Homes may have regarding the criteria or the Home review questionnaire, while seeking counsel from the IBC as needed or passing the question on to the IBC if they are unable to answer it.

Ideas and suggestions: Generate and pass on to the international board ideas, for parenting/childcare-related pubs, materials, and resources that are needed for the children's spiritual and physical training that could possibly benefit the Family worldwide.

Oversight of the national boards: The chairperson is responsible to give counsel to, and answer the questions of the national boards and ensure that they are fulfilling their responsibilities. The chairperson should also be aware of and may help with the training, programs, and activities of the national boards in the region when needed.

Reporting: Report monthly to the chairperson of the international board and send minutes of board meetings and decisions made to the chairperson of the international board and to the members of the regional council.

Resource Center: Work with the Education board to maintain a resource center responsible to make childcare/educational materials and resources available to the Homes in their region.

Teamwork: Meet together at least once a year for prayer and discussion, as well as communicate regularly via mail, email, or phone.

C. Responsibilities of the international Children and Parenting board:

Family publications: Determine through prayer, taking into consideration input received from the regional boards, what topics need to be addressed in Family publications for parents and children.

Home review: Formulate the CP Home review questionnaire and the scoring used to process the questionnaire. Determine matters pertaining to the Home review as concerns the CP questionnaire, providing assistance and answers to the Homes as needed.

Oversight of and assistance to the regional boards: The chairperson is responsible to give counsel to, and answer the questions of, the regional boards. They are responsible to oversee, and prod when necessary, the regional boards, to help ensure they are fulfilling their responsibilities and properly servicing their respective region. They also act as a facilitator and advisor to the regional boards, providing counsel and assistance, within their resources, to help the regional boards fulfill their goals.

Policy: Formulate through discussion and hearing from the Lord, Family policy in regards to children and parenting, taking into account the prophecies, counsel, suggestions, and decisions of the lower boards, which policy would then be presented to the regional and national boards for implementation. Proposals involving changes to the *Charter* and/or would be presented to World Services Leadership.

Reporting: Report to World Services Leadership as directed.

Teamwork: Meet together once a year for prayer and counsel, as well as communicate via mail, email, or phone.

Church Growth and Outreach Board

The CGO board assists Homes in building lasting well-rounded missionary works. It focuses on all aspects of the Family's missionary activities, including distributing Family publications and products, personal witnessing and soul winning, using the *Activated* magazine, and church growth and building a local work. This also includes disciple winning and training, follow-up, provisioning, charitable projects, feeding and shepherding of General, Active, and Attached Missionary members, and generally, reaching the world with the Gospel. See the "[Church Growth and Outreach Board Criteria](#)."

A. Areas of responsibility of the national Church Growth and Outreach boards:

Criteria: Provide assistance and counsel to the Homes, as requested by the Homes or by the regional board, in matters pertaining to the CGO criteria, with the goal of helping the Homes to be able to fulfill the criteria to the best of their ability, as well as to pass Home review.

Charitable projects: Assist the Homes through counsel and prayer in the organization and coordination of local charitable projects; provide counsel in questions relating to local charitable work; encourage the Homes to send in testimonies and photos of their local charitable work so that they can be passed on to the Communications and Community Relations board and World Services Publications.

Field questions: Answer CGO-related questions from the Homes or pass them on to the regional board for further counsel if necessary or if unable to answer.

Ideas and suggestions: Give input to the regional board, including ideas, suggestions, and prophecies in matters pertaining to their areas of responsibility.

Initiatives: Pray about and discuss ways to help the Homes in their outreach and church growth ministries, and how to promote policies, initiatives, and decisions made by their board and/or pillar. Assist the Homes in building a lasting well-rounded missionary work through the Four Aspects of the *Activated* Program, which are:

Distribution of Family publications and products: Promote the distribution and marketing of Family publications and products; tune into and cultivate the ideas and needs of the local distributors; generate ideas for new outreach products that may be needed or improvements to existing ones; and pass on input and ideas from the Homes and the boards to the regional board.

Personal witnessing and soul-winning: Promote and assist the Homes, as needed in their personal witnessing and soul-winning.

Activated magazine: Promote the *Activated* program by means of workshops, seminars, or other activities; encourage and assist the Homes to use the *Activated* magazine in their outreach; collect subscriptions; feed their sheep with the *Activated* magazine; and encourage and assist the Homes in the follow-up of their *Activated* readers and other sheep.

Church growth: Including bringing sheep who are potential along to General and/or Active or Missionary membership by means of the *12 Foundation Stones*, *12 Bridges*, and other materials; offering counsel in matters relating to General, Active, and Missionary members attached; organizing seminars on follow-up; caring for Active members as may be needed; helping with the organization of programs and activities for the Homes' General and Active members such as retreats, seminars, meetings, witnessing trips; and generally looking for ways to improve the care of General and Active members by providing assistance as may be needed.

Reporting: Report monthly to the chairperson of the regional board and send minutes of board meetings and decisions made to the entire regional board and to the members of the national coordinating council.

Teamwork: Meet together at least three times a year for prayer and discussion, as well as communicate regularly via mail, email, or phone as needed.

B. Areas of responsibility of the regional Church Growth and Outreach boards:

Activated program: Work with the national boards and the Activated desks to pray and come up with ideas of how to promote *Activated* to the Homes and the public as well as the follow-up by the Homes of *Activated* subscribers. Counsel with the GP Productions Council in matters pertaining to the business side of the Activated desks.

Approval of local products: The regional chairperson, in counsel with the GP Productions Council, establishes regional committees responsible for the approval of new GP products created by Homes in their region, as well as local translated versions of existing GP products.

Church growth: Pray about the growth of the church of believers in their regional area and look for ways to improve the Home's care and shepherding of their General and Active members. Pray about, discuss and decide on new programs and initiatives to assist the Homes in building lasting, well-rounded missionary works, which would then be implemented in counsel with the national boards.

Comments and suggestions: The chairperson will receive TRF comments and suggestions relating to witnessing, disciple winning and training, church growth, follow-up, provisioning contacts, local charitable work, tool distribution, and the *Activated* program, and is responsible to hear from the Lord, respond to the Homes, and answer their questions, counseling as needed with the national board chairperson of the area the Home is included in, or pass the comments, suggestions, and/or questions to the national board chairperson to pray about and answer. Shepherding issues should be sent to the shepherding desk.

Criteria: Provide counsel and assistance to the Homes in order to help them fulfill the CGO criteria to the best of their ability. Pray about ways to help their region (and/or each national area) as a whole to strengthen the criteria points in which the Homes are weak by means of counsel, newsletters, seminars, meetings, visitation, etc.

Goals: Pray about, discuss, and outline the goals and needs of the Homes in regards to church growth and outreach in their region, working with the national boards to present them to the Homes.

Home review questionnaires: The chairperson is responsible to process the Home review questionnaires from the Home and pass on their recommendations to the review board. The chairperson also provides counsel to the Homes about the questionnaire as needed, such as clarification on questions which the Home may have improperly answered, advice on which aspects of the criteria the Home may want to focus on, and advice on how to improve in criteria areas the Home may be weak on. The regional chairperson may also warn the Home if they are at risk of getting a failing grade next review due to being weak in certain critical criteria and so suggest steps that the Home may want to take in order to avoid that. The chairperson is also responsible to answer questions the Homes may have regarding the criteria or the Home review questionnaire, while seeking counsel from the IBC as needed or passing the question on to the IBC if they are unable to answer it.

Ideas and suggestions: Generate and pass on to the international board ideas for GP publications and products that World Services Publications could produce for the Family worldwide, and report to the international board on products or materials being created locally in their region. Pray about the ideas and needs of the local distributors and ideas for new outreach tools received from the national boards and pass on ideas they deem relevant to the international board. Make suggestions to the international board as to the content of GP/GM/AM pubs, including the *Activated* magazine and *Link*.

Initiatives: Pray about and discuss ways to help the Homes achieve the goal of reaching their region with the Gospel and implementing the CGO criteria and the counsel in the Word and the Charter in regards to outreach, and helping to promote policies, initiatives, and decisions made by their board and/or pillar.

Marketing and distribution: Counsel and work with the GP Productions Council, which oversees the production centers (PCs), regarding products needed for distribution, and pass on ideas and suggestions to the GP Productions Council regarding tools which the PC could produce, prices, service, and other related matters.

Oversight of the national boards: The chairperson is responsible to give counsel to, and answer the questions of, the national boards and ensure that they are fulfilling their responsibilities, and should be aware of the programs, activities, and initiatives of the national boards, and assist and/or participate in them when needed.

Reporting: Report to the chairperson of the international board and send minutes of board meetings and decisions made to the international chairperson and to the regional council.

Teamwork: Meet together at least once a year for prayer and discussion, as well as communicate regularly via mail, email, or phone, as needed.

C. Areas of responsibility of the international Church Growth and Outreach board:

Activated program and materials: Work with World Services Publications in determining the content and direction of the *Activated* magazine and other publications such as the *Link* magazine, the *12 Foundation Stones*, *12 Bridges*, and New Wine newsletters for the follow-up and feeding of Activated readers, General

members, Active members, and Missionary members attached to a Home. Work with the GP Productions Council in overseeing and determining policy for the logistical side of the *Activated* program as implemented by the Activated desks.

Family publications: Determine through prayer, input received from the regional boards, what topics need to be addressed in Family publications concerning witnessing, the needs of sheep and General, Active, and Missionary members, *Activated*, charitable projects, tool distribution, and related subjects to be presented to World Services Publications or be undertaken by the board. Determine other materials that Homes may need to assist them in fulfilling the CGO criteria and implement the creation and production of those materials with assistance from World Services Publications as needed.

GP products: Cultivate ideas for new products and make suggestions to the GP Productions Council and to World Services Publications regarding products to create for worldwide or local distribution.

Home review: Formulate the CGO Home review questionnaire and the scoring used to process the questionnaire. Determine matters pertaining to the Home review as concerns the CGO questionnaire, providing assistance and answers to the Homes as needed.

Oversight of and assistance to the regional boards: The chairperson is responsible to give counsel to, and answer the questions of, the regional boards. He is responsible to oversee, and prod when necessary, the regional boards, to help ensure they are fulfilling their responsibilities and properly servicing their respective region. He also acts as a facilitator and advisor to the regional boards providing counsel and assistance within his resources, to help the regional boards fulfill their goals.

Policy: Determine the CGO criteria, which is then passed on to the Family Policy Council for approval. Formulate through discussion and hearing from the Lord, Family policy in regards to witnessing, including disciple winning and training, church growth, follow-up, provisioning, charitable projects, tool distribution, and promotion of the *Activated* program, taking into account the prophecies, counsel, suggestions and decisions of the national and regional boards, which policy would then be presented to the regional and national boards for implementation. Proposals involving changes to the *Charter* would be presented to the Family Policy Council for approval.

Reporting: Report to World Services Leadership as directed.

Teamwork: Meet together once a year for prayer and counsel, as well as communicate via mail, email, or phone as needed.

Coaching and Shepherding Board

The job of the CS board is to monitor and uphold the spiritual aspects of Family discipleship as outlined in the “[Coaching and Shepherding Board Criteria](#)” and to provide coaching for the Home shepherds through the coach program.

The CS board exists only at the regional level, so there are no national chairpersons to sit on the regional board. The coaches are under the auspices of the CS board pillar, and are required to meet with the CS regional chairperson a minimum of once a year. The CS regional chairperson is responsible to determine the agenda of this meeting, which would generally include training for the coaches, proactive planning and initiatives, discussion and counsel about the spiritual state of the coaches’ circles of Homes or the region in general,

The CS regional chairperson has the authority to invite any or all of the region’s coaches to discuss regional matters pertaining to the CS board. When such a meeting is convened, the selected body has the authority and responsibility of the regional CS board. At least one such regional CS board meeting must be held per year. The CS regional chairperson is primarily responsible for ensuring that the responsibilities of the regional CS board are tended to.

A. Areas of responsibility of the regional Coaching and Shepherding boards:

Comments and suggestions: The chairperson will receive TRF comments and suggestions relating to shepherding and to the coaches, and is responsible to hear from the Lord, respond to the Homes answering their questions, counseling as needed with the coaches for that Home.

Criteria: Provide counsel and assistance to the Homes in order to help them fulfill the CS criteria to the best of their ability. Pray about ways to help their region (and/or each national area) as a whole to strengthen the criteria points in which the Homes are weak by means of counsel, newsletters, seminars, meetings, visitation, etc.

Home review questionnaires: The chairperson is responsible to process the Home review questionnaires from the Home and pass on his recommendations to the review board. The chairperson also provides counsel to the Homes about the questionnaire as needed, such as clarification on questions which the Home may have improperly answered, advice on which aspects of the criteria the Home may want to focus on, and advice on how to improve in criteria areas the Home may be weak on. The regional chairperson may also warn the Home if they are at risk of getting a failing grade next review due to being weak in certain critical criteria and so suggest steps that the Home may want to take in order to avoid that. The chairperson is also responsible to answer questions the Homes may have regarding the criteria or the Home review questionnaire, while seeking counsel from the IBC as needed or passing the question on to the IBC if they are unable to answer it.

Ideas and suggestions: Generate and pass on to the international board ideas for shepherding/training-related pubs, materials, and resources that may be needed for the coaches, Home shepherds, or the spiritual shepherding and training of the Homes that World Services Publications could produce for the Family worldwide.

Initiatives: Pray about and discuss ways to help the Homes achieve the spiritual standard outlined in the “[Coaching and Shepherding Board Criteria](#),” and how to promote policies, initiatives, and decisions made by their board and/or pillar.

Oversight of the coaches: The chairperson is responsible to give counsel to, answer the questions of, and provide training to the coaches and ensure that they fulfill their coaching duties.

Reporting: Report monthly to the chairperson of the international board with a copy to the other regional shepherds.

Shepherding desk: Oversee the region's shepherding desk, including the decisions made and any discipline administered to Homes or individuals.

Spiritual oversight and goals: Pray about and discuss the spiritual state and needs of the Homes in the region, as per the "[Coaching and Shepherding Board Criteria](#)," and outline goals for raising the standard in weak areas.

Teamwork: Meet together at least once a year for prayer and discussion, and communicate via mail, email, or phone, as needed.

B. Areas of responsibility of the international Coaching and Shepherding board:

Family publications: Determine through prayer, and taking into consideration input received from the regional boards, what topics need to be addressed, whether World Services or board produced, for the Home shepherds, coaches, or for the Family concerning the "[Coaching and Shepherding Board Criteria](#)."

Home review: Formulate the CS Home review questionnaire and the scoring used to process the questionnaire. Determine matters pertaining to the Home review as concerns the CS questionnaire, providing assistance and answers to the Homes as needed.

Oversight of and assistance to the regional boards: The chairperson is responsible to give counsel to, and answer the questions of, the regional boards. They are responsible to oversee, and prod when necessary, the regional boards, to help ensure they are fulfilling their responsibilities and properly servicing their respective region. They also act as a facilitator and advisor to the regional boards, providing counsel and assistance, within their resources, to help the regional boards fulfill their goals.

Reporting: Report to World Services Leadership as directed.

Teamwork: Meet together once a year for prayer and counsel, as well as communicate via mail, email, or phone, as needed.

Communications and Community Relations Board

The CCR board deals with promoting the Family's good name and good works, relations with the media, religious freedom issues, and persecution response. The CCR board will also be available to give advice on legal matters when asked by foundations, NGOs, and other organizations that are connected to or run by Family members. See the "[Communications and Community Relations Board Criteria](#)."

A. Responsibilities of the national Communications and Community Relations boards:

The CCR board exists almost exclusively at the regional level. National CCR boards may be set up if there is a need for one in a particular area or country. Because there generally are no CCR boards on the national level, and thus no national chairpersons to sit on the regional board, the RSs appoint the members of the regional board.

B. Responsibilities of the regional Communications and Community Relations boards:

Comments and suggestions: The chairperson will receive TRF comments and suggestions relating to and including community relations, media, religious freedom issues, persecution and proactive work, and legal issues, and is responsible to pray about them and respond to the Homes, counseling as needed with the board members responsible for relevant parts of the CCR portfolio.

Communication: Communicate and share information with the Communications and Community Relations boards of other regions.

Criteria: Provide counsel and assistance to the Homes in order to help them fulfill the CCR criteria to the best of their ability. Pray about ways to help their region (and/or each national area) as a whole to strengthen the criteria points in which the Homes are weak by means of counsel, newsletters, seminars, meetings, visitation, etc.

Goals: Pray about, discuss, and outline CCR goals and needs and present them to the Homes.

Home review questionnaires: The chairperson is responsible to process the Home review questionnaires from the Home and pass on their recommendations to the review board. The chairperson also provides counsel to the Homes about the questionnaire as needed, such as clarification on questions which the Home may have improperly answered, advice on which aspects of the criteria the Home may want to focus on, and advice on how to improve in criteria areas the Home may be weak on. The regional chairperson may also warn the Home if they are at risk of getting a failing grade next review due to being weak in certain critical criteria and so suggest steps that the Home may want to take in order to avoid that. The chairperson is also responsible to answer questions the Homes may have regarding the criteria or the Home review questionnaire, while seeking counsel from the IBC as needed or passing the question on to the IBC if they are unable to answer it.

Ideas and suggestions: Generate and pass on to the international board ideas for legal- and media-related pubs, classes, materials, and resources that World Services Publications could produce for the Family worldwide.

Initiatives: Pray about and discuss ways to help the Homes with persecution prep, proactive work, contact with the media, and legal organizations, and how to promote policies, initiatives, and decisions made by their board and/or pillar.

Legal and business matters: One or more members of the CCR board should be knowledgeable and available to give advice to the Homes on legal matters relating to associations, NGOs, for-profit and not-for-profit companies or foundations.

Media: At least one member of the CCR board will focus efforts on media-related issues.

Persecution response: Assist the Homes in whatever way possible.

Proactive work: Invest time in proactive work and meeting with people who can make a difference in helping to promote and protect religious freedom, such as academics, government officials, lawyers, community and religious leaders, and others.

Community relations: Pray and discuss plans, projects and ways to promote the Family's good name and gather input on this from the Homes by also encouraging the Homes to regularly send in photos, testimonies, and copies of recommendation letters as a means of documenting the Family's humanitarian work, in conjunction with the CGO board. Pertinent photos and testimonies should be passed on to World Services Publications.

Reporting: Report monthly to the chairperson of the international board and send minutes of board meetings and decisions to the international board and the members of the RC.

Teamwork: Meet together at least once a year for prayer and discussion, as well as communicate regularly via mail, email, or phone.

C. Responsibilities of the international Communications and Community Relations board:

Family publications: Determine through prayer, taking into consideration input received from the regional boards, what topics need to be addressed in Family policy statements, and in other pubs, whether World Services or board produced, on issues such as promoting the Family, handling the media, legal and religious freedom issues, and persecution prep.

Home review: Formulate the CCR Home review questionnaire and the scoring used to process the questionnaire. Determine matters pertaining to the Home review as concerns the CCR questionnaire, providing assistance and answers to the Homes as needed.

Oversight of and assistance to the regional boards: The chairperson is responsible to give counsel to, and answer the questions of, the regional boards. They are responsible to oversee, and prod when necessary, the regional boards, to help ensure they are fulfilling their responsibilities and properly servicing their respective region. They also act as a facilitator and advisor to the regional boards, providing counsel and assistance, within their resources, to help the regional boards fulfill their goals.

Policy: Formulate through discussion and hearing from the Lord, Family policy proposals in regards to general media- and legal-related matters, taking into account the prophecies, counsel, suggestions and decisions of the lower boards. Policies decided upon would then be presented to the regional and national boards for implementation. Proposals involving changes to the *Charter* would be presented to World Services Leadership.

Reporting: Report to World Services Leadership as directed.

Teamwork: Meet together once a year for prayer and counsel, as well as communicate via mail, email, or phone.

Education Board

The ED board focuses on the education of our children and teenagers. The responsibility to educate their children rests with the parents and the Home, but the ED boards will do all they can to provide counsel, training, assistance, information, and when available, resources to help the parents, teachers, and Homes with this task. See the "[Education Board Criteria](#)."

A. Responsibilities of the national Education boards:

Counseling: Assist the parents, teachers, and Homes in the education of their children and young people.

Criteria: Provide assistance and counsel to the Homes, as requested by the Homes or by the regional board, in matters pertaining to the ED board criteria, with the goal of helping the Homes to be able to fulfill the criteria to the best of their ability, as well as to pass Home review.

Vocational Training: Work with Youth Services and other boards to promote and encourage the use of the Family's vocational training program.

Education materials: Instruct and inspire the Homes concerning the availability and use of ED and childcare materials produced locally, internationally, or by World Services Publications.

Field questions: Answer educational related questions from the Homes or pass them on to the regional board for further counsel if necessary.

Ideas and suggestions: Give input, including ideas, suggestions, or prophecies, to the regional board concerning the educational needs of the Homes and pass on ideas for pubs, materials, or resources that may be needed.

Initiatives: Pray about and discuss ways to help the Homes achieve the Charter educational standard, and how to promote policies, initiatives and decisions made by their board and/or pillar, in the national area.

Local language materials: Research and recommend to the Homes materials for the education of the children in the local language.

Local standards: In counsel with the Communications and Community Relations board, inform the Homes of the educational standards applicable for each age level of children in respect to the local laws.

Reporting: Report monthly to the chairperson of the regional board and send minutes of board meetings and decisions made to the entire regional board and to the members of the national coordinating council.

Scholastic resources: Assist the Homes in obtaining scholastic resources by providing them with information on local materials available or how to order such materials as CLE, A BEKA, or ACE.

Teamwork: Meet together at least three times a year for prayer and discussion, as well as communicate regularly via mail, email, or phone as needed.

Training: Work with the Homes to organize seminars, workshops, or other meetings involving teachers, parents, and students for interaction and exchange of information. Collaborate with the regional and/or international boards to put regional goals into action.

B. Responsibilities of the regional Education boards:

Vocational Training: Work with the Youth Services and other boards to promote and encourage the use of the Family's vocational training program in the regional area, holding seminars and workshops as needed.

Comments and suggestions: The chairperson will receive TRF comments and suggestions relating to education and is responsible to hear from the Lord, respond to the Homes, and answer their questions, counseling as needed with the national board chairperson of the area the Home is included in, or pass the comments, suggestions, and/or questions to the national board chairperson to pray about and answer, with a copy to the international chairperson. Shepherding issues should be sent to the shepherding desk.

Criteria: Provide counsel and assistance to the Homes in order to help them fulfill the ED board criteria to the best of their ability. Pray about ways to help their region (and/or each national area) as a whole to

strengthen the criteria points in which the Homes are weak by means of counsel, newsletters, seminars, meetings, visitation, etc.

Educational support for young people leaving the Family: To the best of their ability make available educational information and counsel to the parents of young people who choose to leave the Family, and/or to the young people themselves.

Goals and initiatives: Work with the Homes to organize seminars, workshops, or other meetings involving parents, teachers, and students for the purpose of interaction and exchange of educational information and training. Collaborate with the international board to put applicable regional goals into action.

Home review questionnaires: The chairperson is responsible to process the Home review questionnaires from the Home and pass on his recommendations to the review board. The chairperson also provides counsel to the Homes about the questionnaire as needed, such as clarification on questions which the Home may have improperly answered, advice on which aspects of the criteria the Home may want to focus on, and advice on how to improve in criteria areas the Home may be weak on. The regional chairperson may also warn the Home if they are at risk of getting a failing grade next review due to being weak in certain critical criteria and so suggest steps that the Home may want to take in order to avoid that. The chairperson is also responsible to answer questions the Homes may have regarding the criteria or the Home review questionnaire, while seeking counsel from the IBC as needed or passing the question on to the IBC if they are unable to answer it.

Ideas and suggestions: Generate and/or pass on to the international board ideas for educational related pubs, teaching aids, materials, and resources that are needed for the parents, teachers, teenagers, and children that World Services Publications could produce for the Family worldwide.

Information: Stay informed of the educational state of the children and teenagers in their area and verify whether the Homes are fulfilling their responsibilities in regards to the education of their children, working through the national boards to help Homes in need of assistance with their educational standard.

Oversight of the national boards: The chairperson is responsible to give counsel to, and answer the questions of the national boards and ensure that they are fulfilling their responsibilities. The chairperson should also be aware of and may help with the training, programs, and activities of the national boards in the region, when needed.

Reporting: Report monthly to the chairperson of the international board and send minutes of board meetings and decisions made to the entire international board and to the members of the regional council.

Resource Center: Maintain an education resource center in conjunction with their regional Childcare and Parenting board, which would be responsible to make available educational materials and resources available to the national boards and Homes.

Teamwork: Meet together at least once a year for prayer and discussion, as well as communicate regularly via mail, email, or phone.

C. Responsibilities of the international Education board:

Vocational Training: Create and maintain the Family's vocational training program.

Family publications: Determine through prayer and input received from the regional boards, what topics need to be addressed in Family publications, whether World Services or board produced, concerning education.

Home review: Formulate the ED Home review questionnaire and the scoring used to process the questionnaire. Determine matters pertaining to the Home review as concerns the ED questionnaire, providing assistance and answers to the Homes as needed.

Oversight of and assistance to the regional boards: The chairperson is responsible to give counsel to, and answer the questions of, the regional boards. He is responsible to oversee, and prod when necessary, the regional boards, to help ensure they are fulfilling their responsibilities and properly servicing their respective region. He also acts as a facilitator and advisor to the regional boards, providing counsel and assistance, within his resources, to help the regional boards fulfill their goals.

Policy: Formulate through discussion and hearing from the Lord, Family policy in regards to education, taking into account the prophecies, counsel, suggestions, and decisions of the lower boards, which policy would then be presented to the regional and national boards for implementation. Proposals involving changes to the *Charter* would be presented to World Services Leadership.

Reporting: Report to World Services Leadership as directed.

Teamwork: Meet together once a year for prayer and counsel, as well as communicate via mail, email, or phone.

Youth Services Board

The Youth Services board will do what they can to assist the parents and Homes in: 1) providing counsel and material on the shepherding of their teenagers ages 12 to 17; 2) providing inspiring activities and programs for them; 3) discipleship, missionary and vocational training. See the "[Youth Services Board Criteria](#)."

A. Responsibilities of the national Youth services boards:

Counseling: Tune into the spiritual and physical needs of the teens and help to shepherd, counsel, train, and inspire them when possible.

Criteria: Provide assistance and counsel to the Homes, as requested by the Homes or by the regional board, in matters pertaining to the YS criteria, with the goal of helping the Homes to be able to fulfill the criteria to the best of their ability, as well as to pass Home review.

Fellowship and activities: Work with the Homes to help organize fellowships, activities, and programs for the teens.

Field questions: Answer parenting and young people-related questions from the Homes or pass them on to the regional board for further counsel if necessary.

Ideas and suggestions: Give input, including ideas, suggestions, and prophecies, to the regional board concerning the needs of the teens in the Homes, and pass on ideas for pubs, materials, or resources that are needed.

Initiatives: Pray about and discuss ways to help the Homes inspire and train their teenagers, and how to promote policies, initiatives, and decisions made by their board and/or the regional and international YS board.

Leadership training: Work with the Homes in organizing seminars and camps for training and other activities, and to give Christian leadership training to the teens.

Missionary and discipleship training: Help the Homes, in conjunction with the Church Growth and Outreach board, to organize and coordinate outreach initiatives involving the teens, helping them find fulfillment as missionaries and disciples.

Parental support: Offer counsel to the parents regarding the needs of their teens and how best to meet those needs.

Reporting: Report monthly to the chairperson of the regional board and send minutes of board meetings and decisions made to the entire regional board and to the members of the national coordinating council.

Sex education: Advise and counsel parents in their efforts to give age-appropriate sex education to their teens.

Teamwork: Meet together at least three times a year for prayer and discussion, as well as communicate regularly via mail, email, or phone as needed.

Vocational training: Generate ideas and/or programs for the teens to get training in ministries they feel called to. Work with the ED board to promote vocational courses for young people.

B. Responsibilities of the regional Youth Services boards:

Comments and suggestions: The chairperson will receive TRF comments and suggestions relating to teens and is responsible to hear from the Lord, respond to the Homes, and answer their questions, counseling as needed with the national board chairperson of the area the Home is included in, or pass the comments, suggestions, and/or questions to the national board chairperson to pray about and answer. Shepherding issues should be sent to the shepherding desk.

Criteria: Provide counsel and assistance to the Homes in order to help them fulfill the YS criteria to the best of their ability. Pray about ways to help their region (and/or each national area) as a whole to strengthen the

criteria points in which the Homes are weak by means of counsel, newsletters, seminars, meetings, visitation, etc.

Goals: Pray about, discuss, and outline the goals and needs of the teens in the region, working with the national boards to present these to the Homes.

Home review questionnaires: The chairperson is responsible to process the Home review questionnaires from the Home and pass on his recommendations to the review board. The chairperson also provides counsel to the Homes about the questionnaire as needed, such as clarification on questions which the Home may have improperly answered, advice on which aspects of the criteria the Home may want to focus on, and advice on how to improve in criteria areas the Home may be weak on. The regional chairperson may also warn the Home if they are at risk of getting a failing grade next review due to being weak in certain critical criteria and so suggest steps that the Home may want to take in order to avoid that. The chairperson is also responsible to answer questions the Homes may have regarding the criteria or the Home review questionnaire, while seeking counsel from the IBC as needed or passing the question on to the IBC if they are unable to answer it.

Ideas and suggestions: Generate and pass on to the international board ideas for educational-related pubs, teaching aids, materials, and resources that are needed for the teens spiritual and physical training that World Services Publications could produce for the Family worldwide.

Initiatives: Pray about and discuss ways to help the Homes inspire and train their teens, and how to promote policies, initiatives, and decisions made by the local board and/or international Youth Services board.

Oversight of the national boards: The chairperson is responsible to give counsel to, and answer the questions of, the national boards and ensure that they are fulfilling their responsibilities, and should be aware of and may help with the training, programs, and activities of the national boards when needed.

Programs/materials: Create and or participate in producing programs and/or materials for use within the region or worldwide to help meet the needs of the teens and parents/shepherds.

Reporting: Report monthly to the chairperson of the international board and send minutes of board meetings and decisions made to the entire international board and to the members of the regional council.

Teamwork: Meet together at least once a year for prayer and discussion, as well as communicate regularly via mail, email, or phone.

C. Responsibilities of the international Youth Services board:

Family publications: Determine through prayer, taking into consideration input received from the regional boards, what topics need to be addressed in Family publications, whether World Services or board produced, concerning young people and/or their parents/shepherds.

Home review: Formulate the YS Home review questionnaire and the scoring used to process the questionnaire. Determine matters pertaining to the Home review as concerns the YS questionnaire, providing assistance and answers to the Homes as needed.

Oversight of and assistance to the regional boards: The chairperson is responsible to give counsel to, and answer the questions of, the regional boards. They are responsible to oversee, and prod when necessary, the regional boards, to help ensure they are fulfilling their responsibilities and properly servicing their respective region. They also act as a facilitator and advisor to the regional boards, providing counsel and assistance, within their resources, to help the regional boards fulfill their goals.

Policy: Formulate through discussion and hearing from the Lord, Family policy in regards to the needs of the teens, taking into account the prophecies, counsel, suggestions, and decisions of the lower boards, which policy would then be presented to the regional and national boards for implementation. Proposals involving changes to the *Charter* would be presented to World Services Leadership.

Reporting: Report to World Services Leadership as directed.

Teamwork: Meet together once a year for prayer and counsel, as well as communicate via mail, email, or phone.

Appendices

The Family International's Statement of Faith

Doctrinal Statement from the Family International

1. The Holy Scriptures

We believe that the Holy Bible is the inspired Word of God, given to us by God our Creator to be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path (Psalm 119:105). We assert that the Scriptures are a sacred revelation, written by holy men of old who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21), and that these writings are the divinely appointed standard and guide to our faith and practice. Holding fast to the truth that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16), we strive to study, memorize, and obey it, that we may grow in faith, wisdom, and spiritual strength through our knowledge of and adherence to its tenets. God's Word as revealed in the Bible is the basis and cornerstone of all our beliefs and practices. It is the core of our spiritual strength and nourishment. Its principles are the foundation of the instruction we give our children, and its truth is the basis of the witness we give to others.

- Matthew 24:35; Romans 15:4; John 8:31–32; 1 John 2:5; Romans 10:17; Psalm 119:99–100; Jeremiah 15:16; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:15; 4:2; John 1:1,14¹

2. God and the Trinity

We believe in the one true, eternal God, who is the all-powerful, all-knowing, ever-present, invisible Spirit of love who created and rules the universe and everything in it. We believe in the unity of the Godhead, that there are three distinguishable but inseparable Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

- Isaiah 43:10–11; John 4:24; 1 Timothy 1:17; 1 John 4:8; 5:7

3. Creation

We believe the biblical account of Creation as depicted in the book of Genesis, that it is to be accepted literally and not allegorically; that God, not chaos, created the heavens and the earth. We also believe that on the sixth day of Creation, God formed the first humans in His own image and after His own likeness. He formed Adam out of the dust of the ground and breathed into him the breath of life, then later that day made Eve from Adam's rib; thus they became living souls by divine creation and not by random evolution. We also believe that God's visible creation provides clear testimony of His invisible existence. As our Creator, God deserves thanksgiving, reverence, and obedience from us as His creations.

- Genesis 1:1; Romans 1:20; Psalm 33:6–9; Jeremiah 32:17

4. The Fall of Man

We believe that the first man and woman were created innocent by their Maker, but through the temptation of Satan they voluntarily transgressed and fell from their sinless and happy state. As a result, all humankind are now sinners by nature, and are absolutely unable to attain righteousness without the saving power of Jesus Christ.

- Genesis chapter 3; Romans 5:12–21

¹ All Bible verses are taken from the New King James Version, unless otherwise noted. Bulleted Bible references listed after each section are additional verses concerning that particular topic, whereas Bible references noted within the section refer to quoted text or provide background to the point made.

5. Jesus Christ, the Son of God

We believe in the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, who was miraculously conceived by divine intervention and born of the Virgin Mary, and was sinless throughout His life. He made a full atonement for the sins of the world by His death—the substitutionary sacrifice of the just for the unjust. We affirm that Jesus Christ is the mediator between God and humankind, and that He gave Himself as the only ransom for sinners. We believe in His physical resurrection and His bodily ascension into Heaven, His perpetual intercession for His people, and His soon coming personal visible return to the world in power and great glory, to set up His kingdom on Earth, and later to judge the living and the dead.

- 1 Timothy 3:16; Philippians 2:5–11; Hebrews 4:14–15; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:24–25; Romans 1:3–4; Matthew 28:18; Acts 1:9–11

6. Salvation by Grace

We believe that all people by nature are sinners, but that “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). We believe, therefore, that anyone who personally accepts God’s pardon for sin through Jesus Christ will be forgiven of his or her sin, reconciled to God, and will be able to forever live in God’s presence.

We believe that the salvation of humankind is wholly by grace (God’s gift of love, mercy, and forgiveness), through Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who in infinite love for the lost, voluntarily accepted His Father’s will and became the divinely provided sacrificial Lamb who alone can take away our sins (Ephesians 2:8–9; Titus 3:5). Salvation can only be acquired through Jesus Christ. “I am the way, the truth and the life. No man comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:6). “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 2:5).

We are saved by believing in Jesus Christ and personally receiving Him into our hearts and lives, thus becoming spiritually regenerated or “born again.” “As many as received Him [Jesus], to them gave He the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name” (John 1:12). “Unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3).

Once saved, the believer is saved forever. We believe that it is the privilege of all who are born again through faith in Jesus Christ to be fully assured of their salvation from the very day that they receive Him as their Savior. Just as the believer is saved by grace, he or she is sustained by grace: “Who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation” (1 Peter 1:5). “I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand” (John 10:28).²

- Romans 3:23; 6:23; 3:10; 1 John 1:8; Acts 4:12; 1 John 5:12

7. The Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit came forth from the Father to teach, instruct, inspire, and empower believers for their God-given mission. A believer receives a measure of the Holy Spirit when he accepts Jesus, but he can be filled to overflowing if he asks and desires to give himself more fully to the Lord. “Be filled with the Spirit” (Ephesians 5:18).

We also believe the Holy Spirit is the personification of the feminine and maternal element of the Trinity of God and as such is the picture of a mother, the comforter, who loves, nurtures, comforts, and consoles the born-again child of God.

- Genesis 1:26–27; Proverbs 8:1,22–32; John 3:5–8; 14:15–18,26; 15:26; 16:7–11; Acts 1:8

8. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit

We believe that the baptism or complete filling of the Holy Spirit is a baptism of love, “for God is love” (1 John 4:8), and that it may be freely obtained by all believers who simply ask God for it, and that it is often given after the scriptural “laying on of hands” of other believers. The primary purpose of the baptism of the Holy Spirit is to empower the believer to witness the Gospel of Jesus Christ to others. “You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me” (Acts 1:8).

² While we firmly believe that the soul that God has saved and granted His free gift of eternal life to can never be lost, this is not a license for the believer to willingly sin. Because God is a holy and righteous Father who cannot overlook the sins of His children, if the believer persistently sins, He will chasten and correct him. The apostle Paul explains, “For whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives. For what son is there whom a father does not chasten?” (Hebrews 12:6-7).

Other ministrations of the Holy Spirit are to guide the believer into all truth, to comfort the believer, to bring all things that Jesus has said to the believer's remembrance, to assist the believer in prayer, and to help him or her understand God's Word.

- Luke 11:9–13; Acts 8:15–17; 1:8; Luke 4:18; Galatians 5:22–23; John 14:16,26; Romans 8:26–27

9. The Gifts of the Spirit

We believe that it is the privilege of the Spirit-baptized believer to enjoy the benefits of the spiritual gifts outlined in 1 Corinthians chapter 12, which include wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, and prophecy. "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all" (1 Corinthians 12:4–5,7). All of these gifts that are bestowed by the heavenly Father upon His children are to be used and freely exercised in the congregation by both male and female members, so that the body of believers may be strengthened, encouraged, and edified by them.

- Joel 2:28–29; Acts 2:17–18; Matthew 7:11

10. The Gift of Prophecy

We believe that prophecy is an important gift given to God's children through the Holy Spirit, and that prophecy should be an active part of our daily lives and ministry. As we acknowledge the Lord and ask Him to guide our paths, leaning not to our own understanding (Proverbs 3:5–6), we believe that He speaks to us personally with instruction, guidance, and encouragement. "He who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men" (1 Corinthians 14:3). The gift of prophecy is available to all followers of Christ, as is any other gift of the Spirit.

It was foreseen in the Bible that prophecy would occupy a more important role in the Last Days³, the era we believe that we are living in now. "And it shall come to pass in the Last Days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy" (Acts 2:17).

- Romans 12:6; 1 Corinthians 12:28; 1 Corinthians 14:5; Revelation 19:10

11. Divine Healing

We believe that healing diseased and afflicted bodies was a major part of Jesus' ministry while on Earth, and that "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). He still desires to restore health to the afflicted that come to Him in faith. Through Christ's suffering on the cross, God has made provision not only for the salvation of the souls of all humankind, but also for the healing of physical infirmities, for "by His stripes [the wounds He received when He was beaten] we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5). Divine healing is a privilege available to all who believe.

Although we believe in God's power to heal illnesses, we believe that the decision as to whether to rely on prayer alone or to seek medical assistance in addition to prayer is a personal one, and members are free to avail themselves of medical assistance. As the Scripture says, "According to your faith it will be done to you" (Matthew 9:29 NIV).

- Matthew 4:23–24; 10:1; Mark 16:17–18; 1 Peter 2:24; Matthew 8:16–17; Psalm 103:3

12. Keys of the Kingdom

We believe that the spiritual gifts that Jesus gave to His original disciples are available to His followers today. When Jesus said, "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of Heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in Heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in Heaven" (Matthew 16:19), we believe that He was literally bequeathing the spiritual keys of the kingdom of Heaven, representing the full power of God, to His followers. Family members claim the keys of the Kingdom in prayer to release God's power to act in any given situation, in accordance with His will.

- Matthew 18:18; Luke 10:19; Revelation 1:18

13. The Fruits of the Spirit

We believe that Christians who are filled with the Holy Ghost should manifest the fruits of the Spirit as detailed in Scripture: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance (Galatians 5:22–23 KJV).

³ The term "Last Days" refers to a period of time at the end of history as we know it, culminating in Jesus' Second Coming. This time is also known as the "time of the End," or the "Endtime."

- Ephesians 5:9; James 3:17–18; Matthew 7:16–20

14. Angels

We believe that God created an innumerable company of spiritual beings known as angels (literally, “messengers”). Angels are powerful immortal beings whom the Lord has assigned to watch over humankind, especially to protect and to minister to God’s people. “Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?” (Hebrews 1:14). Although angels are usually invisible in the physical realm, they can materialize and appear in human form and even walk amongst us without our being aware of them, which is why God’s Word tells us, “Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels” (Hebrews 13:2).

- Psalm 34:7; 91:11–12; 2 Kings 6:15–18; Genesis 19:1–2; Judges 6:11–22; 13:2–21

15. Departed Saints

We believe that in addition to angelic ministering spirits, God also uses the spirits of departed believers to minister to and deliver messages to His people. Scriptural evidence of this is found in the account of the spirits of the departed prophets, Moses and Elijah, appearing and conferring with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration; and Saint John’s account in the book of Revelation of his conversation with a heavenly messenger sent by God to reveal to him mysteries of the future: “And when I heard and saw these things, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. Then he said to me, ‘See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God’” (Revelation 22:8–9).

- Luke 9:28–33; Revelation 19:10; Hebrews 12:1,22–24

16. Satan and His Demons

We believe that one of God’s mightiest archangels, “Lucifer, son of the morning” (Isaiah 14:12), sinned and fell through his pride, jealousy of God, and ambition. He then became Satan [the Devil], the infernal foe of all righteousness. A third of the angels followed him in his rebellion against God, and thus became demons, evil spirits, which are presently active as his agents and associates in his malignant and God-defying activities. Satan’s evil spirits now influence many people, and are largely responsible for the rampant crime, violence, wickedness, and disease flooding the world. We hold Satan to be the open and avowed enemy of God and humankind, who, as a usurper, now rules as the unholy “god of this world” (2 Corinthians 4:4 KJV). He will be defeated at the apocalyptic Battle of Armageddon after the Second Coming of Christ (Revelation 20:1–3).

- Isaiah 14:12–15; 1 Peter 5:8; Revelation 12:7–9; Ezekiel 28:11–19

17. Spiritual Warfare

We believe that we are engaged in a relentless spiritual warfare. As we strive to obey God’s commands and preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all whom we can, “to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God” (Acts 26:18), our adversary the Devil does all that he possibly can to try to thwart our efforts. “For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places” (Ephesians 6:12). Soldiers in the Lord’s Army must therefore “put on the whole armor of God” (Ephesians 6:11), and learn to skillfully wield the powerful spiritual weapons that God has entrusted us with, particularly the “shield of faith” and the “sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God” (Ephesians 6:16,17). We are confident of victory, because God’s Word has promised us that “He [Jesus] who is in you is greater than he [the Devil] who is in the world” (1 John 4:4).

18. Prayer

We believe that prayer, the communication between every child of God and his or her heavenly Father, is vital to our spiritual well-being. Through prayer, we declare our love for God and manifest our dependence on Him. Far from merely being a religious ritual or a spiritual exercise, prayer can release God’s power, in accordance with His will, and bring about change, supply, healing, and miracles. Jesus said, “Whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them” (Mark 11:24).

We believe that interceding fervently in prayer for the needs of others is an important duty of every Christian: “Praying always ... with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints” (Ephesians 6:18).

- Jeremiah 33:3; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; Hebrews 11:6; James 5:16; 1 Samuel 12:23; 1 Chronicles 16:11; Ephesians 6:18

19. The Lord's Supper—Communion

We believe that the Lord's Supper, called "communion," was instituted by Christ as a means for us to commemorate His death on the cross for our sins, and that partaking of its elements (the bread and wine) is a profession of the believer's faith. Communion is a simple ceremony whereby a group of believers partake of bread, which is broken, representing how Jesus' body was broken for the healing of our bodies; and wine, which represents how Christ's blood was shed for the remission of our sins. Scripture enjoins the believer to partake of the Lord's Supper with other believers until His return; therefore it is the privilege of all who know and believe in Him to commemorate His sacrifice on Calvary "till He comes" (1 Corinthians 11:26).

- Matthew 26:26–28; John 6:51; 1 Corinthians 11:23–30

20. The Church: The Fellowship of Believers

We believe that the Church is the collective body of believers. The Church is referred to as "the body of Christ" as well as "the bride of Christ." Thus, it is not merely an ecclesiastical institution or organization—and certainly not a religious edifice or place of worship. "The Most High does not dwell in temples made with hands" (Acts 7:48). "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house" (1 Peter 2:5 KJV). "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). We believe that the Church is the spiritual entity composed of those who have accepted Christ as their Savior, regardless of any affiliation with Christian organizations or denominations.

We believe that great spiritual benefit can be derived from fellowship with other like-minded believers, to engage in prayer, the reading of God's word, and fellowship meetings. Scripture also exhorts us not to abandon "the assembling of ourselves together (Hebrews 10:25). Thus, we should endeavor to follow the example of the Early Church, whose members "continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42).

- Acts 2:46; Ephesians 1:22–23; 2:19–22; 1 Corinthians 12:12–14; 1 John 1:3,7a

21. The Great Commission

We believe in the Great Commission that Jesus has given to His Church to evangelize the world: "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). As such, every believer is commissioned to make Christ's love known to the world and to seek to win others into God's heavenly kingdom. We believe that a formal ordination into the Gospel ministry from a denomination or institution is not necessary, as all Christians are ordained by God to preach His Gospel and win others to Christ. "You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit" (John 15:16).

- Matthew 28:19–20; Acts 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:2; 1 Peter 3:15; Proverbs 14:25; Acts 26:18; 1 Corinthians 9:16

22. Consecration

We believe that the Christian's life should be consecrated to the Lord; that is, to "present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service" (Romans 12:1), so that He may work through us and in us "both to will and to do for His good pleasure" (Philippians 2:13).

Because our bodies belong to the Lord and are the temples in which the Holy Spirit dwells, we believe that Christians should strive to maintain a healthy lifestyle, in respect to diet, exercise, and rest. We do not believe in abusing our bodies with illicit drugs, tobacco, or harmful substances, or overindulging in the consumption of alcohol, or unhealthy food and beverages. "Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?" (1 Corinthians 3:16). "You were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Corinthians 6:20).

23. Non-conformity to the World

We believe that Christians are called by God to "be not conformed to this world, but [to] be transformed by the renewing of [their] mind" (Romans 12:2). We adhere to the scriptural admonition to "love not the world or the things in the world" (1 John 2:15). We understand this to mean that the believer should avoid pursuits and practices of secular society that are incompatible with Christianity, as well as conformity to worldly attitudes and values contrary to God's teachings.

However, while we believe that Scripture bids God's people to "come out from among [unbelievers] and be separate" (2 Corinthians 6:17), we believe that this separation is primarily spiritual, as Jesus said that His disciples were to be "in the world" but not "of the world" (John 17:15–18). Christians should not isolate themselves, but should reach out to people in all strata of society, following the footsteps of Him who came to this world "to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10).

24. Discipleship

We believe that it is a high privilege for a believer to respond to Christ's challenge to follow Him as a full-time disciple.⁴ We also believe that Jesus' call to such full-time service remains essentially unchanged from His invitation to the fishermen on the shores of Galilee long ago: "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19).

It is our conviction from Scripture that the ideal of such discipleship entails a commitment to devote one's life to winning others to Christ, and to teaching and training others to follow Jesus as His disciples. "Go therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19–20). "By this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit [others won to Christ]; so will you be My disciples" (John 15:8).

Full-time discipleship also entails a renouncement and forsaking of the pursuit of material wealth, as well as worldly and materialistic ambitions and endeavors. "No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please Him who enlisted him as a soldier" (2 Timothy 2:4). Christ plainly set forth the rigorous terms of the high standard of discipleship when He said, "So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple" (Luke 14:33).

- Matthew 6:19–34; Mark 10:21; Hebrews 11:13; Luke 16:13

25. Cooperative Communal Living

We believe that the New Testament's account of the lifestyle of the Early Church offers us not only a historical narrative, but an exemplary pattern and model, which God intended succeeding generations of believers to follow. The Early Church's unselfish, cooperative lifestyle, in which "all who believed were together, and had all things in common" (Acts 2:44), proved to be exceptionally beneficial for the fledgling movement in terms of practical and economic concerns. Even more importantly, the close fellowship and spiritual unity fostered by this lifestyle provided the early disciples with needed support, fellowship, encouragement, and a spiritual haven. It was an example to nonbelievers that Jesus' followers could live together in harmony and cooperation—further proof of the love that they professed. Likewise, we today have found both the practical and spiritual benefits of cooperative communal living to be extremely advantageous in helping us achieve our goal of reaching all whom we can with the Gospel of Christ.

- Mark 10:29–30; Acts 2:44–45; 4:34–35; Psalm 133:1

26. Marriage and Children

We believe that God created and ordained the marriage union of man and woman and that marriage is the ideal relationship for the parenting of children and the forming of stable families.

We also believe that children are a wonderful gift of God with which He blesses and entrusts us, for "children are a heritage from the Lord; and the fruit of the womb is a reward" (Psalm 127:3). Therefore, it is our conviction that the physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual needs of children should be amply and competently met. We consider the care of the children God has given us to be a very important responsibility and a fundamental component of our daily lives and service to God, for which reason all members of our communities are encouraged to do their utmost to ensure that their children are reared in as healthy, loving, safe, and godly an environment as is possible.

We believe that it is the God-given responsibility of every Christian parent to impart to their children a deep appreciation, respect, and love for God and His Word, and the sacred principles contained in it, bringing them up "in the training and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4).

- Psalm 127:3–5; 2 Timothy 3:15; Proverbs 22:6; Deuteronomy 6:6–7; Psalm 34:11; 1 Samuel 1:28

27. The Sanctity of Life

We believe that human life is sacred, and that it is the right of each person to be treated as an individual created in the image of God. It is our belief that as Christians our duty is to love our neighbor as ourselves (Mark 12:31) by sharing the news of God's love and salvation for humanity, regardless of race, gender, color, creed, nationality, religious affiliation, or social status. We are exhorted to love and respect others without partiality (1 Timothy 5:21). We oppose acts of prejudice and violence.

⁴ "Disciple" is defined as "one who believes and follows the teachings of a master, and assists in the spreading of such teachings." While the Gospels exemplify the life of Jesus and His closest 12 disciples who renounced worldly pursuits, they also acknowledge that there are varying degrees of "following the teachings," which must be recognized and appreciated. We believe that the degree to which one commits his or her life to Christ is a matter of personal faith and conviction.

We are opposed to abortion. Scripture makes it clear that God esteems the unborn as a person with an identity, not merely as a mass of fetal tissue. The Lord said to the prophet Jeremiah, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations" (Jeremiah 1:5). Modern fetology makes a strong case that human life begins at conception, which means that the developing child deserves all the protection and safeguards that any of us enjoy.

We believe that neither suicide nor euthanasia are acceptable in the eyes of God. We maintain that life is a valued gift from God, and as the sole giver of life, God is likewise the only appropriate taker of life.

- Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Psalm 139:14–16; Jeremiah 2:34–35; Acts 7:19

28. Civil Government and Religious Liberty

We believe in the Scripture's teaching that civil government is of divine appointment, for the interest and order of human society. "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake" (1 Peter 2:13). "Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the powers that exist are appointed by God" (Romans 13:1).

The only exception to this would be in matters of faith, where obedience to a law of man would mean disobedience to the law of God. Jesus Christ is King of kings and Lord of lords, and in such cases where the laws or ordinances would violate our faith or duty to worship God or witness our faith to others, our position is the same as the apostles': "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

- Romans 12:18; 13:1–7; 1 Peter 2:17; Matthew 22:21; Proverbs 8:15–16; Revelation 19:16

29. Jesus' Law of Love

We believe that Jesus' Law of Love as explained in Matthew 22:35–40 should govern every aspect of a Christian's life. An expert in the Mosaic law tested Jesus with this question: "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" Jesus said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Jesus expressed it again in His famous "golden rule": "In everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the law and the prophets" (Matthew 7:12 NIV).

We therefore believe that if a person's actions are motivated by unselfish, sacrificial love—the love of God for our fellow man—and are not intentionally hurtful to others, such actions are in accordance with Scripture and are thus lawful in the eyes of God. "The fruit of the Spirit is love. Against such there is no law" (Galatians 5:22–23).

It is also our belief that the Law of Love comprises the ultimate fulfillment and completion of biblical law, including the Ten Commandments, as it fulfills the spirit of all the Mosaic law. Saint Paul affirmed this when he said: "All the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Galatians 5:14). We therefore believe that through the Lord's salvation and His Law of Love, Christians are released from the hundreds of rules under the Mosaic laws in the Old Testament and are no longer required to observe them. They are, however, held to a higher law—Christ's Law of Love, which should guide all our interactions with others.

- Romans 13:8,10; James 2:8; Galatians 2:16

30. Perspective on Sexuality

We believe that God created human sexuality, and we consider it a natural emotional and physical need. As evidenced by Genesis 1:28, sexual relationships between men and women were designed, ordained, and commanded by God. Long before Adam and Eve sinned, God told them, "Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth." Later in verse 31 of the same chapter it says that God "saw everything that He had made"—which clearly included the first man and woman as well as their bodies and sexuality—"and behold, it was very good."

Thus, it is our belief that heterosexual relations, when practiced as God ordained, designed, and intended between consenting adults of legal age, is a pure and natural wonder of God's creation, and permissible according to Scripture.

- Titus 1:15; Romans 13:10; Galatians 5:14,22–23

31. The Bride of Christ

We believe that it is evident throughout the Bible that the relationship between God and His people and Christ and His Church is akin to that of a bridegroom to his bride. The Scripture tells us, "For your Maker is your husband, the Lord of hosts is His name" (Isaiah 54:5), and that we are "married to Him who was raised from the dead [Jesus], that we should bear fruit to God" (Romans 7:4).

The marital metaphor is frequently used to describe the intimate spiritual unity between Christ and His people, and the fervency of the loving union of heart, mind, and spirit that accompanies this relationship. The book of Revelation describes the reunion of Christ with His Church in Heaven as His marriage: "Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper" (Revelation 19:9). It is our understanding of the Scriptures that the followers of Christ are His bride, called to love and serve Him with the fervor of a wife. "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for her" (Ephesians 5:25). He has promised to betroth us to Him forever (Hosea 2:19–20).

32. The Time of the End

We believe in the fulfillment of the Scriptures foretelling the end of this world as we know it. It is our belief that we are now living in the time period known in the Bible as the "Last Days" or the "Time of the End," which is the era immediately preceding the return of Jesus Christ (2 Timothy 3:1). His Second Coming will fulfill the Scripture, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever" (Revelation 11:15).

Seven years before Jesus' return, a powerful world leader known in Scripture as the "beast," "man of sin," "son of perdition," and "Antichrist" will rise to power (2 Thessalonians 2:3–4). Three and a half years into his reign, he will declare that he alone is God, and demand the world's veneration and worship (Daniel 9:27; Revelation 13:4,7). A mandatory universal financial system will be instituted during this time, permitting no one to legally buy or sell essential goods, except those who bear this demagogue's mark, name, or number (called the "mark of the beast") in their right hand or forehead (Revelation 13:16–17). The progression of these events will plunge the entire world into an unprecedented time of social chaos and religious persecution known in the Bible as the "Great Tribulation" (Matthew 24:21).

It is our belief that born-again Christians will remain on Earth during the time of the Great Tribulation (Matthew 24:15–31). Multitudes of Christians will survive the Antichrist's onslaughts, boldly preaching the gospel of salvation until the Lord's return (Daniel 11:32–35). Many adherents of other religions will also rebel against this One World regime (Daniel 8:23–25).

The three-and-a-half-year period of Great Tribulation will climax in the return of Jesus Christ to the Earth (Matthew 24:29–30). All of the born-again believers will then be supernaturally delivered from their persecutors at the Rapture, the miraculous event when their mortal bodies will be gloriously changed and made like Jesus' own immortal resurrection body, as they rise to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:16–17; 1 Corinthians 15:51–52)

The Antichrist's forces will then be annihilated by Jesus and His heavenly armies, in the Battle of Armageddon (Revelation 16:16–21). This will usher in a thousand-year rule of Christ on Earth, with peace, justice, and equity for all mankind (Daniel 2:44; Revelation 20:1–3). After this period, God will re-create a beautiful new Earth and atmospheric heavens (2 Peter 3:10–13). God's Heavenly City, New Jerusalem, will then descend like a stupendous jewel from above to the paradisiacal New Earth. "The tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away" (Revelation 21:3–4).

Definition of a Family Discipleship Pioneer Home

A Family discipleship pioneer Home is defined in conjunction with the Charter "[Home Size Rules](#)," which state that a team of four voting members 18 years of age or older can function as a pioneer Home for their first six months before they are required to reach the minimum Home size of six voting members 18 and above.

A Family discipleship Home of no less than four people 18 years and over intending to pioneer a new Home in a metropolitan area or country other than the one in which the majority of them reside, may apply for a FAF Pioneer Gift. The regional shepherds of the region in which the new Home is opening will consider the team's request for pioneer status according to the Home's proposed reasons for opening their Home, the city or country in which they are opening their Home, whether there are already any Homes in that metropolitan area, the amount of witnessing and tool distribution they presently do, their proposed means of support, and the extent and type of work they propose to establish in their new field. In most cases pioneer Family discipleship Homes will be ones opening a Home in a metropolitan area that does not have any Family discipleship or Missionary member Homes. Pioneer teams asking to open a Home in a city with other Family Homes must follow the *Charter's* guidelines for opening a Home in a city or metropolitan area with other existing Homes.

If the regional shepherds grant pioneer status to the new team, a pioneer gift will be sent to the pioneer Home after the reporting office receives the Home's first eTRF from their new field.

20-Month Minimum Responsibility Guidelines

Following are the details of the minimum responsibility guidelines as referred to in the "[Sex and Affection Rules](#)." For a more full explanation of the "minimum responsibility" please read "Living the Lord's Law of Love, Parts 6-7," ML #3206.

A. A single Family disciple man has a minimum responsibility towards any single woman he impregnates, regardless of the circumstances that brought about the pregnancy.

1. The father of the child must form a parenting teamwork and live in the same Home with the mother to help care for her and the baby throughout the pregnancy and for the first year of the child's life, unless the mother releases the father of this responsibility.

a. When a man forms a parenting teamwork with a single woman who has other children, the man is to be a father figure to all the children, not just to his one flesh child.

b. When a single woman forms a parenting teamwork with a single man who has other children, she also is responsible to help with the care of his children.

The Lord says in "Living the Lord's Law of Love. Part 6," ML #3206, when a child results from the lovemaking of two single people, in most cases it is His will that the mother and father marry. However, after having sought and heard from the Lord in prophecy and having received confirming prophecies from others, they are not sure that they should marry, or feel that it is not the Lord's will to marry, the man will be responsible to fulfill a minimum 20-month responsibility to the mother and child. The man will be responsible to help care for the mother physically, emotionally, and spiritually throughout her entire pregnancy, and then help to care for her and the baby until it is one year old, unless she releases the father of this responsibility.

If the couple are not sure of the Lord's will regarding marriage at the time that they form their parenting teamwork, they do not have to make a firm decision at that time to marry or not marry.

When they complete the minimum responsibility period, if they have not yet received a clear answer from the Lord regarding marriage they should at that time decide whether they should part, having completed their minimum requirement; whether they should marry, having grown in love and faith; or whether they should continue as a parenting teamwork for a while longer before making a final decision.

Parenting teamworks are not required to be romantic or sexual in nature. They can be one of friendship as they parent the child together. If both parties are in agreement to continuing a sexual relationship, that is fine, but it is to be a free choice that they should make together.

A parenting teamwork must be formed if pregnancy results, even if the two didn't intend to have intercourse, but they did, or they chose to use a condom and it broke or came off, etc.

2. The woman may release the man from his minimum responsibility for the following reasons:

a. If the man or the woman feel led to a particular ministry and it is not convenient for them to participate in that ministry together.

This ministry may be one that either the man or woman is led to participate in due to their talents and gifts. If there are extenuating circumstances that make it difficult for them to be together and pursue this

ministry, then the single woman can release the man from his responsibility in order for him or her to pursue that ministry or opportunity of service in the Family.

- b. If the man and woman live in different Homes and neither Home votes to accept the other as a new Home member, and they can't find another Home.**
- c. If the Home the man and woman live in closes and they cannot find a Home that will vote to receive them and their child(ren).**
- d. If the man has to leave the country for legal or visa purposes and cannot return.**

The woman retains the right to travel with the man to his new country so that he can continue to fulfill his minimum responsibility, providing she receives clearance and a Home votes her in.

- e. If the woman decides to move to another Home and the man wishes to remain in their current Home.**
- f. If the man and the woman both feel it is not God's will to form a parenting teamwork.**

Since the decision to release the man from his responsibility affects the Home, the single woman should counsel with her Home in making this decision, to be sure that she and the other Home members will be able to properly care for her and her baby and other Home responsibilities without the father's help.

3. The single man is automatically released from his minimum responsibility under the following circumstances:

- a. If the man is voted out of the Home and the woman chooses to remain in the Home.**
- b. If the woman is voted out of the Home and the man chooses to remain in the Home.**
- c. If the man or the woman will depart from Family discipleship.**
- d. If the woman were to get pregnant with another man's baby, or were to become engaged to another man.**
- e. If the woman must leave the country due to legal or visa purposes and cannot return, and the man chooses not to go with her.**

4. If the woman decides to release the man from his minimum responsibility, she should hear from the Lord in prophecy, and it's recommended she seek confirming counsel and prophecies from her Home shepherds as well.

- a. All releases from the minimum responsibility are unconditional and cannot be reversed.**

The woman cannot change her mind later and then hold the man responsible. If the man who was released later chooses of his own accord to fulfill what remains of the minimum 20-month responsibility, that is fine, but the woman cannot demand it.

- b. Releases from the minimum responsibility must be recorded in writing along with at least one member of the steering council signing as a witness. The man and woman should each have a copy of the signed release.**
- c. The Home cannot prevent a woman from releasing the father of her child from his 20-month minimum responsibility.**

It is recommended that the woman counsel and pray together with her shepherds and Home to make sure she is able to care for her baby and her other Home responsibilities, or that she has sufficient help, support and the blessing of her Home before she decides to release the father of her child from his parenting teamwork responsibilities.

5. **If not living in the same Home as the single woman, the man must join her Home or she must join his. If neither Home will vote them in as per the "Procedure for Using the Right of Mobility" the man is responsible to find another Home to accept them.**
 - a. **Because the single man is to do all he can to fulfill his minimum responsibility to a single mother, his vote will automatically be counted as a "yes" vote when his Home votes on whether to receive the single woman the man has impregnated into their Home.**

The man and the pregnant woman must live in the same Home during the 20 months. If that necessitates one of them moving, they must be voted into the Home according to "Rights of a Family Discipleship Home." If neither Home votes to receive them, then the single man is responsible to find another Home to take them in, unless the single woman chooses to release the man from his responsibility.

If the man and woman cannot find a Home to take them both in the woman may, after receiving a confirmation in prophecy, release the man from his minimum responsibility.

- b. **In the event that the man and woman are under 18, if neither of their Homes votes to receive them and they cannot find another Home to take them in, then the man is automatically released from his minimum responsibility.**
6. **The man and woman may move to another Home or country during their parenting teamwork period, provided they remain together until the child has turned one year old.**
7. **If the Home votes out a man who is fulfilling his 20-month minimum responsibility, the woman can choose to leave with the man or she can release the man from this responsibility and stay in her Home.**
8. **If the Home votes out a woman who forms part of a parenting teamwork, the man is not required to go with her. If he chooses to stay in the Home, he is automatically released from his minimum 20-month responsibility.**
9. **If the man has legal or visa problems and must leave the country, the parenting teamwork has the following options:**
 - a. **The man can leave to take care of his business and then return to fulfill the rest of his 20-month minimum responsibility, he must do this.**
 - b. **The woman can travel with him or join him later on his new field.**
 - c. **The woman can release him from what remains of his minimum responsibility.**
10. **If the woman has legal or visa problems and must leave the country, the parenting teamwork has the following options:**
 - a. **The woman can leave to take care of her business and then return to complete the 20-month period of the parenting teamwork.**
 - b. **The man can travel with her or join her later on her new field. However, if he chooses not to go with her, he is automatically released from his minimum responsibility.**

The woman should take special care to be sure of the Lord's will for her to move to another field. If the woman leaves the country and cannot return, the man is also released from his responsibility unless he chooses to join the woman on her new field.

11. **After a man and woman are an established parenting teamwork in a Home, if the woman wants to move to another Home and the man doesn't, he is not obligated to move. She can either release the man from his minimum responsibility and move, or she can choose to stay in the same Home and thus continue to benefit from his help.**

- 12. If the Home closes, the man and the woman must find a new Home to take them in together until they have completed their minimum requirement.**
- a. **If the man and woman cannot find a Home to take them in the woman may release the man from his minimum responsibility.**
- 13. If a man knows he will be traveling soon and has written for clearance, he should inform the woman of his plans before engaging in sexual activity that could result in pregnancy. If the woman becomes pregnant, the man and the woman are responsible to first pray about marriage. If they do not want to get married or they're not sure, then he can still leave as he had planned.**
- a. **The woman has the right to join the man on his new field to form a parenting teamwork, provided she receives clearance and is voted into the Home or they find another Home to take them in. If she chooses not to join him he is automatically released from the minimum responsibility.**
- 14. If a man plans to travel, but he did not tell the woman about his travel plans and that he had written for clearance to another country at the time when they were deciding whether to engage in a sexual act that could result in pregnancy. If the woman becomes pregnant he is obligated to fulfill his minimum responsibility and remain in their present field, regardless of his travel plans or the fact that he has written for clearance. The minimum responsibility can also be fulfilled in his new field if she chooses to go with him, or she can release him from his responsibility.**

The reasons she may choose to release him from his responsibility are listed in clause A.2 above.

- 15. If the man had already moved to another country before the woman found out she was pregnant, he is not obligated to return provided he had informed the woman of his plans to travel and that he had written for clearance before they had intercourse.**
- a. **The woman has the right to join the man in his new location if she wants him to meet the 20-month minimum requirement, provided she receives clearance to his new Home or they find another Home to take them in. If she chooses not to join him he is automatically released from the minimum responsibility.**
- b. **If the man had not informed the woman of his plans to travel and that he had written for clearance prior to their decision to have intercourse, unless the woman releases him, he must return to his previous country to fulfill his minimum responsibility.**
- 16. If at the time that the man and woman make the decision to engage in a sexual act which could result in pregnancy, the woman informs the man that she has written for clearance and plans to travel to another country, if the woman becomes pregnant, the man must do all he can to accompany her to the field or join her there to fulfill the minimum 20-month responsibility.**
- 17. If the woman fails to inform the man of her travel plans and that she has written for clearance to another country when they decide to engage in a sexual act which could result in pregnancy, and she becomes pregnant, the man is not obligated to travel with her. But if she remains in the same country, the man is obligated to fulfill the minimum responsibility.**
- a. **If the woman is in another country when she finds out she's pregnant, the man is not required to join her. But if she returns to the former country, he is required to fulfill the minimum 20-month responsibility.**

Should the woman release the man from his minimum responsibility because either he are moving to another country, and later he returns to the same country, the man is not required to complete his minimum responsibility. However, the loving and responsible thing for him to do would be to fulfill what remains of his minimum responsibility to the woman and child, if that is what the woman desires, but it is not required.

18. The woman is not obligated to receive the man's help. She has the last say as to whether they will form a parenting teamwork or whether she will release the man from his 20-month minimum responsibility.

If the woman decides to release the man from the minimum responsibility for reasons other than those listed in clause A.2 above she will be held accountable before the Lord for her decision, so she should not base her decision only on feelings. She should have prophecies to back up her decision, and it's recommended that she also seek confirming prophecies.

19. When the woman does not know who the father of her child is, she cannot hold any of the potential candidates to the 20-month minimum responsibility.

Although they will not be held to the minimum responsibility, all those who might be the father can share in the care of the woman during her pregnancy as much as they can.

- a. Should it become known during the first year after the birth of the child who the father is the man must fulfill what remains of the 20-month minimum responsibility, unless the woman releases him.**
- b. If a man is not sure if he's the father of a child, and he becomes involved with or marries another woman in the meantime, if he and the woman he created a child with come to an agreement later that he is the father of the child, he will be held responsible for fulfilling the minimum responsibility, if the woman who bore his child so desires.**

It's highly recommended that if a man knows there's a possibility that he might have fathered a child with someone else, he should make this known to any woman he becomes seriously involved with in the future, until such time as he knows that he is not the father of the child, or until he has fulfilled the minimum responsibility, or until the mother of the child has released him from his responsibility.

20. If a man impregnates more than one woman he is responsible to fulfill the minimum 20-month responsibility with them all, unless one or more of the women feels led to release him of the responsibility.

When a man has impregnated more than one woman, he is required to pray about the relationship he will have with each one. First he should pray about the option of marriage to see how the Lord would lead him in that respect. It could be that the Lord would lead him to marry one of the women, or care for both women. There is also the possibility that the Lord would lead the man to marry one of the women and assume the 20-month minimum responsibility with the other. Or there is the possibility that the Lord would lead the man to assume the 20-month minimum responsibility with both women—and in both the previous cases—of course, they would have to make arrangements to all live in the same Home.

21. A man who has either been released from forming a parenting teamwork with the mother of his child or who completes the designated minimum 20-month responsibility can support the woman financially or with goods, if he chooses, but it's not required. He should at least support her spiritually, with love, encouragement, and prayer.

22. If a man refuses to fulfill his minimum responsibility when he has fathered a child, his Family discipleship will be revoked.

If a man refuses to fulfill his minimum responsibility he will face disciplinary action up to and including the loss of Family membership, as determined by the SD.

B. A Family discipleship married couple has a minimum responsibility towards any single woman the man impregnates, regardless of the circumstances that brought about the pregnancy.

- 1. They must form a parenting teamwork with the single woman, and live in the same Home together. The man and his wife will help care for the single woman physically, emotionally, and spiritually throughout her pregnancy, as well as help care for her and the baby for the first year of the child's life, unless the single woman releases the couple of their responsibility earlier.**

- a. When a couple forms a parenting teamwork with a single woman who has other children, the man is to be a father figure to all the children, not just to his one flesh child.**
- b. When a single woman forms a parenting teamwork with a married couple who has other children, she also is responsible to help them with the care of their children.**

When a married man and a single woman create a child a parenting teamwork must be formed even if the man and woman didn't intend to have intercourse but they did, or they chose to use a condom and it broke or came off, etc.

The relationship the married man and single woman share as a parenting teamwork can be one of friendship, as the couple and single mother parent the child or children together. It need not be a romantic or sexual relationship between the man and single woman. If the husband and wife are in agreement with the man and single woman continuing a sexual relationship, that is fine, if the single woman wants to. The husband cannot continue to have a sexual relationship with the single woman without the consent of his wife.

2. A single woman may release the couple from their minimum responsibility for the following reasons:

- a. If the couple or the woman feel led to a particular ministry and it is not convenient for them to participate in that ministry together.**

This can be a ministry that the couple or woman is led to participate in due to their talents and gifts. If there are extenuating circumstances that make it difficult for them to be together and pursue this ministry, then the single woman can release the couple from their responsibility in order for herself or them to pursue that ministry or opportunity of service in the Family.

- b. If a couple without children and a single woman live in different Homes when they find out the single woman is pregnant, and neither Home votes to receive the other person as a new member, and they can't find another Home to take them in, and they don't feel it's the Lord's will to open their own Home.**
- c. If the couple gets voted out of the Home and the single woman prefers to remain.**
- d. If the Home closes and the couple and single woman cannot find a Home that will vote to receive them both and the children, and they do not feel it is the Lord's will to open their own Home together.**
- e. If the couple and the woman feel it is not the Lord's will to form a parenting teamwork.**

In this case it is advisable to not only have personal prophecies that confirm this decision, but also to ask for confirming prophecies from others, and in the case of senior teens or YAs, from their shepherds or parents.

- f. If the single woman is already in a good Home situation where her needs are being sufficiently met.**

3. Reasons in which extenuating circumstances make it such that the single woman would be required to either release the couple or choose to move with them, in which case she must receive clearance and be voted in to her new Home.

- a. If the couple has children and they wish to move to a different Home or another country that would provide a significantly better situation for their children.**

The single woman must allow them to move, but she has the right to go with them if she wishes. She must, of course, receive clearance and be voted in to the new Home.

- b. If the couple or the single woman will depart from Family discipleship.**
- c. If the single woman were to get pregnant with another man's baby, or were to become engaged to another man.**

- d. If the single woman chooses to move to another Home and the couple wishes to remain.**
- e. If the couple has children and they and the single woman presently live in different Homes and the Home that the married couple lives in does not vote to accept the single woman as a new Home member.**

In such a case, it is recommended that the Home where the couple lives hear from the Lord in prophecy for a clear confirmation as to His will, and the reasons why He wishes them to accept or not to accept the woman into their Home.

The couple with children can choose to move to the single woman's Home, if they get voted in, but it's not required. If the couple's present Home does not vote to receive the single woman and the couple does not feel led to move to the single woman's Home, then they are released from their responsibility.

- g. If the couple must leave the country for legal or visa purposes and cannot return.**
 - i. The single woman has the right to join the couple in their new location if she receives clearance and is accepted by their new Home's vote.**

- h. If the single woman leaves the country and cannot or chooses not to return.**

The couple may join her on her new field if they desire, but are not required to do so.

- i. The single woman is voted out of the Home and the couple chooses not to go with her.**

4. All releases from the minimum responsibility are unconditional and cannot be reversed.

The single woman cannot change her mind later and then hold the couple responsible. If the couple who was released later chooses of their own accord to fulfill what remains of the 20-month minimum responsibility, they may do so; but the single woman cannot demand it.

If a woman decides to release a couple from their minimum responsibility she should hear from the Lord in prophecy, and it's recommended she seek confirming prophecies from her shepherds as well.

5. Releases from the minimum responsibility must be recorded in writing along with at least one member of the steering council signing as a witness. The couple and single woman should each keep a copy of the signed release form.

6. The Home cannot prevent a woman from releasing the couple from their 20-month minimum responsibility.

It is recommended, however, that the woman counsels and prays together with her shepherds and Home to make sure she is able to care for her baby and her other Home responsibilities, or that she has sufficient help, support and the blessing of her Home, before she decides to release the couple from their parenting teamwork responsibilities.

7. To form a parenting teamwork, the married couple and single woman must live in the same Home during the 20 months. If that necessitates either the single woman moving into the Home of the married couple or the married couple moving into the Home of the single woman, they must be accepted into the Home in accordance with the "[Rights of a Family Discipleship Home](#)."

- a. If the Home of the couple with children votes not to receive the single woman, and the married couple feels that having to move to a new Home would be detrimental to their children, the couple is released from their responsibility.**
 - i. Because married couples are to do all they can to fulfill their minimum responsibility to a single mother, their vote will automatically be counted as a "yes" vote when their Home votes on whether to receive the single woman the man has impregnated into their Home.**

When a parenting teamwork involves a married couple with children and a single woman, the needs of all parties involved, the couple and their children as well as the single mother and her child/children, must be taken into consideration.

The option also remains for the couple and their children to move to the Home of the single woman, if they wish and if that Home votes to receive them as new members; or they can find another Home that will receive their parenting teamwork. But this is not required when the couple has children. The ideal when the couple has children is that the single woman joins the Home where the couple lives, if she doesn't already live there.

- b. In the event that the couple and single woman are under 18, if neither of their Homes votes to receive them and they cannot find another Home to take them in, then the couple is automatically released from their minimum responsibility.**
- 8. Both the couple and single woman may move to another Home or country during their parenting teamwork period, provided they remain together until the child has turned one year old.**
- 9. If a Home votes out a couple who is fulfilling their 20-month minimum responsibility to a single woman in the Home, the single woman can choose to leave with the couple, or she can release them from their responsibility.**
- 10. If a Home votes out a single woman who is on a parenting teamwork with a couple, the couple is not required to go with her. If they choose to stay in their Home they are automatically released from their 20-month minimum responsibility.**
- 11. If a married man who is involved in a parenting teamwork has legal or visa problems and must leave the country, the parenting teamwork has the following options:**
 - a. If the man can leave to take care of his business and then return to care for his wife, family, and the single mother and her child/children he must do so.**
 - b. If it is necessary that the man and his wife and family leave the country due to legal or visa problems, they are not required to return to care for the single mother, but the single woman has the right to join them on their new field for the remainder of the 20 months.**

Again, the needs of the parenting teamwork as a whole must be considered. In this case, however, the single woman has the right to join the couple in their new location if she so desires, and if she receives clearance and is accepted by their new Home's vote. But if this does not work out then the couple would be released from the remainder of their responsibility.

- 12. If the single woman has legal or visa problems and must leave the country, the parenting teamwork has the following options:**
 - a. The single woman can leave to take care of her business and then return to complete her 20-month parenting teamwork, in which case the married couple is obligated to resume the parenting teamwork.**
 - b. If the single woman cannot return or chooses to remain on her new field, then the married couple is released from their responsibility, unless they choose to join her.**

The single woman should take care to be sure of the Lord's will for her to move to another field. If the single woman leaves the country and cannot return, then the couple is also released from their responsibility unless they choose to join her on her new field.

- 13. If the single woman wants to move to another Home the couple is not obligated to move with her. In such a case, they are released from their minimum responsibility.**
- 14. If the Home closes the couple and the single woman need to find a Home that will receive them. If they feel it is not the Lord's will for them to open a Home together, the woman may choose to release the couple from their minimum responsibility.**

Parenting teamworks are to make it easier for the pregnant woman or single mother, especially in dire conditions or circumstances of great need. If the Home of a parenting teamwork closes, the couple cannot move into a Home without the single woman unless they also find a Home for her which she is happy to move into, and thus she agrees to release the couple. This counsel is for all couples, regardless of whether or not they have children. The couple must care for the single woman and her children as well as their own as best they can.

The best thing is for the couple and single woman to find a Home that is willing to receive them all, or for them to open a new Home so they can continue their 20-month minimum responsibility. They do, however, also have the option of finding a Home that will vote to receive the single woman—in which case, if she chooses to move into that Home, she can release the couple. That would be acceptable, but only if they find another Home for the single woman can the couple move into another Home that has accepted them without the single woman.

It is acceptable when stop gap measures are necessary for the couple and single woman to temporarily live in separate Homes until a new Home is found that will receive the whole parenting teamwork, or they're able to open their own Home, or the single woman releases the couple. But this must be temporary and the parties involved must be actively looking for accommodations where they can be together to fulfill their parenting responsibilities. If it is determined that the couple is not working to unite with and care for the single mother, they will be in jeopardy of losing their Family discipleship.

15. If the couple has no children and they wish to move to a different field, the single woman has the right to go with them if she receives clearance, or she can choose to release them. She is not obligated to release them, and if she doesn't, they must remain to fulfill the 20-month minimum responsibility. If she releases them so they can travel, she can choose to be a parenting teamwork with them until they leave.

16. If a couple has children and they wish to go to a different field, the single woman can go with them.

If the couple's desire to travel is due to their desire to take the children out of their present situation to one that would provide a significantly better situation for their children the single woman should release them from their minimum responsibility, so they can move their children to a better situation.

a. If the single woman later travels to the field where the couple is living, the couple must fulfill what remains of the 20-month minimum responsibility.

If a single woman plans to travel to a field to form a parenting teamwork with a couple on that field, she would need to go through the standard procedure to have a Home on that field accept her, as well as request clearance from the regional desk. If she does not receive clearance, then she and the couple may apply for clearance to a different country, if they so desire. Or the couple has the option of returning to the field where she is. But if she is denied clearance and the couple is not led to change fields or return to the field where she is, the couple is automatically released from their minimum responsibility.

17. If a couple with children has formed a parenting teamwork with a single woman and the couple wishes to move to another Home or field that would provide a better situation for their children, the single mother must allow them to travel.

a. The single woman has the right to accompany the couple to their new field to form a parenting teamwork, provided she gets clearance to their new Home, or the couple feels led to find another Home to take them in, or they open their own Home. If she does not join them, they are released from their minimum responsibility.

18. If a married couple with no children is planning to move to another country, they can only move if they had informed the pregnant single woman of their plans to travel and that they had written for clearance at the time that the man and the single woman decided what sexual activities they would engage in on their date, unless the woman releases them.

a. If the couple moves, the single woman has the right to join the couple on their new field to form a parenting teamwork, provided she gets clearance to their new Home, or the couple feels led to find another Home to take them in, or they open their own Home.

19. If a couple failed to tell the single woman of their plans to travel and that they had written for clearance when the man and the single woman were deciding what to do on their date and the couple are already on their new field when they learn that the woman is pregnant, it is not required that they return to their former field. But the couple still must fulfill what remains of the minimum responsibility if the woman desires to join them on their field.

20. If a woman releases the couple from their responsibility so that she can travel from one field to another field and then later she returns to her former field where the couple live, the couple is not obligated to join together with her to fulfill what remains of the 20-month minimum responsibility.

The couple and single woman can contact each other and pray about what they want to do now that they're both on the same field again, but the woman cannot hold the couple responsible. It must be by the couple's choice.

21. If a single woman becomes pregnant from a married man, whether or not she had informed him at the time of their date that she'd written for clearance and planned to travel to another country, the couple will not be required to accompany her to her field.

If a single woman who is planning to go to another field consents to having intercourse with a married man, she does so with the knowledge that if she gets pregnant and still wishes to move to her new field, she will have to forfeit her right to the parenting teamwork unless the couple chooses to go with her. The needs and considerations of all must be taken into account. The married man has obligations to his family, and moving his entire family to a new field may not be expedient.

a. The single woman can decide to postpone her move and join the couple for the 20-month minimum time period, in which case the couple is obligated to fulfill their minimum responsibility. Or she can move on to her new field, which automatically releases the couple from their responsibility if they choose not to accompany her.

22. Whether or not a single woman informed a couple, or the man, of her travel plans and that she had written for clearance before they decide what to do on their date, if she is on her new field when she finds out she's pregnant, the couple is not required to join her.

a. If she returns to her former field however, the couple is required to fulfill the 20-month minimum responsibility.

23. In situations where the married couple is traveling to a new Home or field and the single woman chooses to go with them, the three adults should work together to raise the funds needed for all the members of the parenting teamwork to travel.

24. The woman is not obligated to receive the couple's help. She has the last say as to whether they will form a parenting teamwork or whether she will release the couple from their 20-month minimum responsibility

She will be held accountable before the Lord for her decision, so she should not base her decision only on feelings but have prophecies to back up her decision. It's recommended that she also seek confirming prophecies.

25. When the woman does not know who the father of her child is, she cannot hold any of the potential candidates to the 20-month minimum responsibility.

a. Should it become known during the first year after the birth of the child who the father is, and the couple and the woman are agreed on the matter, then the couple must fulfill what remains of their minimum responsibility if the single woman so desires.

It's highly recommended that if a married man knows there's a possibility that he might have fathered a child with a single woman, he should make this known to his wife and any other single woman he becomes

involved with in the future, until such time as he knows that he is not the father of the child, or until he has fulfilled the minimum responsibility, or until the mother of the child has released him from his responsibility.

26. If a married man impregnates more than one single woman, he and his wife are responsible to fulfill the 20-month minimum responsibility with each of them, unless one or more feels led to release them from their responsibility.

In cases where a married man and single woman feel led to engage in any form of sexual act (in agreement with the wife) where there is a possibility of pregnancy resulting, it is wise for them to ask their partner what arrangements he has with other sharing partners. They should also offer the information as to whether they are having sex with anyone else that could result in pregnancy. The time to communicate on these matters is when the couple and single woman are deciding what the husband and single woman will do on their date.

A couple who either has been released from a parenting teamwork or who has completed the designated 20-month minimum responsibility can support the single woman and her child/children financially or with goods, if they choose to do so, but it's not required. They should at least support her spiritually, with love, encouragement, support, and prayer.

27. If a married man is a potential candidate to be the father of the single woman's baby, if they're not sure, the couple can leave the Home. If it is later agreed upon by the couple and the single woman that the husband is the father of the child, the couple does not have to return to their former Home or field to care for the single woman.

- a. **The single woman has the right, however, to join the couple in their new Home to form a parenting teamwork, if she gets voted in to the Home and receives clearance, if it is a different country.**

28. If a couple refuses to fulfill their minimum responsibility when the man has fathered a child, their Family discipleship will be revoked.

If a couple refuses to fulfill their minimum responsibility they will face disciplinary action up to and including the loss of their Family membership, as determined by the SD.

Requirements for General and Active Members

General membership

A. To be accepted as a General member of the Family International, an individual must:

1. **Understand what the Family is and what he/she is being considered a member of. To ensure that members have a basic understanding of what the Family is and what we believe, a prospective General member must have read at least the Family publication "Introducing the Family International."**

"Introducing the Family International" explains what the Family is, our main goals, message, and mission, our essential beliefs, our origins and founder, our lifestyle, and a brief mention of controversy and persecution.

2. **Read and understand the "General Membership Declaration of Intent."**

The "General Membership Declaration of Intent," point D., outlines what is expected of the General member. The "GM Declaration of Intent" does not have to be signed by the General member, but is meant to help General members understand what being considered a General member of the Family entails.

In certain sensitive countries, the "GM Declaration of Intent," and therefore the GM requirements, may be modified by the regional CGO board, with approval of WS Leadership.

3. **Be accepted by a two-thirds majority of the Home council.**

The Home will be held accountable to feed and minister to their General members, and therefore should determine who they accept as members by a two-thirds majority vote. The Home may want to vote on whether to accept someone as a General member before presenting him with General membership and the "GM Declaration of Intent." That way if he accepts, he is considered a member.

Once voted in, the Home should include him on the eTRF as a General member for as long as he fulfills the General member requirements.

B. For as long as he remains a General member, he must:

1. **Be subscribed to *Activated* if available in his language, or have the magazine delivered to him monthly by the Home.**
2. **Be regularly ministered the Word by members of a Family Home either in person or via email or mail.**
3. **Fellowship regularly with a Family Home or receive visits from Family members. If unable to fellowship in person, keep in touch by phone, email, or mail.**
4. **Give to the Home in some way, either of his finances, material goods, time, or a combination of the three.**
5. **Be a witness however he can, according to his faith and ability.**
6. **Generally conduct himself as a good Christian according to the godly principles of the Bible to love God and his fellow man; not be a reproach to the Family.**

C. A General member may discontinue his membership at any time. His membership may also be discontinued at any time by a two-thirds majority of the Home council.

A General member can choose to discontinue being a member, at which time the Home should stop counting him or her on the Home's eTRF. A Home may also revoke someone's General membership for failing to meet the requirements, or if the Home loses contact with him or her. This is done by a two-thirds majority vote, after which the discontinued member should be taken off the eTRF.

The Home may vote to reinstate a General member at any time by a two-thirds majority vote.

D. General Membership Declaration of Intent:

> I desire to become a General member of the Family International, and would like to be accepted as part of their [missionary]* movement in this capacity. [* the word "missionary" may be omitted in certain countries for security reasons.]

> I have received Jesus into my heart and have also received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. I plan to grow in my faith in God by receiving and reading the *Activated* magazine, and I will also try to make time to read God's Word in the Bible and Family publications.

> I have read the publication titled "Introducing the Family International," and I am aware of the Family International's basic beliefs and doctrines.

> I would like to stay in touch with other members of the Family International on a regular basis, so that I can benefit from their fellowship. I will try to live and act according to the great commandments of the Bible to love God and love others and manifest that love through my actions. I will also testify of my faith to others when I have the opportunity.

> As a General member of the Family International, I will do what I can to help further the work and efforts of the Family community that I fellowship with, or other Family communities, whether it be through my time, finances, and/or services, according to my ability.

Active membership

A. To be accepted as an Active member of the Family, an individual must:

1. Complete the *12 Foundation Stones* course.

"Introducing the Family International" and the "Family International's Statement of Faith" are required reading as part of the *12 Foundation Stones* course.

2. Read all the *12 Foundation Stones* supplementary MLs.

Each *12 Foundation Stones* class includes one ML which is required reading by the student, to help introduce them to the Words of David. Many classes also have a second, or in some cases a third or fourth ML which is optional reading for the student. However, in order to become an Active member, the student must have read all the supplementary MLs, as they provide an important foundation for being an Active member. Homes aren't required to read these supplementary MLs with their students. They can give them to the students as homework, which the students can read on their own. For a list of these supplementary MLs consult www.familymembers.com/cgo.

The prospective student can read these in any order at any time either before, during, or after the *12 Foundation Stones* course. If the ML is not available in the student's local language, they may read a similar ML that is translated or someone can do a running translation of the ML with the student. If neither of those is an option, the student is only required to read the one required ML with each Foundation Stone class.

3. Complete the *Connexions* classes.

The *Connexions* classes cover topics which Active members will read about in the *Link* magazine and in other AM pubs, such as a basic introduction to the keys, the spiritual weapons, loving Jesus, and the general principles of the Law of Love. It is therefore important that Active members are taught these classes before they become AM.

The *12 Foundation Stones* supplementary classes may be taught in any order at any time, either before, during, or after the *12 Foundation Stones* course.

4. Read and understand the "Active Membership Declaration of Intent."

The "Active Membership Declaration of Intent," point E., outlines what is expected of the Active member. The "AM Declaration of Intent" does not have to be signed by the Active member, but is meant to help Active members understand what being considered a part of the Family at this level entails and what is expected of them.

5. Be accepted by a two-thirds majority of the Home council.

The Home will be held accountable to feed and shepherd their Active members, and therefore should determine who they accept as members by a two-thirds majority vote. The Home may want to vote on whether to accept someone as an Active member before presenting him with Active membership and the "AM Declaration of Intent." That way, if he accepts, he is considered a member. Otherwise, when presenting it to the prospective member, it would be necessary to explain that should he accept, his membership still has to be voted on by the Home.

Once voted in, the Home should include him on their TRF as an Active member for as long as he fulfills the Active member requirements.

B. If a former Family Disciple, Missionary Member, or Fellow Member wishes to become an Active member, he or she must first receive permission from the regional shepherds.

The Home should request permission via the regional desk and must receive a reply before counting the former member as an Active member on the eTRF. The former member must also comply with points A.4–5.

C. For as long as he remains a member, an Active member must:

Note that these requirements are general expectations of Active members. Failure to comply with any of them on a single month does not result in automatic loss of Active membership. It's up to the Home to determine whether their Active members are generally living up to the standard articulated below.

- 1. Be subscribed to *Activated* if available in his language, or have the magazine delivered to him monthly by the Home.**
- 2. Be signed up for *Link* and *Living Word* publications, if available in a language he or she can read.**

Because they've completed the *12 Foundation Stones* course, Active members are eligible to receive *Link* and *Living Word* publications, which will help to feed them spiritually and give them a stronger connection with the Family as a whole. Any AMs included on the Home's eTRF are automatically signed up for this mailing which they will receive from WS; the Home simply needs to select the language and provide the AMs' addresses. If any of the AMs cannot receive the *Link* magazine at their own addresses for security reasons, they may receive their mailings at the Home's address.

- 3. Regularly, at least monthly, receive the Word from his Home either in person or via email or mail.**

In addition to *Link*, *Living Word*, or other publications which the AMs may receive via their WS mailing, they should also be fed regularly by the Home. This should be at least monthly, but ideally more frequently. This feeding can be in the form of Word classes, publications suitable for AMs, such as the *Rolled Gold* MLs, read in person or sent via email or mail. If an AM is working through the *12 Bridges* course, that would fulfill this requirement.

- 4. Fellowship monthly with his Home. If unable to fellowship in person, keep in touch by phone, email, and/or mail.**

Under normal circumstances, AMs should personally fellowship at least once a month with the Home they report to. If they're unable to, members of the Home can also visit them in their homes or meet with them elsewhere, which would count toward this requirement. If there's a particular month an Active member is not able to personally fellowship with the Home, he should at least be in communication through some other means such as phone, email, instant messaging, and/or mail.

Homes are permitted to have Active members who do not reside in the same city or country, and with whom they cannot realistically meet regularly in person. In that case, they must be in monthly contact with the Active member through other means.

- 5. Give regularly of his finances or material goods to the Home, as well as of his time.**

Active members play an important role in the Lord's financial plan, which is Family Homes being largely supported by their flocks. AMs should help to support the Home financially on a regular basis. There is no set definition of what "regularly" should be; that will depend on the capability and willingness of the Active member. Neither is there a set minimum amount that an Active member should be giving to the Home; it's understood that some AMs will be able to help more than others. An AM who is a student living with and supported by his parents, for example, may have very little personal finances and therefore not be able to give much.

Helping the Home financially in some way, shape, or form, is something that is generally expected of AMs, but there are no minimum requirements of amount or frequency, and it's left up to each Home to determine whether their AMs are fulfilling the spirit of this requirement. In an exceptional situation where an AM is willing to help the Home financially but unable to give anything at all for some time, the Home may continue to report him as an AM if he's an Active member in all other aspects.

Active members may also be encouraged to tithe by the Home in order to receive the Lord's blessings that come specifically as a result of tithing as per the Scriptures. However, this is not a requirement; whether or when they do will depend on how the Lord leads in each individual situation.

In addition to their finances, Active members are expected to give of their time to the Home in some way, according to their ability and the needs of the Home. Again, there is no set requirement of how frequent this must be or how much time the Active member should give. Rather, it's generally expected that Active members understand that it's part of their responsibility to help the Home in some way, play a part in the Home's missionary labors, or participate in projects when needed and according to their ability and talents.

6. Witness however he can, according to his faith and ability.

Homes should be teaching their Active members to be active witnesses. This is one of the most important requirements of Active membership, and what makes them "active." At the same time, how this plays out will be different for each Active member according to his circumstances and level of dedication. There are no specific requirements as to what type of witnessing AMs must do, or how often. Witnessing may include participating in Home witnessing activities, which not all Active members may have the opportunity to do, and/or being a wise witness in their work and within their circle of acquaintances, being an instant witness, etc. Learning to be active witnesses is something that Active members will grow into with time.

7. Conduct himself as a good Christian according to the godly principles of the Bible to love God and our fellow man; be a positive reflection of the Family and be in unity with Family members in general.

The conduct of Active members should generally reflect positively on the Home and the Family. Nevertheless, Active members are not held to the same high standard of conduct as Missionary members or Family disciples, and it's understood that they will have vices and weaknesses, and will not be the best example at all times. Active members should be making an effort to grow, and Homes should shepherd their Active members and help them to progress in their weak areas. At the same time, Homes should not have unrealistic expectations that their AMs are unable to fulfill given their circumstances and level of membership.

D. An Active member may discontinue his membership at any time. His membership may also be discontinued at any time by a two-thirds majority of the Home council.

An Active member can choose to discontinue being a member, at which time the Home should stop counting him or her on the Home's eTRF. A Home may also revoke someone's Active membership for failing to meet the requirements, or if the Home loses contact with him or her. This is done by a two-thirds majority vote, after which the discontinued member should be taken off the eTRF.

The Home may vote to reinstate an Active member at any time by a two-thirds majority vote.

E. Active Membership Declaration of Intent:

> I desire to become an Active member of the Family International and would like to be accepted as part of their missionary movement in this capacity.

> I have read the publications titled "Introducing the Family International" and the "[Family International's Statement of Faith](#)," and completed the [12 Foundation Stones](#) course, supplementary Letters and [Connexions](#) classes, and I am aware of the Family's mission and basic beliefs.

> I have received Jesus into my heart and have received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. I plan to grow in my faith in God by receiving and reading *Activated*, *Link*, and *Living Word* publications. I will also make time to read God's Word in the Bible and other Family publications.

> I will stay in touch monthly with the Family community that I am a member of, so that I can benefit from their fellowship.

> I will endeavor to live and act according to the great commandments of the Bible to love God and love others, and manifest that love through my actions. My general conduct should engender unity with other members of the Family, and reflect positively on the Family International.

> I will testify of my faith to others, according to my ability.

> I will regularly give financially or materially to the Family community that I fellowship with, and give of my time, according to my ability, in order to help further their missionary work and/or that of other Family communities.