



# WATCHTOWER

BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF NEW YORK, INC.

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April 15, 1998

## TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS IN THE UNITED STATES

Dear Brothers:

This letter replaces the Society's January 1, 1991, letter that outlines basic steps to be followed in submitting regular pioneer applications. It would be appreciated if the presiding overseer and the secretary would please follow these directions carefully. Your diligence in this will help us provide better service to the brothers.

**NEW PIONEER APPOINTMENTS:** Please note the following points when processing the Application for Regular Pioneer Service (S-205).

1. To qualify for regular pioneer service, the applicant must be an exemplary Christian and must be baptized at least six months before appointment. One full year must have passed from the time of any judicial reproof or reinstatement; all restrictions must have been lifted. If the elders cannot approve the application at the time they receive it, they will advise the applicant that they are not sending it to the Society and explain the reasons why.—See *Our Ministry*, pages 113-14, and the August 1986 *Our Kingdom Ministry* insert, paragraphs 24-6.
2. The secretary should be sure that the application is *complete and correct*, with the applicant's full name (no nicknames), date of birth, and baptism date provided. If there is no record of the baptism, the date should be estimated. It is necessary that these dates be complete, including month, day, and year.
3. Married sisters should give their full name on line 1 of the application and give their husband's full name on line 2(b). If a sister is divorced and not remarried or is separated, she should indicate this on line 2(a) after "Other." Sisters' names should be prefaced with either "Miss" or "Mrs."
4. The applicant should indicate the date he wishes to begin pioneering and the congregation to which he wishes to be assigned.
5. No retroactive appointments are made unless there are *significant extenuating circumstances*. If there are *significant extenuating circumstances*, a letter of explanation must accompany the application.
6. Please do not tell the prospective pioneer that you would like to see him try to meet the 90 hours for a few months and afterward ask the Society to approve a retroactive appointment.
7. On the back of the application, the Congregation Service Committee should provide the applicant's field service **averages** for the past six months, the congregation name and number, and their personal signatures to indicate their approval of the application.

**PIONEERS DISCONTINUING:** When a pioneer discontinues regular pioneer service, regardless of the reason, a Notification for Discontinuing Regular Pioneer Service (S-206) form should be filled out and promptly sent to the Society by the Congregation Service Committee. This is true even if the circuit overseer has informed the Society that a pioneer is discontinuing. The following points apply when submitting this form.

1. Please provide complete information as requested on the form. Include the pioneer's *full name as listed with the Society*, the pioneer's identification number, and the correct congregation name and number. If possible, return the individual's Pioneer Service Identification (S-202) card to the Society with the form.
2. When removal is due to improper conduct, *be specific* in describing what action was taken by the elders. Was the pioneer removed because of setting a bad example, or was judicial action taken, with reproof and restrictions?
3. A brief announcement should be made to the congregation to inform them that the individual is no longer serving as a regular pioneer.—See February 1991 *Our Kingdom Ministry*, Announcements.
4. Unless there is a question, the Society will **not** send formal notice to the congregation when a Notification for Discontinuing Regular Pioneer Service form is received.
5. *The elders should not suggest that if the pioneer disagrees with his removal, he should write a letter to the Society.* However, if the pioneer of his own initiative indicates that he does not agree with his removal, please advise him that he may submit an explanation in writing. His letter should be included with an explanatory letter from the elders and the Notification for Discontinuing Regular Pioneer Service form. If the pioneer insists on writing directly to the Society, you should mention this in your letter. His removal should not be announced until you hear from the Society.
6. Regular pioneers who discontinue pioneer service must wait six months before reapplying.

**PIONEERS CHANGING CONGREGATIONS:** When a regular pioneer permanently moves into your congregation, it is necessary to notify the Society using the "Change of Assignments" portion of the Regular Pioneer Changes (S-204) form. This includes pioneers moving in from another branch, such as Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and so forth.

When filling out the Regular Pioneer Changes form, please provide complete information about the pioneer—full name, pioneer identification number, and name of the congregation or branch that he came from. Your congregation name and number, along with the month and year the change is effective, is to be written in the appropriate space at the top of the form. When sending this form to the Society, please include, if possible, the individual's Pioneer Service Identification (S-202) card. The Society will issue a new card, which will be sent with the congregation's monthly statement.

As a general rule, if a regular pioneer is away from his home congregation for less than three months, it is not necessary to transfer the pioneer's records or change his identification card. The pioneer should report his monthly field service activity to the secretary of his home congregation so that it may be included with his home congregation's field service report to the branch office. Similarly, if a pioneer regularly resides for part of the year in one country, such as

Canada, and the rest of the year in the United States, the pioneer's record cards should remain in his home congregation for the entire year. The pioneer would be responsible to forward his field service report to the secretary of his home congregation each month that he is away.

**PIONEER'S NAME CHANGES:** When a regular pioneer's name changes because of marriage, divorce, or other reasons, the congregation secretary should notify the Society using the "Name Changes" portion of the Regular Pioneer Changes (S-204) form. Please keep in mind the following points when completing this form.

1. Fill in the correct congregation name and number at the top of the form.
2. Show the pioneer's new full name and identification number in the appropriate boxes. If the pioneer is newly married, show the husband's full legal name (no nicknames) and the date of marriage.
3. If a marriage results in both a change of name and a change of congregation for a pioneer, be sure to fill in the "Name Changes" and "Change of Assignments" portions of this form.
4. If possible, please return the individual's Pioneer Service Identification (S-202) card to the Society with this form so that a replacement card can be provided.

**HOOR CREDITS:** We receive questions from time to time about pioneers receiving credit for hours spent working on Assembly Halls, Kingdom Halls, and other construction projects. The Society would like pioneers to concentrate on the field ministry with as little interruption as possible. Assembly Hall Committees, Regional Building Committees, and Convention Committees have received guidelines explaining that they should use a pioneer only when he has a specific skill and when the work cannot be done by another. A pioneer will receive credit for working on such projects only when it is specifically approved by the appropriate committee. If a pioneer is approved to receive credit, a member of the Assembly Hall Committee, Regional Building Committee, or Convention Committee will sign the back of the pioneer's field service report to indicate such approval.

Do not include hour credits with field service time reported on the Congregation Report (S-1).—See the January 15, 1998, letter, To All Bodies of Elders in the United States, page 2, heading "Pioneer Reports."

When elders grant "special consideration" to a regular pioneer, the pioneer's Congregation's Publisher Record card should be marked in accord with the directions given in paragraph 18 of the August 1986 *Our Kingdom Ministry* insert. There is no need to notify the Society when this is done.

**YOUR HELP IS APPRECIATED.** When problems arise that limit what a pioneer is able to do in the ministry, it would be good for the elders to assist him at that time. If the problems persist over an extended period of time despite the assistance of the elders and the circuit overseer, the body of elders should decide if the pioneer's circumstances will allow him to continue as a regular pioneer. If it is determined that it is best for a regular pioneer to

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discontinue pioneer service, please notify the Society promptly using the Notification for Discontinuing Regular Pioneer Service form.

Neither the congregation secretary nor a pioneer should make changes on the Pioneer Service Identification card received from the Society. If you believe there is an error on the card, please write the Society about the matter, sending the card with your correspondence. If a pioneer should lose or accidentally destroy his card, a replacement card can be requested from the Society's Pioneer Desk in writing.

If, at any time during the year, you find that your supply of any of the above-mentioned forms is low, you may request a modest quantity on your congregation's next Literature Request Form (S-14) submitted to the Society.

Please review this letter when handling matters involving regular pioneers. We appreciate that the keeping of accurate records and files involves time and effort, and we thank you very much for your cooperation and help. Please accept our warm Christian love and best wishes.

Your brothers,

*Watchtower B. V. Society*  
OF NEW YORK, INC.