

Stake Senior Missionary Support

This memo suggests how a Stake President's efforts regarding missionary work performed by the senior members of his stake can be supported by others. Some of a Stake President's responsibilities and authority related to missionary work can be delegated. We will begin with a definition of terms and a brief summary of the missionary application process.

A. Translating Church Vernacular. To start, let's review the vocabulary that is unique to missionary work among "senior" members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (the "Church").¹

A.1. Senior Missionary. A "Senior Missionary" serves full time, usually away from home. Senior Missionaries are called by the President of the Church and serve under the direction of a Mission President.

A.2. Senior Service Missionary. "Senior Service Missionaries" serve part-time while living at home. Senior Service Missionaries are called by their Stake Presidents and serve under the direction of the "Operation Manager" of a Church "Operation" that is in their local area or online.

A.3. Who is a "Senior"? For Senior Missionaries, the term "senior" refers to married couples and single sisters who are at least 40 years old. For Senior Service Missionaries, the term "senior" refers to any Church member who is at least 26 years old.

A.4. Operation; Operation Manager. An "Operation" is a Church organization that uses Senior Service Missionaries, such as FamilySearch, Family Services (including Addiction Recovery Services), the Bishops' Storehouse, Deseret Industries, Temples, Mission Offices, BYU-Pathway, Employment Offices, and Community Resource Support operations, among others. An "Operation Manager" is the person who manages a Church Operation.

A.5. Missionary Websites. For seniors, there are four key Church missionary-related websites:

(a) SMW. <https://seniormissionary.churchofjesuschrist.org> is the Church's official Senior Missionary Website.

(b) SMP. <https://missionary.churchofjesuschrist.org> is the Missionary Portal that is used by missionary applicants.

(c) MRS. <https://mrs-leadership.churchofjesuschrist.org/> is the online Missionary Recommendation System that is used by Bishops and Stake Presidents.

(d) SMMS. <https://servicemissionary.churchofjesuschrist.org/> is the service missionary management system that is used by Operation Managers, Stake Presidents, and Senior Missionary Coordinators with respect to the assignments of Senior Service Missionaries.

A.6. Senior Missionary Coordinators. Senior Missionary Coordinators are called over groups of stakes (one or more "coordinating councils"²) to assist, encourage, and facilitate the calling and service of senior Church members as missionaries. Senior Missionary Coordinators coordinate Senior Service Missionaries' assignments with

¹ See Chapter 24 in the Church's General Handbook (<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/general-handbook/title-page?lang=eng>) for more details about missionary service. See also the Senior Missionary Website, <https://seniormissionary.churchofjesuschrist.org>.

² See General Handbook 5.2.4.

Bishops, Stake Presidents, and the Operation Managers. The Senior Missionary Coordinators for the Las Vegas Group of the North American Southwest Area are Elder Layne Rushforth and Sister Sharon Rushforth. (The Las Vegas Group includes 31 stakes.) Their contact information is as follows:

- Email: SMC-LasVegasNVGroup@churchofjesuschrist.org
- Mobile phones: 702-219-3541 (Layne); 702-218-8953 (Sharon)

B. Application for a Recommendation to Serve a Mission

B.1. Generally. A missionary is recommended by his or her Bishop and Stake President, and the process begins with an application for that recommendation. Regardless of the type of service for seniors, missionary service begins with a member's desire to serve, and a member need not wait for an invitation from a priesthood leader to initiate a missionary application. Missionary opportunities can be explored on the Church's official senior missionary website. [Mentioned in paragraph A.5(a), above.]

B.2. Senior Missionaries. For full-time Senior Missionaries, the missionary recommendation process is usually initiated with a member's Bishop, but full-time missionary opportunities can be explored on the senior missionary website, and preferences can be submitted online. Senior Missionaries serve full time from 6 to 24 months.

B.3. Senior Service Missionaries. For part-time, Senior Service Missionaries, the senior missionary website is the best place to both search for an opportunity and to initiate the application process. Senior Service Missionaries serve from 8-20 hours a week for 6 to 24 months.

C. Roles of Priesthood Leaders. The Bishop and the Stake President interview all missionaries. All missionaries must be Temple worthy. The Stake President must approve both the calling as a Senior Missionary or Senior Service Missionary (in MRS) and the specific assignment of a Senior Service Missionary (in SMMS). The Stake President also approves early releases and mission extensions of Senior Service Missionaries.

D. Stake Senior Missionary Support. Stake Presidents can share with others the responsibility of encouraging seniors to serve missions and the work of facilitating and coordinating the assignments of Senior Service Missionaries.

D.1. Candidates. In this memo, we use "Stake Senior Missionary Support Representative" to refer to the person or persons to whom the Stake President has delegated some of his missionary-related duties and authority, such as:

- One or more Stake Senior Missionary Specialists (often a married couple);
- The Stake Executive Secretary;
- The Stake Clerk;
- A Counselor in the Stake Presidency; and/or,
- A High Councilor.

D.2. Duties. One or more Stake Senior Missionary Support Representatives may be asked to do one or more of the following:

- (a) Encourage potential senior missionaries to serve and help them navigate <https://seniormissionary.churchofjesuschrist.org> to look for and apply

for missionary opportunities that are appropriate for their skillset, interests, and availability.

(b) Help the Elders Quorum Presidents, Relief Society Presidents, and Ward Mission Leaders encourage seniors to serve as missionaries. This can be done in many ways, including teaching fifth-Sunday lessons, speaking in Sacrament Meetings, hosting devotionals or firesides, and/or making brief presentations in Stake and Ward Council meetings.

(c) Share information that they receive about missionary opportunities with the wards and branches.

(d) Monitor the Senior Missionary Management System (SMMS) website to help keep the Stake President (and anyone else he delegates authority to) apprised of actions that need to be taken with respect to the approval of callings or modification of callings of Senior Service Missionaries.

(e) Communicate with the Senior Service Missionaries who are serving from the stake to make sure their needs are being met, and possibly host an annual gathering of Senior Service Missionaries under the direction of the Stake President.

E. Resources for Senior Missionary Support Representatives. There are several resources for Stake Senior Missionary Support Representatives.

E.1. SMCs. For the Las Vegas group of the North America Southwest Area, the Senior Missionary Coordinators (SMCs), Elder and Sister Rushforth, provide the training, mentoring, and support of Stake Senior Missionary Support Representatives.

E.2. Written Materials. The SMCs can provide passalong cards and other materials to Stake Senior Missionary Support Representatives, including information that might be shared in classes and other gatherings or placed on ward bulletin boards.

E.3. SMW; Other Websites.

(a) The Senior Missionary Website includes helpful materials Stake Senior Missionary Support Representatives can use to encourage senior missionary work. To access those materials, click “Help” and then “Training”.³ This page includes inspirational videos, as well as presentations and outlines that can be used in various settings.

(b) Stake Senior Missionary Support Representatives should review and become familiar with the materials found on: <https://seniormission.org>⁴ (which includes helpful navigation tips and motivational videos for senior missionary candidates); <https://seniormission.org/bulletin> (which includes examples of missionary opportunities); and <https://seniormission.org/leaders/> (which provides helpful materials for Bishops, Stake Presidents, and Operation Managers).

Contact the Rushforths for more information: <https://seniormission.org/smc/>.

³ <https://seniormissionary.churchofjesuschrist.org/srsite/help/training-brightspot?lang=eng>.

⁴ The seniormission.org website is not an official website of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.