

ELDERS QUORUM TRAINING GUIDE

Role of the Elders Quorum Presidency

The members of the elders quorum presidency "preside over, sit in council with, and teach quorum members" (*General Handbook of Instructions, Book 2*, page 165 and *Doctrine & Covenants 107:89*). They set an example for and show love to the quorum members and those for whom they have responsibility by ministering to the members individually.

The elders quorum presidency reports to the stake presidency and receives training from the stake presidency and the assigned high councilor. They also report to the bishop and receive instruction from the bishopric through priesthood interviews, the Ward Priesthood Executive Committee, the Ward Welfare Committee and the Ward Council (*General Handbook of Instructions, Book 2*, pages 164-166 and 317-318).

Elders Quorum Presidency Organization

The president of the quorum should visit and become acquainted with each quorum member. In order for the president to be in a position to minister to the personal needs of each elder the president should interview each quorum member individually **at least once during the semester or every four months**. These "interviews should be positive, focusing on Priesthood and personal responsibilities. They are a time to give instruction, express love, discuss the member's needs, and plan how to help meet them. The discussion of confidential matters is left to the bishop." (Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 2, page 166.) When appropriate, in the spirit of love and friendship, the quorum president may discuss and/or set personal goals with the elder and pray for and with him.

Home Teaching Organization

The First Presidency instructed the stake presidents and bishops of the Church: "Bishops, assisted by quorum leaders and home teachers, have the responsibility to help members of the ward strengthen their faith, prepare to receive temple

ordinances, and live worthy of the blessings of the gospel" (First Presidency Letter, December 10, 2001). The *Doctrine and Covenants* teaches that every member and family should be visited and taught in their homes (see *Doctrine & Covenants 20:47, 51, 53*). "Members of the bishopric oversee home teaching in the ward" (*General Handbook of Instructions, Book 2*, page 164).

Counselors' Responsibilities in Administering Home Teaching

The Elders Quorum counselors equally divide the home teaching companionships between them, each counselor having stewardship over half the elders in the quorum. They meet with each worthy member of the quorum in a priesthood interview to make assignments for home teaching, emphasizing the importance of their assignments. (Home teaching is a Priesthood assignment and not a calling and should be dealt with as such.) Counselors should make every effort to ensure home teachers are committed to fulfilling all home teaching responsibilities and effectively resolving concerns as they arise.

Counselors teach home teachers that their responsibility is not simply to visit assigned members once a month, rather a call to be a true shepherd, ministering with genuine love and concern for those they home teach. This will, at times, necessitate multiple visits or contacts during the month. Friendship and trust is the key to effective home teaching. Counselors should invite home teachers to pray for those they serve by name.

Quorum Counselors' Home Teaching Interview

Every home teacher should be interviewed monthly by the counselor in the quorum presidency who oversees their particular home teaching assignment. Quorum leaders should "conduct spiritual monthly home teaching interviews, receiving a report on the home teachers' activities, evaluate current needs, make assignments for the coming month and teach, strengthen, and inspire the home teachers in their sacred callings. Such

interviews with home teachers provide a setting for leaders to measure progress and better serve the individuals and members they have been called to serve.” (Pres. Ezra Taft Benson, “To the Home Teachers of the Church,” 51)

Greater success in quorum home teaching activity will be realized when the quorum presidency commits to 100% regular monthly home teaching interviews, rather than perpetual discussion and pleading on the subject in quorum meetings.

Responsibilities of Presidency Members

The *Church Handbook of Instructions* states, “The bishopric, other priesthood leaders, and Relief Society leaders consult with single members to determine their needs and make plans to help meet them” (*Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 1*, page 125).

Along with home teaching one of the most important duties of the presidency is to build quorum brotherhood, unity, and esprit de corps. This can be accomplished in quorum meetings, activities, presidency visits, and general consideration for one another’s welfare. Members of the quorum presidency should make continual efforts to get to know each elder in the quorum, making note of personal information, family life, dating situation, goals, hobbies, educational pursuits, etc. Ask questions and then genuinely listen. Establishing such friendships first will increase the level of success achieved by the quorum during the semester.

Other duties of the presidency would include:

- Planning and conducting uplifting quorum meetings (dignifying the office by manner in which the meeting is conducted)
- Reviewing gospel instruction and plan to make it more effective (encourage quorum instructors to prepare well and involve quorum members in meaningful discussion)
- Reviewing needs of individual members, prospective elders and new members (using Member Progress Reports to track fellowshipping and other activity).

Presidency members are also responsible for submitting monthly quorum attendance and home

teaching reports to the bishop and the stake. Although the secretary has the charge for completing the report and emailing it to the ward clerk, the president is ultimately responsible to ensure this report is submitted properly and punctually.

The Three-fold Mission Councils

The elders quorum and Relief Society presidents oversee the Missionary and Fellowship, Spiritual and Temporal Welfare, and Temple and Family History Councils. With the approval of the bishop, these presidents meet with the chairs and co-chairs of these three councils to discuss ward needs, give direction and provide training. These meetings will be held monthly with the president of the first quorum of elders conducting and the high councilor and the Relief Society specialist attending as directed by the bishop. The purpose of these meetings is to help the elders quorum and Relief Society presidents achieve the mission of the Church by perfecting the saints, proclaiming the gospel, and redeeming the dead while being assisted by the three councils listed above.