



# **CARE to CARE**

Study Materials

*Caring for those who are  
called to care for us!*





**WELS Special Ministries**

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# CARE to CARE

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# **I. Introduction to the Care Committee for Called Workers**

## **Precedent and Purpose**

Sharing Christian comfort and encouragement with fellow believers has been a practice in the Christian church for centuries. Throughout Scripture there are numerous examples of this, especially in the ministry of our Lord Jesus. Our Savior demonstrated a loving and caring heart for his disciples throughout his ministry. He took the time to listen to their cares and concerns, and he applied God's Word to their needs. By his example, Jesus gave us a model of caring for our called workers. By his action, Jesus not only demonstrated that it was good, but that it was important, to care to care.

Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod's (WELS) Care Committee for Called Workers (CCCW) exists to provide assistance to WELS calling bodies and their called workers. This is primarily accomplished by providing help to calling bodies to improve their existing care committees or by providing guidance to calling bodies in establishing new ones. Every calling body can benefit by having a group within its organizational structure whose purpose is to support its called workers and their families, to encourage its called workers in their ministry, and to enhance the quality of the lives of its called workers.

It is the hope of the WELS CCCW that *Care to Care* will be useful to you and your calling body in improving your current care committee or getting a care committee started if none presently exists. Every called worker is a gift from God that is in need of your encouragement and support. Thank you for caring to care.

## Care Committee History

The Care Committee for Called Workers has a relatively short history in WELS.

At the request of the Conference of Presidents, the WELS Commission on Special Ministries appointed an ad hoc committee to study ways to monitor and address quality of life issues among WELS pastors and teachers (and now staff ministers). After several years of research and discussion, the committee's work was presented at the 1991 WELS Convention. The delegates passed a resolution to create the Care Committee for Called Workers (CCCW) as a standing committee under the Commission on Special Ministries (formerly the Special Ministries Board).

The new synodical committee then prepared a handbook outlining its structure and work. This handbook (revised in 1999 and updated in 2013, 2016, and 2024) proved to be a reliable source of information for developing and maintaining local care committees.

The Care Committee for Called Workers has been a part of the WELS Commission on Special Ministries since its inception. Currently, it is one of eight areas of ministry under the Special Ministries umbrella. The other seven committees of special ministries are:

- Committee on Mental Health Needs
- Prison Ministry Committee
- Military Services Committee
- Christian Care Committee
- Mission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Mission for the Visually Impaired
- Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Ministry

The Commission on Special Ministries is one of six commissions under WELS Congregational Services. Congregational Services provides training, resources, and a unified team approach to identifying the needs of congregations and their leaders.

## **Principles of the Local Care Committee**

### **The local CCCW will be proactive.**

The purpose of the local CCCW is to encourage, support, and enhance the lives of the calling body's called workers. With that in mind, it should be proactive in nature, trying to anticipate and to reduce the possible causes of potential problems before they occur. The local CCCW is to serve as an advocate for the workers of the calling body, bringing the workers' needs to the appropriate group (committee, board, council, voters) for consideration. However, the local CCCW should *not* be regarded as a problem-solving group that reacts and seeks to find a solution to every problem that a called worker may have.

When the local CCCW is made aware of a difficulty with a called worker, or sees the potential for a possible problem in the future, the care committee may be able to work with the called worker and help him/her solve the issue if the problem is minor. This can primarily be accomplished by providing encouragement and direction. If a major problem occurs, it will likely be necessary to make a referral.

### **The local CCCW uses local personnel to encourage called workers.**

Public ministry is challenging. Encouragement and support, therefore, are especially appreciated and beneficial when they come from those who are served by the called worker.

### **The local CCCW also wants to include and encourage other workers under its care.**

The primary focus of the local CCCW was originally to encourage and benefit called workers, but it is strongly recommended that the local CCCW should also include the paid staff of the calling body (secretarial, janitorial, etc.) in its work. Although others (in addition to called workers) may be included in the work of the care committee, the committee has continued to be known as the Care Committee for *Called Workers* because the called workers of the calling body are the primary group that is being served by the care committee in each locality.

### **The local CCCW will be careful so that it does not interfere or conflict with the work of the circuit pastor or school counselor.**

When a major problem occurs, especially if it is of a spiritual nature, it is beyond the scope of the care committee's work. It is important to remember that it is also *not* within the scope of the committee's work to discuss the professional implementation of a called worker's call, since there already exists a structure within the calling body to evaluate the professional implementation and faithfulness of the called worker's call (i.e., board of elders, board of education, etc.). If the structure within the calling body is unable to resolve the problem, then the situation should be referred to the circuit pastor or school counselor.

## II. Why Your Calling Body Should Have a Care Committee

### Scriptural Principles of Responsibility Reminders for the Called Worker

#### The Opportunity Is Provided to Review the Roles and Responsibilities of the Called Worker

To be spiritually mature, well-versed in Scripture, and able to teach God's Word

1 Timothy 3:2,6

Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, . . . He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil.

To hold fast to the truths of God's Word

Titus 1:9

He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.

To be an example to the flock in his/her Christian life

1 Timothy 3:1-7

Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task. Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.

Titus 1:6-9

An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. Since an overseer is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless—not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.



## **Scriptural Principles of Responsibility Reminders for the Calling Body**

### **The Opportunity Is Provided to Review the Responsibilities of the Calling Body**

To provide for the physical needs of its workers

1 Timothy 5:4

. . . these should learn first of all to put their religion into practice by caring for their own family . . . for this is pleasing to God.

Galatians 6:6

Anyone who receives instruction in the word must share all good things with his instructor.

1 Corinthians 9:13,14

Don't you know that those who work in the temple get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in what is offered on the altar? In the same way, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel.

Luke 10:7

Stay in that house, eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house.

1 Timothy 5:18

For the Scripture says, "Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain," and "The worker deserves his wages."

To honor and respect its workers

1 Timothy 5:17

The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.

Hebrews 13:7,17

Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. . . . Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.

To pray for its workers and encourage them

Hebrews 13:18-21

Pray for us. We are sure that we have a clear conscience and desire to live honorably in every way. I particularly urge you to pray so that I may be restored to you soon. May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

## **Scriptural Principles to Enhance Relationships and Reduce Potential Problem Risk**

### **The Opportunity Is Provided to Enhance Relationships, thus Reducing the Likelihood of Problems**

#### Between the Calling Body and the Called Worker

Matthew 18:15-17

If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that “every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.” If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

1 Timothy 5:19

Do not entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses.

Matthew 5:13-16

“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.

“You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”

#### Between Called Workers

Galatians 5:22-24

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires.

Matthew 18:15-17

If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that “every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.” If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan and a tax collector.

**The Opportunity Is Provided to Support Called Workers and Their Families,  
thus Reducing the Likelihood of Personal and Family Problems**

Financial problems

Surveys have shown that called workers are not immune to financial problems. Common causes of these problems often include past college loan debt, poor budget management, or credit card debt.

It is taken for granted that any financial problems that the called worker might have are *not* because of the failure of the calling body to meet its responsibility to provide adequately for the called worker. It is assumed that every calling body is providing its workers with a salary that is compensatory to the living conditions of the area in which the worker lives.

Health problems

Concern over a severe physical or mental health problem of the called worker or a member of his/her family can create stress and can impact the ability of the called worker to serve the Lord and his/her calling body.

The care committee should promote efforts to help the worker with prayer, encouragement, and possible financial aid.

### **III. Establishing the Structure of the Care Committee**

#### **Lay Leadership**

It is important for the lay leadership of the calling body to take the initiative in getting the local care program started. It is recommended that lay leaders gain approval from the church council and/or calling body before the care committee begins its work. Once it is started, it is equally important that the lay leaders take ownership of the local care program and oversee its development. It is necessary for the lay leadership to have a full commitment to both the mission and goals of the care committee in order for the care program to be successful.

#### **Temporary Committee**

The first step that is suggested to begin a care committee is for the lay leaders to appoint a temporary committee to develop the bylaws for the local CCCW. These bylaws should be completed before the care committee members are appointed. This will ensure that the nominees that are appointed to the care committee will have a clear idea of the purpose and scope of their work. Suggested content to be included in the local CCCW bylaws is provided directly below.

#### **Content of the Bylaws**

More detail will be provided for each point in the next section (see pages 14-16), but the typical content for the bylaws should include the following:

- Mission statement
- Objectives
- Structure and procedures
- Accountability
- Committee membership
- Characteristics of committee members
- Committee activities

#### **Need for Accountability**

It is important to determine the reporting structure for the local care committee so that items of concern or consideration are not inadvertently overlooked.

## **IV. Establishing the Organizational Content of the Bylaws**

### **Mission Statement**

The first agenda item of the temporary committee should be to develop a mission statement. A suitable example is listed below:

The mission of the Care Committee of \_\_\_\_\_ is to support our called workers and their families, to encourage our called workers in their ministry, and to enhance the quality of their lives. God himself invites us to minister to those who serve us in the public ministry.

### **Objectives**

The purpose of the local care committee is to care for each worker's needs. Sample objectives are listed below:

- To monitor and address each called worker's (and family's) spiritual needs.
- To monitor and address each called worker's (and family's) professional needs.
- To monitor and address each called worker's (and family's) physical needs.
- To monitor and address each called worker's (and family's) emotional needs.



## **Structure and Procedures**

Committee members should meet regularly to plan and review the visits with the called workers.

An entrance visit with a called worker should be conducted when the worker begins his/her ministry in your calling body.

Annual visits should be conducted with each called worker and spouse to provide encouragement and to determine if there are any changing needs.

A transition visit with a called worker should be conducted when the worker leaves his/her ministry in your calling body.

Recommendations should be brought to the church council or the governing board on behalf of the called worker(s).

When it is deemed appropriate, delicate matters should be referred (see pages 22-23).

Careful consideration should be given to the resources that will be used in referral cases.

## **Accountability**

The local CCCW is to serve as an advocate for the workers to the calling body. The underlying premise of the committee's work should be to assist and lend support to its called workers in whatever way it can.

While in some instances the local CCCW may be able to assist the worker within its membership, it often may not have the authority to complete the request independently.

The local CCCW is *not* to be considered a problem-solving group in and of itself.

Recommendations that are deemed appropriate should be forwarded to the group that is responsible for their implementation, such as the board of elders or the church council (or other designated group), and it should regularly report to that body.

This reporting will help ensure that points of concern or items to be considered for action are not continually "put on the back burner" for an extended period of time or inadvertently overlooked altogether.

## **Committee Membership**

The selection of the local care committee members is of vital importance to the committee's success. Care should be taken in the selection process itself and in determining who is ultimately chosen to serve. More than any other factor, it has proven to be true that **the individuals who serve on the committee most often determine the success or failure of the committee and its work.**

See page 17 for details regarding committee selection.

## **Characteristics of Committee Members**

All committee members should be people who are spiritually and emotionally mature, and who also enjoy the respect and confidence of all of the called workers.

See page 18 for a listing of desirable characteristics for committee members.

## **Committee Activities**

All the activities of the local care committee should flow from the mission statement and the objectives. They should support and encourage the called workers and their families as well as seek to enhance the quality of their lives and care for their needs.

The activities that will serve as the springboard through which the mission and objectives of the committee are carried out will be the entrance, annual, and transition visits.

Other activities, including those of a social nature, are important for this work as well. See pages 19-21 and 26-40 for more information.

## **V. Selecting the Care Committee**

### **Committee Membership Guidelines**

The size of the local care committee could range from 1-15 members, depending on the size and needs of the calling body.

Committee members should be appointed rather than elected.

Since the local CCCW will likely work with female called workers as well as the spouses of male called workers, it is strongly recommended that women are appointed to serve on the committee.

It may be beneficial for the majority of committee members to be married couples, especially if the calling body is rather large.

It is recommended that the church council appoint members to serve for three-year rotating terms so that the committee always has experienced members on it.

It is also recommended that committee members should serve no more than two consecutive terms, although in some situations this may not be possible or even preferable.

Each year the committee should elect a chairman (who is a voting member of the calling body) and a secretary.

## **Desirable Characteristics for Committee Members**

The following characteristics are desirable for all committee members:

- Someone who worships regularly and attends Bible classes (for personal ongoing spiritual growth and to be able to better encourage workers).
- Someone who understands the proper use of law and gospel and is able to apply them.
- Someone who knows the calling body and its objectives.
- Someone who possesses effective communication skills (listening, understanding, and encouragement).
- Someone who demonstrates concern for the workers of the calling body.
- Someone who empathizes with people (is able to put oneself in another person's circumstances).
- Someone who maintains confidentiality in those matters which need to remain confidential.
- Someone who enjoys the respect and confidence of all the called workers. This is especially important if there are a number of workers on staff. **All called workers should be asked to approve a list of nominees for potential appointment to the local CCCW prior to the actual nomination process.**

**As stated earlier, the individuals on the care committee can make or break the committee's success. They are to be mature Christians who are sensitive to the needs and concerns of the church and its called workers.**

**It is extremely important that all nominees are approved by all the called workers prior to the nomination process.**

## **VI. Activities of a Care Committee**

### **Conduct the Designated Visits**

The primary work of the care committee will focus on conducting the three visits for which it is responsible:

- the entrance visit
- the annual visit
- the transition visit

The entrance visit will be conducted when a worker begins his/her ministry position with the calling body.

The visit that will be conducted most frequently by the care committee is the annual visit. This visit is intended to be conducted each year with each worker and his/her spouse.

The transition visit will be conducted when a worker leaves his position. Usually this will occur because of the acceptance of a call to another calling body, because of retirement, or because of resignation. There may be some circumstances when it may be beneficial for the care committee to become involved when a call is terminated, such as in the case of the down-sizing of a staff. However, in the majority of call termination cases, the matter should not be the responsibility of the care committee, but rather the responsibility of the circuit pastor or the school counselor. [NOTE: A beneficial resource (for some transition situations) that is currently available in some of the districts of our synod is the special "Help Team." These teams have been organized to provide assistance to called workers who leave the ministry prematurely, for whatever reason.]

Additional information regarding the visits, including suggested questions that may be asked during the visits, is provided in the appendix. Information on general procedures and guidelines is provided on pages 26-28, for the entrance visit on pages 29-30, for the annual visit on pages 31-34, and for the transition visit on pages 35-37.

Many of the activities that the committee might wish to initiate will be discussed in the visits themselves, but they also may be brought to the attention of the calling body as a whole (if it is deemed appropriate) in order to create greater awareness in the calling body and to provide additional support and encouragement for the called worker(s).

Specific activity suggestions to help the committee are listed in the appendix on pages 38-40.

## **Encourage the Called Worker in His/Her Personal and Family's Spiritual Life**

Regular personal Bible study, apart from the study that a called worker does for class preparation, is an integral part of every called worker's spiritual growth.

It is important that a called worker does not only set time aside for personal Bible study, but that he/she sets a strong example for the members of the calling body by participating in corporate Bible study as well.

## **Encourage Continuing Education**

The CCCW member can help the calling body realize that continuing education will benefit *both* the called worker *and* the calling body.

It should be pointed out that the expense for the education will not be wasted if the called worker receives and takes a call away from the calling body because the education will still benefit the church-at-large.

Time for continuing education should be provided that is over-and-above that which is allowed for personal matters and vacation.

Many calling bodies establish guidelines to determine the amount of time and money they will annually allow for their called workers for continuing education.

For more information, see page 38 of the appendix.

## **Evaluate Salaries and Benefits**

An annual review of the called worker's compensation package should be made to balance the needs of the called worker and the stewardship of the calling body.

Because of differing circumstances, such as the size and location of the calling body, compensation will vary from one calling body to another.

Specific activity suggestions to help the committee are listed in the appendix on page 39.



## **Provide Support and Encouragement**

The stresses and strains of ministry can at times weigh heavily on the mind of even the most dedicated and gifted servant of God. When fellow Christians, especially if they are served by the called worker, offer him/her their encouragement and support, it can be uplifting for the worker and beneficial to the calling body as well. Being aware of and supporting the mental health of the called worker is an important role of the committee.

Honest support and encouragement can help build the personal relationship between the committee member and the called worker. If there is a comfortable relationship between the member and worker, then any issue can more easily be discussed with confidence.

By providing encouragement and support, the care committee can diminish the times when the called worker feels “overworked and underappreciated.”

Specific activity suggestions to help the committee are listed in the appendix on page 39.

## **Provide Assistance in Practical Matters**

Providing practical assistance is helpful to the called worker no matter how long the worker has served in the ministry or in a particular location. However, this assistance can be especially valuable and beneficial to a called worker entering the ministry for the first time or to a called worker who is just beginning a new call in a new location.

Specific activity suggestions to help the committee are listed in the appendix on page 40.

## **Organize and Host Fellowship Activities**

Activities can be organized and hosted locally (private home, restaurant, church hall).

Activities can be organized and hosted jointly with other local care committees or with the district CCCW.

Fellowship activities can at times involve some expense. While financial assistance for these activities will vary from one locality to another, some suggestions for providing funds to assist the local CCCW in its work are through the church budget (line item), a door collection, or through designated gifts.

Specific activity suggestions to help the committee are listed in the appendix on page 40.

## **VII. Referrals**

### **General Guidelines**

Each calling body should determine the guidelines that it will use for referring called workers *before* a situation arises in order to avoid the possibility of any questions of biased judgment.

The CCCW member should know the resources to which he/she is referring. A listing of WELS resources can be found on pages 24-26.

Blind referrals (referrals made without knowing the resource) should never be made.

### **Types of Situations**

Examples of referral situations could include the following:

- When the called worker needs advice or counsel in any area for which the CCCW member is not trained.
- When the called worker seems troubled by something that he/she is not willing to share with a CCCW member.
- When the called worker admits or suggests involvement in something that could jeopardize his/her ministry.

## **Making the Referral**

Each CCCW member should be honest about the limitation of the scope of his/her responsibility and ability from the beginning.

Called workers must realize that CCCW members are not professional counselors, circuit pastors, or school counselors.

The CCCW member will respectfully indicate when he/she feels professional counseling might be helpful to the called worker.

The CCCW member should be sure to explain clearly to the called worker his/her reason(s) for referring.

If the called worker disagrees about the need for professional counseling, encourage him/her to speak to another CCCW member or to another called worker about the matter.

The CCCW member may offer the option of finding a counselor for the called worker or allowing the called worker to seek counseling on his/her own.

It should be made clear between the CCCW member and the called worker who will contact the referral source.

## **Referral Follow-Up**

Follow-up contact should be made between the CCCW member and the called worker to assure that the referral is made and that the recommendation for referral isn't ignored or doesn't "slip through the cracks."

## **VIII. Appropriate WELS Resources**

### **WELS Care Committee for Called Workers**

WELS Center for Mission and Ministry  
N16W23377 Stone Ridge Drive  
Waukesha, WI 53188-1108  
414.256.3240

The WELS Care Committee for Called Workers provides free copies of this updated Care Committee for Called Workers handbook (2024) upon request. It also assists the district CCCWs in their efforts to establish, encourage, and support local CCCWs. These resources can be downloaded from the WELS Resource Center at:  
[csm.welsrc.net/download-csm/called-worker-care/](http://csm.welsrc.net/download-csm/called-worker-care/)

### **Called Worker Retirement Planning**

WELS Benefit Plans Office  
N16W23377 Stone Ridge Drive  
Waukesha, WI 53188-1108  
Phone: 414.256.3860 Toll Free: 1.800.487.8322 (available 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m. CT)  
Fax: 262.522.2802 (available 24 hours a day)  
Email: [BPO@wels.net](mailto:BPO@wels.net)  
Website: [welsbpo.net/retirement/](http://welsbpo.net/retirement/)

The WELS Benefit Plans Office website has excellent resources to help congregations and their called workers understand the resources available for retirement and help them set aside funds for that purpose. Information about the WELS Pension and the unique opportunities available through the WELS Shepherd Plan (a denominational 403(b) retirement income account plan) can be found there, and the Benefit Plans Office can answer questions the CCCW or called workers may have.

### **Continuing Education for Called Workers**

Assistance with helping called workers pursue spiritual and professional growth is handled through Martin Luther College ([mlc-wels.edu](http://mlc-wels.edu)) and the Commission on Lutheran Schools ([wels.net/serving-you/christian-life/education/lutheran-schools/](http://wels.net/serving-you/christian-life/education/lutheran-schools/)) for teachers and staff ministers and through Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary and its Grow in Grace Institute for pastors ([wisluthsem.org/](http://wisluthsem.org/)). Those looking to assist their teachers and staff ministers in such spiritual and professional growth are encouraged to contact Professor John Meyer at Martin Luther College ([meyerjd@mlc-wels.edu](mailto:meyerjd@mlc-wels.edu)) or the Commission on Lutheran Schools ([lutheranschools@wels.net](mailto:lutheranschools@wels.net)). Those looking to assist their pastors in such spiritual and professional growth are encouraged to contact Professor Brad Wordell at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary ([bradley.wordell@wisluthsem.org](mailto:bradley.wordell@wisluthsem.org)).

## **Christian Family Solutions**

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Email: [info@wlcfs.org](mailto:info@wlcfs.org)

Website: [ChristianFamilySolutions.org](http://ChristianFamilySolutions.org)

Christian Family Solutions (CFS) provides professional Christian mental health services including outpatient, intensive outpatient, and day treatment services at clinic locations in a number of states including Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan. Many of the services are available in person as well as through telehealth. CFS partners with congregations and schools and provides clinical services at their site. In addition, the Member Assistance Program (MAP) provides an opportunity for congregations, schools, or other Christian organizations to ensure their members have access to short-term counseling services. CFS has many WELS or ELS licensed mental health professionals on staff (counselors, social workers, marriage and family therapists, and psychologists). Many of the professionals on staff have experience and expertise helping church workers and their families. Services are confidential and are typically billed to the individual's insurance company or covered through an organization's Member Assistance Program. Clinic locations, program options, and staff biographies can be viewed at [ChristianFamilySolutions.org](http://ChristianFamilySolutions.org). Call 800.438.1772 to schedule an appointment or request an appointment online.

## **Member Assistance Program**

### **A ministry of WLCFS-Christian Family Solutions**

W175 N11120 Stonewood Drive  
Germantown, WI 53022

Phone: 262.345.5560 Fax: 262.345.5562 Toll-free: 800.438.1772

Email: [map@wlcfs.org](mailto:map@wlcfs.org)

Web Site: [ChristianFamilySolutions.org](http://ChristianFamilySolutions.org)

The Member Assistance Program (MAP) from Christian Family Solutions is a customized and comprehensive way for churches, schools, and organizations to meet the mental health needs of their members and students and demonstrate their love for Christ. Through MAP, WELS/ELS organizations can provide counseling services at no cost for their members—either face-to-face at a CFS clinic location, or through secure, online video conferencing. Congregations or schools cover the discounted hourly fees for the program so members do not need to be concerned about the financial obstacles for receiving the care they need. When a congregation partners with WLCFS-Christian Family Solutions, the members have access to professional, state-licensed, and specialized WELS/ELS master's- and Ph.D.-level therapists who have specialized training to conduct counseling via distance modalities such as video or telephone. Each district of the WELS has set up a Member Assistance Program for their called workers and family members to ensure that they have access to professional mental health services providing a limited number of sessions at no cost. In addition, the Evangelical Lutheran Synod has established a Member Assistance Program for all the called workers and family members in their synod. Contact the Member Assistance Program

manager at 800.438.1772 to learn how to access your district or synod resources. Learn more at [ChristianFamilySolutions.org](http://ChristianFamilySolutions.org) or by calling 800.438.1772. Workshops and seminars are also available upon request.



## **IX. APPENDIX**

### **General Visit Procedures (Entrance, Annual, & Transition Visits)**

The first step of the care committee in its visit preparation is to assign the committee member(s) who will be responsible for conducting the individual visits. Each year this will include the annual visit. The assignment (if necessary) of the committee members designated to conduct the entrance and transition visits should also be made at this time.

Each visit should be organized and planned by scheduling an appointment with the worker and his/her spouse at a comfortable site (worker's home, committee member's home). Be sure to give the worker the choice of sites. It is important that these visits occur in an atmosphere that is conducive to discussion. Baby-sitting should be provided for the worker if it is necessary.

Prior to the visit, the visitors should become familiar with the tools for helping conduct the visits. These include the general visit guidelines found on pages 28-29 and the materials for conducting each of the three visits (entrance, annual, and transition) which are located on pages 30-38 of this appendix.

At least two weeks prior to the visit the visitor should give the worker a copy of the visit materials. Be sure to use the visit materials that are appropriate for the visit being conducted.

Preparations should be made to take good notes during the visit in order to ensure accurate follow-up and reporting.

After the visit, the visitors should evaluate the information gathered during the visit.

The visitors should then report to the care committee, and finally to the church council what confidentiality allows. **It is extremely important that the worker must give approval in advance to the sharing of the report with any other individual or groups.**

## **General Visit Guidelines**

### **Pre-Visit**

Each visit is intended primarily to be a helping visit. The purpose of the visit is not only to demonstrate interest and care for the individual, but also to assist and lend support (focusing on his/her needs, not yours).

Be sure to allow plenty of time for the visit. If you have to rush, it may give the wrong impression (45 to 60 minutes is usually ample).

Committee members should not feel obligated to use all of the questions from the list of suggestions for conducting the visit in a given visit. Generally, it is recommended to select a few questions from each of the different sections of the visit materials. However, in some cases it may be better to focus on only one or two sections. The questions should then be given to the worker prior to the visit.

Make preparations for taking notes during the visit.

Be sure to take precautions that you will not be interrupted during the visit. Provide baby-sitting assistance if necessary.

Prepare your introduction for the purpose of the visit in advance. State clearly the reason for the meeting. If there has been a concern for behaviors, state those behaviors specifically. It is important to send a clear message to the worker of both your concern for them as an individual and your sincere desire to help him/her. Remember to be polite, casual, and comfortable in your approach. Invite the person to the visit, even if he/she is expected to be there.

**PRAY** for God's guidance.

### **Visit – Stage 1 (Initiation)**

Use the following suggestions when you begin the visit:

- Greet the person and thank him/her for coming.
- Offer the person his/her choice of seating and check his/her comfort level.
- Briefly explain the reason for the meeting and that your desire is to help.
- Indicate the amount of time that is available and see if it fits his/her schedule.
- Keep good notes during the visit for accurate follow-up and reporting. (Important!)
- Be sure to inform the called worker why the notes are being taken.

**Assure the worker of confidentiality. If this report is to be shared with an individual or group other than your CCCW or the church council, the worker must give approval in advance.**

### **Visit – Stage 2 (Exploration)**

During the visit use the following suggestions to promote discussion:

- Stimulate response by asking leading questions.
- Encourage exploration by eliciting responses that encourage people to express themselves, especially through:
  - Reflection – What do you think...?
  - Clarification – Could you be more specific...?
  - Summation – Could you summarize that ...?
- Remember that personal examples (self-disclosure) can hinder an initial helping visit.
- Be careful not to shift attention to yourself.
- Remember to LISTEN!

### **Visit – Stage 3 (Closure)**

The following suggestions could be used to end the visit:

- Indicate to the person when there are about 5 minutes left in the visit.
- Attempt to summarize those things which seemed important to the person as well as those that were important to you, being sure to check your impressions are accurate.
- Check out the person's thoughts and feelings about the visit.
- Ask the person if he/she would like to meet again. If the answer is “no,” but you think another meeting is necessary, extend an “invitation.” Remember, it might not be possible to do it all in one meeting. If you have succeeded in being supportive and there are concerns, follow-up may be necessary.
- Thank the called worker for his/her time, your host for allowing the visit (this depends on the visit location), and thank God for guiding your words.

A comfortable closure is very important because the last things you do are likely to be the most remembered.

### **Post-Visit**

At this time, you might wish to jot down some additional notes regarding the visit. Be sure to include your hunches about what is going on.

If necessary, consider consultation with others who might be able to shed some light on the situation. **Be careful, however, to keep confidential matters private.**

If what you heard and/or observed made you especially uneasy, consider a consultation with an appropriate professional.

A follow-up note a day or two after the visit is a nice touch to help solidify the relationship.

Share with the worker a copy of the report you intend to submit for their review.

## **Entrance Visit Suggestions (New Pastors, Staff Ministers, or Teachers)**

### **Pre-Visit**

The following suggestions are encouraged to be used prior to the visit:

- *If at all possible, try to be on site when the new worker first arrives.*
- Introduce yourself again at the called worker's ordination/installation service.
- Express your confidence that God will assist both the worker and the calling body in fulfilling the worker's call.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this visit is to help the worker with the transition to his/her new calling, to get acquainted, and to cultivate friendship.

### **Objectives**

- To provide a formal welcome to a called worker who is beginning a new assignment.
- To build rapport with the called worker.
- To provide encouragement and support for the called worker who has left a familiar setting for an unfamiliar one.
- To learn of any needs or problems, and to promise assistance in solving them.
- To introduce the consideration for continuing education.

### **Procedure**

The following procedure is suggested to be used with this visit:

- Make personal contact to request the visit.
- State clearly what the purpose of the visit will be and how it will be carried out.
- Arrange the visit for a date that gives the worker adequate advance notice time.
- Arrange to meet at a location that would be comfortable for the worker who is being visited and conducive to discussion.
- Use the "Entrance Visit" materials with the worker first (involve the spouse and/or family at a later time whenever possible).
- Summarize the important points of the visit, checking to be sure that your impressions are accurate.
- Write your reactions, your comments, and a short evaluation of the visit after it has been completed.
- Share insight with appropriate members of the calling body in order to assist the called worker. **Be concerned and mindful about issues of confidentiality.**

## Visit Content

Possible opening leads:

- Tell me about yourself. This may include family background, schooling, spouse and children, and earlier ministries.
- How are you and your family adjusting to the new community?
- How are you and your family adjusting to the calling body?
- Is the housing satisfactory?
- Is there anything else we can do to help you more?
- How can we best help you as you begin your ministry among us?

Possible subsequent leads:

- What hopes do you have in this new ministry?
- What hopes do you have for the congregation and/or school?
- What hopes do you have for yourself, your spouse, and family?
- What fears do you have in this new ministry?
- What fears do you have for the congregation and/or school?
- What fears do you have for your spouse and/or family?
- What fears do you have for yourself?
- What plans do you have for continuing education?
- What help would you need from the calling body?

## Visit Closure

Remember to do the following at the close of the visit:

- Indicate to the person when there are about 5 minutes left in the visit.
- Thank the called worker for taking the time to meet.
- Summarize the important points of the visit, checking to be sure that your impressions are accurate.
- If the called worker is in need of some assistance, discuss with him/her how you plan to proceed.
- If you are going to seek the help of others, it is best to get the permission of the called worker. **Be careful, however, to keep confidential matters private.**
- Assure the called worker that if he/she has any questions or needs assistance, you will be glad to help.

## **Annual Visit Suggestions (All Workers of the Calling Body)**

### **Pre-Visit**

The following suggestions are encouraged to be used prior to the visit:

- Introduce yourself (as a member of the care committee) to the worker.
- Remind the worker of the purpose of the annual visit.
- Express your confidence that God will assist both the worker and the calling body in fulfilling the worker's call.

### **Purpose**

St. Paul told his congregations in Galatia, "Anyone who receives instruction in the word must share all good things with his instructor" (Galatians 6:6). The CCCW member who is conducting the visit, acting on behalf of the calling body, wants to determine how the calling body can better share all good things with the called worker. This is the primary purpose of the annual visit.

**Although this visit is conducted annually, it is *not* to be considered a job performance review.**

### **Objectives**

- To build rapport with the called worker.
- To provide encouragement and support for the called worker in his/her personal ministry.
- To provide encouragement and support in the called worker's ministry to the calling body as a whole.
- To learn of any needs or problems, and to promise to provide assistance in solving them.
- To remind the worker of the importance for continuing education.
- To assure the worker that the care committee member is an advocate for him/her.



## **Procedure**

The following procedure is suggested to be used with the visit:

- Make personal contact to request the visit.
- State clearly what the purpose of the visit will be and how it will be carried out.
- Arrange the visit for a date that gives the worker adequate advance notice time.
- Arrange to meet at a location that would be comfortable for the worker who is being visited and conducive to discussion.
- Use the “Annual Visit” materials with the worker (and his/her spouse).
- Summarize the important points of the visit, checking to be sure that your impressions are accurate.
- Write your reactions, your comments, and a short evaluation of the visit after it has been completed.
- Share insight with appropriate members of the calling body in order to assist the called worker. **Be concerned and mindful about issues of confidentiality.**

## **Visit Content**

### Spiritual Concerns

Questions the Visitor Might Ask:

- Are you able to schedule daily Bible study and prayer with your family?
- Does your ministry among us allow you enough time to pursue your personal spiritual needs and the needs of your family? Is there anything we as a calling body can do to allow you more time for your family and personal spiritual needs?
- Do you feel that our staff of called workers devotes sufficient time to group Bible study and prayer? Is there any assistance that our calling body can offer in this area?
- Does your work among us provide opportunity for the strengthening and expression of your faith? Can we do something to provide greater opportunities for both?

Questions the Worker Might Ask:

- Are the fruits of my personal faith evident in my participation in the activities of our calling body?
- Do you feel that I am faithfully carrying out my gospel ministry?
- Are there any areas of my or my family’s conduct or lifestyle that need to be changed or improved?

## Relationships

### Questions the Visitor Might Ask:

- How do you assess your relationships within our calling body?
- How do you assess your relationships to other called workers and their families?
- How do you assess your relationships to the members of our calling body?
- How do you assess your relationships to boards and committees?
- How do you assess your relationships to those whom you serve directly (for example, students taught by teachers, staff minister, or pastor)?
- How do you assess your relationships with those people in your community who are not part of our church family?

### Questions the Worker Might Ask:

- What is your perception of my relationships within and outside the calling body?
- What can I do to improve those relationships?

## Calling

### Questions the Visitor Might Ask:

- How would you evaluate each segment of your work as you carry out your call in our calling body?
- What goals do you have which might improve your work among us?
- What goals and plans do you have regarding continuing education?
- What can we do to help you serve better in your calling?
- Do we, as the calling body, have a clear understanding of our purpose and goals and how we can achieve them?
- What suggestions can you make which would help us achieve our purpose and goals?

### Questions the Worker Might Ask:

- How do you evaluate each segment of my calling in our calling body (congregation, high school, etc.)?
- Do you have some suggestions which would help me carry out my calling here?
- What assistance does our calling body offer for continuing education?

### Physical and Material Support

#### Questions the Visitor Might Ask:

- Are your salary and benefits adequate to meet your needs?
- Should we be making some improvements in the church home in which you live?
- Are you able to schedule sufficient time away from your work for rest and relaxation?
- Are you able to make personal accommodations for your retirement apart from social security and church pension?
- Do you need help with tax preparation or financial planning?
- Is our vacation policy adequate?

#### Questions the Worker Might Ask:

- Am I a good steward of the church's property?
- What is your perception of my use of my time?

### **Visit Closure**

#### Remember to do the following at the close of the visit:

- Indicate to the person when there are about 5 minutes left in the visit.
- Thank the called worker for taking the time to meet.
- Summarize the important points of the visit, checking to be sure to that your impressions are accurate.
- If the called worker is in need of some assistance, discuss with him/her how you plan to proceed.
- If you are going to seek the help of others, it is best to get the permission of the called worker. **Be careful, however, to keep confidential matters private.**
- Assure the called worker that if he/she has any questions or needs assistance, you will be glad to help.

## **Transition Visit Suggestions (All Workers of the Calling Body)**

### **Pre-Visit**

The following suggestions are encouraged to be followed prior to the visit:

- Express thanks to God for the blessings that have been received through the ministry of the worker who is in transition.
- Express confidence that the Lord will continue to use the worker in a pleasing way—whether a new call, a marriage, or retirement (or in some cases of termination).

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this visit is to show the committee's (and the calling body's) concern and love for the worker by helping him/her with the transition. It should not be used to become an axe-grinding session for the called worker.

### **Objectives**

- To provide encouragement and to help the called worker who is in transition and in that way to try to help him/her (as much as possible) with adjustments to a new situation.
- To learn whatever can be learned through the transition visit process with the hope of being able to help others through the information gained.
- To avoid matters requiring disciplinary action.

### **Procedure**

The following procedure is suggested to be used when making this visit:

- Make personal contact to request the visit.
- State clearly what the purpose of the visit will be and how it will be carried out.
- Arrange the visit for a time that gives the worker adequate advance notice of time.
- Arrange to meet at a location that would be comfortable for the worker being visited and conducive to discussion.
- Use the "Transition Visit" materials with the worker first; later involve the spouse and/or family whenever possible.
- Share the gist of your report with the person being visited and seek approval from the worker to share the report with the calling body and the synod office.

## **Visit Content**

Possible opening leads:

- What memories of your ministry will you take with you?
- What adjustments do you think you will have to make in your future (ministry, career, retirement years)?
- How can we help you as you enter into your new life?

Possible subsequent leads:

- What hopes do you have for your future?
- What hopes do you have for your new ministry?
- What hopes do you have for your spouse and/or family?
- What hopes do you have for yourself?
- What fears do you have for your new ministry?
- What fears do you have for your spouse and/or family?
- What fears do you have for yourself?
- What gifts do you hope to use?

Possible special problems:

Spiritual:

- Will you have a congregation in which to worship?
- Is Christian education available to your children?
- To what extent will you get involved in your congregation?

Emotional:

- Do you have feelings that should be resolved?
- Are health problems resolved?

Financial:

- Has our calling body met its financial obligations to you?
- Do you need assistance?
- This assistance is available to you:
  - WELS pension programs and emergency support
  - Government programs

Discussion of the transition:

- What could our calling body have done that was not done?
- What could the district or synod have done that was not done?
- What could individuals have done that was not done?
- Do you have any special suggestions to offer that might enable us to help others in the future?

Future plans (as applicable):

- Do you have any thoughts about re-entering the ministry?
- Do you plan to stay in touch?
- How can the synod best maintain contact with you?
- What career goals do you have?

## Visit Closure

Remember to do the following at the close of the visit:

- Indicate to the person when there are about 5 minutes left.
- Thank the called worker for taking the time to meet.
- Summarize the important points of the visit, checking to be sure that your impressions are accurate.
- If the called worker is in need of some assistance, discuss with him/her how you plan to proceed.
- If you are going to seek the help of others, it is best to get the permission of the called worker. **Be sure, however, to keep confidential matters private.**
- Assure the called worker that if he/she has any questions or needs assistance, you will be glad to help.
- If at all possible, try to be on site when the worker is actually leaving.

## **Additional Activity Suggestions**

### **Conduct the Visits**

It is important that all three visits (entrance, annual, and transition) are conducted in a timely manner.

Every effort should be made to make the visits pleasant and positive.

In the annual visit, a sample of questions from each of the topic areas (spiritual, relationships, calling, physical and material support) may be asked, or the questions could primarily focus on only one or two of these areas.

The length of the visit with each worker and/or spouse will vary depending on the situation, but, in general, the visits should last no more than one hour.

### **Encourage Spiritual Life**

The called worker should be encouraged to take time for personal Bible study.

It is also important to encourage the called worker in his/her family devotions.

The called worker should be encouraged in his/her regular attendance at worship services and Bible classes, not only for the personal blessings that he/she receives, but also for the good example that he/she is setting for the members of the calling body.

### **Encourage Continuing Education**

The calling body should be encouraged to consider funding or subsidizing the cost of continuing education activities.

Consideration should be given not only for funding the cost of the education itself, but also for providing assistance to the called worker for travel expenses if they occur.

Child-care or baby-sitting help may be offered in order to make it easier for the called worker to take a class.

### **Evaluate Salaries and Benefits**

A called worker's salary should not be significantly above or below the salary of the people that he/she serves. The calling body should provide the called worker with a salary that is compensatory to the living conditions of the area in which the worker lives.

In order to fairly evaluate salary and benefits, a comparison of the called worker's compensation can be made with the average salary and benefits of the calling body and the council/governing board members.

In order to fairly evaluate salary and benefits, a comparison can also be made with the salary compensation packages of area congregations and/or calling bodies of similar size.

Actions to be considered could be:

- Review the called worker's health and dental insurance issues.
- Review the called worker's housing needs and related issues.
- Review the number of vacation days allowed the called worker.
- Provide several personal leave days for the called worker.
- Provide assistance toward a called workers' retirement plan or policy. This assistance would be in addition to contributions to the synod's pension plan.

### **Provide Support and Encouragement**

Prayers for called workers can be offered regularly by both the care committee and the calling body.

Assistance that is provided during times of family emergency or catastrophe can be a real source of comfort, easing tensions and concerns that are caused by the situation.

Support for called workers is especially important at times when personal and/or family counseling is needed. WELS provides a variety of resources and supports for mental health needs.

Appreciation and encouragement for the called worker(s) can be shown through the development and implementation of a recognition policy (including recognition of called workers' personal and family anniversaries) by the calling body.

Saying "thank you" or sending thank-you notes is a good policy to follow not just at times of anniversary or retirement, but throughout the year.

Some suggested ways to say "thank you" may be:

- Give gift certificates for gas or car wash tokens.
- Offer to provide baby-sitting for specific events or to encourage "an evening out."
- Invite the called worker over for dinner.
- Arrange to cut their lawn/shovel snow while they are on vacation.
- Provide a supper for teachers during parent/teacher conference evenings.
- Bring a meal over during a busy or stressful time of school year.



### **Provide Assistance in Practical Matters**

Especially when a called worker is new to the area of the calling body, providing assistance in practical issues (such as helping the called worker locate doctors, dentists, banks, auto repair shops, lawyers, etc.) can be extremely helpful.

Contact information may be offered for financial planning and budget planning.

Assistance (personally or through contact information) may be given for home repairs.

Assistance to called workers in the teaching ministry may be provided by:

- Helping with bulletin boards.
- Helping with photocopying or other classroom “busy tasks.”
- Volunteering for supervision of playground duty or lunchroom duty.
- Donating needed items to the classroom.

Care committee members may serve as classroom guest speakers in their area of expertise.

Steps may be taken to provide one day per week for the called worker to have alone with his/her family (except in cases of emergency). It is important to be sure that everyone in the calling body is aware of that (especially for pastors).

Teachers should not be expected to attend EVERY meeting. The congregation should make it clear which meetings the teacher(s) are expected to attend.

### **Organize and Host Fellowship Activities**

A good way for your calling body to collectively meet new called workers and their families is by organizing a welcoming activity (this may include a pantry shower).

An annual called worker appreciation potluck/fellowship dinner promotes rapport.

The plans for an annual “Called Worker Recognition Week” can include:

- Arranging to have special treats each day.
- Hosting a luncheon or provide funding for a meal at a nearby restaurant.
- Providing recess duty/lunchroom duty supervision for the week.

Ministry anniversaries or ministry-in-the-congregation anniversaries should be celebrated. Check annually for the ministry service time for each called worker in order to ensure that an anniversary is not inadvertently overlooked.