

Community Services Director

A ministry description for local church leaders

Introduction

In His earthly ministry Christ worked out a pattern for His followers to copy. He “went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed” (Acts 10:38). Christ identified with the poor and oppressed. “He fed the hungry and healed the sick... By the good He accomplished, by His loving words and kindly deeds, He interpreted the Gospel to men,” comments Ellen White. “Christ’s work in behalf of man is not finished. It continues today. In like manner His ambassadors are to preach the gospel and to reveal His pitying love for lost and perishing souls. By an unselfish interest in those who need help they are to give a practical demonstration of the truth of the gospel” (*Welfare Ministry*, pages 56-57).

When a church serves the world it is an expression of the love of Christ to the world. It is the body of Christ serving the world’s needs and being used by the Holy Spirit as an agency of salvation.

The church was created for service. It serves the Lord in praise, serves one another in love, and serves the world in humility. “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works” (Ephesians 2:10).

Duties of the Community Services Director

The major functions and tasks of the local church community services director include the following:

- 1. Discovering the needs of the community.** A needs assessment of your area should be completed every two or three years by visual inspection; using public, private and human services agencies such as police, fire, mental health and human services; by reviewing the news media; and by conducting surveys.
- 2. Mobilizing a response to specific concerns.** It is your responsibility to help your church identify social concerns to which it feels called to respond. Usually this decision will be made in the outreach or personal ministries committee. Once the decision is made you will have the task of getting the word out and rousing the congregation to action.
- 3. Organization of programs.** You will be asked to recruit volunteers and arrange details of entry events (activities through which non-members participate for the first time in a church-sponsored activity) and other social action projects. These will include health screening, aid for the poor, literacy and employment assistance, and inner city programs. You or a church-elected Disaster Response Coordinator may be responsible to coordinate disaster-related activities.
- 4. Establish cooperation.** The community services director is asked to work with other organizations in the community so the church does not duplicate services. Memorandum of Understanding have been established at national levels with non-profit organizations and private sector parties specifying what Adventist Community Services will do in the event of major disasters

and related to certain social problems. Similar agreements are needed in your area. This may mean that you, or someone you appoint, will meet regularly with inter-agency committees to represent the Adventist Church.

- 5. Communication.** You are the person the congregation expects to keep it posted about Adventist Community Services activities, as well as provide information on current issues. This means that you will want to utilize the personal ministries time once a month (as outlined in denominational policy), prepare announcements for the bulletin and church newsletter, and distribute a comprehensive statistical report at least once a quarter. Since the yearly “Hope for Humanity: Ingathering” and “Disaster Famine and Relief” appeals are a major source of funds for community services, the community service leader will want to be involved.
- 6. Reporting.** You are the person responsible to document community service statistics. Keeping records of the clients you serve, services you provide, volunteer statistics and financial records is important to you, your local church and the Adventist Church in North America. This information can provide operational transparency and assist with grant opportunities, volunteer recruitment and donation requests. With free web-based software, you can quickly and easily maintain these records.

ACS hosts free web-based reporting software to help you document your community service statistics. To learn more about the E-Reporting software, register your church, or join an instructional webinar go to the ACS website: www.communityservices.org

Recommendation: It is recommended that newly appointed directors participate in the Nonprofit Leadership Certification Program (NLCP).

The NLCP is designed to prepare successful executives and pastors for general management responsibilities and social evangelism. This intensive two-week program is taught by an outstanding group of professionals who teach attendees how to operate and minister effectively by emphasizing the distinctive character of nonprofit organizational operation and urban ministries. See www.communityservices.org for more details.

Resources

For a list of recommended resources, free downloads and websites visit MinistryKits.AdventSource.org

For a complete list of resources visit AdventSource.org, select the store tab and then your ministry.

You can call *AdventSource* at 402.486.8800 for additional information or if you have questions about ministry. For ministry-related articles, videos, and free downloads visit AdventSource.org.

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