

Assembly and Convention Attendant Instructions

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1. Those who serve as attendants should be exemplary spiritual men, known for demonstrating the fruitage of the spirit in their life and in their dealings with others. (Gal. 5:22, 23) They should be helpful, reasonable, and kind in caring for their responsibilities. Attendants should remain alert at all times, not becoming complacent or lackadaisical in fulfilling their responsibilities. They must always conduct themselves in harmony with the admonition: “Follow the course of hospitality.”—Rom. 12:13; 1 Pet. 2:12.

2. Attendants should dress in harmony with the standard for brothers handling meeting parts. (If a convention is held in conditions of extreme heat, the Convention Committee can decide to adjust the standard of dress.)

ATTENDANT MEETING

3. There will be a meeting with all attendants before the doors open for general admission on the day of the assembly or the first day of the convention. At the meeting, the attendant overseer will review the duties of the attendants as well as any safety measures that need to be taken. The meeting will conclude in time for all attendants to be at their assigned positions no later than 15 minutes prior to when the doors are opened. Emergency procedures for the facility will be reviewed so that all attendants will know their duties in the event of an evacuation or other emergency.

ASSIGNMENTS

4. Attendants are to remain in their assignments at all times until they are relieved of their duty or replaced by another attendant. All who serve as attendants should wear an attendant badge card.

5. Below is a partial list of attendant duties, which may vary depending on the location of each attendant and the particular needs of the facility being used:

- (1) Welcoming attendees as they arrive
- (2) Monitoring all entrances, exits, and corridors
- (3) Distributing programs and providing department location information
- (4) Assisting the elderly, the disabled, and those with small children to seating locations and on stairs
- (5) Helping individuals to locate seats
- (6) Taking the initiative to kindly remind any who are not seated during the musical preludes (at assemblies) or music-video presentations (at conventions) to find their seats and quietly enjoy the presentation
- (7) Taking a count of those in attendance
- (8) Providing crowd control inside and immediately outside the facility
- (9) Monitoring escalators, elevators, stairs, and fire-alarm pull stations
- (10) Monitoring and controlling access to the stage and other sensitive areas
- (11) Providing crowd control at the baptism area
- (12) Handling difficulties
- (13) Assisting in case of an evacuation or other emergency
- (14) Contacting First Aid

6. Attendants are organized into groups of sufficient size to care for their assigned areas before, during, and after the program. Larger areas may have an assigned captain. (In a multilevel facility, several attendant captains and their attendant groups may be organized under the direction of a level captain.) All captains work under the direction of the attendant overseer and his assistant.

7. Before the doors to the facility open each day, all attendants should be at their assigned locations to monitor and prevent any unsafe actions on the part of those entering. No one should be allowed to run or to move about in an unsafe manner. Attendants should kindly assist all to avoid accidents.

ENTRANCES, EXITS, AND CORRIDORS

8. Elderly and infirm ones, along with one caregiver, may enter the facility starting at 8:00 a.m. All attendees may enter starting at 8:15 a.m. It is important not to allow entry before 8:00 a.m. so that the attendants and other departments can get organized before the crowd arrives. Attendants should be familiar with exits and know the appropriate evacuation route in order to assist all attendees to reach safety. Prior to the session, all exit doors should be checked to make sure that they are not locked or obstructed in a way that prevents opening them from the inside. In order to conserve energy, attendants should ensure that exterior doors are not propped open in air-conditioned or heated buildings.

SEATING

9. No one, including attendants and other volunteers, should save seats overnight or prior to the time when the doors to the building are opened each day. At all times, attendants should be alert to assist those who need seats or who need to be escorted on stairs and should remain attentive to any potential disturbances. When the doors to the building open

at 8:00 a.m., attendants can save seats within their own sections for themselves, those living in their home, those traveling with them in the same vehicle, and their current Bible students. Each attendant should monitor those coming into his assigned area to make sure that this same practice is followed by all, reminding attendees to follow direction provided by the organization on seat saving. Attendants should care for their assignments in a manner that will not distract others. It is helpful if families with small children can be seated where they can enter and exit easily without being a distraction. Attendants should assist disabled, elderly, and infirm ones who wish to be seated in the areas reserved for them, and they should continue to be alert to such individuals, always treating them with dignity, respect, and love.

10. Baby strollers and lawn chairs are not permitted in the regular seating areas of the facility. The attendants should tactfully and lovingly approach attendees who have these items and help them to appreciate that this restriction protects their child and others from injury. The attendants should explain the options of securing a car seat or an infant seat on a seat next to the parents, holding the child in their lap, or asking a friend to assist. Parents may decide to take the stroller back to the car or put it in the checkroom. Strollers and lawn chairs may be used for disabled children and adults, but only in the section reserved for them.

11. The attendants should take the initiative to seat latecomers. This can be accomplished by good communication between the attendants at entry points and those in seating areas. The attendant should ask attendees as they enter whether they are looking for seats and how many they need. If seats are needed, he will keep the attendees at his side and signal to a seating attendant the number of seats that are desired. The attendant in the seating area will signal how many he has available. Each seating attendant should regularly examine his section and check with those sitting next to seats with items placed on them to see if they are occupied. If a section is full, the attendant at the entry point can check with attendants in other sections to see where seats are available and direct attendees accordingly.

ATTENDANCE COUNT

12. Attendants will be informed of the times to take a count of those in their assigned section. The count should be taken without causing unnecessary distraction to those attending. All adults should be counted, as should young children who are listening and benefiting, even to a limited extent.

HANDLING DISTRACTIONS

13. Audiences could be disturbed by such things as attendees talking, latecomers looking for seats, noise from cell phones or other electronic devices, and disruptive children. Attendants should be alert to handle distractions in a loving, kind manner. They should closely monitor people congregating by themselves in remote areas. It may become necessary to suggest in a kindly way that such individuals return to their seats.

SAFETY

14. Attendants should be alert at all times to any potentially dangerous or unsafe situations. These could be due to building defects, faulty or unsafe use of chairs, or objects of any kind being left in the aisles. Uneven floors, irregular stairs, seating riser joints, and loose handrails are especially hazardous. When wet floors are encountered, the attendant should direct attendees around the wet area and have it reported to the Cleaning Department. If there are large openings in guard rails where children could fall through and be injured, the attendant should report these to the attendant overseer or his assistant. Children should not be allowed to sit in rows next to railings where they could fall through and injure themselves. In multilevel facilities, attendants should remind individuals not to lean over the railings or place any items

on the ledge(s) of the upper level(s). If the attendant cannot correct a situation, he should alert the attendant overseer or his assistant.

EMERGENCIES

15. **Nonmedical:** If a nonmedical emergency arises, attendants should immediately contact the attendant overseer or his assistant for direction. (See [paragraph 29, point 1](#), for direction on attendants calling emergency services in the case of a violent individual.) Each attendant should have a flashlight with him in the event of a power failure.

16. **Medical:** Attendants should be familiar with the location of the First Aid Department and contact it immediately if a medical emergency arises so that first-aid personnel can render assistance and call emergency services if necessary.

17. **Reporting:** When reporting an emergency, an attendant should provide the following information:

- (1) The type and scope of the emergency
- (2) The location of the emergency
- (3) His name, phone number, and location
- (4) Any other helpful details

BOMB THREATS

18. Attendants should take all threats seriously and immediately provide the attendant overseer or his assistant with as much information as possible about the individual and the bomb. **Do not activate a fire alarm during a bomb threat.** If a bomb is detonated, the fire alarm likely should be used.

LOST PERSONS

19. If individuals, particularly children, become separated from their group or parents, they should be brought to the Lost & Found and Checkroom Department. Attendants should immediately notify the attendant overseer or his assistant of any such persons.

KIDNAPPINGS AND MISSING PERSONS

20. If a person is reported missing to an attendant, the attendant should immediately inform the attendant overseer or his assistant. Thereafter, the attendant should obtain and provide identifying details and a picture of the missing person.

ESCALATORS AND ELEVATORS

21. Escalators and elevators should never be left unattended. If possible, elevators should be operated by an attendant. Escalators should have an attendant stationed at the top and at the bottom. These attendants should know how to stop the escalator quickly in case of an emergency. Attendants assigned to escalators and elevators should be alert to how these are being used and should especially assist elderly and young ones to be careful when using them.

STAGE

22. Attendants should control access to the stage at all times that the building is open to the public. This should be done in a way that is not distracting to the audience. Attendants should

ensure that only authorized persons are allowed backstage. Authorized persons are those with work assignments backstage, program participants, and the parents of program participants who are minors. No one should be allowed on, in front of, or behind the stage in order to take pictures or video at any time during the program. The attendants should also make sure that no one blocks the view of any section of the audience while taking pictures or video.

BAPTISM

23. The chairman will ask the audience to remain standing until all baptism candidates have left the auditorium. Attendants should then *lead* the candidates out of the auditorium and direct them to the dressing rooms. During the baptism, attendants should care for crowd control around the pool.

WELCOMING THE MEDIA

24. We welcome positive media coverage. (Matt. 5:16; 1 Pet. 2:12) If members of the media arrive at the convention, attendants should approach them with a desire to help. Welcome them, and ask if they have an appointment with the convention spokesman. Send their names, the name of the news outlet, and your location to the attendant overseer. Remain with them, and request that they wait for the spokesman to arrive before filming or recording. While waiting for the spokesman to arrive, refrain from giving a personal interview or answering questions. (Prov. 17:27) Rather, ask the media representatives to wait for the spokesman. If a reporter is asked to leave the venue, stay alert and inform the attendant overseer if he returns. Conduct yourself at all times in a dignified way that will give a good witness.

DEALING WITH DISRUPTIVE INDIVIDUALS

25. Attendants should be alert to individuals trying to enter the premises with ulterior motives. If there is a cause for concern, two attendants should first approach the person and greet him, which may lead to his motives becoming clear. In some cases, it may be necessary to monitor the individual's activity. If apostates are demonstrating outside the facility, attendees should be encouraged not to interact with them. If an individual who is known as someone who has been aggressive or disruptive at an event in the past arrives at the facility, the attendant overseer or his assistant should be informed.

26. It is best to ignore trivial or minor disturbances created by individuals. If an individual is agitated, an effort should be made to calm him. If he is willing to talk, at least two attendants should attempt to speak with him outside of the auditorium and away from others. They should try to ascertain if there is any assistance that can be given. If a person begins to act in a disorderly manner, especially if he approaches the stage, the attendants should intervene. If someone persists in being disruptive, he should be asked to leave the premises and the attendant overseer or his assistant should be informed immediately. If the disruptive individual refuses to leave, he should be informed that if he does not leave and continues to distract others, the police will be contacted. Generally, attendants would not use force to remove a disruptive individual from the auditorium.—See [paragraphs 28-29](#) regarding violent individuals.

27. When someone with emotional or mental illness causes a disturbance, listen patiently to his concerns and determine if any assistance can be provided. Does he have family at the convention? Can the family assist? Is an elder whom he trusts available? Does he have a history of violence? Attempt to calm the person down. Empathize with his feelings, but do not condone his behavior. Refrain from arguing. Do not make physical contact with the individual.

VIOLENT INDIVIDUAL/ACTIVE SHOOTER

28. Following the principles of “**Avoid, Deny, Defend**” can assist in quickly responding and in limiting potential injuries. These principles are as follows:

- (1) “Avoid” involves paying attention to your surroundings, having an exit plan, and quickly moving away from an attacker.
- (2) “Deny” should be used when you cannot avoid an attacker. Your goal is to deny the attacker the opportunity to do harm. This could include creating barriers to prevent or slow down a threat, turning off lights, and remaining out of sight and quiet behind blocked doors or large objects.
- (3) “Defend” should be used only when you cannot avoid an attacker or deny him the opportunity to do harm, and when you must protect yourself and others. This may involve striking out in defense.

29. All attendants should respond quickly to help reduce the potential effects of a violent individual. The immediate deployment of law enforcement is required to stop the individual. In this situation, after saying a quick, silent prayer, attendants should do the following:

- (1) Call the police as quickly as possible. In this situation, anyone may call the police. The sooner they arrive, the less harm a violent person can do. Advise the attendant overseer or his assistant that the police have been called.
- (2) Try to prevent the individual from entering the building. This may include immediately locking and barricading both external and internal doors, even if others are still outside. This will protect the largest number of attendees. Alert others to the presence of the individual.
- (3) If the individual enters the building, make use of multiple brothers to subdue him until the police arrive.
 - If those who are being physically attacked are unable to flee, several working together can strike out defensively by using any available object. Of course, any such action would solely be to protect themselves or others from the attacker.
 - The scene and evidence should be left as is for the authorities to investigate.
 - Those serving as attendants are not permitted to carry weapons in preparation for an active shooter.
- (4) Direct attendees to an escape route away from the violence. Before using an exit, ensure that it is safe, such as by looking through wide-angle peepholes or by other means where possible. Encourage all to help others escape and to leave belongings behind. Do not move wounded individuals unless there is an imminent risk to life. Exit in the direction that police are entering or as directed by them, since this is usually the safest route.
- (5) If evacuation is not possible, encourage attendees to hide. If possible, the hiding place should be in a locked room or in some other place out of the violent individual’s view. Endeavor to block the door quietly with large items. Provide protection if shots are fired.
- (6) Remain calm and instruct others to remain calm and quiet. Encourage them to silence their cell phones and other electronic devices.
- (7) Immediately follow the direction of the police. If needed, instruct others to put down any items, keep their hands raised, and avoid quick movements or pointing or screaming.

OTHER DEPARTMENTS

30. Attendants should be familiar with the location of the circuit overseer's office and the assembly overseer's office (at assemblies) or the Chairman's Office and the Convention Committee Office (at conventions). They should also be familiar with the location of various other departments, such as First Aid and Lost & Found and Checkroom. This will enable them to assist when individuals inquire. Persons inquiring about any accounts-related matters should be directed to the assembly overseer's office (at assemblies) or the Convention Committee Office (at conventions).

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