

Public Witnessing Guidelines

Table of Contents

Displaying Literature	5
Safety at Public Witnessing Locations	6
Disruptive Individuals	7
Disfellowshipped Individuals	8
The Media	9

1. Public witnessing facilitates contacting people who might not otherwise have an opportunity to hear the good news. In order for such ones to receive a witness, literature carts, stands, tables, and kiosks are used in areas of high pedestrian traffic. (Prov. 1:20) Emphasis is put on starting Bible studies, directing individuals to jw.org, and following up promptly on interest shown, not just on placing literature.

2. When using a literature cart, stand, table, or kiosk, endeavor to be warm, friendly, and inviting. It is best to stand or sit at an appropriate distance from the cart, not so close that people hesitate to approach the cart, nor so far away that you cannot be identified with it. Although you do not approach people directly, warm smiles and good eye contact are essential. (*th* study 12) If a passerby gives attention to the display, you may take the initiative to start a conversation, perhaps by saying, “Have you ever wondered what the Bible says about that subject?” Avoid nonessential use of electronic devices and excessive conversation with other publishers, since such activities can hinder your effectiveness.

3. When a person wishes to learn more, you may provide your contact information or suggest that he fill out the “Request a Visit” form on jw.org. If the interested person speaks another language, you may refer him to jw.org, where he can find literature or an appropriate congregation in his language. When practical, and in harmony with applicable data protection laws, you may continue to cultivate the interest until contact is established with a publisher who speaks that language.

4. In the interest of personal safety and in view of the voluntary nature of our ministry, contribution boxes should not be set up and you should not personally accept any donations. Some individuals may ask how our work is financed. If this happens, you may explain that voluntary donations can be made using donate.jw.org or by sending the donation to the address shown on our literature.

DISPLAYING LITERATURE

5. Discernment is needed to make sure that literature is not wasted, given away indiscriminately, or misused. The display should be neat and dignified, not cluttered with too many different publications. The issue of the public edition of the *Watchtower* or *Awake!* that is being featured, the *Enjoy Life Forever!* brochure, and/or publications that appeal to people in the local territory are appropriate. While Bibles should not be displayed, they may be kept on hand for individuals who request one or who demonstrate sincere interest in the truth. Additionally, a modest supply of the *Return to Jehovah* brochure should be kept on hand (though not displayed) for the benefit of any inactive ones who may approach the literature display.

SAFETY AT PUBLIC WITNESSING LOCATIONS

6. Usually two people are assigned to work together at each cart. Publishers should remain alert, since conditions in a normally safe area can unexpectedly change. (Prov. 22:3; Eccl. 4:10, 12) In the interest of safety, it is generally best for carts and tables to be placed so that publishers cannot be approached from behind. For example, some locations may allow for publishers to stand with their backs against a wall, or literature carts could be placed back-to-back, allowing publishers to face opposite directions. Publishers witnessing nearby should be alert to monitor activity in the area. If possible, carts and tables near vehicle traffic should be placed behind concrete barriers or other protection. Please note that if the police ask publishers to leave an area, the publishers should do so and then inform one of the elders.

DISRUPTIVE INDIVIDUALS

7. Rather than debating with disruptive individuals, remain calm and friendly while endeavoring to conclude the conversation kindly. If the individual persists in causing a disturbance or becomes irate, it may be best to leave the area. If the individual becomes threatening, it may be necessary to leave the public witnessing equipment behind temporarily. Help from the local authorities may be requested in extreme situations.

DISFELLOWSHIPED INDIVIDUALS

8. If you encounter a disfellowshipped individual who is interested in returning to the congregation, you can show him the “Find a Meeting” page on jw.org so that he can locate the nearest congregation.

THE MEDIA

9. In general, you should not accept a request from a media representative for a personal interview. Instead, media representatives may be directed to the “News” or “About Us” sections of jw.org for information about the work of Jehovah’s Witnesses. If a media representative persists in his request, you can invite him to provide his contact information and a brief explanation of his inquiry in harmony with applicable data protection laws. Afterward, promptly inform one of the elders of the media representative’s request.