

Achieving the Savior's Vision of Home Teaching

In the Seneca Maryland Stake

In the Savior's vision, home teaching is the means through which holders of His priesthood, by building and nurturing relationships of trust, *minister* effectively to all members of His Church, by:

- lovingly “watch[ing] over” them, “be[ing] with and strengthen[ing] them,” helping them “do their duty” (D&C 20:53-55), “nourishing [them] by the good word of God” (Moroni 6:4),
- and thus diligently working to “keep them in the right way” (Moroni 6:4) through each of the challenges they face in returning to their Father in Heaven's presence.

Full achievement of this vision requires that Melchizedek Priesthood leaders do three main things:

1. *Improve the assignment process:*

- Seek and obtain inspiration for every assignment—focusing first on members who need home teachers the most. (*Handbook 2* (“H2”) 7.4.2)
- Consistent with the injunction to “visit the house of *each* member” (D&C 20:51), ensure that every household has an assigned home teacher, and remind them of that injunction as needed.
- Consistent with inspiration, strive for efficiency by:
 - looking to reduce unnecessary travel and duplication – e.g., by considering geography and assigning a single home teacher to all households in a home (H2 7.4.2);
 - using husband-wife companionships where appropriate (H2 7.4.2);
 - assigning members who are difficult to find or reach to “search and rescue” teams, who will deliver a monthly spiritual message in the most meaningful manner the member will allow—if nothing else by leaving a written message at the member's door.
- Ensure that all willing Aaronic Priesthood holders are assigned to companions who will help them have excellent home teaching experiences. H2 7.4.2.
- Convey to home teachers that their assignments are the result of inspiration.

2. *Improve training and accountability:*

- Hold regular (at least quarterly) in-person meetings (PPIs) with home teachers to discuss their assigned families' spiritual and temporal welfare and to plan help. H2 7.4.4.
 - Make these meetings as convenient as possible—for example, by scheduling them around (but not during) church meetings.
 - In other months, conduct these discussions and receive detailed reports by phone or email—again, focusing on members' needs and how to meet them. H2 7.4.4.
- In PPIs and quorum meetings, inspire & train home teachers on the importance of home teaching, how to be effective ministers, and how to handle common challenges. H2 7.4.
 - Emphasize the importance of urging personal and family prayer. D&C 20:51.
- Encourage members to invite their home teachers for a visit if none has been scheduled.
- Using the LDS.org system, provide monthly, written home teaching reports to the bishop (with a copy to the stake presidency), including a list of those not contacted. H2 7.4.4.
- Report PPIs monthly to the quorum president or group leader, who will in turn report them to the bishop and stake presidency.

3. *Rely more heavily on the Savior's power:*

- Encourage home teachers consistently to pray for inspiration in fulfilling assignments.
- Offer priesthood blessings to home teachers who feel a need for additional inspiration or power.
- Consider inviting other quorum members to join in prayers or fasting for special needs.