

CONFERENCE SECRETARY Philosophy

It is appropriate that the Seventh-day Adventist church which believes in a God of order should have in its administrative structure the secretariat which is mandated to supervise the areas of administrative functions that have direct impact on policy, record keeping and personnel. It was Moses who was directed by Divine instruction to pattern heavenly example (Ex. 25:8,9: Heb. 9:24). It was Ellen White who was given a vision of the heavenly ranks marching in order and was admonished to call the church's attention to God's love or organization.

The Godhead is perfect in all that it does whether in deed, purpose or organization. We are to follow the instruction of Paul to "reach toward the mark." Thus the addition of the secretary to our conference structure is a move in the right direction; and has strengthened the conference administration's ability to manage the varying tasks expected.

The officers of the conference are: President, Secretary and Treasurer. In many local conferences/missions the office of Secretary and Treasurer are one. The office of Secretary began to enlarge as one separate function as it became increasingly evident that the administrative functions of the Secretary were increasing.

The general term "secretary" for the office under discussion is descriptive but not always clear. The term does highlight the record keeping implementation role that is a part of the role of the conference Secretary. The term does not adequately address some of the other duties increasingly associated with the office that are more vice presidential.

The Holy Scriptures are themselves an indication of God's plan to keep the record. Throughout Holy Writ there is the mention of human functionaries who were the record keepers of the ancient people of God--priests, scribes and recorders. More importantly, the New Testament enjoins the people of God "that all things should be done decently and in order." 1 Cor. 14:14.

The genius of the office of Secretary relationally lies in the fact that as an elected person, the Secretary is technically an equal with the President and Treasurer and thus has direct access to the office personnel and to the field. But realistically the Secretary of the conference must understand the President as chief executive officer. Some constitutions clarify this in the field where the Secretary functions, others do not. In those areas where the job description with reference to minutes, statistics, and retirements are constitutionally mandated, the Secretary carries out his/her assignment, but must always do so with a consciousness as to his/her part in the whole and with a purpose to strengthen the hands of his/her fellow officers by keeping them informed.

In some fields where there is a vice president for administration, the role of the Secretary is more defined and should be addressed accordingly.

CONFERENCE SECRETARY Job Description

REPORTS TO: President and Executive Committee

Job Responsibility:

The work of the conference secretary is closely allied to that of the other conference officers. The conference officers should agree upon the division of specific responsibilities, thus the job description for the secretary may vary, as time passes, depending upon the preferences and talents of the conference officers.

The conference secretary should have a rich background of experience, and be one who has served on conference committees over a period of time. The conference secretary must be an individual who has the ability to see a program through and be willing to accept responsibility.

The individual chosen as conference secretary must be efficient in detail work and a self-starter, yet one who is cooperative and has abilities in leadership.

The conference secretary is very closely associated with the conference president, and may be assigned special tasks of virtually any and every kind by the president. His/her work is similar to the vice president status, so any of the president's portfolio may be assigned to him. He/she is the second officer in rank. Following are the basic job responsibilities for the conference secretary:

1. Prepares in counsel with the president and treasurer the agenda for the conference executive committee, and mails out notices to committee members giving the time and place of the meeting. Mail out early enough for ample notice.
2. Prepares calendar of events in counsel with the president and treasurer.
3. Processes all calls for workers.
4. Processes all calls.
5. Responsible for issuance of all credentials and licenses. Keeps updated list.
6. Responsible for preparing and assembling all materials and information for conference directory which is published annually.
7. Prepares, in counsel with other officers, job descriptions of all workers and keeps them updated.
8. Prepares and distributes statistical reports on conference membership and baptisms and mission and Sabbath School offerings.
9. Prepares agenda for Administrator's Council, Officers' Meetings, and Staff Meetings. Keeps and distributes minutes for same.
10. Maintains permanent updated service records of all employees.
11. Responsible for gathering and assembling materials for Yearbook.
12. Prepares the Employee Manual and updates and disseminates all policies. Sees that each new worker receives copy of Employee Manual and that changes in policy are sent promptly.

13. Works closely with and assists the associate conference secretaries.
14. Serves as liaison for retirees. Keeps record of retirees addresses.
15. Processes retirement applications.
16. Reports death of retirees to the North American Division.
17. Reports change of status of retirees to the North American Division.
18. Accepts speaking appointments in the field as requested and needed.
19. Generally is in charge of preparation and smooth running of convocations and councils unless president handles this.
20. Serves as secretary of Conference Executive Committee, Conference Session, Conference Staff Meetings, Officer Meetings, etc. In general, sees that minutes are kept for all such meetings for permanent record. Mails minutes promptly to all members of group involved.
21. Processes ministerial internship/scholarship applications and keep records on same according to denomination policy. Keeps list updated at all times and distributes to local conferences regularly.
22. Prepares quarterly and annual statistical reports of membership, mails same to union and distribute to conference officers.
23. Prepares and distributes office worship assignments.
24. Keeps constitution and bylaws of conference and association and other conference corporations; sends copies to proper people; keeps updated file of constitution and bylaws for conference associations and institutions. Keeps current constitutions and bylaws on file for all other conference corporations.
25. Handles official notice for conference session or special constituency meetings. Mails out letter with information regarding selection of delegations, time and place of meetings, etc. Mails agenda, conference and association constitution and bylaws, information on sub-committees, staff and executive committees and association boards and other pertinent material a month ahead of time to all delegates. Prepares minutes immediately following session and updates constitution and bylaws for both conference and association and sends copies to the union.
26. Coordinates Departmental Council unless president chooses to do this.
27. Keeps on file the minutes of the Executive Committee for conference.
28. May attend the Annual Council by invitation of the North American Division.
29. Attends conference Executive Committees.
30. Assists fields as requested by president.
31. Gives special guidance, assistance, and input to conference departments or organizations as assigned.
32. May chair conciliation panels.
33. May chair conference Divorce and Re-Marriage Committee.