

# FOUNTAINGATE CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY

## SHORT-TERM MISSION'S POLICY

We at Fountaingate Christian Assembly desire to be involved in the spreading of the gospel. In doing so, we recognize that no single-focussed ministry can accomplish that goal. We also recognize that God has gifted his people in a variety of ways to accomplish His great commission.

Short term missions happen to be one of those ways that we wish to be involved into. We desire to cross a variety of cultures in such a way that our efforts become a blessing both to the recipient as well as to those who serve.

### **Guidelines:**

1. We will consider only sending out missionaries who have the support of their families and especially their spouses.
2. We will only become involved in financially supporting one short-mission's trip in any given year.
3. Since we are not equipped to take on the major task of training/goal setting and actually being on location, we will only become involved with ministries who are presently approved for missions' support with FCA.
4. Every effort must be made to be a blessing and to not create any hardship to those who will be served (ie. Cost of food; transportation etc.).
5. All money that is raised is to be done through our church's financial system with any receipts given in accordance with the Federal government's legislation. A financial budget should be set as a guideline to carefully follow.
6. Correspondence (i.e., emails) will be expected where possible while the missionary is away to keep the church updated and to help guide the needed prayer support.
7. A prayer team will be developed from FCA before, during and even for a short time after the trip to ensure that the proper spiritual covering is in place.
8. Transportation costs will be carefully evaluated in order to get the most reasonable way of getting to and from the location served.
9. All fund raising that takes place must be approved by the eldership of FCA.
10. At no time will our missionaries be sent into dangerous or volatile situations.
11. Proper insurance must be taken out to adequately cover the costs of sickness, injury or even death.
12. Evaluation/debriefing will be expected with the pastor/elder(s) upon the return and a 10-15 minute update given to the church on a Sunday morning.
13. Suggested reading: *"Before You Pack Your Bag, Prepare Your Heart"* - Cindy Judge  
*"Essential Guide to STM trip"* - David Forward  
*"What to Know Before You Go,"* a handbook for ST missionaries

# Code of Best Practice in Member Care

*“a benchmark document toward excellence”*

Evangelical Fellowship of Canada  
Global Mission Roundtable, 2001

The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada Code of Best Practice in Member Care is designed as a benchmark document to guide the policies and practice of organizations regarding the care and development of cross-cultural Christian workers. Although it is written for Canadian organizations, others in the international community may find it useful. However, it must be recognized that basic resources for support may not exist or be available in many situations.

The Code does not necessarily reflect current practice but encourages aspirations toward excellence. It is not intended to establish legal standards or liability. Rather the motivation for the development of this code rests on the theological foundation of godly stewardship of people who are made in the image of God. Appropriate member care is a tangible reflection of Jesus' command that His disciples love one another and witness to the world that they belong to Him.

The Code was derived consensually by mission and church representatives across Canada. Discussions at a March 2000 Member Care Roundtable in Toronto, Ontario, provided the material for the initial draft which was written by Dr. Irving Whitt and Bob Morris. This Roundtable was jointly sponsored by Missionary Health Institute, MissionPrep, The Intercultural Ministries (TIM) Centre Tyndale, and the Task Force for Global Mission of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada. Suggestions for revision of the document were made by participants at a subsequent Roundtable in Langley, British Columbia, sponsored by the ACTS Intercultural Ministry (AIM) Centre at Trinity Western University and the Task Force for Global Mission, EFC. The Code in its present form was written by Dr. Laurel McAllister (AIM Centre) in consultation with members of the sponsoring organizations.

## **Core values underlying the Code include the following:**

- A commitment to dependence on God for wisdom, power, and love in all aspects of member care.
- A commitment to the total well-being of cross-cultural workers—helping them minister effectively, while recognizing the possible hazards, stresses, and sacrifice inherent in cross-cultural life and ministry.
- A commitment to the biblical ideal of the Body of Christ working together, through the church, mission organizations, and other partnerships.
- A commitment to the appropriate utilization of all available resources.
- A commitment to encourage organizations to practice care of their members with consistency, excellence, and high standards of ethical, spiritual, and moral responsibility.

## **Some of the main terminology in the code includes:**

- **Principle:** a broad statement of purpose.
- **Key Indicator:** an observable and measurable outcome related to a principle.
- **Member:** a cross-cultural Christian worker—missionary, tentmaker or otherwise.

## **Section 1: Organizational Policy and Practice**

**Principle 1. Member care policies for all members—at home, abroad, or in transition—are effective, efficient, agreed-upon, and transparent.**

### **Key indicators**

- Leaders throughout the organization effectively model member care.
- Human resources staff, both at home and abroad, are recruited in part for their people management skills and are adequately trained to provide member care.
- The organization monitors how well member care policies achieve their objectives.
- Members have clear work objectives and performance standards, know to whom they report, and what support is provided by the organization.
- Benefits, such as adequate health care (physical and mental), and pension plans, are provided and reviewed regularly.

**Principle 2. Members participate in the development of member care policies.**

### **Key indicators**

- Meetings of the organization's Human Resource Department (or equivalent) are regularly scheduled.
- Policy information is distributed routinely to members, and feedback is encouraged.
- Regular reassessment of existing policies and practices is initiated and encouraged by the organization and its membership.
- Mutual accountability between organization and membership is encouraged and practised.

**Principle 3. Agreed-upon personal and organizational beliefs and conduct are essential to effective member care.**

### **Key indicators**

- The organization has clearly-stated policies concerning acceptable personal and organizational belief and conduct.
- A means of communicating these policies is in place and is utilized.
- The policies are consistently applied.
- Ramifications of particular unacceptable behaviours are specified.
- The ability to accept differences in non-essentials is articulated and is in evidence.

**Principle 4. The organization is committed to developing an ethos of member care that enhances kingdom ministry.**

**Key indicators**

- Member well-being—whether spiritual, physical, emotional, mental, moral, or social—is visibly identifiable.
- Core values for member care are in writing and available to everyone.
- An identifiable infrastructure exists for explicit care.
- Sufficient financial and human resources are allocated for the care of the members.
- Transparency, within the context of confidentiality and trust, is encouraged as part of the organizational culture of care.
- Issues necessary to move the organization toward a culture of care have been identified.

## **Section 2: Selection, Training, and Career Care**

**Principle 5. Candidate selection is fair, thorough, and takes into consideration the anticipated role(s) of both women and men.**

**Key Indicators**

- The organization designs and conducts a thorough, objective candidate selection process, utilizing the best available resources.
- Issues relating to singleness, as well as to marriage and the family, are discussed.
- The selection process includes physical and mental health screening where possible.
- The process is clearly written, is provided to candidates at the outset, and is periodically reviewed with them.
- The process is undertaken in cooperation with the candidate's sending church(es).
- Decisions throughout the selection process evidence a clear sense of God's leading to all concerned.

**Principle 6. Assignments reflect the member's expertise, gifting, developmental stage, strengths and limitations as much as is possible—while recognizing the need for, and God's call to, workers in settings with limited resources and uncertain consequences.**

**Key indicators**

- Members are given as much information as possible regarding ministry situations so that they can give "informed consent" to the assignment from the outset.
- In the case of married couples, assignments reflect consideration of the gifts and skills of both wife and husband.
- Assessment tools, including effectiveness evaluations and development reviews, are implemented.
- Team building exercises are carried out as possible and applicable.
- Training and mentoring are provided for assignments requiring additional expertise.

**Principle 7. Appropriate training and professional support for members are integral to effective member care.**

**Key indicators**

- The organization provides appropriate intercultural and language training before and during field assignments.
- The organization provides opportunity for professional support, such as participation in professional conferences, professional refreshment, membership in professional societies, and opportunity for job specific training and further studies as appropriate.
- The development of qualified leaders within the organization is valued and provided for.

**Principle 8. Realistic work expectations, personal renewal, and endurance strategies are articulated and provided.**

**Key indicators**

- Job descriptions are in place and subject to annual review.
- Discussion of strategies for long-term effectiveness are scheduled on a regular basis.
- Resources and accountability partners are found in national churches and within the host community when possible.
- The specific needs of both single and married members are appropriately considered.
- Members take an appropriate amount of time for home service (furlough) on a scheduled basis.

**Principle 9. Organizational responsibilities extend beyond field service to home ministry (furlough), re-entry, retirement, and to re-deployment where necessary.**

**Key indicators**

- Debriefing, including physical, psychological, ministry, and pastoral concerns, is required and provided.
- Rest, renewal, and opportunity for personal and ministry assessment are considered an essential part of home service (furlough).
- Members minister in supporting church fellowships in ways that are mutually enriching.
- Transition opportunities/seminars, which include cultural issues and issues related to redeployment, re-entry and retirement, are provided.
- Resources (human and financial) are allocated for follow-up care during re-entry or redeployment.

## **Section 3: Community Life**

**Principle 10. Healthy Christian communities enhance personal growth and development as well as ministry effectiveness.**

### **Key indicators**

- Responsibility for self-care, in community, is modelled and encouraged by leadership.
- Mutual care is planned for, clearly defined, and its importance communicated.
- The unique needs of single members are considered and provided for.
- Members develop reciprocal relationships with a variety of people in the host community.
- Periodic personal, team, and organizational assessments are required.

**Principle 11. Responsibility for member care is personal, mutual, and organizational.**

### **Key indicators**

- Trained caregivers are identified and made available to members when needed.
- Opportunity is given for member interaction and mutual caring.
- Persons responsible for each sphere of organizational care have been identified.
- Members are deemed responsible for taking an active role in managing their own care.

## **Section 4: Family and Missionary Children (MKs) Care**

**Principle 12. The effectiveness of the Christian worker is related to the holistic care of the family, appropriate and proportionate to the stages of life.**

### **Key indicators**

- There is provision for re-assignment of primary homemakers as children grow through different phases of life.
- Opportunities for marital enrichment and couple retreats are provided and encouraged—both on the field and during home service (furlough).
- Financial provision and counsel are made available for families in transition, including resignation or retirement.
- The organization makes provision for follow-up care for member families at re-entry, and beyond for MKs.
- Professional, personal, and spiritual assessment is provided for all members of the family.
- Care for the family may include extended family members.

## **Section 5: Relationships with Churches**

**Principle 13. The local sending church is included in the continuum of care.**

### **Key indicators**

- There is evidence of shared trust among the local sending church, the organization, and the member.
- Communication is evidenced between the local church and the organization at every stage of a member's life.
- The organization partners with the local church in a member's preparation for initial ministry assignment, re-entry, re-deployment, and retirement.
- Such partnerships exhibit realistic expectations and mutual benefit.
- Training of members is shared by organization and local church where possible and mutually beneficial.

## **Section 6: Crisis/Contingency Care**

**Principle 14. Cross-cultural life and work can be uniquely stressful for individuals and families. Therefore, procedures are in place and resources provided to help members in a variety of contingencies.**

### **Key indicators**

- Members agree on what constitutes a crisis\*.
- Policies governing the handling of the crisis are written and communicated to all members.
- Policies, existing to cover a variety of contingencies, have explicit information for each contingency.
- Policies exhibit flexibility and sensitivity.
- Necessary care, such as post traumatic stress care and counselling, is available\*\*.

### **Suggested definition of crisis:**

\* A situation which creates, or has the potential of creating, trauma for the individual or family and which needs immediate attention on the part of leadership. e.g., field issues; contingency-related issues such as disasters, political kidnapping, death, accidents; personal and family issues (including raising teens); moral issues; major medical needs; deep depression, anxiety, contemplation of suicide, etc.

\*\* The reality of spiritual darkness and the conflict inherent in Christian ministry contexts affect workers in complex and often traumatic ways. Crises may be related to spiritual battles that workers are involved in. Caregivers need to be aware of this dimension and how to deal with it.

**Principle 15. Procedures and resources are in place to discover and deal with issues of moral lapse. A disciplinary process is defined and a process of restoration spelled out.**

**Key indicators**

- Preventative issues and strategies are addressed in pre-field training.
- Confidentiality is respected and balanced with accountability to the organization, sending church, supporters, and other members.
- Confidentiality and all related issues are clearly defined and made known to all parties involved.
- Movement toward restoration is made whenever possible.

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The EFC Code of Best Practice in Short-Term Mission is designed to apply to all visits, experiences, teams and placements of up to two years duration, organized by Canadian mission agencies, churches and other organizations. Though formed initially with cross-cultural contexts in mind, it can apply to both same-culture and cross-cultural situation, in Canada and overseas.

It is a Code of Best Practice. Our motivation is based on our desire that God be glorified in all that we do. We also recognize our responsibility toward all participants and partners in our programs, that we serve them to the highest standards possible. The Code does not necessarily indicate current achievement, but rather our aspirations toward high standards in short-term mission practice. Nonetheless some minimum accomplishments are implied in the Code. The Code is not intended to establish legal standards or liability. Adopting the Code should therefore be seen as a step in a process rather than an end in itself.

It is recognized that not every situation permits a literal application of every element of the Code. For example, a sending local church involvement on rare occasions is not always a reality. Nevertheless it is desirable, and so must be included in a Code of Best Practice. In every case where literal application is impossible, consideration must be given to the question of who may have equivalent responsibilities.

In addition, this Code has some underlying core values, which include:

1. A commitment to culturally appropriate expressions of lifestyle and ministry activities.
2. A commitment to all the stakeholders in short-term missions, the participants, sending locally church, mission agency, and host church and/or ministry.
3. A commitment to partnership and co-operation.
4. A commitment, wherever possible, to communicate as early and as fully as possible.

## **Section 1: Aims and Objectives**

1.1 - A Short-Term Mission program will have a defined purpose within Christian missions.

1.2 - A Short-Term Mission program will have clear and realistic aims and objectives, which include viability, expectations of outcomes, and consideration of how the program serves the long-term objectives of all those involved.

1.3 - The benefits to, and responsibilities of, the participant, the sending organization, the sending local church, the host organization and the host local church will be clearly defined and communicated.

1.4 - Partnerships will be established, as far as possible, with host local churches and communities. These relationships, in the context of unity love, will be defined in terms of agreed-upon priorities, ownership, and expectations.

1.5 - Appropriate sending local church involvement will be sought. A partnership will be developed, as far as is feasible, between the agency, participant and sending local church.

1.6 - There will be a commitment to the participant to provide opportunities for personal and spiritual development throughout the experience.

## **Section 2: Publicity, Selection and Orientation**

### **Publicity**

2.1 - Publicity materials will be accurate, truthful and used with integrity.

2.2 - Publicity will clearly represent the ethos and vision of the sending organization. It will not reflect negatively on the host culture or ministry. It will also define the purpose of the program in the terms of service, discipleship and vocation.

### **Selection**

2.3 - The application process, including a time line, all financial obligations and use of funds, will be clear and thorough.

2.4 - A suitable selection process will be established, including selection criteria and screening. A pastoral care element will be included, regardless of whether or not the individual is accepted as a short-term participant.

2.5 - It is essential that there is disclosure of the relevant details concerning the short-term participant between the church, agency and field.

## **Orientation**

2.6 - Appropriate orientation and training will be given prior to departure, and/or after arrival on the field. Team leaders will be briefed on the orientation and training provided.

2.7 - Preparatory information will be provided as early and as fully as possible.

2.8 - Placement decisions and changes will be made with integrity and communicated clearly to all involved.

## **Section 3: Field Management and Pastoral Care**

3.1 - Clear task aims, objectives, and job descriptions will be developed jointly by the sending and hosting leadership.

3.2 - Home and field-based communication and reporting guidelines will be identified, implemented and reviewed.

3.3 - Mutually defined lines of authority, supervision, communication, responsibility and accountability will be established and implemented through regular reporting and/or meetings.

3.4 - Pastoral Care and support structures will be provided, and respective responsibilities clarified with all parties.

3.5 - Opportunities for spiritual, personal, and character development will be provided, promoted and pursued.

3.6 - Participants will agree to follow guidelines on behaviour, relationships and financial management that are appropriate to the host culture.

3.7 - Policies and procedures covering finances, healthcare and insurance, medical contingencies, security and evacuation, acts of terrorism or political violence, stress management and conflict resolution, misconduct, discipline, and grievances, will be established, communicated and implemented as is appropriate.

3.8 - Where and when requested, necessary equipping and training of hosts will be provided.

## Section 4: Re-entry support, evaluation and program development

4.1 - Re-entry debriefing and support will be seen as an integral part of the short-term package.

4.2 - Re-entry preparation, including field evaluation, will begin prior to return.

4.3 - The mission agency and sending local church will assist the participant through re-entry, including facing unresolved personal issues, and future opportunities and direction in discipleship and service.

4.4 - Evaluation of the mission agencies procedures and performance will be filled out by the participant. (The agencies' procedures will also be evaluated by local sending churches).

4.5 - On the request of the host organization, an assessment of the host organization will be carried out in an appropriate way by the participant.

4.6 - The results of evaluations will be communicated to relevant leadership, for the improvement of future projects and the keeping of permanent records. Confidentiality, integrity and accuracy are required.



*“The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.*

*Matthew 9:37,38*