

TO BE A SENIOR MISSIONARY...

(Information collected and collated on March 24, 2021. Changes can and will occur hereafter)

Some of the Full-Time Missionary Opportunities to serve are:

Church Educational System

Church Headquarter Mission

Church History

Construction, Property and Building Maintenance

Family History

Farm and Ranch Support

Health Care Professionals

Historic Sites

Legal Support

Member and Leader Support

Military Relations

Mission and Area Offices

Public Affairs

Records Preservation

Self-Reliance

Seminaries and Institutes

Storehouses and Canneries

Temple

Visitors' Centers

Worldwide Humanitarian

Young Single adult Program

The following information was accessed and collated from the following link and site:

<https://seniormissionary.churchofjesuschrist.org/srsite/ft/about?lang=eng>

As of March 24, 2021. Be aware that changes can and will occur thereafter.

The following information relates to missionaries. These missionaries typically serve 40 or more hours per week and usually live away from home. [Service missionaries](#) serve 8-40 hours per week and generally live at home.

General

Preparation

Your whole life has prepared you to serve the Lord and His children. Your love for the people and your “desire” to serve “qualify [you] for the work.”

To prepare spiritually to serve the Lord, study the scriptures and Preach My Gospel. Doing so will help you understand your purpose as a missionary and increase your faith that the Lord will help you as you serve Him.

To prepare physically and temporally, review your financial responsibilities and determine how much money you have available for a mission. Prepare your home and/or business for your absence. Get physical exercise on a daily basis.

Many assignments require computer skills. If necessary, you may want to develop or improve your skills with web browsers and the Microsoft Office suite of software (Word, Excel, and Outlook in particular).

Senior missionaries are not required to learn a foreign language, but if you would like to serve in a mission that speaks a different language, work on learning the language or refresh your ability to speak the language. However, language ability does not guarantee an assignment in that language.

Expectations

As a senior missionary, you are encouraged to devote all your time and attention to serving the Lord. Though assignments vary, it is important to remember to use your time effectively. For those working in an office or temple assignment, evenings and weekends are great times to visit new members, inactive members, or part-member families. In addition to your primary assignment, your mission leader (mission president/temple president/historical site president/Area President) may ask you to assist in other capacities.

Sharing the Gospel

As a senior missionary, you are not expected to engage in all the same types of teaching activities as younger missionaries. Some assignments include opportunities to share the gospel, reactivate and rescue less-active members, help retain new converts, strengthen young single adults, and support local leaders in stakes, wards, branches, and districts.

Regardless of your assignment, however, you will have opportunities to interact with members and non-members. The Spirit will prompt you to know how best to share your testimony of Jesus Christ with others. The most memorable recollections of your mission experience will be when you testify to others about the restored gospel of Jesus Christ.

Schedule

You will not be expected to maintain the same rigorous schedule and pace as young missionaries. You will have more flexibility in your daily goals and schedule, which may include opportunities for rest.

Some assignments, such as mission offices, visitors' centers, and temples, will require you to adhere to a daily schedule. In some other assignments, such as member and leader support, military relations, and Self-Reliance Services, you will establish your own schedule, which may vary from day to day.

You are encouraged to include in your daily routine time for personal and companionship study, as well as for exercise and rest if needed.

Your assignments will allow you to arrange your own preparation time according to your assignment and personal needs.

Skills

Your life, work, family, and Church experience have provided you with the skills you need. In addition, the MTC and in-field experience will provide you with additional training. You will also receive training specific to your assignment.

Requirements

Age

You may be recommended to serve as a missionary beginning at the age of 40 if you have no dependent children under the age of 18 living in your home. There is not an upper age limit for senior missionary service as long as you are physically able to meet the needs of the assignment.

Employment

Missionary service requires full dedication to the service of the Lord and His Church. If you still need to work during your service, you should consider a [service missionary assignment](#).

Health

Sufficient physical, mental, and emotional health are required to serve a mission, and some assignments and locations have more stringent health requirements than others. See your local priesthood leader if you have questions about your specific circumstances. See Medical Considerations for information on certain conditions.

Worthiness

As a missionary, you should have received your temple endowment and hold a current temple recommend.

Availability

You should be available to work at least 32 hours per week. Most assignments require 40 or more hours per week.

Companions

Senior missionaries are generally expected to be with their companion throughout the day. Some senior sister assignments do not require a companion.

Some mission tasks (depending on assignment) may separate companions for brief periods of the day. You should never be separated at night. Be aware that you have a responsibility to protect your companion from physical or spiritual danger.

Terms of Service

Length of Service

Couples: You may request to serve for 6, 12, 18, or 23 months.

Senior sisters: You may serve for 12, 18, or 23 months.

If you choose to serve fewer than 18 months and are assigned to a foreign mission, you will be responsible for your own travel costs to and from the mission.

Extending Service

You may extend your mission to 23 months with the approval of your in-field ecclesiastical leader (mission president/temple president/historical site president/Area President).

Dress and Grooming

Dress and grooming guidelines for seniors are similar but not identical to those for younger missionaries. For instance, senior sisters may color their hair with natural hair colors and there is no minimum hair length for senior elders. Please visit the [missionary dress and grooming page](#) for more information.

Due to different cultures or climates, clothing guidelines vary by mission. In certain assignments, you will wear approved work clothing. An assignment-specific clothing list will be provided in your call packet.

Missionaries should be clean shaven. Any medically-related requests for an exception should be discussed with your stake president.

Recommendation Process

General

Time to Complete Recommendation Forms

There are three ways to start the recommendation form: 1) You can do it yourself from this site, 2) you can ask your Bishop to initiate it, or 3) you can meet with your Bishop first and then either he or you can initiate the form. In all cases your Bishop will be notified so he can schedule an interview with you. Once you have completed filling out your portion of the recommendation, submit it to your bishop, including the medical and dental exams (not required for service while living at home), for his review. He will then submit the recommendation to your stake president.

Your stake will contact you to set up an interview. Following the bishop and stake president interviews, your stake president will submit your Missionary Online Recommendation electronically to Church headquarters for processing. Outside of the U.S. and Canada, your stake president will submit the recommendation to the Area Office for review before it is sent to headquarters.

From the time headquarters receives your missionary recommendation, it usually takes about three weeks for your call to be issued.

Availability Dates

You may submit your recommendation forms up to nine months before your availability date. It is recommended that you submit as soon as you are able to within the nine-month window. For those who

receive a foreign missionary assignment, it can take more than five months to obtain a visa. Thus, applying early could help ensure you are able to travel closer to your availability date.

Assignment Preferences

While your preferences are carefully considered by the Brethren and assignments may be made accordingly, please be willing to serve wherever you are assigned. Your call to serve will come from the President of the Church, and your assignment will be made by inspiration by a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

Serving Multiple Missions

There is not a required waiting period between missionary experiences. You may submit recommendation forms for your next missionary assignment within nine months of your availability date, even if you are serving as a missionary at that time.

If you would like to serve multiple missionary assignments, you may want to consult with your tax advisor to determine the tax implications of being away from home for more than 23 months

Factors Affecting Assignment

All missionary assignments are made by revelation by a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, under the direction of the President of the Church. To help them determine the best assignment for you, they will take into account the following factors:

1. Needs of the Church
2. Your desires and preferences
3. Length of time you are available
4. Date of availability
5. Personal health needs
6. Finances available to support yourself while serving
7. Background and experience (work and church)
8. Language skills
9. Technical and computer/office skills

Medical Considerations

Specific Medical Concerns

Here are restrictions and guidelines for common conditions:

Diabetes: The accepted value for diabetes (A1C) is 9.0 or below.

Prostate: A PSA value of 5.0 or greater may require additional medical review before an assignment can be made.

Blood Pressure: Maximum blood pressure reading of 140 over 90 is acceptable if controlled with medication.

For conditions not covered here, please have your stake president contact the Senior Missionary Medical Coordinator at 1-801-240-0322 to discuss your specific medical needs.

Optional Tests

Depending on your insurance and the recommendations of your physician, you may consider having the following tests.

Colonoscopy: Senior missionaries are not required to receive a colonoscopy screening before missionary service. However, you should receive this screening if your doctor recommends it.

Mammogram: Though recommended for sisters, mammograms are not mandatory.

Cardiac Stress Test: You are not required to have a cardiac stress test. However, it is recommended if you have three or more of the following risk factors:

- 50 years of age or older
- Hypertension
- High cholesterol
- Diabetes, obesity, or metabolic syndrome
- Family history of heart disease
- History of chest pain

TB Test

You are required to be tested for tuberculosis exposure.

Immunizations

You are strongly encouraged to obtain immunizations to protect yourself and others from becoming infected by or becoming a carrier of disease. If you decline immunizations, you will be assigned to an assignment in your home country.

The following immunizations are normally required:

- Hepatitis A & B—Because it takes six months to complete this immunization series, you should begin this series as soon as you decide to serve a mission.
- Tetanus
- MMR (Measles, Mumps & Rubella) —This immunization is required if you were born after 1956.

Other immunizations may be required depending on the country where you are called to serve. These may include typhoid, yellow fever, and Japanese encephalitis. Some immunizations may be costly.

Planned Procedures

All major surgical procedures should be completed before your stake president submits your missionary recommendation form. For recent major surgical procedures, ask your physician to provide you a letter of clarification stating the medical concern, the treatment, and if there are any restrictions. This letter helps the missionary medical committee make recommendations to the Brethren regarding your health care needs. For questions about whether this applies to you, please have your stake president contact the Missionary Department at 801-240-0322.

Additional Information to Submit

Please give to your stake president any record, letter, or other document that explains a particular medical condition or treatment that is not listed in the Personal Health History section or Physician's Evaluation section of your missionary recommendation forms. He will scan these documents and attach them to your Missionary Online Recommend before submitting them to Church headquarters. Typical examples include:

- Physician's clarification after surgery or other major medical procedure

- Explanation of abnormal findings that are being monitored/treated
- Rare or unusual diagnoses or conditions needing specialized treatment

Prescription Medications

If you need to take prescription medication on your mission, work with your doctor and your insurance provider to bring a 90-day supply to get you started. Please contact Missionary Medical at 801-578-5650 to arrange for your care in the field.

If you would like to receive medication by mail, please note that they can be mailed only by a certified pharmacy. Family and friends should not mail prescription medications.

Mental Health

Missionary service can be stressful and put you in situations you may not have experienced before. Please disclose any mental health concerns you may have, both diagnosed and undiagnosed. Please list on your recommendation forms any medications you are taking for mental health.

Specific Questions

For conditions or concerns not covered here, please have your stake president contact the Senior Missionary Medical Coordinator at 1-801-240-0322 to discuss your specific medical needs.

Legal Considerations

Pending Legal Matters

You should resolve all pending legal matters before submitting your recommendation.

Past Legal Matters

If you have been involved in any serious legal matters in the past, the Church will review the history before determining whether a call can be issued.

Non-citizen Residents

If you are not a citizen of your resident country, you will need to show proof of citizenship for your home country and documentation of your status in your resident country. Please attach copies of your documents to your recommendation form. Your residence status may affect where you can be assigned.

Financial Concerns

General

Mission Costs

You are responsible for your own mission expenses. The Church pays for your transportation to and from your mission if you serve in your home country or serve outside your home country for 18 months or more. All other expenses are your responsibility: housing, food, personal care items, transportation within the mission, medical care, internet service, phone service, insurance premiums, etc.

Costs vary by the type of missionary assignment, location, and individual lifestyle. Please note that couples will not pay more than \$1,400 (USD) for housing, even if the actual rent exceeds that amount. Please see Housing Costs for more information.

The costs listed on this website are in U.S. dollars.

Financial Assistance

If you need financial assistance, you should first seek additional support from family members. If your own finances plus family contributions are insufficient, you may discuss the matter with your bishop or branch president. If you cannot afford to serve away from home, your bishop or stake president may recommend you for a live-at-home Service Mission.

Tax Deductions

Your housing and vehicle costs may be tax deductible. Please consult your tax adviser for advice.

Debts

You are not required to be completely out of debt before you serve. If you do have debt, you should make arrangements to meet your obligations and also to pay for the costs of your mission while away.

If you have a reverse mortgage, check with your lender to determine how long you can be away from your home. You are encouraged to get a statement in writing from your lender before your stake president submits your missionary recommendation forms.

Tithes and Offerings

Tithes should be paid to your home ward or branch. Normally, however, fast offerings should be donated to the ward or branch where you are serving. If the circumstances of where you will be serving cause you to question the propriety of paying your fast offerings locally, please consult with your mission president/temple president/historical site president/Area President.

[Health Insurance](#)

Requirements

You are required to have adequate medical insurance. Those who do not obtain and maintain adequate coverage are not eligible for away-from-home missionary service.

Most insurance policies provide adequate coverage within your home country but do not offer sufficient coverage outside of your home country. If you are not sure whether your insurance is adequate, please call Missionary Medical at 801-578-5650. Missionary Medical will review your insurance to be sure it meets the Church's requirements.

In countries with a national health care system (including Medicare within the U.S.), this will be considered adequate coverage for those serving within their home or permanent-resident country.

Those assigned to serve in a foreign country must have adequate coverage. This coverage can be provided through an insurance provider of your choice, or you may enroll in the Senior Service Medical Plan (SSMP). Termination of health insurance coverage while serving is in violation of Church policy. Those who do not maintain adequate coverage will be reassigned to their permanent residence country or released from their missionary service.

Senior Service Medical Plan (SSMP)

The Church has arranged with Deseret Mutual to offer a medical insurance policy with benefits for senior missionaries through Aetna International. It is known as the Senior Service Medical Plan (SSMP).

The SSMP is designed to provide Minimum Essential Coverage (MEC) and meet the individual mandate for U.S. citizens. The benefits are designed to meet all other countries' insurance requirements as well.

There are no coverage restrictions based on your health history or pre-existing conditions. Coverage generally begins the day you begin your mission and ends the last day of the month of your release. Your mission beginning date is defined in your call letter.

The SSMP can provide up to 60 days post-mission transitional coverage after you are released. However, if you need this coverage extension, you must request it at the time of enrollment.

For questions about SSMP prior to enrolling in the plan, please contact Missionary Medical at 1-801-578-5650. Following enrollment, please contact Aetna International at 1-877-248-3608 or 1-813-775-0381. SSMP information is also available at www.dmba.com/ssmp.

Be sure to select the link listed as Prospective Senior Service Medical Plan Members.

Medicare Considerations

Your Medicare Advantage policy (Medicare Part C) will likely be affected by your missionary service. Medicare Advantage policies are valid for residents of a specific geographic service area (usually a county or group of adjacent counties). If your missionary assignment requires you to be outside of your policy's service area for a period of more than six months, the policy may be cancelled.

Mission Housing

Arranging Housing

The Church will provide a furnished apartment for you and arrange for utilities. You will provide your own personal linens, but all the other basic furnishing needs (including those for the kitchen) will be provided. You will be responsible for setting up your own cable TV, telephone, and internet service.

Housing and Vehicle Costs

Couples. Housing costs (rent, utilities, and furnishings) for couples are averaged in each respective mission. Your home ward missionary fund will be charged monthly for that cost, up to \$1400.

Senior Sisters. Housing costs (rent, utilities, and furnishings) for senior sisters are averaged in each respective mission. Your home ward missionary fund will be charged monthly for that cost, up to \$850 if you are willing to share housing with another sister, or up to \$1200 if you prefer to live alone in mission housing.

Church-provided vehicle. If you are assigned a Church vehicle, your home ward missionary fund will be charged an additional \$150.

Contributions

You will donate to your named account in your home ward missionary fund to help defray the Church's costs in providing housing and vehicles for senior missionary use.

Contributions can be made online at churchofjesuschrist.org, through your bank's bill pay service, or by a trusted family member in your home area.

Travel and Transportation

Travel and Expenses

The Church will pay for your travel to and from your mission if you:

- Serve within your resident country, regardless of your length of service
- Serve 18 or 23 months in a foreign country

If you are assigned a 6- or 12-month mission outside your resident country, you are expected to pay your travel expenses to and from their mission. If you extend to 18 or 23 months during your service, the Church will pay for your travel home.

If you will be flying to and from your mission, the Church will book you on one of our contracted airlines. Economy seats will be purchased per Missionary Department guidelines. If you wish anything different, you would be responsible for researching, purchasing, and managing the seat upgrades on your own. Additional stopovers are not allowed on the way to your mission. Should you wish to have additional stopovers on your way home you should make those arrangements with your mission president/temple president/historical site president/Area President several months prior to your release. Any additional travel expenses incurred on your way home are your responsibility.

If you drive your own vehicle to and from your mission, you will receive a per diem allowance based on travel distance. The allowance provides for vehicle operating costs, lodging, and meals. The Travel Office at the Provo MTC will provide a check for your travel expenses during orientation.

Travel Companion for Single Sisters

If you are a single sister and will drive more than 500 miles to your missionary assignment, the Church will pay for a driving companion to accompany you. The Church will pay for your companion's travel expenses to the mission and their flight back home.

At the completion of your mission, the Church will pay to fly a driving companion to your mission to accompany you home, as well as their travel expenses.

Your driving companion should be at least 18 years old. If you have more than one companion traveling with you, the Church will reimburse you for only one companion.

Vehicle

If you are assigned to serve in your resident country, you will need to provide your own vehicle while serving.

In some cases, couples serving in a foreign assignment that requires a vehicle may be assigned a Church-owned vehicle and will be expected to pay for fuel charges and a monthly vehicle lease fee (currently \$150). In such situations, guidelines will be sent to you from your mission office.

Electronics

Devices

You may bring computers, cell phones, and other "smart" devices to the mission field at your own expense.

If you are assigned outside of your home country, in many cases purchasing a cell phone in the mission is much more cost effective than using a cell phone and service from your home country. If your cell phone is a "smart phone," you may wish to bring it and use it for various apps and/or use within a Wi-Fi broadcast range. If your phone can be "unlocked" you may want to replace your current SIM card with one purchased within the mission.

Internet

Nearly all missions will have some form of internet service available. You are responsible for the internet costs in your apartment or housing.

Missionary Training Center

[MTC](#)

Training

Most assignments will include attending the MTC for a period of 5 to 7 days for 'Preach My Gospel training'. If you have an additional assignment (e.g. welfare, CES, or Family History), you typically will have an additional 2 to 5 days of training. Your specific training needs will be communicated to you after your call is received.

Some assignments (e.g. temple) do not require training at the MTC. If you have one of these assignments, you will be trained at other venues.

If you have had 'Preach My Gospel' training at an MTC for a previous missionary assignment within the last three years, you may have your stake president request an exception that will allow you to report directly to your mission.

Parking and Housing – Provo MTC

If you will attend the Provo MTC, parking for vehicles and RVs is available. Please contact the Provo MTC security office at 801-422-4568 to make arrangements.

If you live within commuting distance of the Provo MTC, you may live at home during your training. Otherwise, information on housing and meal costs at the MTC will be provided after your call.

Parking and Housing – Other MTCs

Instructions for parking and housing will be made available after you receive your call.

Name Tags

Name tags will be provided for you at the MTC. If you will not attend an MTC, you will receive your name tag from the mission office when you arrive.

Language training

The need to speak a second language during your mission can vary depending on your specific assignment and country. Senior missionaries are not required to learn another language; *however, the vast majority of missionaries serving outside their home country find learning the basics of the mission language invaluable to fulfilling their missionary purpose and connecting with their new community.* The Provo Missionary Training Center offers personalized language training via video conferencing. This service can be adapted to your needs, ability and schedule. In addition, upon arriving in the mission field, you can request up to six more months of tutoring.

Please call 1-801-422-1129 or email onlinetutoring@mtc.byu.edu to request language training.

Home and Family

[Home Matters](#)

What to Do with Your Home

You may consider the following options for your home:

- Have family members live in your home
- Lease/rent your home
- Sell your home
- Leave your home vacant

Whichever option you choose, be aware of the following:

- Make sure you know your official mission report date to prevent from being asked to leave your home before you are prepared to leave.
- Insurance companies may require a different type of coverage if you are not living in your home.
- **Visa delays are possible:** If you are called to serve a foreign mission, a visa may be required. The processing time for a visa can vary, which sometimes results in a travel delay. Do not leave your home before your visa has been obtained by the travel office. If you are selling or renting your home, you may need to delay the move or arrange for a place to stay temporarily if your visa is not obtained on time.

Will and Trusts

You should consider setting up a will, with legal and medical power of attorney, in order to record your expectations during unforeseen emergencies. You may also want to set up a living trust.

Home Expenses

Home utilities, insurance, and property taxes can usually be set up on an automatic payment system, such as a bank or credit union's online bill pay service. Many companies offer online statements and online banking, which make it easier to manage your finances. You should advise your insurance carrier if you plan to leave your home vacant.

Home Mail

Those serving a mission in their home country usually have mail forwarded to their mission residence. Most senior missionaries serving abroad have the post office forward their mail to a responsible family member or to the person handling their finances. **Please consult with your financial advisor and local tax laws because forwarding your mail to an address that is outside your home state for an extended period of time could change your tax status in that state.**

[Family Matters](#)

Communicating with Family

Senior missionaries may communicate with family members through email, phone calls, VoIP telephone, web video, etc., and are encouraged to do so frequently. Such communication should not interfere with your missionary responsibilities.

Visits to/from Family

You may request a leave of absence for an important family event. These requests are often approved but require authorization from your mission president/temple president/historical site president/Area President. Travel and other costs are at your own expense, and your leave should not exceed 10 days.

With the permission of your mission president or in-field ecclesiastical leader, you may receive visits from your immediate family members. Disruption of missionary responsibilities should be kept to a minimum.

Dependent Adult Children

In some circumstances, it is possible to bring a dependent adult child on a mission if he or she is capable of serving as a service missionary. Your stake president would be required to submit a request for an exception to policy to the Missionary Department before your missionary recommendation form is submitted. The stake president should call the Missionary Department for instructions. If an exception is approved, the dependent adult child would be given a call to serve as a service missionary, and the senior couple would receive their missionary calls.

Pets

Pets are not allowed for those serving an away-from-home mission. Those who desire to serve as a missionary, but require the assistance of a service animal should consider a service missionary opportunity.