



Facilitating Missionary Work

During the last six months, the Church has taken several steps to facilitate missionary work.

Standard questions. The First Presidency introduced a set of standard questions for bishops and stake presidents to use while interviewing prospective full-time missionaries. They encouraged leaders, parents, and youth to become familiar with the questions.

Standards reflected in the questions do not change or add to the requirements for full-time missionary service, but reviewing them regularly will enable prospective missionaries and parents to learn principles and identify areas where improvement or additional preparation may be required.

Use of technology. The number of missions using mobile devices is increasing from 87 to 162, and tablets are being replaced with smartphones. The phones will assist missionaries with studying, finding, and teaching.

Technology is also being used to provide online content to people seeking answers to religious questions. The Church began using online teaching centers six years ago and today operates 20 online teaching centers around the world.

Thanks to technology, members who refer friends to missionaries can now communicate with missionaries who are teaching their friend. They can discuss needs with the missionaries and participate in lessons via the internet. Find out how at [lds.org/referrals](https://www.lds.org/referrals).

Meeting current needs. Effective July 2018, the Church will adjust boundaries of 19 missions, and 5 new missions will be created. This will adjust the number of missions from 421 to 407. The new missions will be Brazil Rio de Janeiro South, Cote d'Ivoire Yamoussoukro, Nigeria Ibadan, Philippines Cabanatuan, and Zimbabwe Bulawayo. Details about merging missions will be coming in future communications from mission presidents to parents of missionaries in the affected missions.

Since the change in ages for missionary service was announced in 2012, the Church created 76 new missions to accommodate the surge of growth from 58,000 to 88,000 missionaries. The initial wave of missionaries has since receded, as anticipated, and currently about 68,000 missionaries are serving. This means that, for the present, fewer missions are required. But it also means that appropriate placement

of missionaries in areas of need around the world warrants particular attention.

Missionary training centers. The Provo Missionary Training Center in Utah, USA, and the MTC in the Philippines have both been expanded and dedicated, and the new missionary training center in Ghana has been dedicated. The Spain and Chile training centers will close in January 2019, and missionaries who would have attended either of these centers will be trained at one of the remaining 13 missionary training centers around the world. ■