

Field Secretary, Illinois Yearly Meeting

The position of Field Secretary was created to assist Illinois Yearly Meeting in ministering to a variety of spiritual needs, including nurture, pastoral care, adult education in Quaker faith and practice, and outreach. The work of the Field Secretary differs from that of an individual member of the Ministry and Advancement Committee not only in quantity but usually also in the greater expertise, broader knowledge of resources, and additional responsibility and accountability required.

Specific services offered by the Field Secretary have varied with the individual's skills and leadings, the expressed needs and requests of meetings and worship groups in a particular year, and Ministry and Advancement Committee's discernment of priorities.

Qualifications:

- a. Active membership in the Religious Society of Friends, preferably of a monthly meeting within Illinois Yearly Meeting, and residence in or near its geographic area
- b. Commitment to the life of the Spirit
- c. A working knowledge of Quaker heritage, Bible and Quaker writings, and resources in the wider Quaker world
- d. Respect and appreciation for the variety of beliefs among Friends
- e. Ability to travel and to adapt easily to changes in accommodations.

General Responsibilities:

- a. Visiting monthly meetings and worship groups, generally with a companion-elder who often will be the Ministry and Advancement representative assigned to the meeting. These visits offer an opportunity to learn of the meeting's needs and strengths and to further acquaintance with its members.
- b. Serving as a resource to monthly meetings and worship groups, suggesting opportunities for growth, nurture, or pastoral care that are related to their expressed needs, and helping them to connect with appropriate resources beyond the yearly meeting, if appropriate.
- c. Encouraging inter-visitation among meetings and worship groups.
- d. Conducting retreats, workshops, meetings for reconciliation, and other events for spiritual nurture and adult education, as requested.
- e. Serving as a model for good Quaker practice and appropriate Quaker process.
- f. Identifying and mentoring the development of individuals' spiritual gifts within the yearly meeting.
- g. Offering expertise and suggesting resources to increase Ministry and Advancement Committee members' effectiveness in serving their assigned meetings and worship groups.

Specific Expectations:

- a. While traveling among monthly meetings and worship groups, the Field Secretary normally will stay in the homes of Friends.
- b. Rather than provide direct pastoral care to individuals, the Field Secretary is expected to enable and encourage local meetings to address their own members' needs for pastoral care and to draw upon local resources insofar as possible.
- c. The role of Field Secretary does not permit providing therapy or extended personal counseling, even if the Field Secretary is a trained therapist.
- d. The Field Secretary is an ex officio member of the Ministry and Advancement Committee and is expected to attend all of its meetings.
- e. The Field Secretary may serve voluntarily on another committee of the yearly meeting, but not in the role of Field Secretary.
- f. At least three times a year, the Field Secretary provides the Ministry and Advancement Committee with a written report of hours spent in his or her official activities during the past quarter and of time and expenses incurred in official travel. Careful accounting is essential.
- g. The Field Secretary provides a written summary of his or her work to Continuing Committee's fall and spring sessions, and to the annual session of Yearly Meeting.

Compensation and Support:

The Field Secretary is compensated for up to 700 hours per year at an hourly rate of \$____, plus reimbursement for travel expenses. Hours of work will vary from month to month to accommodate spontaneous needs and requests from within the yearly meeting in addition to scheduled events.

The Field Secretary works under the general oversight of the Ministry and Advancement Committee. He or she may designate the clerk of the Committee or another of its members to serve as a liaison with the Committee if needed. It is appropriate also for the Field Secretary to seek insights from individual members of Ministry and Advancement who have experience that is relevant to a particular situation.

To support the Field Secretary's own spiritual deepening, he or she is encouraged to draw upon funds available for attending conferences, workshops, or retreats that offer spiritual nurture. The Field Secretary also is encouraged to form a small advisory or support group of Friends beyond Ministry and Advancement who can help him or her address any personal issues affected by the work.