

VIS CONTACT JOB DESCRIPTION

General

1. **Be the face of VIS for your church.** Learn as much as you can about the VIS ministry (www.visgr.org) and actively promote your church's participation. Schedule regular offerings for VIS and keep your congregation aware of what God is doing through this ministry.
2. **Attend the VIS information workshop** offered at the VIS annual Leadership Training Event held each fall. Encourage other church leaders to attend additional LTE workshops.
3. **Suggest VIS as an excellent resource** to contact when your church is struggling with various community ministry issues such as benevolence or other ways to help.
4. **Receive new friendship or service project requests**
5. **Pray** regularly for your active referrals and for the VIS ministry.

New Referral Procedures

1. **Listen to the need** when the VIS staff contacts you, and then discuss an appropriate plan to proceed. If you are willing to recruit a volunteer to meet this need, VIS will email (or mail) two copies of the "Service Opportunity Record" (SOR). One is for you to use in keeping records and notes, the other is for the volunteer. Client need and volunteer expectations are clearly stated.
2. **Arrange an initial visit**, within a week if possible, to talk with the individual in need; this visit will help you understand the problem firsthand. Take another person with you--your spouse, or an appropriate committee member; men should always be accompanied by a female partner when visiting female clients, and vice versa. Call VIS if any "red flags" arise during this visit.
3. **Begin recruiting church members** for the need. Pray for God to guide you in this process--trust He will use you to find the right person for this need. Use gift surveys (if available) for potential volunteers, inform church members by asking groups in the church to consider this opportunity, or ask someone in the church whom God brings to your mind as having the talents and personality to work well with this situation. A bulletin ad clearly stating the need (without giving the name of the client) may be run simultaneously with other recruitment efforts, but do not rely on a bulletin announcement to bring a volunteer. **Maintain client contact during recruitment—a quick phone update lets them know you haven't forgotten them!**
4. **Communicate the progress and results to VIS.** Make it your goal to fill the need two to three weeks after the initial call from VIS.
5. **Give one of the typed copies of the referral to the person you recruit to meet this need.**

Ongoing Casework

1. **Please keep up regular contact with your volunteers**, listening for morale, frustrations, blessings, and giving lots of encouragement and support. Let them know that if they are having difficulties, they can and should talk to you about it. Don't forget to use VIS as your support system--feel free to call the VIS office with any developments or concerns. We will also call periodically for follow-up on your active cases.
2. **Hold the volunteers up as examples of servants in ministry.** Include in your church newsletter a report on the meaningful experiences and blessings they receive, or ask them to speak to an Adult Education class or during "Prayer and Share" times. We would also love to feature them in the VIS newsletter! Just let us know!!

HINTS FOR EFFECTIVE VISITS

Key Principles

- **Draw upon your previous experiences.*
- **Be yourself -- genuine, caring.*
- **Be a good **active** listener (good verbal feedback, as well as good non-verbal cues).*
- **Before your visit -- **Be in prayer.***

(Avoid acting pious and judgmental, as if they are wrong and you are right. Remember not to place *your* values on someone else. We are called to accept people for who they are and who God has made them to be--in spite of their flaws and faults!)

Communication Skills

Good communication means you do not press judgment or provide answers.

Try reflecting back what someone says with a summary of what they have said *without* providing a solution.

Listening Skills

A good listener needs humility, silence, empathy and patience. This cannot be stressed too often: listening involves **hearing the hurt--not healing the hurt.** We must resist the temptation of being the problem solver. The person in need has to handle the problem--it is *their* problem although you can show that you care. God is the Cure-giver; you are the Care-giver. Helping involves: **Listening** to the other person, **understanding** the other person and **problem-solving** with the other person.