

The Ideal (non-existent) Conference

1. 6-12 members, depending on need in area
2. meets once or twice a month for about 90 minutes
3. begins each meeting with the prayer and an appropriate spiritual reading & reflection
4. The needs, wishes and preferences of the members are appropriately considered when planning and running the meeting
5. The agenda adequately provides for addressing current issues and concerns
6. Meetings are held "in a spirit of fraternity, simplicity, and Christian joy", providing "for consideration in common of the experiences of each member and the problems encountered in the pursuit of a better service" (The Rule, Schema I, Art. V, 1 & 2)
7. The President is happy to serve the poor in his/her position as President and is willing and able to make the effort required to effectively lead the Conference.
8. The Executive members provide the President with adequate assistance and support.
9. Members make a real effort to attend meetings regularly and to be active participants in meetings.
10. Financial and other records are maintained effectively and efficiently and are appropriately secured
11. Members will make a point to support and assist the other members of the conference, especially the newer or less confident members
12. Adequate and appropriate service, consistent with our Vincentian philosophy and commitment and with the available resources, is provided to those in need
 - a. Home visitations
 - i. Calls are responded to in a timely and appropriate manner
 - ii. Members always visit in pairs (as per the Screening and Risk Management policy)
 - iii. Appropriate arrangements are made with the client prior to the visit
 - iv. In all aspects of the visit members remember that "sharing does not consist merely in the distribution of material goods" (The Rule, Schema I, I 5, Commentaries)

- v. The members take the time and effort to really listen to the client
 - vi. All efforts are directed both at immediate needs and the goal of greater self-sufficiency on the part of the client. The members are not merely satisfied with regularly supplying vouchers and not helping the client move towards goals they have (or could be helped to develop)
 - vii. The information gathered about the client and their circumstances is only as much as is required to make decisions that will be helpful and appropriate, and to allow the members to be good stewards of the funds entrusted to them
 - viii. Although the Vincentians will use good judgment in determining the type and amount of assistance, they will not be judgmental
 - ix. The Vincentians will be compassionate, empathic, respectful and loving towards clients (or will seek a form of service that doesn't require these qualities and efforts)
 - x. They will make it clear to the client, through words, tone, body language and actions, that they genuinely want to be of assistance and service to the client
- b. Where circumstances make it difficult or unwise to do home visitations, the conference will either take appropriate steps to overcome these obstacles (e.g. a recruitment campaign) or will provide the service to those in need in a manner appropriate to the Society's mission and our Vincentian vocation.