SELF-RELIANCE IS A PRODUCT OF OUR WORK AND UNDERGIRDS ALL OTHER WELFARE PRACTICES...“LET US WORK FOR WHAT WE NEED. LET US BE SELF-RELIANT AND INDEPENDENT. SALVATION CAN BE OBTAINED ON NO OTHER PRINCIPLE.”
—PRESIDENT THOMAS S. MONSON, 1986
DEAR SELF-RELIANCE SERVICES/PEF MISSIONARY:

We express great gratitude and happiness that you have accepted the call to serve as a Self-Reliance Services/PEF missionary, and we look forward to serving with you.

Take time to ponder the scope and purpose of your missionary assignment. Through fasting and prayer, seek to gain inspiration, faith, and vision about what the Lord would have you do in your missionary service.

We encourage you to carefully study this missionary guide and the accompanying materials. Discuss the ideas that come to your heart and mind. Note your questions and bring them with you to your training.

We look forward to meeting you and serving with you in the great cause in which we are engaged.

We pray that you will find great joy in your missionary service!

With great appreciation for your service,

Self-Reliance Services/PEF Committee

“IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN A CARDINAL TEACHING WITH THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS, THAT A RELIGION WHICH HAS NOT THE POWER TO SAVE PEOPLE TEMPORALLY AND MAKE THEM PROSPEROUS AND HAPPY HERE ... CANNOT BE DEPENDED UPON TO SAVE THEM SPIRITUALLY, TO EXALT THEM IN THE LIFE TO COME.”¹

—JOSEPH F. SMITH
The doctrines, principles, and many of the applications in this guide will be helpful to Church-service missionaries and volunteers serving in Self-Reliance Services.

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1. YOUR MISSIONARY PURPOSE

“Wherefore, I the Lord ask you this question—unto what were ye ordained?” (D&C 50:13).

*Preach My Gospel* states the missionary purpose this way: “Invite others to come unto Christ by helping them receive the restored gospel through faith in Jesus Christ and His Atonement, repentance, baptism, receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, and enduring to the end” (*Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service* [2004], 1).

Everything you do on your mission should be to labor in the Lord’s vineyard for the salvation of souls. Yours is a mission of rescue and real growth.

As an SRS missionary, you work with managers to support priesthood leaders as they invite, persuade, and help members to follow God’s command to become independent and self-reliant. You accomplish this purpose by (1) teaching the power of the Savior’s Atonement and the doctrines of self-reliance, (2) training and supporting priesthood leaders, and (3) providing and supporting an integrated set of tools, services, learning processes, and training resources.

You help teach and support leaders and others, and you help them develop a deep understanding of the doctrines and principles of self-reliance. You do not take the place of priesthood holders or assume responsibility over their duties, but you support those who have priesthood keys and invite and encourage them to use the self-reliance resources available to them. You follow the counsel of Brigham Young, who said, “[The Lord] requires, absolutely requires, of us to ... teach [Church members] how to live” (in *Journal of Discourse*, 18:354). You help teach others how to live, bring people to spiritual and temporal self-reliance, and change hearts unto conversion.

“We need to care for one another more diligently.”

“I believe the Lord does not wish to see His people condemned to live in poverty. I believe He would have the faithful enjoy the good things of the earth.”

—GORDON B. HINCKLEY
THE FUNDAMENTAL DOCTRINES AND PRINCIPLES OF SELF-RELIANCE

DOCTRINES:

1. SELF-RELIANCE IS A PRINCIPLE OF SALVATION: THE LORD COMMANDS US TO BE SELF-RELIANT.
   - Doctrine and Covenants 78:13-14
   - Moses 1:39; 2:27-28
   - Doctrine and Covenants 76:50, 60-62
   - Doctrine and Covenants 42:42

2. THE LORD’S PURPOSE IS TO PROVIDE FOR HIS SAINTS, AND HE HAS ALL POWER TO DO SO.
   - Doctrine and Covenants 104:15-16
   - Doctrine and Covenants 19:1-3
   - Matthew 28:18
   - 1 Nephi 17:50-51
   - Colossians 2:6-10

3. THE TEMPORAL AND SPIRITUAL ARE ONE
   - Doctrine and Covenants 29:34
   - 1 Nephi 18: 1-2
   - Alma 34:20-25
   - Alma 37:36-37

BASIC PRINCIPLES:

1. EXERCISE FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST
   - Moroni 7:33
   - Mark 9:23-27
   - Ether 12:4, 6-8

2. BE OBEDIENT
   - Doctrine and Covenants 82:10
   - Doctrine and Covenants 130:20–21
   - Abraham 3:25
   - 1 Nephi 3:7

3. ACT
   - 2 Nephi 2:16, 26
   - Doctrine and Covenants 88:124
   - Doctrine and Covenants 104:17
   - Matthew 25:20-21

4. SERVE AND BE UNIFIED
   - Moses 7:18
   - Doctrine and Covenants 38:25-27
   - Mosiah 4:15, 26 another.
2. THE ROLE OF THE SPIRIT IN YOUR MISSIONARY SERVICE

You have been set apart for your sacred calling with the promise that you will have the companionship of the Holy Ghost as you meet the requirements set by the Lord. Enjoying the gifts of the Spirit should be one of your most earnest desires.

The Spirit is essential for teaching the truths of the gospel in a way that builds faith in others. As you strive to develop the faith to rely on the Spirit, you should pray for the companionship of the Holy Ghost, purify your heart, keep the commandments, diligently treasure up God’s word, teach so that others understand your message and are edified, and exercise faith.

As you teach by the power of the Holy Ghost, He will teach you new truths and bring the doctrines you have studied to your remembrance, give you words to speak in the very moment you need them, carry your message to the hearts of the people you teach, testify of the truthfulness of your message and confirm your words, and help you discern the needs of the people you are teaching.

We encourage you to carefully study and apply the scriptures found in the Teaching by the Spirit section of Preach My Gospel.
3. YOUR MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES

WHAT WILL I BE DOING?

Your primary task will be to support and train members of stake self-reliance committees. Stakes and districts organize self-reliance committees to help bishops and ward councils help all families and individuals in the stake become self-reliant (see *Handbook* 2, 6.1.1). A successfully functioning committee is fundamental to the success of the self-reliance initiative, and you will assist the committee in its efforts.

You will help committee members become converted to the doctrine of self-reliance and understand their purpose and roles and how to fulfill them. Successful missionaries do this by explaining, demonstrating, encouraging, persuading, and testifying. Converted leaders (1) understand the doctrine, (2) have experienced the self-reliance group process personally, and (3) know what to do next.

Your goal should be to leave self-reliance committees stronger than you found them. Rather than taking responsibilities from these leaders or doing their jobs for them, you should help convert them to the doctrine and allow them to take their own initiative. This way, they can be self-reliant themselves as they continue to help others.

You will also need to become a content expert, with thorough knowledge about the available self-reliance products. These products include resources that help members start businesses, find jobs, and learn about the best schools and training opportunities, as well as other services. You will be explaining these resources to others and providing training on how to use them, including for stake self-reliance specialists, members of the stake self-reliance committee, and others involved in the self-reliance initiative.

It is important that you help the Self-Reliance Services manager to identify, explore, and develop community resources related to job placement, education and skills training, self-employment assistance, and micro-enterprise. These resources are crucial in opening up opportunities for members to become self-reliant. When you identify new resources, share them with stake self-reliance specialists and others that you support and work with. As the activities above show, your primary focus is to work with leaders.
If time permits, you might also do some of the following activities, in coordination with the Self-Reliance Services manager and the stake self-reliance committee:

- Develop or maintain Preferred Lists of jobs, programs, and schools for PEF and self-reliance participants.
- Build awareness of the self-reliance initiative.
- Help publicize and assist with My Path devotionals.
- Recruit Church-service missionaries and volunteers.
- Mentor group facilitators.
- Teach English or other classes that assist members to become self-reliant.
- Obtain referrals for the full-time proselyting missionaries.
- Find opportunities to serve in your ward and in the community.

Some missionaries will also be involved with the administrative functions of PEF loans, such as helping students apply for loans, reviewing loan applications, assisting and mentoring loan recipients, and processing payments to schools.

TO WHOM DO I REPORT?

Self-Reliance Services missionaries report to the mission president, who is their ecclesiastical leader, but they coordinate their self-reliance activities with a Self-Reliance Services manager on a weekly basis. The Self-Reliance Services manager assists and supports Self-Reliance Services missionaries in their purpose to “labor in the Lord’s vineyard by inviting members to come unto Christ and help them to become spiritually and temporally self-reliant” (“Church-Service Missionary,” srs.lds.org/church-service-missionary).

You will also report to your headquarters contact through a weekly letter. Please share with them your concerns, successes, photos, and anything else you feel is important to mention. Some missionaries will also communicate on a regular basis with a missionary couple who has been assigned by the Area Presidency to support them.

“[SELF-RELIANCE] IS AN ESSENTIAL ELEMENT IN OUR SPIRITUAL AS WELL AS OUR TEMPORAL WELL-BEING. ... ‘LET US BE SELF-RELIANT AND INDEPENDENT. SALVATION CAN BE OBTAINED ON NO OTHER PRINCIPLE.’”
—THOMAS S. MONSON
HOW WILL I BE TRAINED?

Following your five days of *Preach My Gospel* training at the Provo Missionary Training Center, your group will meet with a General Authority assigned to Self-Reliance Services/PEF. Staff members will also provide a few days of orientation and training before you leave for your field of labor.

Self-Reliance Services missionaries will receive a comprehensive orientation from the Self-Reliance Services manager that they will be working with when they arrive in their mission, including information about local grocery stores and other services, local currency and banking, an emergency contact list, a city tour, and tips and recommendations for adjusting to the local culture. Missionaries will be introduced to local priesthood leaders and key individuals involved with self-reliance efforts, including Church-service missionaries and volunteers at self-reliance resource centers.

The Self-Reliance Services manager will oversee the initial and ongoing training of missionaries to help them learn how to be successful in their service.

4. SUCCEEDING AS A MISSIONARY

You will be successful as you (1) teach the power of the Savior’s Atonement and the doctrine of self-reliance, (2) train and support priesthood leaders, and (3) fully support the integrated set of tools, services, learning processes, and training resources from Self-Reliance Services.

To become more familiar with the doctrines of self-reliance and to prepare for your missionary service, we ask that you do the following:

- Study the “Doctrines and Principles” readings, *Leader Guide*, and CultureGram that were included in your self-reliance call packet.
- Read some recent newsletters at lds.org/pef/newsletters.
- Explore the website srs.lds.org. Especially note the items found under the “Self-Reliance” tab. Carefully study the *My Path* and *My Foundation* guidebooks. You may want to use the *My Foundations: Principles, Skills, Habits* course in your family home evenings.
- Visit and tour a self-reliance resource center or an employment resource center and attend a group meeting, if possible. To find a location near you, go to ldsjobs.org and click on the “Find a Center” tab at the top of the page.
- Carefully study and ponder the quotations, self-reliance doctrines, and principles on the following pages.
MISSIONARY QUALITIES CONTRIBUTING TO SUCCESS

Self-Reliance Services missionaries are most successful when they:

• Follow the dictates of the Spirit.
• Understand and teach the doctrines of self-reliance.
• Work through and support priesthood leaders.
  - Missionaries do not work around or take over the responsibilities of priesthood leaders.
• Are familiar with the self-reliance materials.
• Understand and apply the counsel found in this guide.
• Are teachable and willing to receive and follow direction from others.
  - Missionaries do not criticize, blame, or point fingers at employees, leaders, or members.
  - Missionaries do not gossip.
  - Missionaries work cooperatively with their SRS managers.
• Are self-starters, have a positive attitude, and solve problems.
• Love the people and their culture.
  - Missionaries do not try to impose their own culture on the people they work with.
• Encourage those they serve to create their own solutions.
  - Missionaries should not assume responsibility for others’ decisions but should empower them to make their own decisions.
• Read and study the monthly newsletter and all area and headquarters communications.
• Follow the instructions in the Missionary Handbook.

“The CHURCH AND ITS MEMBERS ARE COMMANDED BY THE LORD TO BE SELF-RELIANT AND INDEPENDENT.”
—SPENCER W. KIMBALL
5. SUPPORTING PRIESTHOOD LEADERS

Priesthood leaders in areas, stakes, and wards oversee the work of providing in the Lord’s way. They direct the effort to help all members achieve self-reliance, which is the “ability, commitment, and effort to provide the spiritual and temporal necessities of life for self and family” (Handbook 2: Administering the Church [2010], 6.1.1). Priesthood leaders counsel together, identify needs, minister, and teach.

Missionaries and employees work together to support priesthood leaders to invite and assist members who are (1) in need, (2) willing to be worthy, and (3) willing to work. Our effort is prioritized on the following individuals:

1. Returned missionaries
2. Unemployed leaders
3. Recent converts
4. Recipients of continual fast-offering assistance

Area Presidencies may add additional priorities, such as less-active members, the underemployed, young single adults, single mothers, and others.

As a missionary, your overarching goal is to help priesthood leaders assist members to provide for themselves and their families the spiritual and temporal necessities of life—to help them become self-reliant. This is accomplished through:

• Bearing testimony of the Savior and the power of His Atonement.
• Providing comprehensive training and support to all priesthood leaders.
• Promoting the tools provided by Self-Reliance Services and developing local resources.

The self-reliance process is led by priesthood leaders and involves four steps:

1. Bishops and ward councils (a) identify those in need and (b) invite them to attend a My Path devotional.
2. Stake committees hold My Path devotionals.
3. Members join self-reliance groups.
4. Members start on their path to greater self-reliance.

The following sections will help you understand the roles of the leaders, committees, and councils you will work with.

“THIS WORK OF PROVIDING IN THE LORD’S WAY IS NOT SIMPLY ANOTHER ITEM IN THE CATALOG OF PROGRAMS OF THE CHURCH. IT CANNOT BE NEGLECTED OR SET ASIDE. IT IS CENTRAL TO OUR DOCTRINE; IT IS THE ESSENCE OF OUR RELIGION.”

—DIETER F. UCHTDORF
6. AREA SELF-RELIANCE SERVICES/PEF COMMITTEE

The Area Presidency works through councils to help all members become self-reliant. One of these councils is the area Self-Reliance Services/PEF committee.

Who belongs to this committee, and how does it work?

A member of the Area Presidency is assigned to organize the area self-reliance committee and to serve as chair. The committee includes the following people:

- Member of Area Presidency (chair)
- Director of temporal affairs
- Area self-reliance manager
- Area operations self-reliance manager
- Area welfare manager
- Area controller
- Area director of seminaries and institutes
- Area legal advisor (optional)

The area Self-Reliance Services/PEF committee meets monthly to direct and review all self-reliance efforts in the area, including the progress of the PEF loan program.
7. COORDINATING COUNCIL

WHO BELONGS TO THIS COUNCIL, AND HOW DOES IT WORK?

An Area Seventy is assigned by the Area Presidency to preside over a coordinating council. The coordinating council includes the following people:

- An Area Seventy
- Mission president
- Temple president
- Stake presidents of a geographical area (in most cases, a coordinating council covers the same boundaries as a mission)

Under the direction of the Area Presidency, Area Seventies may include the following self-reliance topics during coordinating council meetings:

- Teach principles of self-reliance to stake presidents.
- Provide guidance and coordination for self-reliance efforts (see Handbook 1: Stake Presidents and Bishops [2010], 1.1.5).
- Call on the Self-Reliance Services manager to assist and train.
- Encourage the formation of stake self-reliance committees and self-reliance resource centers.
- Receive and act upon reports from stake leaders and others.

The topics discussed in the coordinating council will most likely be related to the self-reliance matters discussed in the area council or the area self-reliance committee.

“WE MUST DO ALL WE CAN TO HELP [THOSE IN NEED] TO LIFT THEMSELVES, TO ESTABLISH THEIR LIVES UPON A FOUNDATION OF SELF-RELIANCE THAT CAN COME OF TRAINING.”
—GORDON B. HINCKLEY
8. STAKE SELF-RELIANCE COMMITTEE

WHO BELONGS TO THE COMMITTEE?

The stake self-reliance committee is organized by the stake council and is fundamental to the success of the self-reliance initiative. It includes the following sisters and brethren:

- Member of stake presidency (chair)
- Stake Relief Society president
- Stake self-reliance specialist (secretary)
- Stake youth leaders (as needed)
- High councilor
- Chairman of the stake bishop’s welfare council

WHAT IS THE COMMITTEE’S PURPOSE?

The purpose of the stake self-reliance committee is to help bishops and ward councils help all families and individuals in the stake become self-reliant and serve and care for others. For details, see the section titled “Stake Self-Reliance Committee” in Leader Guide (2014), 1.
9. MONTHLY REPORTS TO PRIESTHOOD COMMITTEES

Self-Reliance Services will provide a monthly report to the area self-reliance committee, coordinating councils, and stake self-reliance committees. The report will contain four simple key indicators:

1. The number of members who are identified by the bishop and ward council as not self-reliant
2. The number of members who have completed My Path
3. The number of members who have completed My Foundation
4. The number of members who have started on their path to self-reliance (those who have started or improved a business, begun a job, or started or completed education or training)

These indicators help priesthood leaders and committees track their progress as they identify members in need and help them start on the path of self-reliance. The stake self-reliance committee will set goals in these four key areas.

10. SELF-RELIANCE RESOURCE CENTERS

Stakes and districts can use self-reliance resource centers to offer resources approved by the stake self-reliance committee. The centers are often located in family history centers and are supported by stake specialists, Church-service missionaries, and volunteers, as well as by a Self-Reliance Services manager, who visits the center periodically throughout the year.

When a member of the Church is not self-reliant, a bishop and his council can refer the member to a self-reliance resource center, or the member may show up on his or her own or as referred by others. In these centers, returned missionaries, unemployed leaders, and other members can receive assistance to overcome unemployment or underemployment, receive training and guidance that will help them learn practical steps to become self-reliant, and learn the core doctrines of self-reliance. Services offered at self-reliance resource centers may include information on how to gain a good education, how to start or grow a business, and how to find employment, as well as personal mentoring and networking opportunities.

Self-reliance resource centers are the gospel in action. They may serve as a “rescue center,” a “temporal salvation center,” a “returned missionary center,” a “hastening the work center,” a “new convert center,” a “fast-offering recipient relief center,” and so on.
