

PROTOCOL IN SDA MINISTRY

DEFINITION:

Protocol refers to customs and rules of politeness and courtesy between individuals and society, i.e. the rules of official and social behaviour.

Protocol is a code prescribing deference to rank. It lays down the rules for interactions that ensure that each person receives the position and respect to which his/her office entitles them and which are recognized by society.

“Protocol is the art of creating a distraction free environment that permits the free and open exchange of information to resolve issues and build relationships in international business and global diplomacy.” *(Robert Frye, Certified Protocol Professional and Director and Chief of Protocol for International Business Protocol)*

“For government, nations and provinces, protocol is a system of conventions, procedures and symbols which express their identity and facilitate relationship between them. In short, protocol is a set of formal rules describing how to deal with officials.” *(Miami-Dade County, Protocol Procedures Manual)*

Protocol is

- grounded in human relationships
- enhancement of common courtesy
- reflective of mutual respect and consideration among people
- reflected in our communication, behaviour and use of physical facilities

PURPOSE OF PROTOCOL

Officials expect their rank to be respected, their religious values and practices to be honored, all logistics to be flawless and they expect any distracting issues to be resolved quickly.

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Protocol creates a distraction-free, courteous environment. Distractions take the focus off of business at hand and results in the persons feeling uncomfortable. In short, meeting everyone's comfort level, makes them as receptive as possible.

In the business world: Knowing the right protocol and cross cultural etiquette makes the difference in winning or losing an important deal or inadvertently sabotaging a relationship.

In the religious world: we show respect for our leaders as a reflection to the order and hierarchies that God instituted in Heaven and relayed to earth.

RANK IN SDA CIRCLES

Conference:

1. President
2. Executive Secretary
3. Treasurer
4. Departmental Heads

Local Church

1. Pastor: 'If the conference committee assigns a pastor or pastors to the congregation, the pastor, or senior pastor if more than one, should be considered the ranking officer and the local elders as assistants.'
(Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual, 19th Edition, Revised 2015, Updated 2016, pp 74-75)
2. First Elder: second ranking officer who functions in harmony with the Pastor and may fulfil certain pastoral duties, but whose power is limited to the local church.

School

1. Principal
2. Vice-principal
3. Chaplain – based on advisory role to administration
4. Teachers

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ELEMENTS OF PROTOCOL

- **Facility Use: Customary or Event**
 - Parking
 - Privacy
 - Signage

- **General Interactions: Customary or Event**
 - Pre-Counsel to senior officers
 - Training – cultural etc etiquette
 - Support officer for problem solving
 - Communications – channels, levels and forms
 - Salutations
 - Dress and Decorum
 - Initial points of contact
 - Who makes contact
 - Who greets who first
 - Seating plans
 - Passing of documents
 - Menu selection
 - Official gift selection

- **Hospitality: Events**
 - Event types: formal, informal, meetings etc
 - Invitations
 - Cultural distinctions
 - Recognising guests
 - Photo positioning
 - Courtesy calls
 - Arrivals and departures

- **Media Protocol**
 - Research on audience
 - Statements and speakers
 - Bookings
 - Q&A information Prep
 - Attendance before VIP
 - Liaison with host for any VIP needs

- **Travel Protocol**
 - Research travel restrictions
 - Greet and escort through process – incoming or outgoing
 - Fill out forms
 - Receive requests from VIP
 - Liaison with receiving agency/country etc

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Protocol officer to be on hand pre, during and post service/meeting to facilitate ranking officer's integration into service.

- **Responsible Agents**

- At Conference: Secretary to the Manager, Communication Officer, Aide
- At Church: First Elder, Church Clerk, Communications Secretary or other designated officer
- At School: Vice Principal, Secretary to the Principal, other assigned officer

- **Facility Use for Ranking Officers: Customary or Event**

- Parking space at Church/school/event site
- Privacy – office space, prayer space, quiet time before meetings
- Equipment as is required.

- **Local Church Service:**

- Greeted at the door and escorted inside
- Updated on
 - the progression of the service
 - officials or special guests in attendance
 - incidents at site
 - requests from congregation or officials
- Liaise with protocol officer on requests etc.

- **Local Church Meetings**

- Pre meeting with key support staff, e.g. Church Clerk and/or First Elder, Vice Principal etc.
- Greet before meeting and provide updates

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- Ensure that all officers are seated before entry of senior ranking official
- Church Clerk/Secretary to submit necessary correspondence thereafter for Pastor's review, prior to dissemination
- **Pastor's Office Hours**
 - Provide refreshment for Pastor
 - Greet guests and manage flow at Pastor's discretion
- **Invited Attendance – Special Events or Meetings**
 - Protocol officer to liaise with inviting agency to
 - verify time, address, parking
 - multiple functions of official at the event
 - relay any specific requirements from ranking official, inclusive of menu selection
 - guide on gift selection if necessary
 - Protocol officer should be at venue before the official
 - Ensure all courtesies are in place
 - Secure necessary documents for official
 - Greet official, provide necessary updates, hand over documents
 - During event, stay in line of sight of official to facilitate immediate requests
- **Travel Protocol**
 - Liaison with receiving agency/country etc
 - Fill out forms where necessary
 - Greet and escort through process in Airport – incoming or outgoing
 - Accompany to housing and ensure requirements are met