

TOOL 1: DEVELOPING YOUR CHURCH'S BENEVOLENCE PHILOSOPHY AND POLICIES¹

From *Helping Without Hurting in Church Benevolence*²

Use the following questions in conjunction with Chapter 3 to begin laying the foundation for your church's benevolence ministry.

DEVELOPING YOUR BENEVOLENCE PHILOSOPHY

Focusing Our Purpose: What Are We Trying to Accomplish?

1. What is the problem to be solved? In particular, what is poverty?
2. What is the goal?
3. How will we try to achieve our goal?

DEVELOPING YOUR BENEVOLENCE POLICIES

Focusing Our Ministry: Whom Will We Help?

1. How do we prioritize those seeking assistance?
2. Do we have a special opportunity with a specific target group?

Focusing Our Resources: What Type of Help Will We Give?

3. What percentage of the benevolence budget will be used for relief and what percentage will be used for development?
4. Are there any types of assistance we will not provide?
5. How often and how much will we consider giving to people in various categories?
6. How will we respond to people who are capable of working but who are unwilling to work full-time?
7. How will we seek to incorporate all adult household members in the process of assistance and long-term change? Specifically, how can we honor and uphold family units—including the relationship between husbands and wives—in the intake and action plan process?

Focusing Our Process: What Procedures Will We Follow?

8. How will we design the intake process?
9. When will we not require an intake form to be completed in order to receive assistance?
10. What sort of fact checking will we do?
11. When will we not require an action plan to be completed?
12. When and how do we want to utilize other ministries or agencies?
13. Will attending church and/or listening to an explanation of the gospel be required in order to receive any assistance?
14. What will we do to address abusive or exploitive individuals who may be contributing to the person's poverty?

15. What will we do to address oppressive systems that may be contributing to the person's poverty?
16. What will we do to address the demonic forces that may be contributing to the person's poverty?

Focusing Our Message: How Will We Share and Solidify Our Guidelines?

17. How will we publicize our policies to the church?
18. How will we publicize our policies to the community?
19. Are there other items we should address in our policies?

¹ This tool draws on material from Diaconal Ministries Canada, "Guidelines for Benevolence," accessed May 28, 2015, <http://diaconalministries.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Guidelines-for-Benevolence-1.pdf>.

² Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert, *Helping Without Hurting in Church Benevolence: A Practical Guide to Walking With Low-Income People* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2015), 99-101.