

Act on Serving in an Honorary Capacity in the Religious Association (RLEMJZ-E)

February 8, 2017 (Official Gazette of Jehovas Zeugen in Deutschland, No. 1, 2017, p. 1) in the wording of September 4, 2024

List of Amendments				
Serial No.	Date	Source Official Gazette of JZD	Amendment to	Type of Amendment.
1	30.03.2022	No. 3, 2022, p. 1	Preamble par. 2	amended
2	30.03.2022	No 3, 2022, p. 1	§ 1 par. 3	amended
3	04.09.2024	No 5, 2024, p. 1	§ 3	reworded
4	04.09.2024	No 5, 2024, p. 1	§ 4	reworded
5	04.09.2024	No 5, 2024, p. 1	§ 6	reworded

Preamble. (1) This Act supplements the existing religious law in order to regulate the options for service in an honorary capacity.

(2) This Act does not regulate the exercise of an ecclesiastical office and the special assignments associated therewith, even when this office is carried out in an honorary capacity.

§ 1 Autonomous actions, preaching activity. (1) Actions attributable to the religious association are assessed according to the religious law of the religious association and its self-concept.

(2) The religious association is not responsible for the autonomous, personal religious practice of members of the religious association, even when the objective of their actions coincides with that of the religious association.

(3) One activity in particular that is autonomous and not attributable to the religious association is the preaching activity carried out by members (§ 13 StRG) as a personal practice of religion, even though the religious association makes available the infrastructure, equipment and other aids.

§ 2 Basis for service in an honorary capacity. (1) All services are rendered on a religiously motivated, voluntary basis in the knowledge that these are sacred services for the honor and glory of God.

(2) Employer/employee relationships are prohibited for all services. Service in an honorary capacity cannot be used to claim any reimbursement, support and care from

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the religious association. Insofar as compensation and minimal allowances are granted, these benefits are extended voluntarily without establishing any legal obligation.

(3) There is no legal entitlement to carry out service in an honorary capacity. The duration and scope are determined by the religious association. Both sides may prematurely terminate the service in an honorary capacity at any time and without providing reasons.

§ 3 Service in an honorary capacity for congregation activities. (1) In particular, the spiritual offices of the religious association mentioned in Section 3 subsections (1) and (3) of the Congregation Charter, “elder” and “ministerial servant”, are honorary offices of the religious association. These office holders in particular are responsible for the smooth running of religious services. They are also responsible for the pastoral care and protection of congregation members.

(2) The respective body of elders decides, in accordance with the religious law, on the possibilities for assisting in other congregation tasks and activities.

§ 4 Other forms of service in an honorary capacity. For service in an honorary capacity that is not a congregation activity, an application must be approved by the branch office (§ 6 StRG).

§ 5 Service in an honorary capacity as a guest at Bethel. (1) Serving in an honorary capacity as a guest at Bethel gives members of the religious community the opportunity to experience the unique spirit of this institution by temporarily participating in the community. Being a guest at Bethel is an expression of the personal commitment to Jehovah God, which was made through the vow of dedication.

(2) Serving in an honorary capacity as a guest at Bethel permits an individual to attend the Biblical morning worship program with the Bethel family and be present at the study of *The Watchtower* with the Bethel family, in order to personally experience the spirit of unity and brotherhood of the communal life that is fostered within the Order. A guest at Bethel submits to the rules of the Order for the duration of his stay to the extent that these apply to him. This service in an honorary capacity can be rendered for a maximum of one year.

§ 6 Order membership. Membership in the *Worldwide Order of Special Full-Time Servants of Jehovah’s Witnesses* is not established by service in an honorary capacity alone. However, this membership does not exclude service in an honorary capacity. This Act does not contain any regulations regarding membership in the aforementioned Order.