Sample SVdP Conference Assistance Guidelines
Adapted from the National Council:

Typical Services Offered
No universal definition of Conference work can be given because each Conference has autonomy in determining what charitable works and services will be undertaken in addition to in-person home visits. A convenient classification of typical person-to-person services that can be provided by parish Conferences in the United States today includes the following:

SVdP Services in Relation to Poverty
- Offer limited material or financial assistance to meet a short-term critical need. Emergency aid, combined with referral to the appropriate public agency, in situations where eligibility for continuing assistance is indicated.

- Provide referrals to appropriate community agencies when the Neighbor's problems indicate a need for professional guidance.

- Initiate and promote necessary services not offered in your local community, such as help finding employment or adequate housing or advocating for a grocery store in a food desert.

- Promote self-help programs. Self-help emphasis can limit the practice of recurrent assistances, which may be destructive of human dignity and degenerate into a subtle form of enslavement. Self-help systems are represented by such operations as food co-ops, credit unions, repair coops, home services for the aged and shut-ins, housing rehabilitation, legal services, adult education, and the like.

- Develop recreational programs through arranging for the use, at nominal fee, of local facilities by marginal income families and special groups (e.g., senior citizens). Leisure and play-time activities are essential to the well-being of all persons, and this aspect of living should be considered in any adequate parish-centered program for the poor.

Example of the guidelines established by an SVdP Conference:

- The assigned Vincentians will contact the Neighbor, conduct a home visit, discuss the emergency need with the client and complete a Conference Intake Form. Vincentians go in pairs. If a Home Visit is not possible, Vincentians should still meet with the Neighbor personally at a confirmed location such as a coffee shop.

- Only Neighbors within our parish boundaries will be financially assisted by our parish conference. All others will be referred to their local parish or other pertinent agencies.

- Requests should be carefully considered by the Conference after prayer and discernment. However:
  - Requests under $300 may be fulfilled by the home visit team without the full consent of the Conference. Requests over $300 should be prayerfully discerned at the next
Conference meeting. In urgent situations, the Executive Committee of the Conference can approve requests over $300.

- If a Neighbor calls for assistance a second time within a 12 month period, the request must be reviewed and approved by Vincentians at a Conference meeting. three or more times in the past the assistance should only be once every twelve months.

- Limited financial assistance may be provided for rent, utility payments, food, gas, prescriptions, home repairs, childcare, car repairs, loan payments. Again, any request over $300 should be considered by Vincentians at a Conference meeting.

- Conference will discuss and track common themes Neighbors present as barriers to sustainability and will research opportunities to eliminate those barriers to success.

- Conference will twin with other Conferences when funds allow to meet the needs of the poor.