

**AGENCY NAME/DEPARTMENT
CHAPLAINCY POLICY
(Revised April 2016)**

SECTION: Administration
TITLE: Agency Name Chaplaincy Program
NUMBER: 1100-013

A. POLICY

- 1) Because of the high risks and constant stresses faced by fire service personnel and the community's need for support during times of crisis, it will be the policy of the [Agency Name] to establish the [Agency Name] Chaplaincy Program to provide the services of a Chaplain on a regular basis.
- 2) Members of the Chaplaincy Program are on-call to provide comfort, counseling, consultation, guidance and assistance for Department personnel, their families and the community, in crisis situations.
- 3) Central Oregon Public Safety Chaplaincy (COPC) provides chaplain services to the Department at the pleasure of the [Chief/Sheriff].

B. PROCEDURE

Qualifications and Appointment

- 1) Chaplains shall be selected by the Central Oregon Public Safety Chaplaincy (COPC) and appointed by written order of the [Chief/Sheriff].
- 2) Potential candidates will submit a written application to COPC including a recommendation or endorsement from their pastor or governing church board.
- 3) The Department Chaplain Liaison shall serve on the COPC board to represent the interests of the [Agency Name].
- 4) All Chaplains will serve as the on-call Chaplain on a rotating basis that will be scheduled by the current chaplains.

Duties of the Chaplain

Emergency Situations

- 1) The Chaplain will respond to the emergency scene when contacted by dispatch.

- 2) While on scene provide appropriate victim assistance to free operational personnel for firefighting or emergency medical duties.
- 3) Provide appropriate assistance to firefighters engaged in firefighting or emergency medical activities.

Routine Duties

- 4) Chaplains are encouraged to ride with engine company/ambulance crews, as well as visit stations regularly. Ride-alongs are limited to availability and subject to the approval of the company officer.
- 5) Visit all stations and shifts as time allows.
- 6) Visit hospitalized members and their families.
- 7) Participate in providing in-service training as requested by the Training Officer.
- 8) Be available for helping or counseling members of the department in times of stress or difficulty.
- 9) Attend Department functions and provide invocations, benedictions and words of inspiration, when requested.
- 10) Conduct funeral/memorial services, as needed and requested.
- 11) Assist, when requested, with public events or public information needs.
- 12) All chaplains shall attend ongoing training and classes as required.

C. INSTRUCTION

Uniform and Equipment

- 1) The Chaplain's attire must comply with [Agency Name] standards, being appropriate for the occasion and professional in appearance. The Chaplain's uniform will clearly distinguish them from other Department personnel.

Response

- 1) The chaplain shall be notified for the need of his or her services by dispatch.
- 2) The on-call Chaplain will respond to calls for service in their own vehicle and be on scene within 20-30 minutes. Code-3 driving is not allowed. At all times, the chaplain shall adhere to posted traffic speeds and laws regarding the use of motor vehicles.

- 3) Upon receipt of a page, the on-call Chaplain will contact Dispatch to confirm their response.

On Scene

- 1) When on-scene, the Chaplain is part of the command staff and is under the direct supervision of the Incident Commander.
- 2) The Chaplain will be available for consultation but are never to give any statements to the media.
- 3) The Chaplain may provide referrals to community and social service agencies and may leave a Chaplaincy business card with a person the Chaplain has aided while on duty, especially if follow up work is anticipated.
- 4) The Chaplain may not distribute religious tracts or evangelize while on duty, but may respond to a personal request for follow-up on pastoral care at his discretion.
- 5) The Chaplain will always try to ascertain if a victim has a religious preference and attempt contact with the appropriate religious leader, if requested by the victim(s).

Firefighter/Chaplain Relationship

- 1) The relationship between the firefighter/EMT and the Chaplain should be on a professional basis. With the Firefighter's/EMT's lead, the Chaplain may enter into a counseling relationship with the firefighter.
- 2) Chaplains may provide spiritual and pastoral guidance, but will not engage in unsolicited or inappropriate evangelistic efforts.

Discipline and Grievances

- 1) The Chaplaincy Liaison, Shift Commander, or Station Captain will discuss issues or actions of concern with a chaplain on a one-to-one basis. The Executive Chaplain shall be notified on any incident in which the Chaplain Liaison, Shift Commander, or Station Captain deems appropriate.
- 2) Further investigation and action may be taken by the appropriate staff of the [Agency Name].
- 3) Chaplains having grievances may present their concerns to the Executive Chaplain or Shift Commander issuing the discipline, after having discussed them with the Chaplaincy Liaison.

- 4) Decisions may be appealed through the chain of command of the [Agency Name].

Confidentiality

- 1) All information communicated confidentially to a Chaplain in their role as a religious officer will be recognized as privileged communication and will not be released to department members or any other person except: Revelations of plans or proposed actions that involve a threat to the welfare of another person or the perpetration of a crime are not considered confidential.
- 2) Chaplains may not, except for purposes directly connected with the purposes of the Chaplaincy Program and their expressed duties therein, solicit, disclose, or make use of any information, names or circumstances concerning incidents or person involved with the Department.

Reimbursement

- 1) Chaplains who incur out-of-pocket expenses that directly relate to a call for service and mileage on their personal vehicle can request reimbursement through the Chaplaincy Liaison.
- 2) Requests for expenses incurred for seminars and training, including tuition, lodging, meals and travel can also be submitted to the Chaplaincy Liaison Officer for reimbursement. All training expenses must be pre-approved.

Death or Serious Injury Notifications

- 1) Notifications to family members of [Agency Name] personnel will be accomplished by a chief officer with the Chaplain assisting.
- 2) Verify all information prior to the notification.
- 3) Notify the survivor's pastor, if appropriate. If the pastor is responding to the scene, wait for them to arrive before leaving.
- 4) Chaplains will not directly contact a chaplain or pastor in another city/state requesting him to make a notification.

Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD) For Department Personnel

- 1) Chaplains should be trained in Critical Incident Stress Management and be part of the Central Oregon CISM Team.

Liability

- 1) Health/medical and automobile insurance will be personally provided by each Chaplain.

COPC SOPs

- 1) Chaplains shall additionally refer to Central Oregon Public Safety Chaplaincy Standard Operating Procedures while performing the duties of a Chaplain.