



Operations
Support

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Subject: The Chaplaincy Program
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I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a chaplaincy program, and to define the program's organizational structure, responsibilities, and operating procedures.

II. Policy

The Nebraska State Patrol (NSP) shall maintain a chaplaincy program for the purpose of serving agency employees and their families by providing to them ethical guidance, counseling, and assistance in confronting the spiritual, mental and emotional burdens of working in law enforcement and public safety. This will include assisting at disasters, traumatic events and death notifications. Chaplains shall not be sworn officers, and they shall have no authority to direct agency employees or to obligate agency personnel and other resources.

III. Procedures

A. Organizational Structure

1. The Chaplaincy Program shall be administered by the Command Chaplain who will be assigned to State Headquarters and be subordinate to the Superintendent.
2. The Command Chaplain shall provide administrative oversight of the Chaplaincy Program statewide. Deputy Command Chaplains shall be subordinate to the Command Chaplain and the assigned Major of the troop area to which they are assigned. Troop Area chaplains and Assistant Chaplains shall be subordinate to the commander of the troop area in which they reside in addition to the Deputy Command Chaplain of their assigned area.

B. Confidentiality

The Chaplaincy Program is a confidential program. No records will be maintained which will in any manner identify any individuals who use confidential clergy services. Agency chaplains will not discuss or divulge information obtained while acting in a confidential capacity to any person, including agency management personnel. All such communication with an agency chaplain, other than statements indicating potential bodily harm to any person, will be deemed to be privileged communication. Chaplains will not be called to testify at (NSP) disciplinary or grievance hearings unless requested by the accused.

C. Chaplain Qualifications

1. Agency employees will not be permitted to serve as chaplains due to potential conflicts of interest. Prospective chaplain candidates who are involved in other law enforcement chaplain programs or prison/jail ministries shall be interviewed and counseled by the Command Chaplain and/or Deputy Command Chaplain to ensure conflicts of interest in either program are avoided.

Nebraska State Patrol Chaplains shall have the following minimum qualifications:

a. Command Chaplain:

1. Be licensed or ordained as clergy in good standing with a local church, faith community, or denomination.
2. Be endorsed in writing by their ordaining ecclesiastical authority, denomination, or church leadership to serve as a law enforcement chaplain.
3. Have a minimum of a graduate degree (e.g. M.A., M.Div.), with a preference for a degree which includes theological training. Degree must be obtained from an accredited college, graduate school or seminary.
4. Have either an advanced degree in mental health/psychology (M.A., Ph.D., Psy.D.) or specialized training related to Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) (e.g. a certificate in specialized training through ICISF).
5. Have a minimum of 7 years ministry experience

b. Deputy Command Chaplain:

1. Be licensed or ordained as clergy in good standing with a local church, faith community, or denomination.
2. Be endorsed in writing by their ordaining ecclesiastical authority, denomination, or church leadership to serve as a law enforcement chaplain.
3. Have a minimum of a bachelor's degree (e.g. B.A., B.S.), with a preference for a graduate degree which includes theological (e.g. B.A., M.A., M.Div.) training. Degree must be obtained from an accredited college, graduate school or seminary.
4. Have a minimum of 5 years ministry experience.
5. Have either a degree (M.A., Ph.D., Psy.D.) or advanced training in mental health/psychology or certification in CISM.

c. Troop Area Chaplain

1. Be licensed or ordained as clergy in good standing with a local church, faith community, or denomination.
2. Be endorsed in writing by their ordaining ecclesiastical authority, denomination, or church leadership to serve as a law enforcement chaplain.
3. Have a minimum of a bachelor's degree (e.g. B.A., B.S.), with a preference for a graduate degree which includes theological (e.g. B.A., M.A., M.Div.) training. Degree must be obtained from an accredited college, graduate school or seminary.
4. Have a minimum of 5 years ministry experience.
5. Have training or certification in CISM, or a willingness to obtain training within 6 months of appointment as a Troop Area Chaplain.

d. Assistant Chaplain

1. Be a participating member/attendee in good standing of a local church, faith community, or denomination.
2. Be endorsed in writing by their church or faith community leadership to serve as a law enforcement chaplain.
3. Experience in law enforcement or advanced training such as a degree from an accredited school/program

or professional certification/training from a nationally recognized organization (e.g. AACC, ICISF) related to at least one of the following: mental health, CISM, crisis counseling, or pastoral care.

4. Have training or certification in CISM, or a willingness to obtain training within 6 months of appointment as an Assistant Chaplain.
5. Have a minimum of 3 years experience in ministry or law enforcement

2. All Nebraska State Patrol Chaplains shall also possess the following qualifications:

- a. Not have been convicted of a felony or any other crime including moral turpitude.
- b. Be able to pass a criminal background check.
- c. Demonstrate maturity in judgment, emotional stability and personal flexibility.
- d. A strong desire to be a source of pastoral care for law enforcement personnel and their families.
- e. Be willing and reasonably available to respond to situations where their assistance is needed on short notice.
- f. Have the ability to be a listening and compassionate companion for those who are struggling with life stresses.

D. Chaplain Recruiting Selection Process

1. The Command Chaplain shall be appointed by the Superintendent and will possess the qualifications listed in paragraph III. C. of this policy.
2. Deputy Command Chaplains, Troop Area Chaplains, and Assistant Chaplains may be recruited by the Troop Area Commanders in cooperation with the Command Chaplain. All employees are encouraged to forward the names and contact information of suitable and interested candidates to their Commander or the Command Chaplain.
 - a. Chaplain applicants shall submit completed applications to their appropriate Troop Area Commander in a format that shall be developed and maintained by the Command Chaplain in cooperation with the Human Resource Division Administrator.
 - b. The affected troop area commander shall ensure a thorough background investigation on each suitable chaplain candidate is performed. The background investigation will be

documented on an RMS report. Background investigators shall keep in mind that chaplains may be involved in high security level events. At a minimum, background investigations shall consist of:

1. Fingerprint based federal and Nebraska criminal history records check.
2. Drivers history check.
3. Verifying the applicants credentials as defined in paragraph III.C of this policy, and
4. Interviewing at least three personal references relative to the applicant's ability to serve as an agency chaplain.

Upon completion, the background investigation shall be forwarded to the affected troop area commander.

- c. If in the opinion of the troop area commander the applicant can serve the agency effectively as a chaplain, the applicant will be interviewed jointly by the Troop Area Commander and the Command Chaplain and/or Deputy Command Chaplain. The Troop Area Commander and the Command Chaplain and/or Deputy Command Chaplain shall reach a consensus regarding accepting the applicant as an agency chaplain. Their recommendation shall be made to the Superintendent who will have the final decision making authority.

3. All Chaplain roles are a volunteer position within the Agency.

E. Chaplain Duties and Responsibilities

Agency chaplains shall have the following major responsibilities. Additional responsibilities for Chaplain roles may be found in the Chaplain Handbook.

1. Assist in notifying families of agency employees who have been seriously injured or killed.
2. Respond to the hospital when an agency employee has been seriously injured or killed.
3. Assist the family of an injured or deceased employee upon injury or death and at other times of personal crisis, but only when formally requested to do so.
4. Visit sick and injured employees who are in the hospital, other treatment or care facility, or their home.
5. Attend and participate in funerals of agency employees and retirees.

6. Assist commanders in logistical planning associated with funerals of agency personnel and other law enforcement memorial services.
7. Attend designated agency ceremonies and offer invocations and benedictions at such functions.
8. Present information to prepare employees and their spouses for retirement.
9. Participate in applicable sessions of agency training and continuing education.
10. Be available to assist agency personnel at critical incidents, major disasters, death notifications and other extended, stressful operations.
11. Provide CISM services upon request.
12. Provide liaison with other religious leaders and the personal clergy of a seriously Injured or deceased employee.
13. Assist victims or other persons in need at incidents in which agency personnel are involved.

F. The director of the Training Division will ensure an overview of the Chaplaincy Program and chaplaincy services is provided to:

1. All Patrol recruits at the beginning of each recruit class. This will include an explanation of the applicability of the program while assigned as a recruit in the Academy.
2. All guests of the Patrol recruits immediately prior to each recruit graduation, preferably on guest day.

G. Investigations and Disciplinary Issues

Employees who are the subject of an internal investigation, criminal investigation or disciplinary action may seek support and counsel from an agency chaplain. In those situations, chaplains will not:

1. Interfere with the investigative or disciplinary process in any way.
2. Assist the Patrol or other agency with the investigation or disciplinary process in any manner.

H. Relationship to Religion

Chaplains will be representatives of their denominations, but ecumenical in service. Chaplains will not evangelize, preach, or attempt to convert any employee to follow the teachings of any particular religion. Employees who want to receive such teachings or information should arrange to do so when not working and outside of state facilities.

I. Relationship to Media

Chaplains will not provide information to the media about any incident, situation, or agency activity, except they may provide general information about the Chaplaincy Program upon request.

J. Weapons

Chaplains will not wear or carry weapons while performing agency related duties. This policy is in effect regardless of whether the chaplain has a permit to carry a concealed weapon. This does not prohibit a chaplain from using any item and reasonable action available to them in a life-threatening situation.

K. Referrals

Chaplains who identify a possible need for extended or professional assistance, or treatment may work with the employee's commander to refer an employee to the Employee Assistance Program or other appropriate source of assistance.

L. Requesting Chaplain Program Services

1. Agency employees may contact agency chaplains directly and confidentially at any time for assistance with personal matters.
2. For official matters the officer in charge of a scene or any member of the command staff may direct communications personnel to contact a chaplain and request the chaplain respond to a scene, hospital, or other facility as needed.

M. Ride Alongs

The Troop Commander or designee will arrange for chaplains to ride with officers while on patrol on an occasional basis. Prior to participation in a ride along, each chaplain will complete a form, NSP456. Completed release form will be retained by the affected Troop Area Commander while the chaplain is assigned to the troop area. Actual coordination of ride alongs, including the contact point, duration, etc., will be determined on a case-by-case basis to meet local needs and circumstances. Officers are encouraged to participate in the ride along program, but participation will not be mandatory.

N. Chaplain Program Equipment and Uniforms

1. Agency chaplains shall be clearly differentiated from sworn officers. Agency chaplains shall be issued the following uniform items. The appropriate uniform items shall be worn at all times when chaplains are representing the agency in public.
 - a. NSP shirt with Chaplain patch for debriefings and general agency meetings.
 - b. Business attire and chaplain badge for official public ceremonies (TA graduation ceremony, funerals, law enforcement memorial events, etc).
 - c. Light weight jacket clearly identifying them as NSP chaplains.
2. Agency chaplains shall also be issued or provided the following:
 - a. Photo identification identifying them as NSP chaplains.
 - b. Lapel pin identifying them as NSP chaplains.
 - c. Business cards.
 - d. Appropriate office supplies.
 - e. Car visor clearly identifying them as NSP chaplain vehicles.

Troop Area Commanders and the Command Chaplain shall ensure agency chaplains are supplied with the above-written uniform and administrative items. As agency chaplains leave the Chaplaincy Program, the Troop Area Commanders and the Command Chaplain shall ensure all issued uniforms and administrative items are collected and returned to the Supply Division. The replacing of lost, damaged and stolen equipment shall be performed in accordance with the provisions of Policy 03-09 (Uniforms and Personal Appearance) and Policy 05-01 (Maintenance and Use of Vehicles and Equipment).

O. Chaplain Training

1. Once approval to participate is granted from the Superintendent, the Command Chaplain will meet with the new chaplain to train and familiarize them about the Chaplaincy Program duties, agency operations, and applicable Patrol policies.
2. All agency chaplains will receive training appropriate to the duties anticipated as a Patrol chaplain. Training may be provided in a group setting organized by the Command Chaplain or individually by the

Command Chaplain or Deputy Chaplain using the Chaplaincy Program Manual as a training guide.

All agency chaplains shall be encouraged to receive continuing education related to law enforcement chaplaincy, such as the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation, Inc., International Conference of Police Basic Training, Nebraska Law Enforcement Chaplain Association training, and the FBI Chaplain in-service.

P. Expense Reimbursement

1. Pursuant to §81-1182.01 and the State of Nebraska Accounting Manual #15, volunteer Chaplains may be eligible for expense reimbursement for:
 - a. Travel expenses (including fuel and lodging) incurred when performing services,
 - b. Food and non-alcoholic beverages, and/or
 - c. Conference/Training costs.
2. In order to receive reimbursement, Chaplains must complete and submit a Volunteer Expense Reimbursement Request form and all applicable receipts to their Supervisor/Commander for approval within 60 days. Their Supervisor/Commander shall review and approve/deny of this reimbursement request and forward documents to the Accounting Division to process.