

St. Joseph, Missouri Police Department



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SUBJECT: Police Chaplain Corps		
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I. Policy

The Police Chaplain Corps is a support unit for the St. Joseph Police Department. Chaplains who serve in this capacity are volunteers who donate their time and expertise to the Department and/or its members. The Police Chaplain Corps provides immediate availability of clergy to offer comfort, counsel, and guidance in emergency/crisis situations to members, their families, and/or the community, upon request. It also serves as a resource to law enforcement agencies in Northwest Missouri during situations that merit immediate intervention. It assists in serving death notifications and participates in ceremonial functions, when appropriate.

The Police Chaplain Corps is sponsored by and accountable to the Department. The Corps is staffed by volunteer ministers of various faiths and is under the direction of the Support Services Division. The Support Services Commander or his/her designee shall serve as a liaison and will directly supervise the members of the Corps. The "Lead Chaplain" serves at the direction of the Chief of Police and will ensure the Chaplains are trained in accordance with the duties required. **Chaplains are not commissioned as sworn officers and have no law enforcement authority. Chaplains shall not intervene in any part of a police investigation without the permission of a Supervisor** (i.e. allowing family members to view a body at the hospital, entering a crime scene, etc.). All Chaplains shall conduct themselves in accordance with the Policies, Procedures, and Written Directives of the Department.

II. Procedure

A. Selection Criteria:

1. Must be ordained or licensed.
2. Must be a member in good standing of a recognized local church body.
3. Must have theological training or appropriate experience.
4. Must complete a written application and submit a letter of support from his/her church to the Support Services Commander.

5. Must submit to a background check, which may include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - a. Criminal history check (City, State, and/or Federal);
 - b. Reference check (including past employers); and
 - c. Verification of credentials.
6. Must appear before the Advisory Committee (see below) and receive its approval.

B. Advisory Committee:

1. The Advisory Committee shall interview prospective Chaplains and make chaplain recommendations to the Chief of Police. This committee is comprised of:
 - a. The Commander of the Support Services Division and/or the Crime Prevention Sergeant;
 - b. The Lead Chaplain of the Chaplain Corps; and
 - c. Two members of the current Chaplain Corps.
2. The Chief of Police has the final authority regarding recommendations from the Advisory Committee concerning chaplain selection. Retention in the Chaplain Corps is contingent upon continued good standing with the Department and/or the religious organization that he/she represents.

C. Structure:

The organizational structure of the Police Chaplain Corps shall be as follows:

1. **The Commander of the Support Services Division** or his/her designee;
2. **The Lead Chaplain:** He/she will be selected by the members of the Corps, subject to the approval of the Chief of Police. The appointment will be for a two-year term; however, there is no limit to the number of terms a member may be elected to serve. The Lead Chaplain will be responsible for:
 - a. Compiling and maintaining a current on-call schedule for the Chaplains;
 - b. Scheduling training for the Chaplains on an ongoing basis;
 - c. Coordinating activities when more than one Chaplain is called into service; and
 - d. Serving as spokesperson for the Police Chaplain Corps.
3. **The Lead Chaplain Assistant:** He/she will be selected by the members of the Corps, subject to the approval of the Chief of Police. The appointment will be for a two-year term; however, there is no limit to the number of terms the member may be elected to serve. He/she will assume the duties of the Lead Chaplain in his/her absence, and perform other duties as assigned by the Lead Chaplain.
4. **The Chaplain Corps Secretary:** He/she will be selected by the members of the Corps, subject to the approval of the Chief of Police. The appointment will be for a two-year term; however, there is no limit to the number of terms a member may be elected to serve. The responsibilities of the Secretary will be:
 - a. Keeping the minutes of all meetings of the Corps;
 - b. Keeping files of all documentation relating to the Chaplain Corps, including, but not limited to, the following:

- 1) Applications for membership;
- 2) Minutes of the meetings;
- 3) Department Policies, Procedures; and General/Special Orders; and
- 4) Training Records.

5. Volunteer Chaplain: He/she will provide the following:

- a. Provide support during times of crisis (i.e., on-duty death or injury of members or requests from other law enforcement agencies for assistance);
- b. Respond to requests from members for chaplain services of a personal nature;
- c. Visit members that are hospitalized or homebound due to serious injury or illness; and
- d. Perform any other duties assigned by the Lead Chaplain.

D. Call-Out Procedure/Report Process:

The following process shall be adhered to when the need for a Chaplain arises:

1. The Chaplain "on-call" will be contacted;
2. In the event that the on-call Chaplain can't be reached, the next-up Chaplain on the call-out list will be contacted. This procedure will be continued until a Chaplain is reached.
3. Upon arrival, the Chaplain will assess the need for additional chaplain services. In the event additional services are needed, the Lead Chaplain and/or Assistant Lead Chaplain will be informed.
4. The Lead Chaplain or his designee shall report the activity of the Chaplain Corp to the Support Service Division Commander monthly.

E. Uniform Requirements:

Members are required to dress in a manner appropriate for a representative of the ministry. Members shall not wear any clothing that would lead the public to confuse them with commissioned members. Chaplains shall wear Department-issued identification cards which clearly distinguish them from commissioned members.

Chris Connally, Chief of Police

Date