
	Florida State University Police Department	
Police Chaplain Program		
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Policy

Police Chaplain Program

It shall be the policy of the Department to maintain a volunteer Police Chaplain Program to provide spiritual guidance, counseling, and support to Department members and their families in times of crisis and to assist Department members with personal, family, or job related problems or concerns. The goal of this program is to provide a trusted individual in whom Department members may confide or seek guidance upon a voluntary basis.

Procedure

A. **General**

The Police Chaplain is a civilian volunteer clergyman who is an ordained minister. The Chief of Police shall appoint all chaplains. The Chief of Police, or designee, may terminate chaplain services at any time if their involvement in the program is deemed contrary to the interest of the Department and/or the Florida State University.

B. **Selection/Eligibility**

Police Chaplains are civilian volunteers. Clergy interested in becoming a Police Chaplain may contact the Chief of Police. To be considered for the position, a person shall:

1. Be ordained by a recognized religious body in good standing with five years of experience in ministry. Chaplains may be currently in service in their respective denominations or retired.
2. Be a legal resident of the United States.
3. Pass a background investigation conducted by the police department including, but not limited to, fingerprinting, driver's license check and a criminal history check.
4. Must not have been convicted of any felony or any offense involving moral turpitude.
5. Be willing and available to respond to any situation where the presence of a chaplain is requested.

C. **Selection Criteria**

Because of the enormous responsibility, sensitivity and confidential nature of the work, the selection process for membership and assignment to the Police Chaplain Program is strict in concept and policy and will be maintained to the highest professional standards.

1. The following criteria shall be considered in the selection process for members of the Police Chaplain Program:
 - a. Have a specialized interest in law enforcement chaplaincy.
 - b. Able to understand, accept and relate to persons holding religious commitments different than their own.
 - c. Supportive of the need for law enforcement in the community.
 - d. Experienced and skilled in counseling and knowledgeable about community resources and referrals.
 - e. High moral standing
 - f. Possess a caring and understanding attitude toward all people regardless of race, gender, or religious beliefs.

D. **Duties and Responsibilities:**

Police Chaplains shall perform the following duties and responsibilities:

1. Assisting in notifying families of Department members who are severely injured or killed.
2. Visiting severely ill or injured Department members.
3. Attend and/or participating in funerals of active and retired members of the Department and their immediate families.
4. Providing guidance, counseling, and support for members upon their request.
5. Attending Department official and social events, giving invocations and benedictions as requested.
6. Promoting, encouraging and aiding spiritual activities and functions among Department members.
7. Assisting the Department in community relations efforts by providing representation to various civic groups and religious leaders in the community as requested or approved by the Chief of Police.
8. Attending periodic meetings.
9. Police chaplains should participate in the Department's Patrol Ride-Along Program and periodically attend Departmental briefing sessions to familiarize themselves with agency operations.
10. Being open and flexible to new responsibilities and additional duties deemed necessary by the Chief of Police.

E. **Confidentiality**

All information communicated to Police Chaplains while acting in the role of personal counselor shall be recognized as privileged communications as provided by law (F.S. 90.505). The chaplain shall not be required to reveal the substance of any confidential communications except as provided by law. However, in the event the chaplain becomes aware of a situation in which the life or safety of any person is endangered, he shall have the responsibility to take the appropriate measures to insure the safety of the person or persons endangered. Such measures may include the notification of other authorities or resources who are equipped and prepared to handle the specific situation.

F. **Notifications**

1. A Police Chaplain shall be notified by the shift commander or command staff member in the event of any of the following situations:
 - a. Death or severe injury to any Department member, while on or off duty.
 - b. Unexpected death or severe injury to any immediate family member of Department members.
 - c. Any officer-involved shooting incident regardless of injury to an officer, suspect, or civilian.

- d. Any action taken by a police officer resulting in death or severe injury to another person
 - e. Any other situation deemed necessary by the shift commander or command staff member.
2. All members of the Department are also authorized to make direct contact with chaplains for personal or Department related purposes.

G. **Training**

All Police Chaplains must meet training standards established by the Department. The Police Chaplain will complete a basic training course prior to assuming duties with the Department.

- 1. The Police Chaplain Training Program (Basic Training Course) consists of the following:
 - a. Department Orientation
 - b. Overview of pertinent Departmental Policies and Procedures
 - c. Overview of University Services and Referrals (i.e. EAP, Victim Advocate, Counseling Center)
- 2. Additional and Specialized Training on topics of Death Notifications, Responding to a Crisis, Law Enforcement Family, Officer Injury & Death, Ministry to Personnel, and similar training may be assigned as they become available.
- 3. Police Chaplains with previous employment at the Department may be exempt from the completion of the Basic Training Course.

H. **Media Relations**

Police Chaplains shall not release information about the Department or its related activities to the media or other members of the public.

I. **Dress and Equipment**

- 1. Credentials: A Departmental Identification Card reflecting the title Police Chaplain is issued. The card will be in the police chaplain's personal possession when involved in departmental activities.
- 2. When on ride-along assignments and performing other departmental duties, the appropriate attire is left to the discretion of the Police Chaplain. Attire must conform to standards described in the General Order titled "Uniforms, Dress Code and Appearance".

J. **Compensation**

Police Chaplains are non-paid volunteers and do not receive a salary. The Department may provide a cellular phone stipend, mileage reimbursement or other reimbursements as approved by the Chief of Police. The Department will incur any expenses related to required travel and training course fees.

K. **Prohibitions**

Police Chaplains **shall not**:

- 1. Criticize in public any:
 - a. Actions taken by Department members

- b. Actions taken by other chaplains
 - c. Department policy
2. Disclose confidential law enforcement information.
 3. Circumvent Department policy and procedures.
 4. Impede any efforts or services of the FSU EAP (Employee Assistance Program).
 5. Carry a firearm or other weapon, concealed or unconcealed, while on departmental duty or while on University property.
 6. Represent themselves as a law enforcement officer.

L. **Additional Requisites**

The Police Chaplain is required to complete and sign a FSUPD "Notice of Confidentiality" form and a "Release and Waiver Liability" form (Ride-Along form).

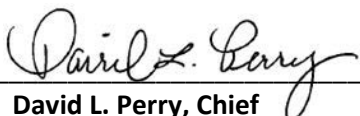
Glossary

Member of the Clergy – a priest, rabbi, practitioner of Christian Science, or minister of any religious organization or denomination usually referred to as a church.

Police Chaplain - A member of the clergy who is available to provide voluntary spiritual help, guidance, and counseling.

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