



Fire Chiefs' Association of Broward County Standard Operating Guidelines

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Subject: Chaplaincy & Spiritual Care Program

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I. Purpose:

- A. The purpose of this program is to provide guidance for Chaplaincy Support Services to Fire Rescue Service organizations within Broward County, Florida. The following guidelines are published by FCABC to assist member departments in chaplaincy program implementation, operation, and oversight.
- B. In light of the major physical risks and constant mental stress faced by fire service personnel on and off duty, and in retirement, each FCABC member department should develop a Chaplain and Spiritual Care Program. Chaplains may be obtained from internal personnel or externally from volunteer or contract sources.
- C. To provide for the full range of fire department personnel needs through the establishment of a comprehensive Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care program for spiritual and emotional wellness to fire rescue operational, support and administrative personnel as well as to retirees. This initiative supports the BHAP.

II. Scope

This guideline applies to all member departments of the FCABC. The FCABC will designate a County Fire Rescue Chaplain Coordinator to assist departments in implementation of this program.

III. Appointment

Each FCABC department is recommended to have a minimum of two designated Fire Chaplains. When more than two chaplains are designated the Fire Chief should designate a Senior Chaplain who oversees chaplain activities. The Senior Chaplain will report to the Fire Chief. The Chaplain will be appointed by written order of the Chief of the department.

IV. Responsibilities

The Chaplain(s) will be responsible for maintaining a pastoral relationship with career and volunteer personnel as well as retirees and will provide counsel and guidance when requested. Chaplains should also be trained and participate in CISM and Peer Support activities under the FCABC BHAP. Chaplains shall ensure that the program is able to accommodate most religious or spiritual beliefs and shall also accommodate members who have no specified faith or belief.

V. Duties of the Chaplain

- A. Emergency Situations: In emergency situations the duty Chaplain will respond when contacted by dispatch, the fire chief or incident commander, or upon department policy, and will report to the Incident Commander (IC) on the scene. When at a scene, the Chaplain will be under the

command authority of the officer in charge (IC). The Chaplain may perform other duties at the direction of the IC if sufficiently trained.

1. The Chaplain may respond as follows:

a. To the scene when:

- 1) A second alarm or larger structure fire is reported
- 2) A critical incident is in progress (ex. mass shooting/ MCI, aircraft crash, explosion, significant hazard materials event, etc.).
- 3) A critical injury or death of a firefighter at an incident or off duty.
- 4) The incident involves a victim that is a member of a department member's family.
- 5) Whenever the incident commander determines that the services of a Chaplain may be of value in the ongoing emergency operation. This may include situations where:
 - a) The victim or family is highly emotional or unstable (pediatric death, drowning, suicide, etc.)
 - b) Care is needed for the family of a victim while treatment is under way
 - c) The victim or the family requests the services of a chaplain/clergy
 - d) The incident commander feels the presence of a Chaplain would be of benefit to the victim or to department personnel.

b. To the hospital when:

- 1) The incident commander or company officer determines the victim or family may need support or counsel of the Chaplain.
- 2) The victim's family needs to be located and notified.
- 3) A member of the fire department or a fire member's family involved.
- 4) The IC or Company Officer feels a chaplain presence is of value.

B. Follow-Up Duties

1. On-the-Scene Duties:

- a. Provide appropriate victim or bystander assistance to free operational personnel for firefighting or emergency medical duties.
 - 1) Watch for signs of physical or emotional stress
 - 2) Assist in providing firefighting needs (water, rest, etc.)
 - 3) Advise command whenever it is felt that a firefighter or paramedic is in need of being relieved from operations.
 - 4) Assist with coordination of relief organizations such as Broward Canteen, American Red Cross, Salvation Army, etc.

2. Post-Emergency Duties:

- a. Conduct follow-up to ensure victims are receiving necessary assistance
- b. Ensure that firefighters' needs are met in the area of on-the-job injuries, Critical Incident Stress, Peer Support, etc.
- c. Notify families when a death or critical injury has occurred to member. This notification will be done in person with an accompanying uniformed fire officer or law enforcement officer.
- d. Will assist with hospital visitation or attend/ perform funeral services (If requested) and provide family consolation and guidance in event of death of a department member.

3. Routine Duties

a. Duties within the fire department

- 1) Visit all stations and shifts within the department

- 2) Visit hospitalized department members and families
 - 3) Participate in recruit training as suggested by training officer
 - 4) Available to help or counsel members in time of member stress
 - 5) Assist when requested by any division of the department in their programs, as available.
 - 6) Attend fire department functions as requested by the Chief
 - 7) Conduct funeral/memorial services as needed or when requested
 - 8) Participate as a member of the CISM/ Peer Support Team
 - 9) Participate in parades, wakes, memorial services and other special projects as determined by the chief or his/her designee.
 - 10) Participate in county, state, regional and/or national chaplain organizations as the opportunities arise.
 - 11) Prepare and monitor reports, maintain Chaplain files and implement modifications in chaplain operations as needed
 - 12) Conduct an average of 16 hours activities per month (recommended)
- b. Duties outside the fire department
- 1) Represent and interpret fire department goals and concerns to the churches and religious institutions of the community
 - 2) Assist when requested with public events and public information needs
 - 3) As time permits, and as requested, conduct extended ministry to member, retirees and their families (ex. funerals, weddings, baby dedications, baptisms, etc.)

VI. Qualifications and Training

- A. The individual appointed to the position of Chaplain will be:
1. An Ordained priest, rabbi, minister or Iman (or equivalent religious leader) holding an endorsement from an Endorsing entity in which he/she is a member in good standing. Chaplains must successfully pass federal, state, and local background checks according to department policy.
 2. In good physical health and willing to participate in necessary training events
 3. Interested in the fire service, reliable and willing to serve in crisis situations
 4. Prepared through education and training to serve people in a crisis zone
 5. Willing to commit the time necessary to make the ministry of the chaplaincy effective and meaningful.
 6. Committed to learn the skills necessary to effectively relate to and minister to personnel and retirees in crises.
 7. Take the class FFC Essentials of Fire Chaplaincy or equivalent within 6 months of appointment. Be certified in CPR, First Aid, and BBP. Take on-line orientation training or equivalent of basic Incident Command System.
 8. Be able to provide chaplaincy services to all personnel regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation or religious affiliation.
- B. To the extent possible, the Chaplain will be given the opportunity to meet with members and staff of the department, visit stations and receive guidance in fire department organization and procedures. Chaplains should arrange riding time with rescue units, engine companies, and/ or Battalion Chiefs. Training will be provided to help the Chaplain protect themselves and to be able to render proper help and assistance to members on the emergency scene. Participation in CERT

training or equivalent is highly recommended.

C. Assistant Chaplains

Under direction of the Fire Chief or designee, the Senior Chaplain will be responsible for supervising the administration of these guidelines and overseeing the selection of Assistant Chaplains.

1. The Assistant Chaplain:

- a) May include outside civilian clergy, who will be governed by the rules, regulations and guidelines applicable to the Department or Senior Chaplain.
- b) Must possess the same high level of spiritual-moral standards required of the Department or Senior Chaplain.
- c) Must demonstrate reliability and willingness to serve and train as a Chaplain
- d) May be called to assist the Senior Chaplain during emergencies, during the Senior Chaplain's absence, or whenever requested.
- e) Assistant Chaplains are supervised generally in their Chaplain duties by the Senior Chaplain but are subject to directions by Company Officers, Battalion Chiefs or above when performing at an incident or on department premises.
- f) Assistant Chaplains may have a lesser level of spiritual training or certification if working under direction of a Senior Chaplain. The Senior Chaplain may designate an individual as "Chaplain-in Training" at the Fire Chiefs discretion.

VII. General Guidelines

- A. The Senior Chaplain, under the direction of the Fire Chief, will provide supervision and guidance to the Chaplain(s). This includes:
 1. Receiving and reviewing applications for Chaplain(s).
 2. Interviewing Chaplain applicants and recommending approval/disapproval.
 3. Introducing new Chaplains to the Command Staff and members.
 4. Monitoring the program, developing monthly activity reports, and implementing modifications in the program as needed.
 5. Evaluating complaints and seeking resolutions.
 6. Overseeing the budget and the issuing of the items necessary for the Chaplain (i.e., I.D., PPE & safety equipment, radios, vehicle, etc.)
- B. The Chaplain does not replace the lead of member's home religious organization, if any, but seeks to support the concerns of every organization whose members may be firefighters or retirees. The Chaplain(s) shall be available to minister to every member of the department, regardless of his or her national origin, race, sex, gender, sexual orientation or religion.
- C. Any communication a person makes to chaplain on a *strictly confidential* basis will not be released to department members or any other person unless required by mandated reporting requirements. Any fire department personnel may go directly to the Chaplain without having to notify his or her supervisor or anyone else. Chaplains may refer members for specialized care as needed.
- D. Any fire department officer or member (including administrative staff) who is made aware of any situation which may need the response of the Chaplain may contact the Chaplain directly. Fire department administrators will keep current contact information for the Chaplains. The Chaplains may also be contacted through the fire department administration or dispatch. Examples of situations where the Chaplain *should be* contacted include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Death or injury to, or hospitalization of a fire department member or retiree
- 2) Death or injury to, or hospitalization of a fire department member's spouse or child.
- 3) Death in a fire department member's close family (i.e., parent, sibling, grand parent, or other close relative).
- 4) Emergent situations that may pose an exceptional risk to firefighting personnel (Support of Law Enforcement on hostage or barricaded suspects, civil unrest, etc.)

VIII. The Chaplain's Uniform

A. After appointment, the Chaplain will be issued the following equipment:

1. All Hazards PPE including safety vest, eye protection, coat, pants, gloves and helmet with "Chaplain" identification markings. Footwear is at the discretion of the department.
2. Chaplain's badge and dated identification card
3. Assigned a Broward County Fire Chaplain Radio Designator. Departments should have a minimum of one portable radio available for chaplain use.
4. Chaplain's business cards.
5. Consideration should be given to having a designated vehicle for chaplain use.

B. The Chaplain's Class "A" Uniform

The Chaplain shall wear the designated class "A" uniform when prescribed for formal ceremonies, funerals, death notifications, or as designated by the Fire Chief. A Chaplain wears the badge and patch of the firefighters they serve. The sleeve marking shall be three 1" gold stripes equivalent to the honorary rank of Battalion Chief. Chaplains who represent more than one Department may wear the universal markings of the Federation of Fire Chaplains upon approval of the Fire Chief.

C. The Chaplain's Class B Uniform

The Chaplain's Class B uniform will conform to the Department's standard including a white shirt with department identification. A symbol of the chaplain's individual religious affiliation (Cross, Star of David, etc.) shall be worn as collar devices.

D. The Chaplain's Casual Uniform, Class C

The Chaplain's Class "C" Uniform will conform to the Department represented guidelines. Polo shirts, operational "T" shirts, etc. should have "Chaplain" embroidered or printed according to policy.

E. The Chaplain's Field Uniform

The Chaplain Field uniform shall be in accordance with Department Standards, usually Class B or Class C. Some Departments may prescribe a Class "D". In an emergency or casual engagement, the chaplain may also perform his duties dressed in civilian clothes with his department badge or ID or they may wear any one of the department issued shirts as appropriate. Safety equipment, ballistic vests, etc. shall be issued based on Department policy.

A. -Each agency shall determine the level of uniform and/or PPE that shall be issued to each Chaplain under their purview.

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