

**Myrtle Beach, South Carolina**  
**Police Department**  
**Administrative Regulations and Operating Procedures**

**Subject: Department Chaplain Program**

Number: 105-B

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Department Chaplain Program, 105 January 1, 2001

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**PURPOSE**

To provide a counseling and support system to employees through an established Department Chaplain Program. This program will support and enhance those services available through the City's Mental Health Counselor.

**PROCEDURE**

**1. AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY**

A. The department Chaplain position is a voluntary, non-compensated position occupied by a qualified non-sworn person.

B. The Chaplain position is a non-commissioned status.

C. The Chaplain shall display a caring and concerned attitude to all members of the department regardless of religious background.

D. The Chaplain will be available to serve on a 24-hour on call basis.

E. The Chaplain is a support person to the Chief of Police and reports to the Chief of Police or his designee. The Chaplain is authorized to visit personnel and have access to all buildings and scenes where the presence of law enforcement officers indicates appropriate involvement.

F. The Chaplain will assist all law enforcement officers and their families in matters within the Chaplain's realm. The Chaplain will not in any way interfere

with an officer in the performance of their duties nor assume the duties of a sworn and certified police officer.

## 2. QUALIFICATIONS

A. The Chaplain shall be an Ecclesiastically Certified (ordained) person in good standing and endorsed by a recognized religious body.

B. The Chaplain shall have a minimum of a Bachelor's Degree in related fields of study with strong emphasis in counseling.

## 3. SELECTION CRITERIA

A. The Chaplain may be selected through active recruitment by the Chief of Police or other Departmental personnel by advertising an open position.

B. Interested persons must submit a written Letter of Interest and Qualifications to the Chief of Police.

C. All Letters of Interest and Qualifications will be reviewed by the Chief of Police.

D. The Chief of Police will make the final decision for selection and approval.

## 4. BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION

A. All interested persons are subject to a criminal background check that consists of:

- 1) Verification of Ecclesiastical Certification (ordained).
- 2) Verification of Bachelor's Degree.
- 3) Criminal History Check.
- 4) Driver History Check.
- 5) Contact with references, friends and acquaintances.

B. The Background Investigation Form currently used by the Police Department for hiring will be completed by all applicants.

## 5. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. The Chaplain will be available for the following:

- 1) Provide pastoral counseling to department personnel.
- 2) Provide pastoral counseling to the families of department personnel.
- 3) Visit sick or injured department personnel in the hospital.
- 4) Make death notifications.
- 5) Provide assistance to victims.
- 6) Assist at any unnatural death incident.
- 7) Serve as liaison with other Clergy in the community.
- 8) Furnish answers for religious questions.
- 9) Serve in ceremonial functions; i.e. funerals, religious and civil ceremonies, academy graduations, swearing in of new officers, awards ceremonies and others as requested by the Chief of Police.
- 10) Serve on review boards, award boards and other committees.
- 11) When there is an accident in the community involving injury and there is need to provide comfort to injured parties and their families.
- 12) Be an advisor to the Chief of Police on all matters pertaining to moral, spiritual and religious welfare of the department.
- 13) Coordinate and plan any religious service or educational programs for the department or community as appropriate.
- 14) Give presentations to the agency's training and recruit orientations.
- 15) Attend shift briefings, when possible.
- 16) Other duties assigned by the Chief of Police.

B. The Chaplain will confer with the City's Mental Health Analyst for professional support in his counseling duties.

## 6. TRAINING

A. Prior to field assignment, the Chaplain must receive employee orientation briefings or training in each of the assigned duties and responsibilities listed above. This training will be coordinated by the Administrative Captain and taught by the Training Section.

B. The Chaplain is not required to be a certified police officer. Chaplain should become familiar with the police environment in order to develop an understanding of the pressures of the profession.

C. The Chaplain should attend seminars and other training as available.

D. The Chaplain is encouraged to become certified by the International Conference of Police Chaplains. The Administrative Captain will keep current information for contact personnel of this organization on file.

## 7. CONFIDENTIALITY-EMPLOYEE COUNSELING

A. The Chaplain is expected to maintain a level of confidentiality concerning what is discussed with an employee.

B. The only exception is when an employee is involved in a situation of danger either to themselves or others. The Chaplain shall use sound judgment in reporting such situations. The Chaplain shall advise the employee if the matter is to be brought to the attention of the Chief of Police.

## 8. REQUESTS FOR CHAPLAIN ASSISTANCE

A. Any employee of the Myrtle Beach Police Department may request the assistance of the Chaplain for personal or professional reasons.

B. The Chaplain may be reached through police communications by telephone, radio or pager.

C. The police communications dispatcher will immediately make contact with the Chaplain when requested by a department supervisor and confirm such contact.

D. Supervisors are encouraged to contact the Chaplain for assistance when situations involve the general duties and responsibilities of the Chaplain.

## 9. CHAPLAIN RIDE-A-LONG

A. The Chaplain is authorized to ride with department officers at any given time.

B. The Chaplain shall notify the Communications Center when they are in service. A call number will be assigned and should be used when advising the Communications Center of their availability and for any subsequent radio conversation.

C. Dispatchers will enter all activities of the Chaplain into the CAD system and be aware of the location of the Chaplain in the same manner as is followed for all in-service police personnel.

## 10. UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

A. The Chaplain will be issued a uniform for regular use, which will consist of:

- 1) White Golf-style Shirt with "Chaplain -- Police Department" and City Seal embroidered on the front and "Chaplain" screen printed on the back in Navy Blue letters.
- 2) Khaki Pants
- 3) A Navy Blue windbreaker-type jacket with "Chaplain -- Police Department" and City Seal embroidered on the front and "Chaplain" screen printed on the back in white letters.
- 4) Chaplain's badge -- gold in color with pocket carrier.

B. The Chaplain shall be issued a standard police uniform to be worn for special occasions such as graduations, memorial services, funerals, weddings or other functions designated by the Chief of Police or his designee, along with the following items:

- 1) Cross on each side of collar -- gold
- 2) Name plate -- gold
- 3) City Identification Card -- Volunteer -- "Police Chaplain"

C. The Chaplain, on duty or on call, shall be issued a pager.

## 11. SELECTION AND RECRUITMENT OF ADDITIONAL CHAPLAINS

A. The appointment of additional Chaplains is at the discretion of the Chief of Police. The Chief of Police, in consultation with the Department Chaplain, will determine the need for additional support personnel. All interested persons must meet the established selection criteria.

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