

Developing a Successful Fire Chaplain Service in Your Fire Department



Photo courtesy of April Gamiz, Allentown Morning Call



Leaders in Critical Thinking

2022



Authors of Chaplain Guidance

Chief Al Yancey, Jr., EFO

Minooka (Illinois) Fire Protection District
VCOS Board of Directors
yanceya@minookafire.com

Brent Molskness

Chaplain
Minooka (Illinois) Fire Protection District
brentmolskness@missionbible.church

Jimmy Duncan

Executive Director
Federation of Fire Chaplains
FFC.chaplain@gmail.com



Volunteer & Combination Officers Section (VCOS) Board

Executive Committee

Chair

Chief Charles Flynn

Suffield (Connecticut) Fire Department

cflynn@suffieldct.gov

Vice Chair

Chief Rich Cowger

Columbus (Montana) Fire Rescue

rcowger@columbusfirerescue.com

Secretary/Treasurer

Chief Fred Windisch, CFO, EFO

Ponderosa (Texas) Fire Department

FWindisch@ponderosavfd.org

International Director

Chief Jason Catrambone

Escambia County (Florida) Fire Department

jlcantrambone@myescambia.com

Immediate Past Chair

Immediate Past Chair and Chair Emeritus

Chief Timothy S. Wall

North Farms (Connecticut) Volunteer Fire Department

firewallco7@sbcglobal.net

Secretary/Treasurer Emeritus:

Chief Robert Bettenhausen

Tinley Park (Illinois) Fire Department

At-Large Board Members

Chief Norvin Collins, MS, EFO

San Juan Island (Washington) Fire District

Norvin.collins@me.com

Chief Jim Cook

Leesburg (Virginia) Volunteer Fire Company

jcook@leesburgfire.org

Chief Kevin Hardwick (ret.)

Glendale (Ohio) Fire Department

Kdhardwick1@gmail.com

Chief Brita Horn

Rock Creek (Colorado) Volunteer Fire Department

Chieffhorn25@gmail.com

Chief Paul Sterling

Millville (Delaware) Volunteer Fire Company

Paulsterlingjr@gmail.com

Chief Al Yancey, Jr.

Minooka (Illinois) Fire Protection District

yanceya@minookafire.com



Federation of Fire Chaplains Board

Jim Cook, President

California Fire Chaplains Association
CDF/Cal Fire and the Riverside County Fire Department-Retired

John F. Long, Jr., Vice-President

Maryland State Firemen's Association
Chaplain-Anne Arundel County Volunteer Firefighters Association
President-Ferndale Volunteer Fire Company in Glen Burnie, MD
US Coast Guard-Retired

Mark Akers, Treasurer

Chaplain-Magnolia Fire Department, Magnolia Texas
Captain-Houston Fire Department
Chaplain-Houston Professional Firefighters Association

Roosevelt Johns, Secretary

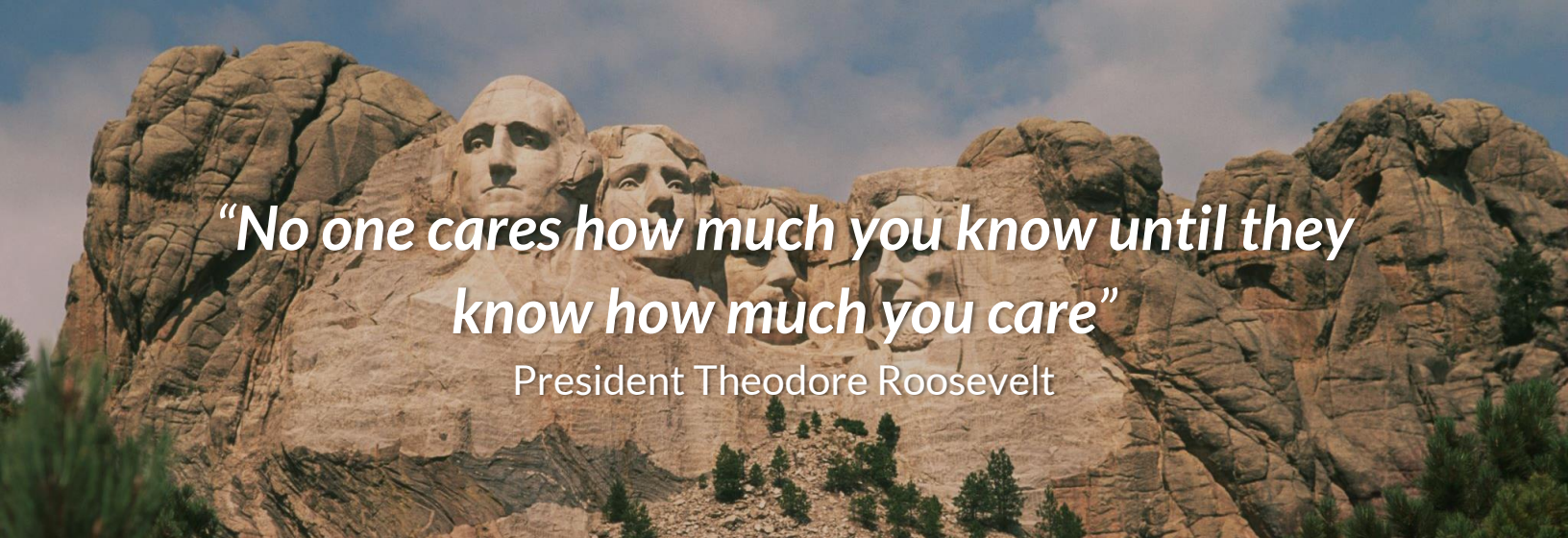
Chaplain-Atlanta Fire Department

Gordon Kouwenberg

Canadian Liaison to the Board and Director of Regions - International
Vice-President BC Association of Fire Chaplains
Presbyterian Minister-Retired

Keith Smith, Member-at-Large

Eules Fire Department
Texas Corps of Fire Chaplains -Treasurer

A photograph of the Mount Rushmore National Memorial in South Dakota, showing the four large granite faces of the presidents carved into the rock face. The sky is blue with some light clouds.

“No one cares how much you know until they know how much you care”

President Theodore Roosevelt

Introduction to the Chaplaincy

Chaplain Chris Groh, Joliet (Illinois) Fire & Police, once stated, *“sometimes we are just there to stir the soup.”* His point was, a chaplain is not always there to counsel; sometimes they are simply support when the firefighters are busy with their mission of saving lives and protecting property. *“When they leave for a call, it is very helpful for someone to “stir the soup” so they can eat when they get back and be ready for the next call to service.”* This is what many chaplains refer to as “a ministry of presence.”

A chaplain is a critical component in the organization. The chaplain leads people into the healing phase after their incident, often while they are still standing in the front yard watching their house burn. The chaplain makes sure the families have connection to the fire department to get answers, guidance, etc. Remember, most families have not been through tragedy and have no experience; the chaplain can guide them toward recovery. You, as the chief, and your command staff have a lot going on during an incident and after. A chaplain is that perfect liaison between command staff and the citizen.

In late 2021, the Volunteer and Combination Officer Section (VCOS) of the International Association of Fire Chiefs reissued an updated version of the Yellow Ribbon Report. The report, *“Best Practices in Behavioral Wellness for Emergency First Responders”* lists eleven best practices for behavioral health within a fire department. Best practice #1 states,

“Create psychological safety inside your workplace by encouraging and employing the interpersonal skills necessary to seek others’ input, invite feedback and ideas, and create an interpersonal climate in which others are willing to share their ideas and concerns.”

The VCOS Board of Directors is providing this publication because the board believes that it is important that each fire department has a support structure for the health and wellness of the people, and their families, who make up the organization of a fire department. A chaplain program is a critical component of a comprehensive fire department behavioral health system. The fire station itself is only a cold building with a few fire trucks inside. It is nothing without people. The people that operate these

buildings, these apparatuses, and respond to the calls, and the families behind them are what make up the organization.

This guidance document is about the vital role of a chaplain within the fire department, a person who can bring a great level of support to the organization. A chaplain within your fire department is a significant step in accomplishing the creation of “psychological safety inside your workplace.”

VCOS is honored to partner with the Federation of Fire Chaplains Association (FFC), to bring you this guidance document. The FFC, formed in 1978, is incorporated as a nonprofit, professional organization. The purpose of this organization is to bring together individuals and groups who are interested in providing effective chaplaincies for fire & rescue service organizations.

The VCOS Board of Directors and the FFC consider this a great partnership. Fire chiefs from around the world have seen the benefit of the chaplaincy program within their organizations and the role of chaplains has expanded significantly over the years to support the people of the fire service, and their families. It is a great opportunity to partner and encourage fire service leaders to have additional tools in the toolbox of leadership, to provide for organizational behavioral health.



A Chaplain's Perspective

The following are the words of Chaplain Brent Molskness, who serves as the Chaplain of the Minooka Fire Protection District, Minooka, Illinois:

“My role is summed up in three words, “ministry of presence.” I am present around the firehouse on a regular basis to be available to firefighters, paramedics, and administration; offering emotional support and encouragement. Present on the scene to comfort and direct victims, and to be a liaison between the department and individuals involved. Present in the community to represent and be an ambassador for the department. Through this ministry of presence, I find that I can offer a solid foundation in what is often the chaotic world of the fire service.”

Before we discuss the roles and responsibilities of a chaplain, it is important to put the chaplaincy in perspective. A chaplain is very different from a pastor of a singular religious organization. A chaplain is responsible for supporting the people of an organization, branch of military, hospital, or ship. The role of the fire department chaplain is drilled down even more specifically, which we will address in this document.

One of the most important things to remember is that a chaplain is there to support, encourage and provide spiritual and emotional guidance to those seeking help in these areas. The role of the chaplain is to help firefighters and staff during difficult times, as well as celebrate their exciting times. A chaplain is there to assist the fire chief and incident commander by focusing on the needs of citizens adversely impacted during a critical incident. The chaplain also has a significant role in the behavioral health of the organization as he or she invests significant time and energy in its people.



Fr. John O'Connor, Chaplain, Prince William County Department of Fire and Rescue, assisting displaced resident of a townhouse fire.

Chaplain History

The history of the role of chaplain dates back many centuries. Many trace the role back to the 4th century and St. Martin, the Bishop of Tours. It is told that during some of his travels he came upon a beggar and seeing how destitute the man was, Martin cut off half of his cape (*cappellano* in Latin) and gave it to the man and thus the name “chaplain.”

From this early beginning, the role of chaplain has been one of bringing comfort and support to those who are experiencing challenging times. Throughout the years since chaplains have been found to be part of royal courts, military forces, religious institutions, medical hospitals, educational campuses, and of course, first responder companies. Throughout its long history, chaplaincy continues to be a work of support and care.

Chaplain Qualifications

Fire chiefs who want to start a chaplain program should first look toward the organized groups of chaplains, groups such as International Conference of Police Chaplains (ICPC) or the Federation of Fire Chaplains (FFC).

The FFC provides some excellent resources on beginning a fire department chaplain program. These resources can be found by going to www.ffc.wildapricot.org and clicking on the “Training & Resources” page.

Chaplains should apply through their organization just as with any other position. Although a department may have identified a candidate, it is important to take the candidate through the selection process, to include background check, criminal history, etc. and any other processes. An administrative type medical physical is important to make sure chaplains are in a healthy status for extreme weather activities, stress, etc.

Here are just a few of the qualifications offered by the FFC, in their document “Beginning a Fire Chaplaincy”:

The individual appointed to the position of Fire Department Chaplain will be:

- In good physical health
- Interested in the fire service
- Prepared to serve in a crisis zone
- Willing to commit the time necessary to make the ministry effective
- Committed to learn the skills necessary to effectively relate to and minister to firefighters and EMS personnel.

The appendix includes an operating guide for the Loudoun County Combined Fire and Rescue System Chaplain Program. This document offers additional information and an exemplar for establishing guidelines for a program.

Often, when the word “minister” appears, people misinterpret the role that they are on the scene to conduct. A chaplain should neither be expected nor plan to enter the fire station to give a sermon. A minister is defined as “a person authorized to conduct religious worship, a member of clergy; pastor.” However, a chaplain is also defined as a person “to give service, care, or aid; attend, as to wants or necessities” - <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/ministering>.

“The chaplain must be able to recognize the signs of stress within department personnel and have methods to effectively help firefighters cope with the pressures they face on a daily basis.” (Book: *Beginning a Fire Chaplain*) This is ministry.

Chaplain Role

Best practices in the role of a chaplain:



Chaplain Wendy Norris, Federation of Fire Chaplains, delivering the invocation at the 2022 Congressional Fire Services Institute Dinner.

Training

Participate in Incident Command System training, attend further training with response personnel, continuing chaplain education, etc.

Support to Local Department Personnel

Counsel, visitation, preside over events such as funerals and weddings, departmental and other community ceremonies. Be a ministry of presence so that personnel know you are available.

Support to Victims

Liaison between department and victims, offer perspective of situation, connect them with resources, death and injury notification.

Support to the Community

Be one of the faces of the department in the community, be available for critical incidents, etc.

Chaplain and The Chief

Words from Fire Chiefs on the Benefits of the Chaplain Program



Photo courtesy of Harlem-Roscoe Fire District, Illinois

Keith H. Johnson, System Chief, Loudoun County Fire and Rescue System, Leesburg, Virginia

The Chaplain Program at Loudoun County Combined Fire and Rescue System (LC-CFRS) began in June of 2008. This program was established for the spiritual support for members of the fire and rescue system and the community of Loudoun County.

The committee has established documents that have given guidance as to the purpose, training, and organization of the committee and the program. I have attached the current System Wide Procedure that we operate under (*SWP 101.1 – Chaplain Program*).

Over the years our program has evolved into what we utilize today. We are one of the few fire service originations that dispatch chaplains on operational incidents. The benefits of this program consistently prove that the Chaplains that volunteer with LC-CFRS play a significant role in the community when at the scene of an accident, when a family suffers a sudden loss, or even within our fire stations when one of our members is struggling with personal matters, struggling through a tough workday, or recovering from a call that was difficult for them. The counsel and comfort that a Chaplain can bring to a grieving family, or a hurting system member is immeasurable, and the conversation and even the support they bring as they can perform a wedding ceremony or assist with a funeral has been beneficial to our entire system.

John Petrakis, Fire Chief, Channahon Fire Protection District, Channahon, Illinois

The Channahon Fire Protection District instituted a chaplain program in December 2016. Like many fire service organizations, the intent was to provide an individual within the organization who could provide the traditional “pastoral care” element for our citizens and firefighters. However, the program has evolved into much more. In our experiences, we have found our program to champion in two scenarios:

- Post structure fire management
- Losing a loved one is a “traumatic event”

Our program is founded on the principle of “recovery.” The sudden loss of a cherished home or loved one completely throws an individual or family outside of their comfort zone. In the wake of their tragedy, we commonly hear from a grief-stricken person, “I don’t know what we will do. What do we do next?”

In our experiences in Channahon, we have found much success in modeling our chaplain program after Emergency Support Function (ESF) #6.

<https://www.fema.gov/pdf/emergency/nrf/nrf-esf-06.pdf>

In 2021, we rebranded the chaplaincy “support services” because of what the program had evolved into with the initiative of our Support Services Coordinator. The support services model is a hybrid of pastoral care and post-disaster relief coordination.

- Pastoral Care
 - Empathy
 - Ability to console
 - Assist in dealing with stress, trauma
 - Emotional support
 - Connect a family to their religious preference
- Support Services
 - Recovery
 - Basic needs
 - Housing, Food, Clothing
 - Coordinate disaster relief
 - Pet services

We are very competent in our abilities to respond to and mitigate critical incidents. In the shadows of our effort, the needs of those we serve can be overlooked or underestimated. Taking care of our community also includes a recovery element to address their psychological, emotional, and basic domestic needs as they face disaster and loss.

Donna Black, Fire Chief, Duck Fire Department, Duck, North Carolina

The Duck Fire Department utilizes chaplains from around the Outer Banks region. One of the biggest assets of having chaplains directly associated with the fire departments throughout our county is that they respond on incidents with all of us. Whether they know us directly or just from listening to day-to-day radio traffic, they know who we are, what we have going on and are willing to help.

I have personally benefitted from three of our chaplains in Duck. They reach out when they hear of a significant incident or respond when we request them to support our people and/or citizens involved. The chaplains who understand and have an interest in what we do have proven to be the most helpful and engaged. Firefighters can be a tough group of folks to reach. Chaplains who have the opportunity to learn about who we are and what we do are much more likely to relate to our firefighters and the environment in which we serve.

Resources

Federation of Fire Chaplains Resource Page

<https://ffc.wildapricot.org/resource>

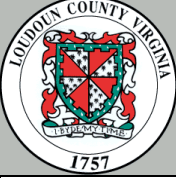
National Volunteer Fire Service Webinar: The Role of Chaplains in the Fire Service

<https://www.nvfc.org/webinar-the-role-of-chaplains-in-the-fire-service/>

FEMA Emergency Support Function #6

<https://www.fema.gov/pdf/emergency/nrf/nrf-esf-06.pdf>

Addendum A

	LOUDOUN COUNTY COMBINED FIRE AND RESCUE SYSTEM SYSTEM-WIDE PROCEDURE (SWP)
TITLE	Chaplain Program
SECTION	Administration
SWP#	101.1
ISSUED	07/01/16
REVISED	
APPROVED	System Chief <u>W. Keith Brower, Jr.</u> W. Keith Brower, Jr.

This SWP supersedes and replaces FRG 1.5.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this SWP is to codify a Chaplains Committee of the Loudoun County Combined Fire and Rescue System (LC-CFRS). The Committee serves at the pleasure of the Chief of the LC-CFRS and reports administratively to the Executive Committee of the LC-CFRS. This policy also defines the role of Chaplains in responding to calls for assistance when dispatched by the Loudoun County Emergency Communications Center (ECC). The Committee and the response program are designed to provide spiritual support for members of the fire and rescue system, law enforcement, and the community.

SCOPE

This SWP applies to all Chaplains recognized as a member of a Fire or Rescue company outlined in Chapter 258 of the Codified Ordinances of Loudoun County.

DEFINITIONS

Chaplain – An individual whose primary mission is to offer non-denominational, non-sectarian spiritual aid, comfort, and help to citizens and to first responders and their families; to help humankind in developing their most noble characteristic, that of serving others; to help bring about a better understanding among all people with mutual harmony and respect regardless of one's personal faith or absence of faith; and to achieve a single healing, unifying spirit of respect and support for each other.

Chaplain Response Program (CRP) – The CRP permits certain qualified and authorized Chaplains to respond to emergency and non-emergency calls for service as a component of the continuum of care for citizens and first responders. CRP Chaplains bring comfort and consolation to all persons in need with special emphasis on those confronted with fire, death,

accidents or natural/man-made disasters. The program includes the provision of pastoral care to members of law enforcement and emergency agencies. CRP Chaplains also assist individuals by carefully and knowledgeably referring them to other care providers or agencies.

POLICY

LC-CFRS Chaplains will respond to incidents and other requests for service as outlined in this SWP.

PROCEDURE

1. Membership in the Chaplain Response Program (CRP) may be open to any volunteer or career member of the Loudoun County Fire and Rescue System. All Chaplains are required to have completed a background check consistent with SWP 201.1, Fire and Rescue Entry Background Investigations. Chaplains must authorize the release of their background investigation report results to the Chaplains Committee for review and record keeping.
2. There shall be two classes of active Chaplains:
 - A. Response Chaplains – In order to respond to emergency incidents as a member of the CRP, an individual must:
 1. Be authorized to respond to emergency scenes as a Chaplain by their volunteer chief (if volunteer) or the Chief of System, if career. In the case of a law enforcement Chaplain, authorization must come from the sponsoring law enforcement agency director. This authorization must be submitted in writing on agency letterhead to the Chairperson of the Chaplain Committee and must be affirmed annually in writing.
 2. Be a member of the Chaplains Committee and be approved to respond to incidents by the Committee Chairperson.
 3. Complete Chaplain Committee's required chaplain's training program.
 4. Have successfully completed the Emergency Vehicle Operator's Course (if operating an emergency vehicle).
 5. Successfully complete the Chaplain Committee's preceptor program.
 - B. Station Chaplains – Chaplains providing in-station activities only and not responding to incidents must:
 1. Be authorized by the Agency Director of the agency by whom they are sponsored.
 2. Be approved for service within their station by the Executive Committee of the Chaplains Committee.
 3. Complete a required Chaplain Committee orientation outlining their role and specific responsibilities.

3. Training – The CRP shall require training for Chaplains consisting of:
 - A. A chaplain’s orientation for all Chaplains,
 - B. A basic chaplaincy program for all Response Chaplains
 - C. An annual refresher program of at least 8 hours for all Response Chaplains.
4. The requirement of basic chaplaincy training shall be considered to have been completed through certification of ANY of the following programs:
 - A. Basic, Senior, or Master Level Training Credentials from the International Conference of Police Chaplains (ICPC)
 - B. Certificate of Basic or Advanced Fire Chaplaincy from the Federation of Fire Chaplains (FFC)
 - C. Basic or Advanced Level Certification in Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) or CISM Residency Training
 - D. Basic or Advanced Level Certification in Pastoral Crisis Intervention (PCM)
 - E. Certification in Training in Mass Casualty Incidents/Fatality Response
 - F. Industrial and Commercial Ministries Chaplain Seminar
 - G. CRP-provided Basic Chaplaincy Training
5. Response Chaplains shall be generally authorized to respond to calls for service under the following circumstances:
 - A. Upon completion of their basic training.
 - B. Following the recommendation of their preceptor.
 - C. With the concurrence of the Executive Committee of the CRP.
6. Station chaplains shall be authorized to function under the following circumstances:
 - A. Upon completion of their chaplain’s orientation.
 - B. The concurrence of the Executive Committee of the CRP.
7. Duty Roster: Only Response Chaplains will be listed on duty rosters. Duty Rosters shall be maintained by the CRP and provided to the ECC.
8. Radio Designation: Response Chaplains participating in the Chaplain Response Program shall receive a radio designation as follows:
 - A. “CHAPLAIN XX-YY” where “XX” is the volunteer station number and “YY” is a unique identifier associated with the Chaplain. Career personnel participating in the response program shall use station number “99.” The list of radio designations shall be maintained by the Chairperson of the Chaplains Committee and shall be provided to the ECC.

9. Emergency Incident Support - Members of the CRP may be dispatched to the following emergency incidents by the Emergency Communications Center (ECC):
 - A. Cardiac or Respiratory Arrests
 - B. Reported Dead-on-Arrival (DOA) patients
 - C. Deaths cause by accident or illness
 - D. Line of duty deaths or serious injuries to members of the LC-CFRS
 - E. Serious motor vehicle collisions, including those involving fatalities or pedestrians struck by automobiles
 - F. Other incidents at the discretion of the Incident Commander (IC)
10. Upon the request of a Charge Nurse at any hospital, members of the CRP may respond to support a patient transported by the LC-CFRS or mutual aid agency, their family, a member of the LC-CFRS, or their family. The hospital shall relay their request through the ECC.
11. When dispatched, Chaplains shall respond non-emergency and shall report to the Incident Commander (IC) on arrival. Responding Chaplains will coordinate actions through the IC.
12. Self-dispatch – Chaplains shall not respond to the scene of an emergency unless dispatched by ECC.
13. Involvement in patient care or rescue activities – Unless first on scene or directed by the IC or Aide-in-Charge (AIC), Chaplains shall not participate in other emergency or non-emergency activities during an incident. If put into other forms of service, a replacement Chaplain will be requested through the IC.
14. Additional Chaplain resources – A responding Chaplain may, at their discretion, request additional Chaplain resources via the ECC, after notifying the IC.
15. Death and other notifications – Official death or incident notifications shall not be made by members of the CRP unless requested by a supervisor of the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office, a Virginia State Police Trooper, or a supervisor from a Loudoun County police department. When an official death or incident notification is made by a Response Chaplain, a member of the investigating law enforcement agency shall be present during the notification (if possible).
16. Non-Emergency Event Support – Response and Station Chaplains are authorized to support non-emergency activities of the LC-CFRS upon the request of the event organizer or family member. Examples of non-emergency events include:
 - A. Funerals for members of the LC-CFRS
 - B. Hospital visits for members of the LC-CFRS (if requested by hospital personnel or for visits to non-system members, shall be treated as a public service call)
 - C. Opening or closing ceremonies for fire and rescue events
 - D. Counseling for members of the LC-CFRS
 - E. Station and other fire and rescue facility dedication ceremonies
 - F. Requests from other jurisdictions for support to their fire and rescue system
 - G. Other events as requested by volunteer fire and rescue companies or DFREM.

17. Transportation Using Privately Owned Vehicles (POV) – Chaplains shall not provide transportation using privately owned vehicles (POV).
18. Operations – Activities of Response and Station chaplains will be conducted in accordance the CRP Standard Operating Procedures Manual, which is maintained by the CRP.
19. Incident Reporting – Chaplains shall prepare an incident report for each incident that they support, in accordance with applicable System-Wide Procedures.

Approved for compliance with Emergency Medical Services delivery

John I. Morgan

John I. Morgan, M.D., LC-CFRS Operational Medical Director



Minooka Fire Protection District
POLICY

Fire District Chaplain Policy 603

Adopted: 03-05-2012

Revised: May 6, 2022

1. Purpose:

- 1.1. The purpose of this guideline is to describe the duties of the Fire Department Chaplain and Chaplain Services and is a brief summary of what may actually be required in any given situation. The Chaplain must remain constantly alert and sensitive to the needs of the Fire District, its employees, the situation and the means he must employ to meet those needs.

2. Scope:

- 2.1. This guideline applies to all Fire District personnel the Fire District Chaplain and those clerics that may be assisting from time to time. The Fire District Chaplain is encouraged to offer his/her services to other fire departments, but when doing so, should adhere to the standards and practices of this policy with regards to the chain of command, incident management, and the confidentiality of the Fire District Chaplain Services with Minooka Fire District personnel being the priority.

3. Emergency Situations

- 3.1. The Chaplain should respond when contacted by WESCOM or at his own discretion, and should report at the scene to the Incident Command Post. When at the scene, the Chaplain should be under the command authority of the incident commander. The Chaplain should display proper credentials and should be readily identifiable as the Chaplain. The Chaplain should don protective clothing when and where the situation warrants under other existing policies. The Chaplain should respond as follows:

3.1.1. To the scene when:

- 3.1.1.1. Working fire or incident at the general alarm or greater is in progress Critical incident is in progress.
- 3.1.1.2. Critical injury or death to a firefighter is reported.
- 3.1.1.3. The incident involves a victim that is a member of a fire department employee's family.
- 3.1.1.4. Whenever the incident commander determines that the services of the Chaplain may be of value in the ongoing emergency



Minooka Fire Protection District
POLICY

**Fire District Chaplain
Policy 603**

Adopted: 03-05-2012

Revised: May 6, 2022

operation. This may include situations where:

3.1.1.4.1. The victim or family is highly emotional or unstable.

3.1.1.4.2. Care is needed for the family of the victim while treatment is underway.

3.1.1.4.3. The victim or the family requests the services of a chaplain or clergy.

3.1.1.5. The incident commander feels the presence of the Chaplain would be of benefit to the victim or to department personnel.

3.1.2. To the hospital when:

3.1.2.1. The incident commander determines that the victim or family may need support or counsel.

3.1.2.2. A victim's family needs to be located and notified. A member of the fire department is the victim.

3.1.3. On-the-Scene Duties:

3.1.3.1. Remain in the cold zone unless accompanied by a firefighter or paramedic.

3.1.3.2. Provide appropriate victim assistance to free the incident commander as he or she gives direction.

3.1.3.3. Provides comfort and counsel.

3.1.3.4. Referral to appropriate community agencies for assistance.

3.1.3.5. Help contact person(s), family member(s), etc. The Chaplain should find out a victim's church or religious preference and attempt to notify the pastor or church as requested.

3.1.3.6. Provide appropriate assistance to firefighters engaged in firefighting activities within the cold zone of the incident (i.e. bottle changes, retrieving equipment from rigs, etc.).

3.1.3.7. Watch for signs of physical or emotional stress.

3.1.3.8. Assist in providing firefighting needs in rehab.

3.1.3.9. Advise the Incident Safety Officer whenever it is felt that a firefighter(s) is in need of being relieved from emergency operations.



Minooka Fire Protection District
POLICY

**Fire District Chaplain
Policy 603**

Adopted: 03-05-2012

Revised: May 6, 2022

4. Post-Emergency Duties:

- 4.1. Conduct follow-up to ensure victims are receiving necessary assistance as needed or directed by the Incident Commander.
- 4.2. Assist the incident commander in assuring that firefighter's needs are being met in the areas of on-the-job injuries, critical incident stress, etc.

5. Routine Duties

5.1. Duties within the fire department:

- 5.1.1. Visit all stations and shifts.
- 5.1.2. Visit hospitalized department members and members of their families.
- 5.1.3. Participate in training, as requested by the Fire Chief, to become familiar with operations.
- 5.1.4. Be available for helping or counseling members of the department in times of stress or difficulty.
- 5.1.5. Assist when requested by any division of the department in their programs.
- 5.1.6. Attend fire department functions.
- 5.1.7. Conduct funeral/memorial and other related clergy services as needed and requested.
- 5.1.8. Serve as a member of the Critical Incident Stress Debriefing team if required, or as directed by the Fire Chief.

5.2. Duties outside of the fire department

- 5.2.1. Represent and interpret fire department goals and concerns to the churches and religious institutions of the community.
- 5.2.2. Assist when requested with public events or public information needs.
- 5.2.3. As time permits, and as requested, conduct extended ministry to victims and their families.



Minooka Fire Protection District
POLICY

**Fire District Chaplain
Policy 603**

Adopted: 03-05-2012

Revised: May 6, 2022

6. General Guidelines for the Chaplaincy

- 6.1. The Chaplain does not replace the home church pastor, but seeks to support the concern of every church for its members who may be in professions with special risks or needs. Moreover, the Chaplain must be for the advantage for every member of the department, regardless of his or her nationality, race, sex, or religion.
- 6.2. Any communication a person makes to the Chaplain is on a strictly confidential basis and should not be released to department members or any other person. Any fire personnel may go to the Chaplain without having to notify his or her supervisor or anyone else. The Chaplain is obligated to report to proper authorities anytime the Chaplain believes immediate harm may come to a member.
- 6.3. Firefighters from mutual aid departments should be considered employees while operating at emergency scenes. However, any follow up or additional contact should be made in conjunction with the mutual aid fire department's policy or guidelines, if any, and through that organizations chaplain, if provided.

Minooka Fire Protection District Operational Guide



FIRE DISTRICT CHAPLAIN

Purpose

The purpose of this guideline is to describe the duties of the Fire Department Chaplain and Chaplain Services and is a brief summary of what may actually be required in any given situation. The Chaplain must remain constantly alert and sensitive to the needs of the Fire District, its employees, the situation and the means he must employ to meet those needs.

Scope

This guideline applies to all Fire District personnel the Fire District Chaplain and those clerics that may be assisting from time to time. The Fire District Chaplain is encouraged to offer his/her services to other fire departments, but when doing so, shall adhere to the standards and practices of this policy with regards to the chain of command, incident management, and the confidentiality of the Fire District Chaplain Services with Minooka Fire District personnel being the priority.

1. Emergency Situations

The Chaplain will respond when contacted by WESCOM or at his own discretion, and will report at the scene to the Incident Command Post. When at the scene, the Chaplain will be under the command authority of the incident commander. The Chaplain shall display proper credentials and shall be readily identifiable as the Chaplain. The Chaplain shall don protective clothing when and where the situation warrants under other existing policies. The Chaplain will respond as follows:

To the scene when:

- Working fire or incident at the general alarm or greater is in progress
- Critical incident is in progress.
- Critical injury or death to a firefighter is reported.
- The incident involves a victim that is a member of a fire department employee's family.
- Whenever the incident commander determines that the services of the Chaplain may be of value in the ongoing emergency operation. This may include situations where:
 - The victim or family is highly emotional or unstable.
 - Care is needed for the family of the victim while treatment is underway.

- The victim or the family requests the services of a chaplain or clergy.
- The incident commander feels the presence of the Chaplain would be of benefit to the victim or to department personnel.

To the hospital when:

- The incident commander determines that the victim or family may need support or counsel.
- A victim's family needs to be located and notified.
- A member of the fire department is the victim.

On-the-Scene Duties:

- Remain in the cold zone unless accompanied by a firefighter or paramedic.
- Provide appropriate victim assistance to free the incident commander as he or she gives direction.
- Provides comfort and counsel.
- Referral to appropriate community agencies for assistance.
- Help contact person(s), family member(s), etc. The Chaplain will find out a victim's church or religious preference and attempt to notify the pastor or church as requested.
- Provide appropriate assistance to firefighters engaged in firefighting activities within the cold zone of the incident (i.e. bottle changes, retrieving equipment from rigs, etc.).
- Watch for signs of physical or emotional stress.
- Assist in providing firefighting needs in rehab.
- Advise the Incident Safety Officer whenever it is felt that a firefighter(s) is in need of being relieved from emergency operations.

2. Post-Emergency Duties:

- Conduct follow-up to ensure victims are receiving necessary assistance as needed or directed by the Incident Commander.
- Assist the incident commander in assuring that firefighter's needs are being met in the areas of on-the-job injuries, critical incident stress, etc.

3. Routine Duties

Duties within the fire department:

- Visit all stations and shifts.
- Visit hospitalized department members and members of their families.
- Participate in training, as requested by the Fire Chief, to become familiar with operations.
- Be available for helping or counseling members of the department in times of stress or difficulty.
- Assist when requested by any division of the department in their programs.

- Attend fire department functions.
- Conduct funeral/memorial and other related clergy services as needed and requested.
- Serve as a member of the Critical Incident Stress Debriefing team if required, or as directed by the Fire Chief.

Duties outside of the fire department

- Represent and interpret fire department goals and concerns to the churches and religious institutions of the community.
- Assist when requested with public events or public information needs.
- As time permits, and as requested, conduct extended ministry to victims and their families.

4. General Guidelines for the Chaplaincy

The Chaplain does not replace the home church pastor, but seeks to support the concern of every church for its members who may be in professions with special risks or needs. Moreover, the Chaplain must be for the advantage for every member of the department, regardless of his or her nationality, race, sex, or religion.

Any communication a person makes to the Chaplain is on a strictly confidential basis and will not be released to department members or any other person. Any fire personnel may go to the Chaplain without having to notify his or her supervisor or anyone else. The Chaplain is obligated to report to proper authorities anytime the Chaplain believes immediate harm may come to a member.

Firefighters from mutual aid departments shall be considered employees while operating at emergency scenes. However, any follow up or additional contact should be made in conjunction with the mutual aid fire department's policy or guidelines, if any, and through that organizations chaplain, if provided.