



## Chaplaincy Program

### .01 Policy

One of the responsibilities of police management is to provide employees with the necessary resources to assist them in performing their work in the most efficient and effective manner possible. The Bladensburg Police Department recognizes that all employees, during the course of performing their tasks and duties, may need to rely on individuals outside the department who have expertise and experience in certain areas.

The primary purpose of the Chaplain Program is to complement the department's total service program by providing value-based guidance services as may be required for the good of the Bladensburg Police Department and the community. It is designed to assist department personnel in handling a variety of crisis situations.

### .02 Terms

**Police Chaplain:** The Police Chaplain is an approved and experienced representative of his or her denomination. Chaplains offer employees the opportunity to interact with individuals who may provide spiritual help, guidance, and counseling.

### .03 Governing Legislation and Reference

Governing Legislation: N/A

Forms: N/A

### .04 Procedure

#### A. Duties and Responsibilities

The department Chaplain position is a voluntary, non-compensated position occupied by a qualified non-sworn person. Appointment as a Chaplain must be approved by the Chief of Police or his designee.

While it is understood that as volunteers, Chaplains with many other duties and responsibilities, may not always be able to proactively seek out opportunities to serve the Bladensburg Police Department, it is equally recognized that the commitment to serving law enforcement impels a willingness and obligation to respond to requests from the Police Department. Specifically, each Chaplain is expected to be accessible by telephone at all times. When a Chaplain is called, he or she is

expected to communicate as soon as possible whether he or she will respond or is unavailable.

If a Chaplain is unable to fulfill his commitment as a Bladensburg Police Chaplain for any reason, he or she is expected to voluntarily vacate the position until such time as he is able to fully participate.

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

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

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.

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.

Chaplains will be available for the following:

- Assist department personnel in making notification to families of police officers in the event of serious injury or death;
- Respond to officer-involved shootings or other incidents in which deadly force was used by or against an officer. Chaplains will be available to assist the officer(s) involved and/or families as soon as possible. The Chaplain is responsible for conducting a short debriefing (one on one or in a group with the officers) to better equip the officer(s) for coping with the aftermath of such a critical incident;
- When requested, provide short-term counseling to stabilize situations involving department personnel, and/or their families, who have personal problems that may

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- adversely affect their jobs or family life, and make referrals to other professional counselors, when applicable;
- Visit sick and injured personnel and/or immediate family members at home or in the hospital when requested;
- Attend and participate in awards banquets, promotion ceremonies, dinners, social events, in-service training classes, funerals and memorial services of active or retired agency members, and any other activity or event deemed appropriate by the Chief of Police;
- Participate in a ride-a-long program, a continuing education program, and other activities developed for chaplains;
- When an officer is seriously injured or killed on duty, Chaplains will respond to the hospital emergency room on request. The Chaplain work with hospital staff and the Hospital Chaplain according to common ethical courtesies;
- Present formal lectures on moral and ethical issues;
- Periodically attend roll calls, and accompany uniformed officers on patrol;
- Represent the Department before official bodies at the Chiefs direction, and contribute to public relations efforts;
- Notify, as soon as possible, the involved persons' ministers in case of death or serious injury;
- Make proper referrals in unique cases which need specialized attention;
- As a specialist in the field of religious guidance, he or she is an advisor to the Chief of Police in all matters pertaining to the moral, spiritual, and religious welfare of police personnel, and should periodically report recognized needs to him;
- The Chaplain will confer with the Department's psychological services for professional support in his counseling duties; and,
- Chaplains are prohibited from using their official capacity, title or position to endorse any product, organization, program, service or partisan political activity. Police equipment, e.g.: badges, patches or business cards shall not be used for political campaigning, fund raising, or

electioneering activities. Chaplains are prohibited from representing themselves in an official capacity when such act is not a part of their official duties.

### B. Confidentiality

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

Chaplains will not release any information to the news media, insurance agencies, or attorneys regarding cases in which he/she is involved or about which he or she has any knowledge. All information secured shall be held in confidence and used only for the benefit of the persons or officers involved.

The Chaplain is expected to maintain a level of confidentiality concerning what is discussed with an employee. An employee who comes for counseling to the Chaplain should clearly understand that this is an "off the record" and privileged communications which will not be reported or have any bearing on his/her job status. This element of confidentiality is very important to the overall effectiveness of the Chaplain and his rapport with the personnel.

#### Exception

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.

### C. Requests for Chaplain Services

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

The Chaplain may be reached through police communications by telephone. The police communications dispatcher will immediately make contact with the Chaplain when requested by a department supervisor and confirm such contact.

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

### D. Chaplain Ride-A-Long

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

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### E. Training

The Chaplain is encouraged to become certified by the International Conference of Police Chaplains.

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

The Chaplain shall attend seminars and other training as available.

Chaplains serving the Department must be committed to participating in continuing education that offers new and refresher instruction to help them be effective ministers to the personnel of the Bladensburg Police Department and the community.

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HISTORY: Adopted July 1, 2013

This General Order supersedes all other orders and memoranda in conflict therewith.

Authority:



Charles L. Owens  
Chief of Police