

## POLICE CHAPLAIN PROGRAM

General Order

No. 701

Effective Date

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12MAR18

### I. POLICY:

It is the policy of the Murfreesboro Police Department to operate and maintain a Police Chaplain Program. The primary goal of the Police Chaplain Program is to create a partnership with faith-based leaders and mental health professionals in our community to assist law enforcement in improving the quality of service provided to the community.

During times of crisis or other law enforcement related incidents involving citizens, the Chaplains will perform tasks of a more emotional, social or spiritual nature while law enforcement handles tasks that are of a law enforcement nature. Additionally, the Police Chaplain may provide assistance to staff members requesting support in the form of advice, comfort, and counsel.

### II. DEFINITION:

Chaplain Liaison Officer: Peace Officer Standard of Training (POST) certified employee of the Murfreesboro Police Department who is responsible for the training, scheduling and supervision of the Police Chaplain Program.

MPD Chaplain: Employee of the Murfreesboro Police Department, POST certified or civilian, who may be called upon to assist with death notifications, provide victim assistance, participate as a member of a crisis response team, visit sick or injured personnel, and serve as a liaison with other clergy in the community.

MPD Volunteer Chaplain: A Volunteer Chaplain is an individual who represents a segment of the faith-based community or is a licensed mental health professional. A Volunteer Chaplain may be called upon to assist with death notifications, provide victim assistance, participate as a member of a crisis response team, visit sick or injured personnel, and serve as a liaison with other clergy in the community.

### III. SELECTION AND EQUIPMENT:

#### A. Qualifications.

1. MPD Chaplains and MPD Volunteer Chaplains shall be endorsed by a religious organization or must be a counselor, psychologist, or social worker licensed by the state of Tennessee. Applicants shall have a minimum of three (3) years of experience in ministry, counseling, psychology or social work. For purposes of this general order, a religious organization is an entity that is organized and functions to perform religious ministries that meets the religious purpose test of section 501 (c)(3) of Title 26, United States Code, and holds current status as a section 501 (c)(3) Schedule "A" organization.
2. MPD Volunteer Chaplain Applicants must submit to a criminal records check and background investigation. Any criminal conviction that would exclude a police officer from becoming certified by the Peace Officer Standard of Training (POST) will disqualify the applicant. The background investigation may be waived if the applicant is currently serving as a Chaplain in good standing with another law enforcement organization.
3. Volunteer Chaplains must reside in Rutherford County unless they have a ministry within Rutherford County.
4. Volunteer Chaplains must possess a valid Tennessee driver's license.

B. Selection Process.

1. Written Application including a minimum of three references.
2. Background investigation to include character reference and criminal history check. All or a portion of the background investigation may be waived if the applicant is currently serving as a Chaplain in good standing with another law enforcement organization.
3. Interview with the Chief or designee.

C. Training.

1. Volunteer Chaplains are required to complete an orientation session which will include training related to liability issues, the Tennessee Open Records Act, and the City Employee Assistance Program.

2. Volunteer Chaplains are required to complete or show prior completion of a chaplain training program provided by an independent training organization.
3. Volunteer Chaplains are encouraged to attend and complete the MPD Citizens Police Academy.
4. Both MPD and Volunteer Chaplains should establish and maintain membership in a national or international chaplain organization.

D. Uniforms and Equipment.

1. MPD Chaplains **may** be issued the following items:
  - a. One (1) set of gold wreath lapel pins.
  - b. One (1) long sleeve dark navy polo shirt with a Chaplain Badge on left chest and “Name” and “Police Chaplain” embroidered on the right chest.
  - c. One (1) pair of khaki pants.
  - d. One (1) dark navy winter jacket with no patches and “Chaplain” on the right front chest and across the back.
  - e. One (1) green traffic vest with “Chaplain” printed on the front and back.
  - f. One (1) bullet resistant ballistic vest.
2. MPD Chaplains **will** be issued the following items:
  - a. One (1) fabric vest with “Chaplain” on the right front chest and across the back.
  - b. One (1) Department Chaplain Photo Identification card. The card must be visible while on duty and returned if and when separated or terminated from the program.

Volunteer Chaplains should only wear the MPD issued items when performing services at the request of the MPD.

E. Dress and Attire.

Chaplains may elect to wear the department issued shirt and pants when providing services at the request of MPD. At minimum, Volunteer Chaplains will wear civilian attire along with the departmental issued Chaplain's Vest and identification card as described in section III(D)(2)(a)(b). Civilian attire should be consistent in portraying a professional image when performing services at the request of the MPD.

IV. PROCEDURES:

A. Operational guidelines.

1. The Volunteer Chaplains shall be on call under a rotation system maintained by the Chaplain Liaison Officer; however, the Chief reserves the right to call a specific Volunteer Chaplain who is likely to be most beneficial in each situation. The rotation will be based on the number of active chaplains available at a given time. A schedule of Chaplains will be posted in the Communications Section. Each Volunteer Chaplain must volunteer for at least one (1) 48-hour period each month to remain eligible to serve as a Volunteer Chaplain, unless inability to do so has been approved but the Chief or their designee.
2. Volunteer Chaplains will be permitted to ride with officers during any shift and observe MPD operations as long as the shift commander has been notified.
3. Volunteer Chaplains will never function in the role as a police officer.
4. On the scene of a police call for service, Volunteer Chaplains shall wait for directions from an officer before offering services.
5. Volunteer Chaplains may be required to stand-by in a secure area until the call for service has been deemed safe for the Volunteer Chaplain to offer services.

6. Volunteer Chaplains shall not interfere with the performance of any officer's duties.

B. General Duties

1. Respond to assignments made by a Murfreesboro Police Department Supervisor, Dispatcher, or Chaplain Liaison Officer.
2. Assist officers in making of death notifications or such notifications as requested.
3. Assist at scenes of trauma in counseling, assisting the victims, friends, family members, and police officers, as requested by officers.
4. Assist in such ways as needed and requested by law enforcement personnel.
5. Attend all trainings as requested, including basic training, Citizen Police Academy, and various trainings.

C. Communications.

If a Volunteer Chaplain is not riding with an officer on shift and a MPD Chaplain is not on duty, a supervisor may request that Communications contact the on-call Volunteer Chaplain. The dispatcher will provide the Volunteer Chaplain with the following information:

- a. Location of the call
- b. Type of call
- c. Name of requesting officer
- d. Location where the Volunteer Chaplain needs to respond

If the Volunteer Chaplain does not respond within 5 minutes of the initial call, the next Volunteer Chaplain should be contacted. If a Volunteer Chaplain is not available, an MPD Chaplain should be contacted and asked to respond.

D. Volunteer Chaplain Responding to Calls While Not on Ride-a-long.

1. The Volunteer Chaplain will drive a privately-owned vehicle to the incident scene, hospital, or other requested location. All traffic laws shall be obeyed at all times.
2. At the request of the Volunteer Chaplain, a zone car shall meet the Volunteer Chaplain at the MPD and provide transportation to the location.

V. OTHER:

A. Confidentiality.

Because of the nature of the information received through personal counseling, confidential reports, and on-scene observations, a Chaplain shall maintain strict confidentiality in such matters in accordance with ethical standards and state and federal law. Note: While a licensed counselor, psychologist, and social worker are under a legal obligation to maintain confidentiality, others may be subject to production of notes or other written documents if requested under the Tennessee Public Records Act.

B. Non-Denominational.

The Chaplain shall strive for an unbiased understanding of all faiths and be acquainted with their liturgies. The Chaplain's conduct shall foster greater interfaith understanding, dialogue, and cooperation and promote goodwill among all people.

C. Death Notification.

All death or serious bodily injury notifications shall be done in compliance with MPD General Order 380 "Notification of Relatives of Injured or Deceased Persons". Only due to extenuating circumstances, should a notification be made by telephone.

D. Carrying of firearms.

At no time will a Volunteer Chaplain carry any type of firearm on their person while acting in a Volunteer Chaplain capacity, regardless of if the Volunteer Chaplain has a handgun carry permit.