Asheville Police Department Policy Manual

Chapter: 18 - Special Programs
Policy: 1802 - Chaplains Program
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Policy 304 - Unbiased Policing
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Introduction

This policy establishes guidelines for Asheville Police Department chaplains to provide counseling or emotional support to department members, their families, and members of the public.

Policy Statement

It is the policy of the Asheville Police Department to ensure that department chaplains are properly appointed, trained, and supervised to carry out their responsibilities.

Rules and Procedures

1802.1 Program Administration

A. The Specialized Operations Division commander serves as a central coordinator for the department's chaplains program. The Specialized Operations commander is responsible for:

1. Assisting with recruiting, selecting, and training qualified chaplains.

2. Conducting chaplain meetings.
3. Establishing and maintaining a chaplain call-out roster.
4. Maintaining records for each chaplain.
5. Tracking and recording the contribution of chaplains.
6. Completing and disseminating, as appropriate, all necessary paperwork and information.

B. The Specialized Operations commander may appoint a senior chaplain or other designee to assist in coordinating chaplains and their activities.

1802.2 Recruitment, Selection, and Appointment

A. The department endeavors to recruit and utilize only department chaplains who meet high ethical, moral, and professional standards. A primary qualification for participation in the program should be an interest in and an ability to assist the department in serving the public.

B. Requirements for participation as a chaplain for the Asheville Police Department include the following:

1. Having a good reputation in the community.
2. Successful completion of an appropriate-level background investigation.
3. Certification and good standing in a religious faith, such as, but not limited to, Christianity, Judaism, Orthodoxy, Muslim, Buddhism, Hinduism, or Mormonism.
4. Emotional stability and professional flexibility, including a broad base of experience in professional ministry and pastoral counseling.
5. The ability to be tactful and considerate in their approach to people, regardless of individual demographics or characteristics; see Policy 304 - Unbiased Policing.
6. Possession of a valid driver's license.
7. No prior serious misdemeanor or felony convictions.

C. The chief of police may apply exceptions to eligibility where appropriate, based on organizational needs and the individual's qualifications.

D. Chaplain candidates are encouraged to participate in a ride-along with department members before and during the selection process.

1802.3 Identification and Uniforms

A. As representatives of the department, chaplains are responsible for presenting a professional image to the community. Chaplains will dress appropriately for the conditions and performance of their duties.

B. Chaplain uniforms, if worn, must be clearly distinguishable from the uniforms of sworn officers. To avoid public confusion, chaplains cannot wear any clothing that says "POLICE" without a prominent "chaplain" identifier clearly associated. [45.3.3]

C. Chaplains will be issued Asheville Police Department volunteer identification cards, which must be carried at all times while representing the department.

1802.4 General Guidelines

A. All chaplains will be assigned duties by the chaplain liaison or an authorized designee, consistent with their knowledge, skills, and abilities and the needs of the department.

B. Chaplains may not proselytize or attempt to recruit members of the department or the public into a religious affiliation while representing themselves as chaplains with this department. If there is any question as to the receiving person's interest, chaplains should verify that the person is desirous of spiritual counseling or guidance before engaging in such a discussion.

C. Chaplains may not accept gratuities for any service or any subsequent actions or follow-up contacts that were provided while functioning as a chaplain for the Asheville Police Department.

D. Chaplains will not interfere with any employee's performance of duty. In the event of a conflict between a chaplain and an employee, the employee will report the conflict in writing through the chain of command to the chaplain liaison.

E. Any information related to any incident is confidential and will not be shared for any reason outside of the scope of the chaplain's duties.

1802.5 Operational Guidelines

A. Chaplains are non-sworn volunteer members of this department and, except as otherwise specified within this policy, are required to comply with Policy 1801 - Volunteers and other applicable policies. [45.3.1 a]

B. At the conclusion of a response or department activity, the chaplain will complete a written summary of their activities and submit it to the chaplain liaison or designee.

C. Chaplains may be permitted to ride with officers to observe department operations, provided the officer and shift supervisor have been notified and approve.

D. In responding to incidents, a chaplain must never function as an officer. When responding to in-progress calls for service, chaplains may be required to stand by in a secure area until the situation has been deemed safe. [45.3.1 a]

E. When their services are needed, chaplains may have access to crime and accident scenes with the supervisor in charge's approval.

F. The following general procedures will apply to any counseling given by a department chaplain as a result of their official capacity:

1. The chaplain will relinquish ministerial responsibility upon request for private clergy.

2. The chaplain should, as necessary, offer a referral to an appropriate external service for professional assistance. The chaplain may, upon request, provide extended pastoral counseling or recommend additional professional help.

3. Conversations with employees or involved citizens are confidential. The only exceptions are when a criminal act is involved or when the individual is believed to pose a risk of harm to themselves or others. The chaplain is obligated to report this to the chaplain liaison.

1802.6 Chaplain Services [45.3.1 b]

A. The responsibilities of a chaplain related to department members may include, but are not limited to:

1. Assisting in making notifications to families of employees who have been seriously injured or killed.

2. Visiting sick or injured employees.
3. When requested, attending and/or participating in funerals or other ceremonies for active or retired employees.
4. Serving as a resource for officers dealing with difficult or critical incidents.
5. Providing counseling and support for employees and their families.

B. The responsibilities of a chaplain related to this department may include, but are not limited to:

1. Responding to call outs involving natural and accidental deaths, suicides and attempted suicides, family disturbances, and any other incident that, in the judgment of a supervisor, aids in accomplishing the mission of the department.
2. Whenever possible, attending department and academy graduations, ceremonies, and social events, and offering invocations and benedictions when appropriate.

C. The duties of a chaplain related to the community may include, but are not limited to:

1. Fostering familiarity between law enforcement and the community.
2. Providing an additional link between the community, other chaplains, and the department.
3. Providing liaison with various civic, business, and religious organizations.
4. Assisting the community in any other function, as needed or requested.
5. Making referrals in cases where specialized attention is needed or in cases that are beyond the chaplain's ability to assist.

1802.7 Training [45.3.2]

A. Active chaplains are expected to attend regular chaplain meetings organized by the chaplain liaison or designee.

B. Chaplains are required to participate in appropriate training as provided by the department or chaplain's program.

C. Peer support training is strongly encouraged for all department chaplains.

1802.8 Separation

A. Allegations of unbecoming conduct, criminal conduct, or violations of department policies, procedures, or rules by any chaplain will be documented and handled in accordance with Policy 2301 - Administrative Investigations. [1.15]

B. The chief of police has sole authority to dismiss a chaplain from the department's service.

C. Upon separation from the department, chaplains must return all departmental materials within forty-eight (48) hours of separation.

By order of:



Jackie Stepp
Interim Chief of Police