



Chapter: Member Conduct and Authority
Subject: 02-42 – Chaplain Program
Effective: June 24, 2025
Supersedes: Official Order 02-42, dated June 3, 2022
Distribution: Department Members

PURPOSE: This Order establishes the roles, responsibilities, and services provided by the Chaplain Program.

02-42-1 POLICY

It is the department's policy to maintain a Chaplain Program consisting of volunteer chaplains who provide counseling and emotional support services to department members and their families. Chaplains participate in department ceremonies and meetings, accompany enforcement members on duty, and perform other related services. Upon request, they may also visit sick or injured members, perform wedding ceremonies, and officiate department funerals.

Chaplains are available to assist members at any time during tragedies or emergencies.

02-42-2 QUALIFICATIONS AND APPOINTMENT

- A. Chaplains are volunteers appointed at the discretion of the Director or their designee. Individuals interested in becoming a chaplain shall be recommended by and receive endorsement from the worksite commander. The following application process shall be followed for chaplain appointments:
 - (1) Experience and Education Questionnaire (PD-100)
 - (2) Criminal history and traffic history check
 - (3) Background investigation consistent with the enlisted member pre-employment process
 - (4) Approval by Chaplain Program Steering Committee
 - (5) Appointment by the Director or their designee
 - (6) Newly appointed chaplains must sign a Memorandum of Agreement, committing to adhere to the rules and written directives established.
 - (7) Attendance at the spring and fall chaplain conferences
- B. Department members are excluded from the selection process for the Chaplain Program and are not eligible to serve as a department chaplain.

- C. The worksite commander's responsibility is to ensure that a prospective chaplain applicant meets the minimum criteria outlined in section E. If the applicant meets these criteria, the worksite commander shall complete a memo to the Chaplain Program Coordinator endorsing the applicant and explaining how their appointment would benefit worksite members.

After confirming that the applicant meets the minimum standards and providing an endorsement, the worksite commander shall instruct the applicant to submit an application to the Chaplain Program Coordinator for review.

- D. Worksite commanders shall ensure this policy is adhered to prior to allowing an interested chaplain applicant to participate in any department business, including a ride-along with enforcement members.
- E. To meet the minimum qualifications for appointment, a chaplain candidate shall:
- (1) Demonstrate an understanding and respect for diverse religious beliefs, considering the preferences of the individuals to be served.
 - (2) Reside in an area of the state where a chaplain is needed.
 - (3) Obtain a written endorsement from recognized leaders of their ministry, church, or community.
 - (4) Meet one of the following educational requirements:
 - a. Hold a minimum of a bachelor's degree from an accredited university and have at least five years of experience in emotional and spiritual support services.
 - b. Provide sufficient evidence, to the Chaplain Program Coordinator's satisfaction, of equivalent education, training, experience, and suitability for the position.
 - (5) Demonstrate a genuine interest in serving as a department chaplain, possess the necessary temperament for the role, and be willing and able to assume the responsibilities.
 - (6) Exhibit the ability to develop rapport with members.
 - (7) Meet the same standards for criminal and traffic convictions, drug use, and overall character required by a trooper candidate.
 - (8) Not currently serve as a chaplain for another law enforcement agency.

02-42-3 CHAPLAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Department chaplains shall fulfill the duties and responsibilities outlined in this written directive. Failure to maintain these competencies, duties, or responsibilities will result in removal from the Chaplain Program.

Department chaplains shall:

- A. Actively engage with and build relationships with members in their assigned area.
- B. Be available to serve as needed.
- C. Dedicate a minimum of 120 hours annually (an average of 10 or more hours per month) to the Chaplain Program.

- D. Attend the spring and fall chaplain conferences.
 - (1) The two-day spring chaplain conference will be held in conjunction with the annual Fallen Trooper Memorial service, which takes place on the first Monday in May at the Training Academy.
 - (2) The annual fall chaplain conference will begin on the first Monday in October.
- F. Attend Chaplain Program meetings as scheduled.
- G. Comply with all laws and respect the civil rights of all individuals.

02-42-4 CHAPLAINS' AUTHORITY, COMPENSATION, AND SERVICE STATUS

- A. Chaplains are authorized to identify themselves, including displaying their department-issued pocket badge or identification card while providing chaplain services or participating on a ride-along.
- B. Regardless of a chaplain's concealed weapons license status, they are not authorized to carry firearms or any other weapons while serving as a chaplain, nor are they permitted to participate in any department firearms training program.
- C. Chaplains shall not disseminate information relating to criminal investigations or matters sensitive in nature to the public or to the media.
- D. The chaplain position is unsalaried. However, the department shall cover duty-incurred expenses within the limitations listed in other department written directives.
 - (1) Chaplains shall be reimbursed for mileage expenses for official duties that exceed a distance of 100 miles roundtrip.
 - (2) Chaplains will be reimbursed for travel through the Chaplain Program SIGMA coding block.
- E. When a chaplain is transferred to an area of the state that is adequately covered by another chaplain, a review of the regional distribution of department chaplains will be conducted by the Chaplain Program Coordinator.
- F. When circumstances arise that prohibit a chaplain from continuing to actively serve, or the chaplain resigns or retires from the position, the chaplain shall turn in the department pocket badge, ride-along uniform, and their identification card.

Chaplains on a temporary leave of absence may maintain possession of their equipment at the discretion of the Chaplain Program Coordinator, in conjunction with the Organizational Development Division commander or their designee.

02-42-5 ATTIRE

- A. When representing the department at an official function, chaplains shall wear business attire. While in business attire and representing the department, chaplains may wear the issued chaplain pocket badge. Chaplains may wear religious symbols or insignia while representing the department, provided such symbols do not imply the department's endorsement of any specific religion. Requests for clarification or exceptions shall be directed to the Chaplain Program Coordinator.
- B. As outlined in the written directive for uniforms, the Quartermaster shall issue chaplains a bullet-resistant vest and a high-visibility vest.

- C. Ride-along attire, which includes khaki pants and a polo shirt shall be issued by the Organizational Development Division.
- D. Chaplains shall be issued service pins starting at ten years of service and in five-year increments thereafter.
- E. Chaplains retiring with at least 25-years of continuous service to the Chaplain Program shall receive a retirement sleeve.

02-42-6 RIDE-ALONG POLICY

- A. Chaplains may ride along on patrol with enforcement members in their assigned areas, as operational needs allow. Chaplains are considered civilian members of the department and are not required to sign a waiver to participate on a ride-along or other worksite training.
- B. Chaplains shall wear the designated ride-along uniform when participating on a ride-along, responding to unscheduled calls for assistance, or attending post meetings. Chaplains may also wear the issued chaplain jacket while participating in ride-alongs.
- C. Chaplains shall always wear a bullet-resistant vest while participating on a ride-along.
- D. Chaplains shall always wear a high visibility vest while assisting enforcement members during traffic control or investigating traffic crashes on the roadway.
- E. Chaplains are prohibited from entering a home during the execution of a warrant, until the scene is secure, and their presence is requested.
- F. Chaplains shall not become involved in law enforcement operations or enter crime scenes without the express request of an enforcement member or other law enforcement officer.

02-42-7 STEERING COMMITTEE AND WORKGROUPS

- A. To support the effective operation of the Chaplain Program, it shall consist of a Steering Committee and three dedicated workgroups.
 - (1) The Steering Committee will consist of the Chaplain Program Coordinator, two chaplain volunteers (or chaplains appointed by the Chaplain Program Coordinator), and a representative from the Michigan State Police Troopers Association.
 - a. Chaplain volunteers serving on the Steering Committee will be selected and rotated every two years at the spring chaplain conference.
 - b. The Steering Committee will oversee the Chaplain Program Workgroups and Chaplain Program meetings.
 - (2) Chaplain Program Workgroups will consist of three chaplains each. Volunteers for the workgroups will be selected annually at the fall chaplain conference. If the number of volunteers exceeds or falls short of three per group, the Chaplain Program Coordinator will make the final determination.
 - a. Recruit School Workgroup:

Responsible for coordinating chaplains who volunteer to assist with department recruit schools. This group will also solicit volunteers to assist with graduation dinners and recruit school graduation ceremonies.

b. Chaplain Conference Workgroup:

Responsible for developing topics, organizing learning opportunities, and scheduling the spring and fall chaplain conferences. Additionally, this workgroup will coordinate lodging and the banquet arrangements.

c. Chaplain Training Workgroup:

Responsible for orienting newly appointed chaplains to the department and ensuring they receive proper training.

02-42-8 CHAPLAIN PROGRAM COORDINATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The Chaplain Program Coordinator shall:

- A. Serve as the primary point of contact between department command and the Chaplain Program, under the supervision of the Organizational Development Division commander or their designee.
- B. Regularly meet and correspond with the Steering Committee and Workgroups to review the general activities of the Chaplain Program.
- C. When a chaplain separates, resigns, or retires from the program, complete the Employee Departure Checklist, PD-056, collect their department pocket badge, ride-along uniform, and identification card, and complete an exit interview.

02-42-9 POST COMMANDER RESPONSIBILITIES

Post commanders shall:

- A. Seek qualified chaplains to meet the needs of the worksite as outlined in Section 02-42-2.
- B. Promptly notify chaplains of serious illnesses, injuries, or deaths involving worksite members.
- C. Encourage chaplains to participate in appropriate local events by extending invitations to district and post commanders' meetings, retirement parties, and other post/district social events.
- D. Permit and encourage chaplains to participate in first aid training.
- E. Ensure chaplains are afforded the same courtesies and access to department worksites as any other civilian member of the worksite.

DIRECTOR

Annual Review Responsibility: Organizational Development Division

Accreditation Standards: CALEA 22.1.4