

Georgia Department of Public Safety

Policy Manual

SUBJECT VOLUNTEER CHAPLAIN PROGRAM	POLICY NUMBER 21.04
DISTRIBUTION ALL EMPLOYEES	DATE REVISED 5/10/2015

21.04.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy statement is to establish procedures to be followed in selecting, training, equipping, and utilizing volunteer chaplains of the Georgia Department of Public Safety (Department).

21.04.2 Policy

The Chaplain Program of the Georgia Department is a volunteer program which is established to provide an optional resource for employees. Department employees are subject to statewide assignment which may require temporary and extended periods where an employee's personal, established support system may not be available. Department employees may be subjected to stresses which are unique to law enforcement employment and which the employees may be unwilling to share with their personal support system.

21.04.3 Responsibilities

- A. The duties and responsibilities of volunteer chaplains are:
1. Read and adhere to the Mission Statement and Core Beliefs of the Department as set forth in Policy #1.01, Mission and Core Beliefs;
 2. Complete training provided by the Department regarding operations of the Department and critical incident support.
 3. When requested by an employee, an employee's immediate family member or personal friend, visit injured/sick employees;
 4. When requested by an employee or an employee's family member, attend and/or participate in funerals of active or retired employees of the Georgia Department of Public Safety;
 5. When requested by an employee, provide counseling for the employee and their family regarding personal problems, and
 6. When requested by an employee, assist with critical incident management.

21.04.4 Procedures

- A. The Chaplain Program will consist of the volunteer Chaplaincy Coordinator and volunteer chaplains.
1. Chaplaincy Coordinator
 - a. Those who wish to volunteer to serve as Chaplaincy Coordinator must meet the same qualifications as a volunteer chaplain. In addition, the Chaplaincy Coordinator must have five years of experience as a law enforcement chaplain and must submit a resume detailing his/her qualifications. If more than one qualified chaplain volunteers to serve as Chaplaincy Coordinator, then the Critical Incident Support Coordinator shall determine which volunteer is most suitable.
 - b. The Chaplaincy Coordinator serves as a volunteer and is not compensated in any manner.
 - c. The Chaplaincy Coordinator shall report directly to the Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Public Safety, or his designee Critical Incident Support Coordinator and shall be responsible for the following:
 - 1) Oversee the Chaplaincy Program to compliance with the requirements of this policy;
 - 2) Verify the credentials of all volunteer chaplain candidates;
 - 3) Determine whether volunteer chaplain candidates meet the qualifications set forth in this policy;
 - 4) Coordinate training and events involving the Chaplain Program;
 - 5) Be responsible for being available for Consultation with the Command Staff of the Georgia Department of Public Safety regarding issues identified or raised by any volunteer chaplain;
 - 6) Serve as the volunteer chaplain for Headquarters;
 - 7) Communicate with volunteer chaplains to discuss and address areas of mutual concern, and to receive in-put on program improvements, and
 - 8) Prepare a Bi-Annual (June and December) report for the Critical Incident Support Coordinator, outlining the activities of all volunteer chaplains, and make recommendations for program improvement.
 2. Volunteer Chaplains
 - a. During the application process, volunteer chaplains shall identify the counties in which they are willing to serve;
 - b. The number of total chaplains serving shall not exceed 20. If more than 20 candidates meeting the requirements of this policy apply, 20 shall be determined based upon the following criteria:
 - 1) Flexibility in counties of service;
 - 2) Diversity;

- 3) Experience, and
- 4) Prior service as a DPS volunteer chaplain.
- c. Any person meeting the qualifications outlined in this policy may volunteer to serve as a volunteer chaplain.
- d. Volunteer chaplains are to serve as a resource to any employee who requests assistance without regard to the employee's race, ethnicity, gender, religious affiliation or beliefs.
- e. Volunteer chaplains must submit a monthly report of activities to the Chaplaincy Program Coordinator.
- B. The Chaplaincy Coordinator shall serve for a period of three years and volunteer chaplains shall serve for a period of two years. Volunteer chaplains may reapply at the end of their service period.
- C. Chaplains serve as volunteers and are not compensated in any manner.
- D. To the extent that volunteers are available who meet the qualifications set forth in this policy, the Chaplain Program shall reflect the diversity of the Department.
- E. Chaplains must support the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution of the State of Georgia and the law enforcement mission of the Department.

21.04.5 Qualifications

- A. The following minimum qualifications shall be met by every volunteer chaplain:
 - 1. Be a regular or duly ordained, ecclesiastically certified, minister, priest or rabbi endorsed by a recognized religious body;
 - 2. Have five years experience;
 - 3. Be familiar with medical, psychiatric, and other such resources within the counties of service;
 - 4. Possess experience and professional maturity, emotional stability, and personal flexibility, and
 - 5. Meet the standards set forth in section C, below.
- B. Volunteer chaplain candidates must:
 - 1. Submit an application to the Critical Incident Support Coordinator;
 - 2. Sign an oath stating that the volunteer chaplain supports the United States Constitution, the Georgia Constitution and the mission of the Department;
 - 3. Show a personal interest in the Chaplain Program of the Department by training, work experience, and support of law enforcement;
 - 4. Be willing to work under the supervision of the Chaplain Program Coordinator;
 - 5. Be available to respond on a 24-hour basis;

6. Agree to a criminal history background check and driver's history check;
 7. Indicate a willingness to be involved in training that would enhance their efficiency in meeting and dealing with people in a crisis;
 8. Be willing to respond to any situation where the presence of a volunteer chaplain is requested, and
 9. Demonstrate concern and an understanding attitude toward all persons regardless of race, sex or religious belief.
- C. The following standards will automatically disqualify an individual from service as a volunteer chaplain:
1. Intentionally providing false information to the Department;
 2. Any felony conviction;
 3. Any outstanding criminal charge pending adjudication.
 4. Sufficient misdemeanor convictions to establish a pattern of disregard for the law;
 5. Any conviction or plea of *nolo contendere* within the past five years for Driving Under the Influence of Drugs or Alcohol (DUI) or for any serious traffic offense, including, but not limited to: Fleeing or Attempting to Elude a Police Officer, Vehicular Homicide, Failure to Stop, Render Aid, or Leave Information, and Racing.
 6. Five or more convictions and/or pleas of *nolo contendere* within the past two years for any moving violations, and/or
 7. Current illegal drug use.

21.04.6 Privileges and Restrictions

- A. Volunteer chaplains must respect and abide by an employee's right to reject or discontinue assistance from the chaplain.
- B. Members shall treat all chaplains with courtesy and respect.
- C. Chaplains are not certified law enforcement officers, and are not authorized by the Department to carry weapons. Chaplains will not become involved in law enforcement activities or duties. This subsection shall not apply to current, sworn Department members who serve as volunteer chaplains.
- D. Misconduct of a chaplain (including any of the behavior outlined in the disqualifiers set forth in paragraph 21.4.5, C) is grounds to be removed from service as a volunteer chaplain by the Chaplaincy Coordinator and/or the Commissioner of the Department.
- E. Volunteer chaplains are not authorized to speak on behalf of the Department.
- F. Volunteer chaplains shall not divulge information of a sensitive nature regarding the operations of the Department or regarding ongoing investigations.

- G. Volunteer chaplains shall be issued a photo identification card unique to the volunteer position which is valid for two years. The identification card is the property of the Department and must be returned upon the conclusion of the volunteer chaplain's service.
1. The identification card shall be displayed when conducting their duties as a volunteer.
 2. Volunteer chaplains shall not use their issued identification card to obtain privileges not afforded to the general public.
 3. If an identification card is lost or stolen, the affected volunteer chaplain shall promptly inform the Chaplaincy Program Coordinator and write a memorandum detailing the circumstances of the loss or theft. The Chaplaincy Coordinator shall make a written request for replacement to the Technology Director and the Director of the Office of Professional Standards.

H. Attire

1. Volunteer chaplains shall wear appropriate professional attire or that which represents the volunteer chaplain's faith.
2. Volunteer chaplains are not authorized to wear any component of the Department's uniforms unless the volunteer chaplain is a current, sworn Department member performing official duties.
3. Volunteer chaplains shall not wear the uniform of any other law enforcement agency while representing the Department.
4. Chaplains serve in a non-uniform capacity and as such are not authorized to wear any component of any of the Georgia Department of Public Safety uniforms, unless they are a sworn member.
5. Chaplains shall not wear the uniform of any other agencies while representing the Georgia Department of Public Safety.