

Chaplains

332.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Discretionary

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

332.2 POLICY

Discretionary **MODIFIED**

The Syracuse Police Department shall ensure that department chaplains are properly appointed, trained and supervised to carry out their responsibilities.

332.3 ELIGIBILITY

Discretionary

Requirements for participation as a chaplain for the Department may include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Being above reproach, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, free from addiction to alcohol or other drugs, and free from excessive debt.
- (b) Managing his/her household, family and personal affairs well.
- (c) Having a good reputation in the community.
- (d) Successful completion of an appropriate-level background investigation.
- (e) A minimum of five years of successful counseling experience.
- (f) Possession of a valid driver license.

The Chief of Police may allow exceptions to these eligibility requirements based on organizational needs and the qualifications of the individual.

332.4 RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT

Best Practice

The Syracuse Police Department shall endeavor to recruit and appoint only those applicants who meet the high ethical, moral and professional standards set forth by this department.

All applicants shall be required to meet and pass the same pre-employment procedures as department personnel before appointment.

332.4.1 RECRUITMENT

Best Practice

Chaplains should be recruited on a continuous and ongoing basis consistent with department policy on equal opportunity and non-discriminatory employment. A primary qualification for participation in the application process should be an interest in and an ability to assist the

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Department in serving the public. Chaplain candidates are encouraged to participate in ride-alongs with department members before and during the selection process.

332.4.2 SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT

Discretionary MODIFIED

Chaplain candidates shall successfully complete the following process prior to appointment as a chaplain:

- (a) Submit the appropriate written application.
- (b) Include a recommendation from employers or volunteer programs.
- (c) Interview with the Chief of Police and the chaplain coordinator.
- (d) Successfully complete an appropriate-level background investigation.
- (e) Complete an appropriate probationary period as designated by the Chief of Police.

Chaplains are under a contractual agreement and serve at the discretion of the Chief of Police. Chaplains shall have no property interest in continued appointment. However, if a chaplain is removed for alleged misconduct, the chaplain will be afforded an opportunity solely to clear his/her name through a liberty interest hearing, which shall be limited to a single appearance before the Chief of Police or the authorized designee.

To maintain professionalism in the program, police Chaplain's should possess the following qualifications and qualities:

- (a) Ecclesiastically certified by and in good standing with a recognized religious body. While a representative of his denomination, the Police Chaplain should be ecumenical in service.
- (b) Interest in law enforcement chaplaincy by training, work experience, and appointment.
- (c) Available to serve on a 24-hour call basis.
- (d) Manifest a broad base of experience and professional ministry, emotional stability, and personal flexibility.
- (e) Tactful and considerate in approaching all people regardless of race, sex, creed or religion.
- (f) Willing to become involved in training programs that enhance efficiency in meeting and dealing with people in crisis, and should be familiar with community medical, psychiatric, and other helping resources.
- (g) Must have never been convicted of a criminal offense or offenses involving moral turpitude.

332.5 IDENTIFICATION AND UNIFORMS

Discretionary NY_CALEA6.13 - 45.3.3

As representatives of the Department, chaplains are responsible for presenting a professional image to the community. Chaplains shall dress appropriately for the conditions and performance of their duties. Uniforms and necessary safety equipment will be provided for each chaplain.

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Identification symbols worn by chaplains shall be different and distinct from those worn by officers through the inclusion of "Chaplain" on the uniform. Chaplain uniforms shall not reflect any religious affiliation.

Chaplains will be issued Syracuse Police Department identification cards, which must be carried at all times while on-duty. The identification cards will be the standard Syracuse Police Department identification cards, with the exception that "Chaplain" will be indicated on the cards. Chaplains shall be required to return any issued uniforms or department property at the termination of service.

Chaplains shall conform to all uniform regulations and appearance standards of this department.

332.6 CHAPLAIN COORDINATOR

Discretionary **MODIFIED**

The Chief of Police shall delegate certain responsibilities to a chaplain coordinator. The coordinator shall be appointed by and directly responsible to the Chief of Police or the authorized designee.

The chaplain coordinator shall serve as the liaison between the chaplains and the Chief of Police. The function of the coordinator is to provide a central coordinating point for effective chaplain management within the Department, and to direct and assist efforts to jointly provide more productive chaplain services. Under the general direction of the Chief of Police or the authorized designee, chaplains shall report to the chaplain coordinator.

The chaplain coordinator may appoint a senior chaplain or other designee to assist in the coordination of chaplains and their activities.

The responsibilities of the coordinator or the authorized designee include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Recruiting, selecting and training qualified chaplains.
- (b) Conducting chaplain meetings.
- (c) Establishing and maintaining a chaplain callout roster.
- (d) Maintaining records for each chaplain.
- (e) Tracking and evaluating the contribution of chaplains.
- (f) Maintaining a record of chaplain schedules and work hours.
- (g) Completing and disseminating, as appropriate, all necessary paperwork and information.
- (h) Planning periodic recognition events.
- (i) Maintaining a liaison with other agency chaplain coordinators.

An evaluation of the overall use of chaplains will be conducted on an annual basis by the coordinator.

332.7 DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Discretionary **MODIFIED** NY_CALEA6.13 - 45.3.1 (b)

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Chaplains assist the Department, its members and the community as needed. Assignments of chaplains will usually be to augment the Uniform Bureau, but chaplains may be assigned to other areas within the Department as needed. Chaplains should be placed only in assignments or programs that are consistent with their knowledge, skills and abilities and the needs of the Department.

All chaplains will be assigned to duties by the chaplain coordinator or the authorized designee.

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 intent, chaplains should verify that the person is desirous of spiritual counseling or guidance before engaging in such discussion.

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 Syracuse Police Department.

[See procedure for DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES](#)

332.7.1 OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

Discretionary **MODIFIED**

- (a) The Police Chaplain is authorized to visit Department facilities and incident scenes where activities indicate a need for ministerial services.
- (b) Chaplains shall be permitted to ride with officers during any shift and observe Syracuse Police Department operations, provided the Watch Commander has been notified and has approved the activity.
- (c) Chaplains shall not be evaluators of members of the Department.
- (d) In responding to incidents, a chaplain shall never function as an officer.
- (e) 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.
- (f) Chaplains shall serve only within the jurisdiction of the Syracuse Police Department unless otherwise authorized by the Chief of Police or the authorized designee.
- (g) Each chaplain shall have access to current department member rosters, addresses, telephone numbers, duty assignments and other information that may assist in his/her duties. Such information will be considered confidential and each chaplain will exercise appropriate security measures to prevent unauthorized access to the data.

[See procedure for NOTIFICATION](#)

332.7.2 ASSISTING DEPARTMENT MEMBERS

Discretionary **NY_CALEA6.13 - 45.3.1 (b) NYSLEAP- 8.7 - 4.1 (A)**

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

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- (a) Assisting in making notification to families of members who have been seriously injured or killed and, after notification, responding to the hospital or home of the member.
- (b) Visiting sick or injured members in the hospital or at home.
- (c) Attending and participating, when requested, in funerals of active or retired members.
- (d) Serving as a resource for members who are dealing with the public during significant incidents (e.g., accidental deaths, suicides, suicidal subjects, serious accidents, drug and alcohol abuse).
- (e) Providing counseling and support for members and their families.
- (f) Being alert to the needs of members and their families.

332.7.3 ASSISTING THE DEPARTMENT

Discretionary NY_CALEA6.13 - 45.3.1 (b)

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

- (a) Assisting members in defusing a conflict or incident, when requested.
- (b) Responding to any significant incident (e.g., natural and accidental deaths, suicides and attempted suicides, family disturbances) in which the Watch Commander or supervisor believes the chaplain could assist in accomplishing the mission of the Department.
- (c) Responding to all major disasters, such as natural disasters, bombings and similar critical incidents.
- (d) Being on-call and, if possible, on-duty during major demonstrations or any public function that requires the presence of a large number of department members.
- (e) Attending department and academy graduations, ceremonies and social events and offering invocations and benedictions, as requested.
- (f) Participating in in-service training classes.
- (g) Training others to enhance the effectiveness of the Department.

332.7.4 ASSISTING THE COMMUNITY

Discretionary NY_CALEA6.13 - 45.3.1 (b)

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

- (a) Fostering familiarity with the role of law enforcement in the community.
- (b) Providing an additional link between the community, other chaplain coordinators and the Department.
- (c) Providing a liaison with various civic, business and religious organizations.

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- (d) Assisting the community when they request representatives or leaders of various denominations.
- (e) Assisting the community in any other function, as needed or requested.
- (f) Making referrals in cases where specialized attention is needed or in cases that are beyond the chaplain's ability to assist.

332.7.5 CHAPLAIN MEETINGS

Best Practice

All chaplains are required to attend scheduled meetings. Any absences must be satisfactorily explained to the chaplain coordinator.

332.8 PRIVILEGED COMMUNICATIONS

Discretionary

No person who provides chaplain services to members of the Department may work or volunteer for the Syracuse Police Department in any capacity other than that of chaplain.

Department chaplains shall be familiar with state evidentiary laws and rules pertaining to the limits of the clergy-penitent, psychotherapist-patient and other potentially applicable privileges and shall inform members when it appears reasonably likely that the member is discussing matters that are not subject to privileged communications. In such cases, the chaplain should consider referring the member to a non-department counseling resource.

No chaplain shall provide counsel to or receive confidential communications from any Syracuse Police Department member concerning an incident personally witnessed by the chaplain or concerning an incident involving the chaplain.