
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

<p>STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES FIRE DEPARTMENT CHAPLAINCY SECTION II 12.0 – 12.2</p>

July 1, 2011

Approved by R. Dale Horne – Fire Chief

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12.0 Purpose:

- a. Every day, people call on the local fire department for help. The calls range from simple brush fires, to auto accidents with entrapment, to structure fires with children inside. The victims include the very young to the very old. The dangers the firefighter faces could bring about the loss of his own life. Seeing death and physical injuries often produce feelings of guilt or helplessness. This stress is reflected in the firefighter's family life and job performance. In this setting, the need for a chaplain is evident.
- b. The administration, firefighters, paramedics, support staff, victims and victim's families daily experience crises in one way or another. A volunteer chaplain can help them handle the crises.
- c. The steps for beginning a fire chaplaincy are as follows:
 - 1) Schedule a meeting with the fire chief.
 - 2) Determine what needs are not presently being met.
 - 3) Share programs and services with the chief which the chaplain could implement.
 - 4) Recruit and train chaplains and volunteers for the program outlined.
 - 5) Set a starting time for the chaplaincy program to start.
 - 6) Implement the chaplaincy program.
 - 7) Re-evaluate the program needs at least every six months.

12.1 Emergency Situations:

- a. The chaplain responds to all major fire calls to aid the fire personnel and to help with panic situations involving civilians. He assists the victims of the tragedy in receiving aid from community help organizations.
- b. He informs the chief of those who have over extended themselves.

12.2 Injury/Death Notification:

- a. The chaplain assists in the notification of families when firefighters receive serious injury or die in the line of duty.
- b. The chaplain visits fire personnel and family members when hospitalized.

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12.3 Counseling Services:

a. The chaplain provides guidance and counseling for fire personnel with personal, family and job related problems.

12.4 Availability:

a. The chaplain is available to all fire personnel. Any contact with the chaplain is strictly on a confidential basis and will not be released to department members or any other person.

b. A firefighter may go to the chaplain without having to notify his or her supervisor.

12.5 Functions:

a. The chaplain will conduct weddings, religious activities, and funeral/memorial services.

b. He attends graduations, award ceremonies, and social events and participates when requested.

c. He should represent the chief of the department when asked. The chaplain also acts as a liaison between the department and the religious leaders in the community.

12.6 Religious Services:

a. The chaplain will conduct worship services, Bible studies or support groups as needed.

12.7 Training for the Chaplain:

a. The chaplain should understand how a crew attacks a fire and why it's done in a certain way. He or she should know something about what paramedics do when working on a victim.

b. Knowledge of stress, stress relief, and critical incident stress debriefing is necessary.

c. The chaplain would also understand how his religious faith fits into his work and the firefighter's work.

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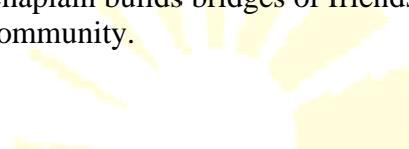
12.8 How the Chaplain Fits Into the Department:

- a. The chaplain usually answers to the fire chief. The AFD will issue the chaplain turn out gear which allows him near the scene when necessary. Badges and other identification allow access through security lines. A pager and/or radio are needed to notify the chaplain when needed.
- b. Permission to ride with the crews and visit the firefighters at the stations helps the chaplain understand the firefighter's job better. Being with the crews allows the chaplain the opportunity to build relationships with the fire personnel.
- c. The ministry of a fire chaplain is rewarding. Helping those who help others is challenging and fulfilling. The fire chaplain builds bridges of friendship between firefighters, their families, and the community.

Implemented

July 1, 2011

R. Dale Horne



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THE ELECTRIC CITY