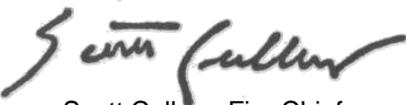




**City of Winchester
Fire & Rescue Department
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE**



Section:	Personnel	SOP:	2.11
Subject:	Chaplaincy Program	Executed:	October 12, 2007
		Revised:	July 23, 2010 February 24, 2011
Approved:			
 Scott Cullers, Fire Chief			

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of our chaplaincy program is to assist members and their families, as well as citizens by providing spiritual and emotional support before, during or after an emergency.

Our chaplain group will hold all conversations in extreme confidence. The position of this department is to encourage a confidential relationship between our chaplains and our members. The only time that the chaplains would be expected to share information with department leaders would be in the case of a public safety concern or when harm is imminent to a person or persons.

We feel that this can be very successful and healthy for our department and would encourage all of our members to embrace this program.

OBJECTIVE

To provide for the full range of fire department personnel needs through the establishment of a comprehensive Chaplaincy Program within the Winchester Fire and Rescue Department.

APPOINTMENT

1. Due to the constant risk and stress that fire and emergency medical service personnel face in the line-of-duty, a chaplain will be appointed to function within the Winchester Fire and Rescue Department.
2. The chaplain program shall be appointed by the Fire and Rescue Department Chief after consultation with volunteer and career leadership and city officials. The senior chaplain shall determine additional chaplain members as needed to fulfill the mission of the program.

QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING

1. The individuals appointed to the position of Fire Department Chaplain shall serve in this capacity for a minimum of one year or longer and will be:
 - An ordained (or otherwise credentialed) member of the clergy.
 - In good physical health.
 - Interested in the fire and rescue service.
 - Prepared to serve in a crisis zone.
 - Willing to commit the time necessary to make the ministry effective.
 - Committed to learn the skills necessary to effectively relate to and minister to firefighters and EMS personnel.
2. To the extent possible, the chaplain will be given the opportunity to meet with members and department staff, visit the stations and receive guidance in understanding fire department organizations and procedures. Training will also be provided to help him protect himself and to be able to render proper help to assist members on the emergency scene.
3. After appointment the chaplain may be issued the following equipment:
 - Department shirts
 - Identification cards
 - Business cards
 - Accountability tags
 - Helmets (red)
 - Badges

DUTIES OF THE CHAPLAIN

The duties listed below constitute only a brief summary of what may actually be required in any situation that may be encountered. The chaplain must remain constantly alert and sensitive to needs and the means he must employ to meet those needs.

1. **Emergency Situations.** The chaplain will respond when contacted by dispatch or fire department personnel, or at his own discretion, and will report at the scene to the officer-in-charge/command post. When at the scene, the chaplain will be under the command authority of the officer-in-charge. The chaplain will respond when available as follows:
 - a. To the scene when:
 - i. A working fire of second alarm or greater is in progress.
 - ii. A critical incident is in progress.
 - iii. A critical injury or death to a firefighter is reported.
 - iv. The incident involves a victim that is a member of a department members' family.
 - v. Whenever the incident commander determines that the services of the chaplain may be of value in the ongoing emergency operation.

This may include situations where:

- The victim or family is highly emotional or unstable.

- Care is needed for the family of the victim while treatment is underway.
 - The victim or the family requests the services of a chaplain or clergy.
- vi. The incident commander feels the presence of the chaplain would be of benefit to the victim or to department personnel.
- b. To the hospital when:
- i. The incident commander or paramedic providing treatment determines that the victim or family may need support or counsel. This should be coordinated with Emergency Room/WMC staff.
 - ii. The victim's family needs to be located and notified.
 - iii. A member of the fire department is the victim.

2. Follow-Up Actions

a. On-the-Scene Duties:

- i. Provide appropriate victim assistance to free operational personnel for firefighting duties.
 - Comfort and counsel.
 - Referral to appropriate community agencies for assistance.
 - Help contact persons, insurance agents, family members, etc. In all cases, the chaplain will find out a victim's church or religious preference and attempt to notify the pastor or church.
- ii. Provide appropriate assistance to firefighters engaged in firefighting activities.
 - Watch for signs of physical or emotional stress.
 - Assist in providing firefighting needs (water, rest, etc.).

b. Post-Emergency Duties:

- i. Conduct follow-up to ensure victims are receiving necessary assistance.
- ii. Assist with firefighter needs such as on-the-job injuries, critical incident stress, etc.

3. Routine Duties

a. Duties within the fire department:

- i. Visit all stations and shifts.
- ii. Visit hospitalized department members and members of their families.
- iii. Participate in recruit training as suggested by the training officer.
- iv. Be available for helping or counseling members of the department in times of stress or difficulty.
- v. Assist when requested by any division of the department in their programs.
- vi. Attend fire department functions (promotions, graduations, annual banquets, monthly meetings, etc)
- vii. Assist with funeral planning and guideline development.

- viii. Conduct funeral/memorial services as needed/requested.
 - ix. Be available to the Critical Incident Stress Debriefing team if called.
 - x. Be on-call on a twenty-four hour a day basis.
 - xi. Provide written in-station training on any subject matter pertinent to spiritual/emotional well being.
- b. Duties outside the fire department:
- i. Represent and interpret fire department goals and concerns to the churches and religious institutions of the community.
 - ii. Assist when requested with public events or public information needs.
 - iii. As time permits, and as requested, conduct extended ministry to victims and their families.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE CHAPLAINCY

1. The chaplain's role is not to preach religion but only to provide spiritual support when needed.
2. The chaplain does not replace the home church pastor, but seeks to support the concern of every church for its members who may be in professions with special risks or needs. Moreover, the chaplain must be for the advantage of every member of the department, regardless of his or her nationality, race, sex, or religion.
3. Any communications a person makes to the chaplain is on a strictly confidential basis and will not be released to department members or any other person. Any fire personnel may go to the chaplain without having to notify his or her supervisor or anyone else.
4. Any fire department officer or member (including administrative staff) who is made aware of any situation which may need the response of the chaplain may contact the chaplain directly. Fire department administration will keep current telephone numbers for the chaplain. The chaplain may also be contacted through Emergency Communication Center if desirable. Examples of situations where the chaplain may be contacted include, but are not limited to:
 - Death, injury to, or hospitalization of a fire department member.
 - Death, injury to, or hospitalization of a fire department member's spouse or child.
 - Death in a fire department member's close family (i.e. any family member covered under the department's death leave provisions).