

# **Germantown Police Department**

## **Policies and Procedures**

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**Number:** 1-23  
**Effective Date:** January 1, 2003  
**Subject:** Police Chaplain Program  
**Previous Revisions:**

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### **I. PURPOSE**

The Police Chaplain Program is intended to support the mission of the Police Department and the individual officers in carrying out mandated responsibilities when requested to do so. The Chaplain is not an officer and shall at no time assume such a role. The Police Chaplain is a resource available to officers, to equip them to meet the demands, challenges, and pressures faced during their tours of duty and away from their job.

### **II. POLICY**

It is the policy of the Germantown Police Department to allow a member of the local clergy to serve as a Police Chaplain. The Police Chaplain will work with the Department in an advisory capacity to assist the members of this Department in meeting the mission and the goals of the Germantown Police Department.

### **III. BACKGROUND**

The vocation of a police officer is to protect, to serve, and to help people in an emergency. Sometimes, officers encounter people in trouble, unable to cope with their own problems, unable to follow laws of society and unable to live in peace and harmony. Police officers face many situations that can be demoralizing and emotionally, mentally and spiritually draining. Tours of duty have the constant potential for danger. Officers must make split-second decisions that are both correct and effective in a variety of situations. In the peacekeeping portions of the police profession, officers come into contact with many of the same people that clergy contact. By combining forces, where appropriate, the police officer and the clergy will both be better equipped to meet the diverse needs of people in our growing complex society. This policy serves as a guide for clergy chaplains as well as members of the Germantown Police Department to inform them of the actions and attitudes that will be expected of them.

### **IV. PROCEDURE**

#### **A. Organizational Assignment**

1. The Chaplain Unit is a component of the Administrative Division and serves under the immediate supervision and at the will of the Chief of Police or designee.
2. Chaplains will receive a general overview of the Germantown Police Department and specialized training in selected topics. The duties of Police Chaplains do not require that they are classified as sworn officers, and their level of training does not warrant a commission.

B. Qualification

1. The Chaplain should be in a position of leadership in a recognized religious body.
2. The Chaplain shall be able to understand, accept and relate to persons holding different religious views.
3. The Chaplain shall be subject to a background investigation and approved by the Chief of Police.
4. The Chaplain shall be of high spiritual and moral standard and must be willing to respond to situations where a need is indicated.

C. Duties and Responsibilities:

1. The general duties and responsibilities of the Chaplain Unit are as follows:
  - a. To provide counseling to employees of the Germantown Police Department when requested.
  - b. To be a liaison with other religious leaders in the community.
  - c. To assist employees in relocating displaced people or those who need assistance in the case of fire or natural disaster.
  - d. To provide assistance in the event of on duty serious illness or death of employees (and to perform the appropriate ministerial duties when asked).
  - e. To provide visitation for sick or injured employees at their home or place of confinement.
  - f. When requested, to participate in funeral or memorial services for active or retired employees of the Department and to assist family members in the planning of funeral arrangements.

- g. When requested, to attend social events, ceremonies, and offer invocation and benediction.
  - h. To have periodic meetings with other Chaplains to discuss subjects of mutual interest.
  - i. To participate in employee training programs, when appropriate.
- 2. The Chaplain may be requested to assist in the intervention of civil disorders in an effort to establish an atmosphere of calm and stability. Such instances may include, but are not limited to, domestic disturbances and suicide attempts or threats.
- 3. The Chaplain may also offer counseling for the grief stricken, lonely and despondent, persons with drug and alcohol related problems, and other persons that counseling would benefit.
- 4. The Chaplain shall be knowledgeable about resources for referrals and shall utilize referral services as needed.
- 5. The Chaplain may deliver notices of death or serious injury and should be accompanied by a police officer at the time the notification is delivered. The Chaplain will also deliver notices of death or serious injury on request from other agencies. Such notices shall be delivered in a prompt and considerate manner.
- 6. The Chaplain may also serve in other appropriate assignments as may be directed by the Chief of Police.
- 7. All services of the Chaplain shall be in compliance with the General Orders and other directives of the Chief of Police.

D. Requests for Chaplain Services

- 1. The Chaplain may serve in emergencies and strengthen the services rendered by the police to the community. Police Department members are encouraged to use the services of the Chaplain when there is an operational need.
- 2. Requests for Chaplain services for field-related police incidents will be made as follows:
  - a. During a tour of duty of the Chaplain, a request for services at a police incident or the jail may be made by an officer or dispatcher/jailer at the scene, but must be directed through and

approved by an on-duty supervisor whose authority directly relates to the incident. It is the responsibility of that supervisor to approve or deny the request.

b. During hours when the Chaplain is considered off duty and services in the field at a police incident are requested, only the on-duty Lieutenant or person of equal or higher rank may approve the call out of the Chaplain. The decision to call the off-duty Chaplain shall be based on the necessity of the service and the urgency of the situation.

3. The Chaplain shall not respond to police incidents in the field unless the request and approval is made in compliance with this section.

4. During a police field operation, the Chaplain shall comply with the orders and instructions of the officer in charge of the operation.

5. This section in no way implies that employees or family members may not contact the Chaplain directly for personal needs.

E. Miscellaneous Regulations

1. The style and specifications of the clothing worn on-duty by the Chaplain shall clearly distinguish him/her from a police officer. The style shall be of “civilian” type dress, navy blue or black in color, with a clergy shirt and other appropriate distinguishing attire normal for respective religions.

2. The Chaplain is authorized to wear the official insignia of the Chaplain Unit. The approved insignia shall be identification with gold cross symbol, Star of David, or the appropriate religious symbol, and lettering that identifies the position.

F. Privileged Communications

Verbal or written communications between the Chaplain and any employee, including family members, are privileged and shall be recognized as such unless expressly waived by the employee or concerned family member unless the communications reveal that the employee is unfit for duty. The prohibition includes disclosure to any individual, panel or board.

**V. REVIEW PROCESS**

An annual review of this policy will be conducted to determine if it should be revised, canceled or continued in its present form.

This order shall remain in effect until revoked or superseded by competent authority.