

# WATERTOWN POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER



JOANNA W. VITEK  
CHIEF OF POLICE

Effective Date: January 1, 2009	Rescinds: Amends:	Number: A-4
Subject: Chaplain Program		Re-evaluation Date: January 2012
Distribution: ALL PERSONNEL	Related CALEA Standards:	

This order consists of the following numbered sections:

- I. Purpose
- II. Policy
- III. Procedure

## I. PURPOSE

To establish policy and procedures related to the Department's police chaplain program and its support for Department members.

## II. POLICY

The Department will support a police chaplain program designed to provide assistance to Department members, their families, and the community in crisis or emergency situations.

## III. PROCEDURES

### A. Organizational Assignment

1. The Chaplain Unit is a component of the Administrative Services Division. However, Chaplains shall have direct access to the Chief of Police on all matters regarding the spiritual and morale welfare of the department.
2. Chaplains shall serve as volunteers and will be non-sworn, non-commissioned members of the police department. A member of this unit will not be armed and only possess those powers of arrest as granted any other citizen under state law. All Chaplains shall be approved and shall serve at the pleasure of the Chief of Police.

### B. Qualifications

1. Prospective members of this unit will meet the following qualifications:
  - a) Be an ordained clergy person of a recognized religious body.
  - b) Have a college degree or professional certification on religion, counseling, education or other related area.
  - c) Be able to understand, accept and relate to persons holding different religious commitments.
  - d) Be of high spiritual and moral standing.
  - e) Must be able and willing to respond to calls, incidents or situations where a need for their services is indicated or necessary.
  - f) Complete a background investigation.
  - g) Be approved by a review board composed of the Chief of Police and Command Staff of the WPD.

### C. Administrative

1. Department members may need a neutral person in whom they can confide more freely than they would their supervisors, co-workers, family, or their own clergy, especially in times of serious injury, death, or job related crises.
2. Police chaplains will be available to counsel or make referrals to aid Department members in resolving family or other disputes.

3. Police chaplains will be available to Department members and their families in times of personal stress. Offers of assistance will be made and members' wishes to accept or decline will be respected.
  4. Police chaplains will be available to assist command staff in making notifications to the families of Department members who have been seriously injured or killed in the line of duty.
  5. Police chaplains may be notified and requested to visit sick and injured Department members.
- D. Emergency Response
1. Notification of a police chaplain in emergencies will be the responsibility of the on-duty Patrol Squad Supervisor with the assistance of Communications Center personnel, if necessary.
- E. Family Notification
1. In the event of a serious illness, injury, or death of a Department member, the member's family will be offered the support of a police chaplain, to include notification of a member's involvement in a critical incident, if appropriate; assistance at hospitals and rehabilitation facilities; and support in matters related to funerals.
  2. Police chaplains will not infringe upon the privacy of Department members and their families nor will they attempt to take the place of the ministers or other supportive persons requested by Department members and/or their families to assist.
- F. Visits to the Sick/Injured
1. Police chaplains may visit sick or injured Department members in the hospital and/or their homes. When a Department member or family member is hospitalized, the police chaplain(s) may be notified. These visits are tangible expressions of the care and concern of Department members for each other. They also provide an opportunity for the sick and injured to discuss any fears or problems related to the illness or injury.
- G. In the Field
1. Police chaplains will be encouraged to ride with patrol officers to become familiar with Department personnel and to become aware of the needs of Department members. When necessary or appropriate, specific authorization will be given by the Chief of Police or his designee.
  2. Ride-a-longs will be frequent during the orientation of a new chaplain and will be continued periodically to keep the chaplain in touch with the needs of Department members for chaplain services.
  3. Police chaplains may be called to assist officers investigating accidents involving serious injury or fatalities.
- H. Church
1. Police chaplains will be in good standing with their own churches/monasteries.
  2. No particular faith or denomination will be represented to the exclusion of others.
  3. Police chaplains will maintain professional relationships with the clergy of the community.
  4. Police chaplains will make referrals to the clergy of choice as soon as possible when Department members in crisis request referrals.
  5. Police chaplains will serve as liaisons between local ministerial alliances or associations and the Department.
- I. Community
1. Police chaplains will be available to minister to the families of Department members in crisis.
  2. Police chaplains will be available to counsel with youth in the community when requested to do so.
  3. Police chaplains will be available to comfort victims and family members in the event of natural disasters.
- J. Roster
1. The Administrative Captain will maintain a roster of police chaplains containing their names and contact information and will provide the roster to Communications.
  2. The Administrative Captain will update the roster of police chaplains as changes occur.
  3. In the event that a specific police chaplain has been requested and Communications personnel have been unable to contact the requested chaplain, the Administrative Captain will be notified to coordinate the required services.
- K. Suspension/Revocation

- a) The Chief of Police or his/her designee may suspend any police chaplain and serious violations of WPD policy and procedures may also result in revocation of status as a police chaplain.

---

JOANNA W. VITEK  
Chief of Police  
Watertown Police Department  
Watertown, South Dakota