

**Procedure  
11.21**

**EFFECTIVE  
DATE  
10-15-21**

**Eugene  
Police Department**



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## **Police Chaplain Program**

### **11.21.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

The Chaplain Program is a voluntary program designed as a support resource to provide guidance, counseling, and comfort to all department members, their families, and members of the Eugene community. Chaplains are volunteers from ordained ministries who offer their services of crisis counseling, comfort, referrals, and are on call twenty-four hours a day. This program provides another option, in addition to those already available to employees (e.g., the Employee's Assistance Program, Peer Support, etc.) that may be helpful to employees involved in traumatic incidents (refer also *Procedure 10.6 – Post Traumatic Incident Procedures*) or who must deal with other difficult situations.

- a. To provide spiritual guidance, counseling, comfort in times of crisis, and any help that a chaplain may be equipped to give on an emergency basis, including assistance in contacting an appropriate agency. Police chaplains are not intended to, nor do they wish to, replace an individual's own clergy.
- b. To provide the assistance of a chaplain during a major emergency for any Lane County agency in accordance with established protocol.

### **11.21.2 DEPARTMENT GUIDELINES**

- a. A chaplain shall conform to all department procedures and guidelines applicable to the position.
  1. A chaplain shall not publicly criticize the action of any Eugene Police officer, department official, department policy or action.
  2. A chaplain shall not release any information to the news media or any other entity or person outside the department regarding cases in which the chaplain is involved. All information should be held in strict confidence and used only for the benefit of the person or employee(s) involved.
  3. A chaplain shall not engage in proselytizing or evangelizing while active as Eugene Police Chaplain. If specifically asked for such services, they may be provided privately, not as a representative of the Department.

4. A chaplain shall be allowed to engage in follow-up work, should the chaplain deem it beneficial. Follow-up may involve counseling in such areas as domestic relationships and bereavement. In such instances, the chaplain shall conduct follow-up work as a clergy person, not as a representative of the Eugene Police Department.
- b. Dress and uniform standards
1. While representing the Eugene Police Department, a chaplain shall be dressed appropriately, presenting a professional image to the public.
  2. Active chaplains shall be issued Police Department identification bearing the title "Police Chaplain", Chaplain badge, Police Chaplain jacket, protective body armor, and business cards. The chaplain shall always wear the police identification while in civilian clothes and working as a police chaplain.
  3. Any equipment, uniforms, or identification issued remain the property of the Eugene Police Department and shall be returned upon separation of service.
- c. Confidentiality
1. A Eugene Police Department employee who *directly confides* in an active chaplain holds the privilege of a confidential communication. The involved chaplain is protected by the "Clergy-Penitent Privilege" (*ORS 40.260, Rule 506*) and cannot be examined regarding confidential communications "made to the member of clergy in the member's professional character" without that employee's consent. In some cases, even if the employee gives permission for the chaplain to share the confidential communication, the chaplain, under the discipline/tenet of their church, may hold the absolute duty to keep the communication confidential.
  2. Confidential communications will not be disclosed to other officers, supervisors, or command staff, unless the information can lead to death or bodily injury of any person, or if mandated by law. This is extremely important to the department, the chaplains, and to the integrity of the Eugene Police Chaplain Program.

### **11.21.3 DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE POLICE CHAPLAIN**

- a. As part of their official duties, chaplains may perform the following tasks and other such duties requested of them by the Police Chaplain Coordinator:
1. Provide comfort and consolation to persons involved in crisis, accidents, and natural disasters.
  2. Assist with notifications to family members when relatives are involved in a serious accident, or where injury or death has occurred.
  3. Provide spiritual counsel and advice, when requested or desired, to persons involved in such experiences as family tensions, suicide or attempted suicide, runaways, lost person, alcohol and drug-related incidents, juvenile conflicts,

loneliness, SIDS deaths, and confused elderly persons.

4. Exert an influence of calm and stability in situations charged with unusual stress and potential explosiveness.
5. Be available for consultation when called upon by the department or its employees as needed.
6. Act as a liaison between the department and ministerial associations.
7. Participate in periodic ride-alongs with officers to establish rapport with department employees and better understand their work.
8. Chaplains may be requested, or compelled by subpoena, to testify in court regarding incidents witnessed in the field which fall outside the State's Clergy-Penitent privilege.
9. Attend briefings, in-service training, and formal training as needed.
10. Be available to department employees for counseling (e.g., pre-marital, marital, family) and weddings.
11. Act on any matter as requested by the Police Chaplain Coordinator.

#### **11.21.4 QUALIFICATIONS AND SELECTION PROCESS**

- a. To be considered for the Chaplain Program, interested candidates must meet the following eligibility requirements:
  - Be credentialed (licensed or ordained) clergy in good standing and endorsed for the chaplaincy by a recognized denominational or non-denominational faith.
  - Demonstrate a strong commitment to the community and be willing to respond to all situations where a chaplain's presence is indicated.
  - Be tactful and considerate toward all people.
  - Show compassion, understanding, and love for others and relate easily to people.
  - Exhibit a broad base of experience and professional maturity, emotional stability, and personal flexibility.
  - Successfully complete the application/selection process, to include the application, an oral interview, and a background investigation.
  - Agree to abide by this and other department policies.
  - Pass a Level 2 background investigation.

- Have the ability to respond in a timely manner to any location in Eugene.
- b. Final determination as to whether an individual will be accepted as member of this program will rest with the Finance and Administration Division Manager.

### **11.21.5 OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES**

- a. Call-out can be initiated via a call-out list maintained by the Police Chaplain Coordinator.
- b. In the areas of police procedures and officer safety issues, a chaplain shall be under the direction of the officer with whom the chaplain is working during that tour of duty.
- c. If a chaplain is a scheduled rider, dispatch must be notified when the ride begins and when the ride concludes and the Chaplain secures.
- d. Unless directed by a supervisor or officer, the same prohibitions apply to chaplain riders as those for other riders (refer to *Procedure 11.16 – Ride-Along Program.*)

### **11.21.6 PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION**

- a. The Police Chaplain Program will be part of the Finance and Administration Division. The Finance and Administration Division Manager has the authority to appoint individuals to or remove them from the program.
- b. The Finance and Administration Division Manager shall appoint a sworn member of the Eugene Police Department to act as coordinator of the Chaplain Program.
1. The Police Chaplain Coordinator shall be responsible for:
- a. the recruiting and selection process;
  - b. program administration; and
  - c. liaison between the chaplains and the Police Department.
- c. Chaplains are encouraged to periodically evaluate their continued service to the program. Chaplains who believe their theological position does not permit their continued participation in the program may resign from it by submitting a memorandum of resignation to the Police Chaplain Coordinator.

**Chris Skinner**  
**Chief of Police**