

Your Fire Department

STANDARD OPERATING GUIDLINES

FIRE DEPARTMENT CHAPLAIN

PURPOSE

The Fire Department Chaplain provides spiritual guidance and emotional support to firefighters and their family members whenever necessary. This guidance and support will also be offered to the citizens who become victims of fire or natural disaster.

SCOPE

The Chaplain should be able to respond to emergencies on a 24 hour basis. The Chaplain will provide counseling, tend to the sick and injured or care for any other spiritual need which may arise either within the ranks of the fire department or to any citizen during an emergency.

PROCEDURE

The Chaplain will be appointed by the Chief of Department and will serve until further notice. If, for any reason, the Chaplain is unable to perform the duties of Chaplain, the Chief of Department shall be notified so that a search for a replacement can be initiated.

The Chaplains shall be notified of the following circumstances:

- 1) Working fires,
- 2) Multiple alarm fires,
- 3) Fire fatalities - Fire Fighters,
- 4) Fire fatalities - Civilian,
- 5) Hospitalization of Fire Fighters due to injury or illness,
- 6) Death of a Retired Fire Fighter,
- 7) Death of a Fire Fighters' family member
- 8) Official functions of the Fire Department (ie.. Fire Fighters Memorial Sunday, Installation of Officers, etc.)
- 9) Prolonged extrication
- 10) Any Sudden death to include traumatic death
- 11) Severe injury to child
- 12) Emotionally challenging scene
- 13) Scenes requiring extended periods of time, including prolonged rescue or recovery operations
- 14) Instances calling for mutual aid
- 15) Any other event that the duty officer or command deems stress provoking for any member of the department.
- 16) Any instances where the aid of a Chaplain would be valuable.

Whenever possible, the Chaplain shall respond to:

- 1) working fires,
- 2) multiple alarm fires,
- 3) fires involving injuries to firefighters or civilians, and,
- 4) fires involving fatalities to firefighters or civilians.

If a member of the Fire Department is injured in the line of duty, the Chaplain may be designated by the Incident Commander or by the Chief of Department as the hospital liaison for that incident. The Chaplain shall respond to the hospital to which the member was transported, ascertain the condition and prognosis of the member, and update the Chief of Department as to the member's condition as soon as possible.

Members of the Fire Department are encouraged to utilize the services offered by the Chaplain. Also, the Chaplain is encouraged to make regular visits to each station in an effort to become familiar with the members and the workings of the Department.

While providing for the emotional and spiritual support of firefighters, the Chaplain may suggest Critical Incident Stress Management interventions when appropriate.

The Chaplain will be issued the following uniform clothing: Dress blouse, double-breasted, gold buttons and braid; Dress hat, white, gold trim; Uniform hardware: badge, collar insignia, hat insignia.

The Chaplain will be issued the following protective clothing: Helmet, turnout coat, boots, and gloves.

When responding to working fires, the Chaplain shall report directly to the Incident Commander at the Command Post and will wear full protective clothing (except self contained breathing apparatus).

When attending official functions of the Fire Department or funeral ceremonies for deceased members, retirees, or their family members, the Chaplain shall wear the Class A dress uniform.

The Chaplain shall maintain membership in the Massachusetts Corps of Fire Chaplains and take advantage of training offered by that organization.