



**POLICY AND PROCEDURES
HANDBOOK OF THE
NEW YORK STATE CHAPLAIN TASK FORCE
AND THE
UNITED STATES CHAPLAIN TASK FORCE**

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to offer information, guidance and direction to members of the New York State Chaplain Task Force and the United States Chaplain Task Force (Chaplain Task Force) and to define the qualifications, duties and responsibilities of chaplains.

WHO WE ARE

New York State Chaplain Task Force, is a 501c3 Not-For-Profit organization which trains, develops and maintains highly skilled volunteer Inter-Faith Community Crisis Chaplains to support and cooperate with individuals, as well as city, federal, religious, and secular agencies and organizations, both during peace times and during times of crisis. Our 4000 plus members, currently representing eleven faith groups, bring images of order in the midst of chaos, and hope in the midst of despair. They practice active listening over speaking, and advise at all levels, offering honest and candid moral and spiritual guidance to all regardless of beliefs or culture, while never promoting their own faith, belief system, personal or political views.

Furthermore, our volunteer chaplains have all undergone extensive background checks at the local, state and federal levels, are certified in FEMA IS100c - Incident Command System and protocols, and FEMA IS505 – Religious and Cultural Literacy and Competency, as well as in Mental Health First Aid, First Aid, CPR & AED and in Opioid Overdose Reversal. We take pride in providing 24/7, 365 day a year emergency spiritual and emotional support services.

Our chaplains are currently volunteering (with approximately 10% employed) within various fields such as hospitals, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, hospice, law enforcement, VA Clinics, shelters, re-entry centers, transit authorities, soup kitchens, food pantries, corporate America, CBO's, FBO's, addiction treatment centers, prisons and jails.

MISSION STATEMENT

To educate, maintain and dispatch highly skilled Inter-Faith Spiritual Care First Responders who can provide quality and safe spiritual and emotional support services, both during peace times and during times of crisis 24-hours a day.

VISION STATEMENT

Recognizing the important and historic role of chaplains in helping individuals and their families maintain health and cope with illnesses, traumas, losses, and life transitions by integrating body, mind and spirit, spiritual and emotional care should be accessible to all people at all times.

POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Chaplain Task Force to provide personal, emotional, and spiritual support to Federal, State and Local agencies, as well as to the community at large with ministerial assistance as desired. The Chaplain Task Force operates as a voluntary duty for the person selected and seeks to ensure that confidential pastoral/spiritual support and encouragement is provided, pro-actively and in times of crisis response. Our goal is to promote the spiritual and emotional well-being of all regardless of their faith or world views.

DEFINITIONS

Chaplaincy

A ministry performed by trained, religious professionals and offering services commensurate with their training and expertise.

The Chaplain Task Force shall consist of experienced representative(s) of various religious faith traditions who can provide spiritual help, guidance, and grief counseling, within their respective realms of expertise.

To protect the integrity of the Chaplain Task Force, the selection process for membership and assignment to the program is strict in concept and policy, and will be maintained to the highest professional standards.

The Chaplain Task Force does not endorse any particular religious belief, and recognizes the right of individuals to practice the faith/belief system of their choosing or not to practice at all.

Service

A broad range of activities is provided through Chaplain Task Force chaplains, including but not limited to, spiritual support for, first responders and their families regarding grief, comfort/consolation, assistance with traumatic events, etc.

PROCEDURES

Qualifications and Selection of Chaplain

Chaplain Task Force members serve at the discretion of the Chief Chaplain (aka the President/CEO) or designee as a recognized Chaplain Task Force volunteer. The Chief or designee is ultimately responsible for the operation of the program.

In order to participate in the Chaplain Task Force, the following criteria are preferred:

An ordained or lay leader, ecclesiastically certified or licensed by a recognized religious body, in good standing during their tenure as a chaplain.

The volunteer should have a minimum of three years of experience serving congregations or relevant ministries.

After review of the candidate's application, the Chief or designee may waive this requirement under special circumstances.

A Chaplain Task Force member may receive compensation for duties performed at the direction of the Chief or designee.

Non-Chaplain Task Force Applicants

Volunteers will complete an application with sufficient personal data to properly complete a limited background investigation.

Must consent to a background check by the Chaplain Task Force.

Applicants must pass a personal interview with the Chief or designee

The Chief or designee may ask for additional letters of recommendation that include the telephone numbers, email addresses, and addresses of the authors of the letters. Letter may be from any three of the following:

A fellow clergy person

A senior in the applicant's organization or denomination

An ecclesiastical supervisor of like position

Another Chaplain

The Chief or designee must approve the applicant.

The chaplain will serve for an indefinite term at the pleasure of the Chief. Chaplains may at any time remove themselves from the position and also may be removed at any time at the discretion of the Chief.

Disqualifiers

In addition to the "Document of Agreement" and "Rules & Regulations" found herein and within the Chaplain Task Force Application, applicants with charges or convictions of criminal offenses or offenses involving moral turpitude, shall not be eligible for appointment, whether adjudication has been withheld or not.

History of immoral or criminal conduct

The loss of a chaplain's endorsement by the chaplain's endorsing entity may result in the chaplain's immediate removal from the program.

Applicant must divulge and cannot be involved in any other profession or business which could be a conflict of interest.

Confidentiality and Disclosure while performing Chaplain Duties

Confidentiality of services to first responders, frontline workers and the public is a matter of extreme sensitivity and importance to the effectiveness of the Chaplain Task Force. To honor the confidential nature of the services rendered by a Chaplain, the Chaplain Task Force will not inquire as to the identity of an individual seeking counseling or the nature of the counseling sought. However, Chaplains who are also sworn Chaplain Task Force members shall not offer counseling services that would compromise the chaplain's duties as a Chaplain Task Force member.

Chaplains shall treat the official business of the Chaplain Task Force as confidential. Information regarding official business shall be disseminated only to those for whom it is intended, and in accordance with established procedures.

Chaplains shall maintain the security of confidential information, and shall not intentionally communicate or reveal information that may aid an individual in hurting themselves or others, hurting a minor, and/or escape arrest, delay the apprehension of a criminal suspect, and/or secure the removal of stolen or embezzled goods, money, or other property.

Chaplains shall not intentionally divulge the identity of criminal informants except as required by law, and authorized by competent authority.

Chaplains may become involved with incidents of significant public interest, however; the Chaplain shall not release information to the media concerning any situation in which they are involved; rather all requests for information shall be referred to the Chaplain Task Force's Chief of Administration or Chief of Operations.

Before addressing any group of persons on behalf of the Chaplain Task Force, the Chaplain will notify and receive approval from the Chief or designee.

In line with other similar professional relationships, the Chaplain may not be compelled to give testimony regarding the contents of conversation with individuals receiving support.

Duties of a Chaplain

Chaplain Task Force member's primary duties are to provide assistance as directed by the Chief or designee.

The duties and responsibilities of the Chaplain may include:

Providing confidential support for first responders, frontline workers, their families and the community at large upon request.

Conducting memorial services

Participating in special functions and offering prayers in times of need and at special occasions or events when requested.

Contacting and visiting sick or injured individuals and family members at home or at the hospital when requested.

Assisting with death notifications when requested.

Assisting in crisis negotiations, calls for service regarding suicide attempts, domestic violence, and other crisis-oriented incidents, if trained in those procedures.

Assisting at disaster scenes and locations where victims of trauma and crisis are present.

The Chaplain may be used in conjunction with the various social service agencies that respond in this jurisdiction. The Chaplain is not intended to take the place of professionals from those agencies, but rather to assist them in dealing with persons involved in situations as described.

The Chaplain shall not intervene or hinder in any way the actions and decisions made by law enforcement and other city and state personnel in the lawful performance of their duties.

Assisting and coordinating with any Victim Advocates to provide guidance, support, and resources to members, their families, and citizens.

Expectations for Chaplains

The Chaplain should exhibit a broad base of experience and professional ministry, emotional stability and personal flexibility and should demonstrate a caring and understanding attitude toward all people regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, creed, national origin, disability status, or religion.

The Chaplain must be willing to work with other Chaplains from other faith backgrounds.

The Chaplain must be willing and able to perform the duties and responsibilities of the position.

The Chaplain is expected to be tactful and considerate in their approach to all people, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, creed, national origin, disability status, or religion.

Chaplains shall refer all legal or law enforcement related questions to the proper authorities.

Chaplains SHALL NOT:

Proselytize, evangelize or push their religious view and world views on those they serve.

Carry firearms or weapons on their person when functioning as a representative of the Chaplain Task Force, unless they are a sworn member of law enforcement or other agency, and approved to carry a weapon by the Chief or designee.

Unless a sworn member of law enforcement, Chaplains shall not intervene in crimes in progress, but shall notify the appropriate law enforcement agency if a crime is observed, and shall cooperate in any subsequent investigation as required by the investigating agency.

Solicit funds for the chaplain program from any person or business.

Dress Code

Proper attire will consist of conservative and/or clerical attire.

Chaplains shall be issued appropriate identification that shall be prominently displayed any time while functioning as a chaplain including responding to a scene as a representative of the Chaplain Task Force.

Chaplain Task Force members volunteering with other agencies, institutions, corporations and organizations may wear their identification in accordance to the rules & regulations of said agencies, institutions, corporations and organizations, and/or will agree to wear the appropriate identification required by said agencies, institutions, corporations and organizations.

Identification and any other equipment issued by the Chaplain Task Force to the Chaplain remains the property of the Chaplain Task Force, and must be surrendered upon separation from the Chaplain Task Force.

Chaplains will be expected to use a conservative email address, or create one for the purpose of Chaplain Task Force business.

If the Chaplain is a sworn member of a law enforcement or first responder or frontline worker agency/institution, the chaplain will wear their duty uniform and shall wear the appropriate collar insignia for their clerical authority.

When terminated from the Chaplain Task Force, all identification and similar equipment shall be surrendered to the Chaplain Task Force.

DOCUMENT OF AGREEMENT

I understand that the credentials/apparel/vehicle identification placard given, purchased and/or licensed to me by US-NYSCTF and its affiliates are merely for identification purposes as an active member of a private, non-profit, volunteer organization.

I understand that I am neither a State employee nor a State official. Furthermore, any misuse of these credentials/apparel/vehicle identification placard on my behalf will result in immediate termination of my membership, at which point I will surrender any/all of the credentials given or licensed to me by US-NYSCTF and its affiliates at once.

I, of my own free will, agree to comply with all the rules and regulations of the US-NYSCTF and its affiliates, as explained to me, produced in writing, and available, as well as updated without notice on their web site.

I fully understand that failure to comply with any of the aforementioned rules, regulations and membership obligations, including those listed in the Members Only area of our website, and any/all behavior unbecoming of a spiritual care provider, constitutes grounds for immediate termination of my membership with the organization.

I fully understand that if I am terminated or resign or fail to renew my membership, I am responsible for returning both my badge/shield, ID card and/or vehicle identification placard to US-NYSCTF or be subject to legal proceedings to the furthest extent of the law.

I agree not to hold US-NYSCTF, New York Chaplaincy Services, World Chaplaincy Organization, and any of its affiliates or agents responsible for any misuse of the credentials/apparel/vehicle identification placard given, purchased and/or licensed to me by US-NYSCTF, or for any mental, physical and/or emotional injury I may incur while performing my duties as a staff and/or volunteer chaplain, or at any other time.

I understand that any misuse of the credentials/apparel/vehicle identification placard given, purchased and/or licensed to me by US-NYSCTF, and/or any misrepresentation and/or wrongdoing of my own accord may lead to disciplinary actions, including, but not limited to, my termination from the organization and any of its affiliates, legal actions and criminal charges leading up to, and not excluding, incarceration.

I acknowledge being told, and understand that it is my responsibility to review the rules and regulations found herein, and on the US-NYSCTF website, as well as review the US-NYSCTF Policies & Procedure found here: <https://www.chaplains.care/rules--regulations.html>

RULES AND REGULATIONS

1. Obey all organization rules and regulations, both written and/or verbally executed.
2. Obey all private and public institution rules and regulations, both written and/or verbally executed.
3. Insubordination will not be tolerated at any capacity and is grounds for immediate dismissal.
4. Behavior not becoming of a chaplain, including, but not limited to negative and offensive attitudes and actions toward patients, clients, victims, any individual, colleagues, peers, staff and the authorities are grounds for immediate dismissal.
5. Ignorance is not bliss. If you are not certain about something, it is your responsibility to make certain.
6. All signed and completed applications, including, but not limited to, any/all additional documents submitted in person, by mail or electronically are the sole property of US-NYSCTF and will not be returned. In the case of a candidate's or member's resignation or dismissal, all documents shall be destroyed by shredding by US-NYSCTF.
7. Maintain a good testimony.
8. Do not use/carry your credentials if you are being disciplined by your ecclesiastic authority.
9. Notify US-NYSCTF immediately in the event of any infractions of the law.
10. All US-NYSCTF credentials, including shields and vehicle identification placards are the sole property of US-NYSCTF and must therefore be returned to the US-NYSCTF offices at 405 RXR Plaza, Uniondale, NY 11556 upon dismissal, resignation or expiration of membership.
11. A minimum of one (1) activity report should be turned in every month, unless unforeseen circumstances prevent you from doing so.
12. Your membership may be revoked if you are found guilty of a legal offense.
13. Your membership will be immediately revoked if you knowingly provide false information.
14. ID cards and First Aid/CPR/AED Certifications must be kept up to date.
15. Always identify yourself properly to the authorities when necessary and/or if required of you.
16. Your ID card may be used on its own, however, Shields must be accompanied by your valid ID card at all times.
17. Shields must never be displayed on your vehicle dashboard. Doing so is grounds for immediate dismissal.
18. Lost or stolen I.D. cards, shields and/or vehicle identification placards must be reported to your local Police Department immediately. A copy of the Police Report must be filed with US-NYSCTF as soon as it is obtained.
19. Replacement badges may be licensed from US-NYSCTF for a fee of \$200 (fee subject to change without notice).

20. Replacement ID Cards may be obtained from US-NYSCTF for a fee of \$35 (fee subject to change without notice).
21. Do not misuse your credentials or misrepresent yourself; this includes 'flashing' your shield at anyone, especially at law enforcement officers.
22. Do not speak on behalf of the organization to media, press, or officials without prior authority.
23. Do not alter or change your credentials in any way and/or use expired credentials.
24. Do not use your credentials to obtain favors from anyone, to obtain free public transportation, or to trespass.
25. Annual Membership Dues are \$125, which includes a new I.D. card.
26. Dress conservatively when performing your chaplaincy duties.
27. When asked to respond to a call, please notify US-NYSCTF as soon as possible as to whether you can respond or not.
28. Please read and adhere to the back of the vehicle identification placard. Misuse of your Vehicle Identification Placard is grounds for immediate dismissal, and in the least, a one-time warning.
29. US-NYSCTF members should never use lights & sirens in their vehicles unless they are authorized to do so by a police department, fire department and/or ambulance corp., and then not on behalf of US-NYSCTF.
30. Create a conscientious email account and voicemail message.
31. Memorize the US-NYSCTF Creed and Code of Discipline, and become very familiar with the Disaster/Crisis Code of Ethics.
32. Please download/print and become familiar with the US-NYSCTF Policies & Procedures found on our website.
33. DO NOT EVER speak ill of a fellow chaplain or a member of our organization. Any disagreements between members should be brought to a peaceful resolution between the members in disagreement. If mediation is needed, please contact your county supervisor.
34. NO REFUND of tuition after the first day of class!!!

SHIELD LICENSING AGREEMENT

I, being of a sound mind, do hereby attest that I have been advised that the Badge/Shield licensed to me by US-NYS Chaplain Task Force (US-NYSCTF) is the sole property of US-NYSCTF and must therefore be returned to US-NYSCTF immediately upon my termination or resignation from said organization. I also understand that if I fail to return the Badge/Shield, US-NYSCTF will have no other choice, but to file a report with State or City Law Enforcement Authorities. I understand that any misuse of the credentials given and/or licensed to me by United States Chaplain Task Force, and/or any misrepresentation and/or wrongdoing of my own accord may lead to disciplinary actions, including, but not limited to, my dismissal from the organization and any of its affiliates, legal actions and criminal charges leading up to, and not excluding, incarceration.

STATEMENT OF THE LICENSEE

I fully understand, and agree with all of the above-mentioned statement produced in writing in this document of licensing, and in doing so, I, being of a sound mind, and under my own accord, do hereby apply my name below, both in print and as a signature, along with today's date, and additional personal information.

OATH

I pledge to serve God in accordance with the sound principles of compassion, service to humanity, sincere advice, equity, respect for human dignity, and justice; I will serve the people who seek my help, counsel, and advice with compassion, sincerity, and integrity.

I will hold in trust the traditions and practices of my religious body. I understand that, as a chaplain, I must function in a pluralistic environment with chaplains of other religious bodies to provide for pastoral care and ministry to persons of religious bodies other than my own within my area of responsibility with the same investment of myself as I give to members of my own religious body. I will work collegially with chaplains of religious bodies other than my own as together we seek to provide as full a ministry as possible to our people. I will respect the beliefs and traditions of my colleagues and those to whom I minister.

To affirm this commitment, I will abide by the US-NYS Chaplain Task Force Code of Discipline and the United States Code of Ethics for Chaplains by faithfully supporting its principles and purposes. As further affirmation of my commitment, I pledge to hold myself and my fellow Chaplains accountable for all public actions set forth in these Codes of Ethics. So, help me God!

RANK STRUCTURE OF THE U.S. - N.Y.S. CHAPLAIN TASK FORCE

In the hopes of not only recognizing the achievements of members, but also keeping better track of said achievements within our membership in order to better serve our clients, we have developed a ranking structure which will indeed serve to better categorize our members according to their levels of training and skills. In addition, we also hope that this new rank structure will encourage our members to seek further education in the field of Crisis, disaster and trauma Spiritual Care.

FIELD OPERATIVE

Must Successfully Complete the US-NYSCTF Community Crisis Chaplaincy Program.

FIRST RESPONDER CHAPLAIN

#1- Must Successfully Complete the US-NYSCTF Community Crisis Chaplaincy Program.

#2- Must Successfully Complete a First Responder Certificate Program from approved agencies such as Red Cross, New York Critical Incident Stress Foundation, Ontario Critical Incident Stress Foundation, Spiritual Care Association, etc.

CERTIFIED CRISIS CHAPLAIN (CCC)

#1- Must Successfully Complete the US-NYSCTF Community Crisis Chaplaincy Program.

#2- Must Successfully Complete a First Responder Certificate Program from approved agencies such as Red Cross, New York Critical Incident Stress Foundation, Ontario Critical Incident

Stress Foundation, Spiritual Care Association, etc.

#3- Must Successfully Complete One Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) Unit.

BOARD CERTIFIED CRISIS CHAPLAIN (BCCC)

#1- Must Successfully Complete the US-NYSCTF Community Crisis Chaplaincy Program.

#2- Must Successfully Complete a First Responder Certificate Program from approved agencies such as Red Cross, New York Critical Incident Stress Foundation, Ontario Critical Incident Stress Foundation, Spiritual Care Association, etc.

#3- Must be Board Certified by a Recognized Professional Chaplaincy Association such as:

American Correctional Chaplains Association

Association of Certified Christian Chaplains

Association of Professional Chaplains

Canadian Association for Spiritual Care

Center for Spiritual Care & Pastoral Formation

College of Pastoral Supervision and Psychotherapy

Healthcare Chaplains Ministry Association

International Association of Christian Chaplains

National Association of Catholic Chaplains

National Association of Veteran Affairs Chaplains

National Conference of Veterans Affairs Catholic Chaplains

Neshama: Association of Jewish Chaplains

National Institute of Business and Industrial Chaplains

Spiritual Care Association

