



ALBUQUERQUE POLICE DEPARTMENT
PROCEDURAL ORDERS

SOP 1-25

Effective: 09/18/2023 Review: 09/18/2024 Replaces: 03/03/2022

1-25 CHAPLAIN UNIT

Related SOPs, Form(s), Other Resource(s), and Rescinded Special Order(s):

A. Related SOP(s)

[1-6 Patrol Ride-Along \(Formerly 2-12 and 4-5\)](#)
[1-12 Volunteer and Internship Programs \(Formerly 2-12 and 4-15\)](#)
[2-21 Apparent Natural Death/Suicide of an Adult \(Formerly 3-22\)](#)

B. Form(s)

Charitable Support Request Form
Chaplain Shift Summary Report
Chaplain Unit Incident Report
[PD 1002 Ride-Along Form](#)

C. Other Resource(s)

Chaplain Unit Field Operational Manual
New Mexico Rules of Evidence, Article 5, Rule 11-506 Communications to Clergy

D. Rescinded Special Order(s)

None

1-25-1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is set forth the rules for the Chaplain Unit and to describe how Department personnel may utilize the unit for support and resources.

1-25-2 Policy

It is the policy of the Department to have a volunteer non-denominational ministry to provide spiritual and emotional support to all Department personnel, their families, and community members. Furthermore, the purpose of the Chaplain Unit is to provide support and resources to Department personnel and community members during times of crisis

N/A 1-25-3 Definitions

None

N/A 1-25-4 Responsibilities

A. Chain of Command

1. The chain of command for the Chaplain Unit is as follows:



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- a. Chief of Police or their designee;
 - b. Operations Review Section;
 - c. Head Chaplain; and
 - d. All volunteer chaplains.
2. The Chief of Police or their designee shall designate a Head Chaplain.
3. The Chaplain Unit Board.
 - a. The Chaplain Board shall be comprised of the following members:
 - i. Head Chaplain;
 - ii. Operations Review Section;
 - iii. Special Operations; and
 - iv. Volunteer Program.
 - b. The Chaplain Unit shall vote to remove personnel from the Chaplain Unit.
 - i. After it has been voted on by the Chaplain Unit Board, the Operations Review Section designee and the Head Chaplain shall approve removing the volunteer from the Chaplain Unit.

B. Training

1. Chaplains shall complete thirty-five (35) hours of training each year. The training may include, but is not limited to the following topics:
 - a. Stress management;
 - b. Death notifications;
 - c. Post-traumatic stress syndrome;
 - d. Burnout for sworn personnel and chaplains;
 - e. Legal liability;
 - f. Confidentiality;
 - g. Ethics;
 - h. Responding to crisis situations;
 - i. Law enforcement family;
 - j. Substance abuse;
 - k. Suicide;
 - l. Officer injury or death; and
 - m. Sensitivity and diversity, as approved by the Head Chaplain.
2. Training may be provided by the Department or outside organizations as approved by the Head Chaplain.

C. Requirements and Selection

1. Candidates for the Chaplain Unit shall meet the following requirements:



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- a. Be ecclesiastically certified and/or endorsed, ordained, licensed, or commissioned by a recognized religious body;
 - b. Successfully pass an appropriate level background investigation to include:
 - i. No felony convictions;
 - ii. No domestic violence or child abuse convictions; and
 - iii. No illegal drug usage with-in the last two (2) years.
 - c. Have at least two (2) years of successful ministry experience within a recognized ministry, church, or religious denomination;
 - d. Possess a valid New Mexico Driver's License; and
 - e. Obtain a City of Albuquerque Operator's Permit within two (2) months of appointment.
2. Chaplain Unit candidates are encouraged to participate in the ride-along program before and during the selection process.
3. Prior to deploying as a chaplain, the candidate:

N/A

- a. Will register with the Department's Volunteer and Internship Programs, consistent with SOP Volunteer and Internship Programs (refer to SOP Volunteer and Internship Programs for sanction classifications and additional duties);
- b. Shall be actively engaged in pastoral care;
- c. Shall provide a recommendation from their church elders, board, or council;
- d. Provide proof of residency in New Mexico for a minimum of one (1) year;
- e. Will receive approval for service by the Volunteer Coordinator and the Head Chaplain;
- f. Attend a new volunteer Chaplain Unit orientation;
- g. Complete a six (6) month probationary period as designated by the Head Chaplain; and
- h. Be required to sign a Department confidentiality agreement.

D. Duties and Responsibilities

1. Chaplain Unit personnel shall:

- a. Assist in making notification to and supporting families of Department personnel who have been seriously injured or killed;
- b. Assist sworn personnel by making death notifications as requested by the Department;
- c. When requested by the Department, attend and participate in funerals of active or retired Department personnel;
- d. When requested, respond to natural and accidental deaths and suicides, consistent with Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) Apparent Natural Death/Suicide of An Adult (refer to SOP Apparent Natural Death/Suicide of An Adult for sanction classifications and additional duties);
- e. Be on-call to respond to requests made from Emergency Communications Center (ECC) personnel;

N/A



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N/A

- f. When requested, assist Department personnel with personal problems;
- g. Attend Department and Academy Division graduations, ceremonies, and social events and offer invocations and benedictions, as requested;
- h. Be a liaison with various religious leaders in the community;
- i. Promptly facilitate requests for representatives or ministers of various denominations;
- j. Make referrals in cases where specialized attention is needed or in cases that are beyond the chaplain's ability to assist;
- k. Be on-call for a period of twenty-four (24) hours daily;
- l. Serve with Department personnel a minimum of eight (8) hours per month;
- m. Complete a Chaplain Shift Summary Report and Chaplain Unit Incident Report to track their activities;
 - i. Chaplain Unit personnel shall submit the documentation to the Head Chaplain or their designee at the end of each watch.
- n. Be permitted to go on ride-alongs with sworn personnel during any shift in order to observe Department operations, after receiving authorization from the shift supervisor conducted, consistent with SOP Patrol Ride-Along (refer to SOP Patrol Ride-Along for sanction classifications and additional duties);
- o. Serve only within the jurisdiction of the Department unless otherwise authorized by the Chief of Police or their designee; and
- p. Be familiar with state evidentiary laws and regulations pertaining to the limits of the clergy-penitent privilege and shall inform Department personnel when it appears reasonably likely that they are discussing matters that are not subject to the clergy-penitent privilege. In such cases, the chaplain should consider referring personnel to a non-Department counseling resource, consistent with New Mexico Rules of Evidence, Article 5, Rule 11-506 Communications to Clergy.

2. Chaplain Unit personnel shall not:

- a. Proselytize or attempt to recruit Department personnel or community members into a religious affiliation while on-duty, unless the receiving community member has solicited spiritual guidance or teaching;
 - i. If there is any question as to the receiving community member's intent, chaplains should verify that the community member is requesting spiritual counseling or guidance before engaging in such discussion.
- b. Function as sworn personnel or give legal advice when responding to an incident;
- c. Accept gratuities for any service or follow-up contacts that were provided while functioning as a chaplain for the Department;
- d. Provide counsel to or receive confidential communications from Department personnel concerning an incident personally witnessed by the chaplain or concerning an incident involving the chaplain;
- e. Provide anyone outside of the Department with personal telephone numbers or contact information of Department personnel or volunteers; and
 - i. All requests for such information should be directed to the Emergency Communication Center (ECC).



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- f. Make a Department statement to the general public or Associated Press without the expressed permission of the Department Public Information Officer (PIO).