

UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT
POLICY AND PROCEDURE

No. 1040 Supersedes: N/A

Effective: May 1, 2013 Page: 1 Section: 3

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POLICE CHAPLAIN PROGRAM

I. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to describe the role and function of the Police Chaplain(s) for the Upper Merion Township Police Department, and to further aid the Department in its effort to advance the Community Policing Concept.

II. POLICY:

It shall be the policy of the Upper Merion Township Police Department to make counseling and pastoral services available to our community and the members and families of the Department whenever such services are requested.

III. PROCEDURE:

A. The Police Chaplain program is a voluntary partnership between the clergy and the Upper Merion Township Police Department to improve the quality of life for the residents of the Township and the Police Department. This partnership will endeavor to help maintain strong community relations through the exchange of vital information that will help residents to better understand police activity and procedures; and to help police officers perform their duties more efficiently:

B. Chaplains are permitted to participate in the ride-along program after giving proper notice to the Chief of Police and as approved by the Chief of Police;

C. All members of the Department may request the Chaplains presence through the Communications Center;

D. Any member of the Department may contact a Chaplain for personal reasons.

IV. DEFINITIONS

- A. Police Chaplain – an interfaith person affiliated with a law enforcement Agency with a passionate interest and specialized training in pastoral care in the world of law enforcement. The pastoral care is offered to all people regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, creed, or religion.

- B. Pastoral Care – counseling and spiritual care during times of crisis, emergencies or turmoil and the aftermath.

V. QUALIFICATIONS

- a. Must reside in Upper Merion Township or be affiliated with a place of worship within Upper Merion Township;
- b. Must be ordained or licensed in a recognized religious denomination or group and be in good standing;
- c. Must be skilled and experienced as a practitioner of pastoral care;
- d. Must maintain high moral standards;
- e. Applicants must participate in and successfully pass a background investigation;
- f. Must possess a valid Pennsylvania Driver’s License;
- g. Chaplains will be appointed by the Chief of Police but are not law enforcement officers and do not possess law enforcement authority;
- h. Must attend orientation given by the Police Department;
- i. Must become familiar with, accept, and follow the policies and procedures of the Chaplains program;
- k. Chaplains will be furnished with Upper Merion Township Police Department identification that shall be displayed while performing the duties as a Police Chaplain.

VI. DUTIES OF A CHAPLAIN

- A. Law enforcement is an unpredictable occupation and the Police Chaplain should stand ready to respond whenever an incident occurs where their presence is needed and requested;
- B. Chaplains are appointed as volunteers and are “on call” 24 hours a day;
- C. Chaplains participate in the workplace of law enforcement officers by listening calmly, advising, and offering assistance when appropriate or requested;
- D. Offering pastoral care, empathy and a source of consolation during and after emergencies;
- E. The pastoral service is offered without cost or proselytizing;
- F. Attend meetings as required;

VII. RESPONSIBILITIES

- a. A Chaplain shall be considered a member of the Upper Merion Township Police Department and is to be shown the respect and courtesy due their position;
- b. Chaplains shall report directly to the Chief of Police;
- c. Information relayed to a Chaplain of a sensitive nature shall be considered privileged (i.e. confidential) information and shall remain with the Chaplain;
- d. No member of the Department may inquire about any information relayed to a Chaplain by another member of the Department;
- e. Chaplains will have their photo identification card when performing department related duties;
- f. The identification card must be returned to the Department upon separation from the program;
- g. Possession of a Police Chaplain identification card does not permit the bearer access to secured police lines without authorization of the ranking officer in charge of the scene;
- h. The Chief of Police or his designee, upon just cause, may remove chaplains from the program. Just cause shall include, but is not limited to the following:
 - i. any violation of the provisions of this policy;
 - ii. violation of statutory authority;
 - iii. a violation of department rules, regulations or policies.
- i. Police Chaplains **shall not** be permitted to carry any type of firearm while acting in the capacity of a Police Chaplain.

APPROVED: _____ DATED: _____

APPROVED: _____ DATED: _____

TO BE REVIEWED: ANNUALLY
DISTRIBUTION: All police officers
All telecommunicators
Township Manager
File