
**NEVADA COUNTY
SHERIFF'S OFFICE**



**GENERAL ORDER
10
Effective Date
1/1/2010**

SUBJECT

Sheriff's Chaplaincy Program

POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Nevada County Sheriff's Office to have volunteer chaplains available to offer support during times of suffering, tragedy or loss. The intent is that the chaplain's services might be available to all law enforcement agencies in Nevada County, their families and all those in our community who are in need. The Sheriff will assign a department member as a coordinator of the Chaplaincy Program.

PURPOSE

Chaplains provide law enforcement members, their families, and the community a compassionate and calming presence in the face of adversity or need.

CODE REFERENCE

CASE LAW

DEFINITIONS

Law Enforcement Chaplain: Primarily serve law enforcement employees and their families. They are licensed, commissioned or ordained clergy and must pass a background investigation and complete department specified training.

Community Chaplain: Primarily serve community members. They must also pass a background investigation and complete department specified training.

PROCEDURE

A. Law Enforcement Chaplains

1. Guidelines

- a. Law Enforcement Chaplains provide law enforcement families and department personnel a trusted source of confidence and encouragement. They work closely with law enforcement management to provide 24/7 coverage for crisis intervention, any emergency situation or employee need.

- b. When engaged in chaplaincy duties, either routine or emergency, the chaplain shall identify himself or herself to the supervisor or OIC and display appropriate departmental identification.
2. Call-Out Procedures
 - a. The Dispatch Centers will maintain current contact lists for Law Enforcement Chaplains.
 - b. Chaplain notification or call-out will be approved by the on-duty supervisor, incident commander or management staff
 - c. Requests made by other agencies will be approved by the on-duty supervisor.
 3. Call-out Criteria may include
 - a. Serious injury or death of any Sheriff's Office employee
 - b. Officer involved shooting
 - c. Death of an immediate family member of any Sheriff's Office employee
 - d. Serious illness of a member of the department
 - e. Any traumatic crime scene
 - f. Any matter pertaining to the moral, spiritual and/or religious welfare of law enforcement personnel or the community where religious guidance is needed to address a crisis situation
 - g. Outside agency requests
 4. Services provided but not limited to
 - a. Chaplain and pastoral care provider for all employees and immediate family members
 - b. Develop relationships and maintaining contact with all personnel through frequent worksite visits to the various facilities
 - c. Providing informal and formal confidential pastoral discussions for problem issues
 - d. Making hospital and home visits to employees and family members
 - e. Officiating at weddings, including assistance in planning the ceremony, as well as pre-marital confidential pastoral discussion
 - f. Performing funerals, including assistance with grief management, planning the funeral service and supporting family members after the funeral
 - g. Writing personal notes to employees for encouragement, counseling follow-up, etc.
 - h. Referring employees and family members with severe or long-term needs to specialized types of assistance
 - i. Acting as a member of a departmental "Death Notification Team"
 - j. Participation in new employee orientation to explain the Chaplaincy Program
 - k. Providing self-improvement material (books, pamphlets, booklets, tracts, and audio/video tapes) for employees and family members to help teach principles for successful and happy living
 - l. Speaking for in-house events (religious or secular meetings, employee gatherings, etc.) when an inspirational speaker is desired by management
 - m. Providing spiritual enrichment activities as requested by the agency, with voluntary attendance by employees, including devotionals, Bible studies, and special seasonal services
 - n. Participate with the Critical Incident Stress Debriefing Team
 - o. Work closely with peer support and EAP mental health responders

B. Community Chaplains

1. Guidelines

- a. May be non-clergy persons who are trained to provide traumatized civilians a compassionate presence in difficult times; for a limited period of time
- b. Community Chaplains bring a calming presence to potentially volatile scenes
- c. Serve as liaisons between survivors and public safety personnel
- d. Help contact and convene survivors' family, friends and clergy
- e. Provide a safe environment for survivors to express their anguish
- f. Provide survivors information on how to care for themselves in the coming days and weeks
- g. Provide referrals to agencies offering long-term support
- h. Provide other practical assistance as necessary
- i. Community Chaplains typically remain on scene anywhere from one to four hours or more

2. Call-Out Procedures

- a. The Dispatch Centers will maintain current contact lists for Community Chaplains.
- b. Chaplain notification or call-out will be approved by the on-duty supervisor, incident commander or management staff
- c. Requests made by other agencies will be approved by the on-duty supervisor

3. Call-Out criteria may include

- a. Serious accidents
- b. Suicides
- c. Homicides or suspicious deaths
- d. Sudden infant death
- e. Barricaded subjects
- f. Missing persons
- g. Industrial accidents
- h. Unexpected natural deaths
- i. Death Notifications
- j. Search and rescue operations
- k. Mass-casualty events

C. General Provisions for both Law Enforcement Chaplains and Community Chaplains

1. Confidentiality

- a. Conversations between department personnel and a Law Enforcement Chaplain shall be held in strict confidence in accordance with the law. Information concerning an individual may only be released to a referred counseling source with the permission of the person being counseled.
- b. Confidentiality of crime screens will also be maintained
- c. Violations of confidentiality will be grounds for the dismissal of a Law Enforcement Chaplain

2. Chaplain Safety

- a. Chaplains will not carry firearms on their person or in their vehicle while on call
- b. Chaplains shall not intervene with in crimes-in-progress but will notify the appropriate law enforcement agency and observe the offense from a position of safety
- c. While on call, every attempt shall be made to not jeopardize the safety of the chaplains. Should a situation develop in which a law enforcement officer requires immediate assistance, the Chaplain should call for assistance and should only become involved when ordered to do so by a law enforcement officer or if the officer is incapacitated.
- d. All chaplains will fill out and sign a "release of liability" in order to ride-along. The form will be kept in their personnel file.
- e. Chaplains shall be permitted to ride with any division in the department with the approval of the division's supervisor.
- f. Chaplains shall remain in the law enforcement vehicle unless directed by law enforcement personnel.
- g. Due to the serious nature of a call a law enforcement officer or supervisor may have the chaplain leave the vehicle and wait in a safe place. Dispatch will be notified immediately so that the chaplain can be picked up as soon as possible

3. Complaints against Chaplains

- a. Any formal complaint against a chaplain, whether by a department member or the community, shall be documented and forwarded through the chain-of-command to the Sheriff.

4. Terms of service

- a. Chaplains are volunteers and the position serves "at will" of the Sheriff or his designated representative. "At will" means that the Sheriff or the individual volunteer may end the volunteer relationship at any time for any or no reason.
- b. Chaplains are required to "ride-a-long" a minimum of ten (10) hours per calendar quarter. This may be with any Nevada County law enforcement agency or division of the Sheriff's Office and may be broken into as little as two (2) hour segments. Attendance at special details where deputies are assigned, i.e. county Fair, Penn Valley Rodeo, Draft Horse Classic may be credited hour for hour as "ride-a-long" hours. The ten (10) hours may be carried over to the next quarter; however failure to complete the total number of hours (past quarter and current quarter), unless excused, may result in dismissal from the Chaplain Program.