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OPERATIONS MANUAL

STANDARD INSTRUCTION 10 INJURY AND ILLNESS PREVENTION PROGRAM

SECTION 19 CHAPLAINS

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I. PURPOSE

To establish guidelines for a volunteer Chaplain Program to provide physical, emotional and spiritual care services to department members and their families, members of the community, and the regional fire service.

II. SCOPE

This policy shall apply to all San Diego Fire-Rescue Department (SDFD) personnel.

III. AUTHORITY

The fire chief authorizes the information within this policy.

IV. POLICY

A. Purpose

1. To provide support for the emotional care and faith needs for sworn and non-sworn personnel of SDFD regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, creed, or religion.
2. To provide critical incident stress management support to assist individuals in coping with inordinate levels of stress they may encounter related to emergency responses. This support is provided to mitigate negative pressures, which can produce disintegrating tendencies and adversely affect an employee's effectiveness on the job as well as at home.
3. To provide incident scene chaplain services to members of the community who have experienced a traumatic event.
4. To provide chaplain services at department functions, retirement dinners, various meetings, recruit graduations, weddings, funerals, etc.
5. To develop relationships with Fire-Rescue personnel and their families, for the purpose of being a resource for support for future times of need.
6. The program will not be used as a forum for proselytizing (recruitment to a new faith) and is not meant to replace an individual's clergy and/or other counseling programs available through the Department or City.
 - a. Chaplains are not to represent a particular denomination, but to care for the emotional and faith needs of the firefighter.
 - b. The chaplain service does not exist to compete with, but rather to complement existing resources.
 - c. Chaplain services are free of charge as the chaplains serve the department as volunteers.

B. Appointment

The fire chief or his/her designee shall evaluate any prospective vetted candidate for a Fire-Rescue Department chaplain position.

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1. **Appointment Process**

- a. Chaplains are appointed by the fire chief
- b. The chaplain program falls under the direction of the Health and Safety Office
- c. The chaplain team leader coordinates the day-to-day operation of the chaplains and is available for the executive command staff (ECS), administrative and the civilian staff
- d. Chaplains will be appointed to all Fire-Rescue divisions with the following minimums:
 - a. Two per fire battalion
 - b. One for Lifeguards
 - c. One to the Emergency Communications and Data Center (ECDC)
- e. Candidates must be from a recognized religious authority (IRS recognized religious organization) to function as an emergency services chaplain.

C. General Guidelines

1. Communications with a chaplain are confidential and will not be shared with any department members or any other person except where required by law.
2. Any fire personnel may go a chaplain without having to notify his or her supervisor or anyone else.
3. Any fire department officer or member (including administrative staff) who is made aware of any situation which may need the response of the chaplain may contact the chaplain directly.
4. The chaplain may also be contacted through ECDC or via the Health and Safety Office.
5. The SDFD chaplain team leader will keep current telephone numbers for the chaplains and ensure they are in posted on the behavioral wellness website.
6. The SDFD Health and Safety Office will provide chaplain supervision.

D. Program Management

1. The program is administered by the Health and Safety Office, supervised by the health and safety officer (HSO) or designee.
2. The Behavioral Health Advisory Board (AB) provides recommendations outlined in the Wellness Program Policy in the Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP).

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E. Chaplain Team Leader

1. The chaplain team leader is one of the chaplains who is selected by the HSO and will remain in the position until they step down or by recommendation of the AB with cause to the HSO.
2. The chaplains shall report to the chaplain team leader.
3. The chaplain team leader will be responsible for matters pertaining to the operations of the chaplain services.
4. The administrative duties shall include planning, organizing and directing the activities of the SDFD chaplains in conjunction with the Health and Safety Office.
5. Chaplain team leader duties include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Meet all SDFD chaplains on a regular basis
 - b. Collaborate with the HSO for instruction of new chaplains to include:
 - 1) Overview of the Chaplain Program
 - 2) SDFD terminology
 - 3) Introduction to executive command staff
 - 4) Invitation to attend SDFD functions
 - c. Maintain updated list of SDFD chaplain roster

F. Equipment/Information Provided at Appointment

1. SDFD polo shirt
2. Brush jacket
3. Business cards/identification card
4. Wallet badge
5. Package of information on Chaplain Program to include:
 - a. SDFD Chaplain Program Policy
 - b. Name and phone numbers for SDFD HSO and chaplains
 - c. List of fire stations/locations
 - d. SDFD chaplain orientation
6. Class B uniform following one year of satisfactory service
 - a. Class A uniform - Based on funding and need for official ceremonies
 - b. Badge center insignia shall be city emblem
 - c. Collar insignia should represent denomination identified by the chaplain

G. Qualifications and Training,

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To ensure that any chaplain associated with the SDFD meets appropriate qualifications and is willing to make the desired commitment, the following standards must be met. These qualifications, training standards and commitment levels are guidelines and are subject to change at the discretion of the fire chief.

1. Proof of Certification:
 - a. Ordination, licensure, investiture, or commission by a recognized religious authority.
 - b. Certification by ACPE, APC, NACC, ICPC, FFC, or other recognized chaplaincy authorizing institution.
 - c. Member of the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation and/or the Federation of Fire Chaplains.
2. Education and Training:
 - a. Theological education or training consistent with the requirements for the specific faith traditions within a denomination or religion.
 - b. Ecclesiastical certification that a candidate is in good standing; an endorsement for SDFD chaplaincy by a recognized religious body; and approximately three years of experience in ministry.
 - c. Current involvement in a ministry, congregation or church-related organization in San Diego County.
 - d. Possession of a valid California ID, a US Citizen.
 - e. Completed 40 hours of documented professional crisis and chaplaincy training in the following categories:
 - 1) Basic Crisis Intervention courses
 - 2) Appropriate Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) courses
 - 3) Appropriate chaplaincy training courses
 - 4) Peer Support courses
3. Experience:
 - a. Experience in crisis intervention services and CISM applications.
 - b. Knowledge and experience of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).
 - c. Experience and understanding of the dynamics of grief and bereavement.
 - d. Experience in conducting weddings and memorials.

H. Chaplain Selection Process

1. Each SDFD chaplain candidate must first come with the recommendation of the chaplain team leader to the health and safety officer.
2. The applicant will complete a city volunteer background investigation.
 - a. Chaplains will be registered as a volunteer for the City of San Diego.
3. The applicant is then interviewed by the fire chief or the fire chief's designee.
4. After fire chief approval, chaplain candidates will meet with the SDFD's designee and go through an orientation and training.

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5. Approved chaplains will receive a list of contact information for their battalion chiefs and station phone numbers for ride-along purposes.
 6. Once the orientation is over, chaplain candidates will be given a chaplain mentor and specific assignment.
- I. SDFD Chaplain Requirements:
1. Attendance at regular chaplaincy meetings.
 2. Attendance at 50% of the peer support training sessions.
 3. Maintain regular accountable communication with the SDFD chaplain team leader.
 - a. General “topic” data provided by Chaplains and the Peer Support Team (PST) members will be utilized by the program management to identify the effectiveness, trends, educational requirements and utilization of the PST.
 - b. No names or identifiable traits of SDFD PST participants will ever be kept or shared.
 4. All chaplains must meet with a PST clinician a minimum of once annually to remain an active member.
 5. Willing to work in coordination with SDFD leadership requests
 6. SDFD chaplains are required to participate in annual continuing education, applicable to peer support, chaplaincy, or crisis intervention.
 7. Able to make a minimum commitment of three years serving as a fire department chaplain.
 8. Minimum of two fire stations/Lifeguard tower/facility visits or ride alongs per month.
 - a. Visits and ride-alongs should be scheduled through the station captain with approval from the battalion chief, lieutenant or supervisor.
 - b. Upon arrival: Introduce yourselves to everyone at the station and provide your intended length of stay.
 - c. Chaplains will cover the cost of their personal meals when on a ride along.
 - d. Ask about the captain’s preference for direction of their personal location when coming to a scene (i.e. stay in the rig, stay with the engineer, stand to the side, etc.)
 - e. Ask questions of the firefighters and LISTEN. Take mental or confidential notes when conversations warrant a follow-up.
 - f. Do NOT make judgments about other firefighters, captains or command staff.
 - g. Tell the crew to follow their normal routine and not to feel that they have to entertain the chaplain ride along.

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9. Provide physical, emotional and spiritual care to members of SDFD and their families.
10. Maintain “around-the-clock” availability and accessibility as much as possible within other career demands.
11. Willing to respond to incidents as requested through SDFD established communication system.
12. Assist department needs for pre-incident and Fire Academy CISM instruction as requested.
13. Willing to serve individual and department personnel needs as requested for crisis intervention, ceremonies, and various other related functions.
14. Respond in a supportive manner to large-scale incidents (e.g. second/third alarm fires, etc.) as available.
15. Chaplains are always to maintain a consistent professional image both on and off duty.
16. Dress appropriate to the requirements of the department protocol. Chaplains should wear approved chaplain uniform at drills and ride-a-longs.

J. Chaplain Commitments may include:

1. Invocations, benedictions, special presentations, etc. for official ceremonies.
2. Visiting sick or injured SDFD employees.
3. Providing care during bereavement situations.
4. Providing pre-incident instruction in relation to stress management intervention strategies.
5. Providing coping assistance for personnel following stressful career experiences.
6. Offering services to families within the department such as weddings, funerals, religious events and ceremonies.
7. Helping with peer support functions.
8. Providing personal, marital and family chaplaincy counseling assistance.
9. Providing chaplaincy support to victims of a work-related crisis.
10. Providing critical incident stress management or psychological first-aid services in a variety of incidents which may include:

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- a. Line-of-duty death of an SDFD employee.
- b. Serious line-of-duty injury or illness of an SDFD employee.
- c. Suicide of an SDFD employee.
- d. Multi-casualty incident/disaster.
- e. Significant event involving children.
- f. Significant event with which an SDFD employee identifies closely.
- g. Personnel placed in extreme danger, e.g., hostage, assaults, etc.
- h. Prolonged incident with loss.
- i. Excessive media interest.
- j. Any incident where SDFD leadership and/or personnel feel an individual may benefit from intervention.

11. San Diego Community Assistance
Community trauma can evoke a wide range of highly charged responses from both disaster victims and emergency responders who are dispatched to provide care and support. The goal of the chaplain's service would be to ensure that affected individuals are assisted in coping with the challenges and stress they experience through a disaster as requested by the SDFD leadership. As such, SDFD chaplains can provide crisis intervention services to assist in the mitigation of the potentially harmful impact of a disaster. Within the arena of community service, chaplains exercise their care through a religiously neutral ethic and within the legal government boundaries. For community disasters the chaplain services may:
- a. Provide on-scene assistance in mitigating the stress reactions of affected community members as appropriately requested by SDFD leadership.
 - b. Assist affected families by offering referrals of community support networks.
 - c. Serve as liaisons with agencies called to assist in a disaster.
 - d. Assist with any community ecumenical services that are in association with a disaster where the SDFD is involved.

K. Crisis Response Canine Program (CRCP)

- 1. Chaplains, with the approval of the Health and Safety Office, may volunteer to become a CRCP handler in service to our members and to those in the community.
- 2. The CRCP is under the direction and coordination of the Health and Safety Office.
- 3. Chaplain handlers (with their canine) will be registered as a volunteer for the City of San Diego.
- 4. The CRCP is a component of peer support during ongoing incidents, CISM, and individual support, and is available case by case as needs arise.

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5. The CRCP may be asked to participate in special presentations, community events, or for official ceremonies.
6. All canines of the CRCP will be certified as Crisis Response Canines (Facility Dogs) through an organization or training program that is accredited by Assistance Dogs International (ADI) and approved by the Health and Safety Office.
 - a. Certification will meet or exceed national standards for animal-assisted crisis response (ADI accreditation)
 - b. Canines will come from recognized, licensed, and certified organizations
7. Canines will be up to date with all vaccinations and monthly flea and tick medication.
8. Canines will be covered by a minimum two-million-dollar liability policy that indemnifies the City of San Diego.
9. Copies of all records will be updated annually and maintained within the Health and Safety Office.
10. Chaplain handler will be responsible for all ongoing care of their canine.
11. Canine Identification
 - a. The department shall provide the following appropriate uniform identification for the canine to wear while performing services for the department.
 - b. The uniform worn will consist of an approved lightweight vest with SDFD patches on both sides along with verbiage identifying the type of canine to include:
 - 1) Crisis Canine badge signaling a department appointed member
 - 2) Crisis Response K-9
 - 3) ADI certification patch
 - 4) American flag
 - 5) Reflective striping
 - c. A place to put the team's (handler and canine) identification card will be displayed on the back of the canine
 - d. A matching collar and leash will be used
 - e. A backpack for canine supplies
 - f. A crate for station and/or facility visits