





NORTHERN WAKE FIRE DEPARTMENT

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

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| TITLE: Chaplaincy Program | SECTION/TOPIC: PERSONNEL |
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| REVISION DATES: | APPROVED BY: Gary Vickerson  <hr/> PRESIDENT – BOARD OF DIRECTORS Tim Pope  <hr/> FIRE CHIEF |

I. PURPOSE

- A. Because of the high stress and risks that firefighters face as they perform their duty to protect the citizens of Wake County, the Northern Wake Fire Department Chaplaincy Program has been established to provide spiritual care and assistance to both current and retired members, their families, and members of the community.

II. SCOPE

- A. This Standard Operating Procedure applies to all members of the Northern Wake Fire Department.

III. PROCEDURE

- A. The chaplain does not replace the role of the member's church pastor.
- B. The chaplain serves every member of the Northern Wake Fire Department, regardless of nationality, race, sex, or religion.
- C. Spiritual guidance and witness is more often by action rather than word.
- D. The example set by the chaplain in all phases of life has more bearing on the firefighter than "preaching" about it.
- E. Any communication made to the chaplain is to remain strictly confidential, unless there is a threat of injury to themselves or to others.
- F. Anyone may speak directly with the chaplain without having to notify his or her supervisor.
- G. Any member, who is made aware of a situation that they feel needs the response of the Chaplain, may contact the Chaplain directly. Examples include but are not limited to:
 - 1. Death, injury, or hospitalization of a member.
 - 2. Death, injury, or hospitalization of a member's spouse or child or other immediate family member.

3. Death, injury, or hospitalization of a retired member.
4. Difficult call or stressful situation encountered while on duty or off duty.

IV. CHAPLAIN DUTIES

A. Routine Duties

1. Periodically being present at the fire stations, while getting to know members while they are on duty.
2. Hosting fellowship meals for members, encompassing spiritual care and team building.
3. Visiting sick or injured members and their families, while they are at home or at care facilities.
4. Visiting sick or injured retired members and their families, while they are at home or at care facilities.
5. Supporting the Junior Firefighter program by periodically attending their meetings, while getting to know them, debriefing them on what they experience on calls, and teaching them about stress management and self-care.
6. Being available to members for spiritual guidance and counseling during times of stress or crisis and if unable to provide proper counseling, help work with the member to find an appropriate counselor that can provide needed assistance.
7. When possible, attending fire department functions and offering prayer when requested.
8. Conducting funerals and weddings upon request.
9. Assisting the Membership Services Committee with providing gifts and support to members having children, getting married, etc.
10. Teaching classes that will assist members with learning self-care and stress management.

B. Emergency Duties

1. Assisting with highly emotional or unstable family members on scene.
2. Working as a liaison to provide assistance to those displaced by a house fire or other disaster (Ex. Red cross activation, contacting local church, etc.)
3. Assisting firefighters by watching for signs of physical and emotional stress, helping with rehab, etc.
4. In the case of a serious firefighter injury or LODD death of a member, assisting the Command Staff with family notification and presence at the hospital.

5. Following up with members that were present on difficult or stressful calls and providing appropriate assistance.
6. Working with the Command Staff on providing critical incident stress management debriefings when necessary.