

SPOKANE COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT 8

Standard Operating Procedures

10.05.04 CHAPLAINCY PROGRAM



Adopted: 12/20/16
Reviewed: 11/09/22
Revised: 11/09/22

Approved: _____

James J. Kuhn

Purpose: The Chaplaincy Program shall allow an "on the scene" coordinator to provide a liaison between the victim/family of crisis and local, state, or national public support agencies; and facilitate family contact with "clergy of choice" and/or additional close family or friends. They will provide non-denominational support designed to meet the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of Fire District personnel and/or their families along with the victims and their families the Fire District serves.

References: N/A

Procedure:

1. Chaplain.

- a) Directly reports to the Fire Chief, or designee, and shall work within the established policies and procedures of Spokane County Fire District 8.
- b) Assist as a liaison between crisis victims and local, state, or national public support agencies such as the American Red Cross, Salvation Army, and FEMA etc.
- c) Assist the victim and/or other family members or friends, etc. in making early contact with their "clergy of choice" if any.
- d) Remain with the family during the period following an event, and/or until the family's personal minister or designated support arrives.
- e) Shall be available at the request of members of the Fire District and staff members to minister to them and their families in times of illness, injury, sorrow, and tension.
- f) Shall be available, if called upon by the Fire District, for consultation on matters that fall within the purview of the Chaplaincy and aid in areas of public relations.
- g) Will not release any information to the news media or public concerning matters deemed personal or confidential. All public statements shall be cleared first with the Incident Commander.
- h) Obey all laws in responding to crisis calls.
- i) Turn in all Fire District equipment promptly upon leaving the position with the Fire District.

2. Incident Commanders.

- a) It is the responsibility of the Incident Commander to make an early determination as to the implementation of this program when the need arises.

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3. General Guidelines.

- a) Chaplain responses are recommended for the following incidents which may occur within the region, **when requested by IC and/or approved by the 820 and approved by the victim or family member:**
 - i. S.I.D.S. - Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.
 - ii. Suicide or homicides.
 - iii. Multi-casualty incidents.
 - iv. Second alarm or greater fire calls.
 - v. Injured firefighters or police officers.
 - vi. As requested by the Incident Commander.
- b) The Chaplain ministers freely to all members of the Fire District, as well as the offender and victim, without interfering with investigative and law enforcement procedures.
- c) Long-term support is at the victim's and/or family's discretion, and shall be considered outside the scope of the Chaplaincy Program.

4. Identification.

- a) The Chaplain shall be provided with the appropriate identification. This will include a photo identification card, a clip-on type badge, and a safety vest marked "Chaplain".

5. Additional Clothing and Items.

- a) The Chaplain shall be provided with a Class B uniform for more formal events or when participating in large scale incidents or events. This includes a Fire District issued jacket, map books, business cards, copy of Fire District regulations (as appropriate), and response report forms.

6. Rank/Title.

- a) The Chaplain shall have need for no title other than Chaplain. This allows the person to freely serve all ranks and positions without regard to position.

7. Response Procedure.

- a) Chaplains shall be dispatched by Combined Communication Center (CCC) upon request by the Fire Chief, the Incident Commander, and/or in such mandatory cases as prescribed by Fire District policy.
- b) The Incident Commander will need to ask the victim, family members, and/or individuals involved whether they would like the Chaplain to be dispatched to the location of the incident in a supportive role.

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- c) The Chaplain will need to log into the district designated scheduling software and input availability. If responding to an incident or event, a support unit may be used.
 - d) You may contact the Chaplain for personal questions on their cell phone (Please **do not** give out this phone number to non-Fire District personnel).
8. Administrative.
- a) The Chaplain shall record and report responses according to Fire District requirements. The Chaplain shall be available to attend occasional meetings with the Fire District and other Chaplain personnel for the purpose of program review and in-service training, etc.
9. Training.
- a) As a minimum requirement to serve in the Chaplaincy Program, approved Volunteer Chaplains are to complete an initial training course approved by the Fire Chief, and directed by the Chaplain Coordinator.
 - b) The Chaplain shall be given a tour of all the fire stations, receive information on the organizational structure of the Fire District. The Fire District will try to help with appropriate training classes that will help in field ministry.
 - c) Chaplains shall participate in a ride-along, classes, officers' meetings, and station visits including all shifts. Any ride-along shall be governed by appropriate Fire District procedures and policies.
 - d) Training will include, but is not limited to:
 - i. Review of SOP's.
 - ii. Review of the Blood Borne Pathogen Training.
 - iii. Review of HIPPA Law Document.
 - iv. Driver Training
10. Statement of Service.
- a) Provide assistance to the local community, through an existing emergency service organization, in establishing a comprehensive program designed to meet the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of the victim and/or family during an immediate period of crisis.
 - b) Allow the victim early contact with "clergy of choice" and/or other family members or friends, etc.
 - c) Provide the service of caring for the victim's family while the firefighter, paramedic, police officer, etc. attends to the victim or the immediate problem.