

**EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH**

**Procedure Manual
Chaplains Work and Care Committee**

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FIRST EDITION

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I. — NATURE OF CHAPLAINCY MINISTRY

Chaplains Work and Care Committee Response to the Referral from the 30th General Assembly Regarding the Ministry of Chaplains

Task from the 30th General Assembly

To study the need for a greater definition of the calling of the Chaplain, especially in light of the increasing number of corporate chaplaincies. The study should include, but not be limited to, questions such as how a person ordained to Word and Sacrament functions in a corporate environment and how such chaplaincies relate to the local church.

Overview of Response

Your Chaplains Work and Care Committee (CWCC) proposes to explore:

- 1) The *principles* of Chaplain ministry, based on our Reformed and Presbyterian understanding of ordination, as well as known dynamics of the ministry setting;
- 2) The *placement* of Chaplains “outside the bounds” of Kingdom institutions;
- 3) The *practice* of ministry by Chaplains within their institutional environments; and
- 4) *Presbyterian partnership* with those called to Chaplain ministry.

A. Principles of Chaplain ministry and its setting

1. Our Biblical, Reformed *office of ministry* is described in our Book of Order (BO) chapter 10. It is a role of spiritual leadership; proclamation and evangelism; Biblical teaching; pastoral care; catechetical training; wise counsel; ethical leadership; and more. Chaplains fulfill all of these ministry functions, though in different degree and emphasis from pastors.
2. Chaplain ministry especially emphasizes the role of *incarnational presence*. The “ministry of presence” is a cornerstone of Chaplain ministry for all Chaplains. It is a wonderfully redemptive ministry of reassurance, encouragement, and honest counsel. However, Christian Chaplains find this cornerstone to be a particularly rich resource, as they draw upon the example of Jesus, who became incarnate among us, both fully God and fully Man. Chaplains are first, fully members of God’s Kingdom and Christ’s Body, the Church. They are ordained to represent and exercise the ministry of the Church. But as with Christ, who was also fully Man, Chaplains are also fully a part of their receiving institutions: whether military, institutional, or corporate.
3. Chaplains can also contribute large measures of “*common grace*” to people in institutions; to institutions themselves; and through these, to the world at large. They do this by providing various programs and teachings aimed at a general, not

necessarily Christian, audience. By building up the bulwarks of morality, ethics, character, and healing—founded on Biblical roots but expressed in ways understandable to most people, Christian or not—they protect the common good even of sinful society in accordance with God’s will, as seen in the prayers of Abraham, even for Sodom.

4. In that vein, the positive Biblical role of *institutional support*, even for institutions not specifically furthering God’s Kingdom, is seen in the ministries of Joseph in Egypt, Elijah helping even wicked King Jehoram of Israel (2 Kings 6), Daniel serving Babylon, and Esther wisely influencing the King of Persia. Chaplains on occasion, in that Biblical tradition, exercise advising and even governing authority through their institutions. Such ministry must be undertaken with great wisdom, caution, humility, discretion, and accountability in order to protect both its proper exercise, and the reputation of Gospel ministry at large.

B. Placement of Chaplains “outside the bounds” of Kingdom institutions

1. Chaplains are assigned, for their ministry, outside the structure of the EPC. Part-time Chaplains who are also Pastors, or have other valid calls, may retain “in-bounds” status due to their other calls; but their Chaplain ministry itself is “outside the bounds” of the EPC. The call to ministry is from an institution, often non-religious, to a Minister who represents the Church, inviting that Minister to serve as a Chaplain within the institution.
2. In every case of Chaplaincy, the Chaplain is organically connected with the calling body. The Chaplain participates in the life of that body as one of its members. This is a high privilege and a holy calling, to serve “outside the bounds” of the Church, God’s Kingdom institution, yet representing God’s higher institution to the lower institution in which the Chaplain serves. It is incumbent on the Chaplain to remember which is higher!
3. Chaplain ministry has classically been seen as being practiced within a “total institution.”¹ A total institution is one that takes those in it out of the normal realm of society. The total institution has much greater control over the person’s life—ultimately in many ways, total control—than does an institution, such as a church or a commercial business, which people can freely enter or leave. Total institutions have been defined as: hospitals;² prisons;³ and the military.⁴ Educational institutions may also be considered, to some degree, due to their dynamics, as “total institutions.”
 - a. In order to minister effectively within a total institution, it has been found

¹ The term was coined and defined by Erving Goffman in *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates* (Anchor Books, 1961); see also Richard Hutcheson, *The Churches and the Chaplaincy* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1975), applying the term specifically to the military.

² See the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, <http://www.acpe.edu/>; and Health Care Chaplaincy, <http://www.healthcarechaplaincy.org/home.html>.

³ See the American Correctional Chaplains Association, <http://www.correctionalchaplains.org/>.

⁴ See the Military Chaplains Association, <http://mca-usa.org/>; and the National Conference for Ministry to the Armed Forces, and the Endorsers Conference for Veterans Affairs Chaplaincy, <http://ncmaf.org/>.

necessary for the Chaplain to be a member of, and organically part of, the institution. This makes the Chaplain subject to most of the same demands and rewards that are shared by other members. This is the essence of incarnational presence.

- b. In recent times, other institutions that are not “total” in nature have sought the blessings of Chaplain ministry. These include civil entities such as law enforcement⁵ and fire fighting;⁶ military auxiliaries such as the Civil Air Patrol;⁷ and corporate groups.⁸ Several corporations have begun to hire Chaplains because of the demonstrable benefits for their employees. In particular, some corporations representing teams in the field of professional sport have designated or hired Chaplains, in order to provide for the spiritual needs of players and staff who, due to travel and the demands of work, experience some dynamics of the “total institution.”
 - c. In some cases, particularly with law enforcement and fire fighting, Ruling Elders may be called to Chaplain service. In such cases, the Pastors and Sessions involved should take special care to train the Chaplains, in conjunction with the EPC’s Chaplains Work and Care Committee (CWCC), and to ensure adequate supervision and accountability for the type and quality of ministry.
4. These are all valid venues for service by EPC ministers as Chaplains. It is incumbent on the Chaplains, though, and on their presbyteries and congregations, to be diligent in their communion, contact, and mutual accountability. It must be remembered that Chaplain ministry is a ministry of Christ’s Church—and in our case, a ministry of the EPC.
 5. Chaplains, especially those ministering in “total institutions,” should remember that their primary allegiance and membership is with the Body of Christ and the EPC. It will sometimes be tempting for the Chaplain to take on so many characteristics, priorities, and practices of the calling institution, that the primary purpose of the Chaplain’s presence may be compromised, obscured or even lost. Chaplains who remember their first allegiance, and who focus on their ministry as their primary purpose within the institution, will provide the greatest benefit for the institution and its people.
 6. Chaplains should not be assigned roles which compromise or conflict with their role as a chaplain.
 7. The Chaplain should be aware that institutions, and their people, need not only the priestly and pastoral roles, but also on occasion, the prophetic role. As the prophets of Israel frequently found, this may set the prophet over against prevailing norms, leading even to persecution and rejection. The Chaplain should prayerfully and

⁵ See the International Police and Fire Chaplains Association, <http://www.ipfca.org/exec.asp>.

⁶ See the Federation of Fire Chaplains, <http://firechaplains.org/>.

⁷ See the Civil Air Patrol Chaplain program, http://www.gocivilairpatrol.com/cap_home/cleryt/.

⁸ See Corporate Chaplains of America, http://www.chaplain.org/index.php?file=page&page_id=70.

collegially consider whether a given situation calls for prophetic ministry; and then, wisely plan to apply that ministry for maximum positive effect.

8. The Chaplain, as with Missionaries and Evangelists, may endure lengthy periods of loneliness in terms of fellowship and support. It is all the more important, then, as a matter of personal health and effectiveness, to keep in touch with like-minded servants of Christ, and especially with fellow members of the EPC whenever possible.
9. The CWCC shall be the EPC's designated body for endorsing Chaplains, training them, providing pastoral care for them, and partnering with Presbyteries to ensure the quality and sustainability of Chaplain ministry.

C. The practice of ministry by Chaplains within institutional environments

1. BO 10-3E states that an EPC Minister, serving as a Chaplain, "Shall always have as his primary duty the sharing of the Good News of God in Jesus Christ." This ministry of sharing will often take a different form than the ministry of a Pastor in an EPC congregation. Chaplains typically practice their ministry within institutions in the following ways: provide religious ministry and support for those of their own faith; facilitate for all religious beliefs; care for all people in their organization with their family and friends; and advise commanders and institutional leaders regarding: moral and ethical concerns; the morale and welfare of the institution's members; and appropriate means by which leaders may fulfill their responsibility to protect the free exercise of religion. It is worthwhile to examine each of these four pillars of Chaplain ministry:
 - a. The Chaplain first of all provides specific Christian ministry:
 - 1) The first "pool" of those to whom this ministry is addressed may be seen as a series of concentric circles, of Christians receptive to the ministry of an EPC Minister, beginning with EPC persons; expanding to persons of Reformed, Presbyterian, and Evangelical background; and on to Protestants and others not Catholic or Orthodox, such as non-denominational, Baptists, Pentecostals, and so forth. While the EPC Chaplain will not provide worship ministry for, say, Catholic and Orthodox Christians, there will nonetheless be opportunities on occasion to cooperate in events and alliances as strategic partners, all as Christians.
 - 2) The second "pool" for provision of direct Christian ministry will be those non-Christians who are open to and willing to receive such ministry. The Chaplain is always watchful for opportunities to share the Gospel message. Institutions hosting Chaplain ministry typically allow evangelism in their midst—under varying guidelines of free practice that may sometimes need challenge—while forbidding proselytism. The institutional definition of these terms, evangelism and proselytism, is functional, not theological. Functionally, evangelism is defined as sharing one's faith message with those who have

given their consent to hear it; while proselytism is defined as imposing the message on those who have not had the opportunity to give consent, or who have specifically withheld consent, or indicated outright opposition. EPC Chaplains, as a matter of respect and courtesy within an institution wherein persons' freedoms have been somewhat restricted, should refrain from proselytism, but should engage in evangelism at every appropriate opportunity.

2. The Chaplain is also called, as an officer representing an institution, to facilitate ministry for all. This will on occasion lead to the seemingly counter-intuitive action of helping some groups that we hold to be in error to hold their meetings and receive religious ministry from those qualified by their groups to lead them. We must remember in these cases that the Chaplain holds an office and position, as a guarantor of religious freedom, quite different from a Minister in general society. There are three helpful ways to look at these actions:
 - a. First, we hold that God gave the first humans, in Eden, the freedom to follow His commands—or not. Because Chaplain ministry is often given in an environment that physically restricts persons in a given institution from seeking normally available avenues of ministry, it is helpful, following God's example of Eden, to provide freedom of religious choice and expression—even when we believe the choice taken to be wrong. If God provided this freedom, who are we to provide less, when given the power, than did God? (It is noteworthy that in the world today, some of the most egregious persecutions of Christians, and restrictions of religious liberty, take place in both secular and religious environments that reject this Biblical freedom for all.)
 - b. Second, by providing these religious freedom protections and opportunities for others, we safeguard those same protections and opportunities for ourselves. We thus provide authentic space, within institutions, to seek our own free exercise of ministry practice, in accordance with our own groups' requirements and beliefs, and our own consciences.
 - c. Third, we believe that when a genuine “free market” exists for faith, belief, and practices, the Gospel of Christ will do well! Just as the early Christians thrived and grew in a pagan world—even on a very unlevel “playing field” that often disdained and persecuted them—we believe that Gospel ministry today will bring forth a joyful response from many people who seek its liberation and life.
3. The Chaplain cares for all, without regard to belief or allegiance. This is another ministry of common grace. Jesus noted with approval, in Luke 4:25-27, that Elijah's and Elisha's ministries encompassed those outside of God's chosen people. Chaplains often have access to people's lives that Pastors do not have, because their circle of care includes all those within their assigned institutional structure. The Chaplain's care of all these persons, whether of the Church or not, should be that of a loving shepherd: to encourage, to comfort, to visit, to heal, to teach, to befriend, and to give a cup of water in our Lord's name (Matthew 10:40-42 and 25:31-46).

4. The Chaplain also advises the institution, in particular the leaders, of which he or she is part. This advice constitutes a primary duty and takes many forms. It is proper for the Chaplain, in this advice, to consider the overall welfare of the institution and its people, vigorously advocating for the highest standards of good, and always highlighting the essential dignity of each person as made in the image of God.
5. Regarding the provision of *sacraments*, Chaplains minister to some degree with the role and authority of Evangelists. A Chaplain may be, in a given situation, the only representative of the EPC, or indeed of Christ's Church at large. To this end, it is necessary that Chaplains have authority to provide the sacraments of baptism, and the Lord's Supper, wherever they minister. The Chaplain should keep in mind that sacraments are not private, but provide God's grace for the Body of Christ in general. The Chaplain should therefore attempt, whenever possible, to provide the sacraments in the context of public worship. If they are provided in other settings for individuals, the Chaplain should endeavor to have present some expression of the larger Body of Christ, such as mature laymen and known Christian leaders.
6. Regarding *worship services*, the Chaplain should take care to safeguard the purity of Gospel ministry practice. This includes care in choosing public ministry partners, that a scandal not be brought upon the Body of Christ. The General Assembly has stated that Chaplains shall not co-lead worship with anyone whose endorsing group does not affirm the Apostles' Creed (such as Latter Day Saints, and Christian Scientists); or with anyone whose endorsing group advocates practices at variance with God's Word and God's Law in the field of ethics.
7. Regarding *public ceremonies*, the Chaplain should understand that there is considerably more latitude in practice, as these are not Christian worship services. Such events fall in the category of providing common grace. Participation in such events, including the leading of public prayers, should be done with due consideration for the purpose of the event, and the people present—particularly recognizing that people are often present at such ceremonies by requirement, not choice.

D. Presbyterian partnership with those called to Chaplain service

1. Chaplaincy is a valid, important, and growing calling in today's world. It represents a strategic opportunity for ministry that is specifically Christian, yet also a ministry of common grace, in places not otherwise accessible to Ministers or Pastors. The Church, and specifically the EPC, should endeavor to encourage its members to consider God's call to Chaplain work.
2. The General Assembly supports Chaplain ministry through the Chaplains Work and Care Committee (CWCC). The CWCC is responsible to grant selective endorsements for Chaplain service; to see that those endorsed as Chaplains maintain a valid Gospel ministry, and appropriately represent the EPC in their work and life; to provide training and pastoral care for Chaplains and their families; to maintain records of, and advisory contact with, those Chaplains not needing endorsement by their calling institutions; and to maintain coordination of Chaplain ministries with the Office of the

General Assembly.

3. The Endorser of Chaplains shall be a member of the CWCC. The Endorser shall normally be a retired Chaplain. The Endorser authenticates and validates Chaplain endorsements; provides direct guidance, training, and pastoral care to Chaplains and their families; represents the EPC to various Chaplain organizations; reports to the CWCC, and to the General Assembly; and maintains liaison with the Office of the General Assembly and its Committee on Administration. The position of Endorser is a valid pastoral call, entailing Terms of Call.
4. The Presbyteries ordain Ministers to serve as Chaplains. In this role, they should carefully follow the guidelines of the EPC's current *Procedure Manual For Ministerial and Candidates Committees*. For example, a person should not be received as a Candidate for ordination as a Chaplain, or ordained for Chaplain service, until endorsement has been granted through the CWCC.
 - a. Presbyteries should endeavor to take special care to keep in touch with Chaplains, and offer their support. Chaplains are often in positions that are institutionally and geographically isolated. Chaplains, as members of their respective Presbyteries, should take special care to submit the required annual report.
 - b. Two models of Presbytery membership, each valid, are available to Chaplains serving in Chaplain positions for lengthy periods. Military Chaplains, who often move, should prayerfully consider which model would work best.
 - 1) One model is to maintain membership in a single Presbytery for the length of one's Chaplain service. This has the advantage of maintaining long-term relationships, possibly including those from the Chaplain's home area. However, the Chaplain may not be able to regularly attend Presbytery meetings. The Chaplain choosing this model should so inform Presbytery, and may wish to apply for status as an Associate Member (BO 11-12). Chaplains choosing model 1 should be encouraged to attend meetings of the Presbytery in which they are geographically located as a visitor.
 - 2) A second model is to change Presbytery membership with each move. This could entail undergoing Presbytery examinations every three years, or so. The advantage is that the Chaplain becomes directly connected with EPC people and ministries in his or her geographical area of service, receiving encouragement and direct support. Also, over time, the Chaplain becomes well familiar with the EPC as a whole—certainly an advantage should the Chaplain eventually feel called to enter congregational service.
 - c. Chaplains are bound to follow the requirements of their calling institutions. As such, they may not be free to attend all meetings of Presbytery. Presbyteries should therefore be sympathetic to Chaplains' requests for excused absences. Chaplains, in turn, should inform their institutions that maintenance of their endorsement normally involves a minimum of one attendance, annually, at either

Presbytery or General Assembly. Those Chaplains living within the bounds of their own Presbytery should make every effort to attend more frequently.

5. Presbyteries should also carefully follow all guidelines and requirements regarding ministers serving out of bounds of the EPC. Special care should further be taken to evaluate if a proposed part-time Chaplain ministry, absent any other call to ministry, is sufficient to warrant ordination.
6. Congregations can often be a refuge of strength and renewal for the Chaplain and his or her family, when the Chaplain does not have duties leading worship. The Chaplain can also be a resource to the congregation. Congregations should also consider creative ways by which they may support those institutions in which Chaplains connected with the congregation serve. Many opportunities exist to supplement Chaplain ministries, especially in times of limited resources.
7. Congregations are also asked to support the EPC's Chaplain ministry as a whole through the CWCC. Congregations can subscribe to support the CWCC with monthly or annual amounts, just as with missionaries. This support will enable the CWCC to better fulfill its mission.

Summary

This study should be used as an introductory and advisory resource. Those items within, requiring certain standards or actions, will be set forth and regularly updated within the current Chaplains Work and Care Committee Procedural Manual.

II. — CHAPLAINS WORK & CARE COMMITTEE

A. Purpose and Responsibilities

The Chaplains Work and Care Committee (CWCC) is dedicated to obeying Christ's Great Commission by providing qualified individuals to serve as chaplains in military and civilian organizations. The CWCC endorses and ecclesiastically supports ordained, qualified chaplains; approves chaplain candidates; and helps presbyteries and congregations in biblical ministry to military personnel and their families.

In carrying out its purpose, the CWCC functions in the following ways:

1. By establishing and maintaining a process to provide endorsements for those qualified for chaplaincy ministries.
2. By providing recognition and support of persons serving in chaplain positions not requiring denominational endorsement.
3. By maintaining liaison with the appropriate contact point of each presbytery, to:
 - a. Provide current information regarding criteria, policies and procedures for the appointment of ministers as chaplains.

- b. Provide a technical service to the presbyteries by recommending qualified candidates to the Chaplaincy.
 - E. By maintaining cooperative relationships with the National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces (NCMAF), Endorsers Conference for Veterans Affairs Chaplaincy (ECVAC), Armed Forces Chaplain Board (AFCB), National Association of Evangelicals Chaplains Commission (NAECC) and other approved ministry partners, and the leadership of other military and institutional chaplaincies by:
 - a. Certifying to the proper agencies the ecclesiastical endorsements and approvals granted by the EPC.
 - b. Serving as a representative body for problems referred by or concerning chaplains, both individually and collectively.
 - F. By maintaining contact and liaison with individual chaplains serving in the Armed Forces, and other institutions (such as medical, prison, law enforcement, and corporate) through regular reports, newsletters, written correspondence and personal visits as authorized by the CWCC and Office of the Stated Clerk.
 - G. By helping congregations minister to their members in the armed forces and other institutions.
 - H. By informing presbyteries of significant developments, trends, issues and problems concerning chaplains and members of the Armed Forces and other institutions and reporting annually on the activity of the CWCC to the denomination.
 - I. By helping presbyteries promote the ministry of the Chaplaincy to their particular churches.
- B. Membership (Rules for Assembly 10-1M)

Committee on Chaplains Work and Care

1. Membership: The Committee shall consist of six members, including at least three members with experience as Chaplains and at least two Ruling Elders. Whenever possible, one position on the Committee will be filled by a currently serving military chaplain, normally the EPC's most senior in rank. The Chairman shall be elected by the Committee and be responsible for coordinating the work and business of the Committee in consultation with the Office of the Stated Clerk and the Chaplain Endorser.
2. Responsibilities: the Committee will be:
 - a. responsible to oversee and conduct the chaplain endorsement process
 - b. develop and implement policies and procedures for EPC chaplain ministry

- c. provide for pastoral care for endorsed chaplains and their families.
3. Chaplain Endorser: The Moderator shall nominate to the General Assembly a Teaching Elder to serve as the denomination's Chaplain Endorser for a three-year term, which is renewable. The Endorser will be operationally accountable to the Office of the Stated Clerk.
 - a. The nominee will normally be one with experience in military chaplaincy.
 - b. The Endorser is an ex-officio member of the Chaplains Work and Care Committee with voice and vote.
 - c. The Endorser is the denomination's designated signatory for chaplain endorsements, and the official representative of the denomination regarding chaplaincy matters to government agencies, institutional chaplain certification agencies, and chaplain endorsing conferences and associations with which the denomination has affiliation.
 - d. The Endorser is the denominational representative for pastoral visits to chaplains at their place of service.
 - e. Should the Endorser resign or become unable to serve, the Stated Clerk or the Clerk's designee shall serve in that position until a new Endorser is nominated and elected.

C. Financial Support

The ministry of the CWCC shall be financially supported primarily through "Per Chaplain Askings," and through contributions of interested individuals, congregations, and other groups.

1. The CWCC shall be free to communicate with and to receive donations to designated benevolence funds from individuals, churches or other organizations, both within and outside of the EPC.
2. It is understood that chaplains have a moral responsibility to share in the cost of their endorsement and support. However, in keeping with the EPC ethos of Per Member Askings with congregations, this financial contribution shall be given voluntarily (as a tax-exempt gift to a designated EPC benevolence fund), not as an assessment of dues. This "Per Chaplain Asking" represents a minimum amount that is requested and encouraged as an expression of their part in the ministry of the larger Church.
3. The recommended amounts for Per Chaplain Askings shall be set by the CWCC and reviewed at least biennially.

D. Meetings

The CWCC shall ordinarily meet twice each year, in keeping with Rules of the

Assembly. One meeting will be in-person; the other may be via electronic means. The chairman may call special meetings (either in person or via electronic means) of the CWCC, normally for the purpose of interviewing and endorsing chaplains.

E. Quorum

For either regular or special meetings of the CWCC, a quorum shall consist of a majority of the committee.

F. Financial Policy and Procedures

The financial policies and procedures of the CWCC, and the Endorser's work, shall conform to the policies and procedures of the Office of the General Assembly, as supervised by designated personnel. The policies of the Office of the General Assembly take precedence should there be any conflict with statements in this procedure manual.

III. — RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ENDORSER

The Endorser shall:

- A. In consultation with the Office of the Stated Clerk and CWCC Chairman, oversee the endorsement application process.
- B. Attempt to interview each applicant for endorsement personally, or, if this is not possible or feasible, designate another person to conduct the interview, such as a member of the CWCC; or a chaplain (full-time, part-time, or retired) endorsed by the EPC; or in the case of necessity, a chaplain of another faith group who is fully trusted by the Endorser. The interviewer shall provide the CWCC a full account of the interview, with a recommendation for action.
- C. Maintain pastoral contact with each endorsee by appropriate means and oversee the pastoral care of EPC endorsed Chaplains. Travel must be approved by the Office of the Stated Clerk in accordance with Committee on Administration actions and policies to conduct endorser visits to military chaplains at their duty stations.
- D. Be the primary representative of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, appropriate governmental and institutional chaplain endorsement/certification departments and agencies and represent the EPC in the ecumenical endorsing conferences of which it is a member
- E. Prepare an annual report for the General Assembly, and provide information and news releases on Chaplaincy programs as appropriate.

IV. — ECCLESIASTICAL ENDORSEMENT

- A. The Requirements for Chaplain Candidacy Approval and Chaplain Ecclesiastical Endorsement

Applicants shall:

1. Meet all presbytery requirements for membership as a candidate under care and be in good standing.
2. Meet all of the requirements of the Chaplaincy to which application is being made. In the case of military Chaplaincy, for example, this would include at least 120 hours of undergraduate credit, the M.Div. degree (a minimum of 72 semester hours of graduate seminary study) plus ordination. Non-military organizations may have different requirements. Department of Defense (DoD) minimum standards include at least 120 hours of undergraduate credit, a minimum of 72 semester hours of graduate seminary study plus ordination. It should be noted that the Evangelical Presbyterian Church may have higher educational standards than DoD. Non-military organizations may have different requirements.
3. Be approved by their presbytery to the CWCC.
4. Have a minimum of two years of practical ministry experience or internship, or its equivalent, such as preaching, youth work, evangelism, teaching, missionary work, counseling, etc. This requirement will be waived in the case of endorsement for the military chaplaincy's program for seminarians, or in extraordinary circumstances if both the individual's presbytery and the CWCC approve.
5. Submit to the CWCC a completed application form, with references as requested.
6. Give evidence of ability to adjust to the Chaplaincy, and able to work within the system without compromising denominational standards and appropriate personal convictions.
7. Give evidence of ability to minister appropriately to institutional personnel and their families, and anyone else eligible, of whatever constituency is served by the Chaplaincy to which endorsement is sought.
8. Give evidence of ability submit to military authority, or whatever lawful authority applies, and be willing to honor and abide by the requirements and guidelines of the EPC as far as chaplains are concerned.
9. Submit evaluations of psychological, marriage, and vocational assessments required by the Committee (such as the MMPI-2 and PREPARE/ENRICH). Applicants are responsible for 2/3 of any fees for these required assessments. If required assessments have previously been completed within two years of the date of application, applicants will agree to release the evaluation to the CWCC.
10. Understand that ecclesiastical endorsement or approval may be withdrawn by the CWCC upon the request of the individual, the individual's presbytery, or for cause. Further details are found below.

B. Maintaining Ecclesiastical Approval/Endorsement

The CWCC expects its approved candidates and endorsed chaplains to:

1. Attend a local EPC church (assuming one is reasonably nearby), or an appropriate evangelical congregation, if not fully engaged in military or civilian chapel ministry
2. Maintain regular contact with the presbytery of membership, and attend presbytery meetings unless providentially hindered.
3. Support and participate in General Assembly activities when at all possible.
4. Contribute financially per year according to funding guidelines expressed in the Per Chaplain Asking.
5. Make every effort to participate in the training required and offered by the military or institutional service for which endorsement is sought.
6. Keep the CWCC informed in a timely manner on such matters as change of seminary and family status. The candidate shall provide the CWCC, the church and the presbytery in which the candidate is under care, with updated information.
7. Make a yearly report to the CWCC and provide any other information relative to their ministry when requested by the CWCC or their presbytery.

C. What the Approved Candidate and Endorsed Chaplain May Expect from the EPC Through the CWCC

The approved candidate or endorsed chaplain may expect:

1. Appropriate information, prayer, mentoring and counsel through its Chairman and Endorser, its individual members or other chaplains endorsed by the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. Each candidate will be assigned an active duty, reserve component or retired EPC chaplain as a mentor while in the candidate program.
2. Official representation with their chaplaincy's organizational leadership, such as with the Chief of Chaplains of the service for which they are endorsed if serving as a military chaplain.
3. Pastoral care, including appropriate information and counsel through the CWCC, its individual members or other chaplains endorsed by the EPC.
4. Prayers and support particularly of their presbytery and denomination and of local churches within the denomination.

D. WITHDRAWAL OF ENDORSEMENT

1. In view of our responsibility to God, the Church, and institutions including the government of the United States, the CWCC cannot and must not look lightly upon a

person who holds the EPC's endorsement but appears to treat it as a matter of convenience, or demonstrates little interest in the principles, practices and ministry of the EPC. The members of the CWCC are obligated to see that mutual responsibilities indicated in this manual are being fulfilled in a manner that is pleasing to God.

2. Endorsements may be lost for a number of reasons. Examples include: coming under EPC discipline, violation of military standards, violation of military or civil laws, failure to follow ethical standards, failure to cooperate with or fulfill CWCC or presbytery requirements.
3. Approval may be withdrawn by the CWCC upon the request of the individual chaplain's church or presbytery, or for cause. In the case of withdrawal for cause, the appropriate denomination provisions for discipline shall be followed.

E. EXCEPTIONS

Exceptions to the guidelines set forth in this manual shall be made only with the approval of the CWCC.

F. PER CHAPLAIN ASKINGS

1. For military Reserve and National Guard chaplains, approximately 2% of base pay. Examples from 2012 include:
 1. O-2 (over 6) \$140 per year
 2. O-3 (over 10) \$180 per year
 3. O-4 (over 14) \$220 per year
 4. O-5 (over 18) \$255 per year
 5. O-6 (over 22) \$310 per year
2. For active duty military chaplains approximately 1% of base pay. Examples from 2012 include:
 1. O-2 (over 6) \$540 per year
 2. O-3 (over 10) \$685 per year
 3. O-4 (over 14) \$835 per year
 4. O-5 (over 18) \$950 per year
 5. O-6 (over 22) \$1,150 per year
3. VA chaplains, part-time, approximately 2% of pay; full-time, approximately 1% of pay.
4. Part-time paid civilian chaplains, endorsed, approximately 2% of pay; full-time paid civilian chaplains, endorsed, approximately 1% of pay.

5. Designated contributions from Chaplains and other interested individuals will be deposited in the Chaplains Work and Care Benevolence Fund and receipted as charitable contributions, according to the financial policies of the General Assembly.
6. The Committee and Chaplains may ask and encourage churches and individuals, and other institutions such as chapel communities, to contribute to the EPC CWCC.

V. — ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY RELATED TO CHAPLAINCY

A. EPC Military Chaplains Leading Worship with Other Faith Groups:

“While our chaplains are encouraged to exercise their ministry in the Armed Forces with the maximum of collegiality in cooperation with persons of varying beliefs, the EPC does not approve joint leadership of a worship service with persons representing faith groups outside the historic Christian tradition, as defined by the Apostles’ Creed. (Act of Assembly 99-12; Minutes, 19-45)

B. EPC Position Papers and Pastoral Letters

A Position Paper is intended to set forth the "mind" of the General Assembly of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church on some particular issue or subject. It is not intended to be a thorough theological statement nor a complete exegetical Biblical study on a particular issue.

The purpose of such a Position Paper is to enable the Evangelical Presbyterian Church to make a statement to itself, the Christian community or the world in general on a subject of recurring interest or one on which there is current compelling interest. Position papers are not constitutional. Neither do they represent in and of themselves "essentials" of the church.

Positions papers are first introduced in a preliminary form and circulated throughout the church for a period of comment. Thus, the majority votes of two general assemblies are necessary to become a position paper.

Position Papers (http://www.epc.org/about-the-epc/position-papers)	
Abortion	Sanctity of Marriage
Divorce and Remarriage	Suffering, Death and Dying
Holy Spirit	Value and Respect for Human Life
Homosexuality	Woman’s Ordination

A pastoral letter is intended to shine the light of God's word broadly on a general area of concern to the Church. Requiring the approval of only one General Assembly, it is not as definitive as a Position Paper, which requires the approval of two General Assemblies (including a minimum of one year circulation among the presbyteries). The primary

purpose of a pastoral letter is to guide churches within the EPC rather than to identify our positions to the world. (Act of Assembly 97-13).

Pastoral Letters (http://www.epc.org/about-the-epc/pastoral-letters)	
AIDS/HIV	Open Theism
Use of the Catechisms	Organ Donation and Transplantation
Children and the Lord's Supper	Receiving and Adopting the Westminster Standards
Civil Disobedience	Evaluating Membership in Secret Fraternal Organizations
Domestic Abuse	Open Theism

C. Ministry Policy for EPC Chaplains Dealing with Persons Who Practice Homosexual Behavior and Claim Homosexual Identity

In summary, EPC chaplains shall:

1. Profess, teach, and live by Scriptural standards of moral law, depending on the work of the Holy Spirit to enact the Gospel's transformative power.
2. In accordance with best practices of chaplain ministry and with a maximum of respect and love for all persons regardless of their beliefs or conditions: provide religious ministry and support for those of our own faith; facilitate for all religious beliefs; care for all people in their organization with their family and friends; and advise commanders and institutional leaders to ensure the free exercise of religion.
3. Not legitimize contrary teaching. EPC chaplains therefore shall not:
 - a) Co-lead worship (as defined in the EPC *Book of Worship*, 2-1⁹) in their official position, in partnership with any person endorsed by a faith group that officially advocates violation of God's moral law. (Public/civic ceremonies, and the normal staff work of religious ministry programs, present a different case, not subject to this restriction.)

⁹*Book of Worship* §2-1: The acceptable way of worshiping God is established by God Himself. Proper worship is defined and outlined in God's revealed will and is to be followed in giving glory to Him. True and proper worship therefore finds its prescription in Holy Scripture. Only God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are to receive such worship. Such worship shall include the reverent and attentive reading of the Scriptures, the sound preaching and conscientious hearing of the Word, and singing of psalms and hymns, the proper administration and right receiving of the sacraments, and prayer with thanksgiving. Such public worship of God shall also include times of solemn prayer and fasting, as well as special days of praise and thanksgiving. All worship should at all times and in all places be performed in a holy and religious manner. The public worship of God is not to be carelessly or willfully neglected or forsaken.

- b) Provide teaching, training, or counsel that advocates approval of, or reasonably appears to advocate approval of, or condones violations of God's moral law.
- 4. Practice ministry of word and deed, in public and private, that brings the full counsel of God to bear, insofar as is possible and practicable with given people and situations, providing prophetic proclamation in the face of expectations of cultural conformity.
- 5. In cases of question or conflict, consult the EPC endorser early in a given process.

It is impossible to name every situation that may arise in the practice of a chaplain's ministry. EPC chaplains in every case should strive to fulfill their call as stated in *Book of Government* 10-2:

Those who fill this office should, according to the Scripture, have certain qualifications. They should be sound in the faith and have an aptitude for teaching. Their lives should reflect holiness and discipline which brings honor to Christ and which causes them to be well thought of by those outside the Church. They should have wisdom and discretion . . .

As this pure ministry of Word and Sacrament is exercised incarnationally by chaplains, we count on God to bless such efforts with great spiritual fruitfulness!

The complete policy is available on the EPC website at <http://www.epc.org/ministries/chaplaincy-ministries/resources>.

SPECIFIC GUIDANCE FOR EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH CHAPLAINS REGARDING MINISTRY TO SAME-SEX COUPLES

Under the guiding authority of their endorsing body, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC):

- 1) No EPC chaplain will provide pre-marital/marital counseling, or officiate, participate in, or provide official witness to any event or ceremony which may reasonably be construed to condone, ratify, or promote marriages or equivalents to marriage between persons of the same sex.
- 2) EPC chaplains may provide direct relationship counseling, couples retreats, or any other related type of event or issue that involves same-sex couples, as long as the chaplain does not give the impression that such relationships are condoned.

The principles guiding our thinking and practice are:

- EPC chaplains receive authority from, and are guided by the Bible, which affirms that marriage is designed by God to be between one man and one woman.
- The EPC acknowledges that federal and state governments, along with several courts, have redefined marriage to include same-sex couples. Our responsibility, however, is to hold to biblical standards of marriage.
- Evangelical Christians treat all people with dignity and respect, including those in relationships outside biblical norms.

Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgender (LGBT) Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Coast Guardsmen and Marines have long been coming to their chaplains seeking ministry. We have always treated each person as one whom Christ loves and for whom He died. We will continue to provide this ministry with truth and grace. However, our biblical convictions tell us that marrying same-sex couples is not “ministry” and we consider such relationships sinful.

Chaplain leadership and military institutions should understand that EPC chaplains must adhere to their own ordination vows and involve themselves only in activities or ministry that their endorsing body, the EPC, requires or allows.

EPC chaplains will always provide cooperation without compromise. For example:

“What should be the extent of my participation in chaplain-led activities (such as Army Strong Bonds and Navy CREDO) where same-sex couples are present?” EPC chaplains should seek ways to be gracious and engaging in their approach to ministry. An EPC chaplain could affirm involvement in traditional relationship retreats while suggesting that there be a two-pronged approach to said retreats; one in which chaplains would minister to traditional couples, and the other in which chaplains, who are permitted to do so by their endorsing body, would minister to non-traditional couples (such as same-sex couples). Such an approach provides support without compromise. EPC chaplains should be swift to affirm what they can do, not just their restrictions.

Institutional chaplains face similar issues. EPC chaplains serving in any venue must continue to be consistent in their witness and counsel. Tailoring the Gospel message in any way that appears to condone sinful behavior is not in keeping with EPC chaplain standards. EPC chaplains will seek to follow Christ's example, who always ministered "Truth in love."

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