



HOWARD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

## GENERAL ORDER ADM-19

# CHAPLAIN PROGRAM & DEPUTY SUPPORT

EFFECTIVE JULY 11, 2011

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This General Order contains the following numbered sections:

- I. POLICY
- II. DEFINITIONS
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- IV. CHAPLAIN PROGRAM DUTIES
- V. CHAPLAIN PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION
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### **I. POLICY**

The Howard County Sheriff's Office (HCSO), in deference to its members' religious and spiritual beliefs, shall solicit the services of local clergy members or other specifically trained individuals from various faiths who wish to volunteer their time to a Chaplain Program.

Additionally, and in coordination with the Howard County Police Department and the Howard County Government's Employee Assistance Program (EAP), the HCSO shall ensure all deputies involved in a shooting or use of force incident in which there is death or serious physical injury receive the counseling, evaluation, and continuing support needed to reduce the chance of developing or suffering from a post-traumatic stress disorder.

### **II. DEFINITIONS**

- A. Chaplain – clergy or spiritual leaders who offer emotional and spiritual guidance and support in times of crisis.
- B. Deputy-Involved Traumatic Incident – an incident where the use of force causes death or serious physical injury to a deputy or another individual.
- C. Deputy-Involved Traumatic Traffic Crash – an incident where, through the use of a Sheriff's vehicle, death or serious physical injury occurs to an officer or another person.
- D. Liaisons – in the event of a deputy's serious physical injury or death, the following liaisons shall be utilized for reporting and coordination:
  - 1. Office Liaison – responsible for coordinating special details with and relaying all information to the Chief Deputy and Sheriff, or their designees.
  - 2. Hospital Liaison – assigned to family members of the deputy, the Hospital Liaison reports to the Office Liaison.
  - 3. Family Liaison – assigned to the family in order to assist with their needs during a period of crisis.
- E. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) – an anxiety disorder that can result from exposure to short term severe stress, or the long-term buildup of repetitive and prolonged milder stress.

- F. Serious Physical Injury – an injury that creates a substantial risk of death or that causes serious disfigurement, impairment of health, loss or impairment of the function of a body member or organ, or that unlawfully terminates a pregnancy.

**III. CHAPLAIN PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. The responsibility for the Chaplain Program rests with the Office of the Sheriff.
- B. The Sheriff shall select clergy members to serve in the Chaplain Program based on established criteria.
- C. Based on the identified need, the Sheriff may modify the size and scope of the Chaplain Program and select additional or replacement clergy members.
- D. The Office of the Sheriff shall maintain a list of the names, addresses, telephone numbers, and further information on all Chaplains.
- E. Division Commanders & Section Supervisors
  - 1. When assessing manpower and support needs, supervisors are encouraged to request a Chaplain at critical incident scenes.
  - 2. Supervisors should also consider the use of Chaplains in post-incident situations to assist deputies and citizens in dealing with stress and emotional reactions.
  - 3. Deputies may request Chaplains to respond to an incident scene by contacting their Supervisor. If a request is made after hours, the Supervisor is asked to contact the on-call supervisor.
  - 4. Supervisors are encouraged to notify the Chaplain whenever a deputy receives any type of significant injury (i.e., shooting, accident, assault). See *Section VI Deputy Support* below for further information.

**IV. CHAPLAIN PROGRAM DUTIES**

- A. When acting in an official requested capacity, Chaplains shall display identification.
- B. As part of their official duties, Chaplains shall perform the following tasks when requested:
  - 1. Provide spiritual or emotional guidance or support to personnel, both on and off duty.
  - 2. Comfort and aid personnel and their families in the event of a serious injury or death in the family.<sup>1</sup>
  - 3. Assist deputies (designated by the Sheriff, the Chief Deputy, or their designees) in making notifications to families of deputies seriously injured or killed.<sup>2</sup>
  - 4. Visit sick and/or injured HCSO personnel at home or in the hospital.
  - 5. Assist with memorial services, ceremonies, and other religious activities of HCSO personnel.<sup>3</sup>
  - 6. Provide liaison with other religious leaders in matters that may impact HCSO personnel.
  - 7. Respond to critical incidents, as requested, to offer aid, comfort, and reassurances of faith for HCSO personnel.

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<sup>1</sup> CALEA 22.2.4

<sup>2</sup> CALEA 22.2.4

<sup>3</sup> CALEA 22.2.4

- C. Chaplains shall perform other duties which may be requested by the Sheriff, his designee, or a supervising officer.
- D. Chaplains shall not interfere with any deputy in the performance of his duties and will conform to all applicable directives.

**V. CHAPLAIN PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION**

- A. During urgent situations, the highest ranking Deputy Sheriff on duty may initiate the request for a Chaplain to respond to the scene or location of an incident. This deputy shall contact the Chief Deputy and applicable Division Lieutenant prior to initiating the request.
- B. Requests for Chaplain Assistance will be directed to the Supervisor.
- C. Members desiring off-duty personal or family counseling are encouraged to make appointments directly with the Chaplains. Members are additionally encouraged to utilize the Howard County Employee Assistance Program (EAP) – information is available on the *Howard County Government Intranet*.

**VI. DEPUTY SUPPORT – ON SCENE**

- A. In the event of a traumatic incident involving an HCSO deputy, the deputy shall be taken to a quiet area away from the immediate location of the incident if possible.
- B. Another deputy shall remain with the involved deputy and shall not discuss the details of the incident.
- C. In specialized cases, the Howard County Police Department may be contacted for mobile crisis assistance.
- D. A supervisor shall complete the following:
  - 1. Discuss with the deputy any standard investigations that may occur as a result of the incident, and advise the deputy that he may seek legal counsel, if he so chooses.
  - 2. Advise the deputy not to discuss the incident with anyone except an attorney, FOP representative, or HCSO investigators until the conclusion of the preliminary investigation.
  - 3. In the case of a shooting incident, in a discreet manner, take custody of the deputy's duty weapon and either replace it with another weapon or advise the deputy that it will be returned or replaced at a later time, as appropriate.
- E. Authorized representatives (liaisons) from the Sheriff's Office shall notify the family of an involved deputy in person, transport them to the hospital, if appropriate, and keep the Chief Deputy and Sheriff consistently informed of the deputy's status.<sup>4</sup>
- F. A supervisor at the scene may ask involved personnel for basic information regarding the incident for the purposes of identifying evidence, ensuring safety, and formulating response tactics.

**VII. DEPUTY SUPPORT – POST INCIDENT**

- A. Personnel involved in a shooting or traumatic incident are not permitted to speak with the media about the incident and shall refer all inquiries to the Public Information Officer.
- B. The identity of the personnel involved in the incident shall not be released to the media for at least twenty-four (24) hours following the event.

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<sup>4</sup> CALEA 22.2.4

- C. The deputy and his/her supervisor shall complete an After Action Report with details and documentation of the incident. This report shall be forwarded, via the Chain of Command, to the Sheriff.
- D. A debriefing of the incident shall be held by the Chief Deputy with all involved personnel following the event. The debriefing and any comprehensive interview of the personnel directly involved may be delayed for a reasonable amount of time to allow for the deputy to recover from the trauma of the event.
- E. The HCSO shall brief other agency members on the incident to keep rumors to a minimum.
- F. Investigation
  - 1. Involved deputies shall be on administrative leave and must remain available for any administrative investigations.
  - 2. Any investigation shall be conducted as soon and as quickly as practicable.
- G. Counseling & Support<sup>5</sup>
  - 1. All deputies directly involved in traumatic incidents shall contact the HCSO designated specialist for counseling if they feel adversely affected by the incident.
  - 2. Support employees involved in traumatic incidents are also encouraged to contact the specialist for counseling if they feel adversely affected by the incident.
  - 3. The HCSO strongly encourages the families of the involved deputies to take advantage of counseling services made available to County employees through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

**VIII. CONFIDENTIALITY**

Contact between HCSO personnel, Chaplains, and/or mental health professionals shall remain confidential, as with any meeting between an individual and a member of the clergy or mental health profession.

**IX. CANCELLATION**

This General Order cancels and replaces *General Order ADM-19, Sheriff's Chaplain Program*, dated September 4, 2009.

Authority:

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James F. Fitzgerald  
Sheriff

<sup>5</sup> CALEA 22.2.4