

FIRE CHAPLAINS

O God the Lord, the strength of my salvation, thou hast covered my head in the day of battle.
Psalm 140:7 KJV

Section 1: Spiritual Guidance

Two important functions of the fire department chaplain are to help firefighters and their families in times of crisis and to help them with their spiritual needs. Of all the many duties the chaplaincy may entail, these are the principle responsibilities. The chaplain may use different ways to bring about spiritual truths and assistance to an individual family. However, the most important ministry is to simply be available when called upon. Spiritual need is the greatest of all needs and the chaplain must be able to meet this need. The spiritual witness is more often brought about by sharing the Word of God, which will come through the King James Version of the Bible. Another important part of these functions is to understand the personal religious needs of the firefighters and to call their own minister to assist as soon as possible, if the family so desires. The chaplain can then assist their minister to understand the functions and the resources available through the fire department. Chaplains should be actively involved in their home church ministries including regular service attendance, the more the chaplain grows through regular Bible teaching and service for God, the more he or she is able to help the department membership with spiritual needs.

Section 2: Assistance in Emergency Response

Dealing with families when a disabling injury or a death occurs is a primary function of the chaplain. To provide the best service at this type of incident, the chaplain should respond as often as possible to all major fire situations. If an injury to a firefighter occurs that requires hospitalization, the chaplain should meet the firefighter at the hospital, quickly determine the extent of the injury from the hospital staff, and then notify the family in a manner that will not cause undue panic or grief. At the time of the initial call or contact with the family, a decision should be made as to whether the family will need transportation to the hospital. When the family arrives, the chaplain should have an accurate report concerning the firefighter's condition. Progress will also be reported to the incident commander, department chief as well as other township officials as is appropriate.

At fire incidents, the chaplain, if not involved in the actual work of the emergency, should be alert to the needs of the firefighters. The chaplain should be especially mindful that the type of people making emergency responses are easily capable of overexerting themselves to the point of exhaustion. Knowing this, the chaplain can make command officers aware of potentially dangerous situations that need immediate attention and/or medical attention.

At major fire incidents it is often the chaplain who is free to assist in handling unruly or hysterical people. This becomes a needed function at rescues, extrications, situations that draw a sizeable crowd, nursing homes, or incidents where children are involved. The

importance of keeping a cool, calm demeanor during these times, along with the ability to explain to the public what is actually taking place, is a service the chaplain can perform. Comforting the bereaved and offering positive direction to the victim's family are priorities at these types of incidents. The chaplain can explain the types of assistance available to victims through the Red Cross, the Fire Department, or other community service and benevolent organizations. When these interventions are used at the scene of an emergency, the results are generally successful in not only aiding the victims, but also in keeping distraught citizens from interfering with the performance of emergency operations. If chaplains are fully certified firefighters and meet all operations requirements, they can assist on the scene as is deemed necessary by the incident commander, but should not be utilized outside of their primary functions if required. Chaplains operating on the fire grounds in the firefighting capacity are bound by department guidelines, requirements, rules and regulations and shall be familiar with these prior to engaging in fire operations.

Section 3: Liaison with Hospitals and Clinics

A chaplain should frequently visit local hospitals and medical clinics to build rapport with medical personnel. These visits help the chaplain to receive accurate and helpful reports from the hospital professionals who have confidence in the chaplain with whom they have become acquainted. This information aids the family of the firefighter in understanding what is taking place and to better understand the condition of their family member.

Section 4: Conducting/Assisting at Funerals

The chaplain can assist a family in funeral arrangements for both active and life members. They may even officiate at the service or assist the family minister. Assistance frequently is done in the form of organizing the details of the funeral service. Details to be considered include establishing an honor guard, preparing fire department apparatus for the funeral procession, organizing fire department members at the church or funeral home and at the cemetery, determining the location of the funeral, and arranging for procession escorts. The chaplain must develop a good working relationship with local funeral directors to help them understand the special rituals involved in a fire department funeral. Support and consolation for the firefighter's family and children are responsibilities of the chaplain. The chaplain should always send condolences at the time of death of any member of the fire department and represent the department by offering any assistance needed. This is a responsibility of the fire department chaplain that should never be neglected.

Section 4A: Line of Duty Death, ICHIEFS, LODD Response Plan

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The information on the following pages was excerpted from the Federation of Fire Chaplains Manual.

Introduction from the Federation of Fire Chaplains:

No one likes to even consider the prospect of arranging and conducting a funeral

for someone who has touched our life. As fire chaplains, however, we serve a group of brave and dedicated men and women who continually place themselves in harm's way. Far too often they make the ultimate sacrifice. They give their lives as they strive to protect the lives and property of the community they serve. When the unthinkable happens, it is up to the chaplain to do all he or she can to ensure that the fallen firefighter receives a tribute befitting the sacrifice that has been made. In this regard no effort is too large, and no detail is too small. It is truly a time for "all things to be done decently and in order." The purpose of this manual is to provide basic information that a chaplain can use to help the department he or she serves through a very trying time.

This manual is not intended to be all-inclusive in content or dogmatic in approach. There are many local customs and procedures that may be used during the funeral process. It is designed to provide a significant amount of information covering a broad spectrum of subjects. From this information, the chaplain may choose what best fits his particular situation and adapt it as necessary. There are two keys to conducting a respectful fire department funeral. Show honor to the fallen firefighter, and care for his family. If these two things are accomplished, the chaplain has done his job well.

ICHIEFS LODD RESPONSE PLAN, GENERAL GUIDELINES

The conditions that will prevail when death strikes the fire department family will require the accomplishment of specific actions in order to meet the needs that will be encountered in the days that follow. These actions include:

- a. Good organization and coordination.
- b. Good communications.
- c. Maintenance of flexibility.
- d. Care not to overload any individual.
- e. Moral, emotional, and spiritual support for the next of kin.
- f. Meeting the requests and needs of the surviving family members.

The primary goal of the fire department will be to work with the funeral director and all others involved ensuring that a fitting tribute is paid to the fallen firefighter, and to ensure that the wishes and desires of the surviving family regarding the funeral ceremonies are carried out. The needs of the family will come before the wishes of the department.

Fire department personnel who are assigned duties related to the conduct of a fire department funeral will understand that their responsibility does not include the duties of a funeral director. Their duties do include working with the funeral director in order to accomplish shared goals in the best interest of the firefighter's family.

ICHIEFS LODD RESPONSE PLAN, PRE-INCIDENT PREPARATION

The fire department should take steps to ensure that certain actions related to the proper conduct of a fire department funeral are completed prior to the occurrence of a tragic incident.

Fire Department Chaplain--The fire department shall maintain an active chaplaincy program. The chaplain should be immediately contacted whenever

the death of a fire department member is imminent or confirmed, regardless of the circumstances involved. The chaplain's services should be available to the surviving family throughout the funeral process.

Personnel Information--A Vital Information Record (copy attached) shall be maintained on all fire department personnel. It may be used to assist in the treatment of personnel following serious injury, and in the notification of next of kin following a serious injury or line-of-duty death. The form should contain the following information:

- a. Complete name of the department member.
- b. Name and location (address/specific directions to residence) of next of kin.
- c. Name and location of alternates for next of kin.
- d. Religion or belief.
- e. Church affiliation and membership.
- f. Allergies to medication.
- g. Chronic medical conditions.
- h. Any other pertinent past medical history.

Photographs--The fire department shall arrange for periodic photographs of all department personnel. Photographs shall be maintained in department personnel files.

Local Support Agencies--The department shall periodically contact local agencies in order to maintain a resource list of:

- a. Honor guards/color guards.
- b. Bands, buglers, pipers.
- c. Firing squads.
- d. Alarm bells (for "Last Alarm" service).
- e. Vocal and instrumental soloists.

ICHIEFS LODD RESPONSE PLAN, FUNERAL DIRECTORS

Local directors shall be contacted by the department and provided a copy of fire department funeral procedures. This will allow them to understand local protocols beforehand.

Ceremonial Clothing/Equipment--The fire department shall have on hand the following clothing/equipment for use during fire department funerals:

- a. Badge and name tag presentation frame.
- b. Presentation flag.
- c. White gloves (sufficient number for honor guard and eight pallbearers).
- d. Extra badge for each rank in the department. (The name of a source for a duplicate name tag on an emergency basis shall also be maintained.)

Key Personnel List--The department shall maintain and annually update a list of personnel willing to serve in key positions:

- a. Survivor Action Officer
- b. Notification Officer
- c. Family Liaison Officer
- d. Funeral Officer
- e. Church Officer
- f. Procession Officer
- g. Cemetery Officer

h. Hospital Liaison Officer

Personnel willing to serve shall be provided with a funeral manual detailing the responsibilities of key positions and containing copies of fire department procedures relating to funerals and serious injury or death.

Honor Guard/Color Guard--The fire department shall encourage personnel to participate in a department honor guard that will function during fire department funerals and at other appropriate times. The following support may be provided:

- a. Properly tailored identical Class A (dress) uniforms with cap, white shirts, black tie and white ascot.
- b. White gloves for all members.
- c. White shoulder braiding for all members.
- d. Patent leather low-quarter shoes for all members.
- e. Parade flags (American, state, municipality, and/or fire department) with holders.
- f. Display axes with chrome heads (2).
- g. Time off from station duties, as needed, to provide honor guard and color guard services and training.

ICHIEFS LODD RESPONSE PLAN, FUNERAL OPTIONS

Honor Guard--Should an honor guard be requested, it is the responsibility of the funeral officer to ensure the request is complied with. The funeral officer will coordinate with the honor guard captain to schedule honor guard activities according to the funeral director's and family's wishes. The following basic rules usually apply to honor guard activities:

- a. Two honor guards will be posted at the casket, one at the head and one at the foot, at all times during viewing hours.
- b. A minimum of four honor guards will be assigned for each set of viewing hours.
- c. Honor guards will be rotated at 15 minute intervals. Relief guards will march up together. Posted guards will come to attention and smartly make relief. The relieved guards will march off together.
- d. Posted honor guards will assume the position of parade rest.
- e. American and state, township or departmental flags shall be posted at the casket.
- f. Honor guards shall wear Class A uniform with white gloves and black mourning bands over uniform badges.

Pallbearers--Should the family choose to use fire department members as pallbearers, it is the family liaison officer's responsibility to determine which firefighters the family would like to have. The total number of pallbearers is usually eight (8). Pallbearers shall wear Class A uniforms with hats and white gloves.

- a. Due to the specific responsibilities they are assigned, pallbearers are exempt from following the majority of orders given to the remainder of a formation.
- b. Instructions on the removal, handling, and transporting of the casket

should be given by the funeral officer with the advisement of the funeral director. If a fire engine is used as a caisson, pallbearers will hold a practice session the day before the funeral if possible. If this is not possible, pallbearers must report to the funeral home several hours before the beginning of the service for a briefing and practice.

c. If the casket is draped with a flag that will be presented to the next of kin, at least three pallbearers shall be instructed on the proper method of removing, folding, and presenting the flag. A usually accepted procedure is for two pallbearers to fold the flag and present it to the third pallbearer who, in turn, presents it to the next of kin.

Coordinating the flag folding will be the responsibility of the cemetery officer. Flag folding instructions are included in an appendix to this procedure. If the casket is not draped, and the department desires to present a flag to the next of kin, an already folded flag may be placed on the casket to be presented by a designated pallbearer or other appropriate person.

d. If fire department pumpers are used as caisson and flower vehicle, pallbearers will ride on them. If pumpers are not used, the department will provide other department vehicles for the pallbearers during the procession.

Transportation

a. The department may wish to offer a fire department vehicle and driver to the immediate family during the viewing and funeral period. The family liaison officer will normally provide this service.

b. The department may also wish to see that the next of kin are provided limousine service by the funeral home on the day of the funeral.

Meals--During the period of mourning and post-funeral reception, meals may become a matter of difficulty for the deceased firefighter's family. Friends of the family and members of the department may be used to provide for these needs. The survivor action officer, in conjunction with the family liaison officer, will determine the need and coordinate the preparation and delivery of the meals provided by department members.

Child Care--Should child care present a problem for the family of the deceased during the viewing and funeral period, the family liaison officer should make the need known to the Survivor action officer who can coordinate providing needed care.

Family Liaison Officer--Regardless of the circumstances surrounding the death, or the deceased firefighter's status in the department, a family liaison officer shall be assigned to make contact with the family. The liaison officer will determine the amount of involvement the department will provide and relay this information to the survivor action officer. The family liaison officer will assist the family as much as possible during the process, including helping with items concerning the deceased's personal matters.

Initial Department Support--This will be determined by family requests as relayed by the family liaison officer. Appropriate key personnel shall be assigned as the needs arise. No assumptions shall be made or acted upon without contact and consent of the immediate family. The services provided by the department may involve a large commitment, or only bits and pieces.

Fire Department Chaplain--The fire department may or may not play a significant role. The amount of involvement the chaplain has will need to be determined by the family based on their preference of religion or clergy. One option that can be proposed is a shared responsibility between the clergy of family choice and the department chaplain. Once again, the family's wishes as determined by the family liaison officer must be honored. Should the department chaplain be requested, the following are areas of his concern:

- a. Initial next of kin notification.
- b. Comfort and counsel for surviving family members.
- c. Prayer service at the funeral home.
- d. Church services.
- e. Cemetery interment.
- f. Follow-up counseling for the family.

Procession--The family may indicate the desire for a procession from the funeral home or church to the cemetery. The procession is the responsibility of the procession officer and involves the staging of vehicles at the funeral home or church prior to the funeral, directing vehicles as they leave for the cemetery, and staging upon arrival at the cemetery. Specific considerations include:

- a. Department vehicles used as caisson, flower car, and miscellaneous transportation.
- b. Coordination with funeral director to determine procession route, including a drive by the deceased firefighter's fire station, home, or any other special considerations. If the procession passes the fire station, apparatus shall be parked on the apron, firefighters shall assemble outside, come to attention as the procession passes, and toll a muffled bell as the caisson or hearse passes.
- c. Static displays of apparatus along the procession route.
- d. Crossed ladders or aerial equipment at the funeral home, church, or cemetery entrance.

Caisson--A fire department apparatus may be appropriate as a caisson to carry the casket. If an apparatus is used, it must be taken out of service for a period of time and prepared as follows:

- a. Thoroughly clean and wax.
- b. Remove hose and dividers.
- c. Add available mourning flags or bunting.
- d. Have the operator in dress uniform.

In the event of inclement weather, an enclosed hearse should be used for the casket and the apparatus used for a flower car.

Flower Car--A fire department apparatus may also be used as a flower vehicle. If so used, it must be taken out of service and prepared as indicated above for a caisson. Hose dividers need not be removed.

Formations--Special formations may be appropriate under certain circumstances.

Should this option be exercised, the formations would be at the following points:

- a. Walk through of all attending firefighters at the funeral home or church.
- b. Honor guard formations on either side of the exit path of the casket from the funeral home to the hearse or caisson.
- c. Honor guard formations on either side of the casket path upon entry to and exit from the church.
- d. Honor guard formations on either side of the casket path from the hearse or caisson to the interment.

Taps--A single bugler at the cemetery may sound Taps. The location of the bugler shall be approximately 75 feet from the gravesite.

Firing Squad--A military type firing squad may be used at the cemetery ceremony, if used, the squad will fire three volleys. The position of the firing squad is 75 feet from the gravesite.

NOTE: Firing squad volleys have been known to frighten young children in attendance at cemetery services. This shall be made known to the family as part of the family liaison officer's briefing.

Band and Musical Arrangements

- a. A band, piper, choir, soloists, or an organist may be used to play certain ceremonial arrangements during various funeral ceremonies.
- b. The family liaison officer will determine the wishes of the family in this area and communicate the needs to the funeral officer.

Last Alarm Service--A traditional bell ringing ceremony at the end of the church service or cemetery service may be used to signify the firefighter's last alarm. A short reading accompanies the ringing of the bell (see Appendix).

Readings--Numerous scripture passages and other fire department related readings are available and appropriate during the funeral services. The family liaison officer will work with the family to determine what readings they would like and who will read them.

Eulogy--A eulogy may be appropriate at any point in the funeral ceremonies. The family must decide who will deliver the eulogy and when. A clergy member, department chaplain, and/or close family friend from the fire department may perform this task. The family liaison officer makes the necessary contacts and advises the funeral officer.

Crossed Aerial Ladders--Should the family wish to have the crossed aerial ladders at the funeral site or cemetery entrance, the family liaison officer shall

forward this request to the survivor action officer for approval and coordination.

Static Equipment Display--During the procession, the family may choose to have a static display of department apparatus with their crews at attention and saluting the passing casket and family vehicle. This final tribute may be set up at the funeral home or church, at key locations along the procession route, at a fire station on the procession route, or at the cemetery entrance. The family liaison officer will communicate this need to the survivor action officer.

Burial In Uniform--Should the family choose to bury the deceased firefighter in uniform, the family liaison officer will deliver the uniform to the funeral officer or funeral director. The family liaison officer may also deliver other clothing to be used.

Presentation of Fire Department Badge--As a part of the funeral service at the funeral home or church, the fire chief may present the badge and name tag worn by the deceased firefighter to the next of kin. The items will be presented in a framed display also containing a PFD uniform patch. The support services specialist will work with the fire chief to obtain the badge and name tag actually worn by the firefighter and to obtain duplicates to be placed on the burial uniform.

Closed Casket --In the event closed casket ceremonies are chosen, the family may wish to place a picture of the firefighter in uniform along with his dress hat on top of the closed casket.

Walk Through--A walk through of firefighters in attendance at the funeral may be used to pay tribute to the deceased firefighter. If used, the funeral officer will schedule the walk through and have firefighters form up single file by station and/or visiting department. The formation will walk single file past the casket with each firefighter stopping briefly to pay tribute. The formation then exits the funeral home or church or goes directly to assigned seating areas.

Post-Services Reception--Should the family approve, a reception may be held following the funeral. A church facility, school cafeteria, fire station, or other facility may be used for this purpose. The survivor action officer will coordinate the event if used. He may call upon department members, the firefighters relief association, or local service organizations to assist in donating or preparing food.

Welfare Fund--Fire department members or local organizations may wish to start a memorial fund for the deceased firefighter's family. The survivor action officer may request the assistance of fire department members, the firefighters relief association, or local service organizations in establishing this fund. The family will be advised by the family liaison officer that this is taking place.

Half-Staff Flags--American flags flying at fire stations shall be brought to half mast upon notification that a fire department member has died. They shall remain at half-mast until at least 1700 hours the day of the funeral and interment. When the American flag is at

half mast, no other flags will be flown on the same halyard. For line-of-duty deaths, the department shall request other township facilities also fly their flags at half-mast.

Badge Shrouding--The shrouding of a badge is accomplished by placing a 1/2" to 3/4" piece of black material horizontally around the badge at its midpoint. The shroud shall be placed on badges at the time of notification of the death and will remain on the badge until the funeral and interment are completed. For line-of-duty deaths, the badge shrouds shall remain in place for a 30-day mourning period.

Flag Presentation--If the casket is draped with a flag, an appropriate flag presentation ceremony shall be conducted at the conclusion of the cemetery service.

ICHIEFS LODD RESPONSE PLAN, KEY POSITIONS FOR FIRE DEPARTMENT FUNERALS

Survivor Action Officer

a. The fire chief will assume the position of survivor action officer or appoint someone to act as his representative in providing liaison and support with the family of a firefighter killed in the line of duty. The survivor action officer is a special staff assignment. As a direct representative of the fire chief the survivor action officer shall receive the full cooperation of the entire fire department. The survivor action officer will appoint assistants and delegate responsibilities as required to successfully complete all assigned duties.

b. The survivor action officer is responsible for the management of several important activities. His principal concern is the ongoing welfare of the next of kin. He will render whatever assistance is necessary in settling the personal affairs of the deceased member and assisting the family through the crisis.

c. The survivor action officer coordinates and supervises the activities of a number of key personnel assigned to handle the specific aspects of the funeral arrangements and to assist the surviving family. These key personnel include:

1. Family Liaison Officer--On call to the surviving family 24 hours per day to provide any assistance and support needed. Provides the survivor action officer with constant updates on the family's status and needs.

2. Funeral Officer--Provides coordination and interaction with the funeral director and other personnel on funeral arrangements.

3. Church Officer--Provides coordination and interaction with the church involved to arrange the funeral service.

4. Cemetery Officer--Provides coordination with the cemetery and others involved in the funeral arrangements in order to organize all arrangements at the gravesite.

5. Procession Officer--Arranges and directs the funeral procession.

d. Additional duties for the survivor action officer include:

1. Assure next of kin notification has been properly accomplished.

2. Officially notify all fire department stations of the death and have flags lowered to half mast. Make arrangements for the notification of all department and vacationing personnel.

3. Notify the following personnel and agencies of the death:

a) Relief association.

- b) All other township departments.
 - c) All other fire departments and police departments.
 - d) Make appropriate follow-up contacts when the funeral arrangements and schedules have been determined.
4. Work with the family liaison officer to determine the desired method of collecting the deceased firefighter's personal items from the fire station.
NOTE: If the next of kin desires to collect items from the locker personally, the contents shall be screened in advance and any inappropriate material removed.
 5. Conduct a coordination meeting with the key personnel as soon as possible so that everyone understands what options will be used in the funeral ceremony. Once the funeral procedures are established all key personnel shall be instructed to make the appropriate contacts and given the time for a final coordination meeting. Conduct a final meeting with key personnel to:
 - a. Establish schedule and timetables.
 - b. Identify times and places for group gatherings as required by the ceremonies to be conducted.
 - c. Re-contact all appropriate people and agencies with the schedule, meeting places, and special instructions.
 6. Be a key contact person for outside agencies, news media, and other departments in relation to the death and subsequent ceremonies.
 7. Make appropriate arrangements for a post-funeral meal and facility to handle a large group of people (with family approval through the family (liaison officer). Arrangements will also be made for a fire department member to be on hand at the residence to assist the family in any manner possible. Additional meals for immediate family members will also be provided as needed.
 8. Coordinate with the township human resources department to arrange for the completion of any required paperwork.
 9. Contact neighboring fire departments and arrange for mutual aid stand-in fire and ambulance companies during the funeral.
 10. Maintain an easily accessible contact position for the duration of the funeral process.
 11. Coordinate providing meals for the family and assure future family follow-up by the family liaison officer.
 12. Assure that all department functions return to normal.

A Family Liaison Officer shall be assigned by the fire chief in every incident involving the death of a firefighter, or when the death of an injured firefighter appears imminent. The individual so assigned will perform the following duties:

- a. The family liaison officer shall have a fire department vehicle, pager, and portable radio assigned to him for the entire funeral process.
- b. Promptly report to the deceased's residence, or to the treating medical facility, and provide reassurance and support to the family.

The family liaison officer is to ensure that the NEEDS OF THE FAMILY come before the wishes of the department.

- c. The family liaison officer must be prepared to discuss all aspects of the funeral process and counsel the family in its decisions. The FLO must be able to relay information to the

fire chief as to what level of involvement the department will have in the funeral process in accordance with the family's wishes.

1. The FLO will make the family aware of what the department can offer in the way of assistance if the family decides to have a line-of-duty funeral.
2. The family shall be made aware of churches with seating capacities large enough to accommodate attendance at the funeral. However, any alternate church will need to be made aware that the family minister or fire department chaplain will officiate at the service. THE DEPARTMENT MUST ONLY MAKE THE FAMILY AWARE OF THE ALTERNATIVES. IT IS THE FAMILY'S CHOICE.
3. The FLO will brief the family on fire department funeral procedures (i.e., 21-gun salute, presenting of the flag, playing of Taps, Last Alarm, the ladder archway, etc.).
4. The FLO will see that the surviving parents, if not the immediate next of kin, are afforded proper recognition and have proper placement arranged for them during the funeral and procession.
- d. The family liaison officer will assist the family in determining the eight primary pallbearers and the optional honorary bearers.
- e. The family liaison officer will assist the family in determining:
 1. Type of interment.
 2. Which funeral home will be used.
 3. Which clergy will be used (whether or not the fire department chaplain will be used).
 4. Which cemetery will be used.
 5. Will the deceased be buried in uniform? If so, obtain a uniform.
 6. Obtain all articles of clothing that the deceased will wear and deliver them to the funeral director.
 7. Obtain a recent photograph of the deceased for the funeral director.
 8. Determine the length of the funeral service to include:
 - a) Readers of scripture.
 - b) What scriptures will be read.
 - c) Music to be used and individuals to perform the music.
 - d) Who will deliver the funeral sermon and/or eulogy.
 - e) Will Last Alarm bell service be used.
 9. Length of the wake and establishing a tentative schedule.
 10. Ceremonies that will take place at the cemetery:
 - a) Band or Piper
 - b) Honor Guard/Firing Squad
 - c) Readings
 - d) Eulogy and who will deliver it
 - e) Taps/Last Alarm
 - f) Will an apparatus be used as a caisson or will a conventional hearse be used
 - g) Will an apparatus be used as a flower car
 - h) Will personnel walk alongside the caisson or ride in the procession schedule
 - i) Identify and determine any other special considerations on behalf of the family.
 - j) The family liaison officer will be available to the family on a 24-hour basis to assist in any way necessary.
 - k) The family liaison officer will also have to address the following items with the family:

1. Autopsy report, birth certificates, marriage certificates, death certificates (workers compensation), VA or military records.
 2. Consult an attorney for the family to review all matters.
 3. Fire department retirement benefits due to surviving beneficiaries.
 4. VA widow and children's benefits and burial benefits.
 5. Social Security survivor benefits.
 6. Public Safety Officer Benefits (federal and state).
 7. Life insurance plans (personal and city).
 8. Final paycheck, including sick leave, vacation payoff, and W-2 forms.
 9. Deferred compensation account.
 10. Income tax report.
 11. Loans outstanding that may be insured, including credit union loans.
 12. Transfer of ownership of property and vehicles to survivors.
 13. Review of all bills before payment by survivors for legality, honesty, and accuracy. This should include last illness, previous debts, and funeral expenses. Some bills may be covered by insurance or otherwise not be legally due.
 14. Change title of all bank accounts.
 15. Advise survivors not to loan money to any person, especially friends and relatives. Advise them to put any available funds in the bank. There will be ample time to invest wisely after a greater degree of stability returns to their lives.
 16. Investigate the possibility of scholarships available for college for surviving dependents.
 17. Check on mortgage insurance.
 18. Check on possible worker's compensation claims with an attorney.
 19. Check on any possible third party lawsuits with an attorney. For example, the surviving family of a firefighter at a fire that is hit by a vehicle may be able to sue the operator of the vehicle.
- l) The family liaison officer must be constantly alert for ways he can assist the family of a fallen firefighter to cope with the tragedy that has entered their lives. Any special needs that are noticed shall be relayed to the fire chief immediately so that the necessary resources to meet those needs can be acquired.

Funeral Officer

- a. The funeral officer will coordinate with the family liaison officer and the funeral director to ensure that the wishes of the deceased firefighter's family concerning all aspects of the funeral are carried out.
- b. The funeral officer will attend all meetings called by the survivor action officer in order to determine the following:
 1. The schedule of events and the length of time the mourning and burial process will involve.
 2. Whether fire department vehicles will be used as caisson or flower car. Should they not be used, ensure alternative arrangements are made with the funeral director.
- c. If the firefighter's immediate family has not requested limousine service from the funeral home for transportation during the day of the funeral, the funeral officer, at the direction of the fire chief, will advise the funeral director to provide the service and send an invoice for the service to the fire department.

- d. Coordinate with honor guard members to establish an honor guard schedule at the funeral home and church.
- e. Coordinate formal walk through of uniformed personnel during the period of viewing with the departments involved and with the funeral director. This includes seating arrangements.
- f. Work with the fire department chaplain or clergy member designated by the family to coordinate any prayer services to be conducted at the funeral home and forward information to the survivor action officer.
- g. Develop a schedule for uniformed personnel the day of the funeral for coordination at the funeral site. This includes:
 - 1. Arrival time for uniformed personnel and specific instructions as to where to gather.
 - 2. Briefing and practice of formations that will be used when the casket is removed.
 - 3. Briefing on proper protocols for entering and leaving the funeral.
- h. Coordinate vehicle staging with the procession officer, including arrangements for fire department vehicles being used. Ensure that sufficient personnel are available to properly direct and stage incoming apparatus and vehicles.
- i. Obtain the uniform or other clothing that the deceased will wear during the viewing from the family liaison officer and deliver it to the funeral director.
- j. Coordinate with the family liaison officer on special readings or eulogies to be used during the funeral.
- k. Obtain white gloves for all department pallbearers.

Procession Officer--The procession officer has the responsibility of coordinating the funeral procession from the funeral home to the church (if necessary) and from the church or other funeral site to the cemetery. Duties include:

- a. Attend all coordination meetings to determine the following:
 - 1. Name of the funeral home to be used.
 - 2. Name of the church to be used.
 - 3. Name of the cemetery.
 - 4. Will an engine be used as a caisson or will a conventional hearse be used?
 - 5. Will an engine be used as a flower car?
 - 6. Schedule of events the day of the funeral.
 - 7. Will the procession involve walking?
 - a) Honor Guard
 - b) Band or Pipers
 - c) Pallbearers
- b. Establish a system for staging and coordinating vehicles at all locations where funeral activities will occur. Coordinate the vehicle staging with appropriate key personnel (church officer, cemetery officer, etc.). Ensure that sufficient personnel are available at all staging locations to efficiently direct and stage apparatus and vehicles.
- c. Coordinate with the family liaison officer to determine any special considerations involved in the procession. These may include:
 - 1. Passing the firefighter's home, fire station, or other significant location.
 - 2. Special static displays of equipment and personnel at a location on the procession route.

3. The use of crossed aerial ladders at the cemetery entrance or other location. If used, contact the survivor action officer to obtain necessary apparatus.
- d. Contact the police department or other appropriate agency for assistance in working with other police departments and the funeral director in order to:
 1. Establish routes for the procession.
 2. Determine traffic control needs.
 - a) Traffic rerouting and street closings at the funeral home and church (contact Public Works Dept. to obtain barricades as needed).
 - b) Traffic control at any special assembly points used.
 - c) If necessary post "No Parking" signs around the funeral home, church, and any other assembly points.
 - d) Directing staged vehicles as they line up for procession(s).
3. Arrange for procession escorts.
 - e. Develop maps showing the procession route and any other needed information. Maps will be handed out at the briefing at the funeral site prior to the beginning of the service.
 - f. Align vehicles in the procession basically as follows (coordinate with funeral director):
 1. Lead Escort
 2. Fire department apparatus used as flower car
 3. Hearse or apparatus used as caisson
 4. Family vehicles
 5. Pallbearers (if not riding on flower vehicle and caisson)
 6. Honorary Pallbearers
 7. Honor Guard/Color Guard
 8. Fire Department Chief vehicle
 9. Other Fire Department vehicles
 10. Police Department vehicles
 11. Township Officials
 12. Vehicles from other fire departments
 13. Vehicles from other police departments
 14. Family friends
 15. Rear Escort
 - g. If fire department apparatus is used as a caisson and/or flower vehicle, contact the survivor action officer and determine which apparatus will be used. Ensure the following items are taken care of in relation to fire department vehicles:
 1. Apparatus is thoroughly cleaned and hose beds stripped.
 2. Hose dividers removed from apparatus used as a caisson.
 3. Hose bed on caisson apparatus is adapted to easily facilitate casket placement and removal (coordinate with funeral director).
 4. Apparatus operators have full dress uniforms to wear while driving.
 5. Deceased firefighter's bunker gear is obtained and placed in a riding position on the caisson (bunker boots will be turned backwards).
 6. If used, bunting and/or funeral flags are affixed to the apparatus.

Church Officer--The church officer has the primary responsibility of coordinating all of the activities and ceremonies at the church. Duties include:

a. Attend coordination meetings and determine the following from the survivor action officer and family liaison officer:

1. Schedule of events.
 2. Location of the church.
 3. Clergy to be used, including fire department chaplain.
 4. Scripture to be read and readers.
 5. Type and length of service.
 6. What ceremonial items are being requested:
 - a) Badge presentation
 - b) Special readings
 - c) Special eulogies
 7. Music to be used and who will present.
 8. Who will deliver eulogy and the deceased firefighter's résumé.
- b. Contact procession officer and coordinate vehicle staging at the church.
- c. Make seating arrangements for those attending the church service.

In addition to family members, dedicated seating should be provided for:

1. Pallbearers
 2. Honor Guard
 3. Uniformed Personnel
- d. Determine formations to be used and coordinate them during the arrival and removal of the casket from the church. Review military commands for the formations and issue them when appropriate.
- e. Develop a program for the service and any special prayer cards and provide for their reproduction and distribution.

Cemetery Officer--The cemetery officer is responsible for the preparation and coordination of events that occur at the gravesite from the time procession vehicles have stopped and people exit the vehicles. He is also responsible for liaison with cemetery personnel. Duties include:

- a. Attend coordination meetings and determine the following from the survivor action officer and family liaison officer:
1. What type of interment will be used:
 - a) Burial
 - b) Crypt
 - c) Cremation
 2. Does the family wish to have:
 - a) Final Alarm Service
 - b) Taps played
 - c) Firing Squad
 - d) Scripture read (who will read it)
 - e) Music (who will perform)
- b. Schedule and coordinate the sequence of events that will take place at the gravesite. This includes coordinating any special requests received from the survivor action officer or family liaison officer.
- c. Develop the type and location of formations that will be used by uniformed personnel and issue orders as appropriate and consistent with Military Standards.

- d. Ensure that the cemetery takes care of necessary items, such as:
 - 1. Overhead protection for immediate family at the gravesite.
 - 2. Public address system provided (if needed).
- e. Ensure that pallbearers are thoroughly familiar with the process of folding and presenting the flag to the next of kin.
- f. If the family situation warrants, coordinate with the survivor action officer to have emergency medical personnel/equipment present.
- g. Upon dismissal of the formation, give instructions as to the location of the post funeral meal (as determined by the survivor action officer and family action officer).

ICHIEFS LODD RESPONSE PLAN, MISCELLANEOUS CONSIDERATIONS

Inclement weather conditions may have an impact on funeral services. If severe weather conditions are anticipated, personnel involved in coordinating the funeral services will work with the survivor action officer and family liaison officer to have alternative plans available to be used as required.

It is possible that the funeral, church service or other aspect of the funeral will be held in a location other than Pemberton Township. This will complicate the process and all planning steps must be coordinated with officials and agencies of the involved jurisdiction(s). If possible, representatives from both fire and police departments of all communities involved should be present at planning meetings to give their input. For a line-of-duty death, a large contingent of visiting firefighters will probably want to attend the funeral. If a procession is held from the funeral home to the church, it is advisable to have visiting firefighters and their apparatus report directly to the church for staging prior to the arrival of the procession from the funeral home. All firefighters and apparatus may take part in the procession from the church, or final funeral site, to the cemetery. If a march of firefighters to the church is to be conducted, only personnel from the department shall participate.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX ONE

SUGGESTED CEMETERY FORMATIONS

SEATING

FAMILY

CASKET

PALLBEARERS

COLOR GUARD

FIRE DEPARTMENT MEMBERS

CHAPLAIN/CLERGY

BUGLER

OIC CHIEF

APPENDIX TWO

MILITARY STANDARDS

POSITION OF ATTENTION

Assume the position of "Attention" on the command "ATTENTION."

To assume this position bring the heels together smartly so that the heels are on the same line with the toes pointing out equally, forming an angle of 45 degrees.

Keep the legs straight without locking the knees. Hold the body erect with the hips level, chest lifted and arched, and the shoulders square and even.

Let the arms hang straight, without stiffness, along the sides with the back of the hands outward. Curl the fingers so that the tips of the thumb are alongside and touching the first joint of the forefingers. Keep the thumbs straight and along the seams of the trousers with all fingertips touching the trouser leg.

Keep the head erect and hold it squarely to the front with the chin drawn slightly in so that the axis of the head and neck is vertical. Look straight to the front.

Rest the weight of the body equally on the heels and balls of the feet. Remain silent except when replying to a question or when directed otherwise.

POSITION OF PARADE REST

Parade rest is commanded from the position of "Attention" only. The command for this movement is "PARADE, REST."

On the command of execution ("REST") move the left foot ten inches to the left of the right foot. Keep the legs straight, resting the weight of the body equally on the heels and balls of both feet. Simultaneously place the hands at the small of the back, centered on the belt line. Keep the fingers of both hands extended and joined, interlocking the thumbs so that the palm of the right hand is outward.

Hold the head and eyes as at the position of "Attention." Remain silent and do not move. "Stand at ease," "At Ease," or "Rest" may be commanded from this position.

STAND AT EASE

The command for this movement is "STAND AT, EASE." On the command of execution ("EASE") execute "Parade Rest" but turn the head and eyes directly toward the officer in charge. "At Ease" or "Rest" may be commanded from this position.

The command for this movement is "AT EASE." On the command "At Ease" movement is allowed but personnel must remain standing and silent with the right foot in place.

"Rest" may be commanded from this position.

REST

The command for this movement is "REST." On the command "Rest" movement, talking, smoking, or drinking is allowed unless otherwise specified. Personnel must remain standing with the right foot in place. "At Ease" may be commanded from this position.

HAND SALUTE

The hand salute is a one-count movement. The command is "PRESENT, ARMS." On the command of execution ("Arms") raise the right hand to the headdress and with the tip of the forefinger touch the rim of the visor slightly to the right of the right eye. The fingers and thumb are extended and joined, palm down. The outer edge of the hand is barely canted downward so that neither the palm nor the back of the hand is visible from the front. The upper arm is horizontal with the elbow inclined slightly forward and the hand and wrist straight. Order arms from this salute is a one-count movement. The command is "ORDER, ARMS." On the command of execution ("Arms") return the hand smartly to the side, resuming the position of attention. When uncovered or when wearing a headdress without a visor, the hand salute is executed in the same manner as previously

described, except the tip of the forefinger touches the forehead near the eyebrow and slightly to the right of the right eye.

APPENDIX THREE

CORRECT METHOD OF FOLDING THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES
FOLD THE LOWER STRIPED SECTION OF THE FLAG OVER THE BLUE FIELD
FOLD THE FOLDED EDGE OVER TO MEET THE OPEN EDGE
START A TRIANGULAR FOLD BY BRINGING THE STRIPED CORNER OF THE FOLDED
EDGE TO THE OPEN EDGE
FOLD THE OUTER POINT INWARD PARALLEL WITH THE OPEN EDGE TO
FORM A SECOND TRIANGLE
CONTINUE FOLDING UNTIL THE ENTIRE LENGTH OF THE FLAG IS FOLDED
INTO A TRIANGLE WITH ONLY THE BLUE FIELD AND MARGIN SHOWING
TUCK THE REMAINING MARGIN INTO THE POCKET FORMED BY THE FOLDS
AT THE
BLUE FIELD EDGE OF THE FLAG
THE PROPERLY FOLDED FLAG SHOULD RESEMBLE A COCKED HAT

APPENDIX FOUR

SUGGESTED "LAST ALARM" CEREMONY

Chaplain or Department Member reads or recites:

Throughout most of history, the life of a firefighter has been closely associated with the ringing of a bell. As he began his hours of duty, it is the bell that started it off. Through the day and night, each alarm was sounded by a bell, which called him to fight fire and to place his life in jeopardy for the good of his fellow man.

And when the fire was out, and the alarm had come to an end, the bell rang three times to signal the end.

And now our Brother _____ has completed his task, his duties well done, and the bell rings three times in memory of, and in tribute to, his life and service.

Officer in charge calls firefighters to attention.

Color guard called to "Present Arms"

Bell is struck three times

Color guard called to "Order Arms"

Firefighters seated (if in church or funeral home)

Closing Prayer

APPENDIX FIVE

SAMPLE ORDER OF EVENTS

ORDER OF EVENTS

Funeral Services for Firefighter John Doe

Pemberton Township Fire Department

June 1, 1994

1:00 Arrival of hearse at First Baptist, Pemberton Township

Honor Guard Posted

Color Guard Posted

1:30-2:00 Guests, fire personnel, and fire apparatus arrive.

Fire personnel placed in formations

Explanation of commands is given

Attention

Present Arms

Order Arms

2:00-2:15 Arrival of family and processional

Pallbearers remove the casket

Procession enters the church

Minister

Color Guard

Pallbearers/Casket

Honorary Pallbearers

Family

Pemberton Township Fire Department members

Other fire department members

2:15-3:00 Funeral Service

Special Music

Reading of Biography

Special Readings

Eulogy

Funeral Sermon

Presentation of Badge

Walk By of Fire Personnel

Benediction

3:00-3:15 Funeral Recessional

Honorary Pallbearers

Minister

Pallbearers/Casket

Family

Fire Department Members

Other Guests

3:15-4:00 Procession to Cemetery

Lead Escort

Pemberton Township Fire Department Apparatus

Hearse

Family Vehicles

Pallbearers

Honorary Pallbearers

Honor Guard

Pemberton Township Fire Department Chief Vehicle

Other Pemberton Township Fire Department Vehicles

Pemberton Township Police Department Vehicles

Township Officials

Other Fire Department Vehicles

Other Police Department Vehicles

Friends, Private Vehicles
Rear Escort
4:00-4:15 Gravesite Processional
Color Guard
Pemberton Township Fire Department Members
Other Fire Department Members
Honorary Pallbearers
Minister
Pallbearers/Casket
Family
Friends
4:15-4:45 Graveside Service
Prayers and Scripture
Words to the Family
Final Prayer
Last Alarm Ceremony
Taps
Presentation of Flag
Benediction
Dismissal

ICHIEFS LODD RESPONSE PLAN, Memphis Division of Fire Services (Funeral Protocols and Death Notification) (Modified for use by Pemberton Township FD)
FUNERAL PROTOCOLS AND DEATH NOTIFICATION

The following death notification and protocol procedures will be in effect from this date forward and will be adhered to unless unusual circumstances prohibit. It is crucial that no fire department member contact the family of a critically injured or deceased firefighter prior to proper notification by specific, identified staff personnel. The department fire chief will coordinate notification and transportation of the immediate family.

The department fire chief and the department chaplain shall be immediately notified in the event of death or serious injury. Strict adherence to the following notification order and/or procedures is mandatory.

Notification to the following shall be done:

- A. Director of the Fire Department
- B. Township Administrator
- C. Township Mayor
- D. Township Council President
- E. Township Police Chief
- F. Township Fire Department Operations Chiefs
- G. No vocal alarm announcements of the death will be made until complete family notification has been assured.
- H. Dispatch Fire Investigators for multiple still photographs and video of the death scene. Secure all pertinent areas with barrier tape.
- I. Department fire chief or his designee shall secure all Protective Clothing and Equipment used by the injured firefighter. Transport all items to secured area.
- J. Contact the department chaplain for initiation of Critical Incident Stress

Debriefing (CISD).

- K. Set up continuous detail at hospital for family assistance, if injured personnel is critical, but is not deceased.
- L. Advise family of need for an autopsy. Have necessary hospital forms signed.
- M. Have "Release of medical information" forms signed by legal party.
- N. Determine desired funeral home to receive the body.
- O. With the physician's assistance, contact coroner's office for:
 - a. Autopsy
 - b. Toxicology Report
 - c. Statement of cause of death, if no autopsy is to be done (medical examiner's report)
- P. Prepare news medical release. (Assign PIO for the incident)
 - a. Hold news release until all the family has been notified and has left the hospital.Prepare member(s) data sheet with departmental photographs. Include brief details of the incident. Investigation normally requires 60-90 days.
Information will not be released to the news media until authorized by the director or his designee.

ICHIEFS LODD RESPONSE PLAN, EMPLOYEY DATA SHEET

Name of Deceased: _____
SSN: _____ - _____ - _____
Date of Birth: _____
Date of Employment: _____
Assigned Station: _____ Shift: _____
Station Address: _____
Home Address: _____ City: _____
State: _____ Zip Code: _____
Telephone Number: _____
Date of Death: _____
Time of Death: _____
Location of Death: _____
Brief Summary: _____

Note: This information, except for home telephone number, should be made available for release to media, departmental members, and various outside agencies. Also, provide departmental photograph to media. Public Information Officer (PIO) shall be the contact point for outside agencies or fire departments.

Section 5: Counseling

The daily pressures of the society in which we live has greatly contributed to the need for competent, caring counsel. It is not recommended that the chaplain should attempt to conduct counseling in all areas. The need for counseling in the areas of marriage, profession, family, substance abuse, delinquency, children, finances, critical incident stress management, and a host of other problem areas can quickly overwhelm an overzealous chaplain. The chaplain should be aware of the basics in these areas, and be knowledgeable of the type of help individuals may need. If the chaplain does not feel qualified, or for some reason is not able to counsel with a firefighter or family member, it

is necessary to be able to direct them to a qualified counselor. Counselors may be available through the township employee assistance program, county programs or other resources developed by the chaplain.

Section 6: Visitation

A great deal of comfort, spiritual aid, friendship, and solid supportive help can be given to the sick, distraught, and injured through personal contact. Regular visitation at home, in the work place, and in the hospital is an important function of the chaplain. It is an excellent time for the chaplain to represent the administration and let the firefighter know that the department is thinking about him or her and is concerned about his or her welfare. The Life Membership is especially thought of here and should not be neglected; regular contact as is reasonable should be maintained by the chaplains along with individual department/station leadership.

Section 7: Availability & Notification

The chaplain must be available seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day, not necessarily for response, but notification purposes. When the chaplain cannot be available, it should be made known and someone else made available to fill in. In order for the chaplain to be available at all times, it is necessary for the fire department or Central Communications to be able to contact him or her by telephone, pager, or radio at all times. The chaplain will be notified, if not responding, of all dwelling fires where the family of such is going to be displaced, any firefighter or civilian injury that requires hospitalization, firefighter or civilian death, major building fire, major forest fire, major motor vehicle crashes, prolonged rescue operations or natural disaster.

Section 8: Gaining Respect & Attending Functions of the Fire Department

Gaining the respect of fire department members is a must for the effectiveness and credibility of the chaplain. It should be noted that respect cannot be demanded, it must be earned by the chaplain as he or she works to develop a relationship with the fire department administration and members. Respect comes as the chaplain demonstrates commitment, dedication, and care for firefighters and their families. The chaplain gains respect by showing respect for members of the department through his or her words and actions. The chaplain earns respect by continuing to participate in fire department activities, emergency and routine, regardless of how hard the going may get.

The chaplain may be called upon to represent the fire department at official functions or public meetings to give an invocation, dedicatory prayer, or benediction. Many times the chief and other active members of the department or township administrators are tied up with important meetings or scheduled activities. It may fall to the chaplain to represent these people at social functions, homes, hospitals, before civic groups, or to other fire departments. It is often the chaplain who carries expressions of sympathy, condolences, or congratulations to firefighters and their families. In today's fire service it is becoming more and more difficult for the fire chief to make all the required personal contacts with

firefighters and their families. This can be a valuable function that the chaplain can perform for the chief to meet the needs of the rank and file department members and communicate messages from the administration.

Section 9: Communications With Firefighters

Communications with firefighters has been mentioned in different ways throughout this guideline. Communication in one form or another is the most important service the chaplain provides and is greatly needed by fire service personnel. Personal, direct contact by visiting fire personnel should be built into every chaplaincy program. Visiting fire stations at least once a month is a good practice in the fire service chaplaincy.

Communications also takes place through telephone calls, sending letters or cards on Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving, and other special occasions. Sympathy cards can be sent to those in need, as well as congratulations for marriages, births, promotions, special recognition for valor, etc. A quarterly prayer breakfast or meeting with interested personnel is an important phase of the chaplaincy. All of the foregoing methods of communication are recommended practices that will build relationships and keep lines of communication open between the chaplain and the department firefighters that we serve. The chaplain may also develop other means of ministry outreach that he deems necessary to maintain the open line of communications with the department membership.

Section 10: Teaching Training Classes

The teaching of training classes by the fire department chaplain should not be overlooked by department administration. Classes can be taught on the resources and services available through the chaplaincy program, critical incident stress management, family life, chain of command, ethics, and many other areas. Frequently classes on integrity and moral responsibilities are taught by the chaplain. This area of service should be considered from the beginning stages of the chaplaincy program.

Section 11: CISD Program Director

The chaplain is considered the crisis management coordinator, the coordination of the critical incident response team fall under the duties of the chaplain; he or she will coordinate with County CISD and other resources if a response is determined necessary.

Section 12: Faith Based Groups Initiative (Reserved)

Section 13: Certifications, Education & Continuing Education (Reserved)

Section 14: Chain of Command & Appointments to Staff

The chaplain is part of the staff to the department chief.

The deputy chaplain and pastoral staff will fall under the chaplain.

The station chaplains and assistant chaplains will fall under the deputy chaplain.

The chaplain is ultimately responsible for the entire chaplaincy staff.

The chaplain will be responsible for interviewing and recommending for appointment to the department chief all positions of the chaplaincy ranks, including but not limited to: deputy chaplain, pastoral staff, station chaplains and assistant chaplains.

Section 15: Uniforms (Reserved)

When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.

Isaiah 43:2 KJV

The Beginning Of A Fire Department Chaplain Program

The first major step has been accomplished, that is the fact that your department wants to start a chaplaincy program. The rest of this document will be directed toward providing the information needed to make your fire department chaplain as effective as possible.

Fire departments by tradition have had someone in the role of chaplain since the beginning of the organized fire service. In many departments, a local clergy person has been appointed chaplain to handle emergency situations within the department, such as serious injury to fire department members, line-of-duty deaths, including notification of family members, and suicides involving fire department members and their families. Chaplains have fulfilled a traditional ceremonial role by giving the invocation at fire department functions, and conducting weddings and funerals for fire department family members.

All too often, the functions normally handled by a chaplain have been taken over by members of the administrative staff and firefighters within the department. When needs arose and no one was available to handle them, the staff and members of the department would do their best to handle the crisis. In the modern fire service, numerous factors have made it very desirable to establish a formal position of chaplain. With all the pressures present today, the need for this position is found in all fire departments—paid or volunteer, large or small, private or public.

As our world becomes more complex, facing the problems of life becomes dramatically more difficult. What used to be a straightforward, clear path to follow becomes cluttered with inflation, the energy crisis, environmental pollution, nuclear accidents, increasing crime, escalating levels of violence, crowded living conditions, and extremely intrusive challenges to our personal values and beliefs. The pressures of living in a complicated world affect us all. Many become emotionally and spiritually crippled when they find that what used to “work” is no longer effective in coping with the pressures.

People under stress tend to look to public agencies and institutions for answers and services that will solve society’s problems. When programs and services fail to improve and simplify living conditions, the providers are subject to the outrage of a frustrated public. As a result, individual public servants, such as a firefighter, are confronted with stress-producing accusations of ineffectiveness, inefficiency, and ulterior motives when they attempt to help. The emergency service worker is confronted with making a living in a complex world, and with having to deal with disenchanted recipients of their services. At the same time, society seems to expect public servants to be immune to the effects of such stress. The emergency worker faces some very real risks if they even hint that the stress is too much or is getting to them. It is as if the firefighter is expected to be the “perfect” person. They are expected to solve problems, make the complex simple, and perform emergency responses without experiencing any emotional turmoil in the process.

Emergency service workers, such as firefighters, who respond to life-threatening situations have additional stresses surrounding their lives that most professions do not have.

1. LEVEL OF UNCERTAINTY

It is a fact that when the alarm sounds, firefighters are going to respond. **THIS IS THEIR PROFESSION.** There is no such thing as a routine call until after the incident is safely over. When the alarm hits, the firefighter faces the unknown and, all too often, becomes the victim of a service-related injury or even death. The family of the emergency worker is under the stress of not knowing what is going to happen at any given incident.

2. *INTERPERSONAL TENSIONS*

Interpersonal tensions are constant within the emergency services simply because of the very nature of the profession. The fire service organization creates a rigid working environment with a strong, competitive mentality on the part of the emergency worker.

Most promotions are made from within the department. Firefighters compete against their fellow firefighters for advancement. Shift work often leads to tensions. Long periods of time are spent with coworkers in training, station and equipment maintenance, fire prevention inspections, and in highly intense emergency incidents. The adrenaline is often flowing just because they are on duty. This factor alone increases tensions as firefighters try to deal with each other and the public while the body is in a continual state of alarm.

Often tensions are heightened by the long hours spent in the fire station away from their families. The fire service becomes the second family for the firefighter. This also adds stressors to the life of the emergency responder.

3. *EXTREME PHYSICAL CONDITIONS*

The difference between the tremendous physical pressures on the emergency worker, and a person in a profession that requires physical labor, is the manner in which the firefighters are called on to perform their duties. Average workers plan out their day to complete a particular task. Rest periods are planned to space out the use of their energy over a length of time. They can also plan around weather or other problems if the need arises.

Emergency responders are called upon to perform their task regardless of the climactic or environmental conditions. In a very short period of time they can be completely physically and mentally exhausted, yet they must still keep going until the task is completed. Many times they complete one exhausting response only to be called to another crisis without having time to fully recuperate. The body and the mind of a firefighter is frequently drained after a tour of duty far more than the average person in a physical occupation.

4. *HUMAN TRAGEDY AND CARNAGE*

When something bad happens, the firefighter is going to be called upon to respond. Depending on the type, the intensity, the duration of the incident, and many other factors, this response can have some far-reaching effects on the emergency worker. The continued response to tragic situations must be dealt with properly. This specific problem in the firefighting/rescue profession demands the input of a chaplain or other qualified person able to identify the problems associated with response to human tragedy.

5. *FEAR*

Fear of the incident or fear of danger does not usually have a negative impact on emergency workers. "Fear" of the incident and what could happen normally translates into being cautious and having respect for the type of procedures needed to perform the task with the utmost safety. It is the fear of making a mistake that could cost a coworker or victim their life or cause further injury that produces the highest level of stress. Emergency workers tend to be perfectionists. When things go wrong, they start asking questions like, "What if I had only...?" Often feelings of guilt have to be dealt with after a particularly sad event.

The uniqueness of the stressors mentioned here is that they face the emergency responder at all times. There is no time while they are on duty that these pressures are not present. When selecting a chaplain, or starting a chaplaincy program, these stresses need to be thoroughly understood. The chaplain must be able to recognize the signs of stress within department personnel and have methods to effectively help firefighters cope with the pressures they face on a daily basis.

STARTING A CHAPLAINCY PROGRAM

The first two steps in starting a chaplaincy program are confirming that your department wants the program, and then selecting the individual to be the chaplain. Assuming you have decided there is a need for a chaplain in your department, the problem of selecting the right person for the job is your next hurdle. Before making any selection, put into writing what your department expects to do or accomplish through the chaplaincy. Also decide what qualities you are looking for in the person that will serve as your fire department chaplain. These expectations need to be discussed with prospective chaplains during the selection process.

FINDING POTENTIAL CANDIDATES

There are a number of methods that can be employed to assist you in finding the right person to be chaplain for your department.

1. Contact other fire departments, fire department chaplains, or the Federation of Fire Chaplains.
2. Look within your own department for a member who may also be a minister.
3. Check with your local ministerial alliance.
4. Look for persons who can provide ministry to department members of Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish beliefs. Or look for a person who is able to deal, without reservation, with all denominations and beliefs.
5. Consider your own personal knowledge of a clergy person who has shown an interest in, or would be good for, your department. Ask for suggestions from members of your fire department.
6. Appoint a committee to seek out candidates. Set times to meet and periodically review how the selection process is going.
7. Do not overlook those clergy persons that members of your department are most often calling for assistance.

Just as all people are not cut out to be firefighters, not all clergy can meet the needs of the emergency service. Just because an individual offers to assist does not mean he or she would be your best choice. Interview and run a background check, listen to recommendations, have the candidate visit with firefighters and get feedback as to whether the person would be able to build a confidential relationship with department members.

A CHAPLAIN HAS BEEN SELECTED

Once the right person has been found, the chief of the department should meet with the chaplain to discuss what is expected from the standpoint of the fire department, and from the standpoint of the chaplain. Means of contacting the chaplain by telephone, pager, or radio must be decided upon. A mission statement might be addressed during this meeting, along with an orientation on fire department procedures.

For a period of time, the new chaplain should plan on visiting all stations and all divisions of the department. Building rapport with the firefighters is essential from the beginning of the program. A time to visit with the union or association leaders is also very important.

The new chaplain should be introduced to the entire department through a formal process. This introduction should include a memo to the department announcing the appointment of the chaplain, and a formal meeting with department members. The meeting could be conducted at a supper or a training. This would be a good time to present the new chaplain with a badge and identification card.

The chief should schedule a second meeting about ninety days after the appointment to evaluate the progress of the program. This meeting can be used to discuss changes that may be needed and guidelines for the program. It may also be good to establish a timetable for the development of the chaplaincy program within the department.

The department should enroll the new chaplain in the Federation of Fire Chaplains as soon as possible. This will provide the new chaplain with valuable materials, resources, and a network of fellow chaplains who can be called upon for information and support.

The chaplain must be fully supported by the chief administrator of the department and the department members if he or she is to be fully effective. Full support by the department is essential for the promotion of the fire department chaplaincy program. It is also essential to provide this support while allowing the chaplain to maintain strict confidentiality in his or her dealings with fire department members.

DUTIES OF THE FIRE DEPARTMENT CHAPLAIN

The following is a list of duties that may be incorporated into a chaplaincy program. The list does not include all the responsibilities that a chaplain can undertake, but it can be taken into consideration as you develop your individual department program.

1. Spiritual Guidance

Two important functions of the fire department chaplain are to help firefighters and their families in times of crisis and to help them with their spiritual needs. Of all the many duties the chaplaincy may entail, these are the principle responsibilities. The chaplain may use different ways to bring about spiritual truths and assistance to an individual family. However, the most important ministry is to simply be available when called upon. Spiritual need is the greatest of all needs and the chaplain must be able to meet this need. It is also a hard area for many ministers to get a "handle on." The spiritual witness is more often by action rather than by word. The example set by the chaplain in all phases of life has more bearing on the firefighter than "preaching" about it.

Another important part of these functions is to understand the personal religious needs of the firefighters and to call their own minister to assist as soon as possible, if the family so desires. The chaplain can then assist their minister to understand the functions and the resources available through the fire department. This particular area of the chaplaincy is given intense coverage at all chaplain seminars and conferences.

2. Assistance in Emergency Situations

Dealing with families when a disabling injury or a death occurs is a primary function of the chaplain. To provide the best service at this type of incident, the chaplain should respond as often as possible to all major fire situations. If an injury to a firefighter occurs, the chaplain should meet the firefighter at the hospital, quickly determine the extent of the injury from the hospital staff, and then notify the family in a manner that will not cause undue panic or grief. At the time of the initial call or contact with the family, a decision should be made as to whether the family will need transportation to the hospital. When the family arrives, the chaplain should have an accurate report concerning the firefighter's condition.

At fire incidents, the chaplain, if not involved in the actual work of the emergency, should be alert to the needs of the firefighters. The chaplain should be especially mindful that the type of people making emergency responses are easily capable of overexerting themselves to the point of exhaustion. Knowing this, the chaplain can make command officers aware of potentially dangerous situations that need immediate attention and/or medical attention.

At major fire incidents it is often the chaplain who is free to assist in handling unruly or hysterical people. This becomes a needed function at rescues, extrications, situations that draw a sizeable crowd, nursing homes, or incidents where children are involved. The importance of keeping a cool, calm demeanor during these times, along with the ability to explain to the public what is actually taking place, is a service the chaplain can perform. Comforting the bereaved and offering positive direction to the victim's family are priorities at these types of incidents. The chaplain can explain the types of assistance available to victims through the Red Cross, the Ladies Auxiliary, or other community service and benevolent organizations. When these interventions are used at the scene of an emergency, the results are generally successful in not only aiding the victims, but also in keeping distraught citizens from interfering with the performance of emergency operations.

3. Liaison With Hospitals and Clinics

A chaplain should frequently visit local hospitals and medical clinics to build rapport with medical personnel. These visits help the chaplain to receive accurate and helpful reports from the hospital professionals who have confidence in the chaplain with whom they have become acquainted. This information aids the family of the firefighter in understanding what is taking place and to better understand the condition of their family member.

4. Explaining Insurance and Benefits

The chaplain should be knowledgeable of referrals to insurance and compensatory benefits available to the firefighters and to their families. These benefits come from many different sources such as insurance carried by the fire department, the municipality, the state, and the federal government. Many fire departments have their own relief associations, blood banks, and other benefits to aid their own sick and injured members.

5. Conducting/Assisting at Funerals

The chaplain can assist a family in funeral arrangements for both active and retired firefighters. They may even officiate at the service or assist the family minister. Assistance frequently is done in the form of organizing the details of the funeral service. Details to be considered include establishing an honor guard, preparing fire department apparatus for the funeral procession, organizing fire department members at the church or funeral home and at the cemetery, determining the location of the funeral, and arranging for procession escorts. The chaplain must develop a good working relationship with local funeral directors to help them understand the special rituals involved in a fire department funeral.

Support and consolation for the firefighter's family and children are responsibilities of the chaplain. The chaplain should always send condolences at the time of death of any member of a fire department and represent the department by offering any assistance needed. This is a responsibility of the fire department chaplain that should never be neglected.

6. Weddings

The chaplain may be called upon to perform weddings for fire department personnel. Wedding etiquette, premarital counseling, and the actual performance of the ceremony are areas of expertise that the chaplain should take special care to develop. The chaplain should make known to department members any preferences held toward the actual wedding ceremony.

7. Counseling

The daily pressures of the society in which we live has greatly contributed to the need for competent, caring counsel. It is not recommended that the chaplain should attempt to conduct counseling in all areas. The need for counseling in the areas of marriage, profession, family, substance abuse, delinquency, children, finances, critical incident stress management, and a host of other problem areas can quickly overwhelm an overzealous chaplain. The chaplain should be aware of the basics in these areas, and be knowledgeable of the type of help individuals may need. If the chaplain does not feel qualified, or for some reason is not able to counsel with a firefighter or family member, it is necessary to be able to direct them to a qualified counselor. Counselors may be available through members of an employee assistance program or other resources developed by the chaplain.

8. Visitation

A great deal of comfort, spiritual aid, friendship, and solid supportive help can be given to the sick, distraught, and injured through personal contact. Regular visitation at home, in the work place, and in the hospital is an important function of the chaplain. It is an excellent time for the chaplain to represent the administration and let the firefighter know that the department is thinking about him or her and is concerned about his or her welfare.

9. Availability

The chaplain must be available seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day. When the chaplain cannot be available, it should be made known and someone else made available to fill in. In order for the chaplain to be available at all times, it is necessary for the fire department headquarters or dispatcher to be able to contact him or her by telephone, pager, or radio at all times. It is advisable for transportation to be made available, either through the furnishing of a vehicle or through a transportation fund to assist in the cost of responding. The expense fund should include all unusual expenses incurred in administering the chaplain's duties.

10. Gaining Respect

Gaining the respect of fire department members is a must for the effectiveness and credibility of the chaplain. It should be noted that respect cannot be demanded, it must be earned by the chaplain as he or she works to develop a relationship with the fire department administration and members. Respect comes as the chaplain demonstrates commitment, dedication, and care for firefighters and their families. The chaplain gains respect by showing respect for members of the department through his or her words and actions. The chaplain earns respect by continuing to participate in fire department activities, emergency and routine, regardless of how hard the going may get.

11. Attending Functions of the Fire Department

The chaplain may be called upon to represent the fire department at official functions or public meetings to give an invocation, dedicatory prayer, or benediction. Many times the chief and other active members of the department or city administrators are tied up with important meetings or scheduled activities. It may fall to the chaplain to represent these people at social functions, homes, hospitals, before civic groups, or to other fire departments.

It is often the chaplain who carries expressions of sympathy, condolences, or congratulations to firefighters and their families. In today's fire service it is becoming more and more difficult for the fire chief to make all the required personal contacts with firefighters and their families. This can be a valuable function that the chaplain can perform for the chief to meet the needs of the rank and file department members and communicate messages from the administration.

12. Communications With Firefighters

Communications with firefighters has been mentioned in different ways throughout this document. Communication in one form or another is the most important service the chaplain provides and is greatly needed by fire service personnel. Personal, direct contact by visiting fire personnel should be built into every chaplaincy program. Visiting fire stations at least once a month on alternating shifts is a good practice in the fire service chaplaincy.

Communications also takes place through telephone calls, sending letters or cards on Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving, and other special occasions. Sympathy cards can be sent to those in need, as well as congratulations for marriages, births, promotions, special recognition for valor, etc. A monthly or quarterly prayer breakfast or meeting with interested personnel is an important phase of the chaplaincy. All of the foregoing methods of communication are recommended practices that will build relationships and keep lines of communication open between the chaplain and the firefighters that are served.

13. Retired Firefighters

A major effort should be made by the chaplain to assist retired firefighters and their families. This can be done by keeping in touch with the leaders of the retired firefighters association and by being alert to notice the needs of retired personnel. Chaplains should be available to minister to the needs of retired personnel as they would for active duty firefighters.

14. Teaching Training Classes

The teaching of training classes by the fire department chaplain should not be overlooked by department administration. Classes can be taught on the resources and services available through the chaplaincy program, critical incident stress management, family life, chain of command, ethics, and many other areas. Frequently classes on integrity and moral responsibilities are taught by the chaplain. This area of service should be considered from the beginning stages of the chaplaincy program.

15. Program Director

The chaplain is often considered the personnel service officer or crisis management coordinator. The coordination of the critical incident response team can fall under the duties of the chaplain. In some departments the chaplain is a representative of the employee assistance program.

Conclusion

The chaplain of the fire department is one of the most vital positions in the fire service. The chaplain is next to the pulse of the department. It is a job that is demanding, confidential, trusting, and needful for the lives of firefighters and their families. The fire department administrator considering a chaplaincy program can rest assured that it is one of the finest and most needed programs that can be started.

This has been a brief overview of beginning a fire service chaplaincy program. There are many areas that could be added, and many, you may not consider to be needs for your department. The next steps are to weigh, consider, investigate, and determine your needs and wants. Then institute the chaplaincy program in your department.

To the chaplain reviewing these guidelines, accept the chaplaincy with pride but serve in it with humility, constantly calling on God for strength and wisdom.

XYZ Fire Department

Fire Department Chaplain Position Description

OBJECTIVE: To provide for the full range of fire department personnel needs through the establishment of a comprehensive chaplaincy program within the XYZ Fire Department.

APPOINTMENT

- 1.1 Because of the major risks and constant stresses faced by fire service personnel in the line of duty, a chaplain will be appointed to function within the XYZ Fire Department.
- 1.2 The Chaplain will be appointed by written order of the Fire Chief.

QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING

- 2.1 The individual appointed to the position of Fire Department Chaplain will be:
 - a. An ordained member of the clergy
 - b. In good physical health
 - c. Interested in the fire service
 - d. Prepared by serve in a crisis zone
 - e. Willing to commit the time necessary to make the ministry effective.
 - f. Committed to learn the skills necessary to effectively relate to and minister to firefighters and EMS personnel.
- 2.2 To the extent possible, the Chaplain will be given the opportunity to meet with members and staff of the department, visit the stations and receive guidance in understanding fire department organizations and procedures. Training will also be provided to help him protect himself and to be able to render proper help to assist members on the emergency scene.
- 2.3 After appointment the Chaplain will be issued the following equipment:
 - a. Standard turnout gear, including coat, pants, boots, gloves, and helmet with "Chaplain" markings.
 - b. Chaplain's badge, identification card, and carrying case.
 - c. Fire department pager.
 - d. Chaplain's business cards.

XYZ Fire Department

Fire Department Chaplain Position Description

DUTIES OF THE CHAPLAIN

The below listed duties constitute only a brief summary of what may actually be required in any situation that may be encountered. The Chaplain must remain constantly alert and sensitive to needs and the means he must employ to meet those needs.

3.1 Emergency Situations. The Chaplain will respond when contacted by dispatch or fire department personnel, or at his own discretion, and will report at the scene to the officer in charge. When at the scene, the Chaplain will be under the command authority of the officer in charge. The Chaplain will respond as follows:

a. To the scene when:

1. A working fire of second alarm or greater is in progress.
2. A critical incident is in progress.
3. A critical injury or death to a firefighter is reported.
4. The incident involves a victim that is a member of a department members' family.
5. Whenever the incident commander determines that the services of the Chaplain may be of value in the ongoing emergency operation. This may include situations where:
 - (a) The victim or family is highly emotional or unstable.
 - (b) Care is needed for the family of the victim while treatment is underway.
 - (c) The victim or the family requests the services of a chaplain or clergy.
 - (d) The incident commander feels the presence of the Chaplain would be of benefit to the victim or to department personnel.

b. To the hospital when:

1. The incident commander or paramedic providing treatment determines that the victim or family may need support or counsel.
2. The victim's family needs to be located and notified.
3. A member of the fire department is the victim.

XYZ Fire Department

Fire Department Chaplain Position Description

3.2 Follow-Up Actions.

a. On-the-Scene Duties:

1. Provide appropriate victim assistance to free operational personnel for fire fighting duties.
 - (a) Comfort and counsel
 - (b) Referral to appropriate community agencies for assistance.
 - (c) Help contact persons, insurance agents, family members, etc. in all cases, the Chaplain will find out a victim's church or religious preference and attempt to notify the pastor or church.
2. Provide appropriate assistance to fire fighters engaged in fire fighting activities..
 - (a) Watch for signs of physical or emotional stress.
 - (b) Assist in providing firefighting needs (water, rest, etc.)
 - (c) Advise command whenever it is felt that a firefighter or paramedic is in need of being relieved from emergency operations.

b. Post-Emergency Duties:

1. Conduct follow-up to insure victims are receiving necessary assistance.
2. Insure firefighter's needs are met in the areas of on-the-job injuries, critical incident stress, etc.

3.3 Routine Duties

a. Duties within the fire department.

1. Visit all stations and shifts.
2. Visit hospitalized department members and members of their families.
3. Participate in recruit training as suggested by the training officer.
4. Be available for helping or counseling members of the department in times of stress or difficulty.
5. Assist when requested by any division of the department in their programs.
6. Attend fire department functions.
7. Conduct funeral/memorial services as needed and requested.
8. Be a member of the Critical Incident Stress Debriefing team.
9. Be on-call on a twenty-four hour a day basis.

XYZ Fire Department

Fire Department Chaplain Position Description

- b. Duties outside the fire department.
 - 1. Represent and interpret fire department goals and concerns to the churches and religious institutions of the community.
 - 2. Assist when requested with public events or public information needs.
 - 3. As time permits, and as requested, conduct extended ministry to victims and their families.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE CHAPLAINCY

- 4.1 The Chaplain does not replace the home church pastor, but seeks to support the concern of every church for its members who may be in professions with special risks or needs. Moreover, the Chaplain must be for the advantage of every member of the department, regardless of his or her nationality, race, sex, or religion.
- 4.2 Any communications a person makes to the Chaplain is on a strictly confidential basis and will not be released to department members or any other person. Any fire personnel may go to the Chaplain without having to notify his or her supervisor or anyone else.
- 4.3 Any fire department officer or member (including administrative staff) who is made becomes aware of any situation which may need the response of the Chaplain may contact the Chaplain directly. Fire department administration will keep current telephone numbers for the Chaplain. The Chaplain may also be contacted through fire department administration if desirable. Examples of situations where the Chaplain may be contacted include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Death, injury to, or hospitalization of a fire department member.
 - b. Death, injury to, or hospitalization of a fire department member's spouse or child.
 - c. Death in a fire department member's close family (i.e. any family member covered under the department's death leave provisions).