

## Chaplains

### 376.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy establishes the guidelines for Modoc County Sheriff's Office chaplains to provide counseling or emotional support to members of the Department, their families and members of the public.

### 376.2 POLICY

It is the policy of this department that the Chaplain Program shall be a non-denominational, ecumenical ministry provided by volunteer clergy without financial compensation.

### 376.3 ELIGIBILITY

Requirements for participation as a chaplain for the Department may include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Being above reproach, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, be free from addiction to alcohol or other drugs, and excessive debt.
- (b) Managing their households, families and personal affairs well.
- (c) Having a good reputation in the community.
- (d) Successful completion of an appropriate-level background investigation.
- (e) A minimum of five years of successful counseling experience.
- (f) Possession of a valid driver license.

The Sheriff may apply exceptions for eligibility based on organizational needs and the qualifications of the individual.

### 376.4 RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT

The Modoc County Sheriff's Office shall endeavor to recruit and appoint only those applicants who meet the high ethical, moral and professional standards set forth by this department.

All applicants shall be required to meet and pass the same pre-employment procedures as department personnel before appointment.

#### 376.4.1 SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT

Chaplain candidates shall successfully complete the following process prior to appointment as a chaplain:

- (a) Submit the appropriate written application.
- (b) Include a recommendation from employers or volunteer programs.
- (c) Interview with the Sheriff.
- (d) Successfully complete an appropriate-level background investigation.
- (e) Complete an appropriate probationary period as designated by the Sheriff.

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Chaplains are volunteers and serve at the discretion of the Sheriff. Chaplains shall have no property interest in continued appointment. However, if a chaplain is removed for alleged misconduct, the chaplain will be afforded an opportunity solely to clear his/her name through a liberty interest hearing, which shall be limited to a single appearance before the Sheriff or the authorized designee.

### **376.5 IDENTIFICATION**

As representatives of the Department, chaplains are responsible for presenting a professional image to the community. Chaplains shall dress appropriately for the conditions and performance of their duties. Identification symbols worn by chaplains shall be different and distinct from those worn by deputies through the inclusion of "Chaplain" on the Chaplain's shirt and not reflect any religious affiliation.

Chaplains will be issued Modoc County Sheriff's Office identification cards, which must be carried at all times while on-duty. The identification cards will be the standard Modoc County Sheriff's Office identification cards, with the exception that "Chaplain" will be indicated on the cards. Chaplains shall be required to return any issued uniforms or department property at the termination of service.

### **376.6 CHAPLAIN COORDINATOR**

The Sheriff may delegate certain responsibilities to a chaplain. The Sheriff may appoint a senior chaplain or other designee to assist in the coordination of chaplains and their activities.

An evaluation of the overall use of chaplains may be conducted.

### **376.7 DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Chaplains assist the Department, its members and the community, as needed. Assignments of chaplains will usually be to augment the Field Operations Division. Chaplains may be assigned to other areas within the Department as needed. Chaplains should be placed only in assignments or programs that are consistent with their knowledge, skills, abilities and the needs of the Department.

All chaplains will be assigned to duties by the chaplain coordinator or the authorized designee.

Chaplains may not proselytize or attempt to recruit members of the Department or the public into a religious affiliation while representing themselves as chaplains with this department. If there is any question as to the receiving person's intent, chaplains should verify that the person is desirous of spiritual counseling or guidance before engaging in such discussion.

Chaplains may not accept gratuities for any service or any subsequent actions or follow-up contacts that were provided while functioning as a chaplain for the Modoc County Sheriff's Office.

#### **376.7.1 COMPLIANCE**

Chaplains are volunteer members of this department, and except as otherwise specified within this policy, are required to comply with the Volunteer Program Policy and other applicable policies.

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### 376.7.2 OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

- (a) Chaplains will be scheduled to be on-call for a period of seven consecutive days during each month, beginning on Monday and ending on the following Sunday.
- (a) Chaplains shall be permitted to ride with deputies during any shift and observe Shift Supervisor has been notified and has approved the activity.
- (b) Chaplains shall not be evaluators of members of the Department.
- (c) In responding to incidents, a chaplain shall never function as a deputy.
- (d) When responding to in-progress calls for service, chaplains may be required to stand-by in a secure area until the situation has been deemed safe.
- (e) Chaplains shall serve only within the jurisdiction of the Modoc County Sheriff's Office unless otherwise authorized by the Sheriff or the authorized designee.
- (f) Each chaplain shall have access to current department member rosters, addresses, telephone numbers, duty assignments and other information that may assist in his/her duties. Such information will be considered confidential and each chaplain will exercise appropriate security measures to prevent distribution of the data.

### 376.7.3 ASSISTING THE DEPARTMENT

The responsibilities of a chaplain related to this department include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Assisting members in the diffusion of a conflict or incident, when requested.
- (b) Responding to natural and accidental deaths, suicides and attempted suicides, family disturbances and any other incident that in the judgment of the Shift Supervisor or supervisor aids in accomplishing the mission of the Department.
- (c) Responding to all major disasters, such as natural disasters, bombings and similar critical incidents.
- (d) Being on-call and, if possible, on-duty during major demonstrations or any public function that requires the presence of a large number of department members.
- (e) Attending department and academy graduations, ceremonies and social events and offering invocations and benedictions, as requested.
- (f) Participating in in-service training classes.
- (g) Willingness to train others to enhance the effectiveness of the Department.

### 376.7.4 ASSISTING THE COMMUNITY

The duties of a chaplain related to the community include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Fostering familiarity with the role of law enforcement in the community.
- (b) Providing an additional link between the community, other chaplain coordinators and the Department.
- (c) Providing liaison with various civic, business and religious organizations.

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- (d) Promptly facilitating requests for representatives or leaders of various denominations.
- (e) Assisting the community in any other function as needed or requested.
- (f) Making referrals in cases where specialized attention is needed or in cases that are beyond the chaplain's ability to assist.

### 376.7.5 CHAPLAIN MEETINGS

All chaplains are required to attend scheduled meetings. Any absences must be satisfactorily explained to the chaplain coordinator.

### 376.7.6 ASSISTING DEPARTMENT MEMBERS

The responsibilities of a chaplain related to department members include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Assisting in making notification to families of members who have been seriously injured or killed and, after notification, responding to the hospital or home of the member.
- (b) Visiting sick or injured members in the hospital or at home.
- (c) Attending and participating, when requested, in funerals of active or retired members.
- (d) Serving as a resource for members when dealing with the public in incidents, such as accidental deaths, suicides, suicidal subjects, serious accidents, drug and alcohol abuse and other such situations that may arise.
- (e) Providing counseling and support for members and their families.
- (f) Being alert to the needs of members and their families.

### 376.8 PRIVILEGED COMMUNICATIONS

No person who provides chaplain services to members of the Department may work or volunteer for the Modoc County Sheriff's Office in any capacity other than that of chaplain.

Department chaplains shall be familiar with state evidentiary laws and rules pertaining to the limits of the clergy-penitent, psychotherapist-patient and other potentially applicable privileges and shall inform members when it appears reasonably likely that the member is discussing matters that are not subject to privileged communications. In such cases, the chaplain should consider referring the member to a non-department counseling resource.

No chaplain shall provide counsel to or receive confidential communications from any Modoc County Sheriff's Office member concerning an incident personally witnessed by the chaplain or concerning an incident involving the chaplain.

### 376.9 TRAINING

The Department may establish a minimum number of training hours and standards for department chaplains. The Training Sergeant may include:

- Stress management

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- Death notifications
- Symptoms of post-traumatic stress
- Burnout for members of law enforcement and chaplains
- Legal liability and confidentiality
- Ethics
- Responding to crisis situations
- The law enforcement family
- Substance abuse
- Suicide
- Deputy injury or death
- Sensitivity and diversity