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**Chaplain Ministries in the Presbyterian Church in America
An Overview of the Process
In
The Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley**

CONTENTS

<u>Committee on Mission to the Military: Standing Rules</u>	2
<u>History of Military Chaplaincy:</u>	
Military Chaplains in the United States	5
History of Chaplain Ministries in the PCA	6
The Doctrine of Vocation (BCO)	7
Constitutionality of the Army Chaplaincy (KATCOFF v. MARSH)	8
<u>The PCA Minister as a Chaplain:</u>	
Relationship of Chaplains to Presbytery and the Endorsing Agency	9
The General Role of a PCA Minister as a Military Chaplain	11
Removal of a Chaplain from Military Service	11
Chaplains on Military Duty Serving in other Presbyteries	12
Responsibilities of Chaplains when Mobilized	13
<u>Chaplain Agencies, Regulations, and Requirements:</u>	
Chaplain Agencies	14
Chaplain Requirements - US Army	15
Common Acronyms within the Military Chaplaincy	16
Religious Support - Army Chaplain Corps Activities (Army Regulation 165-1)...	18
Air Force and Navy Chaplain Regulations, Directives, and Policies	22
<u>Applications:</u>	
Application for Military Chaplain Endorsement and other forms	23
Application for Chaplain Candidate Approval and other forms	34
<u>PRCC Chaplain's Manual</u>	45

STANDING RULES OF THE PRESBYTERY OF THE MISSISSIPPI VALLEY

VII.

ARTICLE VII COMMITTEES

D. Organization

1. Permanent Committees:

a. Committees:

The permanent committees are Administration, Campus Ministry Committee, Christian Education, Credentials, Mission to the U.S. Military and Chaplains, Mission to North America, Mission to the World, Nominations, and Shepherding and Advisory.

b. Nominations:

Nominees will be presented by the Nominations Committee at the November stated meeting. The floor will then be open to receive other nominees. However, the Nominations Committee will not present nominees for its committee; those names will be received only from the floor.

g. Committee Reports:

Each committee is to report to presbytery according to the following schedule. Supplemental reports for other meetings may be submitted as each committee deems necessary. The committee chairman of any committee scheduled or seeking a place on the docket must submit the committee report to the stated clerk in time for inclusion in the White Book.

Committees Time of Reporting

...

Mission to the U.S. Military ... May

...

h. Strategic Goals:

Each permanent committee is to implement presbytery's strategic goals as spelled out in Appendix G and provide an annual evaluation of committee progress to the presbytery and the Administration Committee.

i. Alternate Members:

Each permanent committee shall have two alternate members. Alternate members are expected to attend every stated meeting, called meeting and meetings ordered by presbytery unless providentially unable to attend. The alternates shall be non-voting members except when filling an unexpired term of a permanent member or appointed by the committee chairman to serve in place of a permanent member who is providentially unable to attend

E. RESPONSIBILITIES

5. Mission to the U.S. Military and Chaplains:

a. Number:

This committee shall consist of six members and two alternates.

b. Business:

- 1) This committee shall be responsible for MVP involvement in coordinating and overseeing the planting of PCA churches and development of university ministries near U.S. military bases and academies in foreign countries and within the U.S. while working with and recognizing the bounds and jurisdiction of other presbyteries and church courts.
- 2) Determine the nature of financial support for the church planter of such a congregation.
- 3) This committee shall ensure adequate insurance coverage for such persons that are supported and sent by the presbytery.
- 4) Assist candidates for chaplaincy with the candidating process leading to and including a call.
- 5) Oversee and support MVP chaplains.
- 6) Coordinate relationships with similar committees in other PCA presbyteries.
- 7) Promoting MVP church plants to the military and encouraging prayer and service in this ministry.

APPENDIX G

Strategic Goals

Adopted February 11, 2003

CHURCH GROWTH AND VITALITY

8. To initiate at least one PCA congregation near a U.S. military base in a foreign country by January 1, 2012.MMC

DEVELOPMENT OF LEADERSHIP

7. To provide ongoing support and oversight of MVP military church plants and chaplains.MMC

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Amendments to the Standing Rules to be offered at the May 7, 2013 stated meeting of The Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley.

Motion MSP (1) for the committee to ask the Administration committee to add the following items to the Standing Rules VII.E. 4-b:

- a. The committee shall keep a roll of chaplain candidates.
- b. The committee shall pray for and assist all those interested in pursuing military chaplaincy within our presbytery with our presbytery process.
- c. Candidates pursuing chaplaincy must be interviewed and examined by the Mission to the Military committee prior to being examined for presbytery candidacy by the Credentials committee and Presbytery.
- d. Chaplains transferring into the Presbytery must meet and be recommend by this committee before being examined by the Credentials committee.
- e. Any areas of weakness exposed in the interviews or examination shall be reported to the Credentials committee and to the Presbytery before their examinations begin.
- f. The committee shall pray for and maintain regular communications with all our presbytery chaplain candidates.

And (2) ask the Administration committee to add the following between the two sections of VII 3 b 3 of the Standing rules:

Men seeking chaplaincy or transferring in as chaplains will always come by way of the recommendation of the Mission to the Military committee.

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Chaplain Ministries in the Presbyterian Church in America
Guidelines for
The Mission to the Military Committee
The Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley

God calls many teaching elders to the pulpit ministry; in addition, He calls them to other areas of ministry such as international missions, church planting, campus ministries, and others. The call to serve as a Chaplain is another gospel ministry call.

The PCA has a number of chaplains serving Christ's Kingdom in various ministries. In addition to active duty and reserve military, we have chaplains serving in civilian hospitals, Veteran Administration hospitals, hospice facilities, prisons retirement homes, Civil Air patrol squadrons, and addiction treatment centers.

The Army Chaplaincy is the oldest of the American military chaplaincies, and predated the Declaration of Independence by almost a year. The Second Continental Congress authorized Chaplains for the Army on 29 July 1775. The same Congress authorized Chaplains in the Navy on 28 November 1775. The Air Force Chaplain Service came into existence on 26 July 1949

Military Chaplains in the United States

When George Washington assumed command of the Continental Army at Cambridge, Massachusetts, chaplains were already present for duty. Washington could count fifteen chaplains serving with the twenty-three regiments gathered around Boston.

The Continental Congress gave the chaplains its official recognition on 29 July 1775, when it voted pay for various officers and enlisted personnel in the Continental Army not previously covered in its resolution of 16 July. The reference is to dollars per month, and it reads: "Chaplain 20." This was the same sum paid to captains and Judge Advocates, and it was the first official recognition of chaplains by an American government. As such it is considered the birth date of the chaplaincy. Nearly a year later General George Washington issued the following General Order:

New York, July 9th, 1776

The Hon. Continental Congress having been pleased to allow a Chaplain to each Regiment, with the pay of Thirty-three Dollars and one third pr month—The Colonels or commanding officers of each regiment are directed to procure Chaplains accordingly; persons of good Characters and exemplary lives—To see that all inferior officers and soldiers pay them a suitable respect and attend carefully upon religious exercises. The blessing and protection of Heaven are at all times necessary but especially so in times of public distress and danger—The General hopes and trusts, that every officer and man, will endeavour so to live, and act, as becomes a Christian Soldier defending the dearest Rights and Liberties of his country.

signed, George Washington

[Source: *The Writings of George Washington*, John C. Fitzpatrick, editor (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1932), Vol. 5, pp. 244-245.]

Since 1775, over 25,000 Army Chaplains have served as religious and spiritual leaders to more than 25 million soldiers and family members, in every war and major combat engagement in which the United States has participated. In addition, 419 Army Chaplains died during these wars, either through combat or disease, or in captivity.

Presently, the Army has about 2,500 Chaplains serving in the Active Army, Reserve, and National Guard representing over 130 religious groups. The Navy has approximately 500 Chaplains and the Air Force about 400. The ratio of Chaplains to personnel in the Army is about 350 to 1, while the Air Force and Navy average about 700 to 1.

History of Chaplain Ministries in the PCA

On July 1, 1975, the first two PCA military chaplains entered service, endorsed by the National Association of Evangelicals.

On September 13, 1976 the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) answered in the affirmative an overture from its Pacific Presbytery requesting a study to consider whether a joint commission with “sister Presbyterian denominations” or a PCA chaplain commission under the denomination’s Mission to the US. (MUS, now MNA/Mission to North America) should be formed to represent and supervise PCA chaplains better than was possible through the chaplain commission of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE), through whose good services the young denomination had been securing endorsements for its chaplains. The PCA Moderator appointed a committee consisting of teaching elders J.P. Clark, D.B. McCullough, J.E. Moore, E.A. Jussely, and W.I. Philips; ruling elders E. Bolton, J. Campbell, and G. Sovereign; and alternates H. Langford and E. Fleming. This “Ad-interim Subcommittee on Chaplains” met in Montgomery, AL, on February 17, 1977. The 1977 GA instructed the committee to study the possibility of a joint commission with other Reformed churches.

In Seattle on December 5-6, 1977 the PCA sponsored a “working group” that met in response to the Assembly’s action. Correspondence from all three Chiefs of Chaplains indicated that having a joint commission would not adversely affect current chaplains or the placement of new chaplains. The committee’s report was approved at the June 1978 GA in Grand Rapids, and the new endorsing commission, *The Presbyterian & Reformed Commission on Chaplains and Military Personnel (PRCC)* began functioning in September 1978.

“THE DOCTRINE OF VOCATION” (THE CALLING TO MINISTRY)

Ordination to sacred office in the church is a high and holy calling from God: a vocation. It is the privilege and purpose of God to set aside men for ordination to the Gospel ministry, and yet in so doing, God follows a well-known procedure involving the people of His church.

The *Book of Church Order* of the Presbyterian Church in America describes that process in these words: 16-1. Ordinary vocation to office in the church is the calling of God by the Spirit, through the inward testimony of a good conscience, the manifest approbation of God’s people, and the concurring judgment of a lawful court of the church.

16-2. The government of the church is by officers gifted to represent Christ, and the right of God’s people to recognize by election to office those so gifted is inalienable. Therefore no man can be placed over a church in any office without the election, or at least the consent of that church.

16-3. Upon those whom God calls to bear office in His Church He bestows suitable gifts for the discharge of their various duties. And it is indispensable that, besides possessing the necessary gifts and abilities, natural and acquired, every one admitted to an office should be sound in the faith, and his life be according to godliness. Wherefore every candidate for office is to be approved by the court by which he is to be ordained.

The *BCO* clearly sets forth the three stages of vocation or calling that must be verified before a man is ordained to office in the church:

1. The calling of God, by the Holy Spirit, through the inward testimony of a good conscience (the candidate).
2. The manifest approbation (approval) of God’s people (the congregation).
3. The concurring judgment of a lawful court of the church (the presbytery and the Session).

As a man seeking ordination to Gospel ministry in the PCA, you are attesting to the fact that God has given you a “good conscience” in seeking this ordination to holy office. In fact, in your ordination vows, you will attest to the fact that you have “been induced, as far as you know your own heart to seek the office of the holy ministry from love to God and a sincere desire to promote His glory in the Gospel of His Son.” (*BCO* 21-5, vow #5)

To ensure that the Presbyterian Church in America follows God’s plan in calling men into the ministry, our church polity provides for a series of steps to be taken by candidates to prepare them for sacred office. It is the stated intention of this procedure to search out a man’s motives, test his suitability and giftedness for office, and develop his ministerial skills over a process of several years.

In summary, the steps in this process of preparation are as follows:

1. Candidacy in a presbytery: attestation to the inward call of God and possible giftedness for ministry.
2. Internship in a local church or special ministry: development of both gifts and understanding of ministry.
3. Licensure to preach in a presbytery: development of expository gifts and skills.
4. Ordination to a specific call to ministry.

Constitutionality the Army Chaplaincy under the Constitution's Establishment Clause

KATCOFF v. MARSH

In the 1986 case of Katcoff v. Marsh, the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit became the only federal appellate court to address directly the constitutionality the Army chaplaincy under the Constitution's Establishment Clause

In late 1979, two law students sued the Secretary of the Army seeking a judgment declaring that the Army Chaplaincy Program violated the First Amendment's Establishment Clause

In 1979, two Harvard law students, Joel Katcoff and Allen Weider, brought the Establishment Clause challenge to the Army chaplaincy in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York. Neither plaintiff had ever served in the military

While recognizing that some form of chaplaincy is essential to preserve soldiers' rights to exercise freely their religion, the plaintiffs argued that a voluntary, privately funded program would satisfy the Army's needs as well as the dictates of the Establishment Clause. After several years of litigation, the district court rejected the plaintiffs' claim outright, and the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit affirmed – for the most part – the district court's dismissal of the lawsuit

The Second Circuit refused to follow the district court's approach of wholly deferring to Congress' judgment about the military's need for a chaplaincy program. It did hold, however, that – given the judicial deference owed Congress in the exercise of the war power – the court should find Congress' judgment in the area to be presumptively valid.i[24]

The court also emphasized the importance of the First Amendment's Free Exercise Clause in the constitutional equation. Recognizing the inherent tension between the Establishment and Free Exercise Clauses, the Second Circuit found that if Congress did not establish an Army chaplaincy, it would deny soldiers the right to exercise their religion freely, particularly given the mobile and deployable nature of the nation's armed forces.

The plaintiffs conceded the essentiality of some form of military chaplaincy to accommodate the Free Exercise rights of soldiers. Their lawsuit was predicated upon the assumption that soldiers' Free Exercise needs could be met by a privately funded program. To support their contention, the plaintiffs relied entirely upon the affidavit of the president of a single sect – the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod – who claimed that the Synod could successfully support a civilian chaplaincy.

The Second Circuit flatly rejected the plaintiffs' argument, finding the plaintiffs' proposal “so inherently impractical as to border on the frivolous.” It observed that “even if the affidavit of the President of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod could be accepted at face value, . . . it [could] hardly serve as an indication that the Catholic Church, the Jewish Religion, and the numerous other Protestant denominations would favor, much less financially support, a civilian chaplaincy.” Moreover, apart from the “financial infeasibility” of the plaintiffs' proposal, the plaintiffs offered no evidence that “civilian chaplains would accept military discipline, which is essential to the efficient operation of our armed forces.” The court concluded that any doubt as to the “feasibility of a civilian chaplaincy must . . . be resolved in favor of judicial deference to Congress' decision in this area, which is closely tied to the functioning of our armed forces.”

Re: Richard D. Rosen, condensed.

Relationship of Chaplains to Presbytery and the Endorsing Agency

As each area of chaplain ministry has a different application process, a slightly different set of qualifications, and since candidacy requires approval of The Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley Mission to the Military Committee (MMC), **candidates should meet with the MMC Committee prior to beginning any application. The path to chaplain ministry begins with the Presbytery MMC.**

The MMC conducts the initial interview process and makes a recommendation (as Presbytery's representative) on endorsement to the PRCC. Chapter 16 of *The Book of Church Order* of the Presbyterian Church in America, "The Doctrine of Ministry" serves as a guide in the process as the Committee endeavors to understand the candidate's call to ministry, and in particular his concept of ministry in a military environment.

Consequently, approval by the Presbytery Credentials Committee is not a substitute for approval as a chaplain candidate by the Presbytery MMC.

There are three separate organizations that are involved in the process of approving a minister as a military chaplain and moving him from the civilian ministry into the military chaplaincy. It is important to note the particular relationship that exists between these three different bodies.

1. Presbytery (MMC) must examine a candidate (minister) and approve a particular call to the chaplaincy.
2. The PRCC must certify (issue an endorsement for) that minister that he meets all denominational requirements as a minister.
3. The particular chaplaincy branch must accept the endorsement, approve the candidate's application, and issue orders to accession the minister as a chaplain.

Of course, while this process appears as a linear sequence of events, in reality once the candidate has Presbytery approval, many of these other approval processes are moving on parallel courses to a final point of commissioning, subject of course, in the case of an unordained candidate, to his eventual ordination by Presbytery.

Ministers who are approved by their Presbytery, endorsed by the PRCC as military chaplains, and are accessioned by a branch of the military as chaplains (both active duty and reserve), retain their membership in the local presbytery and denomination, and thus have reporting responsibility to their Presbytery (their sending body) and their endorsing agency, for their service in the gospel ministry.

As members of Presbytery, chaplains are bound by the *Standing Rules*, IIIG3: ***Yearly Ministerial Reports: Ministers laboring out of bounds of presbytery or without call, excepting those honorably retired or permanently disabled, are expected to report at each August stated meeting concerning their locations and activities.***

In addition to the yearly written report, Presbytery's Mission to the Military Committee also requires:

1. an electronic communication at least yearly
2. your physical attendance at Presbytery at least once every four (4) years
3. a copy of your yearly/regular military evaluation/fitness form.

Further, as a condition of endorsement, chaplains sign a Statement of Intent with the PCA Endorsing Agency, the PRCC, essentially a contract, when they accept their military commission as chaplains, in which they agree, among other items, to:

2. I agree to provide a quarterly (Active Duty) or annual (Reserve Components) ministry report which is to be furnished to the Executive/Associate Directors, my Presbytery, and my supporting church(s). E-reports can be found at www.prcc.com

4. I agree to participate in my Presbytery insofar as possible and keep them informed of my seminary progress.

The military attaches great significance to the maintenance of strong ecclesiastical relationships, and all three chaplain corps authorize --- days of Temporary Duty (TDY) to attend ecclesiastical functions at government expense.*** It is the chaplain's responsibility to include that in his yearly planning. In addition, by regulation, all military personnel, including chaplains, are authorized 30 days of paid leave each year.

While it is understood that chaplains are often stationed or deployed outside the United States for more than one calendar year and unable to attend either General Assembly or Presbytery meetings on a yearly basis, still, it is not unreasonable, given the amount of paid duty time and personal leave available (by law), to expect that Chaplains should be able to return to their Presbytery at least once every four years.

As the missionary sending agency, Presbytery has the responsibility to not only support Chaplains in prayer, but also to inquire in depth about their ministry endeavors, spiritual trials, their efforts to proclaim the truths of the Reformed faith in a pluralistic environment, and to be certain that they are faithfully running the race and have not departed from the truth.

*****Air Force**

AFI36-3003 26 OCTOBER 2009 page 57

Table 7 Authorizing Permissive Temporary Duty Rule 26 If members, as chaplains, to attend a spiritual retreat, ecclesiastical conference, or to consult with ecclesiastical superiors the unit commander may approve up to 15 days, (including travel time) maximum in a fiscal year.

*****Army**

AR 165-1 3-5 (d) (1) and (2) Permissive Temporary Duty permitted but number of days not specified.

The General Role of a PCA Minister as a Military Chaplain

(Excerpted from Army Regulation 165-1 – Navy and Air Force regulations will be similar.)

Chapter 3 Status, Roles, and Responsibilities of Chaplains

3–1. Professional status

a. Professional role. The Chaplain is a religious professional whose educational qualifications and certification by a religious organization meet the appointment requirements of DODD 1304.19. Endorsement is the official formal statement by a competent authority of a religious organization attesting to the credentials of an individual as a qualified professional religious leader. Endorsing Agents represent various faith groups. All Endorsing Agents support the pluralistic requirements of the Army without relinquishing their respective faith demands. Chaplains are responsible to keep the command informed when they perceive a requirement that may exceed their endorsement accountability (see paras 3–2).

b. Dual functionality. Army Chaplains have a dual role as religious leaders and religious support staff officers. Their duties are prescribed by law, DOD policy, Army regulations, religious requirements, and Army mission. Each Chaplain also remains accountable to their assigned chain of command, and the Chaplain technical staff channels up through the CCH.. Chaplains also remain fully accountable to the code of ethics and ecclesiastical standards of their endorsing faith group. In some instances, this may restrict Chaplain participation in a command event, but it does not relieve the Chaplain from providing for adequate religious support to accomplish the mission.

3–2. Chaplain as professional military religious leader

a. General. All Chaplains provide for the nurture and practice of religious beliefs, traditions, and customs in a pluralistic environment to strengthen the spiritual lives of Soldiers and their Families. Chaplains conduct the religious programs and activities for the Command and provide professional advice and counsel on religious, moral, and ethical issues.

b. Roles and responsibilities.

- (1) Chaplains are required by law to hold religious services for members of the command to which they are assigned, when practicable. Chaplains provide for religious support, pastoral care, and the moral and spiritual wellbeing of the command (10 USC 3547).
- (2) Chaplains will minister to the personnel of their unit and/or facilitate the free-exercise rights of all personnel, regardless of religious affiliation of either the Chaplain or the unit member.
- (3) Chaplains will perform their professional military religious leader ministrations in accordance with the tenets or faith requirements of the religious organization that certifies and endorses them.
- (4) Chaplains will conduct or assist in arranging for burial services at the interring of members of the military service, retired military personnel, and other personnel as authorized by DOD policy, Army regulations, and applicable law.

Removal of a Chaplain from Military Service

Once approved, endorsed, and commissioned as a military chaplain, individuals may ordinarily continue to serve until limited by law or other denominational reasons.

Chaplains may be removed, or remove themselves, from military service in several ways.

1. Regular retirement.
2. Involuntary retirement for a variety of reasons (civil-military violations)
3. Loss of endorsement by the PRCC for a variety of reasons.
4. Loss of approval of call by Presbytery for a variety of reasons.

Chaplains on Military Duty Serving in other Presbyteries

Ordinarily, PCA ministers must be members of the Presbytery in which they serve. Military chaplains, though not named explicitly, fall under the same category as other teaching elders who receive calls outside of the jurisdiction of their own Presbytery.

8-7. A Presbytery may, at its discretion, approve the call of a teaching elder to work with an organization outside the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church in America, provided that he be engaged in preaching and teaching the Word, that the Presbytery be assured he will have full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our Church, and that he report at least annually on his work. As far as possible, such a teaching elder shall be a member of the Presbytery within whose bounds he labors. (See BCO 20-1.)

13-2. A minister shall be required to hold his membership in the Presbytery within whose geographical bounds he resides, unless there are reasons which are satisfactory to his Presbytery why he should not do so. When a minister labors outside the geographical bounds of, or in a work not under the jurisdiction of his Presbytery, at home or abroad, it shall be only with the full concurrence of and under circumstances agreeable to his Presbytery, and to the Presbytery within whose geographical bounds he labors, if one exists. When a minister shall continue on the rolls of his Presbytery without a call to a particular work for a prolonged period, not exceeding three years, the procedure as set forth in BCO 34-10 shall be followed.

21-3. No Presbytery shall ordain any intern to the office of minister of the Word with reference to his laboring within the bounds of another Presbytery, but shall furnish him with the necessary testimonials, and require him to repair to the Presbytery within whose bounds he expects to labor, that he may submit himself to its authority, according to the Constitution of the Church.

20-13. A missionary who is an ordained teaching elder in another denomination found fit and called (in accordance with BCO 20-1) for missionary service by a missionary agency or Presbytery shall be examined by Presbytery for admission to Presbytery in accordance with BCO 13-6. If approved he shall be enrolled as a member of Presbytery.

Responsibilities of Chaplains when Mobilized

(Preparing for Training and Mobilization when Establishing Terms of the Minister's Call)

If the minister is obligated to fulfill military commitments during a period of pastoral service, a Mobilization Agreement should be added to the terms of call for that obligation and potential mobilization. This agreement would cover all normal and potential periods of military service, i.e., monthly drills, summer training, extended formal military schools, and mobilization training and extended deployment. The PRCC Chaplain Manual has an excellent format.

The agreement also needs to make provision as to when the salary from the calling agency might cease. It will address issues regarding housing and maybe even the payment of rent for family use of a manse during the mobilization period. There should also be some procedure specified regarding what would happen in the event of the death or disability of the minister. A copy of the signed mobilization Agreement should be sent to the PRCC in Atlanta, GA.

In 1994 Congress adopted legislation called the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment ACT (USERRA), which deals with many of these issues. It is a law of general application and does not appear to exempt Church employers. It covers such topics as pension (who pays during deployment) and reinstatement upon return from duty.

Church employing organizations should advise employees of their USERRA rights. Employees need to be informed that it is the employee's obligation to provide the employer with advance notice if his reason for leaving is to perform military service.

Upon mobilization

The pastor and clerk of Session will notify the Stated Clerk of PMV. The Stated Clerk will notify the Committee on Mission to the Military. Chaplains are expected to keep their Presbytery advised of their duty locations, prospective changes to length of duty, and file the quarterly reports required of all active duty chaplains

Status

The pastor/chaplain will normally remain the called pastor of the congregation while deployed and will normally return to that role when returning from active duty. Deployed is defined as a period of active duty that is longer than thirty days and less than one year.

The pastoral position will be held open for a minimum of 12 months. If Session and Presbytery agree, this period may be extended for up to 18 months.

Following the expiration of the agreed-upon time, the congregation may petition the Presbytery to dissolve the pastoral relationship. A second deployment within one year may result in this action..

Administration

Presbytery will appoint a moderator for the session and assist the session in securing temporary supply pastors. The presbytery will provide pastoral care to the congregation and to the deploying pastor and family as he prepares to depart for service. The congregation and the presbytery together will support the chaplain and family.

Financial Housing Considerations

If the church provides a manse, the pastor/chaplain's family will normally remain in it during the deployment. If a housing allowance is provided, the pastor's family will receive that allowance until the military begins to cover living costs. Thereafter, the difference between the military and church allowances will be paid through the time of authorized leave.

Chaplain Agencies

Military Chaplains must meet requirements that many military recruiters may or may not be aware exist. It is imperative that anyone interested in joining the chaplaincy work one-on-one with a recruiter designated and trained to work with Chaplains and Candidates. Contact a Chaplain recruiter in your area through the information below.

While the requirements for the military chaplaincy positions are very similar, non-military (civilian) chaplaincy positions, such as hospitals and prisons, are quite different, and generally require additional professional training.



[United States Army](#)

Army Chaplain Recruiters are positioned all over the country.

<http://www.goarmy.com/chaplain>



[United States Air Force](#)

Air Force Chaplain Recruiters function specifically within the area that a chaplain or candidate is applying to serve.

Active Duty Chaplaincy Recruiting: 800-803-2452
 Reserve Chaplaincy & Candidacy: 800-223-1784 ext. 71475
 Air National Guard Chaplaincy: 866-839-7438



[United States Navy & Marine Corps](#)

The Navy Chaplain Corps also provides chaplain support to the Marines. Navy Recruiters are broken into two regions:

Navy Recruiting District East: 770-612-4360 ext. 2803
 Navy Recruiting District West: 949-509-7679



[Veterans Administration Chaplaincy](#)

The VA Chaplaincy provides chaplain support to patients in the VA system.

www.vacareers.va.gov 757-728-3180

Chaplain Requirements US Army

Provided as an Example

(Requirements for the Air Force and Navy are very similar)

1. You must obtain an ecclesiastical endorsement from your faith group. This endorsement should certify that you are:
 - .A clergy person in your denomination or faith group.
 - .Qualified spiritually, morally, intellectually and emotionally to serve as a Chaplain in the Army.
 - .Sensitive to religious pluralism and able to provide for the free exercise of religion by all military personnel, their family members and civilians who work for the Army.
 - .Without an official ecclesiastical endorsement, you cannot be a chaplain
2. Educationally, you must:
 - .Possess a baccalaureate degree of not less than 120 semester hours.
 - .Possess a graduate degree in theological or religious studies, plus have earned at least a total of 72 semester hours in graduate work in these fields of study.
3. Applicants for active duty or the National Guard MUST be U.S. citizens. Permanent residents can ONLY apply for the Army Reserve.
4. Be able to receive a favorable National Agency Security Clearance.
5. Pass a physical exam at one of our Military Entrance Processing Stations (MEPS).
6. A minimum of two years of full-time professional experience, validated by the applicant's endorsing agency (This requirement is not applicable to Army Reserve applicants).
7. Must be at least 21 years of age, but younger than 42 at time of Regular Army commissioning or less than 45 at time of Army Reserve commissioning. Prior service applicants with at least 3 years of prior AFS or creditable USAR service must be younger than 47 at time of Army Reserve commissioning

Common Acronyms within the Military Chaplaincy

AC: *Active Component.* The United States Army is made of three components: the Army National Guard, the Army Reserve, and the Active Component. The AC is comprised of those who are full-time in the Army, and may also be called the Active Duty or Regular Army.

ARNG: *Army National Guard.* Each state has its own force known as the Army National Guard. The ARNG may be called to duty by the state or by the federal government.

AT: *Annual Training.* In addition to serving one weekend per month, the Reserve Components do a two-week duty, usually during the summer. This 2-week duty is called Annual Training, or AT.

Chief of Chaplains: CCH

The **Chief of Chaplains of the United States Army (CCH)** is the chief supervising officer of the U.S. Army Chaplain Corps. (Chaplains do not hold command authority. A chaplain has rank without command (see 10 USC 3581). Although chaplains may not exercise command, they have authority to exercise functions of operational supervision and control.

Accession Selection Board. (Chief of Chaplains accession selection boards)

To ensure that the chaplain branch is able to accomplish its mission, the CCH accesses to active duty (AD) a sufficient number of chaplains each fiscal year to meet religious support requirements and offset projected losses. The Five-Year Accessions Plan programs the number of chaplains to be brought on AD to support Budget End Strength (BES).

Typically, Accession Selection Boards meet at least two times a year to consider applications for AD, for appointment or reappointment to the chaplain branch, and for appointment as staff specialist in the Chaplain Candidate Program

Endorsing Agent.

The Ecclesiastical Endorsing Agent is an individual authorized to provide or withdraw Ecclesiastical Endorsements on behalf of a religious organization." Department of Defense Instruction 2304.28, outlines "Guidance for the appointment of chaplains for the military departments," and includes the requirement (among others) that "religious ministry professionals" (RMPs) must "receive an endorsement from a qualified religious organization." The endorsing agent for the PCA is the PRCC.

NCMAF: National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces

An umbrella group of religious organizations in the United States that endorse clergy for service as military chaplains in the United States armed forces. It functions as the point of contact between over 200 religious groups and the government of the United States military to satisfy the U.S. military requirement that chaplains serving with the various branches hold "ecclesiastical endorsement" from their religious communities and also serves as a forum for discussions among member organizations regarding issues relating to the military chaplaincy. The PRCC is a member of NCMAF.

NG: National Guard:

A reserve military force composed of National Guard militia members or units of each state and the territories under the control of their governors. The National Guard may be called up for active duty by the state governor to help respond to domestic emergencies and disasters, such as hurricanes, floods, and earthquakes. In the event of a national emergency, they can be brought under the control of their Active Duty component.

RC: *Reserve Components.*

There are two types of Reserve forces in the U.S. Army. They are the Army National Guard and the Army Reserve. The RCs serve one weekend per month and two weeks during the year.

UMT: *Unit Ministry Team.*

Most battalions and higher echelon units are authorized a chaplain and a chaplain assistant. The chaplain and chaplain assistant together are the Unit Ministry Team.

USACHCS: *Unites States Army Chaplain Center and School.*

Every Army chaplain of all components goes through the chaplain school for Chaplain Officer Basic Training (CHOBC) and for the Chaplain Career Course (CCC). USACHCS is at Fort Jackson, in Columbia, South Carolina. Navy and Air Force chaplains also attend their branch basic chaplain training at Ft. Jackson.

USAR: *United States Army Reserve.* One of the two Reserve Components of the U.S. Army, the USAR is a Federal force, not under state command, as is the ARNG.

PRJC. *Presbyterian and Reformed Joint Commission.*

The first ecclesiastical endorsing body for PCA chaplains, organized September 21, 1978.

PRCC. *Presbyterian & Reformed Commission on Chaplains and Military Personnel*

In June 2012, the PRJC was renamed the Presbyterian & Reformed Commission on Chaplains and Military Personnel (PRCC), and consists of the following church bodies: Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church (ARPC), the Korean American Presbyterian Church (KAPC), the Korean Presbyterian Church in America-Koshin (KPCA), the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC), the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America (RPCNA), and the United Reformed Churches in North America (URCNA),

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(Other terms as necessary)

Army Regulation 165–1
Religious Support

Army Chaplain Corps Activities

AR 165–1 • 3 December 2009

Chapter 1 Introduction

1–5. Establishment of the Army Chaplaincy

a. The Continental Congress established Chaplains as an integral part of the Army of the United States on 29 July 1775. The Chaplaincy remains a relevant and integral part of the heritage and future of the Army. Chaplains have served in significant numbers from the earliest battles of the American War of Independence to the present. American Chaplains represent the unique commitment of the American social and religious culture that values freedom of conscience and spiritual choice as proclaimed in the founding documents.

b. The importance and influence of the Chaplain to the religious, moral, and spiritual health of the unit have been valued throughout the history of the Army. Army Chaplains represent faith groups within the pluralistic religious culture in America and demonstrate the values of religious freedom of conscience and spiritual choice. In many nations of the world, religious beliefs influence perceptions of power, diplomacy, law, and social customs. Chaplains provide to commanders and staff invaluable insight into the impacts of religion when developing strategy, campaign plans, and conducting operations. Commanders continue to value the impact of the Chaplaincy in its core commitment to the soul and spirit of the Army to: Nurture the Living, Care for Wounded, and Honor the Dead across the full spectrum of military operations.

1–6. The Chaplaincy and the U.S. Constitution

a. The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution prohibits enactment of any law “respecting an establishment of religion “or” prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” Congress recognizes the necessity of the Chaplain Corps in striking a balance between the establishment and free exercise clauses.

b. The Establishment Clause forbids any governmental authority from mandating a religion or way of prayer. In the pluralistic religious setting of the military, Unit Ministry Teams (UMTs) provide opportunities for religious support (worship services, religious classes, prayers, and so forth) for individuals from all religious backgrounds. Chaplains cooperate with each other without compromising their faith tradition or ecclesiastical endorsement requirements, to ensure the most comprehensive religious support opportunities possible within the unique military environment.

c. The Free Exercise clause guarantees individuals the right to practice what their religion requires and conscience dictates. Soldiers, Family members, and authorized Department of Defense (DOD) civilians are entitled to Chaplain support. Chaplains are expected to advise the command on all matters pertaining to the free exercise of religion and to speak with a candor and urgency befitting the exercise of their religious duties. Chaplains assist the commander in providing for the accommodation of religious practices.

d. The Chaplaincy is an instrumentality of the U.S. Government to ensure that the “free-exercise” rights of religion are not abridged. This constitutional principle is deeply imbedded in the statutory foundations of the Army. The Chaplain and Chaplain Assistant are core and essential manpower at every echelon of the force and are both inherently Governmental in Nature (GIN) – military (Memorandum, HQDA, DAMO–FMP, 30 October 2008, subject: Decision Point 91, Unit Ministry Team ((UMT) Implementation Plan). In maintaining the balance between the establishment and Free Exercise Clause, Army Chaplaincy functions are exempt from conversion to civilian structures.

1–7. The Chaplaincy and Public Law

a. Title 10, United States Code (USC), Section 3073 (10 USC 3073), Section 3547 (10 USC 3547), and Section 3581 (10 USC 3581), establishes the position of Chaplain in the Army and, together with regulations promulgated by the Secretary of the Army, prescribes the duties of that position. This statutory authority requires commanders to furnish facilities and transportation for Chaplains to perform their duty.

b. Public law requires Chaplains to conduct religious services for personnel of their assigned command.

c. The duties of Chaplains beyond those specifically mandated by statute are derived duties, assigned by the Army, with extensive historical and legal precedent. They are described throughout this regulation.

d. General Order No. 253, issued by the War Department, Washington, DC, dated 28 December 1909, established the position of Chaplain Assistant for the purpose of assisting the Chaplain in the performance of their official duties.

Chapter 2

Religious Support in the Army

2–1. General

a. Commanders provide opportunities for the free exercise of religion through their Chaplains, Chaplain Assistants, and other religious support members.

b. Participation in religious activities is voluntary. However, Army personnel may be required to provide administrative support before, during, or after worship services or religious activities in support of the CMRP.

c. Commanders will approve Soldiers requests for accommodation of specific religious practices whenever possible, subject to the limits of military necessity. Examples of accommodation include: Soldiers with religious dietary

AR 165–1 • 3 December 2009 9

requirements, the wearing of religious apparel, and sufficient time for travel to and from religious activities (see AR 600–20 and AR 670–1).

Chapter 3

Status, Roles, and Responsibilities of Chaplains

3–1. Professional status

a. Professional qualifications. The Chaplain is a religious professional whose educational qualifications and certification by a religious organization meet the appointment requirements of DODD 1304.19. Endorsement is the official formal statement by a competent authority of a religious organization attesting to the credentials of an individual as a qualified professional religious leader. Endorsing Agents represent various faith groups. All Endorsing Agents support the pluralistic requirements of the Army without relinquishing their respective faith demands. Chaplains are responsible to keep the command informed when they perceive a requirement that may exceed their endorsement accountability (see paras 3–2 and 8–9).

b. Dual functionality. Army Chaplains have a dual role as religious leaders and religious support staff officers. Their duties are prescribed by law, DOD policy, Army regulations, religious requirements, and Army mission. Each Chaplain also remains accountable to their assigned chain of command, and the Chaplain technical staff channels up through the CCH. Chaplains continually balance their responsibilities in both areas and are expected to avoid placing the technical channel in conflict with the chain of command. Commanders are expected to collaboratively support this dual accountability. Chaplains also remain fully accountable to the code of ethics and ecclesiastical standards of their endorsing faith group. In some instances, this may restrict Chaplain participation in a command event, but it does not relieve the Chaplain from providing for adequate religious support to accomplish the mission.

3–2. Chaplain as professional military religious leader

a. General. All Chaplains provide for the nurture and practice of religious beliefs, traditions, and customs in a pluralistic environment to strengthen the spiritual lives of Soldiers and their Families. Chaplains conduct the religious programs and activities for the Command and provide professional advice and counsel on religious, moral, and ethical issues.

b. Roles and responsibilities.

(1) Chaplains are required by law to hold religious services for members of the command to which they are assigned, when practicable. Chaplains provide for religious support, pastoral care, and the moral and spiritual wellbeing of the command (10 USC 3547).

(2) Chaplains will minister to the personnel of their unit and/or facilitate the free-exercise rights of all personnel, regardless of religious affiliation of either the Chaplain or the unit member.

(3) Chaplains will perform their professional military religious leader ministrations in accordance with the tenets or faith requirements of the religious organization that certifies and endorses them (see DODD 1304.19).

(4) Chaplains will conduct or assist in arranging for burial services at the interring of members of the military service, retired military personnel, and other personnel as authorized by DOD policy, Army regulations, and applicable law.

(5) Chaplains, at their discretion, may perform marriage ceremonies for authorized personnel upon request and in accordance with the laws of the State or country where the marriage is to take place. Chaplain participation in marriage preparations and ceremonies is in keeping with individual conscience and distinctive faith requirements. Chaplains may perform marriage ceremonies for DOD military personnel overseas in compliance with all applicable civil law requirements of the host nations, Army regulations, and any other military command directives.

(6) Chaplains will not be required to perform a religious role (such as offering a prayer, reading, dedication, or blessing) in worship services, command ceremonies, or other events, if doing so would be in variance with the tenets or practices of their faith. Chaplains will make every effort to provide for required ministrations which they cannot personally perform.

(7) Chaplains will provide religious support for authorized personnel confined in military, civilian, or foreign confinement facilities (AR 190–47).

(8) The Chaplain is a teacher of religion and provides religious instruction. The Chaplain is responsible to the commander for the religious education program.

3–3. Chaplain as principle military religious advisor

a. General.

(1) Chaplains serve on the special or personal staff of a command with direct access to the commander (FM 6–0).

(2) Chaplains, in performing their duties, are expected to speak with a prophetic voice and must confront the issues of religious accommodation, the obstruction of free exercise of religion, and moral turpitude in conflict with the Army values.

b. Roles and responsibilities.

(1) Chaplains advise the commander and staff on matters of religion, morals, and morale, including, but not limited to—

- (a) The religious needs of assigned personnel.
- (b) The spiritual, ethical, and moral health of the command.
- (c) The personal impact of command policies, leadership practices, and management systems.
- (d) Plans or programs for advancing Army values and Soldier or Family resilience.
- (e) Religious support personnel matters and area coverage issues.
- (f) Construction, renovation, and maintenance of religious facilities.
- (g) Ethical, moral, and humanitarian implications of operational decisions.
- (h) Analysis of the impacts of indigenous religions on military operations.

(2) Chaplains plan, coordinate, execute, and supervise all religious support activities and resources for the Commander, including, but not limited to—

- (a) Religious leader liaison (RLL), religious analysis, and religious support products for all plans and orders.
- (b) Use of chapels and equipment (Common Table of Allowances (CTA) 50–909).
- (c) Management of ecclesiastical and administrative supplies, chapel furnishings, facilities, and other resources to support the CMRP.
- (d) Establishment and operation of Chaplain advisory councils and other staff, parish development programs, and chapel volunteer training.
- (e) Management of chapel tithes and offering fund (see chap 14).
- (f) Training of Chaplains and Chaplain Assistants.
- (g) Recommend TOE, MTOE, and TDA religious support adjustments.
- (h) Liaise with Chaplains of higher, equal, and subordinate headquarters.
- (i) Participate in the CCH Recruitment Program.

(3) *Chaplain professional and technical communication.* Chaplains will solve problems and resolve issues at the lowest possible echelon. Chaplains wishing to communicate with the CCH on professional matters will do so through technical supervisory channels. Technical supervisory Chaplains are obligated to forward all formal communication directed to the CCH in a timely manner.

3–4. Duty considerations

a. Commanders will ensure that Chaplains and Chaplain Assistants deploy with their assigned units.

b. In a temporary military emergency, Chaplains may volunteer to participate or cooperate in nonreligious, noncombatant functions that contribute to the welfare of the command.

c. Commanders will not—

(1) Detail a Chaplain as an exchange, athletic, recreation, drug or alcohol, suicide prevention program manager, graves registration, welfare, morale, unit victim advocate (UVA), sexual assault response coordinator (SARC), dining facility,

personal affairs, information, education, human relations, equal opportunity, next of kin notification, prisoner escort, safety, survivor assistance, or civil affairs officer. However, in the event of the death of a Chaplain, a Chaplain(s) will be appointed to assist summary court officers in review of confidential records and personal effects when next of kin is present.

(2) Assign a Chaplain as military judge, trial counsel, defense counsel, financial liability investigating officer, investigating officer, or member, or adviser to investigative boards of officers. Chaplains may be required, however, to conduct inquiries into Chaplain-related activities or incidents. If applicable, Chaplains will forward an Endorsing Agent written restrictions regarding service on court martial duty to the respective command and legal counsel.

(3) Require a Chaplain to serve in a capacity that may require the revelation of privileged or sensitive information incidental to such a service.

(4) Ask a Chaplain to participate in any activity that violates their non-combatant status.

(5) Ask a Chaplain to reveal any privileged communication.

3–5. Religious services, rites, sacraments, ordinances, and religious ministrations

a. Chaplain uniforms. When conducting religious services, a Chaplain will wear the military uniform, vestments, or other appropriate attire established by a religious organizations law or practice. The Chaplains scarf, stole, or tallit may be worn with the uniform. Chaplain ceremonial stoles are authorized for wear with Army Class A or dress/mess uniforms in conducting either religious services or military ceremonies.

b. Chaplain services. Chaplains are authorized to conduct religious services, rites, sacraments, ordinances, and other religious ministrations as required by their respective distinctive faith group. Chaplains will not be required to take part in religious services, rites, sacraments, ordinances, and other religious ministrations when such participation would be at variance with the tenants of their faith.

c. Chaplain fees. Chaplains will not accept nor prescribe fees for performing religious support activities that are part of their official military duty. Accepting gifts is subject to guidance of DOD 5500.7R.

d. Chaplain travel.

(1) Chaplains are required to be spiritually fit and adaptive leaders, responsive to the Army needs, and relevant to the expression of faith. Chaplains are authorized to attend endorser-established ecclesiastical training, seminars, and religious updates in an official temporary duty (TDY) status. Ecclesiastical endorsement is a professional relationship essential to maintain military ministry credentials. Commanders support essential ecclesiastical training as part of the professional development of Chaplains. Chaplains will attend these training events in an on duty status and in appropriate uniform.

(2) Permissive temporary duty (PTDY) is also authorized for Chaplains to attend and participate in nonessential religious activities, conferences, seminars, or similar meetings to enhance their professionalism in service for the Army.

Requests for PTDY will be in accordance with AR 600–8–10 and CCH guidelines and policies.

e. Chaplain housing.

(1) Unmarried Chaplains and unaccompanied married Chaplains on an all others tour or dependent-restricted tour may compete for Family housing within the appropriate grade category. Chaplains, at their request, may choose a private unaccompanied personnel housing (UPH) apartment consisting of a bedroom, bathroom, living room, and kitchen or kitchenette. Temporary use of visiting officers quarters may be authorized under the provisions of AR 210–50.

(2) In overseas areas where administrative restrictions are placed on household goods weight allowances, unmarried Chaplains or Chaplains on an all others tour will be authorized the same weight allowance as an accompanied married officer of the same grade competing for comparable quarters.

The Army issues one broad regulation, Army Regulation 165-1, Army Chaplain Corps Activities (attached in part as an example), that encompasses all regulations, policies, and directives for Army Chaplain personnel.

The Air Force and Navy, however, do not have a single all-encompassing regulation but rather issue a variety of directives, instructions, and policy letters.

Air Force and Navy Chaplain Regulations, Directives, and Policies (Not intended as a complete listing)

Air Force Chaplain Regulations

[Air Force Policy Directive \(AFPD\) 52-1, "Chaplain Service," October 2, 2006](#) This Directive establishes policy for active duty, Air Reserve Component, and civilian personnel in fulfilling the mission of the Chaplain Service.

[Air Force Instruction \(AFI\) 52-101, "Planning and Organizing," May 10, 2005, incorporating change 4, 14 March 2008](#) This Instruction directs procedures that ensure the Air Force Chaplain Service is structured and organized to meet mission requirements.

[AFI 52-102 Volume I, "Chaplain Professional Development," October 5, 2007](#) This Instruction describes the process for designating officers as chaplains and outlines the structure and programs for chaplain professional development.

[AIR FORCE INSTRUCTION 36-3003 26 OCTOBER 2009 Personnel MILITARY LEAVE PROGRAM](#)

Navy Chaplain Regulations

[SECNAVINST 1730.7D, "Religious Ministry within the Department of the Navy," August 8, 2008](#) This Instruction implements policy and procedures for religious ministry in the Department of the Navy.

[SECNAVINST 1730.9, "Confidential Communications to Chaplains," February 7, 2008](#) This Instruction provides policy on confidential communications to Navy chaplains.

[OPNAVINST 1730.1D, "Religious Ministry in the Navy," May 6, 2003](#) This Instruction provides for the free exercise of religion for all Navy service members, their families, and all other authorized personnel and establishes policy and assigns responsibility for providing religious ministry within the Navy.

[[[Forms are EXAMPLES ONLY -- Contact PRCC for OFFICIAL forms]]]



Presbyterian and Reformed
Commission on Chaplains
and Military Personnel

Endorsing Agency for:

The Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church (ARPC) • The Korean-American Presbyterian Church (KAPC) • The Korean Presbyterian Church in America – Koshin (KPCA) • The Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC) • The Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) • The Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America (RPCNA) • United Reformed Churches in North America (URCNA)

Application for Military Chaplain Endorsement

Return pages 1-5 and required documents to: Douglas E. Lee, Executive Director, PRCC,
6613 Thurlton Drive, Alexandria, VA 22315

Cell: 678-701-5151 / FAX: 703-719-6685

PRINTED NAME IN FULL: _____

SSN _____ DATE _____

Applying for (Check one):

- | | | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|-----|---------------------|-----|
| | U.S. Air Force | () | Civil Air Patrol | () |
| | Air Force Reserve | () | Air National Guard | () |
| | U.S. Army | () | Army National Guard | () |
| (Attach Photo Here) | U.S. Army Reserve | () | | |
| | U.S. Navy | () | U.S. Navy Reserve | () |

Address: _____ **Zip:** _____

Phone: (H) _____ **(W)** _____ **(C)** _____

E-Mail Address: _____

1. Denomination: ARPC __ KAPC __ KPCA __ OPC __ PCA __ RPCNA __ URCNA __

2. Presbytery: _____ **Member of** _____ **Church**

3. Ordination (include date, place, and ordaining authority): _____

4. Date and place of birth: _____

5. If naturalized, give date of final papers _____

6. Height: _____ feet _____ inches **Weight:** _____

7. Marital status: ___ Married ___ Widowed ___ Divorced ___ Separated ___ Single

8. Wife's name: _____

9. Children (Names & Birth-years.): _____

10. If Military, provide past training or service if any (give branch, rate, rank & dates of service):

11. Education (give full names of institutions and exact addresses. **Enclose transcripts for all completed courses – copies are acceptable**):

Name & Location of College _____

Dates you attended _____

Did you graduate? _____ Degree granted: _____

Name & Location of Seminary _____

Dates you attended _____

Did you graduate? _____ Degree Granted _____

Name & Location of other school(s) _____

Dates you attended _____

Did you graduate? _____ Degree(s) granted: _____

12. Pastorates served:

Name of Church Address	(City/ST)	Dates
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

13. Teaching experience, if any. Give dates, names of schools, and subjects taught:

14. Present Occupation. If pastor, give name of church: _____

15. Athletic experience: _____

Musical ability: _____

16. Business experience: _____

If now employed in addition to your ministry, state relative amount of time given to it:

17. To the best of your knowledge, can you say you are in excellent health and in good physical condition.

___ Yes ___ No (If “No,” please explain) -

18. References. Give four names and addresses to include two teaching elders and two ruling elders of your denomination. (Make 4 copies of enclosed reference forms; one for each reference, and **send to them**)

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Phone</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

19. Attach additional information, if desired. Feel free to answer any of the above questions on extra pages. [NOTE: Item #20 is for first-time applicants only. Chaplain Candidates applying for the Chaplaincy only have to submit “Why I want to be a military chaplain.”]

20. Enclose 3 brief (no longer than 1 page) papers:

- “What is Reformed Theology?”
- “Why I want to be a military chaplain”
- “This is my personal testimony”

21. Have your Clerk of Presbytery email me stating you are “a member in good standing of _____ presbytery.”

22. Fees: Please make checks payable to „Chaplain Ministries.”

___ \$100 if this is a first endorsement for the Chaplaincy. This includes the fee for a Background Check.

___ \$50 if you are a military Chaplain Candidate now applying for the Chaplaincy. This includes the fee for a Background Check

Don’t hesitate to email or call - email to: dlee@pcanet.org; phone: (678) 701-5151)

Send pages 1-5 and required documents to:

Douglas E. Lee, Executive Director, PRCC, 6613 Thurlton Drive, Alexandria, VA 22315



Presbyterian and Reformed
Commission on Chaplains
and Military Personnel

STATEMENT OF INTENT

FOR MILITARY CHAPLAIN APPLICATIONS ONLY: I understand that if and when an Ecclesiastical Endorsement is written by the Executive Director of the Presbyterian and Reformed Commission on Chaplains and Military Personnel (PRCC) and furnished to the Personnel Section of the Office of the Chief of Chaplains, **I am committed to accept the commission and assignment**, if selected by the accessions board. I understand that acceptance of the commission for military active and reserve/national guard duty is not less than three years.

If and when I am selected for a Chaplain’s commission I will immediately inform my Endorser, and assist the Executive Director in enlisting congregational and individual prayer support and sponsors situation changes (married, new children, etc.). In addition:

1. I agree to pay the monthly dues fee as set by the Presbyterian and Reformed Commission on Chaplains and Military Personnel. The current fee schedule may be found in the PRCC Chaplains Manual, found on the PRCC website at www.prcc.com My initial endorsing fee of \$100.00 has been sent to MNA, 1700 North Brown Road, Suite 101, Lawrenceville, GA 30043 or Douglas Lee, 6613 Thurlton Dr, Alexandria, VA 22315.
2. I agree to provide a quarterly (Active Duty) or annual (Reserve Components) ministry report which is to be furnished to the Executive/Associate Directors, my Presbytery, and my supporting church(s). E-reports can be found at www.prcc.co
3. I also agree to update the PRCC administrative assistant each time my personal information or family situation changes. This includes leaving the program, approval for Active or Reserve ministry, etc.
4. I agree to participate in my Presbytery insofar as possible and keep them informed of my seminary progress.
5. I have discussed the above topics with the Executive and/or Associate Directors of the PRCC.
6. I have read and understand the information in the current version of the PRCC Chaplain’s Manual found on the PRCC Chaplain Ministries website at: www.prcc.co.

I have discussed the above topics with the Executive and/or Associate Directors of the PRCC.

Printed Full Name:

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Authorization for Background Check

Applicant:

As required by the PRCC Chaplain Commission, the last step in processing an application to be a PRCC chaplain is for us to run a criminal background, credit, and driving check on every applicant. Please complete this form, print it out, sign it, fax it to 678-825-1252, and mail the original, along with your \$100

Endorsement/Background check payable to:

Chaplain Ministries, c/o Douglas E. Lee, 6613 Thurlton Drive, Alexandria, VA 22315

Print Name: _____
(First) (Middle) (Last)

Former Name(s) and Dates Used: _____

Current Address Since: _____
(Mo/Yr) (Street) (City) (Zip/State)

Previous Address From: _____
(Mo/Yr) (Street) (City) (Zip/State)

Previous Address From: _____
(Mo/Yr) (Street) (City) (Zip/State)

Social Security Number: _____

DOB: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Drivers License Number/State: _____

The information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I hereby authorize the PRCC and its designated agents and representatives to conduct a comprehensive review of my background causing a consumer report and/or an investigative consumer report to be generated for employment and/or volunteer purposes. I understand that the scope of the consumer report/ investigative consumer report may include, but is not limited to the following areas:

verification of social security number; credit reports, current and previous residences; employment history, education background, character references; drug testing, civil and criminal history records from any criminal justice agency in any or all federal, state, county jurisdictions; driving records, birth records, and any other public records.

I further authorize any individual, company, firm, corporation, or public agency (including the Social Security Administration and law enforcement agencies) to divulge any and all information, verbal or written, pertaining to me, to PRCC or its agents. I further authorize the complete release of any records or data pertaining to me which the individual, company, firm, corporation, or public agency may have, to include information or data received from other sources.

**The PRCC and its designated agents and representatives shall maintain all information received from this authorization in a confidential manner in order to protect the applicants personal information, including, but not limited to, addresses, social security numbers, and dates of birth.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Notice to California, Minnesota and Oklahoma Residents:

Please check the box below if you wish to receive a copy of a consumer report that is requested.

____ I wish to receive a copy of any Background Check Report on me that is requested.



Presbyterian and Reformed
Commission on Chaplains
and Military Personnel

REFERENCE FORM

Return to: Douglas E. Lee, Executive Director, 6613 Thurlton Drive, Alexandria, VA 22315
(678) 701-5151 phone, (703) 719-6685 fax

Regarding: (Name of Applicant) _____
Elder's Name, Address, Phone: _____

The above named individual is applying for ecclesiastical endorsement as a chaplain. He has given your name as a reference, and we are asking your assistance in estimating his qualifications. In addition to the basic requirements of physical fitness, education, and successful ministry experience, it is essential that candidates shall be of strong moral and spiritual character, equipped and called for leadership among the men and women of the military forces where he will be representing our Lord Jesus Christ and our Church.

It is possible that you cannot reply to all questions. If you have no knowledge or opinion on any matter, please indicate by a dash after the question. But please reply as completely as possible, being entirely honest and candid. If your answers will not fit in the allotted space, please use the back of this form to complete your thoughts on the subject. What you write is confidential and will not be communicated to the candidate or go outside the commission.

1. How long have you known the applicant and in what capacity? _____

2. Is he a college graduate () seminary graduate ()? Seminary: _____

In your opinion:

3. Does he show a genuine concern for people? _____

4. Has he been successful in working with people? _____

5. Would you say his Christian convictions are deep-rooted? _____

6. Does he seem to have a constructive Gospel message to young people? _____

7. Does his preaching hold the interest of those listening? _____

8. Has he any special gifts or experiences that would add to his effectiveness as a Chaplain?

9. Has he any eccentricities that may hamper his effectiveness? _____

10. Please indicate, using numbers 1 through 5, with the highest being 5, the applicant's emphasis in the following areas as regards his preaching and teaching:

Evangelistic () Doctrinal () Devotional () Social Concerns ()
Personal and family relationships ()

11. Please check the columns below with your candid estimate of the candidate's personal qualities:

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Notes:
Spoken English	()	()	()	()	
Written English	()	()	()	()	
Health	()	()	()	()	
Voice	()	()	()	()	
Mental Abilities	()	()	()	()	
Sense of Humor	()	()	()	()	
Refinement	()	()	()	()	
Tact	()	()	()	()	
Initiative	()	()	()	()	
Cooperativeness	()	()	()	()	
Emotional Stability	()	()	()	()	
Moral Stability	()	()	()	()	
Common Sense	()	()	()	()	
Physical Appearance	()	()	()	()	
Leadership Ability	()	()	()	()	
Spiritual Maturity	()	()	()	()	

12. Has he or his family any personal, domestic, or social handicaps, which would put him at a disadvantage as a Chaplain? _____

13. Is he financially responsible? Does he exercise Biblical stewardship? _____

14. If the applicant is married is his domestic life congenial? Is he the head of the family?

15. If the applicant is married will his wife sympathize with and help him in his work as Chaplain? Do you believe she could handle long periods of separation as happens in the case of many military chaplains?

16. Would you recommend him as a candidate for the Chaplaincy? _____

17. Additional Information you wish to include: _____

18. If possible, please provide include names and phone numbers of two other individuals who know the applicant well:

(1) Name _____ Position _____ Phones _____

(2) Name _____ Position _____ Phones _____

Your Signature: _____

Date: _____

Current Occupation: _____

Endorsing Agency for:
The Korean-American Presbyterian Church
The Orthodox Presbyterian Church
The Presbyterian Church in America
The Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America
The Korean Presbyterian Church in America (Koshin)
United Reformed Churches in North America



Presbyterian and Reformed Commission on Chaplains and Military Personnel

REPORT OF PERSONAL INTERVIEW

For Chaplain Applicants

[NOTE: Doug Lee will arrange for this interview]

To the Interviewer: Thank you for conducting this interview. Your candid observations are essential to identify the best potential chaplains. Please complete Part I and II during the interview. Complete Part III immediately afterward, as you reflect on your impressions of the applicant. Keep a copy for your file, and send scan or fax the original to: Douglas E. Lee - Executive Director, PRCC, 6613 Thurlton Drive, Alexandria, VA 22315 [dlee@pcanet.org, Fax: 703-719-6685, Cell: 6787-701-5151]

Name: _____
Spouse: _____
Address: _____
Telephone: (H) _____ (W) _____ (C) _____
Social Security Number: _____ Birth date: _____ Birthplace: _____
Married: _____ Single: _____ Children's Names and Birth years: _____

Type of Chaplaincy for which you are applying: (check all that apply)

Military Chaplain

US Army *AD US Army Reserve Army National Guard
US Navy AD US Navy Reserve
Air Force AD US Air Force Reserve Air Guard
* AD = Active Duty

1. Academic Preparation:

Baccalaureate: Name & location of School: _____
Degree, Major, Year Granted: _____
M. Div: Name & location of School: _____
Year M.Div. Granted: _____
Other Graduate Degrees: Name & location of School(s): _____
Degree, Major, Year Granted: _____

2. Pastoral Preparation:

- Denomination: ARPC KAPC KPCA OPC PCA RPCNA URCNA
- Presbytery: _____ Location: _____
- Congregation Membership if not ordained: _____
- You have served as): Pastor (dates) _____
Elder (dates) _____
Deacon (dates) _____
Missionary/Church Planter/Evangelist (dates) _____
Other _____
- Military Service: Service and Dates: _____

PART I. APPLICANT PERSONAL INFORMATION

a. Subjectively, how would you describe your pastoral experience(s) to date (check all that apply):

- My ministry has generally been fruitful unfruitful
- I have been generally happy unhappy in my pastorate
- My family has been generally happy unhappy in my pastorate.

Comments: _____

b. Why do you want to be a chaplain? _____

c. What spiritual gifts do you bring to the chaplain ministry? _____

d. Family:

1). Have your family members expressed opinions on your pursuing chaplain ministry?

Yes. Key people in my family are all supportive of this endeavor.

No. Key people in my family are not supportive of this endeavor. Family issues needing resolution before you enter the Chaplaincy include: _____

2) Have you prepared, if orders came, to leave your family and not see them again for up to a year at a time?

Yes No

3). Have you discussed with your wife the implications for your family in the military environment and ministry? Yes No

e. Are you in good health? Yes. No, I suffer from _____

f. What family health issues, if any, will influence your ability to minister as a chaplain? _____

g. The military culture is pluralistic. Diverse ethnic, racial, religious, and social groups participate in and develop their particular traditions and interest within the confines of the military structure. What Reformed and Presbyterian distinctives will be important in this kind of culture?

h. Reflect on your ability to cooperate with chaplains and others of radically different convictions, and to do so without compromising your own. _____

i. How will you respond if you as a chaplain are directed to perform in a manner contrary to your convictions and/or denominational tenets? _____

j. As a chaplain, will you:

Stay in regular contact with your denomination and presbytery? Yes No

Support the PRCC with the required professional endorsement fees? Yes No

Submit all required reports to the Commission in a timely way? Yes No

k. Are there any moral, financial or legal issues that might impact your acceptability as a future chaplain? (including internet porn, etc)

No Yes (Please explain) _____

PART II. MILITARY ISSUES

1. **“I do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely and without any mental reservations or purpose of evasion; and that I will faithfully discharge the duties of the office upon which I am about to enter, so help me God.”**

This is the oath required to U.S. military officers, including chaplains. Are you prepared to take it?

- Yes, I can take the oath in good conscience.
- No, I cannot take the oath in good conscience.

2. Are you a U.S. citizen? Yes No, I am a citizen of _____

3. Height: _____ Weight: _____. Are you physically active (explain)? Yes _____ No _____

4. Are you available for worldwide deployment? Yes No

5. Would any of these be problems for you?

- Lack of familiar surroundings Lack of sleep Lack of privacy or “personal space”:
- Working on a team with ungodly, profane men Constant mobility
- A domineering boss Responsibility for the safety of large numbers of people
- Being outnumbered in a group decision Imminent physical danger

6. Is there anything else I should know about your fitness to serve as a military chaplain? _____

This concludes your interview

Notes:

PART III. FOR THE INTERVIEWER ONLY

Please comment on the following:

	Poor	Satisfactory	Excellent
Applicant’s use of English	_____	_____	_____
Theologically sound	_____	_____	_____
Applicant’s clarity of expression	_____	_____	_____
Applicant’s bearing and posture	_____	_____	_____
Applicant’s grooming	_____	_____	_____
Applicant’s poise under pressure of interview	_____	_____	_____

I DO DON’T judge this applicant to be fully qualified for endorsement as a chaplain in the _____ (Service Branch).

Interviewer’s Signature

Date of Interview

Place of Interview



Presbyterian and Reformed
Commission on Chaplains
and Military Personnel

Endorsing Agency for:

The Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church (ARPC) • The Korean-American Presbyterian Church (KAPC) • The Korean Presbyterian Church in America – Koshin (KPCA) • The Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC) • The Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) • The Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America (RPCNA) • United Reformed Churches in North America (URCNA)

Application for Chaplain Candidate Approval

Return to: Douglas E. Lee, Executive Director, PRCC , 6613 Thurlton Drive, Alexandria, VA 22315
Cell: 678-701-5151 / FAX: 703-719-6685

PRINT NAME IN FULL: _____

SSN _____ DATE _____

Applying for one of the Service Chaplain Candidate Programs (check one):

(Attach Photo Here) U.S. Air Force () U.S. Army Reserve ()
Army National Guard () U.S. Navy ()

Address: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (H) _____ (W) _____ (C) _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Denomination: ARPC ___ KAPC ___ KPCA ___ OPC ___ PCA ___ RPCNA ___ URCNA ___

1. Presbytery: _____ Member of _____ Church.
[I ___ am ___ am not Under Care of this Presbytery]

Date and place of birth: _____

2. If naturalized, give date of final papers: _____

3. Marital status: Married () Widowed () Divorced () Separated () Single ()

4. Wife's name: _____

5. Children (Names & Birth-years.): _____

6. Height: _____ feet _____ inches Weight: _____

7. Military, provide past training or service if any (give branch, rate, rank & dates of service):

10. Education (Enclose transcripts for all completed courses – copies are acceptable):

Name & Location of College _____

Dates you attended _____

Did you graduate? _____ Degree granted:_____

Name & Location of current or potential Seminary _____

Name & location of other school(s)_____

Dates you attended _____

Did you graduate? _____ Degree(s) granted:_____

12. Ministry Experience so far:

13. Teaching experience, if any. Give dates, names of schools, and subjects taught:

14. Present Occupation.

15. Athletic experience: _____ **ability:**_____

16. Business/work experience:

17. To the best of your knowledge, can you say you are in excellent health and in good physical condition? ____Yes ____ No (If 'No,' please Explain)_____

18. References. Find 1 Ruling Elder and 1 Teaching Elder in your denomination for references. (Make 2 copies of enclosed reference forms and give them each a copy; they will mail it to Doug Lee)

19. Attach additional information if desired. Feel free to answer any of the above questions on extra pages.

20. Enclose 3 brief papers (no longer than 1 page):
- **“What is Reformed Theology?”**
 - **“Why I want to be a military chaplain”**
 - **“This is my personal testimony”**

21. **Have your Clerk of Presbytery email me** stating you are “under care of _____ presbytery”...OR...an email from your Clerk of Session stating you are “in process to come under care of _____ presbytery.”

22. Enclose a **service fee** of \$25.00. Make the check out to **‘Chaplain Ministries.’**

Don’t hesitate to email or call - email to: dlee@pcanet.org; phone: (678) 701-5151)

Send pages 1-3 and other requirements of this application to:

Douglas E. Lee, Executive Director PRCC,
6613 Thurlton Drive
Alexandria, VA 22315

Chaplain Candidate Statement of Intent

FOR MILITARY CHAPLAIN CANDIDATE APPLICATIONS ONLY:

Please initial:

1. ___ I agree to provide an annual ministry report which is to be furnished to the Executive/Associate Directors, my Presbytery, and my supporting church(s).
2. ___ I also agree to update the PRCC administrative assistant each time my personal information or family situation changes. This includes leaving the program, approval for Active or Reserve ministry, etc.
3. ___ I agree to participate in my Presbytery insofar as possible and keep them informed of my seminary progress.
4. ___ I will be a member of a PRCC-related church...preferably in a member church of my denomination.
5. ___ I understand that the military Service to which I am applying believes that I am intending to be either an active or Reserve chaplain officer at the end of my Candidate training.
6. ___ I have discussed the above topics with the Executive and/or Associate Directors of the PRCC.
7. ___ I have read and understand the information in the current version of the PRCC Chaplain's Manual found on the PRCC Chaplain Ministries website at: www.PRCC.co/chaplain-resources/chaplainmanual/

Printed Name: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____



Presbyterian and Reformed
Commission on Chaplains
and Military Personnel

REFERENCE FORM

Chaplain Candidate

Return to: **Douglas E. Lee, PRCC Executive Director, 6613 Thurlton Drive, Alexandria, VA 22315**

Phone: (678) 701-5151; Fax: (703) 719-6685

Regarding: (Name of Applicant) _____

Elder Name, Address,

Phone _____

The above named individual is applying for approval as a military Chaplain Candidate. A Candidate is a seminarian who is commissioned as a military officer while in seminary. He pursues some basic military education while a full-time seminary student. He has given your name as a reference, and we are asking your assistance in estimating his qualifications. In addition to the basic requirements of physical fitness, education, and eventual successful ministry experience, it is essential that candidates shall be of strong moral and spiritual character, equipped and called for leadership among the men and women of the military forces where he will be representing our Lord Jesus Christ and our Church.

It is possible that you cannot reply to all questions. If you have no knowledge or opinion on any matter, please indicate by a dash after the question. But please reply as completely as possible, being entirely honest and candid. If your answers will not fit in the allotted space, please use the back of this form to complete your thoughts on the subject. What you write is confidential and will not be communicated to the candidate or go outside the PRCC commission.

1. How long have you known the applicant and in what capacity? _____
2. Is he a college graduate? _____ College: _____

In your opinion:

3. Does he show a genuine concern for people? _____
4. Has he been successful in working with people? _____
5. Would you say his Christian convictions are deep-rooted? _____
6. Does he seem to have an ability to share the Gospel with young people? _____
7. Does he have good verbal and written communication skills? In what context have you heard him? _____
8. Has he any special gifts or experiences that would add to his effectiveness as a chaplain-in-training? _____

9. Has he any eccentricities that may hamper his effectiveness? _____

10. Has he or his family any personal, domestic, or social handicaps, which would put him at a disadvantage as a future Chaplain?

11. Is he financially responsible? Does he exercise Biblical stewardship?

12. If the applicant is married, is his domestic life congenial? Is he the head of the family?

13. If the applicant is married, will his wife support with his military call? Do you believe she could handle long periods of separation as happens in the case of many military chaplains?

14. Would you recommend him as a candidate for the Chaplaincy?

15. Please check the columns below with your candid estimate of the candidate's personal qualities:

	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Notes:</u>
Spoken English	()	()	()	()	
Written English	()	()	()	()	
Health	()	()	()	()	
Voice	()	()	()	()	
Mental Abilities	()	()	()	()	
Sense of Humor	()	()	()	()	
Refinement	()	()	()	()	
Tact	()	()	()	()	
Initiative	()	()	()	()	
Cooperativeness	()	()	()	()	
Emotional Stability	()	()	()	()	
Moral Stability	()	()	()	()	
Common Sense	()	()	()	()	
Physical Appearance	()	()	()	()	
Leadership Ability	()	()	()	()	
Spiritual Maturity	()	()	()	()	

16. Additional Information you wish to include: _____

Your Signature: _____

Date: _____

Current Occupation: _____

WE VERY MUCH APPRECIATE YOUR HELP.

Endorsing Agency for:

The Korean-American Presbyterian Church • The Orthodox Presbyterian Church •

The Presbyterian Church in America

•The Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America • The Korean Presbyterian Church in America (Koshin) •

United Reformed Churches in North America

PERSONAL INTERVIEW

For Military Chaplain Candidate Applicants

To the Interviewer: Thank you for conducting this interview. Your candid observations are essential to identify the best potential chaplains. Please complete Part I and Part II during the interview. Complete Part III immediately afterward, as you reflect on your impressions of the applicant. Keep a copy for your file, and send, fax or scan the original to:

Douglas E. Lee, PRCC Executive Director
6613 Thurlton Drive, Alexandria, VA 22315
Fax: 703-719-6685 / dlee@pcanet.org

PART I. FILL OUT FOR ALL APPLICANTS

Name: _____

Spouse: _____

Address/City/Zip: _____

Telephone: (H) _____ (W) _____ (C) _____

Social Security Number: _____ Birth date: _____ Email: _____

Married: _____ Single: _____ Children's Names and Birth years:

Type of Chaplaincy for which you are applying: (check all that apply)

Applying for one of the Service Chaplain Candidate Programs (check one):

- U.S. Air Force () U.S. Army Reserve ()
- Army National Guard () U.S. Navy ()

Military location	Experience	Service,	dates

1. Academic Preparation:

- Baccalaureate: Name of School Granting Degree: _____

School Address: _____

Degree and Major: _____

Year Granted: _____

- M. Div: Name of current seminary: _____

Reformed and Presbyterian distinctives will be important in this kind of culture?

g. Reflect on your ability to cooperate with chaplains and others of radically different convictions, and to do so without compromising your own. _____

h. How will you respond if you as a chaplain are directed to perform in a manner contrary to your convictions and/or denominational tenets? _____

i. As a chaplain, will you:

Stay in regular contact with your denomination and presbytery? Yes No

Support the PRCC with the required professional endorsement fees? Yes No

Submit all required reports to the Commission in a timely way? Yes No

j. Are there any moral, financial or legal issues that might impact your acceptability as a future chaplain? (including internet porn, etc) No Yes (Please explain)_____

PART II. MILITARY ISSUES

1. "I do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely and without any mental reservations or purpose of evasion; and that I will faithfully discharge the duties of the office upon which I am about to enter, so help me God ."

This is the oath required to U.S. military officers, including chaplains. Are you prepared to take it?

Yes, I can take the oath in good conscience.

No, I cannot take the oath in good conscience.

2. Are you a U.S. citizen? Yes. No, I am a citizen of _____

3. Height: _____ Weight: _____lbs. Are you physically active (explain)? Yes _____ No _____

4. Are you available for worldwide deployment? Yes No

5. Have you prepared, if orders came, to leave your family and not see them again for up to a year at a time? Yes No

6. Have you discussed with your wife the implications for your family in the military environment and ministry? Yes No

7. Would any of these be problems for you?

- Lack of familiar surroundings Lack of sleep Lack of privacy or "personal space":
- Working on a team with ungodly, profane men Constant mobility
- A domineering boss Responsibility for the safety of large numbers of people
- Being outnumbered in a group decision Imminent physical danger

PART III. FOR THE INTERVIEWER ONLY

Please comment on the following:

	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Satisfactory</u>	<u>Excellent</u>
Applicant's use of English	_____	_____	_____
Applicant's clarity of expression	_____	_____	_____
Applicant's bearing and posture	_____	_____	_____
Applicant's grooming	_____	_____	_____
Applicant's poise under pressure of interview	_____	_____	_____

I DO DON'T judge this applicant to be qualified for approval as a chaplain candidate in the USAF USA USN .

Interviewer's Signature Date Place of Interview

CHAPLAINS' MANUAL

Presbyterian and Reformed Commission on Chaplains and Military Personnel (PRCCMP, also known as the PRCC)

Revised 1984, 1989, 2000, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 (July)

PRCCMP Member Denominations: Associate Reformed

Presbyterian Church (ARPC)
1 Cleveland St., Suite 110
Greenville, SC 29601
864-232-8297

Korean American Presbyterian Church (KAPC)
8500 Bolsa Avenue, Westminster, CA
92683
714-891-9133

Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC)
607 North Easton Road
Building E, Box P Willow Grove PA
19090
215-830-0900

Presbyterian Church in America (PCA)
% Mission to North America
1700 North Brown Road, Suite 101
Lawrenceville, GA 30043-8143
678-825-1200

Reformed Presbyterian Church of North
America (RPCNA)
7408 Penn Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15208
412-731-1177

PRCCMP Associate Member Denominations: Korean Presbyterian

Church in America - Koshin (KPCA)
Rev. Young J. Woo - Moderator
1345 S. Dayton Street, Denver, CO 80247
303)750-0696

United Reformed Churches in North America (URCNA)
% Rev. Bradd L. Nymeyer, Stated Clerk
227 1st. Ave. SE, Sioux Center, IA 51250-1522 (712) 722-1965

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Constitution	2
By-Laws.....	5
Requirements and Duties	8
Policy and Guidance Handbook.....	18
I. ECCLESIASTICAL BASIS OF LITURGICAL, SACRAMENTAL AND PASTORAL ACTS PERFORMED BY MILITARY CHAPLAINS	18
II. CODE OF ETHICS FOR PRCCCMP-ENDORSED CHAPLAINS	19
III. FEES, DUES, CONTRIBUTIONS, AND GIFTS	20
IV. WOMEN IN COMBAT	22
V. PRAYING IN JESUS' NAME	26
VI. HOMOSEXUALITY	28

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I — NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Presbyterian and Reformed Commission on Chaplains and Military Personnel.

ARTICLE II — PURPOSES

“The Presbyterian and Reformed Commission on Chaplains and Military Personnel is a ministry of member denominations dedicated to obeying Christ’s Great Commission by providing men to serve as chaplains in military and civilian organizations. The Commission endorses and ecclesiastically supports ordained, qualified chaplains; approves chaplain candidates; and helps presbyteries and congregations in biblical ministry to military personnel and their families. - PRCCCMP Missions Statement

The Commission is the chaplain endorsing agency of its member denominations (not an ecclesiastical commission in the technical sense). The Commission was created to assist in carrying out their ministries to members of the Armed Forces and other institutions. Since the primary structure of such ministries is through formal chaplaincies, the principal activity and concern of the Commission shall be with chaplains. In carrying out its mission, the Commission functions in the following ways:

1. Maintaining liaison with the appropriate contact point of each member denomination, and through their various presbyteries, to:
 - a. Provide current information regarding criteria, policies and procedures for the appointment of ministers as chaplains.
 - b. Provide a technical service to the presbyteries by recommending qualified candidates to the Chaplaincy.
2. Maintaining cooperative relationships with the Armed Forces Chaplain Board and the leadership of military and other institutional chaplaincies by:
 - a. Certifying to the proper agencies the ecclesiastical endorsements approvals granted by the member denominations through their various presbyteries.
 - b. Serving as a representative body for problems referred by or concerning chaplains, both individually and collectively.
3. Maintaining contact and liaison with individual chaplains serving in the Armed Forces and other institutions through regular reports, newsletters, written correspondence, and personal visits as authorized by the Commission.
4. Establishing and maintaining methods of liaison with individual congregations of the member denominations to assist them in providing adequate ministry to their members while they are separated from the particular church during periods in the Armed Forces and other institutions.
5. Keeping member denominations informed of significant developments, trends, issues and problems concerning chaplains and members of the Armed Forces and other institutions and to report annually on the activity of the Commission to each member denomination through the proper agencies.
6. Assisting the presbyteries in the promotion of the ministry of the Chaplaincy to the member denominations and their particular churches.

ARTICLE III — MEMBERSHIP

The Commission is made up of the following member denominations:

1. Korean American Presbyterian Church
2. The Orthodox Presbyterian Church
3. Presbyterian Church in America
4. Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America

Any member denomination may withdraw from the Commission by act of its General

Assembly/Synod. Any denomination seeking membership in the Commission shall:

1. Submit a letter of application for membership to the Commission no later than 1 January of the year in which it desires membership.
2. Be approved by vote of all current member denominations at their General Assembly/Synod.

Each member denomination or its responsible committee shall elect its representatives to serve as voting members of the Commission, with qualifications and terms to be set by the member denominations.

Each denomination shall be entitled to three Commission members for its first fifty thousand members or portion thereof. One Commission member may be added for each additional fifty thousand members or portion thereof.

The Commission may serve as the endorsing agency for applicants of associate member denominations that are in doctrinal agreement with the standards of the member denominations. The Commission will only entertain applications from denominations that are members of the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council (NAPARC) for associate membership in the PRCCCMP. Formal applications from prospective associate member denominations will be handled on a case-by-case basis and will be subject to approval at the next meeting of the Commission.

ARTICLE IV — INCORPORATION

The Commission shall be incorporated under the corporation laws of the State of Colorado relating to non-profit, religious corporations.

ARTICLE V — RULES OF ORDER

The Commission shall regulate its own proceedings in accordance with its Articles of Incorporation, Constitution, By-Laws, and Roberts Rules of Order (current edition). Any portion of the By-Laws and their rules of order, except Article VII of the By-Laws, may be temporarily suspended by a two-thirds vote.

ARTICLE VI — FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The Commission shall be financially supported primarily through contributions of member denominations and donations from interested individuals, churches and groups. Commission income shall be supplemented by the dues of endorsed chaplains.

- A. The financial support of the Commission shall be primarily the responsibility of the member denominations, for whom the Commission endorses and supports chaplains.
1. Each denomination shall contribute a specific annual amount for each active duty, Reserve components, Veterans Administration or civilian chaplain requiring an endorsement by the employing body. Chaplains not required to have an endorsement will not be counted.
 2. In addition, the Commission shall be free to communicate with and to receive donations from individuals, churches or other organizations, both within and outside of the member denominations.
 3. Each denomination shall be responsible for all expenses incurred by its own representatives at any meetings of the Commission or its committees.
- B. Chaplains also have a responsibility to share in the cost of their endorsement and support. Chaplain dues, as distinct from denominational contributions, will be assessed and received as follows:
1. Amounts of chaplain dues shall be reviewed by the Commission at least biennially.
 2. Each military and civilian chaplain who requires an ecclesiastical endorsement shall pay a designated amount of annual dues. Requests for waivers of dues shall be considered by the Commission when received in writing.
 3. A chaplain may request his church, presbytery, or denomination to pay some or all of his dues, or a presbytery or denomination may elect to contribute all or part of their chaplains' dues to the Commission.
 4. If a chaplain's dues remain unpaid, and a waiver request is not approved by the Commission, the Executive Director shall inform his denominational representatives on the Commission. The Chaplain's denomination will become responsible for the dues, and will deal with the chaplain through his presbytery as it desires.

ARTICLE VII — STAFF

The Commission shall have as its chief operating officer an Executive Director, and may hire such other personnel as it may determine.

ARTICLE VIII — AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended only by written submission of proposed amendments to each member denomination and by subsequent approval of each denomination at their annual General Assembly/Synod. Proposed amendments shall be provided to members of the Commission with at least twenty days prior notice to the date of the meeting. If a constitutional quorum is present, a 3/4ths vote shall be required to submit a proposed amendment to member denomination's General Assembly/Synod for approval.

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I — THE OFFICERS

The Commission shall have the following officers to be elected annually: chairman, vice-chairman, and secretary.

ARTICLE II — MEETINGS

The Commission shall meet twice each year at a time set by the Commission. One meeting will be in-person; the other may be via electronic means. The chairman may call special meetings (either in person or via electronic means) of the Commission by petition of at least one-third of the membership, representing at least two member denominations.

ARTICLE III — COMMITTEES

- A. The Commission may establish committees as required to facilitate the business of the Commission. The Chairman will be responsible for appointing members of these committees.
- B. The Commission may establish an Executive Committee to meet as required during the course of the year between the regular meetings, at the discretion of the Executive Director and with the concurrence of the Chairman of the Commission.
1. The purpose of the Executive Committee will be to assist the Executive Director in making decisions usually reserved for the full Commission when such decisions need to be made between meetings.
 2. The Commission will review and affirm or amend actions of the Executive Committee at its next stated meeting. The authority to make or amend Commission policy remains solely with the full Commission.
 3. The Commission in consultation with the Executive Director will select Commission members able and willing to serve on the Executive Committee and meet as often as required in conducting the business of the Commission.
 4. The Executive Committee will include representation from a majority of the member denominations.
 5. Minutes will be recorded at each Executive Committee meeting and subsequently reviewed by the Commission at its next stated meeting.
 6. The Executive Director will notify the Executive Committee members when there is a need for them to meet in person or by electronic means.
 7. The Executive Director shall retain the authority to consult with some or all Commission members of a particular denomination in cases where he believes the personal privacy of a particular chaplain or military service member needs to be protected.

ARTICLE IV. - FINANCIAL POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The financial policy and procedures shall be proposed by the Executive Director and approved by the Commission. The Mission to North America (MNA) Chaplain Coordinator provides administrative support to the Executive Director of the PRCCMP and ensures financial accountability. The fiscal year for the Commission shall be January 1 through December 31.

ARTICLE V — SELECTION,
EMPLOYMENT AND TERMINATION OF STAFF

A. Staff:

1. Executive Director: Selected by the PRCCCMP and approved by the PCA MNA Coordinator. (It is understood that the Executive Director is also the MNA Chaplain Coordinator for the PCA. The Coordinator for MNA oversees the MNA Chaplain Coordinator).
2. Associate Directors: Selected by the Executive Director and approved by the PRCCCMP.
3. Associate Director/Administrative Assistant for the PRCCCMP: Selected by the Executive Director and approved by the PCA MNA Coordinator. (It is understood that this person also serves as the PCA MNA “Associate Coordinator for Civilian Chaplains and Administrative Assistant”).

B. Terms of Service:

1. The Executive Director: shall be elected by the PRCCCMP for a term of four years.
2. Associate Director(s): shall serve for a period of one year, or less, such service to be approved annually by the PRCCCMP.
3. Associate Director/Administrative Assistant for the PRCCCMP: shall serve in an indefinite status as long as funds are available.

C. Termination of Service:

1. Executive Director: Should the Commission desire, for cause, to terminate the Executive Director’s services, or he desire to resign, at least ninety days’ notice shall be given unless waived by mutual agreement. In such a case, three members representing all five member denominations of the Commission and appointed by the Chairman will counsel with the Executive Director. It is understood that no action will take place without consultation and coordination with the Coordinator, Mission to North America (MNA).
2. Associate Directors: Can be terminated with the same stipulations as for the Executive Director except with 30 days notice.
3. Associate Director/Administrative Assistant for the PRCCCMP: Can be terminated with the same stipulations as for the Executive Director except with 30 days notice.

D. Additional staff: Other staff, as proposed by the Executive Director and approved by the PRCCCMP, can be added. Details of funding for a new staff position would be coordinated with the denominational connection of the new staff person.

ARTICLE VI — DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Executive Director shall function as the executive of the Commission and shall give supervision to all other personnel. He shall have responsibility and authority of the general direction and oversight of the total program of the Commission. He shall be responsive and accountable to the policies and actions of the Commission at all times.

ARTICLE VII — QUORUM

For either regular or special meetings of the Commission, a quorum shall consist of more than one-half of the Commissioners, with at least a majority of the member denominations present.

ARTICLE VIII — AMENDMENTS

The By-Laws of the Commission may be amended at any regular meeting of the Commission by a three-fourths vote of the voting representatives present, provided that written notice of such action shall have been sent out in connection with the notice of the meeting at least 10 days prior to the date of the meeting.

REQUIREMENTS AND DUTIES

OCTOBER 28, 1983 (REVISED - FEBRUARY 2010)

I. PURPOSE AND DUTIES OF THE COMMISSION

- A. Serve as the liaison between the member denominations and the offices of the Chiefs of Military Chaplains, of the Chief of the Veterans Administration Chaplains, and of the other agencies or organizations to which our chaplains are assigned. (Commission Constitution II.2.)
- B. Keep these offices appropriately informed as to the developments in, and growth of, our denominations, as well as any concerns we have regarding the free exercise of religion or any restrictions proposed thereof that may compromise the ordination vows of any of our chaplains. - (Commission Constitution II.2.)
- C. Keep member denominations informed concerning the Chaplaincy programs, and to encourage prayer support for chaplains. (Commission Constitution II.1a, and II.4, 5, 6.)
- D. Assist with the recruitment of well-qualified individuals in order to meet various chaplain procurement goals, such as those established by the Department of Defense. (Commission Constitution II.2.)
- E. Provide the official technical endorsement necessary for an applicant approved by his presbytery, providing he meets all of the necessary requirements of his denomination and of the Chaplaincy to which he is being endorsed. (Commission Constitution II.1b. and II.2a.)
- F. Encourage and assist our chaplains by every means possible, such as by maintaining contact, by serving as a liaison and representative body, by promoting the ministry of the Chaplaincy, etc. (Commission Constitution II.2.b. and II.3, 4,6.)

- G. Establish and maintain methods of liaison with individual congregations of the member denominations to assist them in providing adequate ministry to their members while they are separated from the particular church during periods in the Armed Forces and other institutions.
- H. Meet at least twice per year and at other times when needed for the purpose of transacting the business of the Commission. (Commission By-Laws II.)

II. COMPOSITION OF THE COMMISSION

- A. Members are elected by each denomination's General Assembly/Synod or by its authorized committee. (Commission Constitution III.)
- B. Prospective members, when being nominated to serve on the Commission, shall be asked if they are in full support of the stated positions of the respective General Assemblies and Synod and the PRCCMP. If they cannot so affirm, they should not be nominated or stand for election.
- C. The Commission annually elects its own Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary. Its chief operating officer, the Executive Director, is also elected by the Commission every four years. (Commission By-Laws I; IV. and Commission Constitution VII.)

III. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Chairman: The Chairman shall:
 - 1. Preside at all Commission meetings and regularly communicate with the Executive Director between meetings. At his request, the Vice-Chairman shall preside.
 - 2. Appoint members to committees as necessary to facilitate the business of the Commission.
- B. Secretary: The Secretary shall keep the minutes of the Commission meetings, making them available to the members.
- C. Executive Director. The Director shall:
 - 1. administer the affairs of the Commission, with the assistance of the Commission members, in accordance with our Constitution and By-Laws.
 - 2. process all applications for endorsement, working as much as possible with the Commission members.

He shall attempt to interview each applicant personally, and if this is not possible or feasible, he shall designate another person to conduct the interview, such as a member of the Commission or a chaplain (full-time, part-time, or retired) endorsed by the Commission. Upon full satisfactory completion of the application, and with the approval of the applicant's presbytery and the approval of the person conducting the personal interview or, if the interviewer's report is negative, the full Commission, the Executive Director shall prepare the official endorsement of the applicant.
 - 3. keep in touch with each endorsee by correspondence, telephone, and personal visits.
 - 4. keep accurate files and records of all chaplains holding Commission endorsement.

5. prepare an annual report for the member denominations and shall provide information and news releases on Chaplaincy programs as desired by our churches, denominations, agencies, and publications.
6. be the primary representative of the Commission, particularly in meetings of the endorsing agents in Washington or elsewhere, and in the offices of the Chiefs of Military Chaplains, or the Chief of the Veterans Administration chaplains, and of the other agencies or organizations to which our chaplains are assigned.
7. keep a record of all expenses of the Commission, and he shall provide an annual written report of these expenses.
8. recruit and supervise any Associate Directors who assist in the task of keeping in contact with all endorsees.

IV THE REQUIREMENTS FOR CHAPLAINCY ECCLESIASTICAL ENDORSEMENT

A. The Applicant shall:

1. meet all the requirements of his presbytery for membership as a man under care, a licentiate, or fully ordained member, and he must be in good standing.
2. be approved by his presbytery to the Commission.
3. have a minimum of two years of practical ministry experience or internship, or its equivalent, such as preaching, youth work, evangelism, teaching, missionary work, counseling, etc. This requirement will be waived in the case of endorsement for the military chaplaincy's program for seminarians, or in extraordinary circumstances if both the individual's presbytery and the Commission approve.
4. give evidence that he is able to adjust to the Chaplaincy, and that he is able to work within the system without thinking that he is compromising his personal convictions
5. give evidence that he is able to minister appropriately to military personnel and their families, to hospital patients and those attending or related to them, or to whatever constituency is served by the Chaplaincy to which he is seeking endorsement.
6. give evidence that he is able to submit to military authority or whatever lawful authority he is going to be serving under, and he must be willing to honor and abide by the requirements and guidelines of his denomination as far as chaplains are concerned.
7. meet all of the requirements of the Chaplaincy for which he is applying. In the case of military Chaplaincy, for example, this would include at least 120 hours of undergraduate credit, the M.Div. degree (a minimum of 72 semester hours of graduate seminary study) plus ordination. Non-military organizations may have different requirements. Department of Defense (DoD) minimum standards include at least 120 hours of undergraduate credit, a minimum of 72 semester hours of graduate seminary study plus ordination. It should be noted that member PRCCMP denominations may have higher educational standards than DoD. Non-military organizations may have different requirements.

8. submit to the Commission a completed application form, with references as requested.
9. submit a nonrefundable processing fee with all new endorsement requests to defray administrative costs.
10. understand that ecclesiastical endorsement or approval may be withdrawn by the Commission upon the request of the individual, the individual's presbytery, or for cause. In the case of withdrawal for cause, the appropriate denominational provisions for discipline shall have been followed.

B. Non-Military/Civilian Chaplains. In addition to the points in "A" above, the Applicant shall:

1. submit a nonrefundable processing fee with all new endorsement requests to defray administrative costs.
2. ask the Executive Director for a professional Endorsement Certificate, suitable for framing.
3. ask the Executive Director for a wallet-sized identification card to prove endorsement by the PRCCCMP.

V. THE REQUIREMENTS FOR CHAPLAIN CANDIDATE ECCLESIASTICAL APPROVAL

A. The candidate applicant shall submit to the Executive Director a completed application packet with references as requested.

B. The candidate shall:

1. be a member of a church that is in a denomination that has membership in the PRCCCMP, and ordinarily the candidate should be under care of a presbytery. The candidate, in any case, shall come under care of a presbytery within a year of approval. The presbytery must be of a denomination for which the PRCC endorses. The Executive Director can approve appropriate extensions of the one-year rule.
2. give evidence that he is able to adjust to the Chaplaincy, and that he is able to work within the system without thinking that he is compromising his personal convictions. During his seminary training, the candidate shall give evidence that he is able to minister appropriately to military personnel and their families, to hospital patients and those attending or related to them, or to whatever constituency is served by the Chaplaincy to which he is seeking endorsement.
3. give evidence that he is able to submit to military authority or whatever lawful authority which he is going to ~~be~~-serve, and must be willing to honor and abide by the requirements and guidelines of his denomination.
4. make every effort to participate in the military training required and offered by the military service for which he is a candidate.
5. maintain regular contact with his presbytery and attend presbytery meetings unless providentially hindered.

6. keep the Executive Director of the Commission informed on such matters as change of seminary and family status. The candidate shall provide the Executive Director, the church and the presbytery under which the candidate is under care, with updated contact information.
 7. make a yearly report to the Executive Director and shall provide any other information relative to his ministry when requested by the Commission or his presbytery.
- C. Approval may be withdrawn by the Executive Director upon the request of the individual chaplain's church or presbytery, or for cause. In the case of withdrawal for cause, the appropriate denominational provisions for discipline shall have been followed.
- D. The candidate may expect of the Commission appropriate information, prayer, mentoring and counsel through its Executive Director, its individual members, or other chaplains endorsed by the Commission. Each candidate will be assigned an active duty, reserve components or retired PRCCMP chaplain as a mentor during his time in the candidate program.

VI. WHAT THE ENDORSEE/CANDIDATE MAY EXPECT FROM HIS DENOMINATION AND THE COMMISSION

- A. He may expect the official approval and endorsement of his denomination and the Commission as long as he meets the military or other requirements of his Chaplaincy, and as long as he remains a member in good standing of his presbytery.
- B. He may expect official representation with his chaplaincy's leadership, such as with the Chief of Chaplains of the service for which he is endorsed if he is a military chaplain.
- C. He may expect of the commission appropriate information and counsel through its Executive Director, its individual members, or other chaplains endorsed by the Commission.
- D. He may expect the prayers and support particularly of his presbytery and denomination, and of local churches within his denomination.

VII. WHAT THE COMMISSION EXPECTS FROM THE ENDORSEE/CANDIDATE

- A. Maintain regular contact with his presbytery- by providing copies of his required reports and through other forms of communication such as a letter to the Stated Clerk of Presbytery for excused absence when you are unable to attend.
- B. Notify the Executive Director and Presbytery:
1. On change of assignment or duty station, change of status, change of address, promotion, etc.
 2. If significant difficulties with, or disciplinary action by, his command are encountered. The endorsee's denominational commissioners must be notified as well.
 3. If the endorsee or candidate changes or considers changing his theological position. It is a profound and necessary professional courtesy to notify the Endorser and Presbytery of potential or actual changes in one's vows.

C. Provide regular reports:

1. Active duty military chaplains will submit three reports per year to the Commission and provide any other information relative to their ministry when requested by the Commission or their presbytery. Those tertiary reports are due March 1, July 1, and November 1.
2. Reserve Component Military Chaplains and Civilian Chaplains will submit at least an annual report to the Commission.

- D. Attend a local PRCC or NAPARC-related church (assuming one is reasonably near-by) if not fully engaged in military or civilian chapel ministry. A PRCCMP chaplain is expected to lead his family in this regard.
- E. Contribute a designated amount per year. In certain areas, such as if he is a military chaplain on active duty or in a reserve forces pay billet, a minimum amount is set for these regular contributions (See Policy and Guidance Handbook).
- F. Support his denomination wherever he may be located by attending local presbytery meetings and visiting area churches and mission stations of the denomination. Support and participate in General Assembly activities when at all possible.

VIII. PRCC MOBILIZATION AGREEMENT SUGGESTIONS

PRCC Mobilization Agreement Suggestions

1. Specify a reasonable time for the chaplain's absence. 90-180 days is a minimum.
2. Make provisions for relationship between chaplain and church/employer should mobilization period exceed 180 days.
3. Make provisions concerning the use of the manse (where provided) or disbursement of any housing allowance normally paid to the chaplain while absent on mobilization. Normally a chaplain will begin receiving the military benefit Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) within 30 days of mobilization. Church employer might reasonably expect chaplain whose family remains in a manse to pay a fair-market rental value to the church after 30 days. If the employer provides a housing allowance, said allowance may be adjusted or curtailed as soon as the first BAH payment is received. A reasonable period of time to allow a family to remain in the manse would be six months.
4. Make provision regarding other benefits such as allowances, stipends, pension, medical plan costs, insurance, use of church/employer-owned car, etc. Federal law mandates that an employer pay vested accrued pension dues for up to five years from date of initial mobilization or extended active duty. Employers are provided by law with a period of time following release from active duty to make up these dues. Medical insurance dues may be continued by the employer on behalf of the chaplain's family and a recommended period is 30-90 days. While the chaplain and family members become eligible for military medicine - CHAMPUS and TRICARE - within 30 days of mobilization, it is reasonable in locales where there are limited military facilities, that the chaplain's family will wish to remain with their primary care provider under their church provided medical insurance carrier. (Federal law does not mandate that an

employer continues medical insurance during a period of mobilization, only that the member is offered full restoration in the medical plan upon release from active duty.) These issues need to be addressed well in advance of mobilization with the reserve or National Guard chaplain's employer/session/congregation in order to arrive at a satisfactory decision that is acceptable to all parties concerned. This avoids misunderstanding or controversy during a chaplain's mobilization (recall).

5. Consider how congregation will seek a pulpit supply and other ministerial coverage for emergencies. (This is most important for National Guard chaplains who may be activated for shorter periods of time during natural disasters, etc.)

6. Contact presbytery for appointment of a temporary session moderator, if applicable.

7. Include a signed Mobilization Agreement with Terms of Call for presbytery approval and acknowledgement. Make provisions for modification or termination of agreement as needed. Refer to church's constitution and/or Book of Order. Remember that federal law takes precedence over less generous provisions of a Mobilization Agreement. A copy of all signed and periodic updated Agreements must be sent to the current endorser of the Presbyterian and Reformed Commission.

Specific Issues and Suggestions

Chaplains in the military Reserve Components (RC) may be expected to serve one weekend drill per month and two weeks of active duty for training (ADT) each year. The obligation can often be met on other than weekends, depending on the military unit, type of RC involvement and mission. The church/employer may agree to absorb the costs of pulpit-supply or substitute clergy during these normal periods.

Employers/Sessions/Congregations may negotiate with their clergy in Terms of Call to provide the extra two weeks as additional vacation with or without pay and may ask the chaplain to reimburse pay for a visiting preacher. Normally pension, medical, and housing benefits should be continued by the employer during these periods.

A Mobilization Agreement should address provisions during longer periods of absence. Church employers may wish to agree to an initial period of time during which they will continue the normal payment of pension and medical dues, however federal law only guarantees pension dues (not medical insurance dues) and does allow that the payment of dues be suspended during the mobilization period. These dues must be made up by the employer upon return of the chaplain to his civilian employment.

Ensure that the chaplain, the session, and the presbytery are in agreement on the provisions under which the chaplain and family will be provided for if the chaplain is deployed or mobilized.

Civilian chaplains and their employers (hospitals, nursing homes, prisons and other non-denominational employers) should become familiar with the provisions of the federal law: Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA), specifically section 4312 on reemployment rights, and section 4318 regarding pension benefits. The law may be found on the web at www.esgr.org/userra.html. Normally a resignation does not preclude return rights provided by USERRA unless these are specifically waived in writing. NOTE: Clergy of denominational churches are NOT covered under USERRA.

Reserve and National Guard chaplains remain members of their presbyteries which have given approval to serve and to occasionally “labor outside the bounds.” Chaplains should keep their presbytery informed of active duty location and prospect for duration of deployment. A copy of the signed Mobilization Agreement should be sent to The Presbyterian and Reformed Commission (PRCC) in Atlanta, GA. The PRCC & the chaplain’s presbytery is to be notified whenever a chaplain is mobilized. Activated Reserve & National Guard chaplains are to report quarterly to their presbytery and the PRCC using a form provided by the PRCC.

(SAMPLE)

In the event of mobilization of any branch of Reserve or National Guard forces, the following agreement between _____ (pastor/clergy) and _____ (church/employer) will take effect for up to twelve months from the date of deployment.

1. The pastor will be immediately relieved of responsibilities to the congregation in order to report and prepare for military duty.
2. Determine the length of the deployment through the military department and the deployment orders.
3. The pastor and the congregation will prepare a service of blessing and sending forth for the pastor chaplain.
4. The church council will arrange for interim pastoral leadership and care during the pastor's absence.
5. The church will not consider itself vacant during the duration of this agreement.
6. Regarding the pastor's salary and benefits during the deployment, we agree to the following terms:
 - Salary – discontinued
 - Social Security allowance – discontinued
 - Auto allowance – discontinued
 - Educational allowance – discontinued
 - Denominational pension – continued
 - Health and hospitalization insurance – to be continued until active duty-provisions for family medical coverage begin.
7. Housing allowance (or use of the parsonage, including utilities) would be continued up to twelve months.
8. Provision should be made for the modification and/or termination of this agreement upon mutual consent of both parties.

Signature of Pastor

Date

Signature of Church Clerk

Date

GRACE CHURCH (PCA) MOBILIZATION AGREEMENT

In the event of mobilization of any branch of Reserve or National Guard forces, the following agreement between Grace Church (PCA) and its Senior Pastor, Reverend Joe Blow, Chaplain (Captain) USAF ANG, will take effect. It is noted that the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) does not apply to parish clergy. It does, however, provide valuable counsel and should serve as a resource document in matters related to deployment and return.

9. The pastor will be relieved of responsibilities to the congregation in order to prepare and report for military duty (The USERRA provides helpful guidelines in this matter). While some emergency cases may not permit, it will be considered reasonable that at least a 30 day notice be provided by the pastor to the church.
10. The length of the deployment will be determined through the military department and the deployment orders. Upon completion of the deployment, the pastor will return (and be permitted by the church to return) to work in a timely fashion (The USERRA provides helpful guidelines in this matter). If return from deployment is the result of a disqualifying discharge or other than honorable conditions, these terms are not binding on either party.
11. The pastor and the congregation will prepare a service of blessing and sending forth for the pastor chaplain. Similarly a service of thanksgiving will be held upon his return.
12. The Session will arrange for interim pastoral leadership and care during the pastor's absence.
13. The church will not consider itself vacant (without a pastor) during the duration of this deployment.
14. Regarding the pastor's salary and benefits during the deployment, we agree to the following terms: All salary and allowances shall continue for a period of 30 days. Then,
 - Salary – Suspended
 - Continuing Education – Suspended
 - Annuity - Suspended
 - Health and hospitalization insurance – to be continued until active duty-provisions for family medical coverage begin.
 - Housing allowance – to be continued.
15. Modification and/or termination of this agreement upon mutual consent of both parties.
16. These items are meant to be a minimum guideline to support and maintain the pastoral relationship between Reverend Joe Blow and Grace Church (PCA). Implementation of these items requires trust, good faith, and close cooperation between the parties.

Signature of Pastor

Date

IX. EXCEPTIONS

Exceptions to the guidelines set forth in this manual shall be made only with the approval of the Commission. Exceptions shall be considered either at the request of member denominations or at the initiative of the Commission itself. In either case, the Executive Director is to inform and normally secure the approval of each member denomination's mission's coordinator, Chaplaincy committee chairman, or other official who is charged with the leading responsibility for chaplaincy affairs.

X. SUMMARY

In view of our responsibility to God, the Church, and institutions including the government of the United States, the Commission cannot and must not look lightly upon a man holding the Commission's endorsement or approval as a matter of convenience and demonstrate little interest in the principles, practices and ministry of his denomination. The members of the Commission are obligated to maintain a constant vigil to see that mutual responsibilities indicated in this manual are being fulfilled in a manner that is pleasing to God.

POLICY AND GUIDANCE HANDBOOK

I. ECCLESIASTICAL BASIS OF LITURGICAL, SACRAMENTAL AND PASTORAL ACTS PERFORMED BY MILITARY CHAPLAINS

The Armed Forces of the United States do not generate religious ministry. They receive ministries from the churches and religious bodies of America in accordance with the religiously pluralistic pattern of American society. The United States Code, for example, provides in the case of the Navy and Marine Corps, that: “An officer of the Chaplain Corps may conduct public worship according to the manner and format of the church of which he is a member.” (10 U.S.C. 6031(a))

Inasmuch as all liturgical, sacramental, and pastoral acts are performed on the basis of ecclesiastical rather than military credentials, it follows that the ultimate responsibility for the substantive nature of chaplains’ religious ministry rests with their denominations.

The religious context of the Armed Forces, like that of American society at large, is one of religious pluralism, in which independent churches and religious bodies coexist in mutual respect. Because of the impracticality of providing clergy of every faith or denomination at every military command, the Armed Forces and the churches of America have evolved jointly a pattern of cooperative ministry. The principle of cooperative ministry places on every chaplain the obligations to: (a) make provision for meeting the religious needs of those in the command who are adherents of other churches, and (b) cooperate with other chaplains and commands in meeting the religious needs of members of the chaplain’s own faith group.

Inasmuch as the denominations represented by the Commission are confessional bodies which seek to adhere to their standards at all points, each chaplain must be guided in his ministry not merely on an individual interpretation of Scripture, but by the theology and ecclesiology set forth in the Westminster Standards or, for the URCNA chaplains, the Three Forms of Unity (the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dort) and the denomination’s Book of Church Order.

These policies, therefore, will be followed by chaplains endorsed by this Commission:

1. A chaplain shall have liberty in the full and free presentation of the whole counsel of God as contained in the Scriptures and summarized in the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms or, for the URCNA endorsed chaplains, the Three Forms of Unity (the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dort).
2. No military or civilian higher authority may require* a PRCCCMP chaplain to:
 - a. Lead or participate in conducting worship services with non-Trinitarian chaplains.
 - b. Conduct worship services with chaplains whose ordination requirements do not meet the ordination requirements of the PRCCCMP chaplain’s particular denomination.
 - c. Conduct worship services that are not consistent with the PRCCCMP chaplain's convictions on the matter.

- d. Pray without invoking the name of Jesus, because the PRCCCMP member denominations adhere to the Westminster Standards (Westminster Confession of Faith, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms) or, for the URCNA chaplains, the Three Forms of Unity (the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dort) as their statement of faith, and because these standards define prayer that is acceptable to God as necessarily being made in the name of the Son (WCF xxi.3). The PRCCCMP upholds the constitutionally protected right of the PRCCCMP-endorsed chaplains to pray in the name of Jesus, both in worship services and in other public ceremonies. This in no way prohibits a chaplain from working with ordained chaplains in other appropriate professional areas of ministry.
3. Since the sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, are given to the church in particular, chaplains must exercise caution in their administration by assuming that:
 - a. The sacraments are always administered in conjunction with the faithful preaching of the Word.
 - b. An appropriate and clear 'fencing of the table' is made each time the sacrament is administered.
 4. Marriage is a divine ordinance and therefore careful attention to the Biblical principles, as they are defined in the Westminster Confession of Faith, or, for the URCNA chaplains, the Three Forms of Unity (the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dort)** must be followed by all our chaplains.

October 28, 1983 (Rev. December 2000, February 2007)

*The Commission debated whether to italicize the word "require" to clarify its purpose, which is to guide and protect chaplains as necessary rather than prescribe their ministry. The 103 presbyteries (as of 1999) that the Commission serves are the loci of theological oversight of the chaplains.

** Added in February 2008, when the PRCCCMP began as the Endorsing Agency for the URCNA.

II. CODE OF ETHICS FOR PRCCCMP-ENDORSED CHAPLAINS

Whereas Jesus Christ, the Head of His Church, has ordained His body to be His primary instrument through which He carries out His messianic, saving and sanctifying ministry to people,

PURPOSE

We, the Presbyterian and Reformed Commission on Chaplains and Military Personnel (PRCCCMP), representing the churches of our respective member denominations (the PCA, the OPC, and the RPCNA) are committed to endorsing only well-qualified chaplains for military, police, hospital, Veterans Administration, prison, industrial and other institutional chaplaincy ministries. Therefore, we are unequivocally committed to maintaining, by relying on God's sanctifying grace, only the highest standards of chaplain selection, oversight and endorsing accountabilities.

In seeking energetically to maintain a demonstrable and credible commitment to a realistic code of ethics, in support of the above stated purpose, we, the members of the Commission, subscribe to the following specific obligations, and further will require any chaplain we endorse to subscribe, confessing our conscious reliance on God's enabling grace to do so.

OBLIGATIONS

1. To uphold carefully and ethically, without mental reservation, the biblical truths, doctrinal and confessional distinctives, policies and practices of our ordaining and endorsing denominations as represented through the PRCCCMP.
2. To abide by all the requirements for ministry of the institution(s) seeking the ministry services of a PRCCCMP- endorsed chaplain, unless one or more of those requirements is plainly in contradiction to the word of God and the confessional standards of the chaplain's endorsing church. In that unlikely but possible eventuality, we commit to a wholehearted effort to resolve the difference(s) through the process of humble, respectful and biblical discussion.
3. To require our endorsed Chaplains to provide ministry to all those whom they are called to serve, which is in accord with biblical standards of kindness, confidentiality, humility, and ethical regard for those recipients.
4. To respect and uphold the ethical and constitutional right of other endorsers and their respective chaplains, to maintain and express their doctrinal distinctives and ecclesiological practices. At the same time we thereby do not agree or imply any willingness, overtly or covertly, to deny or otherwise suppress the free and appropriate expression of our own distinctives, of which offering prayer in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ is a case in point.
5. To encourage our own (and other non-PRCCCMP endorsed chaplains) to provide the maximum of cooperative ministry without any covert or overt pressure on our own, or other chaplains, to compromise their conscience. At the same time, we are committed to respecting those distinctives, which make a cooperative ministry possible.
6. To seek actively the grace of God, in order to engage in all relevant aspects of endorsement, approval, and oversight of PRCCCMP chaplains in their pastoral ministry, in accordance with recognized standards for a genuinely godly personal conduct in all matters public and private.

Adopted 22 February 2006

III. FEES, DUES, CONTRIBUTIONS, AND GIFTS

A. Fees

1. Military Applicant for Endorsement as a Military Chaplain (Active, Reserves, Guard, Civil Air Patrol) pays a one-time fee of \$100 (this includes a new fee for a PRCC-required background check).
2. Military Chaplain Candidate Applicant pays a one-time fee of \$25.00.
3. Civilian Chaplain Endorsement Applicant pays a one-time fee of \$100 (this includes a new fee for a PRCC-required background check).
4. All endorsement applicants shall pay a fee for a background check (included in the revised application fees above).

The Endorsed Chaplain will receive an Endorsement Certificate and ID card.

NOTE: An unendorsed Civilian Chaplain may choose to pay a \$50.00 fee and receive these two documents.

B. Dues

1. That dues be assessed at the rate of 2% of base pay, rounded down, for Reserve and National Guard chaplains as follows:

O-2 and O-3	\$180 per year	O-5	\$288 per
O-4	\$204 per year	O-6	\$348 per

2. That dues be assessed at the rate of 1% of base pay for active duty military and Veterans Administration chaplains as follows: (Note: The amounts have been adjusted down to the next number divisible by 12 to facilitate automatic monthly payment plans.)

O-2	\$348 per year	O-5	\$792 per
O-3	\$396 per year	O-6	\$996 per
O-4	\$600 per year		

Full-time VA chaplains: GS-11, \$492 per year; GS-12, \$636 per year.

On motion, the Commission voted to recommend that dues be required of those civilian chaplains whose employers or certifying bodies require an ecclesiastical endorsement as follows:

Full-time paid civilian chaplains	\$300 per year
Part-time paid civilian chaplains	\$180 per year

For those paid civilian chaplains whose employers or certifying bodies do not require an endorsement, annual dues are \$120.

Volunteer (unpaid) chaplains pay no dues.

Gifts to the PRCCCMP over and above the required dues would be appreciated.

C Contributions:

Each PRCCCMP denomination makes a \$500/year contribution for each endorsed military and VA chaplain.

D. Annual denominational contributions and individual chaplain dues are payable by December 1 of each year.

Exception: If a chaplain is on a monthly auto-pay plan that ensures his dues are paid in full by year end, he is exempt from the December 1 deadline. His December payment may fall later in the month of December.

E. Church Gifts

Funds sent by churches in the name of a particular chaplain, unless designated for his dues, are used for PRCCCMP Chaplain Ministries. If a chaplain needs ministry resources, he is encouraged to request the PRCC Staff to advertise those needs to the Church, but he must not attempt to re-direct church gifts from the PRCC budget to his own ministry needs. If a chaplain has arranged for a church to specifically pay their dues, the PRCC Administrative Assistant must be notified by him of this arrangement in writing so that church's gift for that purpose can be processed correctly.

IV. WOMEN IN COMBAT

In recent years, the major churches making up the membership of the Presbyterian and Reformed Commission on Chaplains and Military Personnel (PRCCCMP) have in their senior deliberative bodies (General Assemblies and Synod) passed resolutions concerning the use of women as military combatants in the Armed Forces of the United States. Since this was the first formal response of our churches to the evolving policy and practice of female integration into all areas of the U. S. military, the result has been discussion and dialogue in many circles with a commensurate number of questions and concerns as to the practical meaning of these resolutions for members of these respective church bodies.

To assist in applying the resolutions, the PRCCCMP provided this response to encourage study of commissioned study papers from the committees of each church. The approved statements, grounds and committee study reports are in published synod and assembly minutes. This response of the PRCCCMP may be made available to church members and interested individuals and may be used as an aid by pastors, elders, chaplains, church leaders and military members in counseling others on this subject.

It is our prayer that each church member and fellow follower of the Lord Jesus Christ and His Word will consider the resolutions of General Assemblies and Synod with due seriousness, applying these principles to living out their calling as disciples of the Lord.

DECLARATIONS OF THE SYNOD/ASSEMBLIES

A. RPCNA 168th Synod, 1998

“Therefore, be it now resolved:

That, while recognizing the right and duty that women have to self-defense, which may involve physical violence (Judges 9:53), it is our conviction that Biblical teaching does not give warrant to employ women for military combat.

That, we direct all presbyteries and sessions, to instruct their congregations in this regard,

That we urge any of our female members who are considering or presently engaged in military service to take counsel of their Sessions as to the teaching of God's Word in the matter, and

That the Clerk of the Synod send a copy of this resolution to the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council (NAPARC), and the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE), and to our military chaplains, and

That the Moderator of the Synod be directed to assign a representative to present a copy of this resolution to the President of the United States, the Senate, and the House of Representatives.”

B. OPC 68th General Assembly, 2001

“That the 68th GA declares that the use of women in military combat is both contrary to nature and inconsistent with the Word of God.

Grounds [also adopted by the GA]:

1. This is a ministerial declaration of what is revealed in Scripture, cf. 1 Corinthians 11:14; Report I, Sections III-IV. [See pp. 265-269 of the 68th GA minutes].

3. This provides the biblical counsel requested by the PRCCCMP without making any further pronouncements that would, presumably, cause the church to ‘intermeddle with civil affairs

which concern the commonwealth' in a matter that some would say is not yet an extraordinary case, cf. Westminster Confession of Faith, 31.4.”

C. PCA 29th General Assembly, 2001

“That the Philadelphia Presbytery Overture, the PRCCCMP letter, and the Report of the Bills and Overtures Committee be answered by this report.

That the PCA continue to recognize that the individual conscience, guided by the Word of God and responsive to the counsel of the Church, must decide concerning the propriety of voluntary service in the military.

That the PCA believes that military service is a just and godly calling; however, that it presents special and difficult moral challenges in light of the integration of women into the armed services.

That the women of the PCA be warned of the many difficulties and moral and physical dangers involved in serving in the military in secular America, due to their inherent greater vulnerability.

That individual believers as citizens be urged to exercise their godly influence to bring about authentic spiritual and moral reformation in the military services.

That the PCA chaplains be encouraged in their continued ministry to all male and female personnel in their spheres of ministry.

That pastors and sessions be informed of this report and be encouraged to instruct their people in the matters it presents.

That the NAPARC and NAE churches be informed of the PCA's position on this matter.”

D. PCA 30th General Assembly, 2002

“1. Acknowledging that the child in the womb is “a person covered by Divine protection”

(Statement on Abortion, Sixth General Assembly); and that women of childbearing age often carry unborn children while remaining unaware of their child's existence; and that principles of just war require the minimization of the loss of life—particularly innocent civilians; the PCA declares that any policy which intentionally places in harms way as military combatants women who are, or might be, carrying a child in their womb, is a violation of God's Moral Law.

2. This Assembly declares it to be the biblical duty of man to defend woman and therefore condemns the use of women as military combatants, as well as any conscription of women into the Armed Services of the United States.

3. Therefore be it resolved that the Thirtieth General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America adopts the above as pastoral counsel for the good of the members, the officers, and especially the military chaplains of the Presbyterian Church in America.

4. Be it further resolved that the Presbyterian Church in America supports the decision of any of its members to object to, as a matter of conscience, the conscription of women or the use of women as military combatants.”

E. PCA 31st General Assembly, 2003

“Nothing done by the previous Assembly compels any court of original jurisdiction to exercise discipline on issues pertaining to the report on the Ad-Interim Study Committee on Women in the Military.”

PRCCCMP UNDERSTANDING OF THE FORCE OF SYNOD/ASSEMBLY DECLARATIONS

We believe that the actions of the General Assemblies/Synod, rightly understood, have significant weight for chaplains, ministers, ruling elders, military personnel and members of our churches.

The weight of these ecclesiastical statements includes the duty to take them seriously, not to dismiss them casually as advice that can be ignored. Our purpose here is not to foster judicial actions, but to help understand and apply what the assemblies have approved.

As we do this, it is important to realize that none of the declarations has been formally adopted as part of the law and order of the church. Therefore, they are, in a sense, works in progress and the full force of the statements is yet to be determined. Nevertheless, actions are to be taken and counsel is to be given in accordance with the stated position of the church, insofar as one's individual conscience enables.¹

Regarding the matter of individual conscience, these words from A. A. Hodge's commentary on The Westminster Confession of Faith (Banner of Truth reprint, 1992) are instructive. The following paragraphs are from that commentary on Chapter 31, sections II-IV: "... synods and councils, consisting of uninspired men, have no power to bind the conscience, and their authority cannot exclude the right, nor excuse the obligation, of private judgment. If their judgments are unwise, but not directly opposed to the will of God, the private member should submit for peace' sake. If their decisions are opposed plainly to the Word of God, the private member should disregard them and take the penalty."

Nothing herein summarized by the PRCCCMP compels any court of original jurisdiction to exercise discipline on issues pertaining to Synod and General Assembly declarations cited above.

PRCCCMP RESPONSES TO ISSUES RAISED ABOUT WOMEN IN COMBAT

1. We acknowledge that many troops have as their primary mission the support of the warfighters. They may kill or capture the enemy in instances of self-defense within the support train. They are positioned in harm's way, as are any military or civilian personnel close to the battlefield. However, the synod/assemblies' declarations clearly assert that God never intended a woman to be a military combatant. Further, we regard these assembly/synod actions to frame the biblical sense of military combatant to be anyone who is involved, accountably and plainly, in seeking the death of enemy personnel.

There are concerns for women in support roles, as in "remote" naval and aviation roles in the military, that must be considered individually and judiciously. Those concerns affect the spiritual life of the female military member or potential member as well as the male member who as commander or subordinate might be expected and required to abstain from acting on his sense of moral obligation to protect women. While these denominational declarations do not forbid women from participating in those remote or support roles, each should evaluate his own circumstances. Military positional requirements should be examined and evaluated in light of the Scriptures elevated by denominational study committees, as well as by the chaplain's independent study. PRCCCMP chaplains should assist men and women, as requested, in their making that evaluation.

2. These declarations provide authority for PRCCCMP chaplains who counsel or advise other military members regarding the use of women in combat.

3. These declarations do not require a PRCCCMP chaplain, who is biblically counseling a military member who has a problem of conscience with women in combat, to advise resignation. Neither do they require a chaplain who has a problem of conscience with women as military combatants to resign.

¹PCA members of the Commission, in consultation with recognized leaders of the PCA, understand the actions of the Assembly to be interpreted and applied while keeping in mind two common errors: The first error perceives an action of the General Assembly to be similar to a law of Congress or a decision of the Supreme Court. Both are improper analogies. Until the General Assembly acts so as to make a matter a part of our Standards, then that matter is not binding -- unless the matter is determined by a judicial decision or unless the determination is already within the powers of the GA as assigned in the constitution (such as determining the trustees of agencies). The second error perceives a non-constitutional statement of the GA as being superfluous and of no import. In actuality, the GA makes such statements to advise its members and churches of the mind of the larger church at that moment. While such action does not have the authority of law to bind conscience or future Assemblies, brothers in Christ are obligated to weigh with great deference this "pious advice" since they have vowed to seek the peace and purity of the church, and this cannot be done through simply ignoring the properly approved advice of brothers and fathers. Such advice (i.e., an "in thesi" statement) must be seriously considered as the consensus of the church (but not the mandate of the church) by conscientious brothers until the church changes its advice.

4. PRCCCMP chaplains should counsel women who are or might be carrying a child in their womb and who intentionally place that child in harm's way to repent and consider the implications of genuine repentance and forgiveness. Counseling should include the father of the baby and the person who knowingly orders that woman into harm's way.
5. The military chaplain is not expected or obliged to preach or impose these biblically derived declarations presumptively upon individual service members. He should be prepared to teach principles from which this finding is derived and to explain and elaborate when particular pastoral guidance is sought by a uniformed service member. As well, the chaplain shall explain the particulars of such pastoral guidance to a uniformed service member's senior in command when asked to do so by a member who is appealing for relief from duties that could compromise behavior by a man toward a woman.
6. With respect to questions of conscience and morals, as in any other difficult and complex ethical problem, it is the duty of any PRCCCMP endorsed chaplain, humbly relying on God's enabling grace, to seek to deal with all the aspects of such a situation in a manner consistent with his ordination vows, regardless of the inherent difficulty.
7. How are chaplains supposed to deal with (including providing counsel) commanders' policies and institutional/state policies as compared to dealing with individual women vis-à-vis the Synod/Assembly actions?

Chaplains have a moral responsibility to be well and carefully informed of the policies and actions of their endorsing church as well as the policies of their parent command and service, and also the appropriate civilian authorities. From the perspective of the PRCCCMP, we believe this includes diligent, thoughtful reading of the actions of the three church bodies on this issue, including the exegetical work. Furthermore, we believe that the obligation of each chaplain is to deal biblically with each counselee, as God will grant him the grace to do so.

For instance, we do not believe any PRCCCMP endorsed chaplain is obligated to inform every female service member he meets of the position of his church on the subject of women as military combatants, any more than he is obligated to inform every service member he meets of his church's stand on baptism, the

Lord's Supper, etc. On the other hand, if any one asks for a biblical perspective on any of these subjects, we believe it is the duty of the chaplain to represent his endorsing denomination without fear or dissimulation.

To put it another way, it is the duty of a chaplain to do his own "heavy lifting" beforehand on issues such as women as military combatants, issues which may come up in many different settings. He must think it through with humility, honesty and care, just as he would in explaining why our PRCCCMP denominations do not ordain women. Thus, when asked about the issue of women as military combatants, he can kindly and with sensitivity give the questioner the basic biblical facts and citations to encourage his or her own "heavy lifting."

8. The Commission was also asked: How should chaplains advise their command concerning these Synod/Assembly actions?

When asked, answer honestly. When reporting to the command, during the indoctrination period, inform the senior chaplain and/or C.O. if it appears that there may be an issue. If the issue is discussed in an up-front manner at the beginning of the relationship with the command, the probability of friction diminishes. Informing a command of our commitment to use the name of Jesus Christ in prayer is an analogous issue best addressed before having to force the issue in an actual occasion of public prayer.

9. In light of the Synod/Assembly adopted recommendations, some chaplains have asked what advice they are being "commanded" to give? The answer is "none."

10. A group of chaplains addressed the following related questions to the PRCCCMP: "We felt that the churches will be looking to the PRCCCMP for guidance on this issue. How should they be counseling their members on this issue? Some form of statement would be very beneficial so that ministers can provide the Godly advice as stated in the resolutions. And, if it is the obligation of men to protect women, can the denominational statements be construed to imply that all our young men should enter the military to fulfill their obligation and our young women be counseled on the biblical roles that they can play in the military?"

We do not believe it is the place of the PRCCCMP to instruct churches as to what respective synod/assemblies have said. However, we can provide to those who are interested the narrower application for which the PRCCCMP is responsible. It is not the place of the PRCCCMP to construe denominational statements with respect to these questions outside the responsibilities of the PRCCCMP as set forth in the first sentence of Article II of its Constitution: "The Commission is an agent of its member denominations (not an ecclesiastical commission in the technical sense), created by them to assist in carrying out their ministries to members of the Armed Forces and other institutions."

Note on exegesis: The exegetical grounds of the PCA and OPC statements address diverse issues of military combat, such as those raised in Judges 4:4-5:31. Deborah was not a woman in combat. Chaplains and other interested Christians are urged to make use of the careful exegetical work already done by the General Assembly committees that studied the issue. The RPCNA included Scripture references in its declaration. The PCA and OPC published in General Assembly minutes the full majority and minority reports of their study committees, including detailed exegesis.

Adopted 02 March 2004

V. PRAYING IN JESUS' NAME

- A. Today, as never before in our nation's history, there are contentious issues related to the free exercise of religion and the protection of individual civil liberties that challenge United States military chaplains in the conduct of their ministry to members of the Armed Forces.

One high profile issue is the liberty to pray in Jesus' name, in public, non-sectarian settings, and without illegitimate pressures to refrain from doing so, both from within and without the uniformed services. The most common source of those unconstitutional pressures has been some senior chaplains and senior commanders who are fearful of offending others.

The secular settings in which these pressures are growing are settings of religious and cultural diversity commonly referred to as pluralism.

It should be noted that in the context of worship services, conducted in any military setting, the use of Jesus' name in prayers is seldom an issue.

B. Historical Background

Congress established the military chaplaincy to provide for ministry for uniformed Americans in the free exercise of their religion in environments where that exercise would otherwise be impossible or extremely difficult. It is no accident that the first amendment to our Constitution addresses the principle that the government may not establish any religion.

From the beginning of the military chaplaincy, it was understood that the chaplaincy services necessarily included chaplains endorsed by different ecclesiastical bodies. Further, the providential circumstances of remote and/or combat environments required chaplains to provide ministry to those from religious traditions and communities other than their own. It was understood that such ministry was to be offered graciously, respecting the right of recipients to believe differently than the chaplain himself.

Well before the War of Independence, the practice of offering public prayer in non-sectarian environments was a well-established practice. Prayer was commonly offered in local governmental meetings, school classrooms, civic memorial services, and even in Congress itself. For nearly two centuries, few saw this strong tradition of public prayer as a problem, so it was seldom addressed or challenged. In recent decades, that relatively benign situation has changed. Multiple lawsuits and court challenges became a major strategy for those who objected to public prayer at non-sectarian events.

C. Discussion

This development generated a growing debate and conflict when a chaplain was invited to offer public prayer, and did so "in the name of Jesus Christ." The reason this is so contentious is that many non-Christians, and even some churchgoers, rightly regard this phrase as implying that all religions which do not specifically highlight the exclusivity of Jesus Christ as the only way of salvation, are therefore, "wrong." In this, they are eminently correct, from the perspective of those who hold to the Bible as God's inspired Word, and as revealing salvation in Jesus Christ alone. Admittedly, that truth, however circumspectly avoided in direct statement by a discerning chaplain in the wording of his public prayer, in today's politically correct climate, is to invite attack, and, for chaplains, possibly cause damage to their careers.

Where the debate becomes murkier is in the widespread notion that chaplains, offering prayer at public events, should suppress the specific mention of Jesus' name and use generic nomenclature to refer to God. That the specific understanding and intent of a rabbi or imam who would so use their respective traditional names for their god is of no offense to those of anti-Christian bias is scarcely surprising, even though adherents of those faiths also believe theirs is the only true way to Heaven. In the name of "pluralism", chaplains are often pressured by supervisors to restrict the expression of their Christocentric focus and commitment.

Yet, from a constitutional perspective, no governmental entity has the legal authority to tell a chaplain offering prayer, in a public ceremony, what the content of his prayers will be. To do so violates the stringent restrictions on our government to establish a religion of any sort. Governmental attempts at any level to restrict the content of any chaplains' prayer constitute an effort to establish a generic religion, supposedly devoid of theological offense.

In sum, many Christians believe their entire faith and system of belief center in the person, and finished work, of Jesus Christ, of which one of many expressions is offering prayer in His name. Further, for some Christians, refraining from that obedience in such a circumstance constitutes betrayal of their Savior. Nevertheless, recognizing the diversity of an audience in a public setting, we counsel thoughtful language in the use of Jesus' name (e.g., "I pray in Jesus' name" versus "we pray ...") and prefacing public prayer with a statement such as: "I am a Christian Chaplain, and am praying in accordance with my Christian faith"). Thus, chaplains and their endorsing bodies, have a spiritual and constitutional duty, to insist that they not be censored for the use of the name of Jesus Christ in public prayer.

Adopted Mar 06

VI. RELIGIOUS MINISTRY AND HOMOSEXUALITY

A. BACKGROUND

Until the last few decades, there has been little dispute about how to deal with a member of one of the military services who is discovered to have homosexual leanings, or to have actually engaged in such conduct. These members were removed from the particular service with some degree of punitive consequence, such as an Administrative Discharge or an Other Than Honorable Discharge. During the process of enlistment or applying for a commission, it was not the practice of our armed services to probe for a list of possible moral, social or ethical deficiencies that were not connected to a criminal record of some sort.

This policy was characterized by the Clinton administration as “Don’t Ask – Don’t Tell,” implying some sort of moral hypocrisy on the part of the military for punitively dealing with discovered homosexuals, but who presumably had turned a blind eye to their admission in the first place. This incorrect characterization, along with several other contributing factors, including the emergence of formidable political power on the part of the homosexual segment of American society has resulted in Congress repealing the “Don’t Ask – Don’t Tell” policy and making moot the long-standing, adequate practice of our military services in dealing with this problem. This change in public law and policy, however, does not relieve PRCC-endorsed chaplains from their responsibility to stand firmly for what is right.

B. PASTORAL GUIDANCE

A. Remain faithful to one’s vows: Historically, it has been the practice of each Chaplain Corps of the Army, Navy and Air Force, respectively, to insist that it expects every chaplain to remain faithful to the doctrinal practices and ordination vows of his endorsing denomination.

For chaplains endorsed by the PRCCCMP member denominations this includes the vow, in some form, to be faithful to the doctrines and truths of Scripture. That necessarily involves both the duty and privilege of calling sin “sin,” whether in the formal proclamation of the Word of God, or in applying it in solving a problem in conduct or thinking requiring a biblical solution. As in our guidance on praying in Jesus’ name, and women in combat, we remind our chaplains of constitutional principles prohibiting the government from imposing upon them substantive moral/religious judgments and beliefs, such as directing them on how to pray. These prohibitions are even more stringent if attempting substantively to limit chaplains in performance of their spiritual/moral/religious duties in consensual settings where views on homosexuality would be typically discussed in preaching, teaching, or counseling contexts.

B. Perform Religious Ministry: For PRCCCMP endorsed chaplains “religious ministry” includes all those activities and behaviors which are in accord with the inerrant Word of God, and the doctrinal standards set forth in the Westminster Confession of Faith, together with the Larger and Shorter Catechisms. Examples of “religious ministry” set forth in these standards include, but are not limited to, preaching, teaching of all religious subjects, sacramental rites, informal and formal counseling, ministry of presence, and staff interaction on religious issues. “Religious Ministry” for PRCCCMP endorsed chaplains cannot include anything that would cause a chaplain to support biblically defined sinful behavior. If a question arises as to what constitutes “religious ministry” then that particular issue should be clarified in consultation with the Executive Director of the PRCCCMP.

PRCCCMP endorsed chaplains are called by God to minister to our beloved soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines and guardsmen and their respective families and there are few parts of their military or ecclesiastical life that would not be considered “religious ministry.” The ‘DOD Support Plan for Implementation of the repeal of DADT’ clearly stipulates that chaplains, in the context of their “religious ministry,” are not required to take actions that are inconsistent with their religious beliefs. In light of this ‘DOD Plan for the Repeal of DADT’ any detailed service documents requiring ‘sensitivity’ and/or ‘support’ by military chaplains for ministry to homosexual service members (also referred to as gay, lesbian and bi-sexual in DoD documents) may not in any way be construed as over-riding, or requiring the compromise of, any biblical, doctrinal or confessional standard on the part of those chaplains endorsed by the PRCCCMP.

C. Affirm Biblical truth and application: God’s Word specifically addresses the sin of sodomy, and related homosexual behavior in Leviticus 18:22; 20:13; and Romans 1:26-27, in addition to the Genesis chapter 19 account of the supernatural destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah for precisely that iniquity.

In light of the objective passages on the sin of homosexuality, and the Scriptural guidelines on the exercise of pastoral grace (1 Timothy 6:11-16; 2 Timothy 2:14-26), the PRCCCMP advises our endorsed chaplains to deal humbly and yet truthfully when asked about any aspect of this matter, and to do so in as courteous and kind a manner as possible. A chaplain is entirely at liberty to disagree with current secular assumptions, such as the idea that homosexuality is genetically caused, and yet may provide gracious counsel to an individual who confesses to this behavior. A service member who professes to be homosexual is still entitled to receive spiritual counsel if he or she so desires. It is not unconstitutional for a chaplain to encourage such a service member to seek the grace of Christ to repent of this, or any other sin, whether he or she is an unbeliever, or one professing faith in Christ as his or her Savior. However, this guidance must not be construed as in any way requiring any PRCCCMP endorsed chaplain to perform a marriage or union ceremony for homosexual or transgendered service members, to provide any counseling in support thereof, or to counsel or perform programmatic encouragement for homosexual or transgendered relationships before or after such a union. Chaplains endorsed by the PRCCCMP will not be permitted to perform marriage or union ceremonies for homosexual or transgendered service members, nor will they be permitted to plan, organize, lead, assist, direct, supervise or otherwise support same-sex couples retreats, family life seminars, other similar activities, or participate in any joint worship service with any chaplain who is a non-Trinitarian or does not accept the authority of God’s Word in what they teach and believe. Moreover, according to the implementation guidelines, our chaplains will not be required to violate their faith in conducting or sharing worship services with homosexual chaplains or in condoning that which the Word of God condemns.

If a chaplain is challenged to cease and desist from addressing what is wrong with homosexual thinking or behavior, or to cover up his belief that it is wrong, especially if by one who is senior to the chaplain, we expect our endorsed chaplains to seek God’s strength not to waver, even if unjustly accused of failing to support the command, or some aspect of the command’s policies, such as equal opportunity programs. Further, if placed in such a situation, we encourage the chaplain promptly to contact the PRCCCMP for such assistance and protection as we are able to provide.

D. In conclusion, PRCCCMP endorsed chaplains will continue to be under the dual authority of the military and their respective denominations. The PRCCCMP will continue to provide counsel and guidance to ensure that their “religious ministry” is consistent with their ordination vows and denominational beliefs. “Cooperation without compromise” will remain a way of life for our chaplains. In this increasingly pluralistic environment they will have to exercise wisdom in conducting ministry in the pulpit and in the counseling room, but are not restricted, according to the implementation guidelines, from counseling against

a lifestyle that is contrary with the Word of God and calling for repentance and faith in Jesus Christ and for a life of virtue flowing from the love of Christ.

We should all pray fervently that God will allow that which was intended for evil to be used for good as our chaplains have the opportunity to minister the Gospel of Christ to a military that increasingly reflects the social perspective of our civilian world. May He have mercy. May He give greater grace. May He keep this door of chaplain ministry open so that men and women may hear the Gospel and be saved and Christ's Great Commission go forward in the United States military community and in our nation and in the world.

Revised May 14, 2011

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