



SBC Chaplaincy

**The Southern Baptist Endorsement
Manual for Chaplains:
Policies, Guidelines and Practices for Chaplains**

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO SBC CHAPLAINCY

Mission

The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Chaplaincy Team of the North American Mission Board (NAMB) partners with local Southern Baptist churches, local Southern Baptist associations and state or regional Southern Baptist conventions, along with various agencies and institutions:

- To endorse Southern Baptists called to the chaplaincy ministry for the proclamation of the gospel
- To embrace our chaplains and their families in prayer and pastoral care
- To assist churches with the discovery, development and deployment of chaplaincy ministry
- To enhance the ministry of our chaplains through continuing education
- To assist our churches in their ministry to Southern Baptist chaplains and their families, including transitions in ministry
- To engage our pastors and denominational leaders on an intentional strategy in support of our chaplains and our military families
- To enlist our chaplains for local church involvement and ministries.

Vision

Because we know that God is at work in the world to bring people into relationship with Himself through Jesus Christ, the SBC Chaplaincy Team is dedicated to being on the front lines of the specialized ministry of chaplaincy into the future. The Chaplaincy Team will work in cooperative partnerships with SBC churches and various institutions:

- To provide the best qualified chaplains
- To advance the Christian witness in specialized settings of ministry
- To support SBC endorsed chaplains through prayer, pastoral care, training and resources.

Guiding Principles for SBC Chaplaincy

Obedience

In response to the Great Commission and God's call upon the lives of Southern Baptists to the chaplaincy ministry, the SBC Chaplaincy Team will encourage local churches to engage those considering the chaplaincy to initiate the endorsement process. This endeavor will include educational and ministerial formation through faithfulness to the word of God and maintenance of a well-balanced and integrated lifestyle.

Partnership

The SBC Chaplaincy Team supports SBC pastors and respective denominational entities (e.g., local churches, associations, state conventions), and cooperates with institutions, professional chaplaincy associations and certifying organizations in the development and support of chaplaincy ministry through resourcing, equipping, strengthening and serving each of our partners.

Stewardship

The SBC Chaplaincy Team will be good stewards of its people, time and fiscal resources for sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ and for ministry to people in the name of Jesus Christ.

NAMB Staff Organization

The organizational structure of NAMB is designed to support three primary tasks: evangelism, church planting and compassion. Every activity and process of NAMB undergirds all these functions.

Presently there are five groups that form the basic organizational structure of NAMB: Send Network, Send Relief, Evangelism & Leadership, Shared Services and President's Office. Within each group there are teams, and within each team there may be units. The SBC Chaplaincy Team is assigned to the NAMB President's Office for administrative purposes and is under the direct supervision of NAMB's executive vice president. Chaplaincy Team personnel are selected through an administrative process and serve for an indefinite period.

Territory

NAMB's geographical area of ministry responsibility includes the United States, the territories of the United States and Canada. The Chaplains Commission, comprised of NAMB trustees appointed by the Southern Baptist Convention, will endorse chaplains to institutions within this geographic area. However, chaplains may find themselves serving throughout the world by their employment with an institution whose territory is worldwide (e.g., military chaplaincy).

CHAPTER 2

THE CHAPLAINS COMMISSION AND THE CHAPLAINCY TEAM

The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) is a cooperative group of local Baptist churches that have joined together “to elicit, combine and direct the energies of the Baptist denomination of Christians, for the propagation of the Gospel, any law, usage or custom to the contrary notwithstanding.”¹ In 1941 the SBC directed the Home Mission Board (now the North American Mission Board) to establish the Chaplains Commission as the primary executive agency for approving Southern Baptists seeking endorsement to serve as Southern Baptist chaplains. A growing number of institutions with chaplaincy programs, including the federal government, require an endorsement document from a recognized faith group or denomination.

The North American Mission Board (NAMB) was founded in 1998 through a restructuring that combined the Brotherhood Commission, the Radio and Television Commission and the Home Mission Board. The SBC Chaplaincy Team is organized within the President’s Office of NAMB. The mission, vision and guiding principles of the Chaplaincy Team are derived from the mission and vision assigned to NAMB by the SBC.

¹*SBC’s Charter, Constitution, and Bylaws*, December 27, 1845, accessed February 1, 2021, <https://www.sbc.net/about/what-we-do/legal-documentation/constitution/>

History of Chaplains Commission

Southern Baptist involvement in chaplaincy ministries dates back to 1847 when the pastor of a Hampton, Virginia, Baptist church was called to serve as the chaplain of the University of Virginia. Further involvement came during the Civil War as pastors and churches ministered and evangelized among the Confederate troops. The 1863 minutes of the SBC demonstrate the support of chaplaincy among military forces. Religious work was carried on among soldiers in a number of states. At the close of the war, the Domestic Mission Board of the SBC reported, "This has been a prolific field of ministerial effort. It would be gratifying to all the friends of Jesus to read the many letters we have received from chaplains and missionaries employed among the soldiers of the armies"²

Southern Baptist ministers continued to respond to the call for military chaplains as they were recruited by the military. As World War I began, the following is found in the 1917 SBC minutes:

As the country is now greatly increasing its military, naval and aviation forces and will probably continue to increase them for some time, it is plain that the services of many ministers will be needed in the chaplaincy. The Home Mission Board is instructed to use its best endeavors to stimulate and cultivate the interest of our people in this matter and to care for the interests of the denomination as may be necessary. The co-operation of the State Boards is also earnestly requested in the task of finding and recommending men suited to this responsible work.³

During the intervening years between World War I and II, the SBC sought to engage in military chaplaincy ministry through the work of the Committee on Army and Navy Chaplains. This committee was appointed by the SBC Executive Committee and was located in Washington, D.C. Just prior to United States entry into World War II the Executive Committee recommended to the SBC that the responsibility for endorsement of chaplains be designated to the Home Mission Board (HMB). The action of the messengers at the convention reads:

² *Proceedings of the Southern Baptist Convention 1866, Russellville, KY, May 22-26, 1866* (Richmond: Dispatch Steam Presses, 1866), 40.

³ *Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention 1917, New Orleans, May 16-21, 1917* (Nashville: Marshall & Bruce Co, 1917), 101.

We further recommend that Southern Baptists make direct contact with the Government in the appointment of chaplains from our denomination and that the Home Mission Board be designated as an agent to make this contact through a duly appointed representative, in fullest cooperation with other religious bodies, and, further, that all recommendations and endorsements for chaplains from Southern Baptists be made by the Home Mission Board to the Government.

Wishing to maintain the most fraternal and co-operative relationship with the other evangelical bodies, the SBC shall through its Committee appointed by the Home Mission Board retain its membership on the General Commission of Army and Navy Chaplains, provided the General Commission on Army and Navy Chaplains shall continue to exercise its autonomy. Should the General Commission lose its autonomy, then the Committee appointed by the Home Board shall be instructed to seek a consultative membership on the General Commission of Army and Navy Chaplains.⁴

Following this meeting, the HMB established a committee to handle the endorsement function of the Board. This committee retained the name, "Committee" on Army and Navy chaplains. Dr. Alfred Carpenter, pastor in Blytheville, Arkansas, became the first "superintendent" for the work of chaplaincy.

A recommendation was presented and adopted at the 1949 SBC:

That for the sake of clarity the Convention change its terminology and that the Convention recognize the Chaplains Commission, SBC, established by the Home Mission Board, as having all of the powers and responsibilities committed to the Chaplains Committee by the Convention in 1941 as follows:

"(1) That the religious work in connection with the army camps, navy bases, marine corps stations, air corps, and C.C.C. Camps be assigned to the Home Mission Board, with the understanding that the Board will work in co-operation with the State Mission Boards.

⁴ *Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention 1941, Birmingham, AL, May 14-18, 1941* (Nashville: Executive Committee, SBC 1941), 52-53.

(2) We further recommend that Southern Baptist make direct contact with the government in the appointment of chaplains from our denomination and that the Home Mission Board be designated as an agent to make this contact through a duly appointed representative, in fullest co-operation with other religious bodies, and, further, that all recommendations and endorsements for chaplains from Southern Baptist be made by the Home Mission Board to the Government.

‘Wishing to maintain the most fraternal and co-operative relationship with other evangelical bodies, the SBC shall through its Committee appointed by the Home Mission Board retain its membership on the General Commission of Army and Navy Chaplains, provided the General Commission on Army and Navy shall continue to exercise its autonomy. Should the General Commission lose its autonomy, then the Committee appointed by the Home Mission Board shall be instructed to seek a consultative membership on the General Commission of Army and Navy Chaplains,’ and that we recognize the right of this Commission to designate itself as the Chaplains Commission, SBC, of the Southern Baptist Convention.”⁵

Relationship to Southern Baptists

The SBC Chaplains Commission derives its charter and mission from the executive action of the SBC. Today, trustees elected by the SBC to serve on the North American Mission Board are appointed by the chairman of the NAMB Board of Trustees to serve on the Chaplains Commission.

The SBC Chaplaincy Team carries out the policies and guidelines of the Chaplains Commission. The Chaplaincy Team is organizationally a part of NAMB’s President’s Office and provides support and training to endorsed persons under NAMB’s organizational processes.

The ministry of chaplains is supported by Southern Baptists through a network of individuals that includes the Chaplains Commission, the SBC Chaplaincy Team, Chaplain Ambassadors, state/regional convention

⁵ *Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention 1949, Oklahoma City, OK, May 18-22, 1949* (Nashville: Executive Committee, SBC 1949), 39-40.

chaplaincy representatives, local associations and local churches. The connection among these persons provides for ongoing support, encouragement, challenge and fostering of chaplaincy.

Chaplains Commission Membership

Trustees of NAMB are elected for their term of service by the SBC in its annual session. Trustees determine operating policies and give overall strategic direction in matters pertaining to NAMB's ministry and obligations.

The Chaplains Commission is a standing committee of the NAMB Board of Trustees. Trustees are appointed by the Board Officers of the NAMB Board to serve three years on the Chaplains Commission. Ex-officio (non-voting) members include the Chairman of NAMB Board of Trustees and the NAMB President. The SBC Chaplaincy Team processes and presents applications at the Chaplains Commission meetings.

The Chaplains Commission meets approximately six times each year, or as required. The specific dates are determined annually by the Chaplains Commission in consultation with the Chaplaincy Team.

Chaplaincy Financial Support

NAMB funds are derived from generous giving through the Cooperative Program, Annie Armstrong Easter Offering® (AAEO), and other designated contributions. SBC endorsed chaplains are not funded by NAMB, nor do they receive funds from the AAEO. Chaplaincy training funds are provided through the NAMB operating budget. Individuals can contribute to the chaplaincy ministry through NAMB (www.namb.net/give/). Additional financial support for military chaplaincy is derived from offerings received from military chapel designated offerings. These funds are accounted for through the "Military Chaplains' Fund." The Alfred Carpenter Scholarship Fund, which supports advanced theological education for chaplains, is supported by designated donations and annuities.

Affiliations and Partners for SBC Chaplaincy

The SBC Chaplaincy Team, under the advisement and approval of senior NAMB leadership, maintains affiliation and partners with several faith-based organizations involved with the promotion, facilitation and development of the chaplaincy ministry. The Chaplaincy Team also relates to several institutions and organizations supporting the education and professional development of persons serving in chaplaincy. relates to a number of institutions and organizations supporting the education and professional development of persons serving in chaplaincy.

CHAPTER 3

THE CHAPLAINCY MINISTRY

The Context and Nature of Chaplaincy Ministry

Chaplains are ministers of the gospel called by God to minister to people outside the walls of the church in the environment of a particular institution or organization. Pastoral ministry occurs within the context of a local church as stated in Article VI of the *Baptist Faith and Message 2000*.⁶ A Southern Baptist who is endorsed to the chaplaincy ministry must clearly understand that the context of chaplaincy is beyond the ministry environment of a local church setting and very often in a diverse or pluralistic and diverse setting. Chaplains are normally employees or volunteers of an institution providing ministry to their clients, employees, and families. The Chaplaincy affords men and women unique opportunities for ministry. The office of pastor is associated with the local church, while the chaplain, a member in good standing with a local SBC church, represents his or her church in specialized ministry settings. This change of context is a significant point of education for the new chaplain, especially if they are coming from a church-based ministry setting. The following points should help others better understand the chaplaincy ministry.

⁶ *The Baptist Faith and Message 2000*, Article VI “The Church”, accessed February 1, 2021, <https://bfm.sbc.net/bfm2000/#vi-the-church>

Chaplaincy Ministry Expectations

Tremendous insights can be gained from Jesus' example as He resided on earth. As the life of Jesus reveals, all people are to be treated with compassion, dignity and respect. When Jesus was asked about the greatest command, His response was relational: "Love God. Love others" (Matt. 22:37-39, HCSB). Chaplains are in the people-care business. When people provide care to others, they provide it unto God. Jesus gives assurance that whatever a person does "for one of the least of these brothers of [His], [we do] for [Him]" (Matt. 25:40). Considering that every person in the world matters to God, everyone should matter to us and be treated with love, compassion, dignity and respect.

Regarding Religious Diversity and Complexity

The chaplain's ministry is to everyone served by that particular institution. For example, the military chaplain ministers to every member of their assigned military unit, including authorized Department of Defense employees and their respective family members. A healthcare chaplain ministers to patients, patient's families, and staff members. A correctional facility chaplain ministers to staff, inmates and their families. Those served include all persons who seek the chaplain's services, including those who have no religious preference or belief. The focus is not simply on those who respond to the chaplain's presence, but to everyone within the chaplain's sphere of ministry. Every chaplain is expected to support the free exercise of religion toward all within their assigned agency or institution. This contextual focus provides chaplains with endless opportunities to be witnesses of the gospel to every person, whether they express a personal faith preference or have none.

Many institutions (i.e., a military service, prison system, healthcare facility) that host chaplaincy programs employ or provide services to people who are affiliated or claim association with a wide variety of faith groups. The chaplain is expected to perform or advise religious ministry to all, regardless of their faith group, as well as those of the chaplain's particular faith group. Most institutions expect the chaplain to facilitate the free exercise of religion within their organization. Simply stated, the chaplain is to ensure that all persons have access to the appropriate exercise or expression of their chosen faith group. As the Southern Baptist chaplain accomplishes this religious task, the chaplain also is free to minister to those of the chaplain's faith group (i.e., Southern Baptist).

The chaplain may be expected to facilitate access to religious practices

with which the chaplain may have a theological disagreement. The United States Constitution fully protects the chaplain from being compelled to violate his or her own conscience or the requirements of his or her faith.⁷ But these rights cannot be taken for granted. Chaplains must regularly educate their institutional leadership and members on the freedom of religion, as well as all religious matters. They must also be prepared to defend those within their institution, including their own religious beliefs and practices, whose freedom of religion is violated, challenged or restrained by superiors who do not understand them.

Chaplains are expected to “perform or advise.” Rather than the chaplain conducting a service or providing an ordinance/sacrament for a group with which he/she disagrees or whose tenets violate the Baptist Faith and Message 2000, the chaplain is expected to advise appropriate provision for these persons to practice their own faith. Usually, this requires the chaplain to contact another chaplain to provide the ordinance/sacrament/service. If no one is available within the institution or organization, the chaplain may need to contact someone outside the institution. Facilitating religious practice should be within the confines of the policies of the institution.

Questions or concerns about the utilization of Southern Baptist endorsed chaplains should be referred to the SBC Chaplaincy Team at the North American Mission Board, 800-634-2462, or chaplain@namb.net.

Regarding Women in Ministry

The Chaplains Commission and the SBC Chaplaincy Team supports the statement regarding the pastorate in Article VI of the *SBC Faith and Message 2000*.⁸ Every follower of Jesus Christ is a minister and is called to serve in the church (Eph. 4:16). However, the New Testament as a whole upholds restrictions on the ministry of women, barring them from teaching men or having authority over them (1 Tim. 2:12). Nevertheless, the Bible reveals the significant role of women have in the ministry. We encourage the ministry of women in all aspects of the chaplaincy other

⁷ For more information regarding a chaplain’s religious freedoms, please become familiar with the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

⁸ *The Baptist Faith and Message 2000*, Article VI “The Church”, accessed February 1, 2021, <https://bfm.sbc.net/bfm2000/#vi-the-church>

than those pastoral leadership roles requiring ordination.⁹ Therefore, per Items 23 and 51 of the 2001 Southern Baptist Convention, the Chaplains Commission will only endorse female chaplains who are not ordained.¹⁰

Regarding Credentials

The terms *licensed, commissioned or ordained* describe the procedures followed by local churches or denominations to vest ministerial status upon qualified individuals. Each ministerial status has specific legal and ecclesiastical provisions. Chaplains need to understand which ministry status has been given to them by their SBC home church.

Regarding Institutional Structures

A chaplain must learn the structure of the organization that hosts their chaplaincy ministry. Most institutions are vertically organized, with leadership recognized in a defined “chain of command.” While the chaplain’s foremost allegiance is to God, the chaplain’s primary accountability in the organization is to the head of the organization or the next person up the chaplain’s chain of supervision. Therefore, hiring, assigning, reassigning and dismissing of the chaplain is the prerogative of the leadership within the organization being served by the Southern Baptist chaplain.

Regarding Institutional Policies

The management of most institutions is governed by established policies. The position of the chaplain within the agency is defined in those policies. The process for planning and execution of religious ministry and its funding will be designated in the organizational manuals or directives. The new chaplain must become familiar with how the institution organizes itself and conducts its business.

For example, in some organizations, like the military, the promotion process in the organization is very competitive and strictly governed by law. In other organizations, promotion will only come when a position becomes available in the organization through retirement, promotion or dismissal.

⁹ *Resolution on Ordination and the Role of Women In Ministry*, Kansas City, MO 1984, accessed February 1, 2021, <https://www.sbc.net/resource-library/resolutions/resolution-on-ordination-and-the-role-of-women-in-ministry/>

¹⁰ *Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention 2001, New Orleans, LA, June 12-13, 2001* (Nashville: Executive Committee, SBC 2001), 45.

Another example would be seen in how the institution provides funding for religious ministries. What is the source of funding for religious programming? The chaplain must understand these policies to ensure their involvement in the programming and budgeting process. In most institutions, funding for the provision of chaplaincy services and religious programming is unrelated to the gathered religious community that assembles for worship. The chaplain's compensation comes from their institution. Operational funds allocated by the organization and offerings collected are subject to the authority and policies established by the institution.

Southern Baptist chaplains must work hard to balance learning about the policies of their assigned institution while seeking to make time for ministry to persons.

Regarding Institutional Culture

As the new chaplain learns about the structure and policies of the organization they serve, they also will want to pay attention to the culture these structures and policies create. For example, a warden is tasked to run a correctional facility. That facility takes on a culture that results from the warden's policies and the attitudes those policies engender throughout the institution. A particular military command has a culture developed around its mission and the leadership of the command. Chaplains must pay close attention to the culture that exists within their specialized ministry setting while, at the same time, maintaining their pastoral identity.

CHAPTER 4

CHAPLAINCY CATEGORIES

Southern Baptist Chaplains are recognized Baptist ministers sent forth from the local church to serve as an extension of Christ's ministry to all people. The employing institutions normally establish the minimum requirements for their chaplains. Some organizations have strict educational and training requirements, while others may appoint a dedicated employee with little or no formal theological training to the "extra" duty of serving as the chaplain for their organization. In all situations, the chaplain is expected to perform in a professional and dedicated manner.

Areas of Chaplaincy

Chaplaincy occurs in a wide variety of specialized settings. Presently, the Chaplains Commission of the North American Mission Board endorses chaplains to the following categories: community services, corporate, correctional, disaster relief, healthcare, military, pastoral counselors and public safety.

Community Services

Community Service Chaplains provide Christian ministry outside the walls of the church but under the supervision of the local church, often in collaboration with volunteer agencies, in support of individuals, families, businesses, corporations, schools and groups in the local community.

Corporate

These chaplains often provide ministry at industrial settings, manufacturing sites, business offices, corporate headquarters and community settings. The chaplains may be hired by a particular corporation or business to work as an employee of that organization or on a contractual basis. Marketplace Chaplains and Corporate Chaplains of America are two agencies that place chaplains in corporate settings on a contractual agreement.

Correctional

Chaplains for incarcerated persons are involved in prisons and jails at all levels of the government (federal, state, county and city) and with private corrections companies. Institutional chaplains serve in both adult and juvenile facilities.

Disaster Relief

A volunteer chaplaincy service associated with SBC Disaster Relief Ministries.

Healthcare

While hospital settings are the usual place for healthcare chaplaincy, Southern Baptists also have chaplains serving with hospice organizations, mental health facilities, special needs programs, nursing homes and with the Department of Veterans Affairs. This area of service also includes an endorsement for Clinical Pastoral Education residency students.

Military

The United States Army, Navy and Air Force have a corps of chaplains who provide chaplaincy ministry. These chaplains/staff officers serve on active duty or in a capacity as a Reserve or Guard chaplain. Military chaplains also include the volunteer chaplains of the Civil Air Patrol, the Air Force auxiliary service and Auxiliary Clergy Support of the Coast Guard. Also, each state has an organized State National Guard with an associated chaplaincy service. Additionally, some states may have a militia or State Defense Force.

Pastoral Counselors

In 1985 the SBC adopted Recommendation 11 to task the Chaplains Commission with the endorsement responsibilities for Southern Baptists involved in pastoral counseling ministries.¹¹ Pastoral Counselors are a small segment of the chaplain professionals endorsed by the SBC. The SBC Chaplaincy Team supports endorsement of pastoral counselors when required by the institution or certifying organization. We do not provide certification or licensing for pastoral counselors.

Public Safety

Law enforcement and fire departments have chaplains who serve the members of the department as well as the people of the community.

Employment Status

Chaplains serve under a variety of arrangements with the organizations that invite the chaplain into the organization. Employment may be on a full-time basis with numerous employment benefits attached to the compensation for service. Employment also may be on a part-time or volunteer basis.

Employment status is an arrangement between the chaplain and the organization being served. NAMB does not have a policy for providing compensation for chaplaincy services. The Chaplains Commission and the SBC Chaplaincy Team are not organized or tasked to create or provide employment opportunities for chaplaincy.

Professional Organizations

Various professional organizations require endorsements for membership and/or certification. For chaplains seeking membership in these organizations, the endorsement is similar to all other endorsement procedures.

¹¹ *Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention 2001, New Orleans, LA, June 12-13, 2001* (Nashville: Executive Committee, SBC 2001), 45.

CHAPTER 5

ENDORSEMENT POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

Endorsement Defined

Endorsement, as used by the Chaplains Commission, is an official statement that affirms to a using agency or certifying organization that the chaplain is a called and qualified religious leader who is an active member in good standing with a local church of the Southern Baptist Convention.¹²

An endorsement is for a specific chaplaincy with a specific institution or certifying organization. It is the chaplain's responsibility to ensure that he or she have a current endorsement on file with their institution. Southern Baptist chaplains must understand and comply with the endorsement requirements of this manual as well as any additional policies or guidelines issued by the SBC or NAMB.

Reasons/Benefits of Endorsement

Most employing institutions require an ecclesiastical endorsement as a condition of employment. An endorsement by the SBC affirms that the individual is a minister in good standing with Southern Baptists. Some organizations may not require an endorsement, but the individual serving as

¹² See Appendix B, "Chaplain Endorsement Pathway," for an overview of the endorsement process.

a chaplain may request an endorsement. Even though the endorsement is not required, it communicates to the employer that the SBC recognizes the chaplain as a minister. The endorsement also establishes a relationship with the SBC Chaplaincy Team. It is the goal of the Chaplaincy Team to maintain a pastoral relationship with all endorsed chaplains. This is done through chaplaincy training events, phone calls, personal correspondence, social media, Chaplain Ambassador contacts and by SBC Endorser visits.

The primary reason most people seek ecclesiastical endorsement is because it is required by most institutions. However, there are many other reasons/benefits to seek endorsement:

1. The application process helps clarify one's calling to chaplaincy ministry.
2. Tangible affirmation of your chaplaincy calling by 16 million SBC members and more than 45,000 SBC churches.
3. Offers a support network with other SBC chaplains.
4. Provides regional professional development training for chaplains each year.
5. Pastoral care through our Chaplain Ambassador program.
6. Prayer support from the SBC Chaplaincy Team, NAMB and Southern Baptists.
7. Field guidance as needed on current issues chaplains are facing in their ministry setting.

Types of Endorsements

The Chaplains Commission provides five types of endorsement. Two types simply note that the position to which the person is endorsed is either a "full-time" or "part-time" position (for military this indicates "active component" or "reserve component"). The third type of endorsement is for persons serving in a voluntary (non-paid) capacity. The fourth type of endorsement is for training with organizations like the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE), Association of Professional Chaplains (APC), and other programs and centers for ministry training. A fifth category of endorsement is for "professional membership" in organizations which require endorsement as part of the membership criteria (e.g., International Conference of Police Chaplains).

Basic Qualifications/Requirements for SBC Endorsement

The Chaplains Commission of the North American Mission Board endorses chaplains to the following categories: community services, corporate, corrections, disaster relief, healthcare, military and public safety. Chaplains are allowed to have more than one endorsement.

General Endorsement Requirements

When employing vocational or volunteer chaplains, each institutional agency and organization sets specific requirements for their hiring criteria. In addition, the Southern Baptist Convention has its own denominational requirements for endorsing chaplains. All chaplains endorsed by the SBC must meet these minimum requirements:

- Demonstrate the call, competence and character for ministry as a chaplain.
 - > The applicant must demonstrate a call to the ministry. This involves not only the written communication, but actions showing a personal commitment to Christian ministry.
 - > The applicant must have proven character in line with his or her call to chaplain ministry. Chaplains are expected to live their personal and professional lives with the highest practice of integrity in accordance with the *Chaplaincy Code of Conduct*. A chaplain's personal character must be consistent with the spiritual leadership required to work with people.
 - > Background check that includes credit, criminal and sexual offenses.
- Be affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention for a minimum of one year and a member in good standing of a church affiliated with the SBC for at least six months. All endorsed chaplains are expected to maintain membership in a Southern Baptist church and develop an accountability relationship with a Southern Baptist church. This accountability should relate to the chaplain's personal life, as well as their exercise of ministry in their ministry context.
- References including one from applicant's SBC Pastor, ministerial staff or Director of Missions/Associational Mission Strategist.
- For vocational chaplains, be licensed, commissioned or ordained by an SBC church or church of like faith recognized by the applicant's current church. This recognizes the role of the local church in

affirming the ministry of the applicant.

- Hold theological beliefs currently adopted by the SBC as represented in the [*Baptist Faith and Message 2000*](#). Additionally, applicants and endorsed chaplains are to affirm compliance and support of the following policies:
 - > Divorced people will be assessed with grace and mercy on an individual basis in accordance with NAMB policy.¹³
 - > [*Chaplaincy Code of Conduct*](#).
- Vocational chaplains must have accredited theological training consistent with their projected ministry assignment. A master of divinity degree or equivalent often is required for vocational chaplains.
- Volunteer chaplains are expected to be actively engaged in chaplain-specific training.
- Meet requirements of employing agency. The Chaplain Commission will not endorse a chaplain who does not meet the requirements of the employing agency.
- Approval by the Chaplains Commission.

All chaplain endorsements are to a specific ministry position. Any change in that position will require an update or additional endorsement. It is the responsibility of the chaplain to initiate the process for updating an endorsement. After notifying the SBC Chaplaincy Team, at least four weeks should be allowed for the update endorsement process.

Any exception to these basic qualifications/requirements must be approved by the Chaplains Commission.

Community Service Chaplain

Community Service Chaplains provide Christian ministry outside the walls of the church but under the supervision of the local church, often in collaboration with volunteer agencies, in support of individuals, families, businesses, corporations, schools and groups in the local community. Though not exhaustive, some examples may include pastoral counselors, life coaches, motorcycle chaplains, resort chaplains, sports chaplains, civic groups, and campus chaplains.

¹³ For specific details, see *Chaplaincy Endorsement Manual*, “Divorce and Remarriage,” 32.

A denominational endorsement may be required if the institution or organization recognizes a person serving as a chaplain. SBC General Endorsement Requirements, as well as additional standards established by the community service organization, will be required for persons seeking SBC chaplaincy endorsement.

Corporate Chaplain

Corporate chaplains often provide ministry at industrial settings, manufacturing sites, business offices and corporate headquarters. Some businesses may internally hire an employee to serve as a chaplain of that organization. A few chaplaincy service ministries provide chaplains on a contractual basis to various corporate and business settings.

In addition to SBC General Endorsement Requirements, corporate chaplains usually have a minimum of a Bachelor's Degree in Biblical Studies from an accredited college or university, Master of Divinity preferred and a minimum of seven years of full-time work experience. A business degree can reduce this requirement. Most corporate chaplaincy organizations provide their training. Corporate settings often expect specialized training to deal with suicide prevention, marriage enrichment, resiliency and other situations.

Correctional Chaplain

Chaplains for incarcerated persons are involved in prisons and jails at all levels of the government (federal, state, county and city) and with private corrections companies. Institutional chaplains serve in adult and juvenile facilities.

In addition to SBC General Endorsement Requirements, the minimum qualifications of Correctional Chaplains vary according to the type of confinement facility and state.

Local and County Facilities: Chaplains at local confinement facilities are usually volunteers. The local facilities set their requirements, and they often are minimal. Formal accredited theological education and ordination are often not required. A background check is expected. Those desiring to provide ministry in these situations should consult with local authorities for requirements.

State Facilities: Most chaplains at state prisons are required to have a theological degree, including at least 75 semester hours of college. Experience often is credited for some educational requirements. After employment, two units of Clinical Pastoral Education may be required for promotion.

U.S. Federal Bureau of Prisons: Requirements for those desiring to work at Federal correction facilities are more comprehensive:

- Ordained Minister by or recognized by an SBC Church.
- Valid SBC endorsement.
- The normal age limit to apply is 37. Exceptions are made based on experience.
- Citizen of the United States.
- Undergraduate degree from an accredited institution.
- Master of divinity/theology degree or the equivalent education from an American Theological School (ATS) accredited residential seminary or school of theology: 20 graduate hours of theology; 20 graduate hours of sacred writings; 20 graduate hours of church history or comparative religions; and 20 graduate hours of ministry courses, ordination, plus ecclesiastical endorsement.
- At least 2 years of autonomous experience as a religious/spiritual leader in a church or specialized ministry setting. Clinical Pastoral Education may satisfy up to one year of experience.
- Pass a background investigation.
- Pass physical requirements and examination by the Federal Bureau of Prisons.

Disaster Relief Chaplain

Disaster Relief (DR) chaplains are volunteer members of Southern Baptist Disaster Relief teams. They are mobilized with their SBC state convention disaster relief team by the state disaster relief coordinator. The DR chaplain provides ministry both to the deploying disaster response team and to the survivors of the disaster. For this reason, the training requirements for endorsement as a disaster relief chaplain are set high. Ministry opportunities include providing devotionals for the team, assisting with personal crisis of team members, and praying and providing emotional support to disaster survivors.

Disaster Relief training is coordinated and scheduled by each Southern Baptist state convention through the office of the Disaster Relief Coordinator or state chaplaincy representative. This training often includes:

- Introduction to Southern Baptist Disaster Relief
- Specialized Disaster Relief Chaplaincy Training

For SBC endorsement, disaster relief chaplains should also meet the SBC General Endorsement Requirements as well as the following training or its equivalent:

- Complete the “Southern Baptist Disaster Relief Chaplains Manual” training (about 9 hours)
- Complete one unit of training in Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) or Operational Stress First Aid (14 hours)
- Minimum of at least one state Disaster Relief callout

Healthcare Chaplain

While hospital settings are the usual place for healthcare chaplaincy, Southern Baptists also have chaplains serving with hospice organizations, mental health facilities, special needs programs, nursing homes and with the Department of Veterans Affairs. This area of service also includes an endorsement for Clinical Pastoral Education residency students.

In addition to SBC General Endorsement Requirements, healthcare chaplains usually have an accredited master of divinity degree and at least one unit of Clinical Pastoral Care education (CPE). Staff chaplain positions normally require four units of CPE. Pastoral experience as required by the hiring healthcare organization. Specialized positions in healthcare require more training.

Veterans Affairs Chaplain Requirements:

- Valid SBC endorsement.
- Undergraduate degree of 120 semester hours from an accredited institution.
- Master of Divinity or equivalent degree of at least 70 hours of graduate course including all the following: 20 semester hours in pastoral ministry; 20 semester hours in any combination of the-

ology, ethics, and philosophy of religion; 20 semester hours in the study of sacred writings, including the study of languages in which sacred writings are/were written; and 10 semester hours in religious history and/or world religions from an accredited institution.

- Citizen of the United States.
- Four Units of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) from a Department of Education accredited CPE Program. The only two CPE Organizations which are accredited by the Department of Education (DOE) are the Association of Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE) and the Institute of Clinical Pastoral Training (ICPT). There are no substitutions for the 4 DOE accredited CPE units. Board Certification as a Chaplain - being "BCC" from a 501(c)3 board certifying body which requires ecclesiastical endorsement is required for permanent employment as a GS-11 Chaplain. (A person can be hired temporarily as a GS-9 without board certification, and the person has two years to become a board-certified chaplain. When becoming a board-certified chaplain, the person then becomes a permanent GS-11 Chaplain.) 501(c)3 organizations that currently require ecclesiastical endorsement are: Association of Professional Chaplains (APC), National Association of Catholic Chaplains (NACC), and National Association of VA Chaplains (NAVAC).

Military Chaplain

The United States Army, Navy and Air Force have a corps of chaplains who provide chaplaincy ministry. These chaplain/staff officers serve on active duty or in a capacity as a Reserve or Guard chaplain. This area also includes the volunteer chaplains of the Civil Air Patrol, an Air Force auxiliary service and Auxiliary Clergy Support of the Coast Guard. Also, each state has an organized State National Guard with an associated chaplaincy service. Additionally, some states may have a militia or State Defense Force.

U.S. Army Chaplain Requirements (Active Duty, Army Reserve, and Army Guard):

- Ordained minister of or recognized by an SBC church
- Valid SBC endorsement
- Undergraduate degree of 120 semester hours from an accredited institution

- Master of Divinity/Theology degree of at least 72 hours from an accredited institution
- Citizen of the United States (Permanent residents can apply for US Army Reserve only)
- Pass the National Agency Check for a security clearance
- Pass Armed Forces physical exam
- Two years pastoral experience within a congregational setting

For U.S. Army Chaplain Candidate Program:

- Be a full-time graduate student at an accredited seminary or theological school
- Be between 18-36 years of age at the time of commissioning
- Ordination is not required

U.S. Air Force Chaplain Requirements (Active Duty, Reserve, and National Guard):

- Ordained minister of or recognized by an SBC church
- Valid SBC endorsement
- Undergraduate degree of 120 semester hours from an accredited institution
- Master of Divinity/Theology degree of at least 72 hours from an accredited institution
- Citizen of the United States
- Pass the National Agency Check for a security clearance
- Pass Armed Forces physical exam
- Two years pastoral experience within a congregational setting

For U.S. Air Force Chaplain Candidate Program:

- Be a full-time graduate student at an accredited seminary or theological school
- Less than 35 years of age at the time of appointment
- Ordination is not required

U.S. Navy Chaplain Requirements (Active Duty and Reserve):

- Ordained minister of or recognized by an SBC church
- Valid SBC endorsement
- Undergraduate degree of 120 semester hours from an accredited institution
- Master of Divinity/Theology degree of at least 72 hours from an accredited institution
- Citizen of the United States
- Pass the National Agency Check for a security clearance
- Pass Armed Forces physical exam
- Pass a Navy physical fitness test
- Two years pastoral experience within a congregational setting

For U.S. Navy Chaplain Candidate Program:

- Be a full-time graduate student at an accredited seminary or theological school
- Be 21 years of age and be able to complete 20 years
- Ordination is not required

Civil Air Patrol Chaplain Requirements:

- Ordained minister of or recognized by an SBC church
- Valid SBC endorsement
- Undergraduate degree of 120 semester hours from an accredited institution
- Master of Divinity/Theology degree of at least 72 hours from an accredited institution. Clergy without accredited graduate degree may ask for a waiver providing they have a minimum of five years full-time pastoral experience
- Two years pastoral experience within a congregation setting
- Meet CAP Senior Membership requirements
- A Fingerprint card and background check
- Pay CAP national and wing dues
- Contact your wing chaplain for an application (CAP Form 35)

Coast Guard Auxiliary Clergy Support:

The Auxiliary Clergy Support program supplements and supports Navy Chaplains serving with the Coast Guard by expanding religious ministry within the Coast Guard to better meet the needs of Coast Guard members and their families.

- Ordained minister of or recognized by an SBC church
- Be a member of the Coast Guard Auxiliary
- Must meet many of the same qualifications as members of the Navy Chaplain Corps

Public Safety Chaplain

Law enforcement and fire departments have chaplains who serve the members of the department as well as the people of the community. In addition to SBC General Endorsement Requirements, Public Safety chaplains in the following positions are encouraged to seek further theological and crisis intervention training.

Law Enforcement Chaplains: Each law enforcement agency establishes its own requirements for chaplains. The International Council of Police Chaplains gives recommended standards for Police Chaplains. Those desiring to be law enforcement chaplains must consult with individual agencies for qualifications and method of application for positions.

Fire Department Chaplains: Similar to law enforcement agencies, each fire department also establishes its own requirements for chaplains. The Federation of Fire Chaplains brings together individuals and groups interested in providing effective chaplaincies for fire service organizations. Anyone interested in serving as a fire department chaplain must consult with the individual fire departments for their requirements.

Duration of Endorsements

An endorsement is to a specific position. Any change in employment requires an update of endorsement. Some ministerial training programs have a specified duration. When the chaplain completes the training, the endorsement terminates. Some endorsements have a specified time for which they are valid. This termination date is usually stated on the en-

dorsement and/or is expressed by the institution's policy. If an endorsement is no longer required, the endorsement will be "closed" until an update is requested. A chaplain may request the withdrawal of endorsement at any time. The Chaplain Commission may request the withdrawal of endorsement at any time due to circumstances such as doctrinal stance, moral failure, or other substantial issues.

All endorsements terminate when the chaplain is no longer affiliated with the organization to which they were endorsed and/or the chaplain no longer meets the SBC requirements for endorsement.

Endorsement Updates

Periodically, the institution will ask that the chaplain have an updated endorsement. It is the responsibility of the chaplain to initiate the process for updating an endorsement. A chaplain should contact the SBC Chaplaincy Team to request an endorsement update when their status or ministry location changes. Also, endorsement update requests can be made through the chaplain's portal (mynamb.net). Chaplains can have more than one endorsement if an individual is actively serving as a recognized chaplain in respective institutions.

Chaplains can request an update by contacting the SBC Chaplaincy Team or through the Chaplain portal at mynamb.net. Once started, the chaplain will need to complete an Endorsement Update Application and send proper supporting documents. All endorsed chaplains are required to ensure a current profile and Quarterly Report is current. Federal Endorsement update requires SBC Church Membership verification and OER/AER. When a chaplain requests an update to a vocational endorsement from a volunteer endorsement, the basic requirements/guidelines for that chaplaincy category and status applies. At least four weeks should be allowed for the endorsement update process to be completed.

Transferring an Endorsement

A chaplain can only be endorsed through one endorsing body. However, a chaplain can change ecclesiastical endorsement at any time for a variety of reasons. Any transfer of endorsement to another religious ecclesiastical organization requires the chaplain to inform their current

endorsing agent. The ecclesiastical endorsement process, requirements and timeline differs among the various religious ecclesiastical organizations. As a general rule, SBC Chaplaincy provides a 90-day transition period for transfer of endorsement to another religious ecclesiastical body.

Oversight and Supervision

Chaplains serve an institution at their invitation and therefore are under the direct supervision of the institution's supervisory structure. Additionally, the Chaplains Commission, through the administrative actions and pastoral care of the SBC Chaplaincy Team, retains ecclesiastical oversight of the chaplain's work and life as a representative of the SBC. The Chaplaincy Team members are available to respond to any questions or concerns.

Each applicant submitting an application for denominational endorsement by the Chaplains Commission signs the following agreement to assure the Chaplains Commission of the applicant's understanding, acceptance and willingness to cooperate in carrying out the Commission's policies and purposes. The statement reads:

In making this application, I recognize the Chaplains Commission of the North American Mission Board, SBC, to be the agency designated by the Southern Baptist Convention to endorse chaplains to military and civilian agencies and agree to cooperate with the Chaplains Commission, SBC, in carrying out its policies and programs.¹⁴

Discipline and Withdrawal of an SBC Endorsement

When an endorsed chaplain violates a law (local, state, Federal, including Uniform Code of Military Justice), agency policy, SBC general expectation, [Chaplaincy Code of Conduct](#), personal or professional ethic, or should there be an embarrassment to the cause of SBC chaplaincy, disciplinary action may be in order. The Chaplains Commission desires that justice, grace and mercy be exercised in all situations for personal redemption and restoration. However, withdrawal of endorsement may result from any situation deemed by the Chaplains Commission to warrant such action.

¹⁴ Statement taken from current SBC Endorsement application.

It is the right of any autonomous entity, i.e., institution or professional organization, to which a chaplain belongs, or the judicial system, to choose to exercise disciplinary measures it deems necessary. Poor work performance will be an issue with the institution's supervisory process but may involve the Chaplains Commission if invited by the institution or chaplain.

The endorsed SBC chaplain's relationship with God and family is of utmost importance. Restoration to ministry is the desire of the SBC Chaplaincy. However, it may not always be possible depending on the nature of the violation. Chaplains are reminded that personal reputation is to be guarded closely. One's reputation with people is a primary building block for ministry.

Chaplains are expected to inform the appropriate SBC Chaplaincy Team immediately upon being accused of a violation regarding their ministry concerning a felony arrest or other situation which could adversely impact the reputation of a minister or the SBC. The Chaplains Commission and the Chaplaincy Team desires to be of assistance to the chaplain experiencing extreme difficulties in their life.

The disciplinary/withdrawal process will usually include the following steps:

1. The appropriate Endorser is informed, preferably by the chaplain via telephone or other expeditious means. Institutions are welcomed and encouraged to contact the Endorser.
2. The Endorser, in consultation with the Chaplaincy Senior Director, then advises the Chaplaincy Executive Director on the probable removal of the endorsement. The Chaplaincy Executive Director confers with and provides a recommendation to the Chaplains Commission and/or the NAMB President.
3. The SBC Chaplaincy Team, in collaboration with the Chaplains Commission, will work with the chaplain in a restorative relationship as appropriate to the situation and per NAMB/SBC guidelines and policies.

Personnel Policies of the Chaplains Commission

The Chaplains Commission endorses SBC Chaplains. NAMB is an agency of the SBC whose messengers over the years have adopted resolutions on a variety of subjects. These range from broad concepts of freedom

of religion and the separation of church and state to matters of morality and personal conduct. The Chaplains Commission expects that endorsed chaplains will have an awareness of and responsiveness to opportunities to share the gospel of Jesus Christ.

One outcome of the ministry of Southern Baptist chaplains is seeing persons make a profession of faith in Jesus Christ, then following that profession of faith in believer's baptism and affiliation with a local church. Chaplains are expected to live with the highest practice of integrity. They are expected to abide by guidance given to them by the SBC, NAMB and/or SBC Chaplaincy Team. If a chaplain's lifestyle could cause embarrassment to the cause of Christ and Southern Baptists or, impacts his/her effectiveness, that chaplain may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including withdrawal of endorsement. By seeking and receiving an SBC Chaplaincy endorsement, chaplains indicate their willingness to abide by the [Chaplaincy Code of Conduct](#). Applicants and endorsed chaplains with questions, comments or difficulties in the areas of these policies are encouraged to contact the Chaplaincy Team member for their area of ministry.¹⁵

Doctrinal Stability

The Chaplains Commission considers an affirmation of the [Baptist Faith and Message 2000](#) essential for endorsement. The initial and updated application process offers an opportunity for the applicant to affirm support of these doctrinal statements.

Divorce and Remarriage

We support the statement regarding marriage in Article XVIII of the *SBC Baptist Faith and Message 2000*.¹⁶ However, divorce is complicated. We endorse divorced chaplain applicants with the full support of their SBC church, but it is by exception. Current NAMB policy indicates that from the official date of divorce, the chaplaincy applicant shall have waited two years before remarriage. In the event of remarriage, the chaplaincy applicant will have experienced five years of a successful second

¹⁵ See Appendix A, *Chaplaincy Code of Conduct*.

¹⁶ *The Baptist Faith and Message 2000*, Article XVIII "The Family", accessed February 1, 2021, <https://bfm.sbc.net/bfm2000/#xviii-the-family>.

marriage. When we receive an application from someone who has been divorced, we consider their entire application package, including the church placement letter and pastoral recommendation. Additionally, we seek clarification/explanation from the applicant regarding the marital history to determine the appropriate response.

The Chaplaincy Team desires to play a supportive role with the chaplain and family involved in separation or divorce. A chaplain's spiritual and relational health is a vital component of their ministry. All endorsed chaplains who are currently serving and get a divorce or remarry will be evaluated with grace and mercy on an individual basis in accordance with NAMB policy.

CHAPTER 6

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS OF CHAPLAINS

The Chaplains Commission expects that endorsed chaplains will have opportunities to share the gospel of Jesus Christ. One outcome of the ministry of Southern Baptist chaplains is seeing people make a profession of faith in Jesus Christ, then follow that profession of faith in believer's baptism and affiliation with a local church. Chaplains should guard against activities that proselytize people active in other faith groups. Chaplains should present the biblical truths in their ministry and be ready to guide persons who are responding to the work of the Holy Spirit toward a relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

Personal Ethics

Integrity

Chaplains are expected to live their lives with the utmost integrity. Integrity is being who and what you claim to be at all times—a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ serving as a chaplain. Chaplains must remember that those to whom they minister and those they serve depend on the chaplain's integrity to be of the highest quality.

Chaplain Relationships

Since chaplains are called upon to provide counseling and care to people or families experiencing various life issues, chaplains must exercise sound judgment to preclude involvement that goes beyond an acceptable

counselor-client relationship. Such non-professional involvement results in the deepest personal hurt to the chaplain and other people involved, as well as loss of ministry effectiveness and Christian credibility. Any chaplain having trouble in this area is expected to inform the SBC Chaplaincy Team member for their area of ministry and to seek counseling and assistance as early as possible.

Ministry to All Persons

SBC endorsed chaplains are expected to minister to all people, regardless of their religious preference, behavior choices, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity or physical condition/presence. In providing this ministry, they should seek to help the person recognize God's intended order for life and to understand their need to humbly acknowledge God's plan for their lives. Chaplains should be as inclusive as possible for mandatory activities and appropriately exclusive in ecclesiastical function and performance as long as it does not contradict their personal faith, beliefs or practices.

Relationships to Other Faith Groups

Chaplains will usually find their ministry opportunities in an environment with a diversity of religious beliefs and expressions. Southern Baptist chaplains should seek to display a spirit of cooperation and team building. Relationships with those of other faith groups are expected to be one of cooperation without compromise. This standard phrase summarizes Southern Baptist chaplains' expectation of cooperation in methodology without a compromise of Southern Baptist faith and practice. Good ministry relationships will come from being acquainted with and sensitive to the customs and cultures of the people with whom chaplains work and minister. An "open door" attitude is always a healthy approach to lasting relationships. The Chaplains Commission believes this attitude has merit and value because it emphasizes the worth and dignity of individuals.

Recognition of Ministry Limitations

SBC chaplains are endorsed to minister within specialized ministry environments. SBC chaplains not only represent themselves but also the churches and members of the SBC. Endorsed Southern Baptist chaplains, within their respective institutional settings, provide ministry according to the principle of "cooperation without compromise." SBC chaplains *will*:

- Support and conduct religious services in accordance with the

Baptist Faith and Message 2000, The Southern Baptist Endorsement Manual for Chaplains, and the guidelines contained in this document

- Provide biblical counseling and pastoral care for those of like faith and make provisions to meet the religious or spiritual needs of others
- Treat everyone with Christ-centered dignity, honor and respect
- SBC chaplains are free to lead or participate in religious services with any chaplain who is a Trinitarian and accepts the authority of God's Word

SBC chaplains have a pastoral and professional responsibility to ensure that everyone is shown Christ-centered dignity, honor and respect, regardless of differences in theological beliefs, cultural world view and personal behavior. However, when the ministry requested does not comply with SBC beliefs and practices, the chaplain will coordinate with another chaplain or religious leader to perform the requested ministry.

Although SBC chaplains will extend dignity, love and compassion to everyone, they will *not*:

- Conduct any religious service or ceremony jointly with a chaplain, contractor or volunteer that could be reasonably misconstrued as affirming a homosexual lifestyle, sexual immorality and other such unbiblical conduct.
- Officiate, participate in or attend a marriage or union ceremony for any couple contrary to the following biblical mandates that:

“ . . . all persons are created in God's image and are made to glorify Him; . . . God's design was the creation of two distinct and complementary sexes, male and female; . . . affirm God's good design that gender identity is determined by biological sex and not by one's self-perception.”¹⁷

“ . . . marriage is between one man and one woman, ordered by God toward the union of the spouses, the means of

¹⁷ 2014 SBC Resolution “*On Transgender Identity*,” accessed February 1, 2021 <https://www.sbc.net/resource-library/resolutions/on-transgender-identity/>

procreation, formative of family, and foundational to the common good of society.”¹⁸

- Provide any pre-marital or marital counseling and/or marriage enrichment training in support of such a union.

This biblical guidance, under the authority of the SBC endorsing body, remains in effect irrespective of any civil law authorizing same-sex marriage, transgender marriage or equivalents to marriage. Questions or concerns about the utilization of Southern Baptist endorsed chaplains should be referred to the Chaplaincy Team at the North American Mission Board, 800-634-2462, or chaplain@namb.net.

Baptism and the Lord’s Supper

These are the two ordinances of SBC churches. Through the endorsement process, each cooperating SBC church provides the chaplain with the necessary credentials to administer these ordinances and the scope of ministry. Therefore, endorsed Southern Baptist chaplains are to administer baptism and the Lord’s Supper under the authority of the chaplain’s local Southern Baptist church.

Contact Information

Chaplains are required to keep the Chaplaincy Team informed of contact information changes (i.e., address, telephone numbers, and e-mail). The Quarterly Report, email, telephone or letter are recommended means of advising of changes in contact information. Additionally, endorsed chaplains can update their basic profile information through their chaplain portal (mynamb.net).

Quarterly Reports

Upon endorsement and affiliation with an institution, a chaplain is required to complete a Quarterly Report. This required report is used to gather statistical data reflective of the chaplaincy to which the chaplain is endorsed. Individual reports are never used in a comparative process to evaluate effectiveness in ministry. The statistical summary and narrative parts aid in telling the story of ministry provided by Southern Baptist endorsed chaplains.

¹⁹ 2016 SBC Resolution “*On Biblical Sexuality and the Freedom of Conscience*,” accessed February 1, 2021, <https://www.sbc.net/resource-library/resolutions/on-biblical-sexuality-and-the-freedom-of-conscience/>

The SBC Chaplaincy Team provides the Quarterly Report reminders through email. Quarterly Reports can be completed either through an endorsed chaplains' portal on mynamb.net, or chaplainqr.namb.net. It is the chaplain's responsibility to ensure that a report is submitted each quarter on time.

Professional Development Training

Chaplaincy Professional Development Training (CPDT) events for endorsed chaplains allow them to stay connected with the SBC Chaplaincy Team, other SBC chaplains, and to grow professionally. CPDT provides theological and denominational training for Southern Baptist chaplains to maintain a high level of proficiency in chaplain pastoral care ministry.

SBC endorsed chaplains are required to attend at least one CPDT event to ensure all chaplains are developing their chaplaincy skills and networking. It is acceptable to attend any SBC training event (on-site or online) that helps one develop professionally as an SBC chaplain. The events that meet this professional development training requirement are described below. Please contact the SBC Chaplaincy Team with questions concerning chaplaincy training events.

Chaplain Professional Training Conferences

Every year NAMB's SBC Chaplaincy Team hosts several regional events for Southern Baptist chaplains in the United States and around the world (including the Chaplains' reception at the SBC Annual meeting). These annual chaplain trainings are a time for spiritual renewal, continuing education, best practices, networking and fellowship for all SBC endorsed chaplains who attend. Chaplains are encouraged to attend the conference nearest their location.

State or Regional Convention Training

These events are sponsored by the state or regional convention. The state/regional chaplaincy representative plans the conference and provides registration information.

New Chaplains Orientation

This orientation provides the newly endorsed SBC chaplain with an introduction to NAMB, the Chaplains Commission, and the work of chaplains as viewed by the SBC Chaplaincy Team. Newly endorsed chaplains should plan to attend a Chaplain's Orientation within the first year of endorsement. The Chaplaincy Team will extend invitations.

Legal Support

Chaplains who are accused (arrested or charged) of misconduct concerning the performance of their ministry or in their personal lives are expected to immediately inform the SBC Chaplaincy Team. Situations involving chaplains that require “professional discipline” come within this same procedure/expectation. The chaplain must recognize that their ministry may be terminated due to a loss of respect and trust within their institution. The desire of the Chaplains Commission and the Chaplaincy Team is to be of assistance to the chaplain and their family. However, neither the Chaplains Commission nor the Chaplaincy Team can provide legal advice or direct legal advocacy. Should the need arise, chaplains are encouraged to consult with third-party legal professionals as appropriate.

Privileged and Confidential Communications

Conversations between a person and a chaplain usually occur because of trust in the chaplain. When faced with a decision about a privileged or confidential communication, the SBC Chaplain must be aware of federal, state and local laws governing reporting requirements in the jurisdiction in which they minister. Some chaplains may be considered a mandated reporter especially in cases of suspected child abuse or neglect. Every chaplain should know the policies of their institution and professional practices within their specialized ministry. Confidentiality should be maintained as fully as possible within the limits of the law.

Liability Insurance

Chaplains should consult with their institution to determine whether they have liability coverage for the exercise of their ministry. Neither the SBC nor NAMB provides liability insurance coverage for endorsed SBC chaplains.

Local, State or National Organization Involvement

Chaplains are encouraged to be involved in local, state or national organizations that promote chaplaincy, seek to provide for the welfare of persons and that informs and shares social policy. Chaplains represent both Southern Baptists and the institution in which they serve when providing public ministry.

CHAPTER 7

RESOURCES, SERVICES AND RECOGNITION

The ministry of chaplains is supported by the Southern Baptist Convention through a network of individuals that includes the Chaplains Commission, the SBC Chaplaincy Team, Chaplain Ambassadors, state/regional convention chaplaincy representatives, local associations and local SBC churches. The connection among these people provides for ongoing support, encouragement and fostering of the chaplaincy ministry.

Prayer Support

Intercessory Prayer Line

Chaplains are encouraged to make prayer needs known for inclusion on the NAMB prayer line. Also, chaplains can call the toll-free prayer line (800-634-2462) Monday-Thursday from 8 a.m.-7 p.m., and on Friday from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Eastern Standard Time.

Quarterly Report

Chaplains have the opportunity to list prayer needs for the Chaplaincy Team each quarter. Prayer requests are distributed to each member of the Chaplaincy Team (including Chaplain Ambassadors).

PrayerConnect

SBC Endorsed Chaplains can respond to periodic emails from PrayerConnect to share prayers that will be sent to anyone who has committed to pray for NAMB missionaries and chaplains. Also, submitted prayers are listed on the NAMB website for anyone to view and use in intercessory prayer (<https://www.namb.net/pray/>).

Publications

SBC Life

SBC Life is the journal of the Southern Baptist Convention published by the convention's Executive Committee. *SBC Life* features articles and updates on topics and issues related to Southern Baptist missions and ministries, churches, and the culture. It provides information, encouragement and inspiration, and majors on telling the good news of what God is doing through the Southern Baptist Convention and its people. Three print issues of *SBC Life* are produced each year and are sent free of charge to Southern Baptist pastors, pastoral staff, full-time denominational workers, chaplains, and vocational evangelists. Email subscriptions are also available at sbclife.net.

OnMission

This is NAMB's award-winning flagship magazine, designed to help you be on mission where you work and live, as well as to highlight the work of missionaries across North America. Endorsed chaplains are included on NAMB's mailing list for this semi-monthly publication.

Ministry Program Materials

The Chaplains Commission and the SBC Chaplaincy Team do not provide ministry program materials. Chaplains are encouraged to use products from Lifeway Christian Resources (<https://www.lifeway.com/>). Chaplains using materials from other publishing sources should take care to review doctrinal presentations that reflect biblical truth.

Chaplain Communications

Chaplains are encouraged to communicate regularly with the SBC Chaplaincy Team. The Alpharetta, Georgia office is in the United States' Eastern time zone of the United States, and core office hours are 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The following options are provided to enhance communication opportunities.

NAMB Connection Center

The NAMB Connection Center provides customer support through phone calls and emails and supports NAMB's systems for missionary and chaplain endorsement. To contact the Connection Center, you can email help@namb.net or call 800-634-2462.

NAMB's Website

NAMB's website, namb.net/Chaplaincy, is provided to inform persons interested in chaplaincy about the endorsement process, resources, and upcoming events.

Email and Telephone

Email and telephone communications are available to each member of the Chaplaincy Team. NAMB's policy is to respond to your message as soon as possible. Staff members usually check their voice mail and email several times daily. Additional information of a public nature also will be provided from time to time via email through "SBC Chaplaincy Update." Also, automatic emails will be sent at least three times to remind endorsed chaplains about timely submission of their Quarterly Reports. SBC endorsed chaplains should add the following emails to their electronic address book: info@namb.net, chaplainquarterly@namb.net, chaplain@namb.net and noreply@namb.net to insure the timely delivery of Chaplaincy Team communications.

Site Visits by SBC Chaplaincy Team Personnel

Periodically, the SBC Chaplaincy Team members and Chaplain Ambassadors visit with chaplains at the sites where they provide ministry. The Chaplaincy Team or Chaplain Ambassadors are expected to prearrange these visits. The purpose of the visit is to provide pastoral care and encouragement to the chaplain. Also, it is an opportunity for supervisory persons to meet their ecclesiastical representatives.

Pastoral Care

The Chaplaincy Team and Chaplain Ambassadors are available to dialogue with chaplains about ministry coaching, counseling, transition assistance and tuition assistance.

Ministry Coaching

Professional and life situations are often a topic of concern. The SBC Chaplaincy Team desires to come alongside to encourage personal and professional development and to assist chaplains in maximizing their potential in fulfilling God's call.

Pastoral Care Manager

The Chaplain Pastoral Care Manager is a full-time staff person who oversees and undergirds the work of the Chaplain Ambassadors. He also provides direct pastoral care to SBC chaplains and families, helps refer those in need to applicable pastoral care resources, processes requests for financial assistance for intensive counseling retreats and gives training on ministry, personal and self-care, and other topics to enhance chaplains' skills. Additionally, the Chaplain Pastoral Care Manager serves as the Chaplain Ambassador for chaplains currently assigned to overseas locations.

Chaplain Ambassadors

Chaplains and their families are supported by a network of Chaplain Ambassadors in eight geographical regions as well as one National Ambassador for Women. Their role is to support and encourage chaplains in their ministry and personal lives through prayer, various forms of communication and pastoral interactions during conferences and site visits.

SBC Chaplaincy Team

The remaining members of the SBC Chaplaincy Team stand ready to provide pastoral support (within their scope of ordination and role) or to refer chaplains and families to credible resources. Based on financial need, limited monetary assistance may be provided.

To find out who your Chaplain Ambassador is or to contact the Chaplain Pastoral Care Manager or a member of the SBC Chaplaincy Team, email help@namb.net or call 800-634-2462 (Connection Center, NAMB).

Transition Assistance

Changing from one ministry opportunity to another is often a difficult and time-consuming journey. SBC Chaplaincy Team personnel have a variety of information and resources to recommend to those in transition. For those who have the luxury of lead-time, it is recommended that the search for a new position in ministry begin at least one year prior to the transition date. Any chaplain who is terminated from an institution should immediately advise the Chaplaincy Team.

Tuition Assistance

The Alfred Carpenter Scholarship Fund is available to support endorsed chaplains for accredited chaplaincy education opportunities beyond the Master of Divinity degree. Request forms are available from Chaplaincy Team.

Ministry Recognition

The SBC Chaplaincy Team provides recognition to retiring chaplains acknowledging their years of service as an SBC chaplain. The retiring chaplain should provide information regarding the retirement to the Chaplaincy Team as soon as the date of retirement and/or ceremony is known.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Chaplains Commission - A sub-group of the NAMB Board of Trustees who meet to grant and remove endorsement(s) to chaplains and provide overall direction for chaplaincy.

Confidential Communication - Information between a person and a Chaplain cannot be shared with anyone. Confidentiality is sometimes limited by legal and ethical guidelines in States, agencies and credentialing organizations in the event of danger to life. The most common include when a person reveals they are a threat to himself/herself or others, in which case a Chaplain must take steps to ensure the safety of those who may be harmed. This may include the legal and ethical requirement to break confidence and notify appropriate authorities. A chaplain should check with their institution for reporting policies and procedures.

Endorsement - An official statement that affirms to an institution or certifying organization that the chaplain is a called and qualified religious leader who is an active member in good standing with a local church of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Endorser - A chaplaincy ministry professional, recognized, empowered and authorized by a religious group or ecclesiastical endorsing organization to act on its behalf to screen, interview and provide denominational

endorsement for a qualified ministry professional in a specific discipline of chaplaincy ministry. The endorser is also authorized to withdraw ecclesiastical endorsements on behalf of their respective denomination or ecclesiastical endorsing agency. Currently, the SBC Chaplaincy Team has two endorsers:

- **Federal:** Responsible for the endorsement of chaplains to all Federal entities such as, but not limited to, Military (Army, Air Force, Navy, Coast Guard and Civil Air Patrol) regardless of components (e.g., Active, National Guard and Reserve), Federal Bureau of Prisons, Veterans Administration, CIA, FBI and Secret Service.
- **Public Service:** Responsible for the endorsement of chaplains in public institutions that include Corporate, Correctional, Community, Disaster Relief, Healthcare, Pastoral Counselors and Public Safety.

Full-time Chaplain - A person employed who serves an institution as the primary focus of their ministry.

Institution - An organization, such as a business, healthcare facility, correctional system, that invites the chaplaincy to take place in their organization.

Part-time Chaplain - A person employed who serves an institution as the secondary focus of their ministry.

Privileged Communication - A special category of confidentiality. A person has a privilege to refuse to disclose and to prevent another from disclosing a confidential communication by the person to a clergyman or a clergyman's assistant if such communication is made either as a formal act of religion or as a matter of conscience. The Chaplain does not have the authority to break confidence where privilege is invoked. The privilege belongs to the penitent. (For more information, see "General rule of privilege" particularly applicable to Military Chaplains IAW UCMJ - Military Rule of Evidence 503, Communications to Clergy.") Outside of the military, communication is not privileged if it's made to a non-clergy person. The minister must be officially recognized as clergy.

SBC Chaplaincy Team - This team is organizationally a part of the President's Office, NAMB. The team acts on behalf of the Chaplains Commission and provides daily support for SBC chaplains.

Volunteer Chaplain - A person who volunteers their time and resources to serve an institution as a chaplain.



The SBC Chaplaincy Code of Conduct and Pledge of Support

The Chaplains Commission of the North American Mission (NAMB) endorses Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Chaplains. NAMB is an agency of the SBC whose messengers over the years have adopted resolutions on a variety of subjects. These range from broad concepts of freedom of religion and the separation of church and state to matters of morality and personal conduct. The Chaplains Commission expects that endorsed chaplains will have as a focus in the midst of their ministry an awareness of and responsiveness to opportunities to share the gospel of Jesus Christ. One outcome of the ministry of Southern Baptist chaplains is seeing persons make a profession of faith in Jesus Christ, then follow that profession of faith in believer's baptism and affiliation with a local church. Chaplains are expected to live their personal and professional lives with the highest practice of integrity. You will be expected to abide by guidance given to individuals/churches by the SBC, NAMB and/or SBC Chaplaincy Team leaders. If your personal lifestyle impacts your ministry effectiveness or could bring about embarrassment to the cause of Christ, the SBC or SBC Chaplaincy, you may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including withdrawal of endorsement.

By seeking and receiving a SBC Chaplaincy endorsement, you indicate your willingness to abide by the following "Code of Conduct".

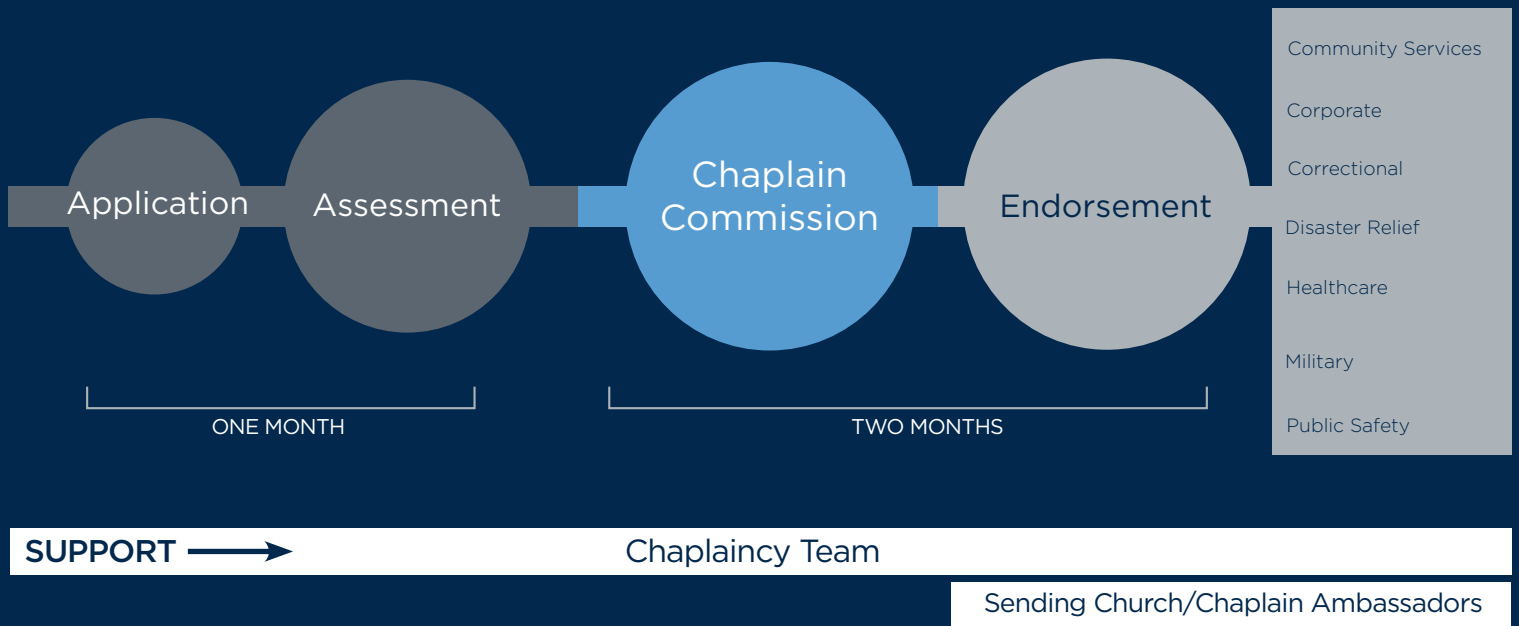
CODE OF CONDUCT PLEDGE

- I will conduct myself in a way that reflects positively on Christ and the Southern Baptist Convention.
- If married, other than my spouse or family member, I will not be at a residence alone, have a meal alone, or be in a car alone with anyone of the opposite sex.
- I will be a member in good standing of a Southern Baptist Church.
- I will practice tithing.
- I execute sound judgment in counseling, visiting, communicating and traveling with anyone of the opposite sex in order to guard against any perception of inappropriateness.
- I will not show affection that could be questioned as inappropriate.
- I will abstain from consumption of any alcoholic beverage or illegal drugs.
- I will not view pornography.
- I will maintain financial integrity.
- I will submit the required Quarterly Chaplaincy Report to the SBC Chaplaincy Team.
- I will covenant to pray for the integrity and spiritual health of my fellow chaplains.

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

CHAPLAIN ENDORSEMENT PATHWAY



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North American Mission Board

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