

**MICHIGAN DEFENSE FORCE
Chaplain and Chaplain Assistant
Duty Qualifications
Standard Operating Procedure 165-1**

Chaplain and Chaplain Assistant Duty Qualifications

**Joint Force Headquarters – Michigan
Department of Military and Veterans
Affairs
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UNCLASSIFIED

For The Adjutant General:



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History. This publication is a new formatted publication and supersedes all other applicable human resources procedures.

Summary. This SOP prescribes the policies and standards for the human resources procedures in the Defense Force. It also defines certain command responsibilities and policies. When not stated directly within this publication, applicable Army National Guard, Air National Guard, or State Defense Force guidance will be utilized.

Applicability. The SOP applies to all components, elements, detachments, units and personnel of the Defense Force, unless otherwise noted.

Federal and state law. In all cases where federal law is mentioned, the coinciding state statutes also apply.

Proponent and exception authority. The proponents of this SOP are the Defense Force commander and the Defense Force adjutant.

Supplementations. This SOP is the basis for all human resources practices

within the Defense Force. This SOP is based on federal and state law and applicable federal and state military regulations and will be enforced as regulations. Other supplements to this publication and establishment of command and local policies and forms not previously authorized by this command are prohibited without prior written approval from the Defense Force commander and / or adjutant.

Suggested Improvements. Suggested improvements which may be considered for this SOP should be forwarded in writing to the proponent agency of this regulation. Adjutant, Michigan State Defense Force, 3411 North Martin Luther King Junior Boulevard, Lansing, MI 48906.

Review / Revision: This SOP will be reviewed, at a minimum, every three years and applicable revisions made to it. When necessary, a rapid revision process may be applied and updates may be made sooner. If such rapid revision occurs within one year of the regularly scheduled review, that review will not occur unless deemed necessary by the adjutant.

Distribution. This publication is available in electronic form only and is intended for all components, elements, detachments, units and personnel of the Defense Force.

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Introduction

The U.S. Constitution, law precedent, and policy support the free exercise of religion. For example, Title 10, United States Code (USC), Sections 3073, 3547, 5142, and 8067, provides for the appointment of officers as chaplains in the Army, Navy, and Air Force. The Navy directs its Chaplain Corps to provide chaplains for the Marine Corps, the Coast Guard, and the Merchant Marines. Chaplains have rank without command (Title 10, USC, Sections 3581, 5945, and 8581), and function in the dual roles of religious leader and staff officer. Department of Defense directive (DODD) 1300.17, Accommodation of Religious Practices within the Military Services, describes the commander's responsibility for religious accommodation.

Chaplain Duty Qualifications (97C)

The mission of the MIDF Chaplain Corps is to provide religious support (RS) to the MIDF across the range of military operations (ROMO) by assisting the commander in providing for the free exercise of religion and providing religious, moral, and ethical advisement and leadership. (DODD 1304.19) "Provide" is understood as either (perform) personal delivery or (provide) coordination of required support from other chaplain sources. (See ADRP 1-03, ART 4.2.4.1 for religious tasks.) Throughout Army history, Chaplains and Religious Affairs Specialists/Religious Ministry Professionals (RAS/RMP) have served alongside combat Soldiers, enduring the same hardships and bearing the same burdens. They are members of the profession of arms. Religious service (RS) in the Army has no civilian equivalent, whereas MIDF Chaplains usually serve as vocational ministers or pastors. Like their Army counterparts, MIDF Chaplains execute their distinct RS mission for uniformed military Service members, Family members, and authorized civilians in a variety of geographical locations, operational situations, and circumstances.

Administrative Support Michigan Defense Force MOS Information

- Officer
- Active Duty
- Reserve

Administrative Support for MIDF Chaplain Corps

- Brigade (BDE) Chaplain (1) serves as the Command Chaplain, reporting directly to the commanding officer of MIDF.
- Battalion (BN) Chaplains (2 – or as many battalions as created) serves one per Battalion, reporting directly to their BN commanding officer and to the BDE Chaplain.
- Company Chaplains (1 per company – serve as Chaplains Assistants for BN or BDE ((if not meeting DoD Chaplain qualifications)) at their discretion or upon request of BN or BDE). Chaplains at CO level report to their CO commanding officer and to their respective BN Chaplain.

Michigan Defense Force Chaplains have the responsibility of caring for the spiritual well-being of Soldiers and their families. The MIDF Chaplaincy can include Ministers, Priests, Imams, and Rabbis. MIDF Chaplains are the spiritual leaders of the MIDF, and they perform religious ceremonies from births and baptisms, to confirmations and marriage, to illness and last rites. Chaplains may perform voluntary religious services during scheduled drills at post, on base, or in the field, through the guidance and standing orders of the Brigade Chaplain. Chaplains attend meetings for the command of their respective AOR and are considered part of the command staff, serving the spiritual needs of fellow soldiers at the discretion of their commanding officer.

As Chaplain Officers, they lead a Unit Ministry Team (UMT), which consists of the BN Chaplain and trained Chaplain Assistants (Battalion and/or Company level). Since a Chaplain is a non-combatant, Chaplains do not carry a weapon at any time. The Chaplain Assistant(s) provides security for the UMT. Chaplain Assistants are also fully trained on the conduct of worship services, as well as Soldier-specific tasks. Chaplain Assistants are those who wish to serve at the Battalion or Company level. They may not be required to fulfill the educational requirements for chaplaincy, and they serve under the command and guidance of the Battalion (and/or Brigade) Chaplains.

The responsibilities of an MIDF and Army Chaplain include:

- Commanding and controlling a Unit Ministry Team during combat and peacetime.
- Coordinating/directing a full program of religious ministries, including workshops, pastoral counseling, religious education, and other activities.
- Developing doctrine, organizations, and ceremonies for unique chaplain missions.
- Instructing chaplain skills to Chaplain Assistants.

- Serving as spiritual advisor to other units, including Army National Guard and U.S. Army Reserve organizations (if called upon).
- Offering confidential communications which are absolute and can never be disseminated without the express consent of the counselee.

Requirements:

To be a Chaplain in the Michigan Defense Force, candidates must obtain an ecclesiastical endorsement from their faith group. The BDE Chaplain will also be aligned with a federal military endorsing agency for Chaplaincy. This ecclesiastical faith group endorsement for all chaplains should certify that they are:

- A clergy person in their denomination or faith group.
- Qualified spiritually, morally, intellectually, and emotionally to serve as a Chaplain in the MIDF, patterned after the US 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 MIDF or Army.
- Possess a baccalaureate degree of not less than 120 semester hours.
- Possess a master's degree in divinity or a graduate degree in theological studies.
- Waivers may be requested and obtained case-by-case for Chaplains at BN or CO level based on a minimum of an undergraduate degree in pastoral studies or religion without a master's degree but combined with full-time pastoral or pastoral staff experience at a church for at least 2 years.
- Those candidates not meeting the Department of Defense education requirements required of Chaplains may be given duties as Chaplain Assistants but will still be trained in the manner of Chaplaincy, including confidential communications, critical incident stress management, psychological/spiritual first aid (or their equivalents), and basic Chaplain skills for protocol in all areas of Chaplain involvement in the MIDF.

Training:

Army Chaplains do not go through Basic Training. Instead, they attend the Chaplain Officer Basic Course (CHOBC), which is a 12-week course taught at Fort Jackson, S.C. It provides them with an introduction to the non-combatant common core skills, Army writing, and Chaplaincy-specific training. The Army will neither require nor allow Chaplains to bear arms as part of their military duties. The MIDF is patterned after the Army model, except for the Army's 12-week training. MIDF Chaplains will receive Chaplain training at annual training (AT) and at such times as pre-determined by BDE and BN drill schedules. MIDF Chaplains will receive basic training in CISM (Critical Incident Stress Management) and PSA (Psychological First Aid) or similar equivalent training at AT and/or drill upon BDE/BN Chaplain scheduling.

Helpful Skills:

Being a Chaplain means being a spiritual leader in the MIDF and requires certain qualities. Leaders exhibit self-discipline, initiative, confidence, and intelligence. They are physically fit and can perform under physical and mental pressures. Leaders make decisions quickly, always focusing on completing the mission successfully, and show respect for their subordinates and other military officers. Leaders lead from the front and adjust to environments that are always changing. They are judged by their ability to make decisions on their own and bear ultimate moral responsibility for those decisions. Chaplains serve as spiritual examples and follow the tenants of their faith group, holding character and integrity in the highest regard, and living it among the soldiers whom they serve.

Advanced Responsibilities:

MIDF Chaplains may continue to specialize and serve in the Chaplaincy at ever increasing levels of leadership and responsibility. Promotions would follow the general TIG (time in grade) schedules established by the MIDF. While Chaplains are not line officers, they are afforded the courtesy and respect as officers by their fellow soldiers.

Confidential Communications. Confidential communication is communication to a Chaplain, Chaplain Assistant, Chaplain Candidate, or other religious support staff given as a formal act of religion or as a matter of conscience, not intended to be shared with a 3rd party. It is a communication that is made in confidence to the person acting as spiritual advisor. Chaplain candidates, along with those listed above, must maintain confidential communications in their role as religious support staff within the unit ministry team. Candidates must remain aware of their training limitations while working with Soldiers and Soldier Families; and should not seek out counseling situations requiring confidentiality. Similarly, Supervisory Chaplains must remain attentive to training Chaplain Candidates the parameters and implications of confidential communications. When faced with potentially confidential situations, Chaplain Candidates should seek the support and involvement of a chaplain. Confidential communications are absolute and are not shared with anyone, including, but not limited to, command staff, commanding officers, supervisory enlisted, anyone associated with the MIDF, or anyone else.

Assistant Chaplain Assistant Duty Qualifications (99G)

Administrative Support MIDF MOS Information

- Enlisted
- Active Duty
- Reserve
- Exceptions for Chaplain Assistants as officers is under the discretion of MIDF BDE command, based on prior military service, prior rank within the MIDF, and service at the Company level and serving as a Chaplain by direction of the BN/BDE Chaplains.

MIDF Chaplains provide for the spiritual needs of MIDF personnel of any denomination. Chaplain Assistants provide much-needed support to the Chaplains during missions and everyday activities. A Chaplain Assistant primarily provides support for the Unit Ministry Team programs and worship services.

Duties performed by the Chaplain Assistant include:

- Coordinating Unit Ministry Team activities
- Maintaining physical security of Unit Ministry Team facilities/equipment
- Safeguarding privileged communications and offerings
- Arranging religious retreats and memorial ceremonies under guidance of their Chaplain
- Supporting the Unit Ministry Team readiness program
- Maintaining chaplain vestments and religious items
- Keeping within the UMT leadership directive

Training:

Job training for Army Chaplain Assistants consists of seven weeks of classroom instruction, where they learn:

- English grammar, spelling and punctuation
- Typing and clerical skills
- Preparing forms and correspondence in Army style
- Roles and responsibilities of Army chaplains
- Religious history and background

MIDF Chaplain Assistants receive annual and other training as directed by their supervising Chaplain, including those in the areas outlined above when possible, and of confidential communications, protocols, and other necessary areas such as Critical Incident Stress Management or Psychological First Aid (or similar) training. While Chaplain Assistants may wear the chaplain insignia and perform duties as Chaplains at the Company Level upon approval by Brigade and Battalion Chaplains, they do not offer counseling or receive confidential communications unless directed by BN or BDE Chaplains through issued or standing orders, or unless it is given to them abruptly or unscheduled.

Helpful Skills:

Helpful attributes include:

- Interest in organization and keeping accurate records
- Preference for clergy office work
- Interest in operating typewriters, computers, devices, and other office machines
- Ability to organize and plan
- Willingness to receive guidance and then follow through with confidence and correct clarity

- Understanding of their respective roles on the Unit Ministry Team (UMT), following the guidance
- and leadership of their respective Chaplains at CO, BN, and BDE level.

Advanced Responsibilities:

Advanced level Chaplain Assistants, if established by MIDF command and the BDE Chaplain, can be trained to be responsible for performing religious support duties in first-level battle fatigue care. Advanced level Chaplain Assistants provide emergency ministrations on the battlefield, organize support for Unit Ministry Team programs, and learn to conduct training on different religions, cultural distinctions, and world customs.

References

References for Guidance:

US Army Study Guide for MOS 56 Chaplain

FM 1-05 US Army Religious Support Manual 2019 edition

US Army Reserve Chaplain Candidate Guide 2016 edition

US Army UMT Field Handbook 1996 edition

JP 1-05 Department of Homeland Security and Joint Chiefs Religious Affairs in Joint Operations Guide 2009 edition

Ohio Military Reserve Regulation 165-1 for Chaplain Activities Guide 2017 edition

CHO607 Unit Ministry Team Leadership Army Correspondence Course Guide (Virginia Defense Force) accessed 2021

The Chaplains Handbook by the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) accessed 2021

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