

**Southern Baptist Convention**

**NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD**

**THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST**

**ENDORSEMENT MANUAL**

**for**

**CHAPLAINS AND COUNSELORS IN MINISTRY**

*Policies, guidelines, and practices  
for endorsed chaplains and counselors in ministry  
of the Southern Baptist Convention*

## FORWARD

*The Southern Baptist Chaplain's and Counselor's Endorsement Manual* provides policies, guidelines, and practices for chaplains and counselors in ministry endorsed by the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) through the Chaplains Commission, SBC, of the North American Mission Board, SBC, (NAMB). This manual is for use by NAMB agency leaders, chaplaincy support team personnel, and all endorsed Southern Baptist chaplains and counselors in ministry.

The Chaplains Commission, SBC, is the designated body for providing affirmation of Southern Baptists needing endorsement to serve as Southern Baptist chaplains or counselors. It has been the practice that agencies and institutions desiring chaplaincy or counseling ministries services want to correspond with one designated body from a faith group or denomination that provides endorsement documents. In 1941 the SBC designated what became known as the Chaplains Commission, SBC, as that one body. The year 2001 marks 60 years of service to Southern Baptists by the Chaplains Commission, SBC.

Chaplaincy and counseling ministries personnel serve at the invitation of the agency or institution in which they minister. Southern Baptist endorsed chaplains and counselors in ministry relate to Southern Baptist life and practice in a continuing capacity through the Chaplaincy Evangelism Team, NAMB, and through local Southern Baptist churches, local Southern Baptist associations, and state or regional Southern Baptist conventions.

It is the intent of this manual to facilitate the call of God upon the lives of Southern Baptists toward chaplaincy and counseling ministries through the endorsement process and through ongoing support and professional training. The Chaplaincy Evangelism Team partners with local Southern Baptist churches, local Southern Baptist associations, and state or regional Southern Baptist conventions, and various agencies and institutions to provide quality chaplaincy and counseling ministries.

Southern Baptist endorsed chaplains and counselors in ministry are expected to be familiar with this manual, provide appropriate response as indicated in various sections; and to serve as Southern Baptist representatives of the highest qualities in regards to faith and practice in their personal lives and professional ministry.

Questions regarding this manual may be directed to the Chaplains Commission, SBC, or the Chaplaincy Evangelism Team.

Approved May 2001  
Chaplains Commission, SBC  
North American Mission Board

Amended

\*10/07/2008, Chapter IV, Personnel Policies, item 3

\*\*04/20/2010, Chapter IV, Personnel Policies, General Expectations second paragraph

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# CHAPTER I

## CHAPLAINS COMMISSION, SBC AND THE CHAPLAINCY EVANGELISM TEAM

### INTRODUCTION

The North American Mission Board (NAMB) came into existence on June 19, 1997. The messengers of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), meeting in Dallas, Texas, gave final approval for the birth of a new home missions agency. This new agency was to combine the resources of three former agencies, the Home Mission Board, the Brotherhood Commission, and the Radio and Television Commission. The primary responsibility of NAMB is to reach the United States and Canada for Jesus Christ, using every appropriate means of evangelization and church planting. The endorsement of Southern Baptist affiliated persons for chaplaincy and counseling ministries is a vital component of achieving NAMB's purpose.

The corporation of NAMB has as its sole stockholder the SBC. The work of the Board of Trustees and staff is guided by the official action determined by the SBC.

The Chaplaincy Evangelism Team is organized within the Evangelization Group of NAMB. The mission, vision, and guiding principles of the Chaplaincy Evangelism Team are derived from the mission and vision assigned to NAMB by the SBC.

### MISSION

The Chaplaincy Evangelism Team partners with local Southern Baptist churches, associations, and state conventions

- to assist local churches to minister to persons in the name of Christ through chaplaincy and counseling ministries,
- to facilitate the proclamation of the gospel through the endorsement process of Southern Baptist persons as chaplains and counselors in ministry,
- to develop, support, and encourage persons who are involved in chaplaincy and counseling ministries.

Note: The endorsement process for chaplains and counselors in ministry includes

- guiding persons toward preparation for endorsement,
- preparation of application packages for review and approval by the Chaplains Commission, SBC,
- providing denominational connection, support, and development of endorsed chaplains and counselors in ministry.

### VISION

Because we know that God is at work in the world to bring people into relationship with Himself through Jesus Christ, the Chaplaincy Evangelism Team is dedicated to being on the front line of the advancement of chaplaincy and counseling ministries into the twenty-first century. The Chaplaincy Evangelism Team will work in cooperative partnerships

- to provide the best qualified chaplains and counselors in ministry,
- to minister the Christian witness in specialized settings of ministry, and
- to support these endorsed chaplains and counselors in ministry through the resources of the SBC.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

We will employ the following guiding principles to empower ministry through chaplaincy and counseling ministries:

--Obedience

In response to the Great Commission and God's call upon the lives of persons to chaplaincy and counseling ministries we will guide Christian persons through the endorsement process including educational and ministerial formation, through faithfulness to the Word of God, and maintenance of a well- balanced and integrated personal and family life.

--Partnership

We exist to partner with individuals, local churches, associations, state conventions, professional chaplaincy associations, and counselor certifying organizations in development and support of chaplains and counselors in ministry.

--Cooperation

We cooperate with those who invite chaplaincy and counseling ministries into their organization as an essential element to the development and support of chaplaincy and counseling ministries.

--Stewardship

People, time, and fiscal resources are entrusted to each of us to use for the furtherance of sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ and for ministry to persons in the name of Jesus Christ.

## **TERRITORY**

The work of NAMB is geographically defined as the United States, territories of the United States, and Canada. To this end the Chaplains Commission, SBC, will endorse chaplains and counselors in ministry to using agencies within this geographic area. Chaplains and counselors in ministry may find themselves serving throughout the world by virtue of their employment with an agency whose territory is worldwide.

## **THE CHAPLAINS COMMISSION, SBC**

Chaplains Commission, SBC, Membership: Trustees of NAMB are elected for their term of service by the SBC in its annual session. Trustees decide policies and give overall direction in matters pertaining to NAMB's work and obligations.

The Chaplains Commission, SBC, is a sub-group of the Board of Trustees. Trustees are appointed by the chairman of the Board to serve on the Chaplains Commission, SBC. Ex-officio (nonvoting) members include the president of NAMB and the vice president for the Evangelization Group. Chaplaincy Evangelism Team director and associates present applications at the Chaplains Commission, SBC, meetings.

Meeting dates of the Chaplains Commission, SBC, are determined annually.

History of Chaplains Commission, SBC:

Southern Baptist involvement in chaplaincy ministries dates back to 1847 when a 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 did evangelism and ministry to the Confederate troops. The 1863 minutes of the SBC demonstrate the support of chaplaincy among military forces. Religious work was carried among the 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...." Proceedings SBC 1866, p. 40)

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 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. (Southern Baptist Minutes 1917, pp.100- 101)

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 Executive Committee, SBC and was located in Washington, D.C. Just prior to United States entry into World War II the Executive Committee, SBC recommended to the SBC that the SBC designate to the Home Mission Board (HMB) the responsibility for endorsement of chaplains. The action of the messengers at the convention reads:

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. (Proceedings SBC 1941, pp. 52-53)

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 at Blytheville, Arkansas, became the first “superintendent” for the work of chaplaincy.

A recommendation was presented and adopted at the 1949 SBC stating “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.
  - (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. (SBC Proceedings 1949, pp. 39-40)

In 1985 the SBC voted to task the Chaplains Commission, SBC, with the endorsement responsibilities for Southern Baptist involved in pastoral counseling ministries.

## **RELATIONSHIP TO SOUTHERN BAPTIST**

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

The Chaplaincy Evangelism Team carries out the policies and guidelines of the Chaplains Commission, SBC. The Chaplaincy Evangelism Team is organizationally a part of the Evangelization Group, NAMB, and provides support and training to endorsed persons under the organizational processes of NAMB.

## **STAFF ORGANIZATION**

The organizational structure of NAMB is designed to support two primary tasks: evangelism and church planting. Every activity and process of the agency undergirds one, if not both, of these functions.

Presently there are six groups that form the basic organizational structure of NAMB. Within each group there are teams, and within each team there maybe units. The Chaplaincy Evangelism Team is part of the Evangelization Group under the leadership of a NAMB vice president.

Chaplaincy Evangelism Team staff personnel are selected through an administrative process. Staff members serve for an indefinite period of time.

## **FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

The basic financial support of the Chaplains Commission, SBC, and the Chaplaincy Evangelism Team is through the budgeting process of NAMB. NAMB's funds are derived from generous giving through the Cooperative Program, Annie Armstrong Easter Offering and other designated contributions. Additional support for military chaplaincy is derived from generous offerings received from military chapel congregations. These funds are accounted for through the "Military Chaplains' Fund." Additionally, the Alfred Carpenter Scholarship Fund is supported by designated donations and annuities.

## **SOUTHERN BAPTIST SUPPORT TEAM FOR CHAPLAINCY AND COUNSELING MINISTRIES**

The ministry of chaplains and counselors in ministry is supported by Southern Baptist through a network of individuals that includes the Chaplains Commissions, SBC, the Chaplaincy Evangelism Team, state/regional convention chaplaincy representatives, local associations and local churches. The connection among these persons provides for ongoing support, encouragement, challenge and fostering of chaplaincy and counseling ministries.

## **AFFILIATIONS AND PARTNERS FOR CHAPLAINCY AND COUNSELING MINISTRIES**

The Chaplains Commission, SBC, through the Chaplaincy Evangelism Team, maintains affiliation and partners with a number of organizations involved with the promotion, facilitation, and development of chaplaincy and counseling ministries. The Chaplaincy Evangelism Team also relates to a number of institutions and organizations supporting the education and professional development of persons serving in chaplaincy and counseling ministries.

## CHAPTER II

### THE CONTEXT OF CHAPLAINCY MINISTRY

A Southern Baptist who is endorsed to chaplaincy ministries must understand that the context of chaplaincy is beyond the ministry environment of a local church setting. The pastorate ministry occurs within the context of a local church as stated in *the Baptist Faith and Message*, Article VI. Chaplaincy ministry is usually found in the environment of a particular institution or organization beyond the local church. Chaplaincy affords men and women unique opportunities of ministry. The office of pastor is associated with the pastorate while the office of chaplain is found in chaplaincy ministries. This change of context is a significant point of education for the new chaplain. Several points of discussion should help launch the learning experience that is before the new chaplain.

(Note: Endorsed counselor must engage in similar journey of understanding when their ministry setting extends beyond the local church to counseling centers in the community.)

#### TO WHOM DOES THE CHAPLAIN MINISTER?

The chaplain's ministry is to all persons of the agency/institution and to all persons that agency/institution seeks to serve. For example, the chaplain ministers to every member of a military unit to include family members. A healthcare chaplain ministers to patients, patient's families and staff members. A prison chaplain ministers to staff, inmates, and their families. Those served include persons of faith who seek the chaplain's services as well as those who have no religious preference. The focus is not simply on those who respond to the chaplain's presence, but to all persons within the chaplain's sphere of influence. Every chaplain is expected to support the free exercise of religion within the agency/institution being served.

#### RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY AND COMPLEXITY

Many agencies/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 provide religious ministry to all these persons regardless of their faith group as well as those of the chaplain's particular faith group. Most agencies/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 appropriate expression of their chosen faith group. As the Southern Baptist chaplain exercises this task, the chaplain will also be free to minister to those of the chaplain's faith group (i.e., Southern Baptist).

Another extension of what religious diversity and complexity may mean is that the chaplain will be expected to facilitate access to religious practices with which the chaplain is very much in disagreement. The chaplain will never be expected to conduct a service or provide an ordinance for a group with which they disagree but will be expected to ensure and make provision for the opportunity for these persons to practice their faith. The facilitating of religious practice is always within the confines of the policies of the agency or institution.

This contextual focus provides chaplains with endless opportunities to be witnesses of the gospel to every person whether they express a faith preference or have none.

#### AGENCY/INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE

A chaplain must learn the structure of the organization that hosts their chaplaincy ministry. Southern Baptist ecclesiology aims toward a democratic organization, with a plurality of participation from church members. Southern Baptist's polity creates a church body that might be described as horizontally organized. Most agencies/institutions are vertically organized, with leadership recognized in a definite "chain of command".

Promotion within the agency/institutions is always by merit. There may be lateral moves but promotions move the chaplain up in the organization usually with increased responsibility for oversight of religious ministries and supervision of more chaplains and assistants. When a chaplain becomes the “Chief of Chaplains”, “Chief of Services”, “Department Head for Pastoral Services”, then the chaplain has reached the “top of the organization” with regard to chaplaincy ministries.

Accountability in chaplaincy ministry is not to a church committee or group of deacons. Responsibilities will be assigned to the chaplain by senior chaplains, commanders of military units, hospital administrators, prison wardens, or corporate leaders. 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. This is vastly different than the local church.

## **AGENCY/INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES**

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

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

Southern Baptist ministers usually work hard to balance learning about the policies of an agency/institution as they seek to make time for ministry to persons.

## **AGENCY/INSTITUTIONAL CULTURE**

As the new chaplain learns about the structure and policies of the organization they serve, they will also want to pay attention to the culture that 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 that those policies engender throughout the institution. A particular military command has a culture that is developed around its mission and the leadership of the command. Chaplains must pay close attention to the culture that exists.

## CHAPTER III

### CHAPLAINCY AND COUNSELING MINISTRIES CATEGORIES AND STATUS

#### AREAS OF CHAPLAINCY AND COUNSELING MINISTRIES

Chaplaincy and counseling ministries occur in a wide variety of specialized settings. Presently the Chaplains Commission, SBC, organizes these various settings into six general areas of chaplaincy and counseling ministries.

1. **Healthcare**—While hospital settings are the usual place for healthcare chaplaincy, Southern Baptists also have chaplains serving with hospice organizations, mental health facilities, mental retardation programs, nursing homes, and with the Department of Veterans Affairs. This area of service also includes endorsement for students in extended or residency Clinical Pastoral Education programs.
2. **Counselors in ministry**—Counselors in ministry serve in settings incorporated into local church facilities, in freestanding counseling centers, and as individual counselors in ministry.
3. **Military**—The 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. Each state also has an organized State National Guard with an associated chaplaincy service. This area also includes the volunteer chaplains of the Civil Air Patrol, an Air Force auxiliary service.
4. **Corporate**—These chaplains are associated with ministry in the corporate workplace. The chaplains may be hired by a particular corporation or business and work as an employee of that organization. Or, a chaplaincy service ministry that provides chaplains on a contractual basis with various companies may hire the chaplain who then fulfills the chaplaincy service contract.
5. **Corrections**—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. Correctional chaplains serve in adult and juvenile facilities.
6. **Public Safety**—Law enforcement, fire departments, and community chaplaincy services have chaplains who serve the members of the department as well as the people of the community.
7. **Disaster Relief**—A volunteer chaplaincy service associated with SBC Disaster Relief Ministries.

#### EMPLOYMENT STATUS

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

Employment status is an arrangement between the chaplain/counselor and the organization being served. NAMB does not have a policy of providing compensation for chaplaincy service, except in a very few locations. The Chaplains Commission, SBC, and the Chaplaincy Evangelism Team are not organized or tasked to create or provide employment opportunities for chaplaincy and counseling ministries.

#### PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

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

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **ENDORSEMENT POLICIES AND GUIDELINES**

#### **ENDORSEMENT, A DEFINITION**

Endorsement, as used by the Chaplains Commission, SBC, is an official act of the Commission that affirms to a using agency or certifying organization that the chaplain or counselor in ministry is in good standing with the Chaplains Commission, SBC.

Endorsement is for a specific chaplaincy or counseling ministry with a specific using agency. It is the chaplain's and counselor's responsibility to ensure they have a current endorsement on file with their using agency. The chaplain and counselor must understand and comply with the endorsement requirements of their using agency.

#### **TYPES OF ENDORSEMENTS**

The Chaplains Commission, SBC, provides six 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 "with active duty" or "without active duty.") 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), American Association of Pastoral Counselors (AAPC), 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, like the International Conference of Police Chaplains. The sixth type of endorsement is called an "approval status." An "approval" is limited to the Chaplain Candidate Program offered by each of the Armed Forces.

#### **DURATION OF ENDORSEMENTS**

Some endorsements have a specified period of time for which they are valid. This termination date is usually stated on the endorsement or is expressed by the using agency's policy. All endorsements terminate when the chaplain or counselor is no longer affiliated with the organization to which they were endorsed. Some ministerial training programs have a specified duration. When the chaplain or counselor completes the training the endorsement terminates.

#### **QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR ENDORSEMENT**

The qualifications expected of a Southern Baptist applying for endorsement as a chaplain or counselor are established by the using agency and the Chaplains Commission, SBC. These qualification requirements vary according to the type of chaplaincy or counseling ministry involved. Qualification requirements may involve certain age limits, educational background, ministry experience, physical condition, financial and credit history, citizenship eligibility for a security clearance, certification by certain national organizations, and other qualifications specific to the using agency or Chaplains Commission, SBC.

A basic qualification from the Chaplains Commission, SBC, is that an applicant be a Southern Baptist. That means the applicant is a member in good standing of a Southern Baptist church. All endorsed chaplains and counselors in ministry 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 and counselor's personal life as well as their exercise of ministry in their ministry context.

The Chaplaincy Evangelism Team associates are available to guide applicants through the qualification process and to respond to any questions or concerns.

## **UPDATING AN ENDORSEMENT**

Periodically the using agency will ask that the chaplain or counselor have an updated endorsement. The requirement for updating an endorsement may be established by the using agency or by the Chaplains Commission, SBC. It is the responsibility of the chaplain/counselor to initiate the process for updating an endorsement. At least four weeks should be allowed for the update endorsement process to be completed.

## **PERSONNEL POLICIES OF THE CHAPLAINS COMMISSION, SBC**

The following items have been identified by specific policy statements of the Chaplains Commission, SBC. The initial and update application process offers an opportunity for the applicant to affirm compliance and support of these policies. Applicants and endorsed chaplains/counselors in ministry with questions, comments, or difficulties in the areas of these policies are encouraged to contact the Chaplaincy Evangelism Team associate for their area of ministry.

1. **Doctrinal Stability**—The Chaplains Commission, SBC, considers an affirmation of the Baptist Faith and Message as currently adopted by the SBC essential for endorsement. The initial and update application process offers an opportunity for the applicant to affirm support of these doctrinal statements.
2. **Abstinence from the use of alcoholic beverages and other abused substances**—Historically, the position of Southern Baptists on the use of alcoholic beverages has been abstinence. The Chaplains Commission, SBC, affirms this traditional stance of Southern Baptists. Endorsed Southern Baptist chaplains and counselors in ministry are expected to avoid the consumption of alcoholic beverages. Abuse of other substances, i.e. controlled drugs, is not to be part of the lifestyle choices of a Southern Baptist chaplain/counselor. Those who have been advised by a physician to consume alcohol questions or controlled substances on a routine basis should contact their chaplaincy associate so that appropriate notation can be made in the chaplain/counselor's file
3. **Glossolalia**—It is the stated policy of the Chaplains Commission, SBC, that no person who is actively participating in or promoting glossolalia hold endorsement as a Southern Baptist chaplain or counselor.  
\*This prohibition includes a private prayer language.
4. **Divorce and Remarriage**—Persons with a history of divorce will be evaluated in accordance with NAMB policy.

## **GENERAL EXPECTATIONS OF CHAPLAINS AND COUNSELORS IN MINISTRY**

The Chaplains Commission, SBC, expects that endorsed chaplains and counselors in ministry 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 and counselors in ministry 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 and counselors in ministry should guard against activities that proselytize persons active in other faith groups. Chaplains and counselors in ministry should present the biblical truths in the course of 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.

**\*\*Ministry to All Persons**—You are expected to minister to all persons, regardless of their behavior choices, ethnicity, physical condition/presence, or religious preference. In providing this ministry you are not condoning/approving of behaviors the Scriptures (Holy Bible) define as sinful, for example drunkenness, fornication, homosexuality, or abortion. Rather you should be seeking to help the person recognize God's intended order for life and to understand their need to humbly acknowledge God's plan for their life. You should be as inclusive as possible for mandatory activities and appropriately exclusive in ecclesiastical function and performance.

Performance of Ministry—The endorsement of a Southern Baptist chaplain/counselor presupposes that such a person will meet the qualifications of the using agency and will be able to perform assigned duties as a chaplain/counselor in a competent manner. Should this not be possible, as determined by the using agency, additional training and guidance should be sought. The Chaplaincy Evangelism Team should be informed of any difficulties in this area to determine if additional training, counseling, or other assistance is needed.

Baptism and the Lord's Supper—These are ordinances of the church. Therefore, Southern Baptist chaplains and counselors in ministry are to administer baptism and the Lord's Supper under the authority of a cooperating Southern Baptist church.

Relationships to Other Faith Groups—Chaplains and counselors in ministry will usually find their ministry opportunities in an environment with a diversity of religious beliefs and expressions. Southern Baptist chaplains/counselors in ministry 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 carries the meaning for Southern Baptist chaplains/counselors in ministry 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/counselors in ministry work and to whom they minister. An "open door" attitude is always a healthy approach to lasting relationships. The Chaplains Commission, SBC, believes this attitude has merit and value because it emphasizes the worth and dignity of individuals.

Contact Information—Chaplains and counselors in ministry are required to keep the Chaplaincy Evangelism Team informed of changes in contact information, i.e., address, telephone numbers, and e-mail. Returned mail is wasted dollars and degrades the financial ability of the Team to provide support to chaplains and counselors in ministry. The Quarterly Report, email, telephone, or letter are recommended means of advising of changes in contact information.

Quarterly Reports—Upon endorsement and affiliation with a using agency, a chaplain/counselor is required to complete a Quarterly Report. This required report is used to gather statistical data reflective of the chaplaincy/counseling ministry to which the chaplain/counselor 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 of the story of chaplaincy/counseling ministries provided by Southern Baptist endorsed chaplains and counselors in ministry. The Chaplaincy Evangelism Team provides the Quarterly Report via mail or through electronic means. It is the chaplain's/counselor's responsibility to ensure that a report is submitted each quarter in a timely manner.

## **PERSONAL ETHICS**

Integrity—Chaplains and counselors in ministry are expected to live their personal and professional lives with the highest practice of integrity. Integrity is being who and what you claim to be—a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ serving as a chaplain/counselor. Chaplains/counselors in ministry are expected to be honest and genuine in all your words and actions. A chaplain's or counselor's personal character must be consistent with the spiritual leadership they have with people. Chaplains/counselors in ministry must remember that those to whom they minister and those they serve depend on the chaplain's or counselor's integrity to be of the highest quality.

Chaplain/counselor relationships—Since chaplains and counselors in ministry are called upon to provide counseling and care to people or families experiencing domestic difficulties, family separation, and divorce matters requiring spiritual guidance, chaplains and counselors in ministry 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/counselor and other people involved and loss of ministry effectiveness and Christian credibility. Any chaplain or counselor experiencing difficulty in this area is expected to inform the Chaplaincy Evangelism Team associate for their area of ministry and to seek counseling and assistance as early as possible.

Financial Stability—Chaplains and counselors in ministry are expected to be wise in their financial dealings. Excessive use of credit beyond one's income may have an adverse impact on the chaplain's or counselor's opportunity for ministry.

Legal Involvement—Chaplains/counselors in ministry who are accused (arrested or charged) of misconduct concerning performance of their ministry or in their personal lives are expected to inform the Chaplaincy Evangelism Team associate for their area of ministry. Processes of "professional discipline" in which a chaplain/counselor is involved come within this same procedure/expectation. The earlier the Chaplaincy Evangelism Team is informed the greater the possibility of being able to intervene or represent the chaplain/counselor in any legal process. The desire of the Chaplains Commission, SBC, and the Chaplaincy Evangelism Team is to be of assistance to the chaplain/counselor and their family. The chaplain/counselor must recognize that their ministry may be terminated due to loss of respect and trust within their using agency.

## **SUPERVISION**

Chaplains and counselors in ministry serve a using agency at the invitation of the agency and therefore are under the direct supervision of the agencies supervisory structure. Additionally, the Chaplains Commission, SBC, through the work of the Chaplaincy Evangelism Team, retains ecclesiastical oversight of the chaplain's and counselor's work and life as a representative of the SBC. The Chaplaincy Evangelism Team associates are available to respond to any questions or concerns.

Each applicant submitting an application for denominational endorsement by the Chaplains Commission, SBC, signs the following agreement to assure the Chaplains Commission, SBC, 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, SBC, of the North American Mission Board, SBC, to be the agency designated by the Southern Baptist Convention to endorse chaplains and counselors in ministry to military and civilian agencies and agree to cooperate with the Chaplains Commission, SBC, in carrying out its policies and programs.

"I also recognize that it is the responsibility of the Chaplains Commission, SBC, to grant and/or to withdraw denominational endorsement. Therefore, should I prove by temperament, disposition, attitude, conduct, or otherwise to be unsuited for endorsement in the opinion of the Chaplains Commission, SBC, and should it decide that my denominational endorsement be withdrawn, I agree to abide by its decision."

## **PRIVILEGED AND CONFIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS**

When faced with a decision about a privileged or confidential communication the Southern Baptist chaplain or counselor must be aware of federal, state, and local laws governing reporting requirements in the jurisdiction in which they minister. They must also know the policies of their using agency. Counselors in ministry must be aware of professional practices expected by their professional association.

Communications received from persons usually occur because of trust in the chaplain or counselor. In the event that a chaplain or counselor determines that privileged or confidential information needs to be shared, the chaplain/counselor should contact their supervisor before proceeding. If imminent danger to life is present, then the chaplain/counselor should act to protect the lives of others. This recommendation provides for the protection of the chaplain or counselor and provides for the most prudent course of action.

## **LIABILITY INSURANCE**

Each chaplain/counselor is responsible in association with their using agency for liability insurance coverage regarding the exercise of their ministry. No liability insurance coverage for chaplains and counselors in ministry is provided by NAMB or the SBC.

## **SECULAR AND/OR ADDITIONAL MINISTRY EMPLOYMENT**

Many endorsed chaplains and counselors in ministry are involved with secular and/or additional ministry employment as a means to financially provide for their personal and family needs while they serve in a voluntary or part-time chaplaincy ministry. Chaplains, counselors in ministry, and their spouses are encouraged to consider the nature of their secular employment in regards to their Christian witness or any negative reflection that employment might have upon the SBC and the kingdom of God.

Chaplains and counselors in ministry in the full- time employment of a using agency are encouraged to advise their supervisor of the prospects of additional employment. In some cases it may be the using agency's policy that one must obtain the approval of a supervisor prior to obtaining additional employment. This policy should be considered to include additional ministry involvement, such as interim or part-time pastor of a church or another part-time chaplaincy position.

## **LOCAL, STATE, OR NATIONAL ORGANIZATION INVOLVEMENT**

Chaplains and counselors in ministry are encouraged to be involved in local, state, or national organizations which promote chaplaincy and counseling ministries, seek to provide for the welfare of persons, and organizations that seek to inform and share social policy. Prior to the chaplain's or counselor's involvement the using agency should be advised of the chaplain's/counselor's interest and/or approval from the using agency obtained. Chaplains and counselors in ministry will be representing Southern Baptists as well as the agency in which they serve.

## **DISCIPLINE AND WITHDRAWAL OF ENDORSEMENT**

In the event that an endorsed chaplain or counselor violates a law (local, state, federal, including UCMJ), agency policy, SBC general expectation, personal or professional ethic, or should there be an embarrassment to the cause of chaplaincy/counseling ministry or the SBC, disciplinary action may be in order. Withdrawal of endorsement may result from any situation deemed by the Chaplains Commission, SBC, to warrant such action.

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

The Chaplains Commission, SBC, desires that justice, grace, and mercy be exercised in all situations with the goal being personal redemption and restoration. The chaplain/counselor's relationship with God and family is of utmost importance. Restoration to ministry will not always be possible depending on the nature of the violation. Chaplains and counselors in ministry are reminded that personal reputation is to be guarded closely. One's reputation with people is a primary building block for ministry.

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

The disciplinary/withdrawal process will usually include these type contacts:

1. Chaplaincy Evangelism Team is informed, preferably by the chaplain/counselor via telephone or other expeditious means. Using agencies are welcome and encouraged to contact the Chaplaincy Evangelism Team.
2. Chaplaincy Evangelism Team associate or Team director confers with the chaplain/counselor, the using agency or professional organization, and other persons the Chaplaincy Evangelism Team, Chaplains Commission, SBC, or NAMB deems appropriate.
3. A written summary of the applicable facts surrounding the situation is provided to the Chaplaincy Evangelism Team director. When deemed necessary the Chaplains Commission, SBC, will be consulted for action concerning withdrawal of endorsement or other remedies as deemed appropriate.

## CHAPTER V

### RESOURCES, SERVICES, AND RECOGNITION

#### PRAYER SUPPORT

1. Prayer Calendar– Endorsed chaplains and counselors in ministry are included on the NAMB prayer calendar. On the birthday of the chaplain/counselor the name and state in which the chaplain or counselor is serving will be listed.
2. Intercessory Prayer Line–Chaplains and counselors in ministry are encouraged to make prayer needs known for inclusion on the NAMB prayer line.

#### PUBLICATIONS

1. *SBC Life*–Endorsed chaplains and counselors in ministry are included on the mailing list of this publication of the Executive Committee, SBC. This is a monthly publication.
2. *OnMission* Magazine–Endorsed chaplains and counselors in ministry are included on NAMB’s mailing list of this publication. This is a semimonthly publication.

#### MINISTRY PROGRAM MATERIALS

The Chaplains Commission, SBC, and the Chaplaincy Evangelism Team does not normally provide ministry program materials. Chaplains/counselors in ministry are encouraged to use products from Lifeway Christian Resources ([www.lifeway.com](http://www.lifeway.com)). Chaplains and counselors in ministry using materials from other publishing sources should take care to review doctrinal presentations that reflect biblical truth.

#### CHAPLAIN AND COUNSELOR COMMUNICATIONS

Chaplains and counselors in ministry are encouraged to communicate with the Chaplaincy Evangelism Team associate for their area of ministry. The Alpharetta, Ga., office is located in the Eastern time zone of the United States. Core office hours are 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The following are provided to enhance communication opportunities.

1. NAMB’s website, [www.namb.net/chaplain](http://www.namb.net/chaplain), is provided to inform persons interested in chaplaincy and counseling ministries about the endorsement process. Links to professional sites supporting chaplaincy and counseling ministries are provided. Additional information of a public nature will also be provided from time to time. This site also is provided as a means to receive word from the Chaplaincy Evangelism Team, receive Quarterly Report forms, and provides other opportunities for communicating with chaplains and counselors in ministry.
2. Email and telephonic communications is available to each member of the Chaplaincy Evangelism Team staff. The policy of NAMB is to respond to your message as soon as possible. Staff members usually check their voice mail and email several times daily.

## **PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

A part of the endorsement relationship is the development of persons in chaplaincy/counseling ministries ministry. Each year the Chaplaincy Evangelism Team and the state/regional chaplaincy representatives plan a variety of training events with a focus on professional ministry education. Chaplains and counselors in ministry are required to attend one SBC-sponsored training event each year. Continuing education credit is usually available.

1. Training Conferences–These conferences, sponsored by NAMB, are held on a regional basis. Chaplains and counselors in ministry are encouraged to attend the conference nearest their location.
2. 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.
3. Chaplains and Counselor’s Orientation– This orientation provides the chaplain/counselor with an introduction to the NAMB, the Chaplains Commission, SBC, and the work of chaplains and counselors in ministry as viewed by the Chaplaincy Evangelism Team. Newly endorsed persons should plan to attend a Chaplain’s and Counselor’s Orientation within two years of endorsement. The Chaplaincy Evangelism Team extends invitations.
4. Alfred Carpenter Scholarship Fund–This scholarship fund is available to support education opportunities beyond the entry- level education requirements. Request forms are available from Chaplaincy Evangelism Team associates.

## **SITE VISITS BY CHAPLAINCY TEAM PERSONNEL**

Periodically, the Chaplaincy Evangelism Team associates and state/regional convention chaplaincy representatives have the opportunity to visit with chaplains/counselors in ministry at the sites where they provide ministry. The Chaplaincy Evangelism Team associate or state/regional representative is expected to prearrange these visits. The purpose of the visit is to provide support and encouragement to the chaplain/counselor. It is also an opportunity for supervisory persons to meet your ecclesiastical representatives.

## **PERSONAL ASSISTANCE**

The Chaplaincy Evangelism Team associates and state/regional convention chaplaincy representatives are available to dialogue with chaplains and counselors in ministry regarding:

1. Ministry Advancement Opportunity– Advancement within a using agency is often a topic of concern and education for the chaplain/counselor. Chaplaincy Team personnel maintain continual contact with a variety of sources regarding advancement with using agencies. The understanding developed by the associates is available to chaplains and counselors in ministry as part of the support provided by NAMB and state/regional conventions.
2. Counseling and Guidance Services– Chaplains and counselors in ministry are encouraged to seek counseling for any variety of situations. Chaplaincy Team personnel will gladly make referral to appropriate persons or agencies. Based on financial need, monetary assistance may be provided.
3. Transition Assistance–Changing from one ministry opportunity to another is often a difficult and time consuming journey. Chaplaincy Team personnel have a variety of information and resources to recommend to those in transition. Although not an “employment agency,” the Chaplaincy Team personnel are often aware of ministry opportunities. 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 or counselor who is terminated from an agency should advise the Chaplaincy Team personnel immediately for assistance with transitioning to another ministry.

## **MINISTRY RECOGNITION**

1. On Mission Celebrations—Chaplains and counselors in ministry are encouraged to participate in mission's conferences. Arrangements are normally made through local association offices. These conferences are wonderful opportunities to tell the story of chaplaincy and counseling ministries.
2. Local and National Recognition—A number of organizations recognize chaplain and counselor leadership in an agency or community. Senior/supervisory chaplains and counselors in ministry are encouraged to look for opportunities to nominate chaplains and counselors in ministry for recognition.
3. Retirement Recognition—Upon retirement from a using agency the Chaplaincy Evangelism Team will provide a recognition acknowledging the years of service rendered by a chaplain or counselor. Information regarding the retirement should be provided to the Chaplaincy associate as soon as the date of retirement.and/or ceremony is known.

## **GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

**ENDORSEMENT**—Endorsement, as used by the Chaplains Commission, SBC, is an official act of the Commission that affirms to an using agency or certifying organization that the chaplain or counselor in ministry is in good standing with the Chaplains Commission, SBC.

**ENDORSER**—The “endorser” is technically the person who signs the endorsement documents. For Southern Baptists, that person is the Chaplaincy Evangelism Team director. The associates in Chaplaincy Evangelism are often referred to as the “endorser” for their area of responsibility.

**CHAPLAINS COMMISSION, SBC**—A sub-group of the NAMB Board of Trustees who meet to review applications for endorsement to chaplaincy and counseling ministries.

**CHAPLAINCY EVANGELISM TEAM**—This team is organizationally a part of the Evangelization Group, NAMB. The team acts on behalf of the Chaplains Commission, SBC, and provides daily support for chaplains and counselors in ministry.

**FULL-TIME CHAPLAIN/COUNSELOR**—A person employed who serves a using agency as the primary focus of their ministry.

**PART-TIME CHAPLAIN**—A person employed who serves a using agency as the secondary focus of their ministry.

**VOLUNTEER CHAPLAIN**—A person who volunteers their time and resources to serve a using agency as a chaplain.

**USING AGENCY**—An organization, such as a business, healthcare facility, correctional system, who invites the chaplaincy and/or counseling ministries to take place in their organization.

**COUNSELOR IN MINISTRY**—A person whose ministry is focused on counseling. This specialized ministry involves appropriate educational experience and certification by a professional association supporting counseling ministries. The endorsement will be requested by the using agency or required by the professional association for membership.



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