

Department of Military Chaplaincy
Military Chaplaincy Policies

*Excerpt from 2023 UPCI Manual,
Office of Education and Endorsement Policies, Section 9 pages 182-184*

Section 9. Military Chaplaincy Policies

1. The OEE Relationship with Endorsed Military Chaplains:

a. The OEE will have the jurisdiction of all endorsed chaplains according to the Manual of the UPCI.

b. The OEE will bring a written report to the General Board concerning the status of the endorsed chaplains program of the UPCI.

c. All chaplains are to be endorsed by the OEE, through the Endorsing Agent for Military Chaplaincy who is recognized by the United States government as the official endorsing agent of the UPCI. To receive endorsement, a letter of approval is required from the District Superintendent and the pastor of the applicant.

2. Privileges and Obligations of Endorsed Chaplains:

a. All military chaplains shall meet the professional qualification requirements for appointment as military chaplains as outlined in Department of Defense Instruction, and in the regulations of the respective service to which the chaplain is seeking appointment. All chaplain candidates shall also obtain a Certificate in Apostolic Studies.

b. Chaplain Candidates should be integrated and paired with active duty (or Reserves Component) Chaplain or retired Chaplain as a Sponsor (Mentor) as soon as they are in the program. Sponsor Chaplains should communicate with Candidate periodically (at least quarterly) to encourage, provide guidance and offer support. Chaplain Candidates will submit quarterly reports to the OEE on their education status and endorsing status or progress.

c. The Active Duty Military Chaplain's first responsibility is to the military. Chaplains are not to be responsible to any local church or district where they are stationed. They are, however, to attend a local church whenever possible. They are to work in harmony with the District Superintendent. They are to attend district functions only as these do not interfere with their military duty.

d. Significant career events (i.e. Promotions/School Selections/Awards) should be acknowledged with a letter from the Endorser. It is required that all Chaplains notify OEE Department of Chaplaincy of such career events ASAP.

i. Chaplains and their Spouse (where applicable) should receive a letter from the UPCI General Superintendent upon retirement from military Service (and Major Awards and Sr. Level promotions).

ii. Upon retirement from military service, each chaplain and their spouse (if applicable) should receive a symbolic gift recognizing the achievement and ministry of the Chaplain and family.

iii. Retirement and Major events (Promotions/Awards) should be recognized during the Chaplain Banquet at UPCI General Conference. All Chaplains are required to notify OEE Department of Chaplaincy of such Retirement and Major events before the UPCI G.C.

e. Chaplain (Active and Reserves) and Chaplain Candidates actively attending military drills/assembly, are required to pay tithes from their military income to the Office of Education and Endorsements (OEE).

f. Chaplains will submit a report of activities and status updates (ministry, schools) to include location (PCS) and contact updates, family updates, military profile updates (pending promotions, awards, separation, and retirement), and civilian activities (ministry) update. Chaplains (and Candidates assigned to Reserve Component Units) will also submit their Annual evaluations (i.e. OER, FITREP, OPR, DA1059, etc.) to the OEE.

g. Chaplains will notify the OEE when a change in UPCI District affiliation has taken place.

h. Chaplains are required to attend the General Conference of the UPCI.

i. The OEE will send out a formal letterhead Memorandum to all Chaplains notifying them of the scheduled Annual UPCI General Conference with language indicating attendance expectations as a basis for continued endorsement. Language should include General Conference's "general religious holiday" recognition for Reserve Component and Chaplain Candidates to advise their Civilian employers.

ii. During the Conference, there should be one formal Chaplain banquet with guests determined by the OEE and the Endorsing Agent.

iii. During Conference, there will be a Chaplain meeting with the OEE Staff to provide, share, update and brief Chaplains on relevant and important (policy) information. Chaplain specific/relevant training will also be provided.

iv. Fifty per cent (50%) of their individual tithes will be available to the Chaplain and/or family if they are able to attend UPCI general conference.

i. As funds allow, the Endorsing Agent will make every effort to attend graduations

of Chaplains (and Candidates) attending Chaplain related Schools. The Endorsing Agent should attempt to visit (where operation security allows) endorsed military Chaplains periodically (NCMAF recommends every three years) to maintain endorser/endorsee integrity and accountability.

j. When assignments or deployment result in family separations, the affected chaplain or family will contact the OEE. The OEE will provide support for the family, which may consist of an email, telephone call, letter, and or fellowship visits if possible. The deployed Chaplain will provide monthly updates to the OEE.

k. The OEE will create and maintain a family care and critical incident plan to care for our Chaplain families going through death or serious injury.

l. Chaplains and Candidates who fail to meet reporting, financial, and attendance requirements will be considered for removal of endorsement by the UPCI.

m. UPCI services which are conducted on military installations are often required to have denominational endorsement. The requirement for endorsement is a letter of approval from the District Superintendent and the sponsoring church pastor. Civilian ministry conducting services on military installations are to recognize the chaplains on said installations that grants them the privilege to conduct services. The chaplains should be honored, and nothing negative should be said about the chaplains or other denominations during the service.

n. The Military Chaplains as a group will receive free booth space at an Endorsed Project area at General Conference, deep discounts on the production and presentation of video advertisement at the conference, and free mailing lists available from the UPCI church administration. These will be administered by the Endorsing Agent, who may call upon the chaplains and their families to help man the booth during the conference.

o. UPCI Chaplains will minister to all service members, their families, and authorized Department of Defense civilians regardless of race, gender, education, religion, rank, or sexual orientation within the framework of the UPCI tenets of faith and biblical teachings. In the event that UPCI Chaplains are not able to perform ministry to individuals due to conflicts with UPCI Articles of Faith and/or biblical teachings, they will make every effort to provide for the religious needs of these individuals by referring them to other chapel or community resources.

p. UPCI Chaplains may attend and/or facilitate retreats and relationship events attended by lesbian, gay, transgender, or gender nonconforming individuals (LGT) or couples provided the curriculum/materials used to conduct the event does not expressly approve or affirm unions and lifestyles contrary to a biblical view of human sexuality. (See General Board Position Paper, "The Biblical View of Human Sexuality".) UPCI Chaplains' participation in such events does not constitute approval or affirmation of sinful lifestyles practiced by attendees, including cohabitation. Furthermore, the General

Board fully supports UPCI Chaplains who choose to exercise a more restrictive approach to these activities due to matters of personal conscience.

q. Due to the pluralistic and ecumenical environment of the military, UPCI Chaplains are permitted to participate in services/activities with non-LGT clergy endorsed by organizations that approve or affirm an LGT lifestyle. However, UPCI Chaplains will refrain from leading religious services/ activities with LGT chaplains. The General Board trusts our chaplains to exercise wisdom and sound judgment in these matters.

r. UPCI Chaplains are permitted to counsel LGT individuals provided their lifestyles are neither approved of nor affirmed.

s. UPCI Chaplains will refrain from performing or sponsoring marriage or covenant ceremonies for LGT individuals.

t. UPCI Chaplains will refrain from performing premarital, marital and/or relational counseling to partners of the same sex or persons who have attempted to surgically change their gender.

u. UPCI Chaplains are not permitted to provide prayers, etc. for LGT-sponsored events or activities.

v. The General Board recognizes that no one can compel a UPCI endorsed chaplain to violate the teachings and/or policies of the UPCI. If a UPCI Chaplain believes someone in his/her supervisory chain of command is requiring an action that goes against UPCI policy, the UPCI Chaplain will immediately contact the Ecclesiastical Endorser at the UPCI World Headquarters in Weldon Spring, Missouri.

w. UPCI Chaplains are encouraged to provide feedback to the UPCI Ecclesiastical Endorser as new situations arise within various contexts of ministry that might impact the principles outlined in this resolution.