

## CHAPTER 1

# RELIGIOUS SUPPORT FUNDAMENTALS

The First Amendment of the United States Constitution guarantees every American the right to the free exercise of religion. When the mission allows, this right is exercised by soldiers in the Army in a number of ways. These include:

- Worshiping according to one's faith.
- Seeking religious guidance, care, and counsel.
- Keeping holy days and observances.
- Participating in rites, sacraments, and ordinances.
- Practicing dietary laws.
- Receiving medical treatment according to one's religious belief.
- Wearing religious garments and maintaining religious appearance requirements.

United States Code, Title 10, Sections 3073, 3547, and 3581 establishes the position of Chaplain in the Army. The US Code and Army regulations prescribe the duties of chaplains, and require commanders to provide for the religious needs of soldiers.

The War Department established the position of Chaplain Assistant by General Orders Number 253, published on 28 December 1909:

One enlisted man will be detailed on special duty by the commanding officer of any organization to which a chaplain is assigned for duty, for the purpose of assisting the chaplain in the performance of his official duties.

The commander provides religious support through a Ministry Team (MT) which consists of at least one chaplain and one chaplain assistant. The MT helps soldiers, families, and

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authorized civilians exercise their religious beliefs and practices. The MT is central to the organization and functioning of the chaplaincy and organic to units in the Army.

Religious activities of the MT include *worship* (services, rites, ceremonies, sacraments, and ordinances), *pastoral care* (visitation, ministry of presence, counseling, family life support, and the care of wounded and dying soldiers), *religious education*, and *spiritual fitness training*.

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Ministry in the Army is unique and has no civilian equivalent. Soldiers in an Army unit come from a multitude of faith groups, some of which are different from the chaplain's own faith group. Under the Constitution's provision for the "free exercise of religion," the MT provides religious support for all soldiers in the unit.

To ensure the free exercise of religion, all chaplains provide religious support to soldiers, their family members, and authorized civilians. Chaplains provide support according to the tenets of their faith group. If unable to provide support because of faith restrictions, chaplains seek the required support from other chaplain sources.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Commanders, chaplains, and chaplain assistants have distinct roles and responsibilities when providing religious support to soldiers and their family members.

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### Commander

The commander is responsible for ensuring that soldiers and their families have the opportunity for the free exercise of religion. The commander enables soldiers to practice their faith through the Command Master Religious Plan (CMRP). The CMRP is intentionally broad, ensuring support and accommodation for soldiers and their families.

It is the Army's policy to approve requests for accommodation of religious practices when they will not

have an adverse impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, standards, health, safety, or discipline, or otherwise interfere with the performance of the soldier's military duties. However, accommodation of a soldier's religious practices cannot be guaranteed at all times, but must depend on military necessity. (AR 600-20, para 5-6 and DA Pam 600-75.)

From the force projection platform through the combat zone, the commander supports the MT's efforts to enhance soldier-to-soldier ministry.

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### Chaplain

The chaplain is a soldier who must possess the technical and tactical skills to perform effectively on the battlefield. As a commissioned officer, the unit chaplain is a special staff officer responsible to the commander for religious support. As a religious leader, the chaplain is responsible to the endorsing faith group. The chaplain's call, ministry, and ecclesiastical authority come from the religious organization which endorses the chaplain for military service. The chaplain develops and implements religious programs and activities, and advises the commander on matters of religion, morals, and morale.

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**The policy of the Chief of Chaplains forbids chaplains from bearing arms.**

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## Religious Leader

The chaplain leads worship, preaches, and teaches according to the beliefs and practices of the endorsing faith group. The chaplain performs ecclesiastical rites and ceremonies, and administers the sacraments and ordinances of the endorsing faith community. The chaplain gives pastoral care to soldiers and their families. If unable personally to provide religious support, the chaplain will seek support from other chaplain sources.



**Chaplain and soldiers offer worship.**

The Geneva and Hague Conventions give the chaplain noncombatant status, and the policy of the Chief of Chaplains forbids chaplains to bear arms. If captured, the chaplain is not a prisoner of war, but a "detained person" for the purpose of ministering to prisoners of war.

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**As a staff officer, the chaplain advises the commander and staff on matters of religion, morals, and morale.**

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## Staff Officer

The chaplain serves on the special staff with direct access to the commander. The commander may choose to include the chaplain on the personal staff. As a staff officer, the chaplain advises the commander and staff on

matters of religion, morals, and morale. This advice includes not only the religious needs of soldiers, but also the moral, ethical, and humanitarian aspects of command policies. The chaplain has the staff authority to plan, coordinate, and control religious support within the commander's area of responsibility (AOR). The chaplain also implements the commander's moral leadership training program. Operating under the supervision of the executive officer, the chaplain coordinates religious support primarily with the S1.

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## Chaplain Assistant

The chaplain assistant is a soldier trained to assist the chaplain in religious support and is essential to the religious support mission. Under the direction of the chaplain, the chaplain assistant coordinates Ministry Team operations.

To accomplish the mission, the chaplain assistant accompanies the chaplain in the area of operations. As a combatant, the chaplain assistant carries a weapon and provides security for the team on the battlefield.

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**The chaplain assistant is a combatant, carries a weapon, and is essential for the survival of the team on the battlefield.**

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In combat, the chaplain assistant assists with battle fatigue prevention, identification, intervention and care. The chaplain assistant assists with casualty care and provides emergency religious support for wounded and dying soldiers on the battlefield. In addition,

the chaplain assistant advises the chaplain on matters of soldier morale; serves as a link with enlisted soldiers; and performs administration and logistics tasks to support the religious support mission.

During operations, the chaplain assistant performs many staff functions. At the chaplain's direction, the chaplain assistant attends briefings, monitors the tactical situation at the tactical operations center (TOC), helps prepare the religious support estimate, plan, and annex, and coordinates religious activities.

The MT Non-commissioned Officer (NCO) mentors and trains chaplain assistants in subordinate units. The MT NCO participates in staff planning and execution, procures contracts for goods and services, and coordinates and tracks the CMRP. The MT NCO provides

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training in suicide prevention awareness, battle fatigue identification and intervention, stress management, and counseling. At senior levels, NCOs plan, brief, and perform operational training with other staff NCOs, coordinate enlisted taskings, and recommend the assignment of replacement enlisted personnel to the G1.

## ORGANIZATIONS

The ministry team (MT), under the direction of the chaplain, provides religious support to soldiers and their families, members of other services, and authorized civilians. There are two kinds of ministry teams: the Unit Ministry Team (UMT) and the Installation Ministry Team (IMT).

### Unit Ministry Team

The UMT is assigned to units organized according to a Table of Organization and Equipment (TOE). It deploys with its unit and provides religious support for all units in the commander's area of responsibility during each stage of force projection.

At echelons above brigade, the senior chaplain is listed in the command section of the Modified Table of Organization and Equipment (MTOE). Additional chaplains, chaplain assistants, and UMT equipment are listed in a separate section of the MTOE.

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**The mission of the MT is to provide religious support to soldiers and their families, members of other services, and authorized civilians.**

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Comprehensive religious support requires the assignment and deployment of UMTs in combat, combat support, and combat service support units at all echelons beginning at the battalion. The UMT deploys with the unit to provide religious support to all elements of the task force. When tactically feasible, based on an assessment of the situation, battalion UMTs move forward to provide religious support to all elements of the battalion: companies, platoons, squads, and teams.

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As lethality and intensity increase, religious support becomes more important to the soldier. Religious support demands greatly increase in situations of mass casualties, hasty burials, battle fatigue, and capture. UMTs

provide encouragement, compassion, faith and hope to soldiers experiencing shock, isolation, fear, and death. In the chaos and uncertainty of conflict and war, the chaplain is a reminder of the presence of God. The chaplain serves “to bring God to soldiers and soldiers to God.”

When planning religious support, the chaplain assigns priorities according to the following types of support:

**Unit support:** support given to the unit of assignment and to all those attached to the unit. The team normally gives first priority to this mission.

**Area support:** support given to soldiers, members of other services, and authorized civilians who are not a part of the team’s unit, but who are operating within the same area of operations (AO) without organic or available religious support.

**Denominational support:** support given to soldiers and other authorized persons of the chaplain’s own denomination for the exercise of their religion. Limited assets and availability determine denominational support. Denominational support is often provided on an area basis. (See DOD Directive 1304.19, paragraph c.)

The UMT extends opportunities for soldiers to serve and grow by recruiting, training, and supervising them as volunteers in worship, religious education, and service to the unit. Under the supervision of the unit chaplain, some soldiers may serve members of their own faith groups as Denominational Service Leaders (DSL). Denominational certification and the commander’s approval are required before a soldier may serve as a DSL. (See AR 165-1.)

### **Installation Ministry Team**

The Installation Ministry Team (IMT) is assigned to the garrison headquarters of an

Army installation. It is organized and equipped according to a Table of Distribution and Allowances (TDA). The installation chaplain is responsible for the entire religious support program on the installation. As part of the force projection platform, the IMT supports the force projection mission.

The IMT provides religious support programs for worship, religious education, pastoral care, and spiritual fitness training. This ministry extends to soldiers of assigned and

**The installation chaplain is responsible for the entire religious support program on the installation.**

tenant units, members of other services, families, and authorized civilians. Other responsibilities include:

- Providing professional development and training for MT members and laity.
- Certifying Denominational Service Leaders (DSL).
- Supervising a Chaplain Family Life Center (CFLC) on designated installations.
- Supervising religious support personnel.
- Planning, programming, and resourcing the Command Master Religious Plan (CMRP).
- Supporting mobilized RC chaplaincy assets.
- Providing religious support for deploying UMTs, units, and their families.
- Working with the installation staff on the spiritual portion of the installation’s core competencies.
- Advising the installation and garrison commanders and their staffs.

## RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

Religious activities meet the religious needs of soldiers, their families, and authorized civilians. Religious activities include worship, pastoral care, religious education, and spiritual fitness training.

### Worship

Commanders provide for worship services in the field and in garrison in accordance with applicable public law and Army regulations. The chaplain provides rites, sacraments, and ordinances in garrison, during training, and in deployment.

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**Gathering soldiers for worship always depends on the mission, the enemy, the troops, terrain and weather, and time available (METT-T).**

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Whenever the Army has deployed, UMTs have brought an encouraging word to soldiers in the field. In combat, worship meets the deepest religious needs of soldiers. It facilitates the growth of faith and hope, and strengthens the will by providing a word of faith for those who are fighting. Gathering soldiers for worship always depends on the mission, the enemy, the troops, terrain and weather, and time available (METT-T). Following battle, soldiers need the opportunity to give thanks and to offer prayer for fallen comrades.

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### Pastoral Care

Chaplains bring the traditional care of the

prophet, priest, and pastor to the Army. Providing pastoral care, chaplains help soldiers cope with the stress and trauma of combat. Chaplains enhance morale and strengthen spiritual well-being. In the religiously diverse environment of the unit, chaplains extend pastoral care to all soldiers.

### Visitation

Visiting soldiers demonstrates interest in their life and welfare. Effective UMTs deal with the doubts and faith of soldiers by establishing relationships before the fighting

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begins. These relationships can be forged only through an intentional program of visitation. Soldiers in combat may question what they have previously affirmed as faith or express a newly-found faith in the context of battle. The



UMTs ministry of presence provides a sign and an assurance of hope for soldiers. Chaplains and chaplain assistants assigned to combat units make support to soldiers in the fight their highest priority. In addition to the battlefield, assembly areas, support areas, casualty treatment facilities, resupply points, and correctional facilities are other areas where the UMT ministers to soldiers during an operation. When visiting soldiers, the UMT carefully monitors the tactical situation to ensure that its movements do not compromise the security of the unit.

### Counseling

Chaplains provide pastoral counseling in accordance with their faith group training and experience. Some chaplains have specialized training in substance abuse, family counseling, or group process. Chaplain assistants are trained in basic counseling techniques for screening and referring soldiers.

Information shared with a chaplain as a spiritual adviser is considered to be of a special character. Categories of information revealed during counseling include *privileged* and *sensitive communication*. (See AR 165-1 and The Military Rules of Evidence 503, Uniform Code of Military Justice.)

### Casualty Care

Pastoral care to wounded soldiers contributes to their well-being and recovery. Prayers, scripture readings, rites, ceremonies, and sacraments constitute religious support for wounded or dying soldiers. While the chaplain gives care to individual casualties, the chaplain assistant moves among the other soldiers to identify those in greatest need and to provide care.

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During combat operations, maneuver battalion UMTs will usually locate with the battalion aid station. When the medical platoon divides the aid station into two or more treatment teams, the UMT considers locating where the most casualties are expected. The UMT may split for a short time to maintain contact with both treatment teams.

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The UMT considers the physical condition of the casualties and gives care first to the most seriously injured. The following categories help the team determine priorities for care:

**Medical Category - Expectant:** casualties with very serious injuries and low chance of survival. *The UMT provides pastoral care for the dying as first priority.*

**Medical Category - Immediate:** casualties with a high chance of survival if medical measures are accomplished quickly.

**Medical Category - Delayed:** casualties needing major surgery, but who are able to tolerate a delay in surgical treatment.

**Medical Category - Minimal:** casualties with relatively minor injuries that can be treated with self-care.

## Religious Support to Caregivers

Religious support to caregivers is a necessary part of the UMT's mission. Often the gravity of the situation, the need to give aid quickly, and the absorbing engagement of the moment carry caregivers through the crisis. When the pressure is relieved, however, the impact of what has happened may strike the caregivers suddenly and dramatically. Medical personnel and mortuary affairs personnel may be in particular need of religious support.

## Religious Support to Combat Survivors

Religious support to survivors of a military operation is critical. Often combat survivors are stunned and immobilized by the loss of fellow soldiers. The emotional and spiritual impact of combat losses requires the finest skills of the UMT to deal with guilt and to facilitate the continuation of life and service. Some pastoral techniques include:

- Initiate active conversation. Be aggressive in starting conversations with soldiers. Ask them to talk about their experiences. Encourage them to express feelings. (See Appendix F-1, "Critical Event Debriefings.")
- Seek close friends of the wounded and dead. These friends often set the tone and direction of bereavement for the unit.
- Encourage spontaneous "grief groups" in assembly areas, work and living areas, or in informal gatherings places of soldiers.
- Tell survivors about the pastoral care provided to their buddies. This knowledge gives comfort and encourages the grieving to move on with their lives.

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- ▶ **Initiate active conversation.**
  - ▶ **Seek close friends of the wounded and dead.**
  - ▶ **Encourage spontaneous "grief groups."**
  - ▶ **Tell the story.**
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## Religious Education

Faith formation and sustainment continue wherever soldiers serve. Religious instruction and education, like worship and counseling, continue when soldiers move to an operational theater. The unit's mission and location within the theater determine the instruction which can be provided. Conducting Bible studies or informal discussion groups, and providing religious literature are some effective ways to offer instruction and to strengthen soldiers spiritually.

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**Soldiers must be spiritually fit.**

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## Spiritual Fitness Training

The soldier must be physically fit, and the soldier must be spiritually fit. As physical fitness is accomplished through a discipline of diet and exercises, so spiritual fitness is trained and achieved by a discipline of reading and study, by the practice of reflection and prayer, and by honoring the demands of a moral life. Spiritual fitness training strengthens the soldier's faith, will, and hope.

## Moral Leadership Training

Moral courage includes a spiritual dimension. The spiritual dimension of courage is derived from religious values that acknowledge an ultimate right and wrong. (See FM 100-1.)

The moral leadership training program is the commander's primary resource for addressing the moral, ethical, spiritual, and social questions which affect the command climate and its soldiers. The chaplain is the responsible staff officer for this program.

### Objectives:

- To enhance soldier values and virtues within the command.
- To instill the values of responsible citizenship and service to country.
- To develop section and unit cohesion by strengthening common moral and ethical standards.
- To provide moral leadership material for the command.

### Topics:

- America's moral and religious heritage.
- Family relationships and responsibilities.
- Personal morality.
- Integrity and responsibility.
- Consideration for others.
- Trust and morality in team development.
- Safety and its moral dimensions.
- Moral dimensions of decision-making and actions in combat.
- Social, organizational, and individual values.

- Suicide prevention.
- Drug and alcohol abuse prevention.
- Loss, separation, disappointment, illness, and death.
- Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) as a medical, social, and moral problem.

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## FUNERALS AND MEMORIALS

### Funerals

Funeral services are religious services of worship, normally with the body of the deceased present. Funeral services reinforce the relationship between the divine and human, ritualize the grief process, and restore the community. A chaplain will rarely conduct a funeral during a military operation. Normally, the remains of the deceased will be returned to the United States for burial.

### Memorial Occasions

#### Memorial Services

A memorial service is a religious service. The chaplain ensures that the content is sensitive to the deceased soldier's faith group and to the needs of the soldiers attending. If possible, a chaplain of the deceased soldier's faith group participates in the service. Because of its religious nature, commanders can encourage units and soldiers to attend a memorial service but cannot make attendance mandatory.

## **Memorial Ceremonies**

A memorial ceremony is a command program to honor deceased soldiers. When planning and conducting a memorial ceremony, the command considers the life and service of the deceased, the soldiers' needs, and the unit's

morale. Because it is a command ceremony, commanders can make attendance mandatory. Although the ceremony may include religious aspects, such as scripture reading and prayer, or a message given by the chaplain, the major focus is on military tributes and honors.