

**FIRE DEPARTMENT  
SANTA CLARA COUNTY**

**CHAPLAIN**

**DEFINITION**

Under the direction of the Fire Chief or designee, and in coordination with the Administrative-Staff Honor Guard Liaison and the on-call Duty Chief, the Chaplain shall provide emotional and/or spiritual support to members of the Department as well as others impacted by incidents responded to by the Department.

This is a uniformed, non-safety, at-will, volunteer position. Chaplains will receive a stipend as outlined in the Department's Volunteer Action Guide.

**EXAMPLES OF DUTIES**

Duties may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Crisis intervention for firefighters and their families – deaths, family issues, personal crises, and many other related issues. Assistance will be offered, and members' wishes to accept or decline will be respected.
- Chaplains will be available to assist command staff in making notifications to the families of Fire Department members who have been seriously injured or killed in the line of duty.
- In the event of a serious illness, injury, or death of a department member, the member's family will be offered the support of the Chaplain, including notification of a member's involvement in a critical incident, if appropriate; assistance at hospitals and rehabilitation facilities; and support in matters related to funerals.
- May be notified and requested to visit sick and injured Department members.
- May be requested to participate in the development of programs or other community events.
- Participate in ride alongs with firefighters. Chaplains are non-suppression volunteers and will remain in the role of an observer.
- Respond to major incidents or disasters to serve as a resource to emergency personnel, victims, and families. Chaplains will comply with orders and instructions of the officer in charge.
- Participate in funerals or memorial services for active or retired employees as appropriate and assist family members in the preparation of funeral arrangements when requested.
- Perform duties relating to their position as requested by the Fire Chief or designee.
- Perform other related duties as assigned.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Qualifications include:

- Must be ordained or certified from a recognized religious organization or affiliated with a local religious organization.
- Successful completion of a chaplain training course prior to start date or successful completion of a Department-funded chaplain training course within six months of start date.
- Must be at least 21 years of age.
- Must be a citizen or legal resident of the United States.

Knowledge Of:

- Crisis intervention and mental health support techniques.
- Critical Incident Stress Debriefing practices.
- Ministerial practices in an interfaith setting.
- Resources for assistance referrals.
- Penal Code § 11165.7(a) for mandated reporters. A mandated reporter includes a clergy member and any custodian of records of a clergy member. As used in this article, 'clergy member' means a priest, minister, rabbi, religious practitioner, or similar functionary of a church, temple, or recognized denomination or organization.

Ability To:

- Understand, accept, and relate to persons holding different religious commitments.
- Provide services that are not specific to a particular religious or spiritual belief system. They shall not proselytize, disparage other religions, use public resources to aid any church, sect, religious denomination, or sectarian institution, or impose their religious beliefs upon others unless specifically asked by an individual. If specifically requested, they may provide spiritual counseling and guidance that reflects their religious orientation.
- Maintain the confidentiality of information and persons requesting their assistance. Exceptions may only be made by written permission from the person requesting assistance, as required by law, or in the face of clear and immediate probability of bodily harm to the person requesting assistance or others.
- Willingly respond to calls, incidents, or situations where needs for their services are indicated or necessary.
- Demonstrate strong interpersonal and communication skills, provide empathetic support, and effectively build trust while working with diverse populations.

Ability To: (continued)

- Follow oral and written direction, work safely both independently and with others, respond quickly to oral commands or signals during emergency situations.
- Exercise sound judgment and be flexible and sensitive in response to changing situations and needs.
- Work effectively under the stress of emergency situations and calmly and effectively handle others in emergency situations.
- Apply information in a logical manner, maintain composure in stressful situations, and withstand the effects of repeated exposure to traumatic situations.
- Understand the unique challenges faced by first responders.
- Work flexible hours, including evenings and weekends, and respond to emergencies as needed.

Working Conditions/Physical Demands: Work is performed in indoor and outdoor environments; regular contact is made with staff and the public. At times, this position requires working conditions that may include exposure to any number of elements (individuals with injuries, illness, toxic chemicals, hazardous substances, excessive heat, cold, noise, inclement weather, as well as occupational hazards such as exposure to smoke, fire, etc.) and may include standing, walking, or sitting for prolonged periods of time.

Required Licenses or Certificates: Possession of a valid, appropriate state of California driver's license.

Pre-Employment Requirements: The candidate will be required to complete and pass a Live Scan fingerprint, background check, and medical examination.