



GENERAL OPERATING PROCEDURES

1. Purpose: This instruction outlines the authorization, mission, objectives, and organization of the Military/Institutional Chaplaincy Department (MICD). Additionally, it specifies duties and responsibilities for leaders and members of the Church of God in Christ (COGIC) Military and Institutional Chaplaincy. In Accordance with the *COGIC Constitution, ARTICLE 6, SECTION G, MICD: MILITARY AND INSTITUTIONAL CHAPLAINCY DEPARTMENT* "There shall be a special auxiliary, the Military and Institutional Chaplaincy Department for the ecclesiastical endorsement of chaplains to be representatives of the church to secular institutions such as the Armed Forces, Civil Air Patrol, National Guard, hospitals, mental health facilities, hospice, prisons, industrial and corporate organizations."

2. References:

2.1 COGIC Constitution.

2.2. COGIC Ministers Manual.

3. Definitions:

3.1. The term "Ecclesiastical Endorser" is interchangeable with "Commissioner of Chaplains" and/or "MICD Auxiliary Bishop or Prelate."

3.2. The term "Chaplain" refers to Armed Forces chaplains and any clergy persons representing the Church of God in Christ in any institution/organization requiring religious endorsements. The term "Chaplain" refers to both Armed Forces and Institutional chaplains.

3.3. The "Executive Committee" (EC) refers to senior representatives or their designee from each of the branches of Armed Forces (Navy, Army, & Air Force) and the Institutional Chaplains.

3.4. The "Executive Committee" (EC) refers to representatives from each of the major Armed Forces branches (Navy, Army, & Air Force) and the Institutional Chaplains. The EC will include other members from other branches of armed services, such as the National Guard and Civil Air Patrol, at the discretion of the MICD.

4. Mission. Provide mission-ready chaplains to carry out spiritual care to the Armed Forces and institutional members and their families.

4.1. **Vision.** To execute exceptional ministry to glorify God and change the world for Christ.

5. Objectives:

5.1. To recruit COGIC members of the highest morale and ethical caliber to fill the position of Military and Institutional Chaplains.

5.2. Provide continual encouragement for those who fill these Chaplain positions and ensure that they are a vital part of COGIC clergy.

5.3. Promote a healthy, dialectical, inspiring relationship between the Church of God in Christ and the Chaplaincy.

5.4. Supplement the professional development of the chaplain so that the chaplain is thoroughly versed in the Church of God in Christ theological, ecclesiastical and social perspective.

5.5. Increase the visibility of the Church of God in Christ to the Chaplaincy and its tremendous potential.

5.6. Undergird and support chaplains and their families through prayer, conferences, counsel, and growth-promoting communications.

6. Responsibilities:

6.1. The Commissioner of Chaplains. There shall be a Department of Military and Institutional Chaplaincy to serve as the official office of the Church of God in Christ and as Ecclesiastical Endorser/certifier for chaplains in the Armed Forces, prisons, hospitals, hospice, or other institutions requiring religious endorsement. The Commissioner's primary purpose is to establish and process proper ecclesiastical endorsements and credentialing necessary in functioning in secular institutions where religious endorsements are required.

The Commissioner of Chaplains will:

6.1.1. Develop the organizational structure of the MICD.

6.1.2. Oversee ministry operations, planning, and administration of the MICD.

6.1.3. Interview/guide potential clergy/student candidates for the chaplaincy.

6.1.4. Appoint/Endorse those qualified clergy personnel for MICD.

6.1.4.1 Endorse all chaplains with a "Certificate of Commission."

6.1.4.2. Remove endorsements of chaplains, if needed.

6.1.4.3. Work with recruiting and accession boards of each branch as necessary to appoint chaplains.

6.1.5. Meet annually with the Chief of Chaplains of all Armed Forces branches.

6.1.6. Visit chaplains at duty/home locations throughout the year.

6.1.7. Serve as an advocate for chaplains during periods of tension, crises, and conflicts.

6.1.8. Conduct yearly planning during Annual Holy Convocation (normally on Tuesday during the first week of Convocation) with Department Commandant of Chaplains, Adjutant, and Executive Committee.

6.1.9. Assist and advise transition plan/church placement for Military/Institutional chaplains.

6.1.10. Submit an annual report on the status of MICD to the Presiding Bishop

6.1.11. For protocol purposes, the Commissioner of Chaplains (MICD) is equivalent to Armed Forces rank of an 0-8 (two-star General/Admiral)

6.2. The Assistant Commissioner/Endorser will:

6.2.1. The Assistant Commissioner/Endorser is appointed by the Presiding Bishop and Chief Apostle. The appointee is second in command of the MICD.

6.2.2. Assist the Commissioner of Chaplains in implementing the scope and practice of the MICD.

6.2.3. Works with the Commissioner of Chaplains to execute specific projects assigned by the Commissioner and/or Presiding Bishop.

6.3. Deputy Commissioner of Chaplains will:

6.3.1. Assist Commissioner of Chaplains as needed in all areas listed in Section 6.1. of this document.

6.3.2. Be appointed at the discretion of the Commissioner of Chaplains.

6.3.3. Meet with the Commissioner of Chaplains annually for planning and administration purposes during Annual Holy Convocation (normally on Tuesday during the first week of the Convocation).

6.4. Department Adjutant will:

6.4.1. Serve the MICD in all aspects in accordance with COGIC guidelines.

6.4.2. Coordinate "Human Chain" with ushers/adjutants on "The Lord's Day" processional.

6.4.3. Garner/coordinate local "Color Guard" for military processional during "The Lord's Day" processional.

6.4.4. Coordinate "yearly" opportunity with Convocation Planning Committee Leaders for chaplains to introduce themselves and to pray for the nation, military, and families prior to "The Lord's Day" service.

6.4.5. Meet with the Commissioner of Chaplains annually for planning and administration purposes during Annual Holy Convocation (normally on Tuesday during the first week of the Convocation).

6.5. Department Executive Administrator will:

6.5.1. Process all financial reports and obligations.

6.5.2. Manage/balance MICD checking/savings account(s).

6.5.3. Maintain chaplain roster/database semi-annually.

6.5.4. Process financial reports for distribution of Chaplains credential cards.

6.5.5. Maintain "Sign In/Sign Out" log at each Annual Holy Convocation.

6.5.6. Complete all administrative duties assigned by the Commissioner of Chaplains.

6.6. The Executive Committee (EC) will:

6.6.1. Assist and advise the Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner, and/or Deputy Commissioner in ministry, operations, and administration of the COGIC Chaplaincy.

6.6.2. Meet with the Commissioner of Chaplains annually for planning and administration purposes during Annual Holy Convocation and other designated times.

6.6.3. Appoint assistant to work with the EC in MICD duties.

6.6.4. Liaison with all members of their branches or organizations.

6.6.5. Mentor, lead and guide chaplains within their branches and institutions as necessary.

6.6.6. Encourage all chaplains within the branch or organization to meet financial obligations.

6.6.7. Visit with "Commissioner of Chaplains" to bases/regions where there are COGIC chaplains.

6.6.8. Obtain/contribute essential information for each newsletter.

6.6.9. Information will be passed on to the EC and Executive Administrator.

6.7. The Commandant of Chaplains will:

6.7.1. Coordinate topics, theme, and fellowship opportunities with Executive Committee (EC) for each calendar year.

6.7.2. Assist the EC in planning the Chaplain's Conference at the Annual Holy Convocation.

6.7.2.1. Ensure the curriculum is relevant and beneficial to all chaplains and leaders.

6.7.2.2. Curriculum/training should not exceed two days (normally Wed and Thurs).

6.7.3. Assist the Commissioner of Chaplains to coordinate/garner keynote speakers, honor guard (as needed) for the conference to include funding and housing as necessary.

6.7.4. Serve as welcoming host to the MICD, chaplains, and their families.

6.7.5. Serve as coordinator/facilitator during the Annual Holy Convocation.

6.8. Chaplains will:

6.8.1. Meet tithes and financial obligation requirements in April of each year.

6.8.2. Report Fair Share annually each year.

6.8.3. Attend Annual Holy Convocation each year as operational schedules permit.

6.8.4. Bring standard MICD uniform for Institutional Chaplains and service dress if Armed Forces chaplain.

6.8.5. Send in biographies with pictures to the Executive Administrator.

6.8.6. Send in a summary of duties, performance reports, and/or awards to the Executive Administrator.

6.8.7. Ensure that performance reports are safeguarded for privacy (remove social security numbers). Submit Department of Defense number.

6.8.8. Maintain contact with Division Heads and Executive Committee Representative.

6.8.9. Notify Executive Administrator of any Change of Address, sicknesses, divorces, deaths, births, marriages, promotions, and other personal and professional concerns.

6.8.10. Form "Human Chain" during Presidium's procession on "The Lord's Day" service.

6.8.11. Follow actual placement as determined by ushers and/or adjutants.

6.8.12. Wear service dress uniform for Armed Forces, standard MICD uniform for Institutional chaplains, or normal clergy attire during Veteran's Day Service.

6.8.13. "Sign In and Out" at each Annual Holy Convocation.

7. General Guidelines.

7.1. Chaplains Fair Share report is to be paid to MICD.

7.2. Chaplains who fail to meet financial reports/obligations will be put on probation for one year, except for those of extenuating circumstances. The MICD will determine extenuating circumstances.

7.3. If financial obligations are not met for two consecutive years, the COGIC MICD endorsement can be revoked at the discretion of the Commissioner of Chaplains and MICD.

7.4. To become an Armed Forces chaplain, the applicant must be ordained, in good standing with their Jurisdiction, possess a Masters of Divinity or equivalency from a regionally accredited institution; meet physical fitness standards for a branch of service; and receive ecclesiastical endorsement from the Commissioner of Chaplains.

7.5. To become an Institutional chaplain, an applicant must be currently working in a field such as a hospital, prison, hospice, or homeless ministry, etc.; possess some education in ministry (no less than two years of Bible college), or as required by the institution; letter of recommendation from currently appointed MICD member; and receive Certificate of Commission from Commissioner of Chaplains.

7.6. All chaplains should have endorsement from the "current" Commissioner of Chaplains.

7.7. This instruction will be reviewed annually at the Holy Convocation for updates and corrections. All changes will supersede previous editions.

8. MICD Chaplain of the Year.

8.1. Each year, the MICD will honor a member with the "*Ithiel Clemmons Chaplain of the Year Award.*" The award will recognize an individual whose career has contributed significantly to the advancement of chaplaincy. The Commissioner will determine the recipient with input from the Executive Committee (EC).

- 8.2. Each EC Representative can nominate one chaplain for MICD Chaplain of the Year.
- 8.3. The Chaplain of the Year award is designed for younger chaplains. Therefore, candidates must be in the grade of 0-3 and below for Armed Forces and possess less than ten years of service for Institutional Chaplains.
- 8.4. Award winners are not eligible to compete more than once within a consecutive 4-year period.
- 8.5. A one-page, single-spaced narrative should be submitted to the EC NLT July of each year.
- 8.6. Narrative categories are limited to: Primary Job Performance, Innovation in Ministry, and Community Outreach.
- 8.7. The EC will review and score all packages according to the award rubric. Once scored, the Commissioner of Chaplains will receive the recommendations and make the final selection of award winner.
- 8.8. The *Ithiel Clemmons Chaplain of the Year* and MICD Chaplain of the Year will be recognized annually at the Chaplain's Conference during the COGIC Holy Convocation.

CHAPLAIN CARLOS R. BELL, M.DIV., M.A.
Commissioner /Endorser of Chaplains

cc:
All Assigned Chaplains