23-02 - LASD Chaplain Program

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

NEWSLETTER

Field Operations Support Services

LASD CHAPLAIN PROGRAM

PURPOSE

The purpose of this newsletter is to inform Department members of the resources available through the Department's Chaplain Program.

BACKGROUND

The LASD Chaplain Program started in 1973, with a study conducted by the Department's Reserve Forces Bureau to determine the need and feasibility of such a program. The Department's Chaplain Program developed into a specialized group of volunteers who provide spiritual, moral, and personal support for Department members and their families. In 1974, Reverend William Christie became the first executive chaplain for the Department, with Sheriff Peter Pitchess' full support. The Chaplain Program is assigned jointly to Reserve Forces Bureau (RFB) and Psychological Services Bureau (PSB). Reserve Forces Bureau handles the administrative operations, while Psychological Services Bureau primarily oversees the Chaplains' support functions to various units of assignment, Department personnel, and their families.

LASD CHAPLAIN PROGRAM

Chaplains represent many faiths but practice interdenominationally, unless a Department member and/or their family member requests a specific faith. Chaplains are certified, licensed, ordained, or appointed and in good standing with the respective religious groups they serve. All Department chaplains undergo an extensive background, vetting process, and receive ongoing specialized training, enabling them to comprehend the unique needs of law enforcement personnel and their families. Law enforcement chaplaincy is recognized nationally as a practical, supportive resource and support group for law enforcement personnel and their families during difficult times.

LASD chaplains carry a Department-issued identification card when conducting official chaplain business. Chaplains also wear a Department-approved uniform which consists of the following:

- White Class A or Class B shirt with a "Chaplain" rocker on each shoulder;
- Blue Class A or Class B pants;

- A white polo shirt with a volunteer patch and a “Chaplain” rocker on each shoulder, and the word “Chaplain” is silk-screened on the back of the shirt; and

- An optional navy-blue raid jacket with volunteer patches and a “Chaplain” rocker on each shoulder, and the word “Chaplain” silk-screened on the back.

The Department’s chaplains work with the PSB and Peer Supporters to provide comprehensive support to Department members and their families for a range of personal and professional issues. Department chaplains are different from jail clergy who work through Religious and Volunteer Services, who support the inmate population, and assist during cell extractions.

Department chaplains are assigned to various units of assignment and respond to the needs of all Department members, in the following manner:

- Respond to Department members’ needs during times of death, injury, or emotional distress;

- Provide interdenominational spiritual support and guidance to personnel;

- Assist Department officials in notifying a Department member’s family upon receiving news of a serious injury or death of an employee;

- Assist the Department upon request, in providing comfort and support to members of the community during times of emotional trauma;

- Serve in an on-call capacity, along with PSB, for after-hours response to critical incidents;

- Maintain contact with local clergy as requested;

- Foster public confidence and support by attending civic events and remaining available during periods of heightened public interest;

- Serve as a resource for spiritual counseling to Department members and their families as appropriate; and

- Provide Department members and their families with additional in-home or external supportive resources.

CONTACTING A CHAPLAIN

For a non-urgent response, a Department member may contact a chaplain by:

- Calling PSB at [REDACTED TEXT] to request a chaplain;

- Contacting a chaplain directly by accessing the Chaplains roster on the PSB Intranet page at [REDACTED TEXT]; or,

- Contacting a chaplain directly via the PSB Lighthouse Wellness mobile application,

at /pars_media/FossNewsLetters/Lighthouse_App_QR_Code_Graphic.png

To request an urgent response during business hours, Department members may call PSB at [REDACTED TEXT] If the request is after-hours, the Department member may call Sheriff's Information Bureau at [REDACTED TEXT]

CONFIDENTIALITY

All chaplains adhere to applicable laws regarding confidentiality, privileged communications, and mandatory reporting. No information will be relayed or disclosed to a third party, without the explicit permission of the party(ies) involved, or if a disclosure is made that requires a mandated breach of confidentiality.

If you require further information, contact Field Operations Support Services at [REDACTED TEXT]