

AUXILIARY CHAPLAIN SUPPORT PROGRAM



**COMDTINST 17350.5B
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COMMANDANT INSTRUCTION 1730.5B

Subj: AUXILIARY CHAPLAIN SUPPORT PROGRAM

- Ref:
- (a) 14 U.S.C. § 705, Navy Department
 - (b) Religious Ministries within the Coast Guard, COMDTINST 1730.4 (series)
 - (c) Military Rules of Evidence (Manual for Courts-Martial, Part 3, Military Rules of Evidence, Rule 503)
 - (d) Privileged and Confidential Communications to Chaplains, SECNAVINST 1730.9 (series)
 - (e) 14 U.S.C. § 3902, Purpose of the Coast Guard Auxiliary
 - (f) 10 U.S.C. §1588, Authority to Accept Certain Voluntary Services
 - (g) Personnel Security and Suitability Program, COMDTINST M5520.12 (series)
 - (h) Auxiliary Manual, COMDTINST M16790.1 (series)

1. PURPOSE. This Instruction promulgates policy and standards for the Coast Guard Auxiliary Chaplain Support (ACS) Program.
2. ACTION. All Coast Guard unit commanders, commanding officers, officers-in-charge, deputy/assistant commandants, and chiefs of headquarters staff elements will familiarize themselves with this Instruction and adhere to its requirements. Advance planning will be the key to mission success in meeting Religious Ministry (RM) requirements. Unit commanding officers will work with local Coast Guard Auxiliary (CGAUX) Division and Flotilla Commanders and ACS Program Branch Chiefs to recruit and recommend ACS program candidates. If local clergy desire to provide RM support to Coast Guard units, commanding officers will refer them to the cognizant Division Commander for information on membership in the CGAUX and to the cognizant ACS Branch Chief for an application to be an ACS Chaplain. The Chaplain of the Coast Guard (CG-00A) shall be responsible for administration of this program and associated qualification and training.
3. AUTHORIZED RELEASE. Internet release is authorized.
4. DIRECTIVES AFFECTED.
 - a. References (b), (c), and (h) will require modification to reflect the updated ACS Program.
 - b. Auxiliary Chaplain Support, COMDTINST 1730.5A is hereby cancelled.
5. DISCUSSION. Pursuant to Reference (a), the Secretary of the Navy may detail officers of the U.S. Navy Chaplain Corps to provide RM to Coast Guard members and other authorized

personnel. The organization and supervision of Coast Guard RM programs is carried out by the Chaplain of the Coast Guard (CG-00A) pursuant to Reference (b). When serving with the Coast Guard, officers of the U.S. Navy Chaplain Corps are referred to as “Coast Guard Chaplains.”

- a. Coast Guard Chaplains have a vital role in support of Coast Guard operations. Pursuant to Reference (b), Coast Guard Chaplains are responsible for administering, supervising, and facilitating religious support and chaplain activities for the Coast Guard. This is accomplished through delivery of the Navy Chaplain Corps’ four Core Capabilities:
 - (1) Provision of religious rites, services, ordinances and other religious activities according to a chaplain’s particular faith tradition.
 - (2) Facilitation of religious accommodation for members of other faith traditions.
 - (3) Care for all, regardless of faith tradition or no faith tradition.
 - (4) Advisement to the command.
 - b. ACS Chaplains supplement and support Coast Guard Chaplains in carrying out their RM responsibilities by expanding RM capacity and capability within the Coast Guard to better meet the RM needs of Coast Guard members and other authorized personnel.
 - c. ACS Chaplains work under the direction of an assigned supervisory Coast Guard Chaplain.
 - d. Communications by Coast Guard members and other authorized personnel with ACS Chaplains are privileged under Reference (d) and section 18 of this Instruction.
6. DISCLAIMER. This guidance is not a substitute for applicable legal requirements, nor is it itself a rule. It is intended to provide operational guidance for Coast Guard personnel and is not intended to nor does it impose legally-binding requirements on any party outside the Coast Guard.
 7. MAJOR CHANGES. Changes include clarification of role of supervisory chaplain as Order Issuing Authority. Additions to application procedures. Expansion of training requirements and annual evaluation process. Elimination of provisional chaplain status. Clarification of uniform polices.
 8. ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECT AND IMPACT CONSIDERATIONS. The Office of Environmental Management, Commandant (CG-47) reviewed this Commandant Instruction and the general policies contained within, and determined that this policy falls under the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) categorical exclusion A3. This Commandant Instruction will not result in any substantial change to existing environmental conditions or violation of any applicable federal, state, or local laws relating to the protection of the environment. It is the responsibility of the action proponent to evaluate all future specific actions resulting from this policy for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), other applicable environmental requirements, and the U.S. Coast Guard Environmental Planning Policy, COMDTINST 5090.1 (series).

9. DISTRIBUTION. No paper distribution will be made of this Instruction. An electronic version will be located on the following Commandant (CG-612) web sites. Internet: <https://www.uscg.mil/directives/>, and CGPortal: <https://cgportal2.uscg.mil/library/directives/SitePages/Home.aspx>
10. RECORDS MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS. Records created as a result of this Instruction, regardless of format or media, must be managed in accordance with the records retention schedule located on the Records Resource Center SharePoint Online site: <https://uscg.sharepoint-mil.us/sites/cg61/CG611/SitePages/Home.aspx>
11. AUTHORITY. Pursuant to Reference (e), the purpose of the CGAUX is to assist the Coast Guard as authorized by the Commandant in performing any Coast Guard function, power, duty, role, mission or operation authorized by law. Reference (f) authorizes the acceptance of voluntary services for RM programs.
12. APPLICABILITY.
 - a. This Instruction applies to clergy members who are, or wish to be Auxiliarists, who pursue designation as, or who are designated as, ACS Chaplains that support Coast Guard RM programs.
 - b. Former and retired Department of Defense (DoD) Chaplains (active and reserve), current DoD Reserve Chaplains who are not otherwise on military orders (e.g. Reserve Chaplains serving in their personal capacities), and chaplains representing other federal agencies are required to enroll in the Coast Guard Auxiliary to participate in this program.
 - c. This Instruction does not apply to Coast Guard Chaplains, other DoD Chaplains on military orders, or Religious Ministry Professionals under contract with the Coast Guard.
13. POLICY.
 - a. Selection to serve as an ACS Chaplain is predicated on meeting the active duty Coast Guard RM requirements of the area of operations (AO) to be served.
 - b. ACS Chaplains will serve under the direct supervision of their assigned Coast Guard Chaplain (assignment determined by CG-00A). The supervisory Chaplain will act as the ACS Chaplain's Order Issuing Authority (OIA) for all mission essential RM support assignments.
 - (1) As the OIA, it is the responsibility of the assigned supervisory chaplain to issue written orders directing the ACS chaplain to perform specified missions. These can be individual or recurring orders.
 - i. While ACS chaplains, like all Auxiliary members, are usually not reimbursed for local travel and travel within their normal area of operations, written orders are still required for all assigned missions. These can be issued by text or e-mail but

there must be written documentation of all mission assignments. This does not preclude verbal tasking in accordance with reference (h) if circumstances do not allow issuance of written orders prior to the mission.

- ii. When an ACS chaplain is asked to provide ministry that involves extended travel or overnight stays, the supported unit or the CG chaplain making the request should make every effort to provide funding or assistance for travel, lodging, and other expenses.
- (2) As the OIA authority, it is the responsibility of the supervisory chaplain to insure that all Coast Guard and Coast Guard Auxiliary required health and safety directives and protocols are followed by ACS Chaplains.
- c. ACS Chaplains will coordinate all RM and associated support with their assigned supervisory Coast Guard Chaplain.
 - d. No Coast Guard unit or official will authorize use of volunteer civilian clergy for official Coast Guard functions without the concurrence of CG-00A.
 - e. To optimize administration of the ACS program at the Auxiliary national level, CG-00A will consult with the Auxiliary National Commodore (NACO) regarding appointment of ACS Chaplains to national offices. These appointments will normally be for a period of 2 years, to align with the NACO's term of office, and are renewable.
 - f. As with all members of the Auxiliary, a favorable National Crime Information Center Interstate Identification Index (NCIC-III) check is required for participation in the ACS program.
 - (1) ACS Chaplains shall not have unsupervised access with children.
 - (2) ACS Chaplains shall undergo an annual NCIC-III check in accordance with existing standards for Auxiliary personnel.
 - (3) If new information, obtained through the annual NCIC-III check or other channels, raises fitness issues, the ACS Chaplain will be suspended from participation in the ACS program until the fitness issues are resolved. If it is determined that continued participation in the program is not appropriate, the ACS Chaplain shall be removed from the ACS program.
 - g. As with all members of the Auxiliary, ACS Chaplains shall follow all Auxiliary health and safety guidance and requirements.
14. ACS CANDIDATES. Candidates for the ACS program must meet the following qualification criteria:
- a. Be in Basically Qualified (BQ) or Operational Auxiliarist (AX) membership status.

Additionally, must be in good standing with the Auxiliary by being current in all Auxiliary Core Training (AUXCT) requirements, being current with respect to payment of annual Auxiliary dues obligations, and not being subject of any investigation or disciplinary action. Failing to sustain such good standing will result in immediate suspension from performing any ACS program activity.

- b. Have an Ecclesiastical Endorsement (Statement of Ecclesiastical Endorsement, ANSC-7070) from an Ecclesiastical Endorsing Agent who is authorized by a religious organization (RO) recognized by the Armed Forces Chaplain Board (AFCB).
- c. Hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university named on the U.S. Department of Education's list of Accredited Postsecondary Institutions and Programs: <https://ope.ed.gov/dapip/#/home>.
- d. Possess a post-baccalaureate graduate degree in the field of theological or related studies from a qualifying educational institution. A qualifying graduate degree program must require no fewer than 72 semester hours (108 quarter hours) of graduate-level work.
- e. CG-00A may grant waivers for clergy lacking either (not both) a bachelor or post-baccalaureate degree if they have a minimum of five (5) years full-time equivalent ministry experience and unique skills or experience applicable to the ACS program. Requests for waivers should be submitted on Form ANSC 7069, Section XI. Along with verification of ministry experience, submitted on form 7069, Section VI, applicants requesting a waiver will provide two (2) letters of recommendation from sources who have observed ministerial activities and capabilities of the candidate. These letters are to be professional references.
- f. Endorsement from
 - (1) the applicant's prospective supervisory Chaplain;
 - (2) the command of a Sector, Air Station, or Base in their principle area of operations;
 - (3) the District Chaplain;
 - (4) the District Commander; and
 - (5) the Area Chaplain.

15. ACS APPLICATION PROCEDURES.

- a. The District Chaplain, in consultation with the Area Chaplain, will determine locations requiring ACS support.
- b. Prior to beginning the application process, prospective applicants will meet virtually or in person with a Coast Guard chaplain and the regional ACS Branch Chief or Branch Assistant to discuss the ACS program requirements and opportunities for ministry within the program. This is not an interview to make a recommendation. This is a discussion to explain the program, answer questions, and help the applicant make an informed decision prior to beginning the application process.

- c. Applicants will coordinate with their regional ACS Branch Chief to complete the application process, which requires submitting the following documents to the District Chaplain:
- (1) Completed ACS Application Form (ANSC-7069), available from the U.S. Coast Auxiliary forms warehouse: <http://forms.cgaux.org/>.
 - (2) Copies of official academic transcripts of each degree. Retired or former DoD chaplains can submit a copy of their DD-214 in lieu of this requirement.
 - (3) If applicable, a written waiver request in lieu of one of the required degrees with verification of five (5) years full-time equivalent ministry experience and two (2) letters of recommendation from sources who have observed ministerial activities and capabilities of the candidate. These letters are to be professional references.
 - (4) Copy of the Statement of Ecclesiastical Endorsement (ANSC-7070), available from the U.S. Coast Auxiliary forms warehouse: <http://forms.cgaux.org/>.
 - (5) A letter of recommendation from their Flotilla Commander (FC) which includes validation that the applicant is in BQ or AX membership status, and that applicant is in good standing with the Auxiliary (current in all Auxiliary Core Training (AUXCT) requirements, current with respect to payment of annual Auxiliary dues obligations, and not the subject of any investigation or disciplinary action).
 - (6) A letter from a Sector, Air Station, or Base Commander (can be a designee) addressing the applicant's suitability for service as an ACS Chaplain.
 - (7) A letter of recommendation from the prospective supervisory active-duty Coast Guard Chaplain. If the chaplain does not recommend approval, the basis for this should be put in writing and forwarded to the District Chaplain with the complete package.
- d. District Chaplains will review ACS application packages for completeness and forward them, along with a recommendation regarding approval, to their District Commander for their endorsement. Upon receipt of the District Commander's endorsement, the District Chaplain will forward via email the ACS applicant package to the Area Chaplain for their endorsement.
- e. Area Chaplains shall forward completed packages to CG-00A.
- f. CG-00A shall convene an administrative board to review applications, verify completion of qualification criteria, and provide a recommendation of acceptance or denial.
- g. CG-00A shall make final determination regarding appointment of an ACS Chaplain and inform the applicant in writing.

- (1) Upon approval as an ACS Chaplain, applicants shall be notified in writing by an appointment letter, and a supervisory Coast Guard Chaplain will be assigned. A copy of this notification letter will be provided by the signature authority to the applicant's cognizant District Director of Auxiliary (DIRAUX) for appropriate Auxiliary record entry.
- (2) Continued participation in the program is contingent on:
 - i. Maintaining affiliation and qualifications with their flotilla,
 - ii. Completing required annual training,
 - iii. Receiving the recommendation of their supervisory chaplain in their annual evaluation.
- h. ACS status may be revoked at any time at the discretion of CG-00A.

16. TRAINING.

- a. Within 12 months of appointment, the ACS Chaplain shall complete the assigned initial training package to include:
 - (1) Incident Command System (ICS) training (ICS 100, 200, 700 and 800);
 - (2) Living Works ASIST Suicide Intervention course;
 - (3) Critical Incident Stress Management or Pastoral Crisis Response Course;
 - (4) Other materials as directed by CG-00A, the ACS Training Branch Chief, or the supervisory chaplain; and
 - (5) Introduction to Risk Management (RM) one-time training course.
- b. If assigned training package is not completed within 12 months, authorization to perform ACS activities may be suspended. Each course certificate must be recorded in their Auxiliary service record.
- c. ACS Chaplains shall complete required annual ACS training under the supervision of a Coast Guard Chaplain.

17. EVALUATIONS.

- a. Coast Guard Chaplains supervising ACS Chaplains will submit an annual evaluation (due 30 November) of the ACS Chaplains under their supervision with a recommendation as

to the ACS Chaplain's continued participation in the ACS program to CG-00A via their District Chaplain.

- b. Failure to address concerns or deficiencies identified in the annual evaluation in an appropriate and timely manner shall result in suspension or removal from the ACS program.

18. ACS CHAPLAIN RESPONSIBILITIES. Crisis Ministry and Response is mission essential under the authority of support to Coast Guard personnel. Coast Guard Chaplains will determine what constitutes crisis ministry and the appropriate response for ACS Chaplains. ACS Chaplains may have the following responsibilities when directed by and under the supervision of their assigned supervisory Coast Guard Chaplain:

- a. Respond to crisis situations by providing RM and other support.
- b. Provide pastoral counseling upon the request of an individual Coast Guard member or family member.
- c. Administer faith group specific religious rites according to the manner and form of the ACS's Religious Organization, at the request of an individual Coast Guard member or family member.
- d. Provide appropriate religious elements for official ceremonies (retirements, changes of command, changes of watch, etc.).
- e. Conduct religious services, studies or rites at Coast Guard facilities, Coast Guard vessels or other predetermined venues.
- f. Participate in annual ACS training.
- g. Provide supervisory Coast Guard Chaplain a monthly report of activities in support of Coast Guard units, even if no activities were conducted. The supervisory Coast Guard Chaplain will provide the ACS Chaplains with guidance regarding the extent of further sharing or dissemination of any such information. Associated Auxiliary program activity information (e.g. mission hours, unreimbursed mileage, and unreimbursed personal expenses) will be submitted and recorded in the Auxiliary Database (AUXDATA) in accordance with Reference (h).
- h. ACS Chaplains may perform any Auxiliary Lay Leader functions authorized in Reference (h).
- i. ACS Chaplains may be issued permissive or funded travel orders in accordance with policies established in Reference (h).
- j. ACS Chaplains shall not write recommendations for religious accommodation requests or conscientious objectors. I

k. If an ACS Chaplain changes ecclesiastical endorsement, either voluntarily or involuntarily, the ACS Chaplain shall inform CG-00A, via their supervisory chaplain and ACS Branch Chief, of the change and request continued affiliation with the ACS program.

(1) CG-00A shall convene an administrative board to review the request.

(2) Upon recommendation of the board, CG-00A has final approval authority for continued affiliation under the new endorsement.

l. If an ACS Chaplain changes geographical location or flotilla affiliation, the ACS Chaplain shall inform CG-00A, via their supervisory chaplain and ACS Branch Chief, of the change and request continued affiliation with the ACS program.

(1) CG-00A shall convene an administrative board to review the request.

(2) Upon recommendation of the board, CG-00A has final approval authority for continued affiliation under the new endorsement.

m. ACS Chaplains shall immediately report any change in their Auxiliary enrollment including disenrollment for any reason, any investigative or disciplinary action taken against them, and any arrest or other reason that would warrant SECCEN notification.

19. CONFIDENTIALITY. Coast Guard Chaplains and ACS Chaplains are committed to treating all those to whom they minister with respect for their personal dignity and for their right to privacy. This includes protecting the confidentiality of all personal information shared. Per References (d) and (e) which define general rules of communications to clergy and who may claim the privilege of the communication, authorized USCG personnel and users have privileged communication when speaking with an ACS Chaplain. ACS Chaplains maintain confidentiality and can only disclose confidential communications with expressed authorization by the person to whom they ministered.

20. UNIFORM.

a. Pursuant to Reference (h), ACS Chaplains are authorized to wear the Coast Guard Auxiliary uniform in the performance of their ACS duties.

b. ACS Chaplains are authorized to wear the uniform insignia of two stripes with a red "A." This does not preclude an ACS Chaplain from wearing a higher insignia if earned (e.g., 3 or 4-stripes if the ACS Chaplain has earned that higher insignia through other Auxiliary service). ACS Chaplains appointed as national staff officers shall wear uniform insignia in accordance with Reference (h).

c. ACS Chaplains shall wear the religious symbol approved by their Ecclesiastical Endorsing Agency as recognized by the Armed Forces Chaplain Board (AFCB).

- d. Religious symbols may be worn on the chaplain's cover when wearing ODUs.
- e. Religious symbols shall only be worn when functioning in the role of an ACS Chaplain.
- f. The standard Auxiliary nametag for Auxiliary uniforms (e.g., Tropical Blue, Service Dress Blue, and Operational Dress Uniforms) will normally be worn. In lieu of the standard Auxiliary pin-on nametag, ACS chaplains are also authorized to wear a pin-on ACS chaplain nametag with the Service Dress Blue Bravo and Tropical Blue uniforms during authorized Auxiliary chaplain support missions. It shall display the full first and last name in the first row and the words "AUXILIARY CHAPLAIN" in the second row in place of the traditional words "U.S. COAST GUARD AUXILIARY."
- g. Uniform guidelines may be revised as needed by CG-BSX and CG-00A.

21. FORMS. None.

22. SECTION 508. This Instruction adheres to Accessibility Guidelines and Standards as promulgated by the U.S. Access Board. If changes are needed, please communicate with the Coast Guard Section 508 Program Management Office at Section.508@uscg.mil .

23. REQUEST FOR CHANGES. To request changes to this policy, contact the Chaplain of the Coast Guard's Office (CG-00A), AUXClergySupport@uscg.mil.

/Steven D. Poulin/
Admiral, U. S. Coast Guard
Vice Commandant