

Lay Leader Program Sector North Carolina

An Invitation to Service:

One of the core pillars of personal and command wellness is spiritual fitness. Coast Guardsmen who serve as Lay Leaders have the opportunity to encourage and enrich their crews in spiritual fitness and resilience.

The lay leader in a crew has an important role. It is the privilege and duty of a lay leader to conduct divine services (worship services, Scripture studies, prayer gatherings, etc.) in the absence of a chaplain. The position can be of great benefit to the community life of the crew.

The lay leader who is faithful and devout and who sets a good moral example among shipmates will be effective and helpful. If you feel unequal for this task, do not despair. You are in company with a vast host among the living and the dead — some of whom we call “saints” — who counter that God could find any worthwhile use for such a vessel of clay. And yet He is able to use us to be a part of his work.

Lay Leaders work together with the Sector Chaplain to represent their own religious organization and communicate religious accommodation needs to the Chaplain of those of other faiths. Additionally, Lay Leaders can be a great asset in coordinating with local religious leaders to help support Coast Guardsmen, their families and mission.

Being a Lay Leader is an opportunity to serve and lead your crew with an eternal value. If you are interested in being a Lay Leader or know someone who is, please contact:

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Lay Leaders Opportunities and Training:

Those that are appointed as lay leaders for their crew are eligible for various training opportunities and resources. Each year the Sector North Carolina Chaplain will hold one day training opportunities for command lay-leaders to give them resources and instruction on how to best serve their crews, conduct worship gatherings, Bible Studies and other lay leader responsibilities.

Certain religious organizations also provide training for their lay leaders. The Sector Chaplain can help facilitate these trainings. Lay Leaders are also eligible to receive resources like books, DVDs, and other devotional material to assist in their work in serving their crew.

Lay Leader References

COMMANDANT INSTRUCTION 1730.4C
Coast Guard Lay Reader Handbook
Lay Leader Guide

www.uscg.mil/directives/ci/1000-1999/CI_1730_4C.pdf

www.uscg.mil/hq/chaplain/docs/LayReaderHandbook.pdf

<http://www.quickseries.com/index.php?prodcode=01-0366-025-01>

Coast Guard Lay Leader Program from **COMMANDANT INSTRUCTION 1730.4C**

Background and Policy: MILPERSMAN 1730-010, Use of Lay Leaders in Religious Services is the Navy Military Personnel Manual policy establishing use of lay leaders in religious services and is adapted in this chapter as USCG policy. Commands shall provide command religious programs (CRP) in support of religious requirements and preferences of authorized personnel. Commands may appoint lay leaders to accommodate religious diversity inherent in the members of the command.

Appointments will be in writing for a specified period of time not to exceed 1 year. Only authorized personnel representing their own religious organization may be appointed. Lay-led religious services are integral to the CRP and subject to command supervision. In most cases, lay-led services constitute a temporary accommodation of specific religious requirements in an operational setting when assigned Chaplains or contract religious ministry professionals are not able to provide.

Qualifications and Training. Commands shall appoint authorized personnel as lay leaders on the basis of volunteerism, high moral character, motivation, religious interest, and certification by the appointee's religious organization. Commands shall ensure that lay leaders are trained and supervised by a military Chaplain. *The Coast Guard Lay Reader Handbook* and the *Lay Leader Guide*, Quick Series Publishing, Inc, #366 are resources for lay leader training.

Terms of Appointment.

(1) Appointment of a lay leader responds to an identified requirement and conveys no ecclesiastical status or civilian credentials to the authorized member appointed.

(2) The appointment ends when the particular requirement precipitating the appointment has ceased: e.g., at the end of an underway period or when the lay leader is transferred. Commands retain the authority to terminate appointment and remove an individual from their status as lay leader. The command shall terminate the appointment when the conduct of the individual hinders accomplishment of the CRP or reflects adversely upon the command.

Responsibilities. In supporting the religious requirements for which they have been appointed, lay leaders should first seek the services of a military Chaplain or civilian religious ministry professional, or, when this is not possible or practical, seek to arrange transportation to an appropriate service in the vicinity of the command. Lacking these opportunities, lay leaders may provide a religious service for members of their religious organization consistent with their lay status and as authorized by their religious organization.

Religious Services.

(1) Under Religious Ministry within the Department of the Navy, SECNAVINST 1730.7D, religious services are conducted in the manner and form of religious organizations and led by lay leaders, contract civilian religious ministry professionals, or other authorized personnel.

(2) Military Chaplains and civilian religious ministry professionals shall ordinarily be the only persons to provide rites, sacraments, or ordinances aboard USCG cutters or units.

(3) Commands may permit lay leaders to provide specified religious rites, sacraments, or ordinances to their faith group if their religious organization (RO) permits them to do so. A statement of certification or approval by the RO to conduct the religious rite, sacrament, or ordinance must be provided by the lay leader. This approval will be granted after consultation and will specifically outline the particular religious requirements supported.

Supplies.

(1) Storage. When the storage of religious supplies needs to be secured, commands will provide lay leaders secure storage space, including smaller locked containers for any authorized sacred items requiring dedicated storage. The location of this equipment and supplies will be noted in a memorandum, and copies will be kept by the Executive Officer, District/Area Chaplain, and the lay leader.

(2) Kits. Lay leader supply kits have been placed aboard many cutters. Prior to lengthy deployments lay leaders should inventory needed supplies and procure replacements using command appropriated funds.

g. Sacred supplies. Some RO's require sacramentally blessed items for religious services. Respective lay leaders must contact the designated religious organization in advance of deployment to secure an adequate supply of consecrated items. At the end of the deployment, the blessed items must be returned.

Offerings. Offerings will not be taken at lay-conducted services except as authorized by the Commanding Officer. Any monies collected will be part of the command Religious Offering Fund (ROF) and shall be collected, accounted for, and disbursed per Religious Offering Fund, SECNAVINST 7010.6A.

Civilian Clergy who serve as Auxiliarists. Some Auxiliarists may have special qualifications or ordination by their RO, but are not authorized DOD/DHS Chaplains. They may serve as lay leaders following these guidelines. They may also serve, only in their civilian clergy attire, as first responder clergy as outlined in the definition below. The service of volunteer RMP's is also governed by applicable Coast Guard Chaplain Corps policy.

Civilian Clergy First Responder (CCFR). A civilian religious ministry professional serving his/her faith group in the civilian community near a USCG unit who has agreed to provide, without cost, pastoral care to the USCG unit as a first responder when the assigned USCG Chaplains are not available. First Responder in this sense is meant to include both emergent crisis situations, as well as ceremonial events when a chaplain is not available. In the same sense CCFRs may be requested by the unit commander/commanding officer/officer-in-charge and assigned chaplain to provide occasional pastoral counseling in the chaplain's absence. CCFRs are considered to be an extension of the CG Chaplains' ministry and serve only at their request. CCFRs are not DOD chaplains and therefore are not granted privileged communications or confidentiality under DOD regulations; but rather are subject to the mandatory reporting requirements of the state in which they serve and their endorsing faith group. These Religious Ministry Professionals are limited to the direct provision of ministry specific to their Religious Organization. They may not advise the command or the Commanding Officer, facilitate the needs of those who do not belong to their religious organization or provide the kind of care that Navy Chaplains offer.