



DoD INSTRUCTION 5120.08

ARMED FORCES CHAPLAINS BOARD

Originating Component: Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness

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Purpose: In accordance with the authority in DoD Directive 5124.02, this issuance establishes policy, assigns responsibilities, and provides procedures regarding the organization, functions, and administration of the Armed Forces Chaplains Board (hereafter referred to as the “Board”).

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SECTION 1: GENERAL ISSUANCE INFORMATION

1.1. APPLICABILITY.

This issuance applies to OSD, the Military Departments, the Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Joint Staff, the Combatant Commands, the Office of Inspector General of the Department of Defense, the Defense Agencies, the DoD Field Activities, and all other organizational entities within the DoD.

1.2. POLICY.

The Board provides advice and recommendations to OSD officials on policies and issues related to the free exercise of religion and all matters concerning religion, spiritual readiness, morality, ethics, morale, and military chaplains.

SECTION 2: RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1. UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PERSONNEL AND READINESS (USD(P&R)).

The USD(P&R):

- a. Exercises authority, direction, and control over the Board.
- b. Appoints one of the Chiefs of Chaplains of the Military Departments to serve as the Board's Chair for a 12-month term, rotating among the Military Departments.
- c. Provides administrative and clerical assistance to the Board.

2.2. DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL POLICY (DASD(MPP)).

Under the authority, direction, and control of the USD(P&R), through the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, the DASD(MPP):

- a. Endorses recommendations of the Board, or acts on them, as appropriate.
- b. Fulfills fitness reports and ratings requirements for the Board's Executive Director.

2.3. SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS.

The Secretaries of the Military Departments rotationally assign a chaplain to serve as the Board's Executive Director. USD(P&R) maintains the right to approve or disapprove the individual proposed.

SECTION 3: PROCEDURES

3.1. ARMED FORCES CHAPLAINS BOARD.

The Board will:

- a. Consist of the Chief and Deputy Chief of Chaplains from each of the Military Departments.
- b. Submit recommendations to the Secretary of Defense and the USD(P&R), through the DASD(MPP), on religious, spiritual readiness, ethical, and moral matters for the Military Services, and on policy matters, including:
 - (1) Protecting the free exercise of religion in accordance with the First Amendment of the United States Constitution.
 - (2) Procuring, training, and assigning military chaplains.
 - (3) Military chaplain professional standards and requirements.
 - (4) All religious support providers within the DoD.
 - (5) Procuring and using supplies, equipment, and facilities for religious use.
 - (6) Dialog with civilian organizations regarding religious issues.
 - (7) Joint military endeavors for delivering ministry by the Military Services throughout the DoD whenever practicable.
 - (8) The requirements of DoD Instruction 1300.17.

3.2. THE CHAIR OF THE ARMED FORCES CHAPLAINS BOARD.

The Chair will:

- a. Serve as the USD(P&R)'s principal advisor on all Board matters.
- b. Call at least four meetings a year, requiring at least one member from each Military Department.
- c. Act independently on routine or minor policy matters on the Board's behalf.
- d. May establish *ad hoc* groups, as necessary, to conduct studies, assemble information, present recommendations, and otherwise assist the Board in carrying out its responsibilities.
 - (1) Such groups will include at least one representative from each Military Department, nominated by the respective Chief of Chaplains.

(2) A military chaplain of a particular religious faith group may be included as a special consultant for matters about that religious faith.

(3) All members of such groups will be Federal civilian employees, permanent part-time Federal civilian employees, or Service members on active duty.

3.3. THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE ARMED FORCES CHAPLAINS BOARD.

The Executive Director will:

- a. Serve a 3-year term.
- b. Be a chaplain in the grade of O-6.
- c. Have no voting rights on the Board itself.
- d. Under the Chair's direction and the DASD(MPP)'s supervision:

(1) Perform administrative work associated with Board actions and provide input on proposed DoD issuances.

(2) Record meeting minutes in accordance with DoD Instruction 5015.02 and present them to the Board for approval.

(3) Represent the Board on advisory groups as an *ex officio* member.

(4) Manage the Board's office and staff.

(5) Advise Board members of all actions taken on their behalf.

GLOSSARY

ACRONYM	MEANING
DASD(MPP)	Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Personnel Policy
USD(P&R)	Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness

REFERENCES

DoD Directive 5124.02, “Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)),” June 23, 2008

DoD Instruction 1300.17, “Religious Liberty in the Military Services,” September 1, 2020

DoD Instruction 5015.02, “DoD Records Management Program,” February 24, 2015,
as amended

United States Constitution