



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, U.S. ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT CENTER AND SCHOOL
AND FORT SAM HOUSTON
2250 STANLEY ROAD
FORT SAM HOUSTON, TEXAS 78234-6100

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF
MCCS-BCH

20 APR 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Lay Ministry Policy

1. Lay ministry is an important asset to the execution of this command's religious support program. This memorandum will delineate the parameters of that program as envisioned by the Commander and applicable regulatory guidance.
2. Chaplains are the responsible agents of the command for the conduct or provision of religious worship and religious education activities affiliated with the Fort Sam Houston Military Community. All worship services are chaplain-led and chaplain-supervised in accordance with AR 165-1, Chaplain Activities in the United States Army. Lay ministers and chapel volunteers will coordinate and seek approval of all activities associated with chapel programs through their respective chaplain supervisor/pastor.
3. All lay ministers come under the supervision of the appointed supervisory chaplain of the authorized worship congregation. The Installation Chaplain will validate the authorized use of lay ministers through an accreditation process that satisfies the requirements of the Commander's religious mission.
4. The Installation Commander has directed the Installation Chaplain to screen and validate all chapel volunteers and lay ministers. This facilitates the maintenance of "good order and discipline" as well as the professional conduct of all religious worship programs on Fort Sam Houston. The Installation Chaplain may properly rely on the recommendations of chaplain-pastors to approve all religious studies teachers (Bible Studies, Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA), Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD), and Sunday School), lay readers, music ministers, and worship leaders.

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5. Preaching is a chaplain responsibility. Chaplain-pastors may choose to allow lay ministers, who are licensed and/or ordained from an approved denomination recognized by the Chaplaincy, to provide homilies, sermons, or lectures to chapel congregations, as long as an appointed supervisory chaplain is present for the program.

6. While lay ministers facilitate pastoral coverage responsibilities as extensions of the Installation Chaplain's Office to supplement unit ministry team coverage, chaplains and chaplain assistants are the official representative agents for the implementation of the commander's religious support program.

7. This policy is effective immediately and will remain in effect until otherwise revoked or properly modified.

8. The proponent of this policy is the Installation Chaplain, DSN 471-5007 or (210) 221-5007.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


GARRY J. ATKINS
Colonel, MS
Garrison Commander

DISTRIBUTION:

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