

Chaplain Candidate (Active Duty, Reserve, or National Guard) Approval Process

Chaplain candidacy is an opportunity for seminary and other professional religious school students to evaluate their compatibility and potential for commissioning as a military Chaplain. The Chaplain Candidate Program is for seminary students, **not for ordained clergy**. It allows an individual to explore military chaplaincy while still in preparation for ministry.

If you are starting or completing your seminary education, you can potentially enter the Chaplain Candidate Program. Each service, the Army, Navy, and Air Force, offers similar programs to allow individuals contemplating serving as military chaplains to learn about service in their respective branches. Some States also offer a National Guard Chaplain Candidate Program.

Seminary Students seeking to serve in the Military must:

- Be enrolled in or accepted in a seminary's Master of Divinity degree program
- Be in a relationship with a presbytery and under their care and guidance
- Maintain personal conduct above reproach
- Complete an application and gain approval process with the Presbyterian Federal Chaplaincies
- Be able to receive a favorable background check
- Be able to pass a physical exam
- Be physically fit and be able to pass the physical training requirements for that particular service. This can include, at a minimum, running from 1.5 to 4 miles, sit-ups and push-ups, and maintaining weight standards for that particular service
- Must meet all medical, legal, financial, and moral standards
- Age: (Talk with a recruiter about changes and age waivers)
 - Navy: Must be commissioned before age 38
 - Army: Must be commissioned before age 37
 - Air Force: Must be commissioned before age 40

This is an ecclesiastical approval and not the same as ecclesiastical endorsement. Appointment as a military chaplain requires ecclesiastical endorsement applied for at the appropriate time. Applicants must work with a chaplain recruiter from the specific service they are interested in to complete the military side of the process.

NOTE: Applicants must work with a chaplain recruiter from the specific service they are interested in to complete the military side of the process.

- Approval and participation in the Chaplain Candidate Program do not guarantee that an individual will become a Military Chaplain
- Upon completion of Seminary, individuals interested in military chaplaincy must:
 - Reapply for an Ecclesiastical Endorsement
 - Be ordained by your Presbytery
 - Meet the required post-seminary experience requirement
 - Be accepted by the military service they wish to serve

The Presbyterian Federal Chaplaincies application packet can be found on our website presfedchap.org.

The Navy Chaplain Candidate Information can be found under the education tab at navy.com/careers/navy-chaplain

The Army Chaplain Candidate Information can be found at goarmy.com/chaplain.html

The Army National Guard Chaplain Candidate Information can be found at nationalguard.com/chaplain

The Air Force Chaplain Candidate Program Information can be found at afrc.af.mil/About-Us/Chaplain