

*I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me...*

Matthew 25

## FAQ's

### Federal Government Requirements for Chaplain Eligibility:

- U.S. Citizen; the Army may consider permanent residents for individuals entering the reserve programs.
- M.Div. degree; exception: chaplain candidates must be individuals seeking ordination, enrolled in accredited seminary.
- Ordination as Minister of Word and Sacrament (teaching elder) with 2+ years of pastoral experience post-ordination. (Possible: exception above).
- Ecclesiastical Endorsement; must be in good standing with local Presbyteries.
- Maintain personal conduct above reproach.

### Process for Ecclesiastical Endorsement:

- Application  
(Available on PFC Website)
- Reference Check  
(Conducted by PFC)
- Presbytery Approval  
(Completed by the Presbytery)
- Background Check  
(Source: Protect My Ministry)
- Interview  
(Zoom/In-Person)
- Endorsement Form  
(Completed by the PFC)

### CONTACT:

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# PRESBYTERIAN FEDERAL CHAPLAINCIES

## Ecclesiastical Endorsement Quick Reference

## WHO WE ARE

The agency that endorses Federal Chaplains for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America, and the Korean Presbyterian Church Abroad.

## WHAT WE DO

Provide ecclesiastical endorsement for ministers who desire to serve in a Federal Chaplaincy position: Department of Veterans Affairs Hospital Chaplaincy, Federal Bureau of Prisons Chaplaincy, Army, Navy, or Air Force Chaplaincy (Active Duty, Reserve, or National Guard), Civil Air Patrol Chaplaincy, or as Chaplain Candidate to one of the military services.

Additionally the agency provides the following:

- Evaluation of individual suitability for ministry in Federal Chaplaincy settings.
- Assistance for Presbytery staff and committees as individual goes through application process.
- Resources for career guidance, pastoral care, training opportunities, and transition assistance for chaplains and their families.

## WHY ONE AGENCY

To fulfill the requirement of the federal government to be a single point of contact as the official national endorsing authority for our four Presbyterian partners.

## CONNECT WITH US

Please contact us if you are considering a federal chaplaincy or if you have a minister or candidate under your care who is considering a federal chaplaincy.

Presbyterian Federal Chaplaincy endorsement is required by federal chaplaincy programs, but it does not guarantee an applicant will be accepted into a federal chaplaincy program.

Applications and information are available online: [www.presfedchap.org](http://www.presfedchap.org)

# ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Note: There are specific additional requirements per federal agency.

## Veterans Affairs

- Complete minimum of 4 units of CPE (Clinical Pastoral Education)
- Board Certification (within 2 years of hire).

## Federal Bureau of Prisons

- Ages 21 to 37 for initial appointment  
*(Exception: Age Waiver may be granted by Department of Justice under certain circumstances)*

## Military Chaplain Candidate

- Enrolled or accepted in accredited Master of Divinity degree program.  
*(Note: Ordained Ministers are not eligible for this program.)*
- Maintain relationship with local presbytery; be under their care and guidance.
- Receive a favorable background check.
- Pass physical exam.
- Be physically fit and able to meet the physical training requirements for that particular service.  
*(Possibly including, at a minimum, running from 1.5 to 4 miles, sit-ups and push-ups, and maintaining weight standards for that particular service.)*
- Ages 21 to 47 years old  
*(Exception: Age Waiver may be granted based on years of prior service.)*

## Civil Air Patrol

- Fulfill minimum 2+ years of post-ordination pastoral experience.
- Receive a favorable background check.

## Military: Army, Navy, Air Force (Active Duty, Reserve, National Guard)

- Receive favorable background check.
- Pass physical exam.
- Be physically fit and able to meet the physical training requirements for that particular service.  
*(Possibly including, at a minimum, running from 1.5 to 4 miles, sit-ups and push-ups, and maintaining weight standards for that particular service.)*
- Ages 21 to 47 years old  
*(Exception: Age Waivers may be granted based on years of prior service).*
- Active Duty Applicants: Must have 2+ years of post-ordination pastoral experience.  
*(Clinical Pastoral Education may satisfy up to one year of the pastoral/ spiritual experience.)*

