

Presbytery of Denver Military Chaplain Policy

PNC considerations

A full disclosure of the candidate's potential military obligations must be made during the initial interview process. The financial implications of such a deployment will be carefully considered in light of the congregation's resources. This includes the 11% payment to the board of pensions. (See attached guidelines).

Upon mobilization

The pastor and clerk of Session will notify the Stated Clerk of Denver Presbytery. The Stated Clerk will notify the Committee on Ministry.

Status

The pastor chaplain will remain the called pastor of the congregation while deployed and will normally return to that role when returning from active duty. Deployed is defined as a period of active duty that is longer than thirty days within one year. Leave less than thirty days would be negotiated as part of the terms of call.

The pastoral position will be held open for a period of up to 12 months.

If Session and COM agree, this period may be extended for up to 18 months.

Following the expiration of the agreed-upon time, the congregation may petition the COM to dissolve the pastoral relationship. A second deployment within one year may result in this action.

While serving, the pastor will remain a continuing member of the Presbytery of Denver with permission to labor outside the bounds of Presbytery.

Administration

COM will appoint a moderator for the session and assist the session in securing temporary supply pastors.

The presbytery will provide pastoral care to the congregation and to the deploying pastor and family as he or she prepares to depart for service.

The congregation and the presbytery together will surround the chaplain and family with love and support, to minimize the disruption to each of them.

Financial Housing Considerations

If the church provides a manse, the pastor/chaplain's family will normally remain in it during the deployment.

If a housing allowance is provided, the pastor's family will receive that allowance until the military begins to cover living costs.

Thereafter, the difference between the military and church allowances will be paid through the time of authorized leave.

The church pension and the family's medical care should be protected until the military assumes that responsibility (this should be no longer than 60 days).

The Board of Pensions requires that the church of employment at the time of the active duty is responsible for the 11% pension payment during the deployment, even if the relationship ends after the end of active service.

COM shall work to ensure that the transition to normal status upon return from deployment is made seamlessly.

At the discretion of the session and COM, the departing pastor/chaplain will receive a cash salary of either 30 days or the remainder of the pay period of his/her departure.

Post-deployment

Nurture and care for the congregation, the pastor, and the pastor's family will be needed for some time after deployment.

The congregation and/or the pastor may have changed during the pastor's absence. The Presbytery will provide pastoral care as needed to nurture pastor and congregation while they become reacquainted with each other.

Dissolution of the pastoral relationship may be recommended.

If the pastor returns with post-traumatic stress disorder or other health issues resulting from the deployment, COM will work with session to ensure that the family receives the appropriate care from military sources.