

CHAPLAIN CANDIDATE STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING

TO: HQ AFRC/HC
255 RICHARD RAY BLVD STE 111
ROBINS AFB GA 31098-1637

I, _____ (*Full name*) understand to remain in the Chaplain Candidate Program, I must have a valid Ecclesiastical Endorsement on the DD Form 2088, Statement of Ecclesiastical Endorsement and be a full-time student pursuing a graduate-level degree from a qualifying education institution per DoDI 1304.28, *Guidance for the Appointment of Chaplains for the Military Departments*. I also understand failure to maintain good standing in the Chaplain Candidate Program, complete my education or maintain my ecclesiastical endorsement may lead to separation from the United States Air Force. Air Force needs will determine the need for reappointment and utilization as a chaplain of the Air Force or separation.

CHAPLAIN CANDIDATE PROGRAM EXTENDED STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING (SOU)

The primary purpose of the Air Force Chaplain Candidate Program is to allow theological students to explore Air Force Chaplaincy before making a long-term commitment to serve in the military. This program aids students in discerning the best fit for their future faith group ministry. The program is specifically designed for those who have little or no ministry experience; though it is open to all who are pursuing a qualifying graduate degree.

In order to maintain the integrity of the program, all candidates must commit to professional ministry after graduation and endorsement from an accredited ecclesiastical endorsing agency.

1. Professional ministry is primarily defined as full-time employment as a licensed and/or ordained clergyperson serving in a sacramental and/or liturgical role within or on behalf of a faith group.
 - a. Roles within a faith group include:
 - i. Senior/Associate/Assistant Pastor/Rector/Minister/Imam/Rabbi, etc.
 - ii. Member of a professional clergy staff working with age groups (such as youth/children/adults), liturgical arts (such as music/drama/worship), special functions (such as education/administration/outreach).
 - b. Roles on behalf of a faith group include:
 - i. Chaplaincy in a hospital/prison/hospice/corporation/camp/school, etc.
 - ii. Professional educator in faith group setting
 - iii. Professional missionary or outreach minister
2. Professional ministry may also be defined as bi-vocational when the clergyperson is employed at least 20 hours/week as a licensed and/or ordained clergyperson serving in a sacramental and/or liturgical role within or on behalf of a faith group, using the same examples of those roles above.

All candidates who successfully complete the candidate program and decide to continue in Air Force Chaplaincy will reappoint into the Air Force Reserve (TR or IMA). Once a reserve Chaplain, those who aspire to Active Duty will be asked annually to submit their name to AFRC/HC leadership for consideration for recommendation. Those who are recommended will have a streamlined process to apply for Active Duty.

Chaplain Candidates who decide not to reappoint to the Air Force Reserve will incur a one year waiting period before they can apply for Active Duty. The one year waiting period will begin on the date of their official release from the Candidate Program.

Any exception to the above requirements will be determined by AFRC/HC leadership.

Please consider these expectations and commitments carefully before applying. Should you have any questions, please discuss them with your Chaplain Recruiter prior to signing this document.

Guidance for this SOU can be found in AFMAN 36-2032, 27 Sept 2019, Par 5.6.4.

Applicant Signature

Date

Witness Signature

Date