

STAFFING

- 1. REASON FOR ISSUE:** To establish a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) qualification standard for Chaplain, General Schedule (GS)-0060, appointed under 38 U.S.C. § 7401(3), Appointments in Veterans Health Administration, and 38 U.S.C. § 7405(a)(1)(B), Temporary full-time appointments, part-time appointments, and without-compensation appointments.
- 2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS/MAJOR CHANGES:** This handbook contains mandatory procedures on staffing. This policy establishes qualification standards for the chaplain occupation in Appendix II-G67. The policy is established under VA's title 38 hybrid excepted service employment system and the authority of Public Law 111-163, "Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010." Authority is given to the Secretary of VA under 38 U.S.C. § 7402(b), Qualifications of appointees, to prescribe qualifications for occupations identified in or established under 38 U.S.C. § 7401(3), Appointments in Veterans Health Administration, and 38 U.S.C. § 7405(a)(1)(B), Temporary full-time appointments, part-time appointments, and without-compensation appointments. These changes will be incorporated into the electronic versions of VA Handbook 5005 that is maintained on the [Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer Website](#) and the [VA Publications Website](#).
- 3. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE:** Recruitment and Placement Policy Service (059), Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer.
- 4. RELATED DIRECTIVE:** VA Directive 5005, Staffing.
- 5. RESCISSION:** VA Handbook 5005, Part II, Appendix F1, Chaplain, GS-0060-11/15, dated April 15, 2002.

CERTIFIED BY:

**BY DIRECTION OF THE SECRETARY OF
VETERANS AFFAIRS:**

/s/

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DISTRIBUTION: Electronic Only

NOTE: This transmittal page accompanied the former VA Handbook 5005, Staffing publication. It is provided for reference to the establishment of this qualification standard.

FORMER VA HANDBOOK REFERENCE: PART II APPENDIX G67
EFFECTIVE DATE: September 24, 2020

**CHAPLAIN
QUALIFICATION STANDARD
GS-0060
Veterans Health Administration**

1. COVERAGE. The following are requirements for appointment as a chaplain in the Veterans Health Administration (VHA). The requirements apply to all VHA chaplains employed in the General Schedule (GS)-0060 series. Chaplains provide religious, spiritual, and pastoral care to all persons that is commensurate with the needs, desires, and voluntary consent of the Veteran or caregiver or staff. Chaplains interact with healthcare professionals from many different fields to address the spiritual component of health and wellness in every patient care setting to ensure that pastoral care is fully integrated into all aspects of care.

2. AUTHORITIES.

- a. [P.L. 111-163, Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010;](#)
- b. [38 U.S.C. § 7401, Appointments in Veterans Health Administration;](#)
- c. [38 U.S.C. § 7402, Qualifications of appointees;](#)
- d. [38 U.S.C. § 7403, Period of appointments; promotions;](#)
- e. [38 U.S.C. § 7405, Temporary full-time appointments, part-time appointments and without-compensation appointments;](#)
- f. [38 U.S.C. § 7407, Administrative provisions for section 7405 and 7406 appointments.](#)

3. DEFINITIONS.

- a. **Journey Level.** The full performance level for this qualification standard is the GS-11 grade level.
- b. **Creditable Experience.** To be creditable, the experience must have required the use of knowledge, skills, abilities (KSAs), and other characteristics, also referred to as core competencies; be associated with the scope of chaplain practice equivalent to at least the next lower grade level; be directly related to the position being filled; and may be paid or non-paid employment.
- c. **Part-Time Experience.** Part-time experience is creditable according to its relationship to the full-time work week. For example, a chaplain employed 20 hours per week, or on a half time

basis, would receive one full-time work week of credit for each two weeks of service.

4. BASIC REQUIREMENTS. To qualify for appointment as a chaplain, all applicants must possess the following:

- a. **Citizenship.** Citizen of the United States (U.S.). Non-citizens may be appointed when it is not possible to recruit qualified citizens in accordance with 38 U.S.C. § 7407(a).
- b. **Education.** Applicants must possess a Master of Divinity degree or equivalent educational qualifications as evidenced by a graduate-level theological degree from a college, university or theological school accredited by a member of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) or Association of Theological Schools (ATS) and recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

NOTE: For applicants who do not possess a Master of Divinity degree or equivalent educational degree, an approved educational equivalency review from a nationally recognized board certification body for chaplains (see paragraph f) is acceptable.

- c. **Foreign Education.** To be creditable, theological or related education completed outside the U.S. must be submitted to a current affiliate agency of the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES) listed at <https://www.naces.org/members>.
- d. **Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE).** Applicants must have completed four units of CPE from a CPE center that is accredited by an organization recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.
- e. **Ecclesiastical Endorsement.** In accordance with 38 C.F.R. § 17.655, ecclesiastical endorsement is a condition of employment as a VA chaplain. An individual must possess and maintain a full and active ecclesiastical endorsement to be employed as a VA chaplain. Applicants must have an ecclesiastical endorsement, dated within the past 12 months. Ecclesiastical endorsements must be from the official national endorsing authority of the applicant's/employee's faith group or denomination. Ecclesiastical endorsement is a written official statement, by the official national endorsing body of the faith group or denomination, certifying that the applicant is in good standing with the applicant's faith group or denomination; and stating that the individual is, in the opinion of the endorsing body, qualified to perform the full range of ministry required in the VA pluralistic setting. Loss of endorsement will result in removal from the GS-0060 Chaplain series and may result in termination of employment. The National Chaplain Service maintains a list of approved endorsing organizations that can be found here: https://www.patientcare.va.gov/chaplain/Employment_Information_and_Resources.asp
- f. **Board Certification.** Applicants must be a Board Certified Chaplain certified by the Board of Chaplaincy Certification Inc. (BCCI) ® or nationally recognized certification body that utilizes the [BCCI ® Common Qualifications and Competencies for Professional Chaplaincy](#) or a certifying organization that has a reciprocity agreement with BCCI ®.

Exception. Non-certified applicants who otherwise meet the eligibility requirements may be given a temporary appointment under the authority of 38 U.S.C. § 7405(c)(2) for a period

not to exceed two years. This exception only applies at the entry level. For the journey level and above, the candidate must have board certification. At the time of appointment, the supervisor in collaboration with Human Resources, will provide the uncertified chaplain with the written requirements for obtaining certification, the date by which the certification must be acquired, and the consequences for not becoming certified by the deadline. The written notice must be provided prior to the entrance on duty date. Failure to become certified within two years from date of appointment will result in removal from the GS-0060 Chaplain series and may result in termination of employment. Temporary graduate chaplain appointments may not be extended beyond two years and may not be converted to a new temporary appointment in this occupation.

- g. **Loss of Endorsement or Certification.** Chaplains must maintain ecclesiastical endorsement and board certification. Loss of endorsement or board certification will result in removal from the GS-0060 Chaplain occupation and may result in termination of employment.

- h. **Grandfathering Provision.** All chaplains employed in VHA, in this occupational series, performing the duties as described in the qualification standard on the effective date of this qualification standard, are considered to have met all the qualification requirements for the grade held, including positive education and certification that are part of the basic requirements of the occupation. For employees who do not meet all the basic requirements of this standard, but met the qualifications applicable to the position at the time they were appointed to the position, the following provisions apply:
 - (1) Chaplains who do not meet the basic requirements for education and certification may be reassigned, promoted up to and including the full performance level, or demoted within the occupation, but may not be promoted beyond the full performance level or placed in supervisory or managerial positions.
 - (2) Chaplains appointed on a temporary basis prior to the effective date of the qualification standard may not have their temporary appointment extended, or be reappointed on a temporary or permanent basis, until they fully meet the basic requirements of the standard.
 - (3) Chaplains initially grandfathered into this occupation, who subsequently obtain education and/or certification that meets all the basic requirements of this qualification standard, must maintain the required credentials as a condition of employment in the occupation.
 - (4) Chaplains who were retained in this occupation, under this provision, and subsequently leave the occupation, lose protected status and must meet the full VA qualification standard requirements in effect at the time of reentry to the occupation.

- i. **Physical Requirements.** See VA Directive and Handbook 5019, Employee Occupational Health Service.

- j. **English Language Proficiency.** Chaplains must be proficient in spoken and written English to be appointed as authorized by 38 U.S.C. § 7403(f).

5. GRADE REQUIREMENTS. All individuals assigned to this occupation must have an approved title or parenthetical title, as described below:

- a. Chaplain
- b. Supervisory Chaplain
- c. Chaplain (CPE Educator)
- d. Chaplain (National Program Coordinator)
- e. Chaplain (National Program Manager)

6. GRADE DETERMINATIONS.

a. **Grade Determinations.** In addition to the basic requirements for employment, the following criteria must be met when determining the grade of candidates:

(1) Chaplain, GS-9

(a) **Experience.** None beyond the basic requirements.

(b) **Assignment.** At the GS-9 entry level, chaplains serve in a career development position practicing under close supervision of a supervisor or qualified individual who reviews and ensures the employee meets competency requirements. The chaplain conducts spiritual assessments to identify patient strengths and needs and creates plans for care in response to the moral injuries and spiritual distress of patients. The candidate provides crisis intervention and stabilization as required. The chaplain collaborates with healthcare teams to create and update treatment plans to address spiritual distress, grief, and loss as existential concerns to enhance holistic care. The chaplain ensures free exercise of religion and protects Veterans from proselytization and coercion from any source. The candidate uses a variety of intervention methods, including individual and group intervention, to address the emotional and spiritual needs of patients and families. The candidate coordinates religious services in a manner which respects the faith traditions and religious expression of patient. In addition, the candidate communicates effectively both in writing and verbally with persons of varied backgrounds. The chaplain documents chaplaincy care services. The chaplain provides referrals for continuity of spiritual care.

(c) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities.** In addition to meeting the basic experience requirements, the candidate must demonstrate the following KSAs:

- i. Knowledge of spiritual assessments to identify patient strengths and needs and documenting services provided.
- ii. Ability to use the information of the spiritual assessment to create care plans in all dimensions of pastoral care.

- iii. Ability to provide crisis intervention and stabilization.
- iv. Skill in healthcare team collaboration to create and update treatment plans to address spiritual issues.
- v. Ability to ensure free exercise of religion for patients and staff.
- vi. Knowledge of individual and group interventions to address spiritual and emotional needs of patients and families; providing referrals for continuity of spiritual care.
- vii. Skill in the coordination of religious services respecting the faith tradition of individual patients.
- viii. Ability to communicate verbally and in writing with persons of varied backgrounds.

(2) Chaplain, GS-11

- (a) **Experience.** At this level, the candidate must have one year of creditable experience equivalent to the GS-9 level that is directly related to the position to be filled.
- (b) **Assignment.** At the GS-11 journey level, the chaplain independently serves as a primary resource and point of contact for the spiritual needs of patients, caregivers and staff. The chaplain provides advance care planning education, information, and counsel for patients and their families. The chaplain provides guidance and/or support for patients to express values through processes such as life review, oral history, and end of life preparation and documentation. The chaplain develops pastoral care programs that are measurable, outcome-driven, and evidence-based in coordination with the department guidelines. The chaplain provides pastoral counseling on medical and ethical matters, including but not limited to, moral injury, problems of conscience, family or marital difficulties, justice or confinement matters, terminal diagnoses, or crisis. The chaplain also supports the development of staff resiliency by providing emotional and spiritual support and compassionate presence and develops programs for staff development and wellness. The chaplain provides education and equips other healthcare staff and trainees to screen for spiritual and religious needs, and the importance of appropriate referrals to chaplains for complex spiritual distress. At this level, the chaplain coordinates with community organizations to ensure the provision of comprehensive spiritual care, and engaging community resources to meet religious needs of patients that cannot be met by chaplain staff.
- (c) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills and Abilities.** In addition to meeting the KSAs for the GS-9 grade level, the candidate must meet the experience above and demonstrate the following KSAs:
 - i. Knowledge of advance care planning to educate, inform, and counsel patients and families.
 - ii. Skill in guiding patients in verbalizing and expressing values through life review,

oral history, and end of life preparation and documentation.

- iii. Ability to develop pastoral care programs that are measurable, outcome-driven and evidenced based within the department guidelines.
- iv. Skill in counseling on medical and ethical issues, terminal diagnoses or crises, moral injury, problems of conscience, family or marital difficulties and justice or confinement matters.
- v. Ability to support the development of staff resiliency and develop programs for staff development and wellness by providing spiritual and emotional support.
- vi. Ability to educate and equip healthcare staff and trainees screening for spiritual and religious needs of patients and the importance of appropriate referrals to chaplains for complex spiritual distress.
- vii. Knowledge of community needs to coordinate with community organizations to provide comprehensive spiritual care, utilizing outside community resources to meet the religious needs of patients that cannot be met by chaplain staff.

(3) Chaplain, GS-12

- (a) **Experience.** The candidate must have one year of creditable experience equivalent to the journey level (GS-11) that is directly related to the position to be filled.
- (b) **Specialty Certification.** Specialty certification is demonstrated advanced practice and/or specialization in chaplaincy beyond the board certification and is required for the GS-12 grade level. Specialty certification from a professional chaplain certifying body that is directly related to the assignment is qualifying for a senior chaplain assignment.
- (c) **Assignment.** For all assignments above the journey level, the higher-level duties must consist of significant scope, complexity (difficulty), range of variety, and be performed by the incumbent at least 25% of the time. This assignment is a senior chaplain. Senior chaplain assignments may include serving at a facility in clinical settings where there is limited access to onsite supervision such as small healthcare systems, Community Based Outpatient Clinics, other Federal agencies or satellite outpatient clinics. Senior chaplains typically practice in a specialized program area, that may include intensive and extended pastoral counseling as an integral part of the treatment program, with patients facing complex moral, ethical, or spiritual problems. The senior chaplain may be assigned administrative responsibility to independently develop and implement programs and curriculum. They are accountable for clinical program effectiveness and modification of service patterns, which may include research and leadership of clinical teams. The senior chaplain works with full understanding of its relationship to the objectives of the institution, and to successfully integrate it with the work of the institutional staff, collaborates with and advises the other senior members of the treatment team in the provision of comprehensive healthcare services to Veterans, ensures equity of access, service,

and benefits to this population, ensures the care provided is of the highest quality. The senior chaplain provides leadership, direction, orientation, coaching, in-service training, staff development, and continuing education programs for assigned chaplain staff. This assignment is to be relatively few in number based on the size of the facility/service and applying sound position management. This assignment must represent substantial additional responsibility over and above that required at the full performance grade level and should not be used as the full performance level of this occupation.

- (d) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities.** In addition to the experience above, the candidate must demonstrate the following KSAs:
- i. Ability to apply relevant theories and methodologies to their ministry specialty.
 - ii. Ability to integrate specialized psychological and sociological theory with an advanced approach to spiritual care.
 - iii. Skill to seek out primary research and research literature that informs the ministry specialty and one's spiritual care practice.
 - iv. Skill in developing and implementing methods for measuring effectiveness of chaplain practice and services in the specialty area, utilizing outcome evaluations to improve treatment services and to design system changes.
 - v. Ability to mediate conflict, hold various emotions and diffuse moral distress among staff and complex crisis situations.
 - vi. Ability to provide specialized consultation, teaching and mentoring to colleagues and students on advanced spiritual care interventions in the service delivery area.
 - vii. Ability to apply advanced clinical knowledge to write policies, procedures and/or practice guidelines pertaining to the service delivery area.

(4) Chaplain (Clinical Pastoral Educator), GS-12

(a) **Experience.** At this level, the candidate must have one year of creditable experience equivalent to the next lower grade level that is directly related to the position to be filled.

(b) **Certification.**

- i. To provide educational supervision for CPE Level 1 and Level 2 students, the Chaplain CPE Educator must be a Certified Educator.
- ii. To provide educational supervision for students seeking to become Certified Educators, the Chaplain CPE Educator must be a CPE national faculty from an organization recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

- (c) **Assignments.** For all assignments above the journey level, the higher-level duties must consist of significant scope, complexity (difficulty), range of variety and be performed by the incumbent at least 25% of the time. The certified educator manages the daily operations of the CPE center, develops and implements program policies and procedures and serves as certified educators of record for all CPE students. They are responsible for administrative oversight and programmatic resources and monitoring of educational outcomes. They are responsible for all educator evaluations, student records, center portfolio and CPE accreditation requirements, which may include off-site CPE satellites and placement contracts. The certified educator seeks approval for allied health trainee positions through the Office of Academic Affiliations (OAA). They recruit, interview and select students, and ensure all documentation is completed for compliance. They develop educational curricula that are measurable, outcome-oriented and evidence-based and designed to meet board certification competencies. They develop relationships with key staff related to the CPE program, e.g., clinical preceptors, Advisory Group members, OAA staff.
- (d) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills and Abilities.** In addition to the experience or education above, the candidate must demonstrate the following KSAs:
- i. Ability to independently educate all levels of CPE students and plan, organize, and implement all levels of the CPE program.
 - ii. Skill in adhering to all accreditation standards, processes and practices including, but not limited to, timely and professional submission of all required program reports, center portfolio, fees and dues.
 - iii. Skill in written and verbal communication that are articulate, professional and cohesive.
 - iv. Ability to recruit, interview and select students for the CPE program.
 - v. Knowledge of professional ethics for certified educators and history of CPE.
 - vi. Ability to apply theoretical understanding for and competence in administering and conducting all levels of CPE programs.
 - vii. Knowledge of emerging trends and research in the area of pastoral education.
 - viii. Knowledge of diverse conceptual frameworks for developing educational curriculum.

(5) Supervisory Chaplain, GS-12

- (a) **Experience.** At this level, the candidate must possess one year of creditable experience equivalent to the GS-11 grade level that is directly related to the position to be filled.

(b) **Assignment.** For all assignments above the full performance level, the higher-level duties must consist of significant scope, complexity (difficulty) and variety and be performed by the incumbent at least 25% of the time. The supervisory chaplain at this level typically has responsibility for management of a small to moderately complex chaplain service. The supervisory chaplain is responsible for the professional practice of all facility chaplains and provision of chaplaincy services and programming. The supervisory chaplain provides supervision to professional and non-professional staff at the GS-12 or below. The supervisory chaplain has full responsibility for managing and supervising all aspects of chaplaincy service operations including clinical practice, program management, education, human resource management and supervision of the service. The supervisory chaplain is responsible for oversight and management of all religious and spiritual care and provides counsel to facility leadership concerning religious expression. The supervisory chaplain may supervise nonsupervisory and supervisory personnel and is responsible for chaplaincy practice including all administrative functions of the department, such as budget management, development of policy and clinical practice standards, development and oversight of service programming, establishing and ensuring performance and productivity metrics and outcomes, planning and organizational development, ensuring compliance with agency and accreditation requirements and setting the strategic direction of the service. The supervisory chaplain ensures the right of free exercise of religion and protects against proselytizing. The supervisory chaplain maintains chapel space and oversees distribution of space, inventory, and resources needed for the provision of spiritual care, education, and programming. The supervisory chaplain assesses spiritual and religious needs of the organization and ensures the religious needs of patients are met through partnerships with community religious leaders and organizations, and community, state and Federal agencies.

- (c) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills and Abilities.** In addition to the experience or education above, the candidate must demonstrate the following KSAs:
- i. Knowledge of administrative, personnel, resource management and strategic planning for chaplaincy and chaplain pastoral education programs.
 - ii. Ability to provide the full range of supervisory duties which include responsibility for assignment of work, performance evaluations, selection of staff and recommendation of awards, advancements and disciplinary actions.
 - iii. Skill in interpersonal relationships including conflict resolution and ability to work collaboratively with managers from other departments.
 - iv. Ability to develop local policy, productivity and clinical practice standards.
 - v. Ability to align local chaplaincy services and programming with the strategic goals and objectives of all levels of the agency, department or organization.

- vi. Ability to ensure compliance with chaplaincy practice, policy and accreditation standards across the continuum of health care.
- vii. Skill in providing consultation to facility leadership, managers and other staff on all religious expression and spiritual care.

(6) Supervisory Chaplain, GS-13

- (a) **Experience.** At this level, the candidate must possess one year of creditable experience equivalent to the GS-12 grade level that is directly related to the position to be filled.
- (b) **Assignment.** For all assignments above the journey level, the higher-level duties must consist of significant scope, complexity (difficulty), range of variety and be performed by the incumbent at least 25% of the time. The supervisory chaplain is responsible for oversight and management of all religious and spiritual care and provides counsel to facility leadership concerning religious expression. The supervisory chaplain supervises professional and non-professional nonsupervisory and supervisory staff at the GS-12 grade level or below and is responsible for chaplaincy practice including all administrative functions of the department, such as budget management, development of policy and clinical practice standards, development and oversight of service programming, establishing and ensuring performance and productivity metrics and outcomes, planning and organizational development, ensuring compliance with agency and accreditation requirements and setting the strategic direction of the service. The supervisory chaplain ensures the right of free exercise of religion and protects against proselytizing. The supervisory chaplain maintains chapel space and oversees distribution of space, inventory and resources needed for the provision of spiritual care, education and programming. The supervisory chaplain assesses spiritual and religious needs of the organization and ensures the religious needs of patients are met through partnerships with community religious leaders and organizations, and community, state and Federal agencies.
- (c) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills and Abilities.** In addition to the experience or education above, the candidate must demonstrate the following KSAs:
 - i. Knowledge of administrative, personnel, and resource management and strategic planning for chaplaincy and chaplain pastoral education programs.
 - ii. Ability to provide the full range of supervisory duties, which include responsibility for assignment of work, performance evaluations, selection of staff and recommendation of awards, advancements and disciplinary actions.
 - iii. Skill in interpersonal relationships, including conflict resolution and ability to work collaboratively with managers from other departments.

- iv. Ability to develop local policy, productivity and clinical practice standards.
- v. Ability to align chaplaincy services and programming with the strategic goals and objectives of the facility, Veterans Integrated Service Network and VHA.
- vi. Ability to ensure compliance with chaplaincy practice, policy and accreditation standards across the continuum of health care.
- vii. Skill in providing consultation to facility leadership, managers and other staff on all religious expression and spiritual care.

(7) Chaplain (National Program Coordinator), GS-13

- (a) **Experience.** At this level, the candidate must possess one year of creditable experience equivalent to the GS-12 grade level that is directly related to the position to be filled.
- (b) **Assignment.** For all assignments above the journey level, the higher-level duties must consist of significant scope, complexity (difficulty), range of variety and be performed by the incumbent at least 25% of the time. The chaplain national program coordinator positions are in the National Chaplain Service and provide transitional spiritual care services and programming for beneficiaries transitioning between the Department of Defense (DOD) and the Department of Veterans Affairs and those transitioning between any of the three Veterans Administrations. The chaplain provides transitional care for Service members and their families transitioning from active duty into the VHA. The chaplain works closely with the VA/DOD Liaison Program to ensure seamless transition of care from military service to enrollment and care linkage in the VHA. The chaplain provides bereavement care for the families of Veterans who die inside or outside of VHA facilities and who seek beneficiary assistance with the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) and/or interment through the National Cemetery Administration (NCA). The chaplain provides site and multi-state geographical care. Chaplains may provide intensive and extended pastoral counseling during transitional periods, liaisons with facility chaplain staff to provide seamless pastoral care services with facility chaplain departments, ensures continuity and optimization of spiritual care services and programming and avoids duplication of facility chaplaincy care services or programming. The chaplain may be assigned administrative responsibility to independently develop and implement programs and curriculum. They are accountable for clinical program effectiveness and modification of service patterns. Assignments may include DOD facilities, VHA facilities and NCA facilities. The chaplain works with full understanding of the relationship to the objectives of the institution, and successfully integrates with the work of the institutional staff, collaborates with and advises members of the institution in the provision of comprehensive healthcare services to Veterans, ensures equity of access, service and benefits to Veteran and Veteran beneficiaries and ensures the care provided is of the highest quality.

- (c) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills and Abilities.** In addition to the experience above, the candidate must demonstrate the following KSAs:
- i. Ability to effectively liaison and build relationships with transitioning Service members or family members.
 - ii. Skill in assessing need for basic and complex spiritual care or bereavement care across multiple programmatic venues.
 - iii. Knowledge of chaplain practice, policy, standards and strategic planning in relationship to a large multi-layered, multi-organizational program (e.g., United States Military Bases or National Cemeteries).
 - iv. Skill in maintaining relationships with appropriate offices and individuals to keep them abreast of significant accomplishments, program changes, and other substantive events.
 - v. Ability to develop and sustain strategic partnerships with key internal and external VA stakeholders and community partners on a national level.

(8) Chaplain (National Program Manager), GS-14

- (a) **Experience.** At this level, the candidate must possess one year of creditable experience equivalent to the GS-13 grade level that is directly related to the position to be filled.
- (b) **Assignment.** For all assignments above the journey level, the higher-level duties must consist of significant scope, complexity (difficulty), range of variety and be performed by the incumbent at least 25% of the time. The chaplain (national program manager) serves as a program manager for the National Chaplain Service for either the Transitional Care; Clinical Care; or Bereavement/Family Care program at the national level. The chaplain program manager provides executive management leadership for policy, planning, programming, education and evaluation related to program assigned. The program manager has national oversight of programming implementation and data collection; and administration, communication, public relations, and outreach concerning the program. The chaplain (national program manager) has personnel management responsibilities for professional and non-professional staff. The chaplain (national program manager) provides organizational direction and serves as the principle interagency liaison with other Federal departments.
- (c) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills and Abilities.** In addition to the experience above, the candidate must demonstrate the following KSAs:
- i. Ability to serve as facilitator, negotiator, primary point of contact, head writer and principal decision-maker for a multi-layered, multi-organizational chaplain health care, transitional care or bereavement/family care program.

- ii. Ability to provide day-to-day technical guidance to chaplain staff across the continuum of a large geographically dispersed organization, monitor performance, review and approve staffing models, review and approve reports and deliverables, recommends required adjustments to existing staff models and debrief both positive and negative field action proposal merits/deficiencies.
- iii. Ability to collaborate with internal and external partners (such as, VHA, VBA, NCA, DOD, and Faith Group Endorsers) to further program goals and enhance Veteran centered care.
- iv. Skill in supporting large-scale public relations events as required, which may attract the attention of U.S. and world press resulting in multimedia reports.
- v. Ability to conduct onsite assessments of progress towards meeting program goals; to modify objectives; and keep the agency, department or organization's leadership informed of fluctuations in performance trends.
- vi. Skill in developing reports, policies, procedures and/or practice guidelines for the program and in participating in national program development.
- vii. Ability to provide technical management support for complex, long-range, multi-year strategic goals for a very large, complex, geographically dispersed national program.

7. DEVIATIONS.

- a. The approving official may, under unusual circumstances, approve reasonable deviations to the grade determination requirements for chaplains in VHA whose composite record of accomplishments, performance and qualifications, as well as current assignments, warrants such action based on demonstrated competence to meet the requirements of the proposed grade.
- b. The placement of individuals in grade levels not described in this standard must be approved by the Under Secretary for Health, or designee, in VHA Central Office.
- c. Under no circumstances other than the exception at the entry level, will the certification, endorsement or educational requirements as a chaplain be waived.

RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: Human Resources and Administration/Operations, Security and Preparedness (HRA/OSP) (006), Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer (OCHCO) (05), Recruitment and Placement Policy Service (059)