



INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP OF CHAPLAINS, INC

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STANDARD OF CONDUCT AND CODE OF ETHICS

Preamble

The International Fellowship of Chaplains, Inc. (IFOC) is committed to doctrines and theologies of both the Old and New Testaments as the definitive and authoritative rule of faith and practice. The chaplains of the IFOC will exemplify both the faith and conduct of a pastoral counselor whose counseling basis is guided by the standards of the Holy Scripture.

The following statements of faith contain essential beliefs necessary for *membership* as a chaplain with the International Fellowship of Chaplains, Inc.

Therefore, we affirm:

- That the Bible is the inspired, the only infallible and authoritative Word of God;
- That there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Ghost;
- The deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, His virgin birth, His sinless life, His miracles, His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, His bodily resurrection, His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and His personal return in power and glory;
- That for the salvation of lost and sinful man, regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential;
- That a person becomes justified by grace through faith and forgiveness in the Lord Jesus Christ;
- That present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life;
- The spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ and His church;
- The lives of our chaplains will exemplify the standards set forth in the Holy Scripture as defined and suggested by (1) the persons ecclesiastical converting doctrines and theologies, and (2) when serving at another agency, institution or Christian institution, the IFOC chaplain will become subject to their standards and rules within and subject to their ecclesiastical doctrines and theologies.

The IFOC chaplain performs his/her service as part of the ministry of Christ's church, embracing thereby the values of Christianity. He/she upholds and supports the common bond of fellowship, faith and unity as prescribed in the Scripture and seeks to establish a relationship between the counselee and a loving God within the framework of the Body of Christ. Certification by the IFOC is contingent upon continued good standing in the church subscribing to the doctrines contained in the above statement of faith.

Tenet Prologue

As members of the International Fellowship of Chaplains, Inc., we are committed to the various theologies, traditions and values of our faith communities and to the dignity and worth of each individual. We are dedicated to advancing the welfare of those who seek our help and assistance and to the maintenance of high

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standards of professional conduct and competence. We are accountable for our ministry whatever its environment. This accountability is expressed in relationships, to clients, colleagues, students, our faith communities, and through the acceptance and practice of the principles and procedures of this Code of Ethics. In order to uphold our standards, as members of the IFOC, we covenant to accept the following foundational premises:

- a) To maintain responsible association with the faith group in which we have ecclesiastical standing.
- b) To avoid discriminating against individuals we minister to on the basis of race, color, gender, sex, sexual orientation, religion, or national origin.
- c) To manage our personal lives in a healthful fashion and to seek appropriate assistance for our own personal problems or conflicts.
- d) To establish and maintain appropriate professional relationship boundaries.

Tenet II – Professional Practices

In all professional matters, members of the IFOC will maintain a standard of conduct that protects the public and advances chaplaincy in regards to pastoral counseling.

- a) We use our knowledge and professional relationships for the benefit of the people we serve and not to secure unfair personal advantage.
- b) We clearly represent our level of skill and training, and limit our pastoral counseling to that level.
- c) We are prepared to render services to individuals and communities in crisis without regard to financial remuneration when necessary.
- d) We neither receive nor pay a commission for pastoral counseling client referrals.
- e) We conduct our individual practice, regional and Corporate fiscal affairs with due regard to recognized business and accounting procedures.
- f) Membership and client names and records shall be held in strictest confidence.
- g) We shall be careful to represent facts truthfully to all interested parties, referral sources, and third parties regarding credentials and pastoral services rendered. We shall correct any misrepresentation of our professional qualifications or affiliations.
- h) We do not malign colleagues or other professionals.

Tenet III – Client Relationships

It is the responsibility of members of the IFOC to maintain relationships with those we serve on a professional basis.

- a) We do not abandon or neglect the individuals we serve. If we are unable, or unwilling for appropriate reasons, to provide help or continue a professional relationship, every reasonable effort shall be made to refer the individual to an appropriate resource.
- b) We make only realistic statements regarding the pastoral counseling process and its outcome.
- c) We show sensitive regard for the moral, social, and religious standards of clients and communities. We avoid imposing our beliefs on others, although we may express them when appropriate in the pastoral counseling process.

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- d) We do not engage in harassment, abusive words or actions, and exploitative coercion of clients or former clients.
- e) All forms of sexual behavior or harassment with those we serve are unethical, even when a client invites or consents to such behavior or involvement. Sexual behavior is defined as, but not limited to, all forms of overt and covert seductive speech, gestures, or behavior.

The IFOC chaplains' lives should represent the above tenets.

Tenet IV – Confidentiality

As members of the IFOC, we respect the integrity and protect the welfare of all persons with whom we are working and have an obligation to safeguard information about them that has been obtained in the course of membership and the pastoral counseling process.

- a) All records kept on a client and membership are stored and/or disposed of in a manner that assures security and confidentiality.
- b) We treat all communications from clients with professional confidence.
- c) Except in those situations where the identity of the client is necessary to the understanding of the case, we use only the first names of our clients. It is our responsibility to convey the importance of confidentiality, this is particularly important when the supervision is shared by other professionals, as in a supervisory group.
- d) We do not disclose client confidence to anyone, except as mandated by law; to prevent a clear and immediate danger to someone; in the course of a civil, criminal or disciplinary action arising from the counseling where the pastoral counselor is a defendant; for purposes of supervision or consultation; or by previously obtained written permission. In cases involving more than one person (as client), written permission must be obtained from all legally accountable persons who have been present during the counseling before any disclosure can be made.
- e) No audio and/or video tape recording or permitting third party observation of sessions will be allowed.
- f) We do not use these standards of confidentiality to avoid intervention when it is necessary, e.g., when there is evidence of abuse of minors, the elderly, the disabled, and the physically or mentally incompetent, murder, threat of murder, or suicide, etc.