SUBJECT: Administrative Separation of Chaplains Upon Loss of Professional Qualifications

References:  
(a) Title 10, United States Code  

1. PURPOSE

This Directive implements Section 643 of reference (a) and establishes the criteria and procedures for the administrative separation, upon loss of professional qualifications, of chaplains on the active duty lists of the Military Services.

2. APPLICABILITY

The provisions of this Directive apply to the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Military Departments and cover chaplains on the active duty lists of the Military Services. The term "Military Service," as used herein, refers to the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, and the Marine Corps.

3. DEFINITIONS

3.1. Active Duty List. A single list for the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, or the Marine Corps that is required to be maintained under Section 620 of reference (a) and that contains the names of all officers of that Military Service (other than the officers described in Section 641 of reference (a)) who are serving on active duty.

3.2. Separation. Discharge or retirement.
3.3. **Chaplain.** A commissioned officer of the Chaplain Corps of the Army, a commissioned officer of the Chaplain Corps of the Navy, or a commissioned officer in the Air Force designated for duty as a chaplain.

3.4. **Counsel.** A lawyer qualified under Section 827 (Article 27(b)(1) of the Uniform Code of Military Justice) (reference (a)) or a civilian lawyer retained at the commissioned officer's expense.

4. **POLICY**

An applicant for the chaplaincy must receive endorsement from an ecclesiastical endorsing agency in accordance with reference (b) as a prerequisite to appointment or designation as a chaplain. An endorsement by an ecclesiastical endorsing agency is an essential element of a chaplain's professional qualifications. A chaplain whose endorsement is withdrawn must be processed under this Directive.

5. **RESPONSIBILITIES**

5.1. The **Assistant Secretary of Defense (Manpower, Reserve Affairs, and Logistics)** shall modify or supplement this Directive, as appropriate.

5.2. The **Secretaries of the Military Departments** shall follow the policy and procedures in this Directive.
6. EFFECTIVE DATE AND IMPLEMENTATION

This Directive is effective September 15, 1981. Forward two copies of implementing documents to the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Manpower, Reserve Affairs, and Logistics) within 120 days.

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PROCEDURES

E1.1. BASIS FOR INITIATION OF ACTION

Processing under this Directive shall be initiated when an ecclesiastical endorsing agency withdraws its endorsement of officer's continuation on active duty as a chaplain. Nothing in this Directive precludes separation under other regulations of the Military Department concerned when separation for reasons other than loss of ecclesiastical endorsement is appropriate.

E1.2. NOTICE

When processing under this Directive is initiated, the chaplain shall be notified in writing that:

   E1.2.1. The chaplain has a right to consult with military counsel or with civilian counsel obtained at the chaplain's own expense, and to submit statements in response to the notice.

   E1.2.2. The ecclesiastical endorsing agency has withdrawn the chaplain's endorsement.

   E1.2.3. Under conditions established by the Secretary of the Military Department concerned, the chaplain may:

       E1.2.3.1. Seek another ecclesiastical endorsement;

       E1.2.3.2. Apply for non-chaplain duties with the understanding that the officer shall be discharged voluntarily as a chaplain on one day and appointed for non-chaplain duties on the next day;

       E1.2.3.3. Apply for voluntary retirement; or

       E1.2.3.4. Tender a voluntary resignation.

   E1.2.4. If a request is not submitted under paragraph E1.2.3., above, or if such a request is disapproved, the chaplain shall be separated with an honorable discharge.
E1.3. **RESPONSE**

The chaplain shall be provided a reasonable period of time, but not less than 2-working days, to respond to the notice. If the chaplain states that action under paragraph E1.2.3., above, will be requested, the chaplain shall be notified in writing of the date and manner by which such request must be submitted. If the chaplain does not respond to the notice, separation processing shall be completed under section E1.4., below.

E1.4. **FINAL DETERMINATION**

The Secretary of the Military Department concerned may:

- E1.4.1. Approve a new ecclesiastical endorsement submitted in accordance with DoD Directive 1304.19 (reference (b));

- E1.4.2. Approve a voluntary resignation, if tendered, and direct an honorable discharge;

- E1.4.3. Approve voluntary retirement, if requested;

- E1.4.4. Approve a request for assignment to nonchaplain duties through voluntary resignation and appointment in accordance with regulations implementing 10 U.S.C. 533(a)(1), 3353(a)(1), 5600(a)(1), or 8353(a)(1) (reference (a)); or

- E1.4.5. Direct an honorable discharge if the actions in paragraphs E1.4.1., E1.4.2., E1.4.3., or E1.4.4., above, are not requested or approved.