

STAFFING

1. **REASON FOR ISSUE:** To revise the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) qualification standard for Chaplain, 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 qualification standard revises the Chaplain, occupation under VA's title 38 hybrid excepted service employment system according to the authority established under P.L. 111-163, Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010. VA Secretary has authority under 38 U.S.C. § 7402 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. The revised standard is effective on the date of this publication. This qualification standard is maintained on the [Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer website](#) and [Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer \(OCHCO\) \(va.gov\) website](#). Significant changes include:
 - a. Revises the Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) definition and adds a definition for Clinical Pastoral Educator.
 - b. Removes the CPE requirement.
 - c. Revises board certification requirement.
 - d. Revises the exception for non-board-certified Chaplains.
 - e. Revises the Clinical Pastoral Educator certification.
3. **RESPONSIBLE OFFICE:** Office of 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).
4. **RELATED DIRECTIVES:** [VA Directive 5005, Staffing, April 15, 2002.](#)
5. **RELATED HANDBOOK:** [VA Handbook 5005, Staffing, Appendix G17.](#)
6. **RESCISSION:** Former VA Handbook 5005/135, Appendix G67, dated September 24, 2020.

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

/s/

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Human Resources and Administration/
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**[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 health care 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 §§ 7405 and 7406 appointments.](#)
3. **DEFINITIONS.**
 - a. **Appointing Official.** The Human Resources (HR) Officer is delegated appointing authority, to process and authenticate notifications of personnel actions, and effect management-approved employment actions on behalf of officials, employees and facilities for which service is provided.
 - b. **Approving Official.** The Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) Director, facility Director, or Under Secretary for Health or designee (for VHA central office appointments) is the approving official and will determine whether to approve or disapprove the appointment of employees in hybrid occupations.
 - c. **Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE).** Clinical Pastoral Education must be recognized by a Board of Chaplaincy Certification, Inc. (BCCI) ® agency that requires completion of 4 units of CPE.
 - d. **CPE Educator.** CPE Educators must be certified by an agency whose CPE units of training are recognized by the BCCI ® or a U.S. certifying body that

has a reciprocity agreement with BCCI ®. CPE Educators must be certified by the same accrediting body as the CPE training program where the position is being filled for the CPE training program to maintain accreditation.

e. Experience.

- (1) **Creditable Experience.** To be creditable, the experience must have required the use of knowledge, skills, and abilities associated with the scope of Chaplain practice. Experience satisfying this requirement may be paid or non-paid employment as a Chaplain in a health care setting or completion of CPE beyond the basic qualification requirements. This would be credited on a month for month basis.
- (2) **Part-Time Experience.** Part-time experience is creditable according to its relationship to a full-time workweek. For example, an individual employed 20 hours per week, or on a half time basis, would receive one full-time work week of credit for each 2 weeks of service.
- (3) **Quality of Experience.** Qualifying experience must be at a level comparable to Chaplain experience at the next lower grade level of the position being filled. For all assignments above the full performance level (FPL), the higher-level duties must consist of significant scope, administrative independence, complexity, and range of variety as described in this standard at the specified grade level and be performed by the incumbent at least 25% of the time.

f. Journey Level. The FPL for this qualification standard is the GS-11 grade level.

4. BASIC REQUIREMENTS. To qualify for appointment to this position, all applicants must possess the following:

- a. **Citizenship.** Be a citizen of the United States (U.S.). Non-citizens may be appointed when it is not possible to recruit qualified citizens according to 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 d) is acceptable.

- c. **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: [National VA Chaplain Service SharePoint](#).

d. **Board Certification.**

- (1) **Certification.** Applicants must be a Board-Certified Chaplain certified by BCCI ® or a U.S. certifying body that has a reciprocity agreement with BCCI ®. Board Certification that requires 4 units of CPE is qualifying. The National Chaplain Service maintains a list of approved certifications found on the [National VA Chaplain Service SharePoint](#).

Note: Provisional or Associate or other status as a candidate for board certification does not meet the board certification requirement for the FPL GS-11 or above.

(2) **Exception for Non-Board-Certified Chaplains.**

- (a) Non-Board-Certified applicants who otherwise meet the eligibility requirements, may be given a temporary appointment as a Chaplain under the authority of 38 U.S.C. § 7405(c)(2) not to exceed 2 years.
- (b) Non-Board-Certified Chaplains must provide proof of completion of 4 units of CPE as required by an approved board certifying body.
- (c) Non-Board-Certified individuals may only provide care under the supervision of a certified Chaplain at or above the FPL.
- (d) Non-Board-Certified individuals may only be appointed at the entry level and may not be promoted/converted until certification is obtained. Temporary appointments of non-board-certified Chaplains may not be extended beyond 2 years or be converted to a new temporary appointment.

- (3) **Failure to Obtain Board Certification.** In all cases, Chaplains must actively work to meet requirements for board certification starting from the date of their placement into the occupation. At the time of appointment, the HR Office staff in collaboration with the supervisor will provide the employee with the written requirements for board certification, including the time by which the board certification must be obtained and the consequences for not becoming board certified by the deadline. Failure to obtain board certification during this time may result in separation from employment.
 - (4) **Loss of Credential.** Management officials, in collaboration with HR Office staff must immediately relieve employees who fail to maintain any of the required certifications (board certification, ecclesiastical endorsement, or when applicable a speciality certification) of the duties and responsibilities associated with this occupation which may also result in separation from employment.
 - (5) HR Office staff must appoint Chaplains according to the provisions in VA Handbook, Part II, Chapter 3, Section B, paragraph 16, who have, or ever had, their Chaplain board certification, ecclesiastical endorsement, or specialty certification revoked, suspended, denied, restricted, limited, or issued/placed in a probationary status.
- e. **Grandfathering Provision.** Employees in VHA in this occupation, under a permanent, appropriate, and legal placement on the effective date of the qualification standard, are considered to have met all qualification requirements for the grade and/or assignment held, including positive education and certification, where applicable. For employees who do not meet all the basic or assignment-specific requirements in this standard, but met the qualifications applicable to the position at the time they were appointed, the following provisions apply:
- (1) Employees may be reassigned, promoted up to and including the FPL, or be changed to a lower grade within the occupation, but may not be promoted beyond the journey level or be newly placed in supervisory or managerial positions.
 - (2) If an assignment above the FPL level requires an additional certification over and above the basic requirements, employees must meet the assignment-specific requirement before they can be reassigned or promoted.
 - (3) Employees who are 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.

- (4) Employees retained in this occupation under this provision who subsequently leave the occupation lose protected status and must meet the full VA qualification standard requirements in effect at the time of re-entry to the occupation.
- (5) Employees initially grandfathered into this occupation, who subsequently obtain additional certification(s) that meets all the basic or assignment-specific qualification requirements of this standard must maintain the required credential(s) as a condition of employment in the occupation.

NOTE: This provision is not intended to regularize appointments or placements.

- f. **Foreign Education.** To be creditable, education completed outside the U.S. must be submitted to a current affiliate agency of the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES) at <https://www.naces.org/members> and be deemed at least equivalent to that gained in a conventional U.S. program.
 - g. **Physical Requirements.** See [VA Directive and Handbook 5019, Employee Occupational Health Service](#) for requirements.
 - h. **English Language Proficiency.** Candidates must be proficient in spoken and written English in accordance with 38 U.S.C. § 7403(f).
- 5. OFFICIAL POSITION TITLES.** All official documents relating to a position (for example, functional statements and personnel actions) must use the approved official title and grade level as described below. For recruitment purposes, HR Offices will use the title listed below in the job opportunity announcement. See VA Handbook 5003, Part I for information on the use of official titles and organizational titles.
- a. Chaplain
 - b. Supervisory Chaplain
 - c. Chaplain (CPE Educator)
 - d. Chaplain (National Program Coordinator)
 - e. Chaplain (National Program Manager)
- 6. GRADE DETERMINATIONS.** In addition to the basic requirements for employment, candidates must meet the following grade determining criteria for placement at grade levels specified.
- a. **Chaplain, GS-09.**

- (1) **Experience.** None beyond the basic requirements.
- (2) **Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSAs).** In addition to the experience above, the candidate must demonstrate the following KSAs:
 - (a) Knowledge of spiritual assessments to identify patient strengths and needs and documenting services provided.
 - (b) Ability to use the information of the spiritual assessment to create care plans in all dimensions of pastoral care.
 - (c) Ability to provide crisis intervention and stabilization.
 - (d) Skill in health care team collaboration to create and update treatment plans to address spiritual issues.
 - (e) Ability to ensure free exercise of religion for patients and staff.
 - (f) Knowledge of individual and group interventions to address spiritual and emotional needs of patients and families; providing referrals for continuity of spiritual care.
 - (g) Skill in the coordination of religious services respecting the faith tradition of individual patients.
 - (h) Ability to communicate verbally and in writing with persons of varied backgrounds.
- (3) **Assignment.** Employees at this grade level serve in an entry level position. It is expected that they receive guidance from more experienced staff members and require daily direct supervision. 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 health care 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 all individuals. The chaplain documents

chaplaincy care services. The chaplain provides referrals for continuity of spiritual care.

b. Chaplain, GS-11.

- (1) **Experience.** One year of creditable experience equivalent to the next lower grade.
- (2) **Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSAs).** In addition to meeting to the experience above, the candidate must demonstrate the following KSAs:
 - (a) Knowledge of advance care planning to educate, inform, and counsel patients and families.
 - (b) Skill in guiding patients in verbalizing and expressing values through life review, oral history, and end of life preparation and documentation.
 - (c) Ability to develop pastoral care programs that are measurable, outcome-driven and evidenced based within the department guidelines.
 - (d) 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.
 - (e) Ability to support the development of staff resiliency and develop programs for staff development and wellness by providing spiritual and emotional support.
 - (f) Ability to educate and equip health care staff and trainees screening for spiritual and religious needs of patients and the importance of appropriate referrals to chaplains for complex spiritual distress.
 - (g) 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) **Assignment.** Employees at this grade level serve as an FPL Chaplain. 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 health care 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. Chaplain, GS-12.

- (1) **Experience.** One year of creditable experience equivalent to the next lower grade.
- (2) **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.
- (3) **Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSAs).** In addition to the experience above, the candidate must demonstrate the following KSAs:
 - (a) Ability to apply relevant theories and methodologies to their ministry specialty.
 - (b) Ability to integrate specialized psychological and sociological theory with an advanced approach to spiritual care.
 - (c) Skill to seek out primary research and research literature that informs the ministry specialty and one's spiritual care practice.
 - (d) 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.
 - (e) Ability to mediate conflict, hold various emotions and diffuse moral distress among staff and complex crisis situations.
 - (f) Ability to provide specialized consultation, teaching and mentoring to colleagues and students on advanced spiritual care interventions in the service delivery area.

- (g) Ability to apply advanced clinical knowledge to write policies, procedures and/or practice guidelines pertaining to the service delivery area.
- (4) **Assignment.** For all assignments above the FPL, the higher-level duties must be of significant scope, administrative independence, complexity, and range of variety as described in this standard at the specified grade level 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 health care 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 health care 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 FPL of this occupation.

d. Chaplain (Clinical Pastoral Educator), GS-12.

- (1) **Experience.** One year of creditable experience equivalent to the next lower grade.
- (2) **Certification.** CPE Educators must be certified by an agency whose CPE units of training are recognized by the BCCI ® or a U.S. certifying body that has a reciprocity agreement with BCCI ®. CPE Educators must be certified by the same accrediting body as the CPE training program where the position is being filled for the CPE training program to maintain accreditation. (Refer to paragraph 3. Definitions).

- (3) **Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSAs).** In addition to the experience above, the candidate must demonstrate the following KSAs:
- (a) Ability to independently educate all levels of CPE students and plan, organize, and implement all levels of the CPE program.
 - (b) 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.
 - (c) Skill in written and verbal communication that are articulate, professional and cohesive.
 - (d) Ability to recruit, interview and select students for the CPE program.
 - (e) Knowledge of professional ethics for certified educators and history of CPE.
 - (f) Ability to apply theoretical understanding for and competence in administering and conducting all levels of CPE programs.
 - (g) Knowledge of emerging trends and research in the area of pastoral education.
 - (h) Knowledge of various conceptual frameworks for developing educational curriculum.
- (4) **Assignment.** For all assignments above the FPL, the higher-level duties must be of significant scope, administrative independence, complexity, and range of variety as described in this standard at the specified grade level 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.

e. Supervisory Chaplain, GS-12.

- (1) **Experience.** One year of creditable experience equivalent to the next lower grade.
- (2) **Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSAs).** In addition to meeting the experience above, the candidate must demonstrate the following KSAs:
 - (a) Knowledge of administrative, personnel, resource management and strategic planning for chaplaincy and chaplain pastoral education programs.
 - (b) 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.
 - (c) Skill in interpersonal relationships including conflict resolution and ability to work collaboratively with managers from other departments.
 - (d) Ability to develop local policy, productivity, and clinical practice standards.
 - (e) Ability to align local chaplaincy services and programming with the strategic goals and objectives of all levels of the agency, department, or organization.
 - (f) Ability to ensure compliance with chaplaincy practice, policy and accreditation standards across the continuum of health care.
 - (g) Skill in providing consultation to facility leadership, managers and other staff on all religious expression and spiritual care.
- (3) **Assignment.** For all supervisory assignments the Chaplain must spend 25% or more of their time providing administrative and technical supervision and perform major duties above those at the FPL that consist of significant scope, complexity, difficulty, and variety. 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.

f. Supervisory Chaplain, GS-13.

- (1) **Experience.** One year of creditable experience equivalent to the next lower grade.
- (2) **Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSAs).** In addition to the experience above, the candidate must demonstrate the following KSAs:
 - (a) Knowledge of administrative, personnel, and resource management and strategic planning for chaplaincy and chaplain pastoral education programs.
 - (b) 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.
 - (c) Skill in interpersonal relationships, including conflict resolution and ability to work collaboratively with managers from other departments.
 - (d) Ability to develop local policy, productivity and clinical practice standards.
 - (e) Ability to align chaplaincy services and programming with the strategic goals and objectives of the facility, VISN, and VHA.
 - (f) Ability to ensure compliance with chaplaincy practice, policy and accreditation standards across the continuum of health care.

- (g) Skill in providing consultation to facility leadership, managers and other staff on all religious expression and spiritual care.
- (3) **Assignment.** For all supervisory assignments the Chaplain must spend 25% or more of their time providing administrative and technical supervision and perform major duties above those at the FPL that consist of significant scope, complexity, difficulty, variety. 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.

g. Supervisory (National Program Coordinator), GS-13.

- (1) **Experience.** One year of creditable experience equivalent to the next lower grade.
- (2) **Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSAs).** In addition to the experience above, the candidate must demonstrate the following KSAs:
 - (a) Ability to effectively liaison and build relationships with transitioning Service members or family members.
 - (b) Skill in assessing need for basic and complex spiritual care or bereavement care across multiple programmatic venues.
 - (c) Knowledge of chaplain practice, policy, standards and strategic planning in relationship to a large multi-layered, multi-organizational program (e.g., U.S. Military Bases or National Cemeteries).

- (d) Skill in maintaining relationships with appropriate offices and individuals to keep them abreast of significant accomplishments, program changes, and other substantive events.
 - (e) Ability to develop and sustain strategic partnerships with key internal and external VA stakeholders and community partners on a national level.
- (3) **Assignment.** For all assignments above the FPL, the higher-level duties must be of significant scope, administrative independence, complexity, and range of variety as described in this standard at the specified grade level 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 VA 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 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 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 health care 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.

h. Chaplain (National Program Manager), GS-14.

- (1) **Experience.** One year of creditable experience equivalent to the next lower grade.

- (2) **Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSAs).** In addition to the experience above, the candidate must demonstrate the following KSAs:
- (a) 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.
 - (b) 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.
 - (c) 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.
 - (d) 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.
 - (e) 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.
 - (f) Skill in developing reports, policies, procedures and/or practice guidelines for the program and in participating in national program development.
 - (g) Ability to provide technical management support for complex, long-range, multi- year strategic goals for a very large, complex, geographically dispersed national program.
- (3) **Assignment.** For all assignments above the FPL, the higher-level duties must be of significant scope, administrative independence, complexity, and range of variety as described in this standard at the specified grade level 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.

7. DEVIATIONS.

- a. The establishment of a position and subsequent placement of an individual in a grade or assignment not described in the hybrid title 38 qualification standard must be approved by the Under Secretary for Health or designee prior to placement.
- b. Under no circumstance will educational requirements necessary to meet basic qualifications or assignment-specific educational requirements be waived.
- c. Under no circumstance will the credential (that is license, certification, and, or registration) requirements to meet basic qualifications or assignment specific credentials be waived unless an exception provision is provided in the qualification standard.
- d. In rare and unusual circumstance(s), the Under Secretary for Health or designee may approve requests for reasonable deviations to the grade determination requirements for an individual whose composite record of experience, accomplishments, performance, and qualifications warrant such action based on demonstrated competence to meet the requirements of the grade and, or assignment.]