MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION


1. References.
   b. DoD Instruction (DoDI) 1300.28 (In-Service Transition for Transgender Service Members), June 30, 2016.
   c. Army Regulation 165-1, Army Chaplain Corps Activities, 23 June 2015.
   e. HQDA EXORD 029-17 Implementation of Army Policy on Military Service of Transgender Soldiers (pending publication).

2. Scope. This document contains guidance and clarification regarding religious support expectations, advisement, and training requirements related to implementation of Army Policy on Military Service of Transgender Soldiers. This guidance applies to all Unit Ministry Team (UMT) members serving Soldiers, and remains in force until superseded or amended by subsequent guidance/instruction.

3. Purpose. Provide guidance to Chaplain Corps personnel across all Components regarding the expectations for training, religious support, and pastoral care to Soldiers during implementation of Army Policy on Military Service of Transgender Soldiers.

4. Bottom Line. Chaplain Corps personnel will continue to perform or provide religious support, advise commanders, and care for Soldiers, Families, and DA Civilians. DoD/DA policy regarding transgender service will impact Soldiers, units, and communities. Chaplains and chaplain assistants are key leaders within their units and communities who provide religious support, pastoral care, and advise commanders in support of mission readiness. If chaplains believe they are unable to perform a service or provide support based upon their religious beliefs or conditions of their endorsement, they will consult with their immediate supervisory chaplain and make referral to another chaplain to ensure Soldiers receive the necessary support.
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5. Training.
   
a. Training and educating the force on the new policy is necessary to sustain readiness. The Army's training plan will be a conditions-based chain teaching approach with three different tiers: Tier One – special staff and key personnel; Tier Two – commanders and leaders at all levels; and Tier Three – units and Soldiers. Tier One training will begin on 1 November 2016 and Tier Three will be completed NLT 1 July 2017.
   
b. Tier One training includes Chaplain Corps personnel, and will be accomplished via distribution of this Guidance Memorandum to all Corps personnel. This Guidance Memorandum highlights some key points in the new policy. Although not required, senior chaplains at installations, commands, and organizations are encouraged to host a training discussion with assigned UMTs on this Guidance Memorandum. Suspense for reporting completion of the distribution of this Guidance Memorandum is NLT 23 November 2016. Chaplain Corps personnel will receive the full training by participating in Tier Three unit training conducted by commanders.

6. End State. All Chaplain Corps personnel having read this Guidance Memorandum will have a general understanding of the Army Policy on Military Service of Transgender Soldiers in order to best care for those we serve. Chaplain Corps personnel continue to treat all Soldiers with dignity and respect.

7. Terminology. “Gender dysphoria” is a medical diagnosis that refers to distress that some transgender individuals experience due to a mismatch between their gender and their sex assigned at birth. “Transgender” individuals are those whose internal sense of being male or female (i.e., their gender) is different from their sex assigned at birth.

8. Process/Policy. The Army recognizes a Soldier’s gender by the Soldier’s gender marker in DEERS. The Soldier is responsible to meet all uniform, grooming, and APFT/PRT performance standards, and to use billeting, bathroom, and shower facilities associated with the Soldier’s gender marker in DEERS. Transgender Soldiers will be subject to the same standards as any other Soldier of the same gender. Gender transition begins when a Soldier receives a diagnosis from a military medical provider indicating that gender transition is medically necessary, and concludes when the Soldier’s gender marker in DEERS is changed to the preferred gender. Medically necessary care may include treatment involving any of the following four ascending categories: psychotherapy, real life experience (RLE), cross-sex hormone therapy, and/or surgical transition. Brigade-level commanders must approve the timeline for medical treatment before any transition treatment beyond psychotherapy may begin. Soldiers may request an exception to Army standards (i.e., exception to policy/ETP, e.g., uniform and/or grooming standards) with regard to their preferred gender prior to transition completion. ETP approval authority is Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) / ASA (M&RA).
9. Protection. DoD/DA policy on transgender service does not change any Chaplain Corps policy concerning Chaplain Corps personnel and their duties. DoD/DA policy on transgender service does not change Soldiers' right to free exercise of religion. In the context of their religious ministry, chaplains are not required to take actions inconsistent with their religious beliefs. Chaplain Corps personnel will continue to respect and serve with others who may hold different views and beliefs than their own, and will conduct themselves as required by law and regulation. Chaplains may discuss any concerns they have with their commander, supervisory chaplain, and/or denominational endorsing agent.

10. Guidance to the Chaplain Corps.

   a. As leaders and professionals, we treat all Soldiers with dignity and respect, while always maintaining adherence to military policy and standards of conduct.

   b. ISO readiness, assist commanders in creating/maintaining a command climate consistent with Army Values, while minimizing/mitigating disruption to the force IOT avoid any negative impact upon the military mission.

   c. Strive to help maintain good order and discipline at all times. Do not tolerate harassment, bullying, threats, or victimizing of any kind.

   d. Soldiers and leaders expect the following from chaplains: confidential counsel, advice, care, and faithful advocacy for the welfare of Soldiers, Families, and DA Civilians.

   e. Chaplains remain available to the Army Family at all times and in every condition of life. Chaplains serve as leaders who perform or provide key religious support and pastoral care to Soldiers, Families, and DA Civilians. Chaplains and chaplain assistants are vital members of the larger Army network of leaders who care for Soldiers, Families, and DA Civilians wherever and whenever necessary.

   f. Soldiers who face any major life change undergo many forms of stress and need support networks, coping skills, and in some cases, professional services to remain resilient. Be aware of and sensitive to the potential for heightened risk associated with the transgender demographic. Concerns may include anxiety, depression, and potential suicidal behavior (ideation/attempt/etc.). Some research data reflect a suicide rate multiple times higher than average.

   g. Commanders are responsible for mandatory training efforts across the force (Tier Three). Chaplain Corps personnel should not conduct unit training, but may support command-led training upon request.

   h. Tier One training of the Chaplain Corps directly supports the chaplain-commander relationship, and the task to advise the commander. This Guidance Memorandum will be
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distributed to all chaplains and chaplain assistants (all Compos). Chaplain Corps personnel will satisfy their Tier One training requirement when they read this CCH Guidance Memorandum. Suspense for reporting completion of this Tier One Chaplain Corps training is NLT 23 November 2016 to the point of contact (POC) identified in paragraph 12 of this Guidance Memorandum.

i. Only media engagements approved and coordinated through your respective command with Army Public Affairs and OCCH may be conducted.

11. Reporting. Upon completed dissemination of this Guidance Memorandum to all UMT personnel, reporting by each unit/organization will be through their respective higher major command to DACH-37TR / Training Management Officer. Refer to POC below.

12. Point of contact is the DACH-Operations Training Management Officer, Chaplain (LTC) Shmuel Felzenberg, (703) 695-0341, DSN: 312-225-0341; or via e-mail: shmuel.l.felzenberg.mil@mail.mil.

[Signature]
PAUL K. HURLEY
Chaplain (Major General) U.S. Army
Chief of Chaplains

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SUBJECT: Chief of Chaplains' Guidance on Religious Support, Advisement and Training
Related to Implementation of Army Policy on Military Service of Transgender Soldiers

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