

Operating Policies



70. OFFICER PERSONNEL - MISCELLANEOUS

7007 - Officer Soul Care - Spiritual Wellness and Formation

Effective: October 27, 2016

1. POLICY STATEMENT

Within the context of a leader-coach culture and a lifelong learning approach to ministry, the Canada and Bermuda Territory is committed to the total well-being of its officers, including their ongoing spiritual formation.

To this end, provision is made for officers to access appropriate spiritual support to facilitate growth in *who* the officer is (being), as well as strengthening their capacity for ministry effectiveness (doing).

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this provision is consistent with well-documented best practice and is to assist all officers in developing and maintaining a healthy, balanced inner core of spiritual and emotional wellness. The benefits to officers and The Salvation Army include:

- Competent ministry with increased relational skills and quality of service to others.
- Accountability and the strengthening of appropriate personal boundaries.
- A safe context for addressing personal and relational challenges before they escalate into major problems.

Spiritual formation is nurtured through a combination of factors including spiritual disciplines, notably through meeting with a spiritual director, and taking a personal retreat.

As a means of spiritual formation, spiritual direction is an intentional relationship whereby the spiritual director accompanies those directed in being attentive and responsive to the active presence of God in their lives. Spiritual directors are trained, accredited and receive spiritual direction themselves. Spiritual direction can also be provided within the context of a personal retreat.

3. PROVISIONS FOR SPIRITUAL WELLNESS AND FORMATION

3.1 Wellness Provision: Provision is being made for active officers to participate in spiritual direction and/or a time of prayer and reflection at a retreat centre, up to

the prescribed limits set by THQ.

- 3.2 **Financial Provision:** Each active officer may budget a set maximum amount per year as per the annual budget guidelines. Supporting documentation of payments must be provided and can include any combination of the above.
- 3.3 **Accountabilities:** Officers will not be required to divulge any content of this confidential relationship.
- 3.4 **Role of Divisional Commander/Area Commander/Department Head:** To encourage all officers to avail themselves of this provision for personal growth and development.

4. ADDITIONAL GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 4.1 It is expected that the chosen spiritual director would be appropriately trained, experienced and accredited within their professional discipline (NB: There are a variety of accepted training and accreditation tracks within this discipline). The spiritual director should be receiving spiritual direction as part of his or her professional self-management.
- 4.2 The THQ pastoral services spiritual director is available to consult with officers regarding the choice of their spiritual director and other spiritual resources, i.e. retreat centres.
- 4.3 While not mandatory, as in some denominations, officers are to be encouraged to use this opportunity to strengthen their lifelong journey of becoming the person Christ wants them to be.
- 4.4 This provision is for ongoing personal development ó not a provision of counselling therapy for times of crisis. In times of personal crisis, pastoral services can be contacted to access the officer care plan.
- 4.5 Officers are encouraged to use this provision for personal and ministry development by exploring growth issues identified from personal appraisals, ministry experiences and other significant relationships.
- 4.6 In addition to the self-care provisions of this policy, officers are encouraged to find ways of caring for colleague officers. This may include arrangements for mutual õsoul-care,ö accountability partnerships or forming a mutually supportive spiritual formation group.

Mark Tillsley

**Colonel
CHIEF SECRETARY**