THE GRANDPARENT RULE

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod’s Emergency Services Chaplaincy process for granting grandparent status as an ecclesiastically endorsed ESC applies only to those who have been serving as a police, fire or other emergency services chaplain in a local department for no less than three years prior to applying for ESC ecclesiastical endorsement.

Ecclesiastical endorsement is based on the applicant’s demonstration in writing and in person that he/she has sufficiently addressed the Core Standards as listed in the SPM Ecclesiastical Endorsement Standards and Procedures manual located at lcms.org/spm. Although all written materials will be required to qualify under the grandparent rule, training in any or all of the areas of competency listed previously may be waived (except for LCMS Ethics in ESC) if the applicant can show in the written materials and before a consultation committee of peers that he/she has acquired the necessary knowledge and possesses the aptitude to serve in Emergency Services Chaplaincy.
Emergency services chaplains (ESC) provide emotional and spiritual care and support to members of law enforcement, emergency medical services, and fire services and may serve local, state, and federal agencies. Expectations of the chaplain will vary from agency to agency. Due to the significant differences in culture between law enforcement and fire personnel, specific courses are required for each specialty.

Duties may include making death notifications to citizens and agency families, participating in ceremonies, teaching classes related to chaplaincy, making visits to hospitalized personnel, conducting funeral services of officers and personnel, and participating in ride-alongs with police and fire officers. Chaplains trained in critical incident stress management may conduct interventions following traumatic incidents and/or natural disasters.
In order to earn an ESC ecclesiastical endorsement, the applicant must meet the following criteria:

- Meet the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod’s (LCMS) Specialized Pastoral Ministry (SPM) Core Standards for theological and ministerial competency as an emergency services chaplain (see Section I, C of the *SPM Ecclesiastical Endorsement Standards and Procedures manual* online at [lcms.org/spm](http://lcms.org/spm)).

- Attain 49 hours of training for law enforcement chaplaincy or 47 hours for fire chaplaincy to qualify for ESC ecclesiastical endorsement. Specific course work and training includes:
  - Pastoral Care and Intervention Skills (Lectures and Demonstration) – 4 hours
  - Pastoral Care Intervention Skills (Supervised Practice) – 6 hours (one unit of CPE would be accepted in place of the pastoral care intervention skills and practice courses.)
  - LCMS Ethics in ESC – 3 hours (includes SPM Code of Ethics, confidentiality, ministry in pluralistic contexts, public rites and ceremonies, Christian response and Law/Gospel conversation within a disaster/emergency situation, etc.)
  - National Incident Management System (NIMS/FEMA) 100 and 700 – 3 hours each for a total of 6 hours
  - International Critical Incident Stress Foundation (ICISF) Critical Incident Stress Management Group Crisis Intervention – 14 hours
  - Sensitivity and Diversity – 2 hours
  - Fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Chaplaincy. Specific courses for endorsement as a fire chaplain include:
    - Personhood of the Fire Chaplain – 2 hours
    - Ministry to Fire Fighters – 2 hours
    - Ministry to Crisis Victims – 2 hours
    - Fire Chaplain Operations – 2 hours
    - Firefighter Injury or Death – 2 hours
    - Death Notification – 2 hours
Law Enforcement Chaplaincy. Specific courses for endorsement as a law enforcement chaplain include:

- Introduction to Law Enforcement – 2 hours
- Death Notification – 2 hours
- Stress Management – 2 hours
- Responding to Crisis – 2 hours
- Law Enforcement Family/Culture – 2 hours
- Substance Abuse – 2 hours
- Officer Injury and Death – 2 hours

- 100 documented hours of ESC experience (law enforcement and/or fire), e.g., ride-alongs, on-location visits, death notifications, memorial services, etc. Documentation is to be authorized and signed by the commander, chief, captain, or representative.

- Required written material includes that listed in Standard E, page 3 of the SPM Ecclesiastical Endorsement Standards and Procedures manual, with the exception of item 6 (Two recent descriptions or verbatims of visits/relationships.) In place of item 6 in the manual, competency in ESC ministry is to be demonstrated through the following: one verbatim (use the verbatim outline included in the ecclesiastical endorsement packet and listed under “Resources” at lcms.org/spm) and the completion of two ESC scenarios (these will be sent to the applicant upon completion of all other written materials.)

- Provide evidence of two years (minimum) of parish ministry experience and assurance that the applicant has consulted with the appropriate congregational leaders and has sought their support. NOTE: The minister is responsible for ensuring that his/her primary ministry in the congregation, recognized service organization (RSO), or other ministry context will not be inhibited or deterred as a result of the ESC duties.

- Document a minimum of 49 continuing education contact hours (1 CEU = 10 contact hours) for law enforcement chaplaincy, and 47 hours for fire chaplaincy — see previously listed courses — related to emergency services ministry under responsible, qualified instruction.

- Submit a letter of reference from the agency being served.