

## **ARMED SERVICES ECCLESIASTICAL ENDORSEMENT GUIDELINES FOR MEMBERS IN DISCERNMENT**

1. The Committee on Ministry (COM) must first approve the candidate as a Member in Discernment of the Association.
2. If the MID is applying to a Chaplain Candidate Program s/he, through a Local Church Discernment Committee, must request that the Committee on Ministry recommend the MID to the UCC Ecclesiastical Endorser for Ecclesiastical Endorsement for a Government Chaplaincy. The candidate must submit an original "Application for Ecclesiastical Endorsement for Government Chaplaincy (found on the UCC website) signed in blue ink, to the Ecclesiastical Endorser and to the Committee on Ministry.
3. Along with this request, the Candidate must submit the necessary documentation as outlined in Section 2.5 of the Manual on Ministry. It is understood that the candidate may not have completed units of clinical pastoral education, will not have three years post-ordination experience or the Masters of Divinity completed. However, a college degree is required. All letters of recommendation must be on letterhead and have original signatures.
4. Once these documents are received, the COM will then proceed to interview the candidate and determine whether s/he is a qualified candidate, using the procedure outlined in Section 2.5 of the Manual on Ministry. The COM will focus its questions on qualifications for the military setting, including experience and knowledge of the military setting.
5. If approved, the COM sends all original copies of the documentation and a letter describing the interview process and determination of qualifications to the Ecclesiastical Endorser, recommending that the individual be approved for ecclesiastical endorsement as a chaplain candidate.
6. The Endorser will then make a decision as to whether the candidate will receive an ecclesiastical endorsement for the Chaplain Candidate Program to which they are applying.

7. When the Candidate has completed requirements for an M.Div. from an accredited institution, s/he can begin the application for Ordination and Ecclesiastical Endorsement, for National Guard or Reserve military chaplaincy, with the Association.
8. Since an assignment to the Active Duty for Army, Navy and Air Force chaplaincy requires three years post-ordination experience, a Chaplain Candidate will only be eligible for assignment to the Reserves or National Guard in the service branch of their choice.
9. When the above qualifications are met, the Candidate can apply for Ecclesiastical Endorsement to the Association, following the procedures outlined in Section 2.5 of the MOM. The Association reviews the documents, interviews the candidate, and determines whether it will recommend that the Ecclesiastical Endorser approve the request. The request to the Ecclesiastical Endorser is made in the same manner as described in step #5.