FUNDAMENTAL BAPTIST
FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL

FBFI CHAPLAINCY INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICATION

NOTE: There are two applications you will need to submit, one at a time.

Reference these instructions for each application as appropriate; make sure you submit the correct form based on your readiness for endorsement. Incomplete or incorrect forms cannot be processed by the Endorser.

- Preliminary Chaplain Endorser Application, Short Form
- Request for Endorsement, Long Form

Your first official contact with the FBFI Endorsing Agency must be made on the Preliminary Chaplain Endorser Application, Short Form. After you have submitted the Short Form, you must not submit the Long Form until you are directed to do so by the Endorser. Again, make sure you are submitting the correct form.

1. Forms may be completed online, saved as a file with your name included in the file name, and sent as an e-mail attachment to info@fbfi.org.
2. Make sure you are submitting the correct form for your current status. If this is your first contact, use the "Short Form;" if you have completed all requirements and are ready for endorsement; use the "Long Form."
3. Do not use the Long Form unless you can document your completed Seminary qualifications, your ordination, and your required ministry experience. Again, if you are still in Seminary, if you have not yet been ordained, or if you do not have the required ministry experience, you must use the Short Form.
4. Take time to prepare a neat application, giving attention to spelling and grammar. This is a professional application for a professional position. It will remain in your file throughout your career as a professional chaplain. Be professional.
5. Include with your application the following:
   a. A digital color photo (family, if applicable). The photo need not be studio quality but must be clear.
   b. Your $100 Short Form Application Fee or $150 Request for Endorsement Fee, as applicable. You may call 864.268.0777 to pay by credit card, pay online through PayPal at www.fbfi.org, or send a check payable to FBFI, 2801 Wade

Hampton Blvd., Suite 115-165, Taylors, SC 29687. (These fees cover only a fraction of the cost of processing your forms, but are kept low in the expectation that we will enjoy a long relationship with you as your endorsing agency.)

6. On behalf of the FBFI Chaplaincy Commission, the Endorser will contact all references, order a background check (included in your fee), and conduct a follow up interview.
7. Short Form interviews may be made by phone if necessary, but Long Form interviews must be made in person and will need to be scheduled well in advance of any military or agency selection board review of your endorsement package.
8. Plan to attend subsequent FBFI Regional Fellowship meetings in your area and all Annual Fellowship meetings after your initial application form is submitted. The Annual Fellowship is always held on the Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday of the second full week (seven day week) of June.
9. Annual Chaplain Training is conducted on Monday through Friday morning of the Annual Fellowship and is **required** for applicants and Endorsed chaplains.
10. When your Short Form has been received and processing has begun, you will be listed as a "Chaplain Candidate." Your status may be reported in Board reports, *FrontLine* magazine, and on the FBFI website. If you withdraw your application, you must inform the FBFI immediately. You must realize that "change of endorser" is a serious matter at the military service branch Chief of Chaplains Office, and you could be liable for punitive action if you change endorsers during the application process or following endorsement without permission from your military branch.
11. Once you are considered a "candidate" you may report that you have chosen an endorser. However, if a recruiter tells you "You have to get an endorsement before you can proceed," contact us for clarification. Yes, you must have Ecclesiastical Endorsement to be "accessioned" into the military. Endorsement for military chaplaincy can only occur when your endorser files DD (Department of Defense) Form 2088, but Form 2088 is the LAST step in your lengthy application and qualification process. Recruiters often give the impression it is the FIRST step. When you submit the *Short Form* your relationship with an endorser begins, and you may honestly tell your recruiter, "I have an Endorser" as soon as you file the *Short Form* with FBFI. You will have to be very patient until it is time for the

DD2088. If you are applying for a non-military chaplaincy, you will follow other protocol, explained below.

12. **Guard/Reserve Chaplains** follow the same process as other military applicants.
13. **Fire Service, Health Care, Hospital, VA, Law Enforcement, Civil Air Patrol, Corporate, and/or any other chaplaincy** will complete both Short Form, followed by Long Form at the appropriate time, filling out all blanks as applicable, or making notations as necessary.
14. As you attend FBFI Fellowship meetings and/or make other contact on your own, you will meet other FBFI Endorsed chaplains who will be a source of information and encouragement throughout your application process and chaplaincy ministry to follow. If you are visiting or passing through Upstate South Carolina, try to include a visit with us. Watch the calendars and links on the FBFI websites to see if your Endorser is going to be in your area.
15. You will be notified when your Preliminary Application (Short Form) has been received and will receive instructions on what next steps you need to take in order to proceed. Depending on where you are in your educational pursuit, readiness for ordination, and/or ministry experience, it can take several years for an interested applicant to become a chaplain. It is a long and comprehensive process, so you must take the long view and be patient throughout.
16. Early in your process, you will be instructed to study the FBFI Commission on Chaplains *Chaplain's Manual* (current edition), and will be required to affirm that you have studied it when you complete your *Long Form*. You may obtain this manual in digital format on www.fbfi.org, and should read it sooner than later.
17. When you are near the completion of your application process, you will schedule an interview with the FBFI Chaplaincy Commission. In order to meet with your military branch selection board in February, June or October, your approved request for endorsement and interview report must be received in the FBFI Home Office by January 1, May 1, or September 1, respectively.
18. Do not create a crisis for yourself by starting this process too late, missing deadlines, failing to communicate, asking for waivers, exceptions, or failing to note anything on your application forms that will require them to be amended later. If you have anything that you will need to report to the branch or agency regarding legal issues or moral failures, tell us up front. Those are not necessarily cause for rejection, but if you have to get last minute appeals or letters of

acknowledgement from your endorser, the fact that you did not report up front will be in your permanent record.

19. After you have been fully endorsed, there are many regular responsibilities to maintain. You cannot finalize your application to the military branch or agency until you have been fully endorsed: DD 2088 for military, or letter of endorsement for civilian chaplaincy. If you change endorsers without permission from both sending and receiving endorsers, or if you fail to maintain endorsement from a qualified endorser at all times, you will be discharged from the military for sure, and possibly dismissed from the civilian agency where you serve. This is because of the dual role of the chaplain. The branch or agency authorizes your official (military, law enforcement, etc.) identity; your endorser authorizes your religious identity. You cannot serve without both.

Going Forward in the Process to Become a Chaplain

Your relationship to your sending/home church local church

1. We suggest you provide your sending/home church with updated family photos for use on their missionary display board or other prayer reminders.
2. Write your pastor(s) and church(es) regularly to keep them up to date on your ministry. Behave like your ministry is an extension of their ministries, which it is.
3. Give them definite prayer requests and pray for their prayer requests.
4. At reasonable intervals, visit your sending/home church and as often as possible be involved in the best local church available to you. If there is no local church where you can conscientiously place your membership, keep or return your membership to your sending/home church and just attend a local church. Prior to visiting your sending/home church, notify the pastor to inform him you are coming.
5. Prior to special days, such as Memorial Day, Veterans, Law Enforcement Memorial Day, etc., you will receive letters that you may, if you desire, copy and send to all churches with which you have any affiliations appealing for their support of your Endorsing Agency which is performing an essential service that allows your ministry to be an extension of their ministry. This support could come through special offerings, or regular support. This support would not take the place of your own pledged support to your Endorsing Agency, but is greatly needed to insure proper service and future availability to you for every need.

Your relationship to the FBFI Commission on Chaplains and your Endorser

1. A Chaplain Report reminder will be sent each quarter on January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1. By accepting Endorsement from FBFI, you agree to return a completed report each quarter.
2. The FBFI Commission conducts Annual Training in conjunction with the Annual Fellowship held the second full week of June. Your presence at Annual Training is required except in the case of emergency or if excused in writing for valid reasons. You may apply to your Chain of Command for funding, but lack of official funding does not excuse you from required training.
3. Keep the FBFI Commission on Chaplains informed of any change in your chaplaincy status: promotions, duty stations, family milestones, etc.
4. To support your Endorsing Agency and to keep it strong to insure your own continued endorsement, making possible your own continued service as an endorsed chaplain, we ask that you pledge the following when you request endorsement:
    a. That you will remain true to the FBFI Statement of Faith.
    b. That you will remain true to your Ordination vows.
    c. That you will report to the local church that has the authority to apply spiritual discipline to any situation in your life involving moral failure, marital status, criminal conviction, or other matter requiring spiritual discipline, and that you will inform your Endorser of the same.
    d. That you will faithfully support the FBFI Commission on Chaplaincy Endorsing Agency in prayer, by promotion and recruitment, and financially with an appropriate monthly pledge (dues). The dues structure for chaplains will most likely be updated at the FBFI Annual Fellowship and Annual Chaplains Training on June 15-19, 2015, when the Chaplains Manual is officially revised. Until then, the FBFI Chaplain Recruiter or Endorser can provide current information.