



Answer the call to serve while you're still in school.
CHAPLAIN CANDIDATE PROGRAM

AMERICA'S
NAVY
A GLOBAL FORCE FOR GOOD.™

Chaplain Candidate Program (CCPO)

If you're in the process of starting or completing your graduate theological degree, you can potentially enter the Navy Chaplain Candidate Program as a student. [Discover the benefits of the Chaplain Candidate Program on page 2.](#)

Serving as a Chaplain in America's Navy

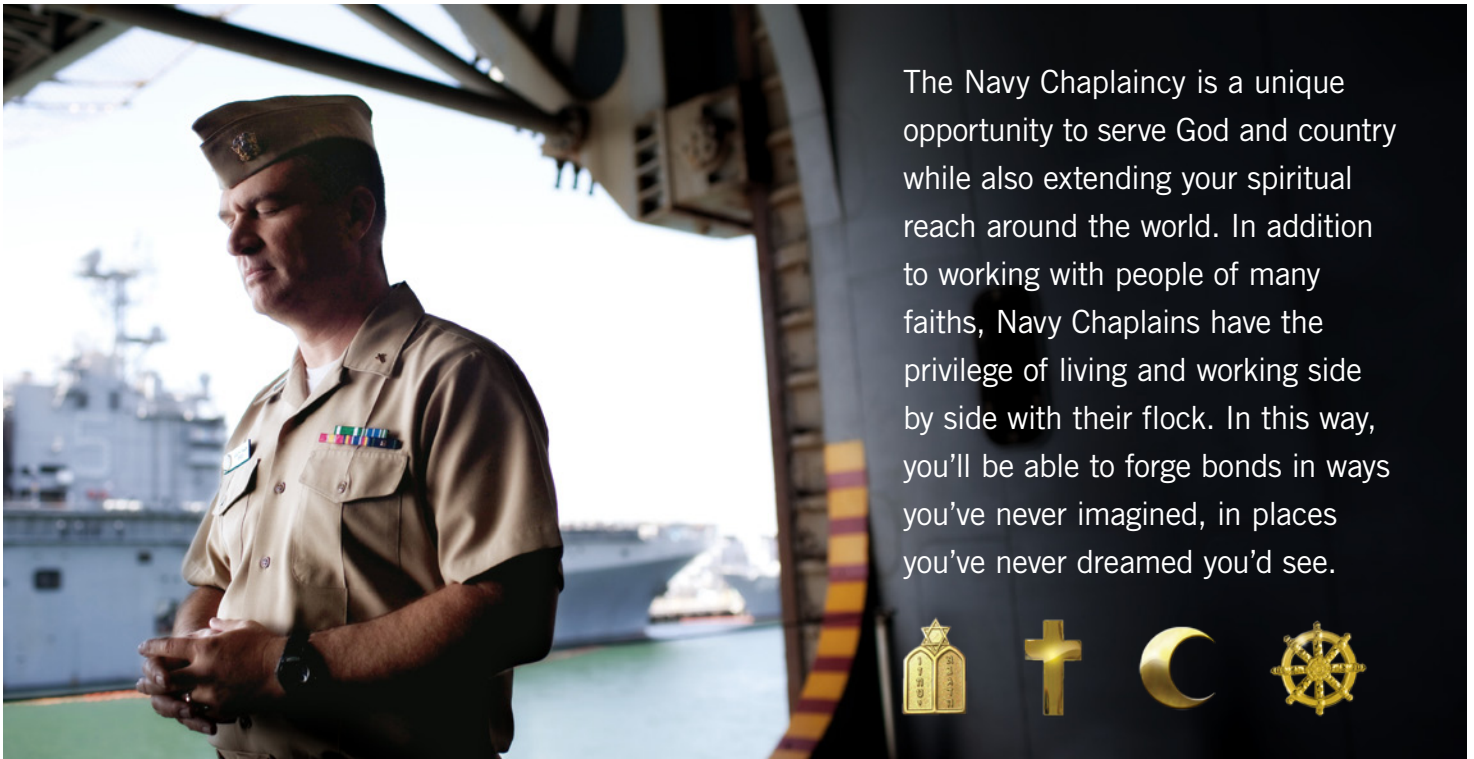
You've answered a spiritual call. Now you can provide guidance to men and women who have also answered a call. [Learn more about how to become a Navy Chaplain on page 3.](#)

Commonly Asked Questions

You may have some practical questions. For instance, how much time must you serve? Where will you serve? And what are the requirements to become a Navy Chaplain? [Get the facts about serving as a Navy Chaplain on page 4.](#)

Navy Chaplains – In Their Own Words

There's no better way to discover what it's like to be a Navy Chaplain than to hear from those who have already made their commitment. [Read stories from real Navy Chaplains on page 5.](#)



The Navy Chaplaincy is a unique opportunity to serve God and country while also extending your spiritual reach around the world. In addition to working with people of many faiths, Navy Chaplains have the privilege of living and working side by side with their flock. In this way, you'll be able to forge bonds in ways you've never imagined, in places you've never dreamed you'd see.



Program overview

If you're in the process of starting or completing your graduate theological degree, you can potentially enter the Navy Chaplain Candidate Program as a student. Through this program, you can be commissioned as a Navy Officer while you finish your theological studies at an accredited seminary or graduate school.

The Navy Chaplain Candidate Program is a chance for seminary students to see real Navy Chaplains at work. You'll be exposed to the challenges and rewards of working in the diverse situations that the Navy has to offer. Students may have on-the-job training wherever Navy Chaplains serve – at sea, at home or overseas.

As a Chaplain Candidate, you'll wear the uniform and receive pay and benefits while on your annual training and not in school. You will truly get to experience what it is to serve as a Navy Chaplain. You'll know for certain what this incredible experience is like and how it affects the men and women of the Navy, Marines and Coast Guard.

Program benefits

As a Navy Chaplain Candidate, you'll receive on-the-job training under the direct supervision of a Navy Chaplain during summer breaks. This gives theological students an opportunity to go to the Fleet, to shadow Chaplains on ships, and to have hands-on ministry opportunities at places like Bethesda Naval Hospital or Naval Base San Diego. Completing the Chaplain Candidate Program qualifies you for significant pay advantages once you enter Active Duty.

After the Chaplain Candidate Program, prospective students are interviewed by the Chaplain Candidate Program Manager and by a Navy Recruiter. Then these prospects go before the Selection Board to see if they meet all of the requirements of the Navy Chaplain Corps.

CCPO students who meet the requirements and are selected to be a Chaplain are ready to enter service immediately after graduating and finishing the CCPO. All that remains for them to do is to wait for their assignment; but aside from that, these candidates are ready to serve.

Eligible schools

To find out whether your graduate program is eligible for the Chaplain Candidate Program, contact your local recruiter.

Want to know more? Get informed

Visit the Navy Chaplain page on navy.com or navyreserve.com to learn more about how to become a Navy Chaplain. Or go to the [Chaplain Facebook page](#) to interact with Navy Chaplains. Ask questions. Get answers.

Get more information by calling 1-800-USA-NAVY or [filling out this form](#). A Navy Recruiter will answer your questions and provide further details about being a Navy Chaplain.



Over 800 Chaplains from more than 100 different faiths currently serve in America's Navy. Navy Chaplains enable the free practice of religion for all Sailors, Marines and Coast Guardsmen, and their impact is far-reaching and widespread.

A calling within a calling

Navy Chaplains nurture the spiritual well-being of the men and women around them. Because you live, work, eat and pray together, you come to know the needs and challenges of your ministry like no one else. And you'll get the chance to interact with members of many faith groups. In this role you will:

- Provide religious ministry and support
- Facilitate religious requirements of those from all faiths
- Care for all servicemembers and their families
- Advise the command on issues of morale and culture

Serving God and country

When you're deployed, you'll be immersed in the daily lives of Navy personnel. Serving God. Serving country. Serving faithfully alongside your congregation. In what can be best described as a ministry of presence, you will be there to offer guidance and insight in the moment, whenever you're needed.

At times, this will involve ministering to group audiences in a scheduled worship setting. But often, this will involve ministering to individuals on a very personal level. Under these circumstances, you'll have the ability to build meaningful relationships and to become a trusted advisor.

Where you fulfill your higher calling could be anywhere on land or at sea. You could be presiding over religious ceremonies on a base. Conducting services from the flight deck of an aircraft carrier. Or even performing baptisms somewhere in the middle of the desert. Your job as a Navy Chaplain could literally take you anywhere in the world.

Answering the call

To become a Navy Chaplain you must:

- Be a U.S. citizen and be at least 21 years of age and be able to complete 20 years of service before the age of 62
- Meet certain medical and physical fitness standards
- Hold a BA or BS degree with not less than 120 semester hours from a qualified educational institution; and hold a post-baccalaureate graduate degree of not less than 72 semester hours in theological or related studies
- Hold an ecclesiastical endorsement from a religious faith organization registered with the Department of Defense (DOD)

If you meet those requirements, you will then complete 84 days of training. This begins at Officer Development School and ends with Navy Chaplain School, where you'll undergo a basic orientation course before receiving job placement. For those who are entering or attending graduate school, Chaplain Candidate School is available.

Ready to take the next steps?

Once you're inspired, better informed and seriously interested, here's how to proceed:

1. Talk to your recruiter

- Ask questions and review your qualifications
- Talk about the responsibilities and opportunities associated with Navy Chaplaincy
- Discuss the advantages of entering through the Navy Chaplain Candidate Program

2. Apply for the program

- Be prepared to provide personal information that includes birth certificate, Social Security card, academic transcripts, proof of ecclesiastical endorsement, professional references (if applicable) and medical history
- Pass a full medical examination
- Participate in a precommitment interview
- Accept an Officer commission in the Navy or Navy Reserve

3. Begin your training

- Newly commissioned Officers have the opportunity to complete [Officer Development School](#) (ODS) and Navy Chaplain School



Why do Navy Chaplains serve?

“During my civilian ministry, my role was limited. Today, 3,500 people look to me as their Chaplain. It’s exciting and completely fulfilling knowing I’m everybody’s Chaplain wherever I go.

Why do I serve? I felt the call. I look forward to those opportunities to make a deep impact. Especially when exceptional circumstances prompt these young men and women to look heavenward for purpose and comfort.”

*Robert Nelson
Lieutenant, Chaplain Corps, USN*

How long must I serve?

CCPO lasts for the duration of your graduate school program. Navy Chaplains are typically required to serve 3–5 years after being commissioned. A Navy Recruiter can provide current, specific commitment information.

Where do Navy Chaplains serve?

Wherever young Sailors, Marines and Coast Guardsmen live and work – there you will find Navy Chaplains. Providing a ministry of presence. Attending to the religious needs of young men and women of all backgrounds. And rendering spiritual assistance in the very moment it’s needed.

What are the material benefits?

Navy Chaplains share in the benefits earned by all Navy Officers – which include a respectable salary, full health-care benefits for themselves and their families, a generous pension program, and numerous tax advantages.

What are the basic requirements to join?

America’s Navy requires Chaplains to be highly educated in their own faith in addition to having real-world experience in a civilian ministry. Candidates must therefore hold a **post-baccalaureate graduate degree** in theological or related studies. They must have **at least two years of real-world experience** as a representative of their faith. And they must receive an **ecclesiastical endorsement** from their individual faith group. A Navy Recruiter can provide you with additional information.

What student programs are available?

Students interested in the Navy Chaplain Corps are encouraged to apply for the Chaplain Candidate Program. In this program, a student is commissioned as a Navy Officer with the rank of Ensign (ENS). He or she will participate in Chaplain training in addition to normal studies. Upon graduation, the student is promoted to Lieutenant Junior Grade (LTJG), which translates to a higher salary. Students should contact a Navy Recruiter for additional details.



Words of a student

Through the Chaplain Candidate Program, graduate theological students can be commissioned as a Navy Officer while they finish their studies at an accredited seminary or graduate school. For many students, the on-the-job training opportunities that this program provides are invaluable.

Chaplain Candidate Program

“I heard about the Chaplain Candidate Program from my Pastor, who is a retired Navy Chaplain. Joining the program was one of the best decisions I’ve ever made. It’s been a vital part of my preparation for ministry. The program has equipped me with valuable training, tools and motivation. The CCPO managers do an excellent job of encouraging me to succeed. Most of all, the time I’ve spent as a CCPO has helped confirm God’s calling in my life to serve as a Navy Chaplain.

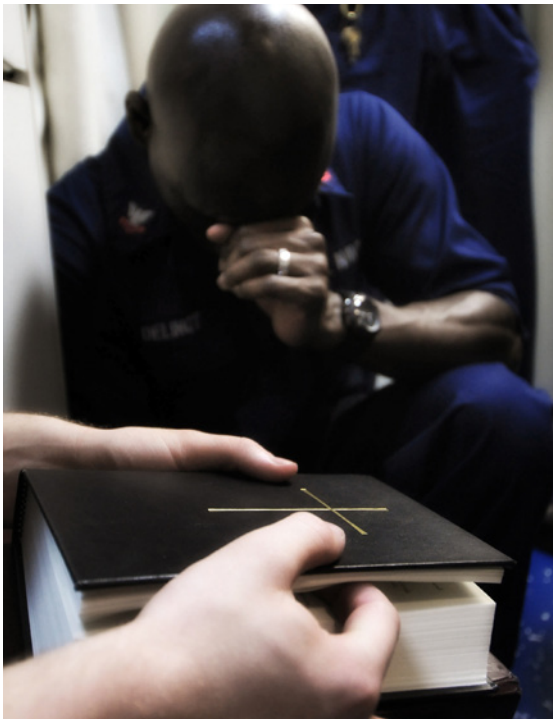
I’ve been blessed to have on-the-job training opportunities through the CCPO. Some highlights from on-the-job training include giving the evening prayer on a ship while under way, leading a worship service out in the field while with the Marines, and joining the Marines for Physical Fitness Training early every morning.

The lessons I’ve learned through the Chaplain Candidate Program will prepare me well when I’m serving in the Fleet.”

Justin Grove
Lieutenant, Chaplain Candidate Program Officer, USN

Words of experience

Chaplain LT David Kim is a third-generation pastor who joined the Navy through the Chaplain Candidate Program. He wanted to make a difference. He follows that path as a Navy Chaplain. See how his firsthand knowledge of his fellow troops’ experiences makes a difference in their lives. [Watch the Chaplain Kim video here.](#)



Words of wisdom

During his time in seminary, Chaplain Muschinske took advantage of the Navy’s Chaplain Candidate Program. After graduating, he launched his 13-year career as a Lutheran minister while serving his country part-time as a Chaplain in the Navy Reserve.

To Care For All

“In the service, we all look after each other. Sometimes a Sailor or Marine will send someone my way if there seems to be a problem.

One day, the Command Master Chief asked me to check up on a sailor who was struggling with family and medical matters. The Sailor showed up after a worship service and we talked. At one point in our conversation, I wondered about his faith experience and how it was that he was moved to participate in ‘church call.’

‘To be perfectly honest, sir,’ he replied, ‘I’ve never been to church before in my life.’ Yet here he was, open to care of self and spirit – and I with the privilege of providing the same.

It doesn’t matter if a Sailor or Marine has any experience or interest in worship. My call as a Chaplain is to care for all.”

Chaplain Peter Muschinske
Commander, Chaplain Corps, USN