

ON THE DAY OF THE VISIT

1. Alert your NCO, clerk or secretary to the visit. Should you be inadvertently tied up, your visitor should be expected and warmly greeted by others in your office. Informing the gate guards of the expected arrival can ease and expedite access to the installation. Such a courtesy is especially important for an endorser who has no personal military background, for whom a guarded gate may seem imposing or frustrating.

If the trip is an extended one, some mail or messages may arrive for the endorser. Make sure they are delivered immediately.

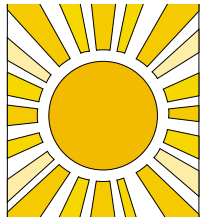
2. You are the principal reason for all of the expenditure of time, energy and money in this visit. Capitalize on that principal. Compound the interest. Share with your endorser your family, your associates and your staff. Time spent in your home or quarters can be heartwarming and relaxing. Most importantly, make sure that you have adequate time alone with the endorser.

3. Your endorser is interested in what you do, with whom you minister, the conditions under which you work and live, your office, your area of responsibility, your installation. The visit should never be considered an inspection, but rather an effort to experience the unique nature of your multi-faceted ministry.

4. Escort the endorser promptly to each appointment, and make all appropriate introductions. If someone desires the opportunity to speak privately with the endorser, facilitate arrangements for a suitable time and for a comfortable, confidential setting.

5. As far as circumstances permit, stay with your visitor until the day's activities are over or the visit completed.

6. Ascertain whether there is any follow-up to the visit that should be accomplished. Be sure to thank those on whom calls have been made for their time and interest in the endorser's visit.



EPILOGUE

A visit from your endorsing agent is an **opportunity** for you to become better acquainted with each other. It should always be an occasion for helpful and honest sharing. For the endorser, it is also a *learning process about your ministry* and its setting. For the command, it is a testimony that the religious body which endorses you to the chaplaincy cares about you and your ministry.

Again, these are not directives. They are merely suggestions, developed out of the experience of endorsers and chaplains alike. You should **feel free** to modify them in any way that will make the visit from your endorser a mutually happy and profitable experience.

Guidelines

TO CHAPLAINS

FOR VISITS OF **ENDORISING AGENTS** TO **MILITARY INSTALLATIONS**

A PROJECT OF
THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MINISTRY
TO THE ARMED FORCES

Provided by
Your Endorsing Agent

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The purpose of this memorandum is to assist chaplains by outlining procedures which are appropriate when an endorsing agent visits a military installation. It is clearly understood that no endorsing agent or chaplain is required to follow this or any other procedure developed by this Conference.

INTRODUCTION

Ecclesiastical endorsing agents are responsible to their religious bodies and are committed to the Department of Defense to provide ecclesiastical, spiritual and moral support and supervision to their chaplains. Because of the geographical deployment of the armed forces in which chaplains serve, it is difficult for endorsers to fulfill this responsibility adequately, either in the United States or overseas, without some degree of on-site visitation.

When endorsers can engage in direct communication and personal fellowship with their chaplains and see the conditions under which they work and live, they experience a visual awareness and appreciation for the unique nature of the chaplain's ministry as an extension of the religious body in the military community.

To assist, therefore, in making the visit of the endorser a beneficial experience for all concerned, the National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces offers these suggestions.

TO THE CHAPLAINS

A visit to your installation by your ecclesiastical endorsing agent is:

1. To convey to you, by the very fact of the visit, the support and appreciation of your religious body for your ministry.
2. To render pastoral support in the event of problems — personal, professional or domestic.
3. To receive an update on your ministry, both for the endorser's own information, and to assure that the service of you and your fellow chaplains is reported and interpreted to your church body with understanding and concern.
4. To give testimony to the command of the interest, concern and relationship which your religious body has for you and your presence in the armed forces.
5. To establish richer rapport and more effective communication between you and your endorser.

The visit of your endorser is primarily a pastoral call from one who cares about you and your assignment. At the same time, it provides your endorser an opportunity to see how you are functioning in your ministry within the military community.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PLANNING THE VISIT

1. Know the desires of your endorser

Learn ahead of time as much as you can concerning the intent and purpose of the visit. Make a list of the items you would like to discuss during the visit. Plan an agenda for the time you will spend together, thereby avoiding the "what-do-we-do-now?" problem.

2. Determine whether a briefing is advisable

If the endorser is new to this responsibility or to the military community, a briefing about the installation or the chapel program may be helpful. This may be quite unnecessary if the endorser is already well informed about the military, the chaplaincy and your installation. Be aware, however, that including a briefing can be a useful way to engage your endorser in dialogue with command and staff personnel.

3. Determine the general itinerary and trip schedule

An emergency, either for you or the endorser, may necessitate some alteration of plans. It is important you know where the endorser may be contacted, both before and after the visit to your installation. Reconfirm the estimated time of arrival at your stop on the itinerary and arrange to be there in adequate time to meet the arrival.

4. Clear the calendar

Emergencies may always arise. Routine business, however, should be deferred to the maximum degree possible. If you must attend to some office work, do so. Your endorser will understand and will no doubt have to do the same when you visit the endorsing office.

5. Determine whom the endorser should see

Calls on the command and on supervisory chaplains are courtesies which should normally be included in plans. Establish as precisely as possible the times for the calls and hold to the schedule as closely as you can. You should also find out whether the endorser has any ancillary denominational responsibilities to fulfill in the area in addition to the visit to your installation. The responsibility for arranging other business is not normally yours unless you are specifically asked to assume it.

6. Brief those whom the endorser will visit

Make sure that persons on whom courtesy calls will be made understand what an ecclesiastical endorsing agent is and does. If possible, provide the command with some background information on the endorser. Many senior officers have never had occasion to meet endorsing agents. They appreciate being briefed in advance so they understand the relationship you have with the visitor and the context of the conversation.

7. Make the logistical arrangements

Some endorsers like to be billeted in civilian motels, while others prefer military guest facilities or chaplains' homes. Determine the preference among the options open to you. Keep in mind that extended travel is taxing, and the opportunity for privacy and solitude is usually welcome. On the other hand, travel is a costly item in the endorsing agency budget, and economy may take priority over other considerations. It pays to ask before confirming any reservations.

Ensure that there are dining facilities available and convenient to your endorser

This is especially important on weekends, as well as any other times you are not together for meals. Some endorsers, as retired or reserve officers, have military ID cards. If this is not the case, make sure your arrangements will permit your visitor to function alone on the installation if necessary. Confirm any housing or dining arrangements you have been asked to make for the endorser and ascertain the costs to be borne by the endorsing agency.