

## **Chaplain of the Year Nomination Guild**

### Guide for Submitting a Chaplain for “Chaplain of the Year”

This guide helps your Post or district assemble a complete, compelling nomination packet that highlights your chaplain’s service, leadership, and impact on Veterans, families, and the community.

#### Gather Documentation

Collect the following information before drafting the nomination:

##### Service Activity Log

Include detailed records for the award year:

- Community service hours
- Funerals and memorial services conducted or attended
- Hospital visits (VA and civilian)
- Assisted living / nursing home visits
- Home visits to Veterans or surviving spouses
- Wellness checks (phone calls, texts, emails, in-person)
- Crisis response or emergency support provided
- Participation in Post or District volunteer events
- Support for ceremonies (patriotic holidays, POW/MIA events, dedications)
- Chaplain-led prayers at meetings, ceremonies, or community events

##### Letters of Support (Optional but Powerful)

Ask for short letters from:

- Post or District Commander
- Auxiliary President
- Veterans or families the chaplain has supported
- Community partners (hospitals, care facilities, clergy, etc.)

## Create a Clear Summary of Chaplain Activities

### Activity Summary

Community Service Hours

Funerals/Memorials

Hospital Visits

Assisted Living Visits

Veteran Wellness Checks

Volunteer Events

Crisis Support

### Write the Chaplain's Narrative Summary

This is a short, factual description of the chaplain's service. Keep it professional, warm, and focused on impact.

### Suggested Structure

- Opening statement: Who the chaplain is and how long they've served.
- Core responsibilities: What they do consistently for the Post or District.
- Notable achievements: Special events, major support efforts, or unique contributions.
- Impact on Veterans: How their presence improves morale, connection, and wellbeing.
- Leadership and character: Compassion, reliability, integrity, and spiritual grounding.

### 4. Write the Required Essay: "Why We Are Submitting This Chaplain for the Award"

### Sample Essay

Our Post or District proudly submits [Chaplain's Name] for the VFW Chaplain of the Year Award in recognition of their unwavering dedication to Veterans, families, and our community. Throughout the past year, Chaplain [Name] has demonstrated the highest ideals of the Veterans of Foreign Wars—service, compassion, and commitment to those who have borne the battle.

Chaplain [Name] has completed over [X] community service hours, conducted or attended [X] funerals, and made [X] hospital visits and [X] assisted living visits. They performed more than [X] wellness checks, ensuring no Veteran or surviving spouse felt forgotten or alone. Their presence at Post or District events—whether offering an invocation, supporting a fundraiser, or volunteering alongside our members—has strengthened our Post's or District's sense of unity and purpose.

What sets Chaplain [Name] apart is not only the quantity of their service, but the quality. They bring comfort to grieving families, hope to Veterans in crisis, and encouragement to those struggling with illness, isolation, or hardship. Their ministry extends beyond prayer; it is a ministry of presence, compassion, and action.

Chaplain [Name] embodies the spirit of the VFW Chaplaincy: servant leadership, humility, and unwavering devotion to others. Their work has touched countless lives and strengthened our Post's or District's mission in profound ways. For these reasons, and with deep respect, we nominate Chaplain [Name] for the honor of VFW Chaplain of the Year.

#### 5. Add Supporting Materials (of Possible)

Include:

- Photos of the chaplain in action (if allowed)
- Event programs listing the chaplain
- Certificates of appreciation received
- Post or District newsletters highlighting their work
- Any chaplain reports submitted during the year

Assemble and Submit the Packet

#### 1. Nomination Cover Sheet

2. Chaplain Activity Summary
3. Narrative Summary
4. Essay
5. Letters of Support
6. Supporting Materials

Submit according to Department guidelines and deadlines.

#### Final Tips for a Strong Nomination

- Be specific—numbers and examples matter.
- Keep the tone respectful, proud, and mission-focused.
- Highlight compassion, reliability, and spiritual leadership.
- Show how the chaplain strengthens the Post or District and community.
- Proofread for clarity and professionalism.