



UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-4000

SEP 30 2011

PERSONNEL AND  
READINESS

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS  
CHIEFS OF THE MILITARY SERVICES

SUBJECT: Military Chaplains

In connection with the repeal of Section 654 of Title 10 of the United States Code, I write to provide the following guidance, which hereby supersedes any Department regulation or policy to the contrary:

A military chaplain may participate in or officiate any private ceremony, whether on or off a military installation, provided that the ceremony is not prohibited by applicable state and local law. Further, a chaplain is not required to participate in or officiate a private ceremony if doing so would be in variance with the tenets of his or her religion or personal beliefs. Finally, a military chaplain's participation in a private ceremony does not constitute an endorsement of the ceremony by DoD.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Clifford L. Stanley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "S" at the end.

Clifford L. Stanley

cc:  
Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff  
General Counsel of the Department of Defense