
**State Government & Tribal Relations
Committee**

HB 1485

Brief Description: Concerning the appointment of religious coordinators.

Sponsors: Representatives Lekanoff, Pettigrew, Shewmake, Gregerson, Entenman, Pellicciotti, Doglio, Appleton, Frame, Ormsby, Hudgins, Jinkins and Leavitt.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Changes the employee title "chaplain" for institutions under the Department of Corrections to "religious coordinator."
- Expands the housing allowance provided to chaplains to also include religious coordinators.

Hearing Date: 2/6/19

Staff: Desiree Omli (786-7105).

Background:

The Department of Corrections (DOC) appoints as employees institutional chaplains for the correctional institutions under its jurisdiction to meet the religious needs of inmates. Chaplains serve as religious program coordinators for all faith groups. Every chaplain must have qualifications consistent with community standards of the faith group to which the chaplain belongs. The DOC may contract with chaplains as necessary to meet the religious needs of inmates whose religious denominations are not represented by institutional chaplains and where volunteer chaplains are not available.

A minister or other clergyperson employed as a chaplain in a state institution or agency may receive, in addition to his or her gross salary, a housing allowance as follows:

- the rental value of a home furnished to the person; or

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

- a housing allowance paid to the person as part of his or her compensation, in an amount equal to the rent or expense of the home, but not more than 40 percent of the person's gross salary.

Summary of Bill:

The employee title chaplain, as used by the DOC, is changed to religious coordinator. The housing allowance for chaplains is expanded to cover religious coordinators.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 3, 2019.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.