

2024-10-17

[Sender] Full Rank First M. Last
Duty Title
Organization
Street Address
City ST 12345-6789

Chaplain Brian Michael Frost
SAF/FMF
Church Authority
84 Calle Segunda
Camarillo, Ca 93010

Dear [Brian M. Frost],

Thank you for inquiring about the Air Force format and purpose for personal letters. First, the format for a personal letter is detailed in Air Force Manual (AFM) 33-337, *The Tongue and Quill*, and begins by using only approved organizational letterhead. Second, the purpose of a personal letter is to convey official information in a personal manner to a limited number of people. Thus, the personal letter is useful for personal responses to inquiries (such as this letter), welcome letters, letters of appreciation, letters of condolence, etc.

In addition to using only approved letterhead, the standard font style is Times new Roman and the standard point size is 12 points. The standard margins are 1.75 inches on the top for the first page and 1 inch on the left, right, and bottom. If the letter is longer than a single page, use 1 inch margins for the top, left, right, and bottom for the second and subsequent pages.

The formats for the heading elements (date, return address, receiver's address, and salutation) are important: they convey attention to detail and professionalism. Place the date on the first line of the upper-right hand corner so that the date is flush with the right margin. Next, place the full rank and full name of the sender on the second line below the date followed by the sender's duty title and mailing address. On the third line below the sender's mailing address, place the full rank and full name of the receiver followed by the receiver's duty title and mailing address. Do not use a comma to separate the city from the state abbreviation. The salutation is placed on the second line below the receiver's address with the appropriate form for the rank (refer to the "Forms of Address, Salutation, and Close" in *The Tongue and Quill*) followed by the receiver's last name. Finally, punctuation is not used after the receiver's last name.

For the body of the personal letter, the paragraphs are indented 0.5 inches from the left margin but they are not numbered. Use the "Body Paragraph" style for this purpose. Following the body, include a complimentary close on the second line below the last line

of text as shown in *The Tongue and Quill*, Forms of Address, Salutation, and Complimentary Close” tables. These tables are drawn from formats used by the Department of Defense for everyone from the President of the United States to your neighbor down the street.

For classified content, refer to DOD 5200.1-R to prepare classified papers. To add classification banner markings (including FOUO), click on the header or footer, and in the “Header & Footer Tools” tab, select the Header / Footer dropdown menus on the left side. Use the pre-generated headers and footers for the cover page and subsequent pages.

The final paragraph of a personal letter may include the sender’s contact information. Contact personal information is optional and depends on the purpose of the letter. Contact information, if shown, customarily includes the digital switched network (DSN) telephone number, commercial telephone number, and official email address.

The signature block for the personal letter is placed on the fifth line below the complimentary close. Use the “Signature” style for correct formatting of margins. The four blank lines provide ample space for the actual signature. For a personal letter, the duty title of the sender is not used and, although it is rare for a personal letter to extend beyond a single page, letters of 3 or more pages include page numbers on the second page onwards: the first page is never numbered. A two-page letter may include a page number on the second page or it may be omitted since the order of the pages is self-explanatory. Finally, the attachment and courtesy copy elements for the personal letter, if used, are as shown below.

I hope this answers any questions you had about the purpose and format of the personal letter. If I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me by phone at DNS 415-1225 or commercial (805) 415-1225, or via email at author.tome@us.af.mil.

Sincerely

Brian M. Frost, SAF/FMF USAF
CHAPLAIN

X Attachments: (if none, delete element)

- Attachment description, date
- Attachments section should begin on third line below the signature block

cc: (if none, delete element)

Rank and name, ORG/SYMBOL, or both

The CC element should begin on the second line below the attachment element. If no attachment element is present, it begins on the third line below the signature block.