

A. PURPOSE. To direct a response to:

1. The death of an active or retired member of the Grand Rapids Police Department
2. The sustaining of a serious injury to an active member of the Grand Rapids Police Department

B. GOALS

1. Properly notify next-of-kin in the event of a duty related death or serious injury
2. Define responsibilities of various command and support personnel
3. Establish guidelines for ceremonial honors and services at funerals
4. Provide Support for the family of the deceased member immediately after his/her death and or funeral proceedings
5. Provide long-term assistance to survivors

C. DEFINITIONS

1. *Line-of-Duty Death.* Any death sustained by an on-duty sworn officer or Crime Scene Technician, or any death sustained by an off-duty sworn officer providing law enforcement services.
2. *Line-of-Duty Serious Injury.* Any injury sustained by an on-duty sworn officer or Crime Scene Technician, or any injury sustained by an off-duty sworn officer or Crime Scene Technician providing law enforcement-related services that may be:
  - a. Potentially life threatening
  - b. Potentially disabling
  - c. Requiring significant medical treatment, long term hospitalization, or treatment.
3. *Family Members.* Defined as spouse, children, parents, siblings, grandparents, fiancé, and/or significant others of the deceased member.

4. *Family Liaison Officer.* A member of the Department who acts as a facilitator between the family and the Department. This employee may have enjoyed a close relationship with the deceased member and his/her family.
5. *Critical Incident Stress Management Team (CISM).* Members of the Department who have received special training in critical incident stress debriefing.
6. *Hospital Liaison.* A supervisor who takes command at the medical treatment facility where the injured or deceased member of the department is located.

#### D. NOTIFICATION

1. A line-of-duty death/serious injury emergency contact file shall be maintained within the records management system.
2. The Chief of Police or designee shall notify the immediate family or designated person as soon as possible.
3. Notification shall be done in person. If the immediate family or next-of-kin is a significant distance from the city of Grand Rapids, as determined by the Chief of Police, then the appropriate agency should be asked to make a personal contact.
4. Release of the deceased/injured officer's name shall only be done upon approval of the Chief of Police or designee.
  - a. The name shall not be released prior to family notification. Any release of information by any other employee by oral, written or electronic communications, including social media, is strictly prohibited without permission from the Chief of Police.
  - b. Communication about the incident shall be limited to MDC or telephone to the extent possible.
  - c. If the media has obtained the member's name, they will be requested to withhold the information pending family notification.
5. The Chief and/or designee shall:

- a. Be accompanied by another supervisor, Police Chaplain, CISM Team Coordinator, or another employee familiar with the family. However, notification should not be delayed if these people are not readily available.
- b. Be fully briefed on the specifics of the incident so as to inform the family.
- c. Not make the notification on the doorstep.
- d. Use the officer's name and be specific as to the seriousness of the event. The use of the words "dead" or "died" is preferred over "passed away" or "expired".
- e. Not give false hope or overly protect the family from the truth.
- f. Be prepared for any reaction the family may have, including anger, hysteria, fainting, physical violence, shock, denial, or no apparent reaction.
- g. Make available any medical personnel if there are any anticipated or potential medical concerns of those being notified.
- h. Transport the family to the hospital **immediately**, if the officer or Crime Scene Technician is still alive. The family should be discouraged from driving themselves to the hospital. If the family refuses or insists upon driving their own vehicle, they should be accompanied by a police officer.
- i. Assist with arrangements for child care if, necessary.
- j. Notify the hospital liaison, preferably by phone, that the family is enroute.
- k. Notify the parents of the deceased or injured officer or Crime Scene Technician in person, whenever possible.

## E. SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

### 1. The Chief of Police or designee shall:

- a. Arrange for the notification of the deceased or injured officer's or Crime Scene Technician's family.

- b. Meet with the family to determine their wishes regarding Departmental participation in the preparation of the funeral or service.
  - c. Designate a Family Liaison Officer, with the approval of the family.
  - d. Designate a member of the command staff to notify all department members as quickly and practically as possible.
2. The Incident Commander shall:
- a. Coordinate response to the incident scene and/or hospital. Direct another supervisor to respond to the hospital, if he/she cannot, to act as the hospital liaison.
  - b. Arrange for relieving personnel directly involved in the incident.
  - c. Coordinate responses from other police or government agencies.
3. The Watch Commander shall:
- a. Notify the Chief of Police.
  - b. Notify the Unit Commander
  - c. Notify all Commanders.
  - d. Notify the CISM Team
  - e. Assume the role of Unit Commander in his/her absence.
  - f. Notify the Department's Chaplain.
  - g. Send appropriate LEIN message to MSP operations as soon as practical following the duty-related death of a police officer
4. The Hospital Liaison shall:
- a. Coordinate activities at the hospital. If the officer or CST is deceased, the family shall have access to them at the hospital before they are moved to another location. When possible, this should be coordinated with the Investigative Commander.

- b. Designate two separate waiting areas, one for the immediate family and one for co-workers.
  - c. Establish a press staging area.
  - d. Ensure that medical personnel relay pertinent information to the family in a timely manner.
  - e. Update the family immediately upon their arrival.
  - f. Allow the family to visit the injured/deceased officer or CST if at all possible. The Hospital Liaison should prepare the family for what they might see and accompany them, if they request it.
  - g. Remain at the hospital with the family along with the notification officer, CISM team member and/or Police Chaplain.
5. The Support Services Division Commander or his/her designee shall:
- a. Assist in locating a church or other facility.
  - b. Arrange for the transportation of Department personnel to the funeral site.
  - c. Arrange for parking for personnel attending the funeral.
  - d. Regulate traffic and control parking during visitation.
  - e. Develop a funeral traffic plan.
  - f. Inventory officer's personal property for return to the family.
  - g. Arrange for disposition of the member's Departmental property.
6. The CISM Team Coordinator shall:
- a. Coordinate the Critical Incident Stress Debriefing.
  - b. Maintain contact with the Family Liaison Officer.
  - c. Assist in coordinating family benefits.

- d. Meet and coordinate activities with F.O.P. and other labor union representatives.
  - e. Maintain long-term liaison with the surviving family to ensure their needs are being met.
7. The Family Liaison Officer shall:
- a. Be determined by the Chief of Police and/or designee after meeting with the family.
  - b. Act as facilitator between the Department and the family.
  - c. Assist with funeral arrangements, if the family desires, and advise them of what the Department can offer.
  - d. Ensure the needs of the family come before the wishes of the Department.
  - e. Brief the family on protocol.
  - f. Apprise the family of information concerning the death and continuing investigation.
  - g. Assist with obtaining lodging for out of town mourners.
  - h. Be relieved of all other duties for a period of time determined by the Chief of Police. They shall carry a cell phone during this time period.
8. The Police Chaplain may:
- a. Assist in making notification to the member's family.
  - b. Provide assistance to the family as needed.
  - c. Conduct the funeral service if requested by the family.
  - d. Provide assistance to affected personnel.
  - e. Respond to the scene of the incident or hospital.

**F. LINE-OF-DUTY DEATH FUNERAL PROTOCOL**

1. In the event of a line-of-duty death, the needs of the employee's family will come before the desires of the Department.
2. Personnel directly involved in the incident, either on the scene or who arrived moments after a member was critically injured or killed, should be relieved of their duty as soon as possible. These members shall attend a Critical Incident Stress Debriefing held by a CISM Team Member and/or trained mental health professional.
3. Services provided by the Department, with the approval of the family, shall include:
  - a. An Honor Guard during all visitation.
  - b. Pallbearers (Honor Guard or other personnel dependent upon the wishes of the family and/or deceased employee)
  - c. A bugler and/or bagpiper.
  - d. A firing detail.
  - e. United States flag provided by the Department.
  - f. Traffic control and escorts.
4. As many on-duty personnel as is practical will be allowed to attend the funeral. Mutual aid may be considered to maintain patrol coverage.
5. Transportation to the funeral shall be provided through 'The Rapid' or other mass transit provider.
6. The Department shall provide a bugler and/or bagpiper from amongst existing personnel if available; otherwise, a civilian may be utilized.
7. Uniforms, except those worn by the Honor Guard, shall be the Class A uniform (long sleeve uniform shirt with tie) including a mourning band.
8. At the direction of the Chief of Police, departmental flags shall be flown at half-staff until burial.

9. At the direction of the Chief of Police, mourning bands shall be worn until burial.

G. NON-DUTY RELATED DEATH/RETIRED MEMBER'S DEATH

1. The unit commander and/or designee shall contact the family to offer other assistance and explain available services.
2. The Department may provide an Honor Guard at the family's request.
3. The Honor Guard may act as pallbearers if necessary and act as greeters during visitation.
4. The Department may provide the appropriate flag.
5. At the conclusion of the burial service, the flag shall be folded and presented to the family.