



# GENERAL ORDER

Loudoun County Sheriff's Office

**Chapter:** Personnel Management

**Section:** 310.7

**Subject:** Personnel Management

**Topic:** Casualty Assistance Plan

**Accreditation:** PER.02.01, 02.0 3

**Revised:**

**Reaffirmed:**

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## I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to prepare the Sheriff's Office for the event of a line -of-duty death, and to direct the agency in providing proper support for the deceased deputy's family.

## II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office to provide liaison assistance to the immediate survivors of an active duty sworn deputy or civilian employee who dies in the line-of-duty, and to provide tangible and emotional support during this traumatic period of readjustment for the surviving family and co-workers. Organizationally, the Casualty Assistance Team shall be assigned to the Office of the Sheriff.

## III. DEFINITIONS

- A. Line-of-Duty Death: The death of an active duty deputy or civilian employee by felonious, accidental or natural means during the course of performing sheriff functions while on-duty or while working an assignment not within the normal scheduled pay period to include, overtime, special assignments, details, or any other situation whereby the deputy is acting under the authority of his/her position as granted by law.
- B. Non-Service Related Death: The death of an active-duty deputy while not engaged in the performance of law enforcement functions.
- C. Survivors: Immediate family members of the deceased deputy to include, but not necessarily be limited to, spouses, children, parents, siblings, fiancés and/or significant others.
- D. Casualty Assistance Team: Those members of the agency appointed by the Sheriff , or designee, who, upon learning of a line of duty death of any member of the Sheriff's Office, activates and executes the Casualty Assistance Plan. The Casualty Assistance Team will consist of a Team Leader, Notification Officer, Hospital Liaison, Funeral Liaison, Family Support Advocate, Benefit Liaison, Communications Liaison, Chaplain, Public Information Officer, and the Sheriff's Office Critical Incident Stress Management Team (CISM).

- E. Casualty Assistance Plan: The procedure and protocol by which the Sheriff's Office supports the survivors of a deputy killed in the line of duty.

IV. PROCEDURE

A. Notification

Upon an instance of a line-of-duty death or in cases of a critically injured deputy, the Casualty Assistance Team shall be activated and the Casualty Assistance Plan shall be implemented. The procedures set forth should be followed, both in cases of line-of-duty deaths and those involving a critically injured deputy, with the understanding that the wishes of the family take precedence over the desires of the agency. Deputies providing services to family members and survivors shall take all possible measures to accommodate their needs, wishes and desires, but should not make promises to family members that they are not sure can be met.

1. The name of the deceased or critically injured deputy shall not be released to the media or other parties before the immediate survivors living in the Washington D.C. metropolitan area are notified. No deputy, whether on the scene of the death or not, shall communicate any information whether written, verbal, in person, or electronically, concerning a line of duty death to anyone not involved in the investigation until such family members have been appropriately notified and that the information has been released by the appropriate member of the agency. Communication of information concerning the deputy and the incident shall, whenever possible, be made in such a way so as to avoid interception by the media or others. Should the media obtain the deputy's name prematurely, the ranking on-duty deputy should request that the information be withheld until proper notification of survivors can be made.
2. The Sheriff or appropriate Bureau Commander will inform the survivors of the deputy's condition, or death. If they are not immediately available, a senior staff member will make the notification. The notifying staff member shall be accompanied by the Notification Officer and Chaplain, when possible. Personnel making notification will consult the Confidential Line of Duty Death Information Form (LCSO# 1.56) in order to confirm any special notification requests made by the family.
3. Notification of the immediate family should be made as soon as possible and, if possible, coincidental with command notifications.
4. Notification of survivors living in the Washington D.C. metropolitan area shall be made in person. The notifying officer will be accompanied by the Family Support Advocate and the Chaplain whenever possible. If the health of any of these survivors is a concern, emergency medical service personnel shall be requested to stand by.

5. If the opportunity to get the family to the hospital exists prior to the deputy's death, notification will be made to the Hospital Liaison Deputy that the family is on the way. In such cases, immediate transportation should be provided for survivors rather than waiting for any other members of the agency delegation to arrive. If the deputy has died, notification should be made to the survivors in as forthright and empathetic a manner as possible.
6. The Notification Officer shall be responsible for the identification of additional survivors outside the area and shall make any notifications as desired by the immediate family. Such notifications shall be made by contacting the law enforcement agency in that jurisdiction, and request that a personal notification is made.
7. The Notification Officer shall submit written notification to the Sheriff specifying the identity and location of each survivor as well as the time each was notified.
8. As soon as practical, all active personnel on the shift of the affected deputy shall be relieved of duty and provided assistance and/or counseling as necessary.
9. The Notification Officer or a member of the Casualty Assistance Team shall complete the Survivor Intake Form.

V. APPOINTMENT TO CASUALTY ASSISTANCE TEAM

- A. Upon their appointment by the Sheriff or his/her designee, to the Casualty Assistance Team, personnel shall begin serving in the following capacities: Team Leader, Notification Officer, Hospital Liaison, Funeral Liaison, Family Support Advocate, Benefits Liaison, Communications Officer, Chaplain, Public Information Officer, and the Sheriff's Office Critical Incident Stress Management Team (CISM). Team assignments will be made in writing to agency personnel and the surviving family members will be informed of those designated. In addition, the Sheriff or his/her designee will:
  1. Make additional personnel assignments to assist in handling incoming telephone calls and inquiries and to direct the public to appropriate personnel
  2. Ensure that the Employee Assistance Program is offered to assist surviving family members and to emphasize the family members' access to psychological services
  3. Ensure that other deputies are provided the opportunity to participate in critical incident stress debriefings

**B. Team Leader**

The Team Leader will serve as the facilitator between the family and the Sheriff's Office. In order to expedite the tasks of employing Sheriff's Office resources and the delegation of assignments, the Team Leader will normally have a command staff rank. This deputy will work closely with the funeral liaison deputy to ensure that the needs and requests of the family are fulfilled. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to the following:

1. Upon activation of the Casualty Assistance Team, provide information, guidance, and support to all team members during the service period
2. Retrieval of the Confidential Line of Duty Death Information Form and maintenance of the information on an electronic database. The Team Leader will ensure that this information is updated annually during the first month of each new fiscal year
3. Provide oversight of travel and lodging arrangements for out-of-town family members
4. Identify alternative churches and reception halls that will accommodate the law enforcement funeral
5. Coordinate all official law enforcement notifications and arrangements to include the Honor Guard, pallbearers, traffic control, and liaison with visiting law enforcement agencies
6. Assist family members in dealing with general media inquiries and inform them of limitations, if any, on what they can say to the media
7. Assist the Public Information Officer by providing a liaison with the media to include coordination of any statements and press conferences. The agency liaison shall also ensure that members of the Sheriff's Office are aware of restrictions regarding the release of information that might undermine future legal proceedings
8. Ensure that security checks of the survivors and residences are initiated immediately following the incident and for as long as necessary thereafter

**C. Notification Officer**

The Notification Officer shall accompany the Sheriff, or his/her designee, on any notification and, in the Sheriff's absence, make the notification to immediate family members. The Notification Officer will also be responsible for making any other notifications, upon the family's request, to extended family and friends of the family. The Notification Officer will maintain contact with the Public Information Officer

concerning the completion of notifications and assist in the coordination of release of information to the media. The Notification Officer shall ensure that the Survivor Intake Form is completed.

D. Hospital Liaison

The Hospital Liaison Deputy shall be responsible for coordinating the arrival of immediate survivors, agency personnel, the media, and others and assume the following responsibilities:

1. Arrange for waiting facilities for immediate survivors and a press staging area. The desires of the surviving family members should be followed with regard to their accessibility to other deputies and friends of the deceased or injured deputy. When possible, arrange for separate waiting facilities for Sheriff's Office personnel
2. Ensure that medical personnel provide pertinent medical information on the deputy's condition to the family before any other parties
3. Assist family members, in accordance with their desires, to gain access to the injured or deceased deputy while exercising care regarding any possible physical evidence that may be present
4. Provide hospital personnel with all necessary information on billing for medical services. The Liaison Deputy should ensure that all medical bills are directed to the appropriate Sheriff's Office authority and that they are not forwarded to the deputy's family or other survivors
5. Arrange transportation for the family and other survivors upon their departure from the hospital
6. Ensure that immediate family members are provided with appropriate assistance at the hospital.

E. Funeral Liaison

The Funeral Liaison acts as a facilitator between the deceased deputy's family, the funeral home and the Sheriff's Office during the wake and/or funeral. The Funeral Liaison Deputy is responsible for:

1. Meeting with the family members and explaining their responsibilities including, but not limited to, funeral services and interment
2. Being available to the family prior to and throughout the wake and funeral

3. Ensuring that the needs and wishes of the family come before those of the Sheriff's Office
4. Assisting the family in working with the funeral director regarding funeral arrangements and briefing the family members on the procedures involved in the law enforcement funeral
5. Relaying any information to the family concerning the circumstances of the deceased deputy's death and appropriate information regarding any investigation
6. Determining the need for travel arrangements for out of town family members and any other special needs of the family during the funeral and reporting this information to the Agency Liaison

F. Benefits Liaison

The Benefits Liaison is responsible for managing communication between immediate survivors and the appropriate Loudoun County Human Resources Benefits Coordinator for the following purposes:

1. Presenting information on all benefits available to the family
2. Documenting inquiries and interest in public donations to the family and establishing a mechanism for receipt of such contributions, as appropriate
3. Preparing all documentation of benefits and payments due survivors to include the nature and amount of benefits to be received by each beneficiary, the schedule of payments and the name of a contact person or facilitator at each benefit or payment office
4. Assisting the family with filing all benefits paperwork and maintaining contact with the family in order to ensure that benefits are being received. A copy of benefits documentation should be provided to all survivors affected and explained to each of them
5. Advising the surviving family of the role of the Loudoun County Deputy Sheriff's Association as well as other organizations and the nature of support programs that they sponsor for law enforcement survivors

G. Family Support Advocate

The Family Support Advocate serves in a long-term liaison and support capacity for the surviving family. The duties of this position may include:

1. Providing contact with surviving family members in order to keep them abreast of criminal proceedings related to the death of their family member
  2. Accompanying surviving family members to criminal proceedings, explaining the nature of the proceedings and introducing them to prosecutors and other persons as required
  3. Identifying all support services available to family members and working on their behalf to secure any services necessary
  4. Maintaining routine contact with the family members to provide companionship and emotional support; maintaining an ongoing relationship between the agency and the immediate family
  5. Providing a copy of the Community Resource Information Form to the family; advising the family that the contents of the form will provide them with information pertaining to resources but that the Sheriff's Office will make the necessary contact and requests on the family's behalf
  6. Relaying the concerns and needs of the family to those individuals or organizations that may provide assistance, and encouraging others to visit and help as necessary
- H. A "Confidential Line of Duty Death Information" (Form #LCSO 1.56, Attachment #A) will be completed by all sworn agency personnel. This form will be reviewed and updated annually during the first month of each new fiscal year by each deputy. These documents will be kept and maintained in a database by the Team Leader and placed with each employee's Bureau Commander.
- I. The "Loudoun County Sheriff's Office Casualty Assistance Assignment Roster" (Form #LCSO 1.57) will be completed by the Casualty Assistance Team Leader, the Sheriff, his/her designee, or the highest ranking official on duty at the time of a line of duty death.