



MAINE STATE POLICE GENERAL ORDER

E-14

SUBJECT: MAINE STATE POLICE POLICY REGARDING THE DEATH OF A MEMBER, RETIREE, OR OTHER MAINE SWORN LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

EFFECTIVE DATE: 08.01.2020

EXPIRATION DATE: 08.01.2027

RECENT HISTORY: AMENDED (08.01.2020); AMENDED (11.15.2019); AMENDED (10.04.2017); REVISED (02.25.2014); TECHNICAL CHANGE (10.04.2011); NEW (10.01.1998)

DISTRIBUTION CODE: 2 (MAY BE PUBLICLY DISCLOSED)

APPLICABILITY CODE: S, Z

SIGNATURE OF COLONEL:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. B. R.", is written over a light blue rectangular background.

I. PURPOSE

1. The purpose of this General Order is to establish the procedures the Maine State Police is to follow in the event a current or retired sworn member of the Maine State Police, or other active duty Maine sworn law enforcement officer, dies.

II. POLICY

1. The policy of the Maine State Police is:
 - A. To provide assistance and emotional support to the immediate family of a sworn member who dies or is mortally-wounded;

- B. To provide support to the immediate family of a retired sworn member who has died; and
- C. To maintain a funeral manual to be utilized as a reference guide in carrying out the requirements of this policy.

III. DEFINITIONS

- 1. For the purposes of this General Order, the terms included in this section are defined as follows, unless otherwise indicated in the order.

- A. Agency Liaison Officer. "Agency Liaison Officer means the deceased or mortally-wounded sworn member's Commanding Officer, or her or his designee, who shall assume overall responsibilities for coordinating the liaison assistance that the Maine State Police will provide.
- B. Benefits Coordinator. "Benefits coordinator" means an officer assigned by the Agency Liaison Officer to assist the immediate family of a deceased sworn member by coordinating, preparing, and filing all of the paperwork necessary to provide survivor benefits to the deceased sworn member's immediate family.
- C. Family Liaison Officer. "Family Liaison Officer" means a sworn member assigned by the Agency Liaison Officer to maintain contact with the immediate family of a mortally-wounded or deceased sworn member and to offer assistance and emotional support to immediate family members.
- D. Funeral Detail Commander. "Funeral Detail Commander" means a sworn member assigned by the Agency Liaison Officer to coordinate the planning and execution of the funeral for a deceased sworn member and to ensure that the wishes of the immediate family with respect to the funeral are carried out to the fullest extent practicable.
- E. Immediate Family. "Immediate Family" means:
 - 1. The spouse, significant other, or finance(e);
 - 2. All children and step-children;
 - 3. Parents and step-parents; and
 - 4. Siblings

of a sworn member who is deceased or mortally wounded.

- F. Hospital Liaison Officer. "Hospital Liaison Officer" means the highest ranking sworn member present at the hospital where a deceased or mortally-wounded sworn member is.
 - 1. The Hospital Liaison Officer shall coordinate with hospital staff for the arrival of immediate family members, other kin

and friends of the hospitalized sworn member, Maine State Police personnel, and the media.

- G. Line-of-duty death. "Line-of-duty death" means the death of an active-duty sworn member resulting from apparent or actual criminal conduct or an accident in the course of performing law enforcement-related duties while the sworn member is either on-duty or off-duty.
- H. Non-line-of-duty death. "Non-line-of-duty death" means a death of a sworn member that occurs for reasons unrelated to the performance of law enforcement-related duties by the member.
- I. Retiree. "Retiree" means a former sworn member of the Maine State Police who has retired from the agency.
- J. Sworn member. "Sworn member" means an active-duty, sworn officer of the Maine State Police.

IV. PROCEDURE

1. GENERAL

- A. The procedures set forth in this policy are to be followed whenever possible in cases of a line-of-duty death of a sworn member, as well as in cases in which a sworn member has been mortally wounded in the line of duty.
 - 1. To the fullest extent practicable, the wishes of the immediate family of the sworn member must take precedence over the wishes of the Maine State Police.
- B. An individual providing assistance to immediate family members shall take all possible measures to accommodate their needs and wishes, but is not to make promises that the individual is not certain can be fulfilled.

2. NOTIFICATION & PUBLIC DISLCOSURE OF INFORMATION

- A. In order to make notification as soon as possible, the senior ranking sworn officer at the scene of a line of duty death shall designate a supervisor to notify immediate family members of the sworn member's medical condition or death.
 - 1. Notification to Command Staff shall be made as quickly as possible, concurrent with notifications that are made through the Chain-of-Command Notification of immediate family members must be made in person whenever possible.

- a. Whenever appropriate, the sworn member making notification in person should be accompanied by another person such as a clergy member or another sworn member.
 - b. Whenever the health of an immediate family member is a concern, the sworn member making notification may request emergency medical service personnel to stand by.
 2. The sworn member making notification shall identify and then notify any immediate family member who is not geographically close by contacting the law enforcement agency of jurisdiction and requesting that the agency make personal notification to the immediate family member.
 3. If a sworn member is making notification that another sworn member has died, the notification must be made in as forthright, empathetic, and compassionate manner as possible.
 - B. The name of the deceased sworn member shall not be released to the media or any other party until all immediate family members are notified.
 1. If the media prematurely obtains the name of a deceased or mortally-wounded sworn member, the ranking sworn member is to respectfully request that the media refrain from reporting the information until all immediate family of the deceased or wounded sworn member have been notified.
 - C. Communication of information concerning a deceased or mortally-wounded sworn member and the incident that resulted in the sworn member's death or injury, shall be by telephone or through in-person communication to the fullest extent practicable.
 - D. When applicable, after notifications to all immediate family members have been made, notification of a line-of-duty death may occur by requesting the Regional Communications Center of jurisdiction to issue a line-of-duty death teletype.
3. TRANSPORTATION OF IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBERS
- A. If the opportunity to transport an immediate family member (or members) to the hospital exists prior to the sworn member's death, transportation to do so must be provided immediately, and the sworn member providing notification shall inform the Hospital Liaison Officer that the family member or members are in route.

4. ASSIGNMENT OF PERSONNEL

- A. The Colonel, or her or his designee, shall assign a sworn member to be the Agency Liaison Officer.
 - 1. The Agency Liaison Officer then shall assign other sworn members to the following positions:
 - a. Hospital Liaison Officer;
 - b. Family Liaison Officer;
 - c. Funeral Detail Commander; and
 - d. Benefits Coordinator.
 - 2. The Agency Liaison Officer shall anticipate the need for services of the Honor Guard and Incident Management Assistance Team for the ceremonial and logistical efforts associated with the escort of the deceased member and the planning and execution of services.
 - a. These teams should be contacted as soon as possible.
 - 3. The Agency Liaison Officer also may contact a clergy member when appropriate or requested by the family and request to provide comfort and support to the immediate family of the deceased or mortally-wounded sworn member.
- B. The Colonel, or her or his designee, shall:
 - 1. Ensure that immediate family members of the deceased or mortally-wounded sworn member are made aware of the sworn members who have been assigned to the above-listed positions;
 - 2. Make additional personnel assignments to assist in handling incoming inquiries about a sworn member's death or condition, and direct such inquiries to appropriate personnel; and
 - 3. Ensure that other Maine State Police personnel are provided with the opportunity to participate in critical incident stress debriefings.

5. AGENCY LIAISON OFFICER

- A. The Agency Liaison Officer shall be the deceased or mortally-wounded sworn member's Commanding Officer, or that Commanding Officer's designee, and shall act as the liaison between the sworn member's immediate family and the Maine State Police.
- B. The Agency Liaison Officer shall:

1. Meet with immediate family members and explain her or his responsibilities to them;
2. When applicable, coordinate the accompaniment and arrival of the body of a deceased sworn member to the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner;
3. When applicable, be available to immediate family members of a deceased sworn member prior to and throughout the funeral and wake;
4. Ensure that the needs and wishes of the immediate family come before those of the Maine State Police, to the fullest extent practicable;
5. When applicable, assist the immediate family in working with the funeral director regarding funeral arrangements being made for a deceased sworn member;
6. When applicable, identify churches and reception halls that will accommodate a law enforcement funeral for a deceased sworn member, and then report that information to the immediate family so the family may decide where to hold the funeral;
7. Relay to the immediate family any information concerning the circumstances that led to the sworn member's death or injury;
8. Determine the need for travel and lodging arrangements to be made for out-of-town relatives of the mortally-wounded or deceased sworn member;
9. When applicable, identify any other special needs of the family prior to the funeral for a deceased sworn member and report this information to the Funeral Detail Commander;
10. Brief immediate family members about responding to media inquiries and inform them of whether any limitations must be placed on what, if any, information may disclose to the media; and
11. Ensure that security checks of a deceased or mortally-wounded sworn member's residence are immediately initiated and continue for as long as necessary thereafter.

6. HOSPITAL LIAISON OFFICER

- A. When possible, the Colonel, or her or his designee, shall join the immediate family of a deceased or mortally-wounded sworn member at the hospital.
- B. The highest ranking sworn member (other than the Colonel) to first arrive at the hospital where a deceased or mortally-wounded sworn member is located shall serve as the Hospital Liaison Officer until one is designated.
- C. The acting or designated Hospital Liaison Officer shall:

1. Coordinate the arrival of immediate family members, other next of kin and friends of the hospitalized sworn member, Maine State Police personnel, and the media;
2. Arrange for waiting facilities for immediate family members, other next of kin and friends of the hospitalized sworn member, and Maine State Police personnel;
3. Arrange for a media staging area;
4. Ensure that immediate family members are provided with appropriate assistance at the hospital;
5. Ensure that medical personnel provide pertinent medical information on the hospitalized sworn member's condition to the immediate family first before any other parties are informed;
6. Assist immediate family members, in accordance with their wishes, in gaining access to the injured or deceased sworn member;
7. Provide hospital personnel with all necessary information on billing for medical services.
 - a. The liaison should ensure that all medical bills are directed to the appropriate Maine State Police authority, and that the bills are not forwarded to the hospitalized member's immediate family or other next of kin; and
8. Arrange transportation for the immediate family and other next of kin upon their departure from the hospital.

7. FAMILY LIAISON OFFICER

A. The Family Liaison Officer shall:

1. Keep immediate family informed of investigative developments and criminal proceedings related to the incident that resulted in the sworn member's death or injury;
2. When applicable, accompany immediate family to criminal proceedings, explain the nature of the proceedings, and introduce them to prosecutors and other district attorney's office personnel;
3. Identify support services available to immediate family members and work on their behalf to secure any such services, if necessary;
4. Maintain routine contact with the immediate family to provide companionship and emotional support, as well as to maintain an ongoing relationship between the Maine State Police and the immediate family;

5. Relay concerns and needs of immediate family to those individuals or organizations that might be able to provide assistance in response; and
6. Maintain a list of advocates willing to assist the immediate family and help to coordinate the provision of such assistance when requested.

8. FUNERAL DETAIL COMMANDER

- A. The Funeral Detail Commander shall work with the Agency Liaison Officer to ensure that the needs and requests of the immediate family of a deceased sworn member are fulfilled to the fullest extent practicable, including, but not limited to:
 1. Planning and conducting the law enforcement funeral in accordance with the Maine State Police *Funeral Manual*;
 2. Coordinating all official law enforcement notifications;
 3. Serving as the liaison with all visiting law enforcement agencies; and
 4. Serving as the liaison with the media.
- B. The Funeral Detail Commander also shall ensure that Maine State Police personnel are made aware of any restrictions regarding the disclosure of any information that might affect future judicial or administrative proceedings.

9. BENEFITS COORDINATOR

- A. The Benefits Coordinator shall:
 1. File worker's compensation claims and related paperwork on behalf of the immediate family of a mortally-wounded or deceased sworn member;
 2. Present immediate family members with information about benefits available to them;
 3. Document inquiries or interest expressed about donations to the immediate family, and coordinate an appropriate means for such donations to be received;
 4. As applicable, prepare all documentation of benefits and payments due to immediate family members, including, but not limited to, the type and amount of benefits to be received by each beneficiary, the schedule of the payments of the benefits, and the name of a contact person or facilitator at each office from where a payment or benefit will be provided.

10. RECORDS

- A. A copy of all files and records generated as the result of the death of a sworn member shall be retained at the Maine State Police Troop or Unit to which the deceased sworn member was assigned.

11. MOURNING BANDS AND OTHER SUCH SYMBOLS OF MOURNING

- A. The following information shall be used as a guide to the proper etiquette regarding the wearing of black bands to signal mourning.
 - 1. If a sworn member dies, black bands shall be worn over all exposed Maine State Police badges for a period of thirty (30) days, or as otherwise directed by the Colonel, or her or his designee.
 - 2. If a retiree or other Maine law enforcement officer dies, black bands shall be worn over all exposed Maine State Police badges until after the funeral for the retiree or officer has occurred, or as otherwise directed by the Colonel, or her or his designee.
- B. The Colonel may designate any item as a reminder of a deceased sworn member and authorize the wearing or display of such reminders.

NOTICE

THIS GENERAL ORDER IS FOR USE OF THE MAINE STATE POLICE AND NOT FOR ANY OTHER AGENCY. THE GENERAL ORDER IS NOT INTENDED TO BE RELIED UPON BY ANY OTHER INDIVIDUAL OR PRIVATE OR PUBLIC AGENCY. THE GENERAL ORDER EXPRESSLY DOES NOT CREATE, AND IS NOT INTENDED TO CREATE, A HIGHER LEGAL STANDARD OF SAFETY OR CARE IN AN EVIDENTIARY SENSE WITH RESPECT TO THIRD-PARTY CLAIMS. VIOLATIONS OF THIS ORDER ONLY MAY FORM THE BASIS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE SANCTIONS BY THE MAINE STATE POLICE.