

**1.429 LINE OF DUTY DEATHS & SERIOUS INJURIES** (22.2.3, 22.2.4)

- A. The Chief or designee is responsible for ensuring that the agency provides all reasonable and prudent liaison and support services, consistent with family wishes, to the immediate families and co-workers of employees who die or sustain serious injuries in the line of duty.
- B. These notification procedures in addition to **2.424.12 Next of Kin Notifications - Departmental** should be followed in cases of line-of-duty deaths or when employees have been critically injured in the line of duty.
  - 1. Employees' names will not be released to the media or other parties before immediate survivors living in the area are notified.
  - 2. Notifications to immediate family members should be made as soon as possible and, if possible, after command notifications.
  - 3. EMS support should be requested to stand by if the health of immediate survivors is a concern.
  - 4. Notifications to family members should be made in as forthright and empathetic manner as possible.
  - 5. Officers at hospitals should be informed by notifying officers if and how family members are on the way to hospitals. Immediate transportation should be offered by officers making notifications.
  - 6. Information about involved employees and related incidents should not, to the best extent possible, be transmitted over the radio. The PIO should request the employees' names be withheld by the media should they obtain the information prematurely.
  - 7. Officers making notifications will also attempt to learn of other family members that should be notified and ensure those notifications are made as desired by immediate family members.
- C. The next highest ranking officer, or departmental liaison, to arrive at the hospital will be the initial hospital liaison officer and will be responsible for:
  - 1. Coordinating the arrival of immediate survivors, departmental personnel, the media and others and assume the following responsibilities:
  - 2. Arranging for waiting facilities for immediate family member and a press staging area;
  - 3. Meeting the family members' needs regarding their accessibility to other officers and friends;
  - 4. Ensuring that medical personnel provide pertinent medical information on the employee's condition to the family before any other parties;
  - 5. Assisting family members in gaining timely access to the injured or deceased employee as permitted by the investigation;
  - 6. Providing hospital personnel with medical billing information to ensure that all medical bills are initially directed to the university and not to employees' families;
  - 7. Arranging transportation for the family when they wish to leave the hospital; and
  - 8. Ensuring that immediate family members are provided with appropriate assistance at the hospital.
- D. The Chief or designee will ensure:
  - 1. That family members and the agency are made aware of the individuals who are designated to fulfill the functions of:
    - a. Departmental liaison;
    - b. Funeral liaison;
    - c. Benefits coordinator; and
    - d. Family support advocate; and
  - 2. That employees are given the opportunity to participate in critical incident stress debriefings.
- E. The department liaison will normally be a commander who serves as a facilitator between the family and the agency and works closely with the funeral liaison officer to ensure that the needs and requests of the family are fulfilled. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - 1. Providing oversight of travel and lodging arrangements for out-of-town family members;

2. Identifying potential funeral facilities to family members so they can make final location determinations;
  3. Coordinating all official law enforcement notifications and arrangements to include the honor guard, pallbearers, traffic control and liaison with visiting law enforcement agencies;
  4. Assisting family members in dealing with general media inquiries and informing them of what they should or should not say to the media;
  5. Providing liaison with the media to include coordination of any statements and press conferences;
  6. Ensuring that members of the agency are aware of restrictions regarding release of any information that might undermine future legal proceedings; and
  7. Ensuring that security checks of the survivor's residence are initiated immediately following the incident and for as long as necessary thereafter.
- F. The funeral liaison acts as facilitator between the decedent employee's family and the department during the wake and funeral. The funeral liaison is responsible for:
1. Being available to the family prior to and throughout the wake and funeral;
  2. Ensuring that the needs and wishes of the family come before those of the department;
  3. Assisting the family in working with the funeral director regarding funeral arrangements;
  4. With the permission of the lead investigating agency, relaying any information to the family concerning the circumstances of the decedent employee's death and appropriate information regarding any investigation;
  5. 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 department liaison; and
  6. Briefing the family members on the procedures involved in the law enforcement funeral.
- G. Staff in the Office of Human Resources (OHR) assumes the role of benefits coordinator and is responsible for:
1. Filing workers' compensation claims and related paperwork;
  2. Presenting information on all benefits available to the family;
  3. Documenting inquiries and interest in public donations to the family and establishing a mechanism for receipt of such contributions, as appropriate;
  4. 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;
  5. Filing all benefits paperwork and maintaining contact with the family in order to ensure that benefits are being received;
  6. Providing completed copies of benefit documents to all survivors affected and explained to each of them; and
  7. Advising the surviving family of the role of employee associations and organizations and the nature of support programs that they sponsor for law enforcement survivors.
- K. The family support advocate serves in a long-term liaison and support capacity for the surviving family. The duties of this individual include:
1. Providing contact with surviving family members in order to keep them abreast of criminal proceedings relating 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 family members to provide companionship and emotional support and maintain an ongoing relationship between the department and the immediate family;  
and
5. 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.