



LINE OF DUTY DEATHS & DEPARTMENT FUNERALS

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I. POLICY

A. It is the policy of the Anne Arundel County Police Department to provide liaison assistance to the immediate family of any Anne Arundel County Police Officer who dies in the line of duty. This assistance will be provided whether the death is the result of felonious or accidental circumstances while that officer is an active member of this police department.

B. Consistent with that liaison assistance, the Anne Arundel County Police Department will strive to provide a clear, concise, and comprehensive overview of survivor benefits. In addition, the department will provide both tangible and intangible emotional support during this traumatic period.

C. The Anne Arundel County Police Department further realizes and understands that the actual funeral arrangements should properly reflect the wishes of the deceased officer's family and that any conflict will be decided in favor of the family.

D. Furthermore, it is the policy of the Anne Arundel County Police Department to provide similar liaison assistance to any Anne Arundel County Police Officer who suffers a severe and debilitating injury in the line of duty. This assistance will be provided whether the injury is the result of felonious or accidental circumstances. Liaison assistance will be tailored to meet those specific needs.

II. DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this policy, the following words/phrases pertaining to line of duty deaths and departmental funerals are defined as follows:

A. **Benefits Coordinator** - A ranking official appointed by the Chief of Police tasked with assisting the deceased's family in obtaining all benefits to which they are entitled.

B. **Color Guard** - A contingent of department members assigned to carry the American, Maryland State, and Anne Arundel County flags, flanked by two riflemen.

C. **Casket Watch** - A mandatory requirement for a line of duty death that requires the constant guarding of the deceased's remains once the body has been prepared for viewing. This honor is performed on a 24-hour basis.

D. Honor Guard - A contingent of department members tasked to render appropriate military honors during the departmental funeral, i.e. saluting of the casket at the funeral site and the burial location.

E. Liaison Officer -An officer appointed to serve as the department's representative and official contact person for all matters relating to the family of the deceased member. The liaison officer is an Anne Arundel County Police Officer, and does not necessarily need to be of a supervisory rank.

F. Mourning Band - A black band of cloth worn on the badge to designate mourning by department members. The mourning band always covers the word "Police" on the badge.

Uniformed officers may wear a mourning band for a period of 10 days following the announcement of the death of any officer, from within the state of Maryland, who dies in the line of duty.

G. Mourning Period - That period of time that is designated by the Chief of Police where the mourning band is worn by all members and the County flags are flown at half-staff. The traditional mourning period for a line of duty death is generally 30 days.

H. Pallbearers - Those individuals selected to carry the casket of the deceased member. Pallbearers need not be strictly departmental members. Civilians or a combination of members and civilians can perform this function. However, all pallbearers should be dressed in similar attire.

I. Surviving Family -Immediate family members of the deceased department member, to include spouse, children, parents, siblings, fiancée and significant others.

III. NOTIFICATION OF SURVIVING FAMILY

It is the responsibility of the deceased or severely injured officer's District/Division Commander to properly notify the officer's next of kin. The following guidelines must be strictly adhered to when making notification to the surviving family:

A. The name of the deceased officer **MUST NEVER** be provided to the media before immediate survivors living in the area are notified.

B. If there is knowledge of an existing medical problem with an immediate survivor, medical personnel should be dispatched to the residence to coincide with the death notification.

C. Notification **MUST ALWAYS** be made in person and never alone. The following individuals should accompany the officer when notification is to be made:

1. The Chief of Police (or his/her personal representative)
2. The Police Chaplain
3. The commanding officer of the deceased

If the above-suggested persons are not readily accessible, notification should not be held up until these people can gather. If the opportunity to get the family to the hospital prior to the demise of the officer presents itself, **DO NOT** wait for the appropriate delegation to gather.

D. The best person to make the actual death notification might not always be a command level officer. Another officer or supervisor close to the deceased and his/her family may be the most appropriate choice, if available. This person should not replace the Chief, but instead serve as a valuable assistant.

E. The reactions of the family may include hysteria, anger, fainting, physical violence, shock, etc. A medical unit should be placed on standby in the neighborhood vicinity of the notification, in case medical response is required.

F. **NEVER** make a death notification on the doorstep. Gather everyone in the home and ask them to sit down. Inform them slowly and clearly of the information you have on the incident. Make sure you use the officer's name during the notification.

- G. If the officer has already died, relay that information. **NEVER** give the family a false sense of hope. Use words like "died" and "dead" rather than "gone-away" or "passed away."
- H. If the person responsible for the death notification has been seriously affected by the death, he/she should understand that showing emotions is perfectly acceptable. If specifics of the incident are known, the officer should relay as much information as possible to the family. Do not intentionally withhold information from the family, unless it could jeopardize an ongoing investigation.
- I. If the family wants to go to the hospital, they should be transported via police vehicle. It is highly recommended that the family NOT drive themselves to the hospital. Should there be serious resistance and the family insists on driving, an officer should accompany them in the car. If young children are at home, the notifying officer should be prepared to assist in handling immediate baby-sitting needs.
- J. Once the family is enroute to the hospital, the transporting officer will notify the Communications Section that the family is enroute, as well as an approximate time of arrival.
- K. The deceased or severely injured officer's parents will be afforded the courtesy of personal notification if they live within a reasonable distance of Anne Arundel County. The deceased's parents are immediate family members and are very important during this time of crisis.
- L. If immediate survivors are out of town, personal death notification should be requested from the nearest law enforcement agency in that area. Logistical arrangements can be made that will enable simultaneous telephone contact with a department representative while the notification is being made locally.

IV. FAMILY ASSISTANCE AT THE HOSPITAL

- A. The District/Division Commander will immediately respond to the hospital and meet with the hospital personnel to arrange appropriate waiting facilities for the family, as well as a separate area for fellow police officers. This police official should also ensure that medical personnel relay pertinent information to the family on the officer's condition in a timely manner.
- B. The District/Division Commander or his designee will ensure that the family is updated on the incident as soon as the family arrives at the hospital.
- C. If it is possible for the family to visit the critically injured officer prior to death they must be afforded that opportunity without hesitation, within the guidelines of the medical facilities policy. **Do not be overly protective of the family.**
- D. The attending medical personnel should make the family aware of hospital policy about visitation with the injured officer and/or visitation with the body following the officer's death. The family should also be advised why an autopsy will be needed.
- E. The District/Division Commander or his designee should be present the entire time the family is at the hospital and should arrange whatever assistance the family may need during this time.
- F. The individuals who made the initial notification should also be among those at the hospital.
- G. A survivor should not be sedated unless medication is specifically requested by the survivor, or their physician.
- H. Idle promises will not be made to the family at this time (i.e., "We'll promote him/her posthumously"; "We'll retire his/her badge.")
- I. Arrangements should be made for transportation of the family back to their residence.
- J. Arrangements should be made with the medical facility to have all medical bills relating to the deceased officer sent to Anne Arundel County for payment. The family **SHOULD NOT** receive any of these bills at their residence address.

V. SUPPORT FOR THE FAMILY DURING THE WAKE AND FUNERAL

A. District/Division Commander Responsibilities

The District/Division Commander will perform the following duties during the wake and funeral period:

1. Compile information concerning the funeral arrangements and any other pertinent information needed to complete the teletype notification as follows:
 - a. Name of deceased
 - b. Date/time of death
 - c. Funeral arrangements (to include if service is private or formal)
 - d. Expressions of sympathy in lieu of flowers
 - e. Uniform to be worn
 - f. Staging area
 - g. Encourage officers attending the funeral to carpool with three and four per patrol vehicle to avoid traffic and parking problems.
2. Arrange for replacements for on-duty officers desiring to attend the funeral services.
3. Assist family and visiting departments with transportation after the funeral.
4. Meet with or contact the following persons to coordinate all funeral activities and establish a complete funeral itinerary.
 - a. Family members/Liaison Officer
 - b. Special Services Commander
 - c. Public Information Officer
 - d. Priest/minister/chaplain
 - e. Funeral director
 - f. Cemetery director
5. Coordinate through the Chief of Police the order to fly all County flags at half-staff and direct the wearing of mourning bands for a thirty-day period in the case of line-of-duty deaths.
6. Arrange for a stand-by doctor to assist the family, if necessary.
7. If the family desires a burial in uniform, designate an officer to obtain a uniform and all accouterments, assemble the uniform and deliver it to the funeral home. (The officer's weapon can be displayed during the actual viewing, but will be secured at all other times by the Commander of the Casket Watch).
8. Assign an officer to remove property from the deceased officer's assigned patrol vehicle, clean the vehicle, and drape the light bar with black cloth.
9. Arrange for meals for the immediate family and provide baby-sitting services, if necessary.
10. Ensure that mourning bunting for the district police station is ordered and hung. (Purchasing is done by the Management Planning Section on a contractual basis.)

B. Appointment of Liaison Officer

1. The District/Division Commander will, with the approval of the family, appoint a liaison officer to assist the family throughout the wake and funeral.
2. The appointment of a liaison officer is a critical assignment. Although the liaison officer should know the deceased officer and be aware of the family relationships, the officer should not be so emotionally involved with the loss that he/she would become ineffective. The liaison officer must know that **this is not a decision making position. This is a role of "facilitator" between family and the department.** The liaison officer must be an Anne Arundel County Police Officer, but need not be of a supervisory rank.

C. Department Liaison Officer Responsibilities

1. Meet with the family and tell them what his responsibilities will be during this time.
2. Be constantly available to the surviving family throughout the wake and funeral.
3. Assist the family in making the necessary funeral arrangements and ensure the needs of the family come before the wishes of the department. (Since most officers have not prearranged their wishes for the handling of their own funeral, the family will most likely need to decide most aspects of the funeral. The liaison officer should only make the family aware of what they can offer in the way of assistance if the family decides to have a "law enforcement funeral").
4. Know all information concerning the death and continuing investigation to answer family questions.
5. Provide as much assistance as possible; oversee arrangements for travel and lodging for out-of-town family members.
6. Ascertain what the police fraternal/labor organization involvement will be, and what financial assistance they are willing to provide for out-of-town family travel, feeding the funeral attendees following the burial, etc.
7. See that the surviving parents are afforded appropriate recognition and have proper placement arranged for them during the funeral and funeral procession.
8. Accommodate all possible family requests for assistance by communicating those desires to the appropriate commander. The liaison officer may not authorize any expenditure without the express approval of the appropriate commander.
9. Ensure that the District/Division Commander is fully aware of all requested assistance.
10. Inform the Police Chaplain and/or family minister, the department psychologist, FOP President, and the Public Information Officer, as to the personal requests of the family and request that they be available at the church and the burial site.
11. Secure the use of a telephone answering machine to assist in the screening of telephone calls to the residence.
12. Determine the location of the officer's personal property (i.e., Evidence Collection/Property Management Section), being particularly attentive to wedding rings and religious medals.

D. Special Services Bureau Commander's Responsibilities

1. The Special Services Bureau Commander will direct and coordinate the following assignments, ensuring their execution is in keeping with the highest degree of reverence and dignity:
 - a. Casket Watch
 - b. Honor Guard
 - c. Color Guard
 - d. Pallbearers
2. The Special Services Bureau Commander is also responsible for the following:
 - a. Complete an itinerary for the day of the funeral services.
 - b. Brief the Chief of Police and command staff concerning all funeral arrangements and special family requests.
 - c. Determine if the family wishes a flag presentation by the Chief of Police and notify the Chief's office. Obtain an American flag. (This can be obtained through the funeral home.)
 - d. Ensure an Anne Arundel County Seal wreath is ordered through the Chief's office.
 - e. Arrange for a Fire Department ambulance to be present at the cemetery.

- f. Obtain a County garage tow truck to be on standby in the vicinity of the funeral procession, in case of a disabled vehicle in the procession.
- g. Decide procession route traffic posts
- h. Parking coordination at the church and cemetery
- i. Assign Traffic Safety officers to reconnoiter the procession route.
- j. Assign traffic posts (funeral home, church, procession route, cemetery, reception, etc.)
- k. Obtain traffic cones, barricades, etc., from Public Works for parking.
- l. Arrange for assistance from other jurisdictions if the services extend beyond Anne Arundel County.
- m. Arrange for a tactical radio channel with the Communications Section for the funeral detail.
- n. Prepare and publish a Special Order outlining the procedures and itinerary of the funeral.
- o. Maintain a roster of all departments sending personnel to the funeral. Assist in arranging for all the necessary accommodations, i.e., food, lodging, etc.
- p. Acknowledgement of visiting or assisting departments with letters of appreciation prepared for the Chief's signature. Secretarial support can be acquired from other District/Division personnel.

E. Public Information Officer

1. It is the responsibility of the Public Information Office to handle all exchanges with the media throughout the entire ordeal. The Public Information Office should coordinate any release of information with the Special Services Bureau Commander, to ensure no information is released which could jeopardize the criminal prosecution of the case.

F. Assistant Chief

1. The *Assistant Chief* is responsible for the review and approval of the Special Order on the funeral arrangements and funeral detail. This order will provide all commanders and department members with the information necessary to support the department's response to the event at hand.
2. The *Assistant Chief* will serve as the department's Benefits Coordinator. The Benefits Coordinator will ensure that the appropriate personnel are designated to meet with the family within 72 hours after the funeral to discuss the benefits they are eligible to receive, and that the following related benefits tasks are completed:
 - a. The benefits coordinator is responsible for obtaining and preparing the necessary forms and supporting documents. The documents will be submitted to the appropriate agency for processing and payment.
 - b. Filing of Injured Worker's Insurance Fund Claim related documentation, if applicable.
 - c. Gathering of information on all benefits and funeral payments available to the surviving family.
 - d. Fielding all telephone calls and inquiries regarding the establishment of any special trust or educational funds.
 - e. Filing of all benefit-related documentation, and following through with the surviving family to ensure these benefits are received.
 - f. If there are surviving children from a former marriage, the lawful custodian of these children should also receive documentation of the children's benefits.
 - g. Advise the surviving family of the role that associations and organizations have in making their attorney/financial counselor available to the family for any necessary counseling (i.e., establishing trust or educational funds, etc.)

VI. AUTHORIZED HONORS

The following will serve as a guideline in regard to those honors rendered to the various categories of deceased department personnel. Should the family specifically request any of these traditional honors be waived, their wishes will be honored.

A. Line of Duty Deaths - Sworn Members

Line of duty deaths (felonious or accidental) involving sworn department members are entitled to the following honors:

1. Wearing of mourning band for 30 days

2. Color Guard
3. Honor Guard
4. Casket Watch
5. Pall Bearers
6. Firing Squad - 21 Gun Salute
7. Playing of Taps

It is appropriate to have a local military contingent provide a firing squad and/or bugler in the case of a deceased department member who is a U.S. Armed Forces veteran, regardless of the manner of death. This is a customary honor that is provided as a tribute from the veteran's former branch of service.

B. Line of Duty Deaths - Reserve Officers and Civilian Employees

Line of duty deaths (felonious or accidental) involving Reserve Officers of civilian personnel who die in the line of duty are entitled to the following honors:

1. Wearing of the mourning band from the date of death through the day of the funeral
2. Color Guard
3. Honor Guard
4. Casket Watch
5. Pall Bearers

C. Deaths Due to Natural Causes - Active or Retired Officers and Reserve Officers

Deaths of active or retired department members due to natural causes are entitled to the following honors:

1. Wearing of the mourning band for the twenty-four hour period on the day of the funeral
2. Either Color or Honor Guard (per request of family)
3. Pall Bearers

D. Additional Honors - Generally

1. Flying of the County Flag at Half-Staff

Only those deaths occurring in the line-of-duty will be acknowledged by the flying of all County flags at half-staff on the day of the funeral at the direction of the Chief of Police. Flags at all police facilities will be flown at half-staff for a period of thirty days from the date of the officer's death in the case of a line-of-duty death.

2. Flying of the United States Flag at Half-Staff

In accordance with Federal law, the United States flag will not be flown at half-staff to acknowledge a departmental death, unless authorized by the President of the United States.

VII. GENERAL FUNERAL PROCEDURES

A. Casket Watch

The Casket Watch is only for members who have died in the line of duty. The Casket Watch is usually comprised of officers from the Special Operations Section. However, volunteers can stand the watch at the discretion of the Commander of the slain officer. The officers who are assigned the detail must look sharp in uniform and conform to all current grooming regulations.

The Class A uniform will always be worn for the Casket Watch. It will include the Sam Brown belt and white gloves. The minimum number of personnel is eight officers plus a Sergeant to serve as the Officer in Charge of the Casket Watch. The watch should be divided into shifts with two officers standing 20 minutes at a time.

The Casket Watch moves at the slow death cadence. This includes marching, movements, and saluting. The supervisor will post the watch and officers will post themselves at/or near the head and feet of the officer, facing the public seating area.

While standing watch, officers will assume the position of "Parade Rest" and will not speak or move until relieved. Officers will be relieved every twenty minutes. Circumstances at the funeral home may require adjustments to accommodate the available space and influx of visitors. The Officer in Charge of the Casket Watch will have the authority to alter the length of the individual shifts to accommodate any special circumstances.

After the formal viewing hours, an informal casket watch will take over. This detail usually consists of two officers and is manned on a twenty-four hour basis.

B. Honor Guard

The Honor Guard will be composed of one Lieutenant, one Sergeant, and six officers. They will assemble at a point near the service (church, funeral home, or cemetery) for inspection by the Lieutenant. Assembly should occur at least thirty minutes prior to the start of the viewing or service. Commands of execution will be issued by the Sergeant.

Upon the conclusion of the services at the cemetery, members of the Honor Guard will remove the United States Flag from the casket and ceremonially fold it and turn it over to the Sergeant directing the detail. The Sergeant will then present the flag to the Chief of Police for presentation to the next of kin at the gravesite.

C. Pallbearers

If requested, six pallbearers will be selected in the same manner as the Honor Guard. Pallbearers should be under the direction of an assigned Officer in Charge, and will report to the funeral director at the time designated for instructions and seating arrangements. The duties of the pallbearers are usually dictated by the needs of the funeral director. Therefore, it is not feasible to prescribe a formation policy. However, when at all possible, members will move in some order or formation in a military manner.

D. Honor Guard and Pallbearer Uniforms

The Class A uniform will be worn by both the Honor Guard and Pallbearers. The uniform will include the Sam Brown belt and white gloves.

E. Special Instructions

Honor Guard, Color Guard, Casket Watch and Pallbearers will all receive specific detailed instructions from the Commander of the Special Services Bureau. These instructions will address the particulars of each group's participation and responsibilities during the funeral.

F. Participating Department Members

Members participating in the funeral will report to a predesignated assembly point, away from the place of services for inspection and briefing. Information regarding the uniform of the day, reporting time and location, etc. will be derived from the published Special Order.

From the established assembly point, members will move in an orderly fashion (i.e. route-step) to the place of service, timing their arrival to permit immediate entry.

Upon entering the building, members will remove their hats and hold them under their left arm. They will move in an orderly manner to the place reserved for them.

Members will remain standing until all members are in their places and the command, "BE SEATED" is given. Members will sit with hats in lap, maintaining their military bearing throughout the service.

Upon termination of service, members, upon command "DETAIL RISE," will rise in unison and place their hats under their left arms and prepare to file past the casket. They will hold their hats in this position until they have passed the casket and arrived outside.

Upon leaving the building, members will replace their hats and assemble in formation at right angles to the hearse.

1. Two ranks will be formed facing each other, leaving an aisle through which pallbearers and casket may pass.
2. Members should normally be dressed at extended intervals, but may be dressed at close intervals, if space is limited.
3. While waiting in formation, members will be placed at parade rest.

When the casket comes into view, the command "DETAIL, ATTENTION" will be given. The next command will be "PRESENT ARMS." All members will salute and hold this salute until the casket is placed in the hearse. At this time, the command "ORDER ARMS" will be given and members will return hands to their sides. Once the doors of the hearse are closed, the command is given "DETAIL, READY FACE" so that the two columns are facing the hearse. The Commander will then order "DETAIL, FALL OUT."

The members may then break ranks and quickly move to their vehicles in a professional manner.

G. Procedural Variations

The funeral procedures previously outlined will be followed in most cases. Any changes made necessary by a shortage of manpower, the unusual size of the funeral, the type of service, the physical arrangement of the place of service, or for any other reason will be made by the Special Services Bureau Commander in consultation with the *Assistant Chief*.

None of the provisions of this order will preclude the Chief of Police from authorizing a level of participation in excess of those established. This discretion will rest with the Chief and will ensure appropriateness in the case of unique or unusual circumstances or events.

VIII. DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBILITIES DURING CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS

A. It is the department's responsibility to keep the family informed of all legal proceedings if the officer died as a result of a criminal act.

B. The Commander of the Criminal Investigation Division will assign a contact officer to notify the family of upcoming court proceedings and keep them informed as the current status of the criminal case.

C. The Commander of the Criminal Investigation Division should also ensure the members of the deceased officer's family are given a detailed account of the entire incident which led to the officer's death or debilitating injury. If any details may not be released because of legal or prosecution reasons, this should also be explained to the family. Failure to disclose information may be viewed as an attempt to "hide something" and could create serious concerns for the family.

D. The District/Division Commander will assign an officer close to the deceased officer or reassign the liaison officer to accompany the family to court. This officer can assist with transportation as well as advise the family regarding those portions of the trial which might be particularly upsetting to them.

E. The Commander of the Criminal Investigation Division will ensure that a teletype is sent to all units within the department stating the date, time, and place of the court proceeding. This will allow as many officers as possible to show their support for this deceased officer and the surviving family by attending the proceedings.

IX. CONTINUED DEPARTMENTAL FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITIES

A. The department should be sensitive to the needs of survivors other than the spouse. Adult-aged or younger children, parents, siblings, etc., are all experiencing grief. Realize that grief is a process and that everyone handles grief differently. It might be beneficial to have the psychologist see the entire family for one "supportive service" session shortly after the funeral. Do not set time limitations on when the family should "recover" from the death. The grieving process has no timetable, and many survivors may experience a complicated grief process.

- B. The following post-funeral procedures will be observed:
1. The District/Division Commander should assign an officer close to the deceased officer to assemble a "shadow box" to present to the family. The box should at minimum contain the officer's badge, nameplate and department patch, as well as any rank insignia or commendation ribbons awarded. The presentation of a second box should be considered for surviving parents and those children who might not have been living with the officer at the time of the officer's death.
 2. When plaques, memorabilia, etc, are given to the surviving spouse, consideration should be given to the surviving parents. They have lost a child who can never be replaced. Duplicate presentations should be considered. Remember to invite the surviving family to Police Department activities.
 3. Children from a former marriage should also be recognized. Even though they did not live with the police officer/parent, they are still that officer's children. They, too, need personal memorabilia of their deceased parent.
 4. Close co-workers of the deceased officer should be encouraged to visit the home of the family on a regular basis. Their continued show of support and concern can have a very positive effect on the family.
 5. The District/Division Commander should coordinate a "formal" memorial service on the first anniversary of the officer's death.

Announcement of this service should be sent throughout the department to ensure maximum participation. A message should be sent to the family and flowers should be placed on the gravesite.
 6. The family of the officer should be formally invited to the annual "Fallen Heroes Day" memorial services.
 7. The Chief of Police and the liaison officer will coordinate with any community groups and government leaders regarding the establishment of any appropriate memorial, plaques, memorabilia.
 8. The department should maintain support as long as the family feels the need for the support. In time, the family will let you know when they are ready to move on with their lives without assistance from the Police Department.
- X. **PROPONENT UNIT:** Special Services Bureau.
- XI. **CANCELLATION:** This directive cancels Index Code 750, dated 02-27-09.