
KANSAS CITY, KANSAS POLICE

GENERAL ORDER

ORDER NUMBER: 1.07
ISSUED DATE: 03/22/2019
EFFECTIVE DATE: 03/29/2019
RESCINDS: 1.07 Issued 11/17/17

REFERENCE: CALEA Ch.22

CROSS REFERENCE:

CONTENTS:

- I. PURPOSE
- II. DEFINITIONS
- III. DEATH AND SERIOUS INJURY NOTIFICATION
- IV. ASSISTING SURVIVORS AT THE HOSPITAL
- V. APPOINTMENT OF DEPARTMENT COORDINATION PERSONNEL
- VI. DEPARTMENT LIAISON
- VII. FUNERAL LIAISON
- VIII. BENEFITS COORDINATOR
- IX. FAMILY SUPPORT ADVOCATE

I. PURPOSE

- A. To establish Departmental policy in preparing for the unfortunate event of an active duty officer's death in the line of duty and to direct the Departmental personnel in providing proper support for the deceased officer's family.
- B. It is the policy of this Department to provide liaison assistance to the immediate survivors of an active duty officer who dies in the line of duty and to provide tangible and emotional support during this traumatic period of readjustment for the surviving family.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. Line-of-duty death: The death of an active duty officer by felonious or accidental means during the course of performing police functions while on or off-duty.
- B. Survivors: Immediate family members of the deceased officer to include spouse, children, parents, siblings, fiancée and/or significant others.
- C. Beneficiary: Those designated by the officer as recipients of specific death benefits.
- D. Benefits: Financial payments made to the family to insure financial stability following the loss of a loved one.
- E. Funeral Payments: Financial payments made on behalf of the surviving family of an officer killed in the line of duty which are earmarked for funeral expenses.
- F. Critical Incident Form (Appendix B): The critical incident form will be completed by each officer. Each officer will be afforded the opportunity to update their form at the Annual Bid, or anytime they wish to do so in the Chief's Office. Upon completion of the form Officers will place their completed form into an envelope which they will seal and initial. The envelope will be secured in the Chiefs office. The envelope will only be opened by a designee of the Chief, during a LODD or serious injury.
 - 1. This form will be used to assist the Department with locating family members and any final wishes that an officer may have. It will not precede any living will or interest of the family.

III. DEATH OR SERIOUS INJURY NOTIFICATION

- A. The following procedures should be adhered to in cases of line-of-duty deaths and in cases of critically injured officers with poor prognosis of survival. These procedures should be followed whenever possible with the understanding that the wishes of the family take precedence over the desires of our Department. Officers providing services and assistance 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 officer shall not be released to the media or other individuals before immediate survivors living in the area are notified.
 2. The senior ranking officer on the scene is responsible for ensuring that timely notification is made to the surviving family. Upon a confirmation of death, a death notification must be made to the immediate survivors shortly after or coincide with command notifications. The responsibility for designating a notification officer(s) remains with the senior ranking officer in command of the scene.
 - a. Whenever the health of immediate survivors is a concern, emergency medical services personnel shall be requested by the officer assigned to notification duties to stand-by at the location of the notification.
 - b. When possible, victim services advocates and a police chaplain should accompany the notification officer during notification of survivors.
 - (1) The victim services supervisor and on-call Chaplain will coordinate all available Chaplains to respond to designated locations i.e. hospital, home, scene, etc. if needed.
 3. If the opportunity to get the family to the hospital exists prior to the officer's death, notification officers shall inform the hospital liaison officer the family is on its way. In such cases, immediate transportation should be provided for survivors rather than waiting for any other members of the Departmental delegation to arrive. (i.e., waiting for police chaplain, etc. to arrive before proceeding with notification). If the officer has died, notification should be made to the survivors in a forthright and empathetic manner as soon as possible.
 - a. Notification officers should know if there are young children in the home. The survivor may wish to leave the children at home. The Department should be prepared to handle immediate babysitting needs. (Utilize co-workers' spouses or other organizations or associations within the Department.)
 - b. Surviving parents should also be afforded the courtesy of personal notification if they live in the same geographic area.
 4. Communication of information concerning the officer and the incident shall, whenever possible, be restricted to the telephone to avoid interception by the media or others. Should the media obtain the officer's name prematurely, the Public Information Officer should request that the information be withheld until proper notification of all survivors can be made.
 5. Public Information Officer(s) and the Victim Services Unit shall be responsible for identification of additional survivors outside the area and shall make any notifications as desired by the immediate family. Such notification shall be made by contacting the law enforcement agency in that jurisdiction and requesting that a personal notification is made.
- B. The notification officer should be aware of the following:
1. As soon as the family sees you, they will know something is wrong. Ask to be admitted into the house. 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, making sure you use the officer's name during the notification.
 2. If the officer has already died, relay that information using words like "died" and "dead", rather than "gone away". DO NOT spark a false sense of hope.
 3. The notification officer will be seriously affected by the death; he/she should understand that showing emotions is perfectly acceptable.
 4. Reactions of the family may include hysteria, anger, fainting, physical violence, shock, etc.
 5. 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 family car.

IV. ASSISTING SURVIVORS AT THE HOSPITAL

- A. A ranking officer or their designate shall serve as Hospital Coordinator. The coordinator will respond to the medical facility and will be responsible for coordinating the arrival of immediate survivors, Departmental personnel, the media, etc. and assume the following responsibilities: (See attachment). The Chief of Police or his/her designee shall join the family at the hospital in order to emphasize the agency's support.
 1. Arrange for waiting facilities for immediate survivors and a separate waiting area for officers arriving at the hospital. A press staging area should be segregated from the family and the officers.
 - a. The family may request the assistance of a certain co-worker, (close personal friend) to provide emotional support and to aid with the family's understanding and familiarity with Department procedures and practices. The assignment of an individual to this task will be communicated to coordination personnel by the Chief of Police or his/her designate.
 2. Ensure that medical personnel provide pertinent medical information on the officer's condition, on a timely basis, to the officer's family before any other parties.
 3. Be an advocate for the family assisting family members with their desires, in gaining access to the injured or deceased officer.

4. Provide hospital personnel with all necessary information on the officer for medical services rendered. The liaison officer should ensure that all medical bills are directed to the Police Auditor's Office and they are not forwarded to the officer'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.

V. APPOINTMENT OF DEPARTMENT COORDINATION PERSONNEL

- A. Department personnel designated by the Chief of Police will serve in the following capacities: Department liaison, funeral liaison, benefits coordinator and family support advocate. These assignments will be made in writing to Department personnel and the surviving family members will be informed of those designated. In addition, the Chief of Police or his designee will:
 1. Make additional personnel assignments to assist in handling incoming phone calls and inquiries and to direct the public to appropriate personnel.
 2. Ensure the employee assistance program is implemented to assist surviving family members and emphasize the family's right to psychological services (offered through the Human Resource Office).
 3. Make certain other officers and civilians are provided the opportunity to participate in psychological services through the employee assistance program.

VI. DEPARTMENT LIAISON

- A. The Department Liaison Officer(s) will be designated by the Chief of Police and will serve as a facilitator between the family and the law enforcement agency. These officers will work closely with Funeral Liaison Personnel to ensure the needs and requests of the family are fulfilled. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, the following:
 1. Providing oversight of travel and lodging arrangements for out-of-town family members.
 2. Identify alternative funeral homes and reception halls which would accommodate the law enforcement funeral. The Department will attempt to assist family members in the making of funeral arrangements when feasible. These alternatives will be presented to the family, who will make the final determination.
 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 limitations on what they can say to the media specifically.
 5. Providing liaison with the media to include coordination of any statements and news conferences. The Departmental liaison shall also ensure that members of the agency are aware of restrictions regarding release of any information which might undermine future legal proceedings.
 6. Ensuring that security checks of the survivor's residence are initiated immediately following the incident and for as long as necessary thereafter.

VII. FUNERAL LIAISON

- A. The Funeral Liaison Officer(s) will be designated by the Chief of Police and act as facilitator between the decedent officer's family and the Department during the wake and funeral. The Police/Fire Chaplain's Association should be utilized by these officers in delivering services to the deceased officer's family. Funeral liaison personnel are responsible for:
 1. Meeting with family members and explaining their responsibilities to them.
 2. Being available to the family prior to and throughout the wake and funeral.
 3. Ensuring the needs and wishes of the family come before those of the Department.
 4. Assisting the family in working with the funeral director regarding funeral arrangements.
 5. Relaying any information to the family concerning the circumstances of the officer'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 Department liaison.
 7. Briefing the family members on the procedures involved in the law enforcement funeral.

VIII. BENEFITS COORDINATOR

- A. The Benefit Coordinator, as assigned by the Chief of Police, will be responsible for coordinating all death benefits/payments arising from the officer's death as well as for the filing of appropriate paperwork and following through with the family to assure these benefits are being received. The coordinator will work closely with the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge #4 and any other police association or

organization within the Department to assist the deceased officer(s) family. The Benefit Officers duties will include but not necessarily be limited to:

1. Gathering information on all benefits available to the family. (Refer to Benefit Coordinator's Guidebook located in Research/Development Unit)
2. Filing workers' compensation claims and related paper work. (Risk Management Office)
3. Filing pension forms. (Human Resource Office)
4. Filing group life insurance claims. (Human Resource Office)
5. Completing all necessary reports from the Department of Justice and other federal agencies.
6. Documenting inquiries and interest in public donations to the family and establishing a mechanism for receipt of such contributions, as appropriate.
7. 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.
8. Filing all benefits paperwork and maintaining contact with the family in order to ensure benefits are being received. A copy of benefits documentation should be provided to all survivors affected and explained to each of them.
9. Visiting with the surviving family within a few days following the funeral to discuss benefits.
 - a. Another visit two to three days later should follow the initial visit.
10. Advising the surviving family of the role of police associations, organizations and support programs for law enforcement survivors.

IX. VICTIM SERVICES ADVOCATE

- A. The Victim Services Unit will serve in a long-term liaison and support capacity for the surviving family. The advocates will be assigned as the family support advocate coordinator(s). The duties associated with the role will include:
 1. Provide contact with surviving family members in order to keep them abreast of criminal proceedings relating to the death of their family member.
 2. Accompany surviving family members to criminal proceedings i.e., sentencing appeals, parole hearings etc., explaining the nature of the proceedings and introducing them to prosecutors and other persons as required.
 3. Identify and provide all support services/counseling resources available to family members including services offered by the Kansas Crime Victim Compensation Board and working on their behalf to secure any services necessary.
 4. Maintain routine contact with family members to provide companionship and emotional support and to maintain an ongoing relationship between the Department and the immediate family. Encourage drop in visits by personnel.
 5. Assist family members with any questions they may have regarding departmental procedures.
 - a. If possible conduct a debriefing, in person, with the family, communicating the circumstances surrounding the death and attempt to answer any questions they may have.
 6. Communicate the concerns and needs of the family to those individuals and organizations that may provide assistance, while encouraging other concerned persons to visit and help if necessary.