

LEON COUNTY E.M.S.

Standard Operating Guideline

Title: LODD Combined Funeral Service Guidelines
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I. STATEMENT:

To provide funeral guidelines in the event of a Line of Duty Death of an employee of Leon County EMS and to provide general guidelines following the sudden death of a spouse or child of an employee.

II. GUIDELINE:

These guidelines should not be interpreted to mandate any particular service or procedure, they are however, offered as a guide to assist the survivors in planning a memorial that meets the needs of the surviving spouse or family members.

III. PROCEDURE:

Upon notification of the death of any Leon County EMS employee the following may be applied either in part or whole to facilitate compassionate timely handling of the memorial service and interment.

Line Of Duty Death: Any employee death that results while on duty or while undergoing medical treatment for any injury or disease resulting from such duty. This also includes the death of a department member while traveling in connection with such duty or while engaged in EMS activities while off duty.

Notification

Next of Kin

The importance of the next of kin notification cannot be over-emphasized. This process sets the tone for the difficult times the surviving family will face. Sensitivity and compassion are paramount.

The name of the deceased employee must never be released by the Department before the immediate family is notified. Do not inform neighbors of the death before telling the family. If asked, inform them you need to find the family regarding a medical emergency and ask if they know where the family can be found.

Family notification should be made as quickly as possible to avoid the family receiving a notification from another outside party. The media may employ many unscrupulous tactics to seek out the name of the fallen EMT or Medic. Use all necessary measures to protect the next of kin from unwanted media exposure.

For this reason, a Notification Team must assemble rapidly. The team should consist, if possible, of the Chief (or the highest ranking available Officer), Chaplain, Clergy (Family bishop, Pastor, Minister, etc.), Family Liaison Officer, and a friend of the family or close civilian family friend. Check the employee's Personal Information Packet for their wishes and or recommendations.

If the fallen employee's family lives far enough out of the area as to make the department's notification impractical, the local law enforcement agency in the area should be notified to make an immediate notification.

In the event that the department experiences the loss of more than one member, then multiple notification teams will be assembled and deployed.

Before arriving at the residence, verify the latest information, decide who will speak and what they will say. Because of the emotional circumstances involved, be prepared for the family to strike out and blame the department for their loss.

AGENCY PERSONNEL

EMS Department Members

It is very important that all members of the Department be notified of the death(s) as soon as possible, including those off-duty and vacationing personnel.

In the event of an on-duty death, the external monitoring of communication frequencies may be extensive. Communications regarding notifications should be restricted to the telephone whenever possible. Department personnel should not give out any information about the incident unless it is approved by the Chief or his designee.

For a line-of-duty death, a message, prepared and/or approved by the Chief, should be transmitted to personnel.

For a death other than a line-of-duty, an announcement should be transmitted to personnel.

Media

The line-of-duty death of an EMT or Paramedic is fortunately a rare occurrence for most EMS departments. When it does occur, the media, as well as many others are interested in obtaining as much detailed information as possible. Every effort should be made to provide *essential* facts, but the information provided should be offered only after the next of kin has been notified. Care should be given so that any information critical to an investigation of the incident is not compromised.

The Public Information Officer (PIO), with the approval of the Chief, can arrange for news conferences, written news releases and interviews. Information provided during a news conference should be prepared in advance. A press kit can be prepared that may include Bio(s), pictures, and service information.

The PIO should engage any media well off site so as not to impede command staff or others in

the organization while constantly searching for the “latest” information. It is important that daily operations are not compromised by crowds of information seekers. Law enforcement should be employed to limit access to headquarters by non staff members.

Staff Assignments

In order to provide the best possible tribute to the fallen, it is extremely important for the department to organize effective team(s) to manage all of the related activities.

The EMS Chief or in his absence, The Deputy Chiefs of Operations or Administration, has overall responsibility for directing the activities. It is recommended that the Chief assign, as a minimum, individuals to function as: Family Liaison Officer, if not already chosen by the decedent, Public Information Officer, Other assignments or personnel that may be established are Hospital Liaison, Benefits Coordinator, Agency Liaison, Financial Officer, Investigation Team Leader. It is also recommended that these duties be assigned to individuals now, before an incident occurs. This will allow those individuals an opportunity to research and recommend a course of action for the Department to follow prior to an incident. Backup personnel should also be assigned to positions in the event that the principal is unavailable. Generally command staff will fulfill most obligations. Recall of all Command Staff should begin as soon as the event occurs. All members of Command Staff should be familiar with the guiding principals of this policy and have a cursory knowledge of the different job descriptions necessary to stay ahead of the event. Job Description Sheets will serve to remind each of important tasks that should not be overlooked as well as a time line for implementation of each task.

Initial Actions

An emotional and tense situation occurs at an incident with the death, probable death, or injuries severe enough that they will likely lead to the death of a Paramedic or EMT. Actions; however, need to be taken to control the situation and to prepare for the events which will take place. (Refer to – LODD Checklist)

- ❖ ***Don't forget the rest of the incident.***
- ❖ ***Institute a radio discipline policy.***
- ❖ ***Assign a PIO:***
 - Expect a major media event.*
 - Use prepared scripts so that the release of information is concise and accurate.*
 - Schedule press conferences.*
- ❖ ***Begin notifications:***
 - EMT or Paramedic's family;*
 - Chief and an additional representative from the department should notify (in person) the family of death and facts related to the incident. Have an Ambulance unit nearby, but out of sight.*
 - A family Liaison should remain with and/or be available to the family (24hrs) and should be the official conduit for all information to/from the family.*
 - All department personnel*
 - County Administrative staff*
 - Coroner for an autopsy (May be needed later on)*

❖ **Initiate a thorough investigation into the incident:**

Recover & secure all personal and protective equipment
 Secure the scene if possible – consider it a possible crime scene
 Establish an investigation team – should be separate and distinct from the Law Enforcement investigation team; but, both should work well together.

❖ **Contact support agencies:**

Provide for critical incident stress debriefing and grief counseling for the department.
 Public Safety Officers' Benefit Program (PSOB)
 Neighboring departments
 Local or departmental clergy

Family Notification Suggestions

Next of Kin

Steps to be taken at the residence:

It is recommended to have a Paramedic and LCSO unit standby near the residence, but not in view, especially if there is a known medical problem with an immediate survivor.

At the door identify yourself and ask to come in. (Notification should take place in a private setting.)

When inside, ensure you are notifying the right person (Know everyone's names)

It is important to put all of the known basic facts into one sentence. Make sure the message is absolutely clear and direct.

Begin with, "I have very bad news" or "I am very sorry to tell you."

Let them know what happened, "Your husband, wife or child was killed while responding to an emergency call or on an emergency call." (Use the victim's first name when appropriate.)

Allow the family to express their emotions. Do not try to talk them out of their grief. Also, since this is a very sad time, do not mask your own grief.

Provide only the facts you know, never speculate. Answer all questions honestly. If you cannot answer a question, find the correct answer.

Avoid the following phrases: a) "I know how you feel" b) "It was God's will" c) "Life will go on" d) "He would have wanted to go this way" e) "Be brave" f) "Passed away."

Ask if the Department can assist by notifying immediate family members (parents, brothers and sisters).

Never leave immediately after making the notification. Have at least one member, preferably two members of the Department stay with the family preferably the Family Liaison Officer and one other. (Take 2 cars)

Do not take the victim's personal items with you.

Ask the survivor(s) if they wish to see the deceased employee, even if the body is badly disfigured. People often have a need to see, touch and hold the deceased; otherwise they may be in denial. This is often very helpful in the family grief process. It gives a sense of finality.

If family members wish to see the EMT or Paramedic, arrangements must be made rapidly for viewing if possible. Sensitivity to the family is very important. Provide the best possible environment and avoid delays that heighten the family's anxiety. (Note If the decedent was involved in what may be interpreted by Law Enforcement to be a possible crime scene or criminal investigation, access to the body for viewing by spouse or family members may be

delayed or denied temporarily, pending evidence collection by forensics teams or the County Medical Examiner)

Offer to transport the family to the location of the viewing, and help prepare them for what they will see. It is highly recommended that the family not drive themselves. If the family insists on driving, a uniformed EMS agency member should accompany them in the family vehicle.

(NOTE: If family members arrive on the scene during on-going operations it is important to identify them and keep them out of the direct flow of operations, particularly if the body is still trapped or on the scene.)

If you transport the family, advise dispatch that you are transporting the relatives and if possible, turn off your radio or switch to an alternate channel. Communicate by phone.

If the Department's Family Liaison Officer is not present at the notification, the family should be given the name prior to the team deployment. Write down their telephone and pager numbers. If possible, this person should already be known by the family.

Advise the family that the Family Liaison Officer will contact them to assist with the necessary arrangements.

Advise the family of possible media calls. Unwanted media exposure will only add to the difficulty of the tragedy. Suggest that a friend of the family screen incoming calls. Offer to be the media spokes person for the family, consider law enforcement standby at the families home.

Assure the family that their wishes are important to the Department.

Advise the family that an autopsy is often required and why it is necessary.

Ensure that the family understands that they do not have to make any immediate decisions regarding services, mortuary, wills, etc. The Department's Family Liaison Officer will be able to provide assistance.

LODD Checklist

- _____ Notification of Department Chief Officers
- _____ Notification of Leon County Risk Management
- _____ Radio Discipline Policy

- _____ Scene Security
- _____ Notification of local law enforcement agencies
- _____ Employee's Personal Information Packet Referenced
- _____ Notification Team Established
- _____ Notification Team - Verification of Information and deceased (Facts Only)
- _____ Notifications:
 - _____ Family
 - _____ Department Members
 - _____ Local Officials
 - _____ Neighboring Departments
- _____ LODD Investigation Team
- _____ Secure Employee's personal gear and safety equipment
- _____ Contact County Coroner & County or State Medical Examiner
- _____ Autopsy Arranged
- _____ Copies of Death Certificate (Minimum of 6 more is better)
- _____ Contact Support Agencies:
 - _____ Leon County EAP
 - _____ CISD Team
 - _____ Bureau of EMS
 - _____ Public Safety Officers Benefit Program
- _____ LODD Staff Assignments
 - _____ Benefits Officer & HR Liaison
 - _____ Financial Officer
 - _____ Funeral Coordinator
 - _____ Family Liaison Officer
 - _____ Church Coordinator
 - _____ Procession Coordinator
 - _____ Cemetery Coordinator
 - _____ Public Information Officer (Prepared media release)
- _____ LODD Supply Kit (mourning bands, bunting, flag, etc.)

Funeral Coordinator

- _____ Notify off-duty personnel.
- _____ Lower department flags to half mast.
- _____ Notify neighboring agencies.
- _____ Notify other City, County departments.
- _____ Collect and secure deceased members personal items for Family Liaison Officer
- _____ Contact support agencies for assistance benefits
- _____ Arrange for duty coverage during funeral
- _____ Arrange for law enforcement and other departmental assistance during funeral
- _____ Arrange post-funeral meal/reception
- _____ Coordinate all funeral arrangements with staff coordinators and department

Family Liaison Officer

- _____ Notify deceased members family in conjunction with the Chief
- _____ Contact hospital for family visit, if needed
- _____ Coordinate family's funeral desires with department
- _____ Coordinate benefit applications with family
- _____ Arrange for Family's child care as needed
- _____ Make post-funeral follow-ups with family

Church Coordinator

- _____ Coordinate Viewing/Vigil with Funeral Home Director, Family Liaison Officer and department
- _____ Coordinate church services with church/Funeral Home Director, Family Liaison Officer, and department
- _____ Coordinate Department staff roles
- _____ Coordinate Honor Guard
- _____ Coordinate Pallbearers
- _____ Coordinate/assist with services
- _____ Assist participants with arrival/parking/seating

Procession Coordinator

- _____ Coordinate staging areas
- _____ Establish procession route
- _____ Prepare maps/directions, as needed
- _____ Establish/coordinate processional order
- _____ Prepare Department vehicles
- _____ Coordinate staging, traffic control, etc. with law enforcement agencies

Cemetery Coordinator

- _____ Establish placement of personnel and guests
- _____ Coordinate staging, parking and security
- _____ Coordinate standby medical personnel
- _____ Coordinate Flyover with Air Medical Services
- _____ Coordinate flag presentation
- _____ Coordinate Bugler/Bag Piper
- _____ Coordinate Last Alarm Ceremony
- _____ Coordinate Dispatch Farewell Message
- _____ Notify participants of post-funeral arrangements

Public Information Officer

- _____ Coordinate all media contacts
- _____ Coordinate notifications
- _____ Surrounding Department Information
- _____ Local Public Officials
- _____ Other related State and local organizations
- _____ Set location for off site media staging

Family Liaison Officer (FLO)

The FLO is the primary EMS agency connection with the family – the conduit for all information that flows to/from the family. The FLO should be assigned a department vehicle for the entire funeral process and should be available to the family 24-hours a day by phone or pager.

The FLO should be prepared to discuss all parameters of the funeral process and ceremonies, and to counsel the family in its decisions. These may include, but are not limited to: the internment; wake; funeral home; religious service; cemetery; burial garment (uniform or other); music; eulogy; procession; reception; child/family care. The FLO needs to know what services the Department can and cannot provide.

The Family Liaison Officer should also work with the family to obtain necessary documentation – autopsy reports, birth and death certificates, marriage certificates, military records, and insurance documents. The FLO can assist in coordinating with the Benefits Officer the benefits due the family such as:

- ❖ Public Safety Officers Benefits
- ❖ Pension/retirement systems
- ❖ Local insurance benefits or Life Insurance
- ❖ Workers' Compensation
- ❖ Social Security
- ❖ Veterans benefits
- ❖ State/Federal education benefits
- ❖ Other local, state or regional organizations
- ❖ Setting up a Family Fund through a local bank.

Funeral Coordinator

The Funeral Coordinator is the overall coordinator for the Department's involvement in the planning and participation in the funeral, and the after care for the family. This person must be able to effectively communicate with the Department Chief, funeral team members, Department members, and the public. The Funeral Coordinator, or designee, may have these additional duties:

- ❖ Conduct coordination meetings with key personnel as needed.
- ❖ Assure notification of all off-duty and vacationing personnel.

- ❖ Arrange to have flags lowered to half mast.
- ❖ Notify all other County Departments.
- ❖ Notify neighboring Fire Departments.
- ❖ Make appropriate follow-up contacts when the funeral arrangements have been made.
- ❖ Personally collect all of the deceased personal items and forward them to the Family Liaison Officer.
- ❖ Remain a contact person for outside agencies.
- ❖ Make appropriate arrangements for a post funeral meal/reception.
- ❖ Contact support agencies, as appropriate, to arrange for their assistance.
- ❖ Contact appropriate Department personnel to arrange for finalization of paperwork, forms, etc.
- ❖ Contact neighboring departments for purpose of station coverage during the funeral.
- ❖ Contact law enforcement and other agencies for assistance during the funeral.

Church Coordinator

The Church Coordinator assists with all phases of the funeral and/or memorial services. He/she works closely with the Family Liaison Officer to ensure that the needs and desires of the family are being met. Duties may include:

- ❖ Working with the Funeral Home Director to ensure that the family is taken care of appropriately in the planning of the funeral.
- ❖ Determine whether department vehicles will be used as a funeral coach, family transportation, and for the processional.
- ❖ Coordinate with the Honor Guard.
- ❖ Obtaining and delivering to the Funeral Home Director burial clothing from the family or from the Department.
- ❖ Coordinates any formal walk-through of uniformed personnel during the period of viewing.
- ❖ Assists in coordinating the funeral service such as prayers, readings, music, and eulogies.
- ❖ Assists with arrival and seating of EMS department members, visiting departments, dignitaries, friends, and family

Procession Coordinator

It is the responsibility of the Procession Coordinator to coordinate the procession from the funeral service to the cemetery. Duties may include:

- ❖ Coordinating with other departments that will be involved with the procession.
- ❖ The cleaning and preparing of Department vehicles.
- ❖ Establishing staging areas for vehicles and apparatus at both the funeral service and at the cemetery.
- ❖ Determining if agency vehicles will be used.
- ❖ Contacting and working with the Police Liaison Officer in setting up traffic control,

- directing traffic, and assisting in the staging areas.
- ❖ Determining and placing the procession vehicles in order.
- ❖ Determining the route of the procession, how long the procession will be and if the procession will pass in front of special locations.
- ❖ Providing maps and directions to the service.
- ❖ Assigning personnel to assist in parking cars as well as setting up personal vehicles for the processional.
- ❖ During a walking procession, directing individuals into proper placement.

Funeral Considerations

Decisions regarding the funeral are the responsibility of the family. However, consideration should be given to the individual's wishes, if he/she communicated those wishes before his/her death (Personal Information Packet); the family's religious traditions; and, Emergency Medical Service traditions.

The honors and support provided by the agency may be affected by circumstances surrounding the death, established departmental protocol and the classification (type) of death.

Classifications

LODD - Death occurs as a result of an on-duty incident or is job related.

NON LODD - Death occurs when an active employee is off-duty and not relating to any emergency activities.

Retiree - Death pertains to a retiree of the department.

Employee Spouse or Child- Full departmental support and attendance as available, Dependent on Employee or Family wishes.

Suggested Services for Funeral Types

Listed below are the different types of situations and suggested services which may be offered to the family. The Family Liaison Officer should coordinate the arrangements with the family. The most important item in any situation is that prior approval of any and all funeral services must be given by the family of the deceased. Under no circumstances should assumptions be made.

Suggested Options

OPTION	LODD	Non LODD	Retiree
American Flag Presentation	X	X	X
Badge Shrouds	X	X	Opt
Flyover	X	Opt	Opt
Alarm Service	X	Opt	Opt
Bugler/Bag Piper	X	Opt	
Color Guard	X	Opt	

Flower Unit	X	X	Opt
Eulogies	X	X	X
Honor Guards	X	Opt	
Vehicle Bunting	X	X	
Active Member Pallbearers	X	Opt	X
Station Bunting	X	X	
Walk Through	X	Opt	

Funeral/Memorial Service Guidelines

LODD – On Duty

All available department personnel to attend in full uniform, including off duty members.

All members will wear a black band over their badges from the time the death is announced until 24 hours after the finish of service. The department may choose to have the shroud remain on the badge for thirty day mourning period.

All department flags will fly at half-staff from the time of the death is announced until at least 24 hours after finish of service, and up to one week after death.

All Honor Guard members will be covered at all times during the performance of their duties.

Seating will be reserved as such that the family is nearest the casket followed by the Pallbearers, the department officers, descending in rank, followed by all other members of the home department. Following that will be all visiting uniformed agencies, from the longest distance traveled to the least traveled. Leon County Commissioners, Administrators, and other dignitaries (from local to most broad (i.e. Federal), will be seated either to the side of the home department, or directly behind the home department.

Upon conclusion of the service, all personnel starting with the Pallbearers, and going further from the casket, will file out, being the first to leave, to assemble outside in preparation of the passing of the casket.

The casket will precede the family filing through the assembled LCEMS EMT's and Paramedics to the Funeral Coach.

Directly behind the casket as it exits the chapel/church will be the immediate family, followed by extended family and all other attendees.

The Pallbearers will then place the casket in the funeral coach.

Non LODD – Off Duty

All available department personnel asked to attend in uniform, including off duty members.

All members will wear a black band over their badges from the time the death is announced until 24 hours after finish of service, and up to one week after death.

All department flags will fly at half-staff from the time of the death is announced until at least 24 hours after finish of service, and up to one week after death.

Seating will be reserved as such that the family is nearest the casket followed by the Pallbearers, any department officers who wish to attend, followed by all other members of the department. Following that will be any visiting uniformed agencies. Any dignitaries will be seated either to the side of all uniformed employees, or directly behind them.

Upon conclusion of the service, all personnel starting with the Pallbearers, and going further from the casket, will file out, being the first to leave, to assemble outside in preparation of the passing of the casket.

The casket will precede the family filing through the assembled LCEMS EMT's and Paramedics to the Funeral Coach.

Directly behind the casket as it exits the chapel/church will be the immediate family, followed by extended family and all other attendees.

The Pallbearers will then place the casket in the funeral coach.

Retiree Death

All available department personnel are encouraged to attend in full uniform, including off duty members.

All members may wear a black band over their badges from the time the death is announced until 24 hours after finish of service.

All Honor Guard members will be covered at all times during the performance of their duties.

Seating will be reserved as such that the family is nearest the casket followed by the Pallbearers, department officers, all other members of the home department, all visiting uniformed agencies, and any applicable dignitaries.

Upon conclusion of the service, all personnel, starting with the Pallbearers, and going further from the casket, will file out, being the first to leave, assembling outside in preparation of the passing of the casket.

The casket will precede the family filing through the assembled LCEMS EMT's And Paramedics to the Funeral Coach.

Directly behind the casket as it exits the chapel/church will be the immediate family, followed by extended family and all other attendees.

The Pallbearers will then place the casket in the funeral coach.

Employee Spouse or Child

While it may not be appropriate or welcomed by the Spouses family members for an agency to participate in a spouse's or child's funeral services, Employee attendance and

support for the loss of a fellow department members immediate family member is particularly worthwhile and appropriate. Agency members are encouraged to attend in uniform as a sign of respect and support for a fellow agency member. Should the spouse or family request a private service their wishes will be honored.

Guidelines for Processional to, and Assembly at Graveside

LODD – On Duty

Vehicular Procession

It is again the responsibility of the Procession Coordinator to ensure that the order for the vehicular processional is appropriate, as follows, and that Piper(s), Drummer(s), Bugler/Bag Piper and Color Guard are standing by at the cemetery.

- ❖ Lead Car provided by funeral home, containing appropriate Clergy/Department Chaplain
- ❖ Funeral Coach, with Pallbearers, riding inside, or immediately following family in one vehicle if funeral coach
- ❖ Car or Limousine with Immediate Family
- ❖ EMS Chief Car followed by officer cars and dignitary cars
- ❖ Additional Home Department Vehicles
- ❖ Visiting Department Apparatus from the longest distance traveled
- ❖ All other Home Department Personnel, if in personal vehicles
- ❖ All other Visiting Department Personnel, if in personal vehicles
- ❖ All other Miscellaneous Vehicles

Assembly at Graveside

- ❖ The Bugler/Bag Piper/Bag Piper will be approximately 20 feet past the gravesite.
- ❖ Walk of Honor – the members of the home department shall line up on both sides of the path, in an organized fashion from the Coach to the graveside, approximately 10 feet apart with all additional home, and visiting department agencies lining up behind the front row of LCEMS EMT's and Paramedics.
- ❖ Once the agencies are appropriately assembled, the Color Guard if used will line up at the beginning of the Walk of Honor followed by the Clergy/Chaplain.
- ❖ At this point the Pallbearers will remove the casket from the Coach and the Honor Guard will command "Attention". All uniformed agencies will then come to attention, awaiting the command "Present Arms" which will signal the Pallbearers to begin carrying the casket down the Walk of Honor, and all uniformed agencies will salute.
- ❖ The casket will be followed in order by the Immediate Family, the EMS Chief and Officers, and command staff in descending rank, and other dignitaries.
- ❖ Once the casket reaches the gravesite, any selected music may commence. The

- command “Order Arms, Fall In” will be given, instructing the agencies to move from their places in the Walk of Honor, to, directly behind (or across from) the family, who are to be seated directly in front of the casket.
- ❖ The appropriate Clergy/Chaplain then should step forward with the graveside message, which may include the 23rd Psalm.
 - ❖ At the close of the graveside message, the Clergy/Chaplain may then commence with “Let us now pray.” At this time, all are expected to bow their heads in respect.
 - ❖ Once the Clergy/Chaplain has finished his prayer, all personnel will recover, and the Honor Guard will remove the flag from the casket (if used), and fold it for presentation to the family.
 - ❖ The flag will be passed from one member of the honor guard to the honor guard commander, with both members of the honor guard saluting as it passes.
 - ❖ The presentation to the next of kin will be made by the Chief, who will present it as he explains,

“This flag is presented on behalf of a grateful County, as a small token of our appreciation for the honorable and faithful service, and great sacrifice of your loved one.
 - ❖ It is then appropriate for the dispatcher to announce this farewell message.

“The members of Leon County Emergency Medical Service wish to thank (rank and name) for his/her __# years of services to the citizens of Leon County. Although you are gone, you will never be forgotten.”
 - ❖ At the conclusion, the Honor Guard Commander will command “Attention, Present Arms” and the Bugler/Bag Piper will begin to play ‘Taps’ or some other selected tune(s).
 - ❖ At the conclusion of ‘Taps’ the command “Order Arms” will be rendered, and the Uniformed agencies will stand at attention until the family has begun to depart.
 - ❖ Information about the reception or other family desires may be announced.
 - ❖ At this point the Honor Guard Command will command, “Dismissed” concluding the services.

Non LODD Death

Procession

It is again the responsibility of the Procession Coordinator to ensure that the order for the vehicular processional is appropriate, and that the Bugler/Bag Piper is standing by at the graveside.

- ❖ Lead Car provided by funeral home, containing appropriate Clergy/Chaplain.
- ❖ Funeral Coach, with Pallbearers immediately following family in one vehicle
- ❖ Car or Limousine with Immediate Family
- ❖ EMS Chief Car
- ❖ Additional Home Department Vehicles
- ❖ All other Department Personnel
- ❖ All other Vehicles

Assembly at Graveside

- ❖ The Bugler/Bag Piper if used will be standing approximately 20' past the gravesite.
- ❖ At this point the Pallbearers will remove the casket from the Coach and begin carrying the casket to the graveside.
- ❖ The casket will be followed in order by the immediate family and present uniformed employees.
- ❖ Once the casket reaches the gravesite, any chosen music may begin. The appropriate Clergy/Chaplain then should step forward with the graveside message, which may include the 23rd Psalm, depending upon the wishes of the family.
- ❖ At close of the graveside message, the Clergy/Chaplain may then commence with "Let us now pray." At this time, all are expected to bow their heads in respect.
- ❖ Once the Clergy/Chaplain has finished his prayer, all personnel will recover
- ❖ It is then appropriate for the dispatchers to announce this farewell message. *"The members of the Leon County Emergency Medical Service wish to thank _____ (rank and name) for your service to the citizens of Leon County, although you are gone, you will never be forgotten."*
- ❖ At this point the services are concluded.
- ❖ Information about the reception or other family desires may be announced.

Retiree Death

Procession

It is the responsibility of the Procession Coordinator to ensure that the order for the vehicular processional is appropriate, and that the Bugler/Bag Piper is standing by at the cemetery, according to the family's wishes.

- ❖ Lead Car provided by funeral home, containing appropriate Clergy.
- ❖ Funeral Coach, with Pallbearers immediately following family.
- ❖ Car or Limousine with immediate family.
- ❖ EMS Chief Car
- ❖ Additional Department vehicles
- ❖ All other Department Personnel
- ❖ All other vehicles

Assembly at Graveside

- ❖ The Bugler/Bag Piper if used will be positioned 20' past the gravesite, according to the wishes of the family.
- ❖ At this point the Pallbearers will remove the casket from the Coach and begin carrying the casket to the graveside.

- ❖ The casket will be followed in order by the immediate family and present uniformed employees.
- ❖ The musician may begin playing as they approach from the distance.
- ❖ Once the casket reaches the graveside.
- ❖ The Clergy should then step forward with the graveside message, which may include the 23rd Psalm, depending upon the wishes of the family.
- ❖ At the close of the graveside message, the Clergy may then commence with “Let us now pray.” At this time, all are expected to bow their heads in respect.
- ❖ Once the Clergy has finished his prayer, all personnel will recover.
- ❖ If it is appropriate, according to local custom, for the dispatch to read this farewell message over the radio. *“The members of Leon County Emergency Medical Service wish to thank (rank and name) for his/her ___# years of services to the citizens of Leon County, although you are gone, you will never be forgotten.”*
- ❖ At this point the services are concluded.
- ❖ Information about the reception or other family desires may be announced at this time.

Viewing/Vigil Considerations

The family may desire to have a time for a viewing or vigil. The Department should coordinate its participation with the Family Liaison Officer. Often the family will request Honor Guards be posted at each end of the casket. It is generally proper protocol for the Honor Guards to wear their uniform hat inside the church or mortuary, including the time spent posted alongside the casket. Gloves should also be worn. It would be acceptable for immediate family members to be escorted by Department personnel to and from the viewing. It may be helpful to have members of the Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Team available for counseling.

Memorial Service Logistics

There are a number of issues regarding the memorial service that should be taken into consideration:

- ❖ Ensure the facility is large enough to handle the anticipated numbers. You may have to plan for an overflow.
- ❖ The Department may need to coordinate traffic control and parking with other agencies.
- ❖ Work with the family in establishing the program and obtaining speakers for the service.
- ❖ Assist with the printing and distribution of a written program.
- ❖ Coordinate seating arrangements for the family, VIP’s, Department personnel, visiting departments, officials, and civilian friends.
- ❖ Arrange for an adequate PA system.
- ❖ Coordinate music requests from the family with musicians, etc.
- ❖ If services are held outside, arrangements may be required to a tent, chairs, restrooms, water, stage, power, etc.

- ❖ Rehearsals may be needed for key personnel particularly Pall bearers
- ❖ Coordinate Last Alarm ceremony with dispatch
- ❖ Provide Lat/Lon coordinates and coordinate timing and direction of over flights with air medical services

Recommended Presentation Order for Memorial Service

- ❖ Invocation
- ❖ Prayer
- ❖ Opening remarks/greetings
- ❖ Special music
- ❖ Special reading/clergy remarks
- ❖ Scripture Speakers
 - County Officials
 - State or Federal officials
 - Family representative(s)
 - Department representative's, friends
- ❖ Eulogy – Chief or designated by Deceased
- ❖ Special music
- ❖ Presentations
- ❖ Closing remarks/prayer
- ❖ Last Alarm Ceremony
- ❖ Dismissal instructions

Suggested Presentation of the Emblem

- ❖ The EMS Chief may present the deceased members badge to the family.

(Name of nearest of kin) it is an honor that I have the privilege of presenting to you an emblem of the Department of which our late brother/sister was a member; his/her emblem symbolizes the esteem we held for him/her. May the memory therefore always bring happiness.

Suggested Last Alarm Ceremony

- ❖ Chaplain or Department member can read or recite:

Throughout most of history, an EMT's or Paramedics life has been closely associated with the sounding of an Alarm. As they began their hours of duty, it was the Alarm that started it off. Through the day and night, each Emergency was sounded by an Alarm, which called them to place their lives in jeopardy for the good of their fellow citizens.

An now our Brother/Sister _____ has completed his/her task, his/her duties well done, and the Alarm Sounds in memory of, and in tribute to his/her life and service.

- ❖ Officer in charge call the department to Attention.
- ❖ Color Guard called to “Present Arms.”

- ❖ *(Signal Alarm tone for 3 sec. Call “Leon (ID#)” 3 times, brief pause, then “No Response” “Silent now and forever more”*

- ❖ Color Guard called to “Order Arms.”
- ❖ End of ceremony

Recommended Program for Internment

- ❖ Assembly
- ❖ “Attention, salute” (command given, ready two, when casket is placed over the grave).
- ❖ Opening prayer
- ❖ Scripture reading
- ❖ Committal reading, closing prayer
- ❖ Taps/ Bag Piper Music
- ❖ Flag folding (NOTE: Flag option for veterans.)
- ❖ Flag presentation by Chief
- ❖ Gun Salute and/or Last Alarm Ceremony
- ❖ Reception/family announcements
- ❖ Attention, dismissed.

Suggested Graveside Services

- ❖ Chaplain or Department member can read or recite:

Reverently we commit the body of our brother/sister to the grave (flames, if cremation) “Earth to Earth” – “Ashes to Ashes” and “Dust to Dust.” Though our brother/sister has passed beyond our mortal view, through our faith in the Almighty we know that we can leave him/her in the hands of the Supreme Chief of the Universe who doeth all things well; who is glorious in His holiness: wondrous in His power; and, boundless in His goodness and love to His children.

Now, my brother/sister, with a firm faith in the almighty, we know we shall meet

you again in His house and until then – my brother/sister – farewell.

May the Almighty bless thee and keep thee; let His face shine upon thee and be gracious to thee; may the Almighty lift up the light of countenance upon thee and give thee peace. AMEN.

Reception Logistics

It is often the Department's responsibility to organize and provide food and refreshments at a reception at the conclusion of the burial service. This will probably take place at a location away from the cemetery. The Funeral Coordinator should assign an individual to coordinate the activity. The following should be taken into consideration:

- ❖ Location site – to ensure site is suitable in size, with adequate parking and adequate facilities.
- ❖ Maps to be passed out at the cemetery
- ❖ Number of anticipated attendees
- ❖ Anticipated starting/closing times
- ❖ Menu and refreshments (provided by Department or catered).
- ❖ Tableware and seating
- ❖ If outside, tents, restrooms, seating
- ❖ If speakers/program, PA and stage
- ❖ Relocation of flowers
- ❖ Department provided transportation for individuals.

Setting Up Memorials

Paying tribute to the fallen coworker is honorable and should be done. Setting up a memorial can also help with the healing process of the family and the Department. Permission should be obtained from family member before setting up the memorial.

There are several ways a memorial can be made – erecting a permanent memorial marker; establishing a trust or scholarship fund (check with the bank for the proper type and number of accounts); annual Department memorial service; and, national memorial service.

Survivors Benefits

The death of an EMT, Paramedic or coworker is often a difficult time for the entire department. Many details and arrangements need to be addressed in a short period of time. One major item which is often overlooked is the identification and completion of the various claim forms that are required to assure the deceased member's family receives the benefits available to them. The department should take the responsibility for

seeing that this is cared for. The benefits available can vary as a result of the circumstances surrounding the cause of death, whether the employee was fulltime, part time, or PRN, prior affiliations and places of employment and locally established benefit options. The Department should research and prepare a listing of the potential benefits available to its members.

Federal Benefits

Public Safety Officers' Benefit (PSOB) Program

The PSOB Program provides a one-time financial benefit to the eligible survivors of public safety officers whose deaths, or permanent and total disability, are the direct and proximate result of a traumatic injury sustained in the line of duty. The total benefit amount is adjusted annually, as of October 1, 2005, the benefit was set at \$283,385.

Following the death of a Paramedic or EMT, the Department needs to identify a departmental liaison with the PSOB Program. The liaison then needs to:

- ❖ Call the PSOB at 1-888-744-6513 (If you need to notify PSOB on an evening or a weekend, leave a message. Be sure to include all of the required information.)
- ❖ Provide accurate, up to date information including,
 - EMS department name and address
 - Liaison's name
 - Phone number for the department and liaison
 - A fax number or mailing address so the PSOB can send the Death Benefits Questionnaire
 - Deceased employees name
 - Date of the incident and death
 - A brief description of the incident

The department liaison must complete and return the Questionnaire to PSOB immediately. This information is vital. In describing the incident, as much detail as possible should be given; however, do not speculate if the cause of death is not known.

The PSOB will send an information package with a form (Report of Public Safety Officer's Death) that the department must complete and a form (Claim for Death Benefit) that the survivors must complete and sign. With the form the family submits, several original documents will need to be attached (e.g., birth certificate, marriage license, divorce decree, etc.). PSOB will not return items unless specifically requested to.

Upon verification of the claim, the PSOB will notify the next-of-kin of the status of the claim. The Department liaison should be available to provide assistance to the family.

Department of Veterans Affairs

The Department of Veterans Affairs may be able to provide family assistance for veterans in obtaining a burial site, marker and flag. Contact the VA at 1-800-827-1000.

Social Security Administration

Depending on the work history of the deceased employee, and their participation in the Social Security program, his/her family may be eligible for benefits provided by the Social Security Administration (SSA). Assistance can be obtained from regional SSA offices or at www.ssa.gov.

If eligible, survivor benefits may include:

- ❖ A one-time lump-sum payment of \$255.00 is payable to the surviving spouse provided the deceased employee and the spouse were living together at the time of death, or the surviving spouse is entitled to survivor benefits. If there is no surviving spouse, the lump sum is paid to children who are eligible for benefits. Otherwise, the lump sum is not payable.
- ❖ Social Security will pay survivor benefits to a surviving spouse and dependent children. For the spouse to qualify, he/she must be at least age 60, or between the ages of 50 and 59 and disabled, or any age and caring for a child under the age of 16 or a disabled child. Children may qualify for benefits if they are under age 18 (or under age 19, if in high school) or disabled. Dependent parents and former spouses may also qualify for survivor benefits. The amount of the benefit depends on the deceased employee's Social Security earnings and the number of survivors eligible for benefits.

Family Issues How to Help the Family...

From Time of Death through the Funeral

Only promise what you actually can do. Keep all of your promises

- ❖ Notify the Department of Justice of the Death. This will begin the process of reviewing eligibility for the Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program.
- ❖ Work with the family in planning the funeral. *Remember that the family's wishes should always come first.* If they want a private funeral, the department may consider holding a memorial service; however, the family should still be consulted.
- ❖ If there are children in the family, consider creating a special role for them. Offer to assist with lodging or transportation for out of town relatives and friends.
- ❖ Offer to have a member of the department stay with the family prior to the funeral. In smaller departments, consider rotating people as needed in

- order to maintain a department presence with the family.
- ❖ Have someone available for tasks such as answering the phone, driving the family to the funeral home to make arrangements, or running errands.
- ❖ Help coordinate household duties such as food preparation, cleaning, and childcare. Do necessary maintenance such as mowing the grass.
- ❖ If donations are collected for the family, set up bank accounts in the families name to deposit these funds.
- ❖ Coordinate with local law enforcement officials to make routine checks of residence and neighborhood.
- ❖ Assign a department member to help the family set guidelines for dealing with the media.

Family Issues

How to Help the Family...

Ongoing Support

Only promise what you actually can do. Keep all of your promises.

- ❖ Instead of saying “Call if you need anything” offer to help with specific tasks and then follow through. For instance, say “I would like to come over on Thursday to fix the fence.
- ❖ Continue to talk with the family about your memories of the EMT or Paramedic. Most families want to hear about their loved one, even if it is emotionally difficult.
- ❖ Remember that parents of a fallen Employee need support and contact just like spouses and children do.
- ❖ Help with what the Deceased used to do – yard work, fixing things around the house, attending children’s sports and school events, etc.
- ❖ Take all steps necessary to secure benefits for the family. The process is often lengthy, so keep the family involved.
- ❖ Continue to invite the family to department events, but don’t be disappointed if they don’t always attend.
- ❖ Remember that some events, such as holidays and the anniversary of the date of death, may be especially difficult for the family. Even families who seem to be doing well may need extra support and contact during these times.
- ❖ Contact the family before releasing any information on investigations, incident reports, etc.
- ❖ Consider creating some kind of tribute to the fallen EMT or Paramedic. This could be a local memorial, a video tribute, a scrapbook, or a scholarship in the employee’s name. Prepare a tribute that is fitting for your service and special to the family.

Resources

Public Safety Officers' Educational Assistance Program, Department of Justice –

Provides support for higher education expenses through an established monthly allowance for eligible survivors. It may be used to defray expenses such as tuition and fees, room and board, books, supplies, and other education-related costs. For classes taken after October 1, 2005, the program offers up to \$827 per month for full-time students and lesser amounts for part-time students. This educational assistance program is limited to survivors who qualified for Public Safety Officers' Benefits. Spouses are eligible for benefits at any time. Children are only eligible for expenses that occur prior to their 27th birthday. All awards are reduced by the amount of other governmental assistance that a student is eligible to receive.

Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program Fact Sheet

(Available online at: www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/bja/fs000271.pdf)

Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program, Checklist for Public Safety Agencies Filing a PSOB Death Claim

(Available at: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/grant/psob/PSOBChecklist.pdf>)

Public Safety Officers' Educational Assistance Program

(Available online at: www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/bja/fs000270.pdf)

Contact: Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program

Bureau of Justice Assistance

810 Seventh Street NW

Washington, DC 20531

1-888-744-6513 / Fax: 202-616-0314

www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA

Funeral Guides

For Those Who Gave So Much: Planning, Preparation, and Officiation of Funerals and Memorial Services for Public Safety Officers. Dwaine Booth, 1993

Contact: Booth/Taylor Publishing

2579 Surrey Drive

Clearwater, FL 34615

(727) 789-3816

IAFC Line of Duty Deaths; Notification, Family Support, Department Support, Benefits, Protocols, Investigation, Appendix

Available at: (<http://www.iafc.org/associations/4685/files/01Notification.PDF>),

(<http://www.iafc.org/associations/4685/files/02famSupport.PDF>),

(<http://www.iafc.org/associations/4685/files/03deptSupport.PDF>),
 (<http://www.iafc.org/associations/4685/files/04Benefits.PDF>),
 (<http://www.iafc.org/associations/4685/files/05Protocols.PDF>),
 (<http://www.iafc.org/associations/4685/files/06Investigations.PDF>),
 (<http://www.iafc.org/associations/4685/files/07Appendix.PDF>),
 Contact: International Association of Fire Chiefs
 4025 Fair Ridge Drive, Suite 300
 Fairfax, VA 22033-2868
 (703) 273-0911 / Fax: (703) 273-9363
www.iafc.org

IAFF Recommended Protocol for Line-of-Duty Deaths.

(NOTE: The IAFF will provide this protocol at the request of the IAFF District Vice President or local IAFF affiliates.)

Contact: International Association of Fire Fighters
 1750 New York Avenue, NW
 Washington, DC 20006-5395
 (202) 737-8484 / Fax: (202) 737-8418
www.iaff.org

Illinois Fire Chiefs Association, Funeral Service Guidelines, Funeral Committee

(http://www.illinoisfirechiefs.org/data/service/FuneralServiceGuidelines_59.doc)

Sample SOG for Funeral Guidelines

([http://www.illinoisfirechiefs.org/data/service/SOG103.09 \(LineofDutyDeath\) _60.doc](http://www.illinoisfirechiefs.org/data/service/SOG103.09 (LineofDutyDeath) _60.doc))

Contact: Illinois Fire Chiefs Association
 P.O. Box 7
 Skokie, IL 60076-00071-800-662-0732
www.illinoisfirechiefs.org

Investigations

Guide for Investigation of a Line of Duty Death.

International Association of Fire Chiefs

(Available at: <http://www.iafc.org/associations/4685/files/06Investigations.PDF>)

Contact: International Association of Fire Chiefs
 4025 Fair Ridge Drive, Suite 300
 Fairfax, VA 22033-2868
 (703) 273-0911 / Fax: (703) 273-9363
www.iafc.org

PSOB Fact Sheet

On September 29, 1976, the President signed Public Law 94-430 establishing a death benefit to eligible survivors of firefighters and police officers from local, state and federal organizations. The legislation became known as the Public Safety Officers Benefit Act (PSOB). The Act has been amended several times since 1976. The most profound amendments came in November 1988, November 1990, October 2001, and December 2003.

The PSOB Act, amended in 1988, increased the death benefit to \$100,000. It had an escalator clause tied to the Consumer Price Index, which increases every October 1. Death benefits to public safety officers on and after January 1, 2001, became \$250,000. Based on the Consumer Price Index as of October, 2005, the benefit has increased to \$283,385.

Among the 1988 amended changes made were beneficiary requirements. The Act added benefits for the survivors of single firefighters or police officers, including parents, without regard to dependency. Spouses became eligible automatically, as did stepchildren, adopted children and children born to unmarried parents. Parents also were included if they were the only survivors - whether or not they were dependent on the child - as long as a parent/child relationship existed.

Children over 18 are eligible when they are less than 23 and a full-time student. When there is a surviving child or children, and a surviving spouse, one-half of the benefit will be provided to the child or children of the officer in equal shares. One-half goes to the surviving spouse.

Because the PSOB benefit is not paid into the deceased officer's estate, benefits are not paid when an officer dies without an eligible survivor.

To be covered, a firefighter or rescue squad person must be an officially designated member of a fire or rescue squad (department). Under the law, an "officially designated" person is one who is carried on the department's membership roll as an active member. If not on the listed roll, beneficiaries must prove that the individual was conscripted legally at the scene of an emergency to engage in emergency operations.

To be covered, a firefighter's death must be the result of a traumatic injury suffered in the line of duty. A traumatic injury is a blow to the body by an outside force. An accident in which the victim suffers crushing injuries in a building collapse is eligible, as well as accidents involving apparatus or falls. Burns, smoke inhalation and such climactic injuries as heatstroke or frostbite are considered traumatic injuries.

Death from stress, heart attacks, strokes and diseases, including occupational diseases, are not covered by the law unless a traumatic injury was a substantial factor in the death. To be a substantial factor, a traumatic injury must have been capable in itself of having caused the death. Smoke inhalation is considered a substantial factor in a heart or stroke related death when the firefighter's blood/carbon monoxide level is 10% or greater for nonsmokers, 15% or greater for smokers.

Excluded from the coverage are deaths from suicide, intentional misconduct, gross negligence and voluntary intoxication. Intoxication is described as evidence by a

postmortem blood alcohol level of .20 per centum or greater. A postmortem blood alcohol level of a least .10 per centum, but less than .20, will exclude coverage unless the Bureau receives convincing evidence that the public safety officer was not acting in an intoxicated manner immediately prior to his/her death. Exclusion will also be made if the blood tests show evidence of the introduction of drugs or other substances into the blood. President Bush, on December 1, 1990, signed into law the "Crime Control Act of 1990." This legislation includes a major revision to the PSOB. The revision at that time made available \$100,000 to any public safety officer who becomes permanently and totally disabled as the direct result of a catastrophic personal injury sustained in the line of duty. An amendment to the Crime Control Act of 1992 changed the funding so the death and disability benefits are the same. Thus the disability benefit is \$250,000 until October, 2002. The catastrophic injury is defined as "consequences of an injury that permanently prevents an individual from performing any gainful work." As with the death benefit, the amount of the award will be adjusted annually.

Limitations to the new PSOB are that beneficiaries are not eligible to collect both the disability and death benefits.

An example of this limitation would be if a firefighter became permanently injured, collected the disability award and later died from the injuries, his beneficiaries would not be eligible for the death benefit.

Congress and the President amended the Act in 1998, which the Bureau of Justice Assistance implemented

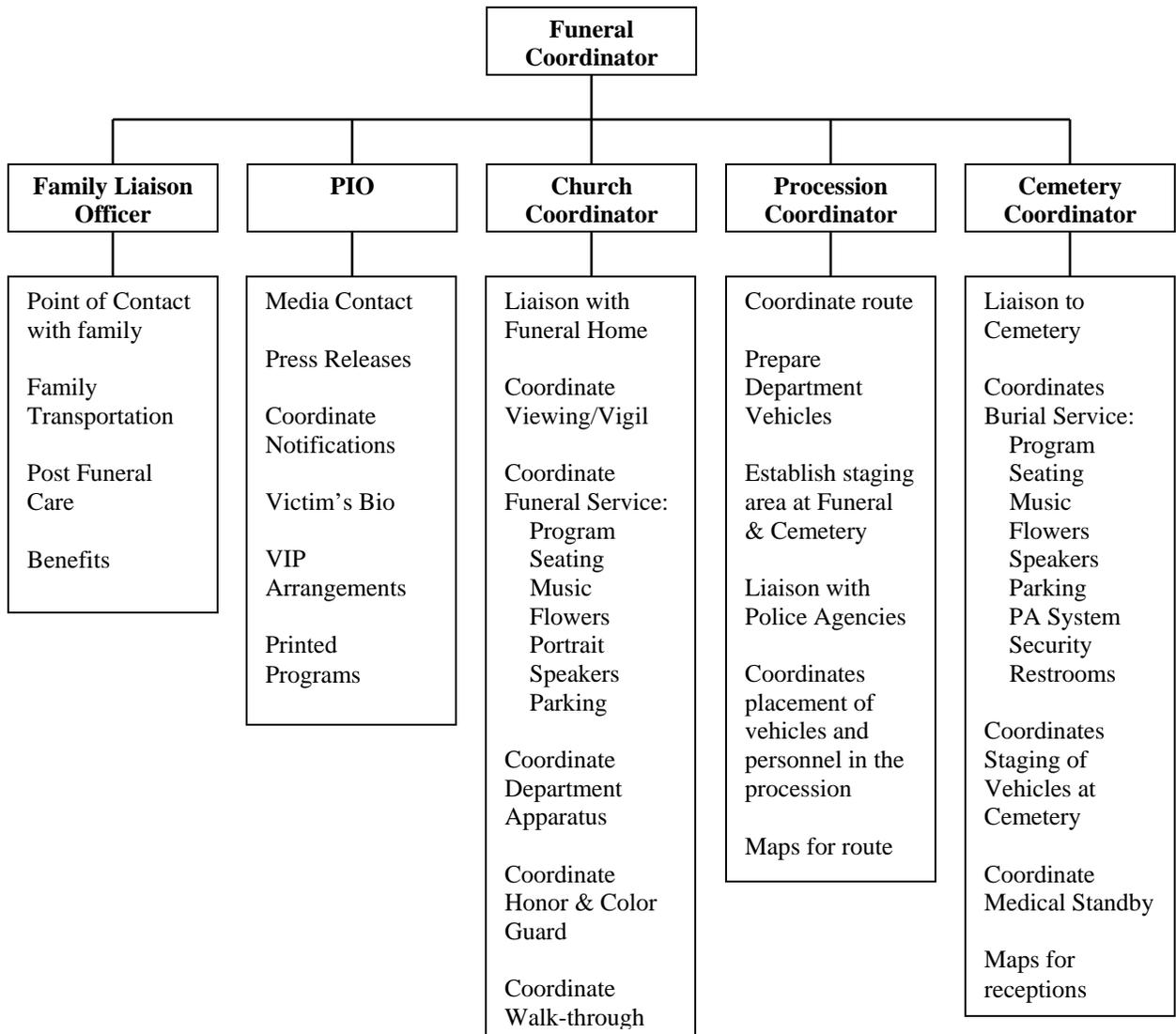
September 14, 1999, to include a revision to provide educational assistance to spouses and children of all Public Safety Officers killed in the line of duty or permanently and totally disabled by catastrophic injuries sustained in the line of duty. The dependents will be eligible on a retroactive basis if the Safety Officers death or disability occurred on or after October 1, 1997.

On October 25, 2001, the United States Congress voted to significantly increase the benefit to \$250,000. The provision, included as part of the anti-terrorism bill (H.R. – 3162), is retroactive to January 2001.

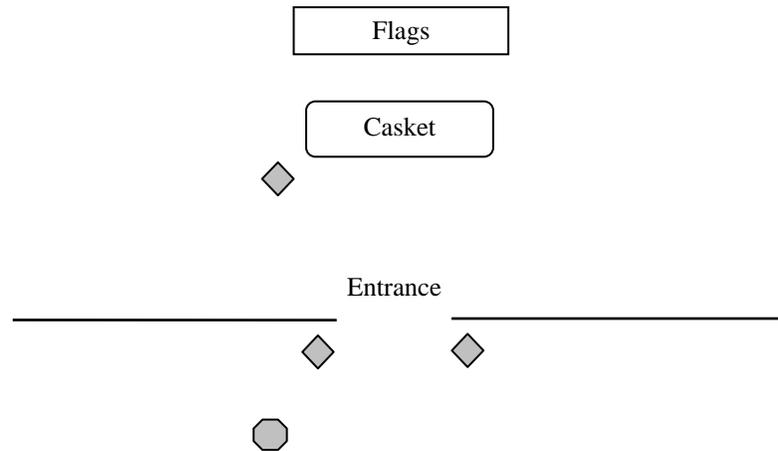
On December 15th, 2003, President Bush signed into law the Hometown Heroes Survivor Benefits Act (S. 459 /

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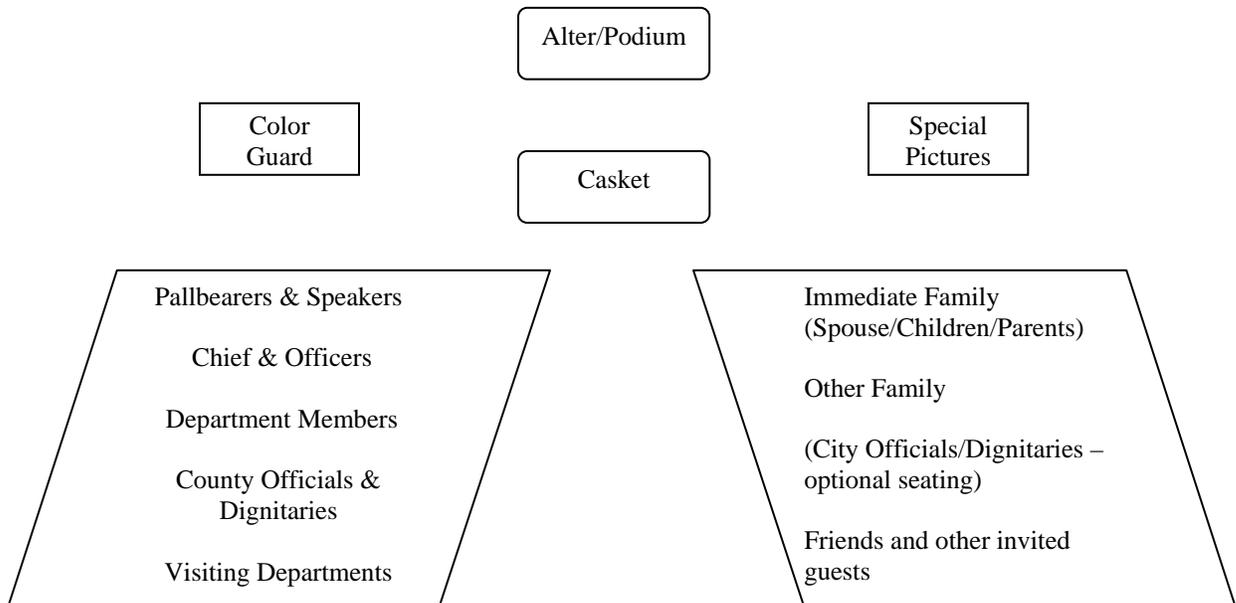


Visitation



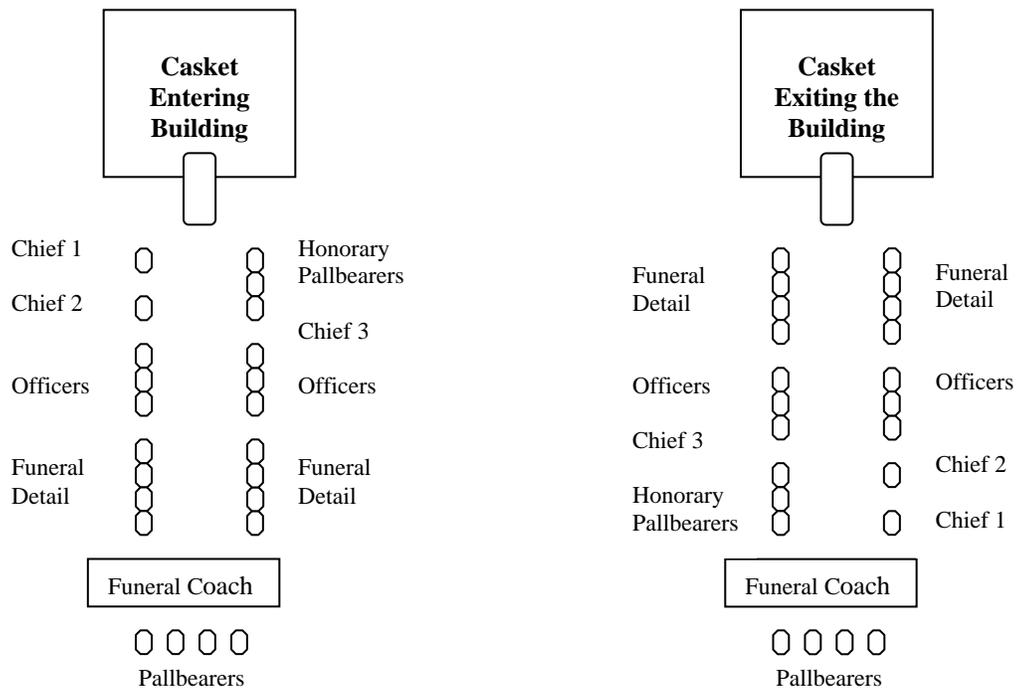
- ◆ Honor Guard Member – One member to stand at attention by the foot of the casket during the entire time of visitation and one on each side of the entrance. Rotate Individuals every 30-60 minutes.
- ⬡ Chief or other Department Officer

Inside The Church



Outside the Church

(The funeral formation is formed before the casket is moved and the casket is then carried through the formation followed by the family and friends)



Cemetery Service

