

POLICE DEPARTMENT HANOVER PARK, ILLINOIS



DIRECTIVE: 199-A

REFERENCE STANDARDS: 22.1.4 22.1.5 55.2.6

SUBJECT: Line of Duty Death Protocol

POLICY: It will be the policy of the Hanover Park Police Department to provide liaison assistance to the immediate survivors of any member who dies in the line of duty. This assistance will be provided when the death was unlawful or accidental (automobile accident, hit by a passing vehicle during a traffic stop, traffic accident, etc.) while the officer was performing a police related function either on or off duty and while an active member of the department. The Chief of Police may institute parts of this order for cases of a member's natural death. The department will assist in the providing of clarification of survivors benefits as well as other tangible and intangible emotional support for the surviving family. The family will decide funeral arrangements of the deceased member, with their wishes taking precedence over the Department's.

I. Responsibilities/Definitions (22.1.4)

The following are the various responsibilities and positions that will be implemented to provide the best possible services and support to the officer's family. The Chief of Police or his designee will assign specific tasks to selected members of the department.

A. Notification Officer:

An officer/senior member of the department designated by the Chief of Police or his designee, to make the notification to the officer's family.

B. Hospital Liaison Officer:

An officer or supervisory officer who has been assigned to act as the liaison between the hospital and the department.

C. Family Liaison Officer:

An officer who has been assigned by the Chief of Police to act as the liaison between the family and the department.

D. Benefits Liaison Officer:

An officer assigned by the Chief of Police to be a liaison between the family and the Village Human Resource Coordinator.

E. Department Liaison Officer:

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A staff officer who will coordinate the Department's response to the family and the news media. This Officer will also be responsible for coordinating the funeral and related activities.

II. Death Notifications (22.1.5 55.2.6)

- A. In the event that an Officer dies in the line of duty, the following procedures should be followed. The name of the deceased officer will not be released to the news media until after the family/immediate survivors are notified.
1. It will be the responsibility of the supervisor on duty to immediately notify the Chief of Police, Deputy Chief of Operations and the Deputy Chief of Support Services. Other members of the department will be notified at the direction of the Chief of Police.
 2. Notification of the family/next of kin will be made by the Chief of Police or his designee. If the Chief or his designee is not available, notification will not be made until they are available. The only exception to this rule will be if there is a possibility of getting the family to the hospital before the death of the officer. In this case immediate notification will be made.
 - a. The Chief of Police or his designee will determine if the officer has completed a Line of Duty Death information form. If the form has been completed, it will be reviewed to determine who the officer wishes notification be made to and if there are requests for who should be present during the notification.
 3. It will be the responsibility of the person assigned to make the notification, to immediately review the Personnel Data Sheet for the member that is maintained in the Officer's file. If the department has knowledge of any medical problems with an immediate survivor, medical personnel should also be dispatched at the same time.
 4. Notification must always be made in person and never alone. Another member of the department should accompany the Notification Officer. Under no circumstances will notification be made on the doorstep. As soon as the family sees the Notification Officer, they will know that something is wrong. Attempt to gather the family around, sit them down and slowly and clearly inform them of what has occurred. Try to have as much information as is possible. The family should hear about what has occurred from the department first and not the news media.
 5. The Officer(s) making the notification should be prepared for the reactions of the family members, which may include hysteria, anger, violence, fainting, etc. It should be remembered that these are natural reactions. It should also be

remembered that the Officer(s) making the notification may also be affected by the death of a fellow officer and that their showing of emotion is to be expected.

6. If the family wishes to go to the hospital, they should be transported by police vehicle. It is highly recommended that the family not drive themselves to the hospital. If the families insist on driving, recommend that an officer accompany them.
7. If there are small children at the residence, the officers should assist the family with deciding if the children are going to the hospital. If it is decided that the children will not be going to the hospital, the officers should assist the family in finding someone to care for the children.
8. Prior to leaving for the hospital, the Notification Officer should make contact with the Hospital Liaison Officer and advise that officer that the family is enroute to the hospital. This should be done in a private and confidential manner as soon as possible.
9. When possible, the parents of a severely injured or deceased officer should be afforded the courtesy of a notification.
10. If the immediate survivors live outside the immediate area and a personal death notification is not practicable, the supervisor on duty at the direction of the Chief of Police or his designee will request that the local police department make a notification. Arrangements should also be made for a telephone contact at the Police Department for the family.
11. A staff officer should respond to either the residence or the hospital to meet with the family as soon as possible.

B. Assistance for Affected Officers (22.1.4)

1. Officers who were on the scene or who arrived moments after an officer were critically injured or killed should be relieved as soon as possible.
2. Officers who were witnesses and other officers may be emotionally affected by the serious injury or death of a fellow officer. Consideration should be given to having these officers debriefed by the Northern Illinois Critical Incident Stress Debriefing Team. (Appendix B)

III. Assisting the Family at the Hospital (22.1.5)

- A. The Officer or Supervisor that accompanies the injured or deceased officer to the hospital will function as the Hospital Liaison Officer, until such time as relieved by a supervisor or staff officer.

- B. The Hospital Liaison Officer will be responsible for coordinating the activities of hospital personnel, fellow police officers, the officer's family, the press and others that may be involved.
1. Arrange with hospital personnel to provide appropriate waiting facility for the family, the Chief of Police and the Notification Officer and only those people that the surviving family wishes to be there.
 2. Arrange with hospital personnel for a second area for police officers and friends of the officer to assemble.
 3. In conjunction with the hospital, arrange for a place to use as a press staging area.
 4. Insure that medical personnel relay pertinent information regarding the officer's condition to the family on a timely basis and before the information is related to others.
 5. Notify the appropriate hospital personnel that all medical bills relating to the injured or deceased officer, be directed to the Human Resource Director for the Village of Hanover Park. The family should not receive these bills at their residence. This may require the Hospital Liaison Officer to contact the hospital during normal business hours to insure that the proper billing will take place.
 6. If possible, arrangements should be made with hospital personnel to allow the family to visit with the officer before death. It is important that the family be prepared by an officer for what they might see in the Emergency Room. If the family request, an officer should accompany the family. It should be remembered that there is a definite need to touch and hold the body while there is still life and to be present when death occurs for the family.
 7. The same arrangements should be made if the officer has died and the family wishes to see the officer. The family should also be made aware of the need for an autopsy.
 8. Officers should not be overly protective of the family. This means that specific information should be shared with the family when appropriate. This should include how the officer met his/her death.
 9. The Hospital Liaison Officer and the Notification Officer(s) will remain at the hospital as long as the deceased officer's family is present.
 10. It will further be the responsibility of the Hospital Liaison Officer to take custody of the deceased officer's service weapon, ammunition and other equipment that can be released prior to the officer's remains being transported to the morgue.

- a. Rules of evidentiary procedure are to be adhered to.
- b. Confer with the appropriate State's Attorney's office for guidance.

IV. Support for the Family during the Visitation and Funeral (22.1.5)

- A. The Chief of Police will designate an officer to act as liaison between the department and the deceased officer's family. This is not a decision making position, but is that of a facilitator between the family and the department.
- B. The Family Liaison Officer should be an officer who knew the deceased officer, but should not be an officer who is so emotionally involved in the death of the officer as to render him or her ineffective. The Chief of Police may assign other officers as necessary to assist the Liaison Officer. The responsibilities of the Family Liaison Officer will be as follows:
 - 1. Insure that the needs and the wishes of the family come before the wishes of the department.
 - 2. Maintain a detailed record of assignments and duties associated with the visitation and the funeral. (Appendix A)
 - 3. Determine what type of function the family desires. Meet with the family and advise them of what the department can offer if they decide to have a line of duty death funeral. If they should choose this, explain the funeral procedure (i.e., 21 gun salute, presentation of the flag, playing of taps, etc.). If the family chooses any of these options, it will be the responsibility of the Family Liaison Officer to notify the Department Liaison Officer of this.
 - 4. Apprise the family of information concerning the investigation into the death of the officer.
 - 5. Provide as much assistance as possible to the family. This may include assisting them in making travel and lodging arrangements for out of town family members.
 - 6. Work closely with the Department Liaison Officer.

V. Department Liaison Officer (22.1.5)

- A. This position will normally be assigned to a Staff Officer or senior sergeant due to the need to effectively coordinate the department resources.
 - 1. Work closely with the Family Liaison Officer to ensure that the needs of the family are fulfilled.

2. Be available to handle any and all inquiries from the news media throughout the ordeal, should the family want this service. If the family decides to accept an interview, the Department Liaison Officer or his designee should be present to screen questions presented to the family.
3. Meet with the following persons in order to coordinate funeral activities and establish an itinerary:
 - a. The Chief of Police and Staff
 - b. Funeral Director/Funeral Home
 - c. Clergy
 - d. Cemetery Director
4. Coordinate the activities of the department and visiting Police Departments according to the wishes of the family.
5. Issue a Type 3 message to include the following information:
 - a. Name of deceased officer
 - b. Date and time of death
 - c. Circumstances surrounding the death
 - d. Funeral Arrangements (state if service will be private or a police funeral.)
 - e. Uniform to be worn
 - f. Expressions of sympathy in lieu of flowers if appropriate.
 - g. Name and telephone number of the contact person for visiting departments to indicate their desire to attend and to obtain further information.
6. Obtain an American Flag. If the family wishes presentation of the flag by the Chief, notify the Chief.
7. If the family desires a burial in uniform, select an officer to obtain a uniform and leather and deliver the items to the funeral home.
8. Assign members of the department for usher duty at the church.

9. Arrange for delivery of the Officer's personal belongings to the family.
10. Insure that the Chief of Police is briefed on the arrangements and that department members are aware of duties as outlined in Appendix A.
11. Insure that the surviving parents are afforded recognition and that proper placement is arranged for them during the Visitation and the funeral.
12. Coordinate traffic management with other jurisdictions if necessary to accommodate the procession and funeral.
13. Maintain a roster of all visiting departments sending personnel to the funeral, including:
 - a. Name and address of the responding agency
 - b. Name of the Chief of Police
 - c. Number of Officers attending
 - d. Number of vehicles.
14. Acknowledge visiting departments when services are completed.
15. Make arrangements for routine checks of the survivor's home for a period of six-eight weeks following the funeral. If the survivors live out of town, make arrangements with the agency for the town of residence. This is done due to the amount of money that passes through the residence and the fact that the survivors will be out of the residence attending to legal matters.

VI. Benefits Liaison Officer (22.1.5)

- A. The Benefits Liaison will be an officer that is appointed by the Chief of Police to gather information on all benefits and funeral payments that are available to the survivors. This officer will act as a liaison between the family, the department and the Human Resource Director for the Village of Hanover Park. The Benefits Liaison will also assist the survivors in the filing of necessary paperwork to insure that they receive all benefits due to them. (22.2.5)
- B. The Benefits Liaison Officer will be responsible for the following:
 1. Accompany the family to the Human Resource Department for the filing of Worker's Compensation claims and other related paperwork.

2. Contacting the Police Pension Board to insure that the correct paperwork is filed for survivor benefits and work with the Human Resource Director to insure that all monies due to the deceased officer are paid.
3. Prepare a printout of benefits available to the surviving family, listing benefits available to the named survivors, along with contacts for the various benefits.
4. Meet with the surviving family a few days following the funeral to discuss the benefits that they will be receiving and provide them with a copy of the printout.
 - a. If there are surviving children from a previous marriage who did not reside with the deceased officer, they also should be provided with a copy of any benefits due them.
5. Insure that the family is aware that medical benefits will cease within thirty days and with the assistance of the Human Resource Director, insure that they are aware of the provisions of COBRA.
6. Meet with the family approximately six months following the funeral to insure that they have received all the benefits that are due to them.

VII. Continued Support for the Family (22.1.5)

- A. Members of the department must remain sensitive to the needs of the survivors long after the officer's death. The grief process has no timetable and survivors may develop a complicated grief process.
- B. Members of the department are encouraged to keep in touch with the family. Close friends, co-workers and staff should arrange with the family to visit the home from time to time, so long as the family expresses a desire to have these contacts continue.
- C. The department should maintain close contact with the family as long as the family feels need for the support. The family will let it be known when they are ready to move on and live their lives without the assistance of the department.

VIII. Support for the Family Awaiting Trial for those Responsible (22.1.5)

- A. This is a very important part of the grieving process and there are a number of things that should be done to insure that the family does not feel left out or that the department is hiding something from them. There are a number of ways to prevent this.
 1. The family should be met with and the circumstances surrounding the Officer's death should be explained to them. If there are investigative reasons why certain details cannot be released prior to the trial, this should be explained to them.

2. The family should never hear of court or parole hearings from the media first. It is the responsibility of the department to keep the family advised of all legal proceedings. The Chief should appoint an officer this responsibility.
3. Family members should be encouraged to attend the trial so they feel they are representing the slain officer's interests.
4. A department representative should be assigned to accompany the family throughout the trial. This officer can explain the proceedings to the family and advise them of testimony that may be upsetting to them. The officer should remember not to be overly protective of the family. It is the decision of the family as to whether or not to attend the trial.
5. Members of the department should be encouraged to attend the trial. This is not only comforting to the family, but also may be beneficial to the members of the department that were close to the fallen officer.

IX. Post Incident Stress of Department Personnel

- A. It is a given that family members, friends and close associates of the fallen officer will experience various levels of grief. The need for the Police Department to arrange for psychological assistance or post incident debriefing cannot be stressed strongly enough. Although officers deal every day with man's inhumanity to man, the loss of a co-worker is often the most traumatic experience that an officer may experience in his or her career.
- B. Counseling for all employees can be provided through the Village Employee Assistance program.

X. Benefits Summary

- A. A copy of the benefits available to survivors is maintained in Police Administration and the Human Resource Department of the Village.

Appendix A

FUNERAL PROTOCOL

I. General Funeral Procedures

Any Hanover Park Police Officer who dies in the line of duty will be accorded full honors if requested by the family. This will include the casket watch during the Visitation, honor guard, pallbearers, rifle squad, taps, military flag fold, and presentation of the flag and motor escort.

The Honor Guard Commander will be responsible for coordinating and directing the activities of the Honor Guard, Casket Watch, Pallbearers, Rifle Squad, Bugler and Flag presentation and will be under the direct supervision of the Department Liaison Officer.

A. Uniforms and Appearances

1. Spring and Summer - Long sleeve shirt, tie, Five Star Hat
2. Fall and Winter - Long sleeve shirt, tie, Five Star Hat, appropriate outerwear.
3. Members of the Honor Guard and Pallbearers will also wear white gloves.
4. A black sash will be worn over the badge.

B. Visitation

1. All members of the department who attend the Visitation will, regardless of assignment, dress in the appropriate uniform.

C. Casket Watch

1. The casket watch is usually comprised of Officers from the Honor Guard. However, volunteers may stand watch at the discretion of the Honor Guard Commander. Officers assigned to the casket watch must present an excellent uniform appearance and will conform to all department regulations to grooming and appearance.
2. All members standing casket watch will arrive at the funeral home at least thirty minutes prior to the start of the Visitation for inspection, briefing and assignment.
3. The dress uniform will be worn to include white gloves. The watch will be divided into shifts with two officers standing watch for 30 minutes at a time.

4. If the family wishes, an informal watch can take place after the viewing has ended for the day.
5. The casket watch moves in slow cadence. This includes all marching movements and saluting. The Honor Guard Commander will post the watch and the officers will position themselves at or near the head and feet of the deceased officer.

D. Honor Guard

1. The Honor Guard will consist of a Guard Commander of the rank of Sergeant or above and any police officer appointed to the position by the Chief of Police.
2. Members of the Honor Guard will assemble at a location near the service (church, funeral home, and cemetery) for inspection by the Honor Guard Commander thirty minutes prior to the beginning of the services.
3. All commands in regards to the rendering of honors will be issued by the Honor Guard Commander.

E. Pallbearers

1. If the family request pallbearers from the department, and they have no special request to who will serve as pallbearers, the Honor Guard Commander will be responsible for selecting them. If possible and practical, the pallbearers should be officers that the slain officer worked closely with, regardless of rank.
2. Pallbearers will be under the direct command of the Honor Guard Commander and will report to the funeral home as directed for inspection and instructions.

II. Funeral Procedures

- A. Members who attend the funeral services will report to a predetermined assembly point near the place of services for inspection and briefing.
- B. From the assembly point, members will proceed to the place of service, timing their arrival to permit immediate entry upon the arrival of the deceased officer.
- B. Upon entering the location of service, members will remove their uniform hats and place them under their left arm, hat brim forward and will move in an orderly manner to the place that is reserved for them.
- D. Members will remain standing until all members are in their places, at which time the command "BE SEATED" is given.

- E. Members will sit with their hats upright in their laps, and will maintain a military bearing throughout the service.
- F. At the end of the service, upon receiving the command of “OFFICERS RISE,” members will rise in unison and place their hats under their left arm and prepare to file past the casket. Members will hold their hats in this position until they pass the casket and walk outside.
- G. 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 the pallbearers and the casket will pass.
 - 2. They will be normally dressed at extended intervals but may be dressed at close intervals if space is limited.
 - 3. While waiting in formation, members will stand at parade rest.
- H. When the casket comes into view, the formation will be called to attention. The next command will be “PRESENT ARMS.” All members will salute and will hold the salute until the casket is placed into the hearse. At this time, commands of “READY, FRONT” will be given and members will return to attention.
- I. After the doors of the hearse are closed, the command of “FIRST RANK (Passenger side of hearse) RIGHT FACE” and “SECOND RANK (Driver’s side of hearse) LEFT FACE,” will be given so that the two columns are facing the hearse.
- J. The Honor Guard Commander will then dismiss the formation with the command of “OFFICERS DISMISSED.” The members will then break ranks in an orderly manner and proceed to their vehicles.
- K. Members will then proceed in the motorcade to the cemetery.
- L. Gravesite Services
 - 1. Members will report to the places that have been reserved for them immediately upon arrival at the gravesite. If indoors, members will remove their hats and hold them under their left arm. If seated, members will sit with their hats in their laps. If services are outside, members will wear hats. At all times, members will maintain a military bearing.
 - 2. Prior to the playing of taps and the 21 gun salute, members will be given the command of “OFFICERS RISE” (if seated) at which time members will rise. The next command given will be the command of “PRESENT ARMS,” at which time a hand salute will be rendered.

3. At this time the Honor Guard Commander will instruct the members of the Honor Guard to fold the flag. Once folded, the Honor Guard Commander will turn the flag over to a Division Commander and will salute the flag. The Division Commander will then repeat this process and turn the flag over to the Chief of Police. At this time, the Chief will present the flag to the surviving family members.
4. At this time the 21 gun salute will be rendered. Once this is concluded, "TAPS" will be played. Upon the conclusion of taps, the command of "READY FRONT" will be given at which time, members will return to the position of attention. The Honor Guard Commander will then give the command of "OFFICERS DISMISSED." At this time, members will break ranks and return to their assigned vehicles.

III. Procedural Variation

- A. The procedures that have been outlined in this order will be followed in most cases. Any changes that are made necessary by shortage of manpower, the unusual size of the funeral, the type of service, the physical arrangement of the place of the service or for any other reasons, shall be made by the Department Liaison Officer in conjunction with the Chief of Police.
- B. At the discretion of the Chief of Police, department honors may be accorded to deceased/retired members of the department and employees.