

**Oakland County Sheriff's Office
General Order # Draft**



SUBJECT: Employee Death or Serious Injury		NUMBER: 2.14
EFFECTIVE DATE: 7/8/2023 REVIEW DATE: Annually		MACP Standard Impact: 2.1.2
REPLACES AND RESCINDS: N/A	DISTRIBUTION: All Personnel	NUMBER OF PAGES: 6

This order replaces and rescinds all previously issued orders, procedures, rules and regulations, notices and/or practices in conflict with this General Order.

I. PURPOSE

This order is designed to prepare this agency for the event of an employee's death or serious injury and to direct the agency in providing proper support for the employee's family.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Oakland County Sheriff's Office to provide liaison assistance to the immediate survivors of an active-duty employee who dies or is seriously injured in the line of duty or whose death is not work-related. It is also the policy of the Sheriff's Office to provide tangible and emotional support during this traumatic period of readjustment for the surviving family. In the event of a death that is not duty-related, there is a reduced level of military-style honors. **(MACP Standard 2.1.2)**

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. Line-of-Duty Death (LODD): The death of a deputy while on duty or while performing law enforcement functions off-duty. Line-of-Duty death denotes full military-style ceremonial honors. This category is reserved for sworn employees (including reserve officers) killed in the line of duty.
- B. Serious Catastrophic Injury: A serious or debilitating injury of an employee while performing law enforcement functions on- or off-duty.
- C. Non-Work-Related Death: Death of an active employee whose death is not work-related. Denotes a reduced level of military style honors.
- D. Survivors: Immediate family members of the deceased employee to include spouse, children, parents, siblings, fiancée/fiancé and/or significant others.
- E. Notifications Deputies: The deputies/command officer responsible for notification of survivors.

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- F. Hospital Liaison Deputy: The deputy/command officer responsible for activities at the hospital in the aftermath of the incident.
- G. Family Liaison Deputy: The deputy/command officer assigned as a facilitator between the family and the Sheriff's Office.
- H. Funeral Liaison Deputy: This shall be the Commanding Officer of the Oakland County Sheriff's Office Honor Guard or designee. They will act as a facilitator between the family and the Sheriff's Office regarding the funeral.
- I. Benefits Coordinator: The Sheriff's Office Administrative Services employee responsible for coordinating the administration of benefits to the family.
- J. Family Support Advocate: The deputy/command officer responsible for serving in a long-term liaison and support capacity for the surviving family.

IV. PROCEDURES

- A. Appointment of Agency Coordination Personnel
 - 1. Due to the fluidity of incidents involving a deputy line-of-duty death or serious injury, the Duty Captain will appoint the following positions with the aid of the agency's Peer Support Team:
 - a. Notifications Deputy
 - b. Hospital Liaison Deputy
 - c. Family Liaison Deputy
 - 2. During a senior staff incident briefing, the Sheriff or designee shall appoint the following positions:
 - a. Funeral Liaison Deputy
 - b. Family Support Advocate
- B. Death/Serious Injury Notification
 - 1. The following procedures should be adhered to in cases of line-of-duty deaths and in cases of critically injured employees with a poor prognosis of survival or high probability of permanent debilitating injury.
 - 2. The Duty Captain shall designate two Notification Deputies to inform the immediate family of the deputy's condition or death.
 - a. Notification of the immediate family should be made as soon as possible and, if possible, coincidental with command notifications.
 - b. Notification of survivors in the immediate area shall be made in person and, whenever appropriate, with a second person. Whenever the health of immediate survivors is a concern, emergency medical services personnel shall be requested to stand by.
 - c. If the opportunity to get the family to the hospital exists prior to the employee's death, notification deputies shall inform the Hospital Liaison Deputy that the family is on its way. In such cases, immediate transportation shall be provided for survivors rather than waiting for any other members of the Sheriff's Office delegation to arrive.

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- d. If the employee has died, notification should be made to the survivors in a manner as forthright and empathetic as possible.
 - e. The Notification Deputies shall coordinate transport of the family survivors to the hospital in a professional manner, without listening to police radio traffic.
 - f. All efforts shall be made to allow survivors to pay their last respects at the hospital if requested.
 - g. Deputies making the death notification shall follow the procedures outlined in the Sheriff's Office order for death notifications.
3. These procedures should be followed whenever possible, with the understanding that the wishes of the family take precedence over the desires of the agency.
 4. Deputies 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.
 5. The name of the deceased deputy shall not be released to the media or other parties before immediate survivors living in the area are notified.
 6. Communication of information concerning the employee and the incident shall, whenever possible, be restricted to the telephone to avoid interception by the media or others.
 - a. Should the media obtain the employee's name prematurely, a command officer or Public Information Officer (PIO) should request that the information be withheld until proper notification of survivors can be made.
 7. The Public Information Officer shall handle media inquiries and the scheduling of press conferences as directed by the Sheriff.
- C. Notification Deputies Responsibilities
1. The Notification Deputies shall be responsible for identification of additional survivors outside the area and shall make any notifications as desired by the immediate family.
 - a. Such notifications shall be made by contacting the law enforcement agency in that jurisdiction and requesting that a personal notification be made.
 2. The Notification Deputies shall submit a written memo to the Sheriff specifying the identity of the survivors and the time and place of notification.
- D. Hospital Liaison Deputy Responsibilities
1. The Hospital Liaison Deputy shall be responsible for coordinating the arrival of immediate survivors and have a private area available for them to wait.
 - a. The desires of the surviving family members should be followed regarding their accessibility to other deputies and friends.
 - b. Ensure that medical personnel provide pertinent medical information on the deputy's condition to the family before any other parties.
 - c. Assist family members, in accordance with their desires, in gaining access to the injured or deceased employee to pay last/final respects.
 - d. Ensure that immediate family members are provided with appropriate assistance at the hospital.

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2. The Hospital Liaison Deputy shall refer any arriving press to the Public Information Officer (PIO).
3. The Hospital Liaison Deputy shall be responsible for providing hospital personnel with all necessary information on billing for medical services.
 - a. All medical bills are directed to the appropriate county authority and are not forwarded to the deputy's family or other survivors.
4. The Hospital Liaison Deputy shall be responsible for arranging transportation for the family and other survivors upon their departure from the hospital.
5. In the event of the death of an employee, the Hospital Liaison Deputy shall be responsible for coordinating with the Honor Guard. The actions of the Sheriff's Office will be guided by the protocol established by the Honor Guard.

E. Family Liaison Deputy Responsibilities

1. The Family Liaison Deputy shall be a facilitator between the family and the agency.
2. The Family Liaison Deputy shall be responsible for ensuring that the reasonable needs and requests of the family are fulfilled.
3. The Family Liaison Deputy shall be responsible for assisting with the following, but not limited to:
 - a. Providing oversight of travel and lodging arrangement for out-of-town family members.
 - b. Identifying alternative churches and reception halls that will accommodate the law enforcement funeral. These alternatives will be presented to the family, who will make the final determination.
 - c. Coordinating all official law enforcement notifications and arrangements to include the honor guard, pallbearers, traffic control and liaison with visiting law enforcement agencies.
 - d. Assisting family members in dealing with general media inquiries and informing them of limitations on what information can and cannot be released to the media.
 - e. Ensuring that a security check of the survivor's residence is initiated immediately following the incident and for as long as necessary thereafter.
 - f. Relaying any information to the family concerning the circumstances of the employee's death and appropriate information regarding any investigation.

F. Public Information Officer (PIO) Responsibilities

1. The PIO shall be responsible for coordinating all notification and response to the media.
2. The PIO shall assist family members in dealing with general media inquiries.
3. The PIO shall serve as liaison with the media to include coordination of any statements and press conferences.

G. Funeral Liaison Deputy

1. The Funeral Liaison Deputy acts as facilitator between the deceased employee's family and the agency during the wake and funeral.

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2. The Funeral Liaison Deputy is responsible for the following:
 - a. Assist family members in working with the funeral director to make funeral arrangements.
 - b. Briefing the family members on the procedures involved in law enforcement funerals.
 - c. Being available to the family prior to and throughout the funeral.
 - d. Ensuring that the reasonable needs and wishes of the family are met.
 - e. 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.

H. Benefits Coordinator

1. The representative from the Sheriff's Office Human Resources Office shall be appointed and serve as the benefits coordinator.
2. The Benefits Coordinator is responsible for the following:
 - a. Ensuring that workers' compensation claims and related paperwork are filed.
 - b. Ensuring presentation of information on all benefits to the family.
 - c. Documenting inquiries and interest in public donations to the family and establishing a mechanism for receipt of such contributions as appropriate, advising the Family Liaison Deputy.
 - d. Preparing all documentation of benefits and payments due survivors to include the nature and 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.
 - e. Filing all benefits paperwork and maintaining contact with the family to ensure that benefits are being received.
 - i. A copy of benefits documentation should be provided to all survivors affected and explained to each of them.

I. Family Support Advocate

1. The Family Support Advocate serves in a long-term liaison and support capacity for the surviving family.
 - a. As the Family Support Advocate continues for years to come, it is likely that the first Family Support Advocate will be the Family Liaison Deputy. Replacement Family Support Advocates will be appointed should the current advocate separate from the agency or is unable to be an advocate any longer.
2. The Family Support Advocate duties include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Providing contact with surviving family members to keep them abreast of criminal proceedings relating to the death of their family member.
 - b. Accompanying surviving family members to criminal proceedings, explaining the nature of the proceedings and introducing them to prosecutors and other persons as required.
 - c. Identifying all support services available to family members and working on their behalf to secure any services necessary.
 - d. Maintaining routine contact with family members to provide companionship and emotional support and maintain an ongoing relationship between the agency and the immediate family.
 - e. Relaying the concerns and needs of the family to those individuals or organizations

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that may provide assistance and encouraging others to visit and help as necessary.

- f. Advising the surviving family of the role of police associations and organizations and the nature of support programs for law enforcement survivors.
- g. Ensure that the surviving family members can access available psychological services through their insurance benefits and emphasize the family's right to psychological services.

J. Incident Stress Diffusions and Debriefings

1. The agency's Peer Support Team shall ensure that Critical Incident Stress Diffusions shall be conducted on scene and within the first 24 hours for those directly involved in the incident.
2. The agency's Peer Support Team shall ensure that Critical Incident Stress Debriefings shall be conducted for those directly involved in the incident within the first 24 – 72 hours.
3. The agency's Peer Support Team shall ensure that Critical Incident Stress Debriefings shall be conducted for other agency members within one week of the incident.
4. The agency's Peer Support Team shall activate the agency's Employee Assistance Plan (EAP) personnel and agency chaplains for assistance.

V. REVISION RESPONSIBILITY

- A. The Homeland Security, Wellness and Professional Development Division Commander shall be responsible for the continuous updating and revision of this order annually, or when necessary or mandated by law.



ISSUED BY: Sheriff Michael J. Bouchard