



GENERAL ORDER ADM-16 DEPARTMENTAL DEATHS AND CRITICAL INJURIES

EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 1, 2015

This General Order contains the following numbered sections:

- I. POLICY
- II. NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES
- III. RESPONSIBILITIES
- IV. DEPARTMENTAL HONORS
- V. FUNERAL PROCEDURES
- VI. CANCELLATIONS

I. POLICY

It is the policy of the Howard County Department of Police (HCPD) to provide assistance to a member's immediate family and Department members whenever a HCPD member dies or is critically injured. Assistance will include emotional and logistical support for the family during this traumatic period, as well as providing the family with a comprehensive explanation of benefits.¹

II. NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES

A. Critical Injuries/Death Notifications

1. The highest ranking Commander available will make **immediate** notification to the affected officer's designated emergency contact by telephone.
2. The designated emergency contact will be instructed to remain at their current location as an assigned officer(s) will be en route to provide immediate transportation.
3. In addition to the member's emergency contact, the notifying Commander shall identify all additional needed family contacts (e.g., parents, siblings, adult children, etc.).
4. It is imperative that the family does not learn of the death or critical injury from another source. Under no circumstance will the name of the deceased or critically injured member be released to the media or on personal social media accounts until after appropriate notification to the member's designated emergency contact and family has been made.
5. The HCPD will offer the services of a chaplain, counselor, psychologist, CISM member or Mobile Crisis Team (MCT) to assist the family in coping with the crisis.
6. The notifying officers will use exact terminology when making the notification. Terms such as "died" or "dead" should be used instead of words such as "fatally injured" or "passed away." The notifying officers will provide all available information concerning the incident.
7. Reaction of the family may include hysteria, anger, fainting, physical violence and/or shock. This reaction may be directed at the individual making the notification at which point the notifying individual may find it necessary to step back and allow the other officers to deal directly with the family. If the notifying individuals' are affected by the event, they should understand that their expressions of grief are acceptable.

¹ CALEA 22.2.3 & 22.2.4

B. Employee Notification

1. The affected member's Commander shall ensure that all HCPD members receive appropriate notification of a Departmental death or injury as early as possible from the HCPD.
2. The use of the Employee Notification System (ENS) should be considered for making timely notification. The Communications Division should be notified to implement the use of the Employee Notification System (ENS) to automate notifications, with a voice recorded message being preferred instead of a computer generated message.
3. If the ENS is not used the Deputy Chiefs, or their designee, shall designate personnel to notify all affected first line supervisors, via the Chain of Command, to make employee notifications.

C. In the event that the member's injuries are life-threatening, every effort will be made to immediately transport the family to the hospital.

1. If the family desires to go to the hospital, the following arrangements will be made:
 - a. Transportation to and from the hospital will be provided.
 - b. Arrangements for babysitting, if necessary.
 - c. The assignment of an officer, to remain with the family, to act as a liaison for as long as necessary.
2. A Lieutenant, or above will respond to the hospital and meet with hospital administrators to arrange for an appropriate waiting facility for the family and to identify an appropriate space for agency members, Chief, County Executive, and Command Staff. If requested by the family the commander will also act as a liaison between the hospital and the family, ensuring that all pertinent information concerning the member's condition is relayed to the family in a timely manner.
3. The HCPD will afford the same courtesy of personal notification and/or transportation to any of the member's immediate family members who reside in or within close proximity of Howard County.
4. The assistance of other law enforcement agencies may be requested for notification and/or transportation of family members who reside outside the immediate Howard County area.

D. The Public Information Officer (PIO) will be notified of any incident involving the death of, or critical injury to, any member. The PIO will respond to either the incident scene or hospital as directed. All requests for information from the media will be directed to the PIO or the highest ranking officer at the location.

1. Due to the capabilities of most media outlets to monitor police radio transmissions, any information concerning the member's name or condition will only be conducted via telephone.
2. Should the media obtain the member's name prior to the family notification, the media will be requested to withhold this information pending family notification.

3. In the event of a member line of duty death, the PIO will prepare a teletype (TTY) message request for submission to the Communications Division containing all pertinent information, i.e., name of the member, assignment, how the member died, the PIO's name and telephone number and a statement that further details will follow for those departments interested. The initial TTY will be issued for a nationwide broadcast. Follow up TTY requests will be submitted with additional information, (i.e., funeral arrangements and honor guard information). Follow-up TTY messages may be directed to specific agencies.
4. The Chief of Police, or his designee, will notify the County Executive and the Chief Administrative Officer of the death or critical injury.
5. In the event of a death of an officer, and at the direction of the Governor or County Executive, District/Bureau Commanders will ensure that the State of Maryland and Howard County flags are lowered to half-staff at all HCPD facilities for a time period specified by the specific authority. In the event of a line of duty death, black bunting will be draped over the public entrance and a memorial table will be set up at all police facilities for thirty (30) days.

III. **RESPONSIBILITIES**

Immediately following the death of a member, the Chief of Police, or his designee will arrange for a briefing with the senior command staff, including union representation or other appropriate affiliations. The Chief or his designee will make the following assignments and will personally notify the family which officers will fill the following positions:²

- A. **Department Liaison Officer:** This command staff member will be responsible for the supervision and assigning of all activities concerning:
 1. Assist the family with the planning and implementation of the viewing, funeral, procession and reception as required. Written operational plans will be developed and will be approved by the Chief of Police. The Commander of the Honor Guard will be privy to all meetings with the family and to plans for any and all services.
 2. Appointing a detail commander responsible for carrying out all operational plans. This will include making the provisions necessary for staffing and equipment to carry out these plans.
 3. Coordination of all official law enforcement notifications with the assistance of the PIO. For a law enforcement funeral, this may include honor guards, pallbearers, traffic control and liaison with visiting law enforcement agencies and associated operations plans.
 4. Making arrangements for food and beverages to be served to law enforcement representatives during assembly and the following reception. The Department will be responsible for funding these receptions but may request the assistance of other organizations such as the Police Foundation, Howard County Police Officers Association, Howard County Police Supervisor's Alliance, Centurions for Justice, and Howard County Department of Fire and Rescue Services.
 5. Arranging with the State representative for the deceased's home district to obtain a Maryland State flag for presentation to the family (line of duty death only).

² CALEA 22.2.4

6. Obtaining a United States of America Flag for casket cover and/or presentation.
 7. Arranging for continued liaison with the family following the funeral.
 8. For line-of-duty deaths, ensuring that the officer's name is added to the appropriate memorials.
 9. Placing the family in contact with various support organizations, such as Concerns of Police Survivors (C.O.P.S.).
- B. **Benefits Coordinator:** The Commander of the Human Resources Bureau will ensure that the surviving family is informed of all available monetary assistance regarding funeral and insurance benefits. This member will be responsible for assisting the family with:³
1. Completing necessary steps to ensure the family receives any applicable county benefits as quickly as possible.
 2. Filing workers' compensation claims and related documents.
 3. Gathering information on all benefits/funeral payments available to the family, including the Public Safety Officers Benefits Act provided for by the U.S. Department of Justice and the Howard County Police Foundation's Support Fund.
 4. Establishing any special trust or educational fund as appropriate.
 5. Filing all benefits related paperwork and following through with the family to ensure that the benefits are received.
 6. Meeting with the family and funeral director regarding funeral arrangements.
- C. **Family Liaison Officer:** This member acts as a facilitator between a deceased member's family and the Department during the wake and funeral. This member need not be a member of the command staff; however, it should be a friend or person known to the family, if possible. This member can request assistance from the union and civilian groups as needed. This member's responsibilities will include the following:
1. Immediately securing a HCPD cellular telephone (if needed/possible).
 2. Coordinating arrangements for travel and lodging for out-of-town family members.
 3. Determining the type of funeral service preferred by the family, i.e., formal law enforcement funeral with all honors, local law enforcement funeral or private service with limited or no formal HCPD participation.
 4. If the family requests, the Liaison Officer will survey the available places of worship for a facility with sufficient capacity to accommodate the anticipated attendance at the funeral. The family's choice of facility will be honored under all circumstances. If at all possible, for logistical purposes, a facility within Howard County is preferable to assist with seamless coordination and support.
 5. Constantly available to the family throughout the wake and funeral.
 6. Meeting with the family and funeral director regarding funeral arrangements.

³ CALEA 22.2.3

7. Relaying all information to the family concerning the circumstances of the death and any continuing investigation, as authorized by CIB/SOB.
8. Providing for all of the family's transportation needs.
9. Arranging for food for the family, as needed. Notifications should be made through the Police Union as well as department wide.
10. Providing for security for the family and their residence, as necessary.
11. Reporting directly to the Department Liaison Officer.
12. Visiting with the family after the funeral to explain the available benefits and resources in conjunction with the Benefits Coordinator.
13. Accompany the family to any meetings with the State's Attorney's Office and any criminal proceedings.
14. Being aware of the "Nodal Effect." This is the period of time prior to the anniversary of the traumatic event, usually three to five weeks. This is a critical time, as the anticipation can become very stressful and may lead to psychological difficulties. The family may need support during this period.
15. Gather a list of important dates such as anniversaries, birthdays, etc.

D. The Chief of Staff

1. The Chief of Staff will assist with establishing a fund for the family to assist in the collection of any donations and any short term funding needs.
2. The Chief of Staff will be responsible for coordinating all line of duty memorials and services, to include:
 - a. National Memorial Service and Wall activities;
 - b. Maryland State Events/Dulaney Valley;
 - c. Howard County Department Memorial Garden, services, plaques, and markers;
 - d. Police Week events; and
 - e. C.O.P.S. services.

IV. DEPARTMENTAL HONORS

The following honors may be given to current or retired members, unless otherwise ordered by the Chief of Police.

- A. The following Departmental Honors may be offered to the family of any **civilian member** or **volunteer**:
 1. Uniformed presence during any viewing and/or funeral.
 2. Pre-folded Departmental Flag for presentation or display.
 3. Traffic control planning and execution (if within Howard County).
 4. Point control for the funeral procession (if within Howard County)
- B. In addition to those honors listed in IV.A., the following may be offered to the family of a **retired police officer** (official participation may be waived by the Chief of Police should the location not be within a reasonable distance of Howard County).

1. A Police Department Hat (with appropriate rank) and white gloves for presentation or display.
 2. Honor Guard Watch (an Honor Guard member stationed in the hallway during a viewing or service at the Funeral Home).
- C. In addition to those honors listed in Sections IV. A and IV. B, the following may also be offered to the family of an **officer who died, other than in the line of duty, while employed as a police officer.**
1. The playing of Taps, on a bugle during the interment ceremony.
 2. A police escort of the funeral procession within Howard County.
- D. In addition to the honors previously listed, the following honors may also be offered to the family of an **officer or civilian or volunteer who are killed in the line of duty;**
1. **Casket Watch:** The Casket Watch is normally staffed by members of the Departmental Honor Guard. However, other volunteers may stand the watch at the discretion of the Honor Guard Supervisor. All officers assigned to this detail must display proper military bearing and conform to all current grooming standards. The Class A dress uniform with white gloves and hat will be worn by all members of the detail. The Casket Watch will remain on duty during all public viewing hours. The officers participating in the Casket Watch will stand at opposite ends of the decedent's casket/urn for periods of time specified by the supervisor.
 2. Pre-folded Maryland State flag.
 3. Bag pipe performance during the interment ceremony.
 4. Rifles salute during the interment ceremony.
 5. Ceremonial folding and presentation of United States flag.
 6. Last Call.
 7. Police motorcycle escort of the hearse from the funeral home to the church.

V. FUNERAL PROCEDURES

- A. Funerals for Civilian Employees or Volunteers not killed in the line of duty:
1. The Chief of Police, or his designee, will contact the family to extend the Department's sympathy.
 2. Departmental participation, as requested by the family, will include:
 - a. Traffic control and planning for the funeral procession, within Howard County.
 - b. Uniformed officers and civilian members may act as pallbearers.
 - c. Assistance from the Benefits Coordinator as specified in section III.B.

B. Funeral Support for Other Law Enforcement or Public Safety Agencies

1. In the event of the death of an officer of another law enforcement agency or other public safety agency, who has been killed in the line of duty, the extent of the Department's participation will be:
 - a. If the services are to be conducted within a reasonable distance from Howard County, the Chief of Police, or his designee, will send a delegation of sworn officers to represent the Department.
 - (1) The delegation will consist of at least four (4) sworn officers and one (1) member of the rank of Lieutenant or above, who will serve as the detail commander.
 - (2) The Departmental Honor Guard will be assigned to participate at the Chief of Police's discretion.
 - b. If the funeral services are to be held within Howard County, the Department will assist with logistical resources necessary, i.e., traffic control planning, escort services and facility acquisition.

C. Uniform

1. The Class A dress uniform with badge shroud and hat will be worn by all uniformed members attending a police funeral, whether in Howard County or other jurisdiction. This may be waived by the Chief of Police for those members serving in a plain clothes assignment.
2. White gloves will be worn with the dress uniform whenever the funeral is for an officer who died in the line of duty.
3. Badge Shroud
 - a. When a Howard County Police Officer/Volunteer/Civilian is killed in the line of duty, a black badge shroud will be worn for thirty (30) days commencing on the day of the death.
 - b. When a current HCPD member or a Howard County Police Officer dies, on or off duty, a badge shroud will be worn commencing on the day of the death and continuing until 2400 hours on the day of the funeral.
 - c. When a member of another department in the State of Maryland is killed in the line of duty, a badge shroud will be worn commencing on the day of the death and continuing until 2400 hours on the day of the funeral.
 - d. The Chief of Police may modify the provisions governing the wearing of a badge shroud at any time.

D. Procedural Variation

1. The procedures outlined in this General Order will be followed in most cases. Any variations necessitated by: family preference, shortage of personnel, size of the funeral, the type of funeral service, the physical arrangement of the place of service or any other reason, will be made by the Chief of Police, or his designee.

2. Any additional honors to be accorded to deceased members of this Department or other law enforcement or public service agencies will be at the discretion of the Chief of Police.
- E. Line of Duty Death and Critical Injury Action checklist is available for further reference.

VI. CANCELLATIONS

The issuance of this General Order cancels and replaces ADM-16, Line of Duty Deaths, dated September 4, 2014.

AUTHORITY:



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Chief of Police