



SACRAMENTO POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDERS



254.03

DEATH AND CRITICAL INJURY NOTIFICATION DETAIL

10-10-12

PURPOSE

The purpose of this order to establish procedures for the notification of next of kin of an employee who dies or is critically injured while on duty.

POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Sacramento Police Department to provide courteous and professional support to the families of employees who have died or have been critically injured, making every effort to notify the employee's next of kin in a timely and effective manner.

PROCEDURE

NOTE: The following procedures are guidelines only. Every effort shall be taken to follow these procedures, however, there are instances when due to certain constraints such as time of day, staffing limitations, time-efficiency, and needs of the family, that strict procedural adherence will not be possible. In such a case, the highest ranking officer in charge of the notification detail shall assume responsibility for timely, effective and empathic notifications.

A. GENERAL

1. Watch Commanders shall:
 - a. immediately notify the Captain the employee works for.
 - b. examine the employee's emergency information card to determine whom the employee has designated to be notified, and relay the information to the Captain.

B. DEATH NOTIFICATION DETAIL

1. The employee's Captain shall immediately notify both the Chief of Police (COP) and the Office Chief.
2. The employee's Captain or designee shall form and lead the Notification Detail. The detail shall not exceed four members if possible. Members shall be selected from the following list as appropriate, with consideration given to time-efficiency and the needs of the family.

NOTE: There are many networks, associations and friendships between officers and employees of the Department. While "friends" may sincerely wish to get involved, it is necessary to consider the emotional implications of unethical and incomplete notifications on concerned family members. Therefore, employees shall not take it upon themselves to notify family members prior to official Department notification unless they can articulate a reasonable necessity, which is in the best interests of the family members who are closest to the involved employee.

- a. COP
 - b. Office Chief
 - c. Appropriate Captain
 - d. Other employees as deemed necessary and proper
 - e. Police Chaplain
 - f. Peer support
3. If the Office Chief is unavailable, the appropriate Captain shall assume the Office Chief's responsibilities.
 4. The employee's Captain or designee shall contact the Peer Support Coordinator so that they can provide support for the family and others impacted by the employee's critical injury or death. Peer support may be also be used as a liaison between the family and the Department.

C. GENERAL PRECAUTIONS

1. The name of the officer shall not be released to the media before notification of next of kin. Any official disclosure of the incident shall be in compliance with GO 360.01 Media Relations or as designated by the COP.
2. Fellow officer(s), team member(s), or other Department employee(s) shall refrain from contacting surviving or extended family member(s) prior to official notification.
3. Employee(s) shall not disclose information concerning the incident over the radio unless necessary.