

SPRINGFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT

Standard Operating Guideline

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Part Title: Operations		Chapter Title: Unusual Occurrences	
Chief of Police:			

Death Notification and Funeral Protocol

I Policy

It is the policy of the Springfield Police Department to provide dignified and professional assistance, along with emotional and tangible support to the immediate family of any employee who dies as an active or retired member of this Department.

II Definitions

Employee's Family – The immediate survivors of the police employee, including the spouse, children, parent, sibling, fiancé or significant other.

Funeral Commander – An officer with the rank of lieutenant or above appointed by the Chief who shall be charged with the responsibility of the Department's participation in services for the deceased and with delivering commands to officers at the funeral.

Salute – The hand salute is executed by raising the right hand smartly until the tip of the forefinger touches the lower part of the headdress, or the forehead, just above and slightly to the right of the right eye, fingers and thumb extended and joined, palm down, the hand and wrist straight, forearm inclined at an angle, and the upper arm horizontal with the elbow inclined slightly forward. The salute is held until a superior officer has given the command, "Order Arms." To complete the salute, the hand is dropped smartly to its normal position at one's side.

Present Arms – The command to give a hand salute.

Order Arms – The command to complete a hand salute. Return to a position of attention.

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Attention – Attention is attained by bringing the heels together on the same line with the feet turned out equally forming a 45 degree angle with the body weight resting equally on the heels and balls of the feet; keeping the legs straight without stiffening or locking the knees; holding the body erect with the hips level, stomach in, chest lifted and arched, and the shoulders square and even; letting the arms hang straight without stiffness along the sides with the backs of the hands outward; curling the fingers so that the tips of the thumbs are alongside and touching the first joint of the forefingers; keeping the thumbs straight along the seams of the trousers (for a skirt, the lateral mid-point of the thigh) with all fingers touching the legs; keeping the head erect and squarely to the front with the chin drawn so that the axis of the head and neck is vertical; and looking straight to the front. Officers must be at attention before they can follow the orders of parade rest or dismissal.

Parade Rest – The command “Parade Rest” is given only from the position of attention. The command “Parade” is preparatory. On the command, “Rest,” move your left foot 10 inches to the left of your right foot. Rest your weight equally on the heels and balls of both feet, keeping your legs straight without locking your knees. At the same time you move your feet, place your hands at the small of the back, centered on your belt. Keep the fingers of both hands extended and joined, interlocking your thumbs so that the palm of your right hand is outward. Hold your head erect and look straight to the front. Remain silent and do not move.

Detail – A temporary unit separate from the Honor Guard that is made up of all sworn officers participating in a funeral service. This may also be referred to as the Funeral Detail.

III Procedure

1 NOTIFICATION OF POLICE FAMILY MEMBERS CONCERNING CRITICAL INJURIES OR DEATH INVOLVING POLICE EMPLOYEES

- 1.1 It shall be the responsibility of the on-duty watch commander or his designee to properly notify the next of kin of an officer who has suffered life-threatening injuries or has died. This shall include the employee’s family, or if none of these exist, the officer’s closest relative.
- 1.2 Steps should be taken to ensure the media does not obtain the name of the deceased employee before a member of the Springfield Police Department has made personal notification to the immediate family. If the media does learn the name of the employee before proper notification has been given to the family, they should be asked to show respect for the family by withholding the name until after personal notification can be made.
- 1.3 In case of death, a chaplain and one other person should accompany the shift commander when notification is made to the family if possible. The other person accompanying the shift commander may be the Chief of Police, Bureau

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Commander, officer, close friend, or another employee. Notification should not be delayed because any of these three people are not available. In the case of critical injury, an officer should be designated to contact the family and transport them to the hospital without delay.

- 1.4 Notifications should not be made on the doorstep. Officers making the notification should first ask to be admitted into the house. After everyone has been gathered together, if specific information about the incident is known, the notification officer should relay as much of this information as possible to the family. The officer's name should be used during the notification.
 - 1.4.1 If the officer has died, the notification officer should relay that information. Never give the family a false sense of hope. Use words such as "died" and "dead" rather than "gone away" or "passed away".
- 1.5 If the family requests to visit the hospital, they may be transported in police vehicles. It is recommended that the family members not drive themselves to the hospital. Be aware that arrangements for childcare may be needed. The notification officer(s) should remain at the hospital while the family is present.
- 1.6 If the immediate survivors live more than 60 miles outside the Springfield area, the watch commander or a designee will ensure the appropriate jurisdiction is contacted by telephone and a request will be made that personal notification regarding death be made to the family. The watch commander shall coordinate transportation of the immediate survivors with the appropriate jurisdiction. The Bureau Commander can approve personal notification beyond 60 miles.
- 1.7 The Chief of Police or a ranking representative should respond to the residence or to the hospital to meet with the family as quickly as possible.
- 1.8 Counseling services should be offered to the family through the Department. Commanders should be cognizant that fellow employees indirectly involved may need counseling assistance and those directly involved may need an altered duty status.

2 ASSISTING THE FAMILY AT THE HOSPITAL

- 2.1 The first commander, other than the notification officer, to arrive at the hospital becomes the hospital liaison. The hospital liaison is responsible for coordinating the activities of hospital personnel, the officer's family, police officers, the media, and others.
- 2.2 These responsibilities include:
 - 2.2.1 Arranging with hospital personnel to provide an appropriate waiting facility for the family, the Chief of Police, the notification officer, and only those others requested by the immediate family.
 - 2.2.2 Arranging with hospital personnel to provide a separate area for fellow police officers and friends to assemble.

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- 2.2.3 Working with medical personnel to relay pertinent information regarding an officer's condition to the family on a timely basis and before such information is released to others.
 - 2.2.4 Ensuring that the family is updated regarding the incident and the officer's condition upon their arrival at the hospital.
 - 2.2.5 Arranging transportation to the hospital for the family and back to their residence.
 - 2.2.6 Offering assistance in taking care of the family's immediate needs if necessary.
- 2.3 If it is possible for the family to visit the injured officer before death, they should be afforded that opportunity. A police official or hospital personnel should prepare the family for what they might see in the emergency room and should accompany the family in the room for the visit if the family requests. Do not be overly protective of the family. This includes the sharing of specific information on how the officer was injured or died, as well as allowing the family time with the deceased officer.

3 GENERAL FUNERAL OR MEMORIAL PROCEDURES

- 3.1 Upon the death of an active-duty officer in good standing, the officer's family will be offered police funeral rites, including an Honor Guard, by the Department, upon approval of the Chief of Police.
- 3.2 The Department will respect the family's wishes not to have any or all police funeral rites.
- 3.3 The Funeral Commander will:
 - 3.3.1 Ensure a teletype message containing the following information is issued (according to MULES and NCIC guidelines):
 - 3.3.1(a) Name of deceased;
 - 3.3.1(b) Date and time of death;
 - 3.3.1(c) Circumstances surrounding the death;
 - 3.3.1(d) Length of service;
 - 3.3.1(e) Funeral arrangements;
 - 3.3.1(f) Uniform to be worn at the funeral;
 - 3.3.1(g) Expressions of sympathy in lieu of flowers;
 - 3.3.1(h) Contact person and phone number for visiting agencies to indicate their desire to attend and to obtain further information.
 - 3.3.2 Arrange for close patrol checks of the survivor's home, if within city limits, for several weeks following the death since the survivors may be spending much time away from the home, or in some cases, there may be threats of reprisal.

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- 3.3.3 Confer with the funeral home director and the family to determine the most appropriate funeral rites, if any, the Department should provide. Final approval rests with the Chief of Police.
 - 3.3.4 Brief the Chief of Police and staff concerning all funeral arrangements and ensure dissemination of appropriate funeral information to all members of the Department.
 - 3.3.5 Direct the funeral activities of the Department and visiting agencies according to the wishes of the family.
 - 3.3.6 Coordinate funeral rites and logistics with the Family Liaison Officer, and the Department Honor Guard if the family desires the services of that unit.
 - 3.3.7 Assign members for honorary pallbearer duty if the family so desires. If the family asks that the Department supply regular pallbearers, members of the Honor Guard shall ordinarily carry out this duty.
 - 3.3.8 Arrange for the delivery of the officer's personal belongings to the family.
 - 3.3.9 Make arrangements with the funeral director to remove any Department issued items from the casket prior to burial.
 - 3.3.10 Ensure that the surviving parents are afforded recognition and that proper placement is arranged for them during the funeral and procession.
 - 3.3.11 Coordinate traffic management with the Traffic Section Commander prior to the service to survey the funeral sites, considering traffic control, environmental factors, parking concerns, and placement of officers at the gravesite and assessment of traffic control needs.
 - 3.3.12 Coordinate with the Emergency Communications Department to have a dispatcher and radio channel ready to deliver at the appropriate time the message noted in subsection 7.11, below.
- 3.4 The Traffic Section Commander will:
- 3.4.1 Be responsible for coordinating the police funeral procession with the funeral director and other agencies as needed;
 - 3.4.2 Establish the route of the funeral procession and any special traffic control measures that may be needed inside the city limits;
 - 3.4.3 Be responsible for the coordination of the officers and units assigned to escort. Coordinate with other law enforcement agencies for assistance in the assignment of marked units or law enforcement personnel that may be needed inside or outside the city;
 - 3.4.4 Determining number of officers and vehicles assigned based on the size of the funeral procession;
 - 3.4.5 For establishing parking, necessary crowd control and media staging areas at the funeral and burial sites.

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- 3.5 The Family Liaison Officer will:
 - 3.5.1 Be temporarily assigned to this post by the Chief of Police;
 - 3.5.2 Contact the surviving police family and act as a liaison for the Department;
 - 3.5.3 Offer liaison assistance between the police family and other City services, such as the Employee Assistance Program;
 - 3.5.4 Assist the family to gather and coordinate information regarding benefits available to them, if any.
 - 3.5.4(a) Assist with filing of appropriate claims for medical and life insurance benefits or group policies, policies provided by the Department, City, State, or Federal Government.
 - 3.5.4(b) Provide information concerning financial matters such as salary due the employee at time of death, including tabulating vacation, holidays, and compensatory time accumulated.
 - 3.5.4(c) Provide other services as determined by the Chief of Police.
 - 3.5.5 Contact the City Human Resources Department and coordinate assistance provided by that department.
 - 3.5.6 Notify Concerns of Police Survivors (COPS) to provide emotional support and assistance to surviving families as desired;
 - 3.5.7 Assist the Funeral Commander as needed;
 - 3.5.8 Advise the Honor Guard coordinator to obtain an American Flag (funeral homes usually have them available) if desired by the family to be used to drape the casket and whether the family wishes a flag presentation;
 - 3.5.9 Advise the Honor Guard coordinator if the family requests the playing of taps at the funeral;
 - 3.5.10 If the family desires a burial in uniform, obtain uniform and proper accouterments and deliver them to the funeral home.
 - 3.5.10(a) This uniform should consist of:
 - 3.5.10(a.1) Class A dress uniform;
 - 3.5.10(a.2) The uniform shirt shall be properly outfitted with the uniform badge, SPD pins and nametag. Other Department issued adornments may be worn;
 - 3.5.10(a.3) Uniform trousers;
 - 3.5.10(a.4) The duty belt with all duty gear (holster, handcuff case, etc.) removed;

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3.5.10(a.5) At no time will a Department firearm be a part of the uniform or be placed in the casket.

3.5.11 Coordinate with the proper military officials if the family desires military funeral rites in addition to police funeral rites.

3.5.12 Make contact with the police family on a daily basis to assist with needs or desires.

3.5.13 Ensure the family is afforded support from this Department during any related criminal proceedings.

4 MOURNING AND VISITATION PERIODS

4.1 The official mourning period shall begin at the time of death and continue until the beginning of day watch on the day following the funeral unless otherwise specified by the Chief of Police.

4.2 Uniformed officers will wear a black band over their badge during the official mourning period. The band shall be positioned over the state seal on the badge. Non-uniformed and civilian personnel may wear a black ribbon on the left side of their chest.

4.3 If desired by the family, the Honor Guard shall be posted at the casket during the time of the formal family visitation. The Honor Guard shall stand at the position of parade rest with one officer at the head of the casket and another at the foot. Changing of the guards shall be done formally approximately every 30 minutes.

4.4 While standing guard, members of the Honor Guard shall not become unduly distracted. Other members of the Honor Guard shall stand at a position of parade rest at the rear of the chapel; or they may be allowed to briefly leave the main chapel by the Honor Guard coordinator so as to refresh themselves.

5 FUNERAL OR MEMORIAL SERVICES

5.1 Uniformed officers attending the funeral will be in formal dress, unless they are working a patrol watch at the time of the funeral. The uniform for the funeral services shall be consistent with section 12.5 of this policy. The Honor Guard and all command level officers' uniform will be in accordance with section 12.5 of this policy. All Department members will maintain an excellent personal appearance, with uniforms, equipment and police vehicles in outstanding condition.

5.2 Hats will be worn anytime an officer is outside of a building or vehicle. While seated, officers will place their hats in their laps. Members of the Honor Guard, pallbearers and honorary pallbearers will wear white gloves.

5.3 Prior to services members attending the service will report for an inspection and briefing at a location designated by the Funeral Commander away from where the services will be held.

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- 5.4 If desired by the family, up to six members of the Honor Guard may act as pallbearers.
- 5.5 Upon entering the building where services are being held, members will remove their hats and place them on top of their left forearm, facing forward, while holding the bill in their fingers.
- 5.6 Officers will enter the chapel or sanctuary as a group upon the command by the Funeral Commander.
- 5.7 Officers will maintain a military bearing throughout the service. Officers shall move in an orderly manner to the place reserved for officers and remain standing until the order to "*be seated*" is given by the clergy or Funeral Commander.
- 5.8 Upon conclusion of the service members will rise in unison after receiving the order, "*Detail, rise,*" from the Funeral Commander. Officers will again place their hats on their left forearm and hold them in this position until they have passed the casket and arrived outside.
- 5.9 Outside, uniformed officers will take a position at parade rest in lines on both sides of and facing the walkway from the chapel to the hearse. Officers and other employees not in uniform will place themselves behind the line of uniformed officers. Upon leaving the building officers will return the hats to their heads and assemble in two lines facing each other starting at the back of the hearse, with an aisle that allows the pallbearers and the casket to pass through. While in this formation, officers will remain in parade rest until given other orders.
- 5.10 When the casket comes into view the Funeral Commander will bring the group to attention by giving the order, "*Detail, Attention*", and then order "*Present Arms*", at which time all uniformed officers will execute a hand salute. When the casket has been placed in the hearse, the Funeral Commander will command "*Order Arms*".
- 5.11 After the doors of the hearse have been closed, the Funeral Commander will give the command, "*Detail, dismissed.*" At that point all officers and other employees will break ranks and proceed to their respective vehicles for the motorcade to the gravesite or other predetermined location.

6 FUNERAL PROCESSION

- 6.1 At least two police motorcycles and one marked unit will normally lead any procession. The vehicle(s) containing the officers of the Honor Guard and honorary pallbearers will follow directly behind the vehicle(s) containing the immediate family. No vehicles shall be between the hearse and the vehicle(s) containing the immediate family members. All other law enforcement vehicles in the procession, marked or unmarked, shall follow with the vehicle's headlights and emergency lights turned on.

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7 GRAVESIDE PROTOCOL

- 7.1 The Honor Guard shall stand on the side of the casket while the graveside service is conducted.
- 7.2 Uniformed officers shall form a line or lines in a predetermined area as directed by the Funeral Commander and await orders while standing at parade rest. Non-uniformed personnel shall form behind the uniformed officers.
- 7.3 Officers and other employees shall follow the commands of the Funeral Commander and shall not follow the Honor Guard commands, which may be different.
- 7.4 When the casket is removed from the hearse, and the pallbearers proceed to the grave, the Funeral Commander will give the order "*Detail...Attention*", then the order, "*Present Arms*".
- 7.5 After the casket has been placed on the lowering device the honorary pallbearers will take a position well off to the side of the grave and assume a position of attention.
- 7.6 The Funeral Commander will give the command, "*Detail, Order Arms*", followed by, "*Detail, Parade Rest*". The pallbearers, who are made up of members of the Honor Guard, will then begin preparations to present the flag to the family. The Honor Guard will perform their tasks irrespective of other activities that may be occurring.
- 7.7 During any prayer, uniformed officers except for the Honor Guard will bow their heads.
- 7.8 After the eulogy or other service, the Funeral Commander will give the order, "*Detail, Attention.*" The Honor Guard will remove the flag, if used, from the casket and present it to the family.
- 7.9 The Funeral Commander will then give the command, "*Detail, Present Arms*". If a 21-gun salute is to be given, the Funeral Commander will indicate to the Honor Guard to proceed. All other officers will hold their hand salute until the firing volley and/or the sounding of taps are complete.
- 7.10 If a bugler is used, he/she will sound taps immediately upon completion of the last volley.
- 7.11 At the proper time, as directed by the Funeral Commander, a dispatcher in the Communications Center will sound the "alert" tone once and then make the following broadcast via an appropriate SPD radio channel,
 - 7.11.1 "*Attention Springfield police units. Standby for roll call. Officer [insert name], DSN [insert DSN], served with pride on the Springfield Police Department from [month, day, year] until [month, day, year]. Officer [insert name] we thank you for your dedicated service; this is your final tour of duty.*"

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- 7.12 At the end of the above broadcast the Funeral Commander will give the command, "*Detail, Order arms.*" After a brief pause the Funeral Commander will give the command, "*Detail...dismissed*". The officers and other employees will then break ranks and return to their respective vehicles.

8 CREMATED REMAINS

- 8.1 During all phases of the funeral where the receptacle containing cremated remains are to be carried by hand, a member of the Honor Guard may be assigned to this function.
- 8.2 If an American flag is to be used in the service, a member of the Honor Guard will carry it folded and always to the right of the remains.
- 8.3 When the receptacle containing the ashes has been placed at the gravesite, members of the Honor Guard will unfold the flag and hold it over the remains during the gravesite service.
- 8.4 In the event that the family elects that the remains be cremated the Funeral Commander may modify the procedures listed in sections 6, 7 and 9 of this SOG to provide for a proper service.

9 EMPLOYEE ATTENDANCE

- 9.1 Prior to the service, law enforcement personnel attending in uniform will form in line as directed by the Funeral Commander. The officers shall stand at the position of parade rest. Non-uniformed personnel will take a position in line directly behind the uniformed officers.

10 FUNERAL FOR NON-SWORN PERSONNEL

- 10.1 Formal Department participation in funerals for non-sworn personnel will be by approval of the Chief.
- 10.2 Unless the employee's family has requested, and the Chief has approved formal Department participation, there will be no group formations or military commands given to groups attending, even though there may be a number of persons attending in uniform. In cases where no formal Department participation is utilized, other employees attending shall attend on an individual basis.

11 FUNERALS FOR RETIRED SPRINGFIELD POLICE OFFICERS

- 11.1 Retired officers are eligible for the services of the Honor Guard as outlined in SOG 302.5, Honor Guard, in the following circumstances:
 - 11.1.1 They retired from the Springfield Police Department under honorable conditions and served the Department for a term of at least 20 years, or;

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- 11.1.2 Died as a direct result of injuries sustained in the line of duty, no matter how much time has passed since the time of injury;
- 11.1.3 The surviving family has made a request for police funeral rites and the Chief of Police has authorized it;
- 11.1.4 Meet the requirements as described in section 12.1.2 of this policy.

12 OTHER AGENCY FUNERAL SERVICES

- 12.1 Upon notification of the line-of-duty death of a law enforcement officer of another agency, the following guidelines shall apply.
 - 12.1.1 A formal request shall be made to the Chief of Police for Department representation in all cases.
 - 12.1.2 The Chief of Police will determine if the Honor Guard should represent the Department.
 - 12.1.2(a) Authorization for representation will normally be granted within the following geographical boundaries:
 - 12.1.2(a.1) An area south of Interstate 70, north of the southern state boundary of Missouri and within the east and western state boundaries of Missouri.
- 12.2 The Honor Guard shall establish a rotation of officers to attend the funeral of any officer(s) from outside agencies when approved.
- 12.3 A maximum of two members of the Honor Guard shall represent the Springfield Police Department at all approved outside agency funerals.
 - 12.3.1 Overtime is not authorized and schedules shall be adjusted to compensate for travel time, etc.
 - 12.3.2 The Department shall provide a marked police vehicle.
- 12.4 No other on-duty officers shall be authorized to attend the funeral of a member of another law enforcement agency without specific authorization from the Chief of Police.
 - 12.4.1 Officers may elect to attend on their own time, in or out of uniform, using their personal vehicle.
- 12.5 Uniform of the day shall consist of: (See SOG 304.6, Police Uniform and Appearance Regulations) ¹
 - 12.5.1 Honor Guard Uniform – Honor Guard.
 - 12.5.2 Dress Uniform – All other sworn officers below the rank of lieutenant.
 - 12.5.3 Command Dress Uniform – All command level officers.

¹ Sections 12.5-12.5.3 revised per Policy Change Order 13-039, Effective Date 03/31/2013.

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13 CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR THE FAMILY

- 13.1 The Department Liaison Officer acts as a long-term liaison with the surviving family. The Department Liaison Officer ensures that close contact is maintained between the Department and the survivors and that their needs are met for as long as they feel a reasonable need for support.
- 13.2 Members of the Department are encouraged to keep in touch with the family. Close friends, co-workers and officials should arrange with the family to visit the home periodically as long as the family expresses a desire to have these contacts. Increased contact and additional support during holidays should be considered.
- 13.3 Survivors should continue to be invited to Departmental activities or functions to ensure continued contact.

IV Attachments