



NWAR Metro Chiefs Line of Duty Death or Catastrophic Injury Plan

Introduction

The loss of a first responder in the line of duty is a profoundly tragic and traumatic event for both the surviving family and our organization. Such an event is often sudden and requires an immediate, organized, and compassionate response. The period between the incident and the final memorial service is brief, necessitating swift and efficient action to honor our fallen firefighter with the dignity and respect they deserve.

The purpose of this document is to provide a structured contingency plan to guide our department in the planning and coordination required in the event of a line of duty death. This plan is designed to ensure an effective response while distributing responsibilities to prevent overwhelming any single individual.

The plan assigns specific responsibilities to designated individuals and teams for the following critical functions:

- **Notifications**
- **Planning**
- **Execution of Services**
- **Death Investigation**
- **Aftercare**

Given that such an event can occur at any time, the Fire Chief and Command Staff Officers (including Deputy Chiefs and Assistant Chiefs) should keep a copy of this plan in their department vehicles. If the Chief is unavailable, a Deputy or Assistant Chief may need to initiate the response.

This plan follows the **Incident Command System (ICS)** framework, ensuring a structured and efficient response. It is administered by a **Planning Group Manager** (Incident Commander), with responsibilities divided among specific **Divisions and Groups** to streamline operations.

Once the Chief designates a **Planning Group Manager**, that individual should obtain the **Line of Duty Death container**, maintained by the Chief's secretary. This container includes detailed notebooks outlining the responsibilities for each ICS position:

- **Planning Group Manager**
- **Logistics Group**
- **Viewing/Vigil Division**
- **Memorial Service Division**
- **Interment Division**
- **Reception Division**
- **Family Liaison Officer**
- **Public Information Group**

The Planning Group Manager must immediately appoint leaders for each Division/Group and convene a meeting to distribute assignment notebooks. These notebooks serve as foundational guides, though flexibility and adaptability remain essential, as no preplan can account for all possible circumstances.

A line of duty death requires a swift, organized, and respectful response. This plan is intended to provide clear guidance in such a difficult time, ensuring that our fallen firefighter is honored appropriately and that support is extended to their loved ones. While it is our hope that this plan never needs to be enacted, preparation is both prudent and necessary.

Policy for Notification and response of the Critical Incident Response Team

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear guidelines for the response, notification, and support procedures for the Critical Incident Response Team.

Scope

Any department in the Northwest Arkansas Region can request assistance from the CIRT team. The team may aid in a line of duty death, off duty death, or critical injury of a firefighter.

Procedure

The requesting department will request the team through their dispatch center. The regional mutual aid coordinator (RMAC) may also make the request. The dispatch center or RMAC will contact Washington County Fire Com. Washington County Fire Com will notify the team leaders.

Helpful information from the agency requesting assistance:

Type of request (Injury, LODD, off duty death)

Number and status of firefighters involved (Death or Injury)

Location of emergencies and firefighters involved

(Scene location and hospital location if firefighters transported)

Contact number for the department

Notification of the team should not be delayed if this information cannot be obtained.

A CIRT team leader will contact the department. The team leader will obtain what resources are needed by the department.

Response Team Composition

Four personnel from the team will assemble prior to contact the department. Team roles will be established as needed to include Coordinator, Family Liaison, Planning, Logistics.

A message will be sent to the entire team via the group me app and additional roles will be assigned.

Chief's Responsibilities in the Event of a First Responder Death Severe Injury

Immediate Notification and Communication Protocol

Upon the death of any first responder, the Fire Chief or Acting Chief must be notified immediately. In the case of a Line of Duty Death (LODD), this notification must occur without delay.

All communications regarding such incidents must be accurate, swift, and conducted with the utmost discretion. As radio transmissions are regularly monitored by the media and private citizens, the names of deceased or injured firefighters shall **never** be communicated over the radio. Instead, all sensitive communications shall take place via telephone to ensure confidentiality.

Chief or Acting Chief Responsibilities

Upon receiving notification of a first responder's death, the Chief or Acting Chief shall coordinate the following actions:

1. Initiate Departmental Notifications

- Notify Command Staff
- Inform Community Services and Public Information Officers (PIOs)
- Contact and brief the City Manager or Mayor on all pertinent information, ensuring that the "Line of Duty Death Contingency Plan" is activated

2. Assemble the Notification Team

The notification team should consist of:

- The Fire Chief (if available) or a designated representative
- A designated Family Liaison Officer
- A close friend of the deceased or a trusted civilian family friend

This team will be responsible for notifying the surviving family members. (Refer to the "Notification of Next of Kin" section for detailed procedures.)

3. Organize a Command Staff Meeting

A Command Staff Meeting should be convened as soon as the family notification process is complete. The agenda should include:

- Appointment of a **Planning Group Manager** to oversee all ceremonial arrangements and issue the Line of Duty Death protocol materials
- Designation of a **Death Investigation Leader**

- Verification that Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) protocols are being implemented
- Discussion of all pertinent operational and administrative matters

Additional Notifications and Actions

Further notifications may be required, including:

- Chaplain and **Metro Chiefs Critical Incident Response Team**
- Emergency Medical Services (EMS) to stage an ambulance 1-2 blocks from the family's residence
- Family Coordinators, ensuring a fire department vehicle is available for support
- Hospital Coordinator(s) to respond if the injured member is in critical condition but still alive
- Public Information Officer (PIO) to manage external communications
- Fire Marshal and Investigator
- Mayor (following consultation with senior officers)
- City Council Members
- Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD) Team
- State Fire Marshal's Office
- Funeral Coordinator to begin preliminary arrangements
- Last Team (State Memorial and Assistance Team)

NEXT OF KIN NOTIFICATION

The importance of next-of-kin notification cannot be overstated. This process sets the tone for the challenging days, weeks, months, and years ahead for the surviving family. Notifications must be delivered with the utmost sensitivity and compassion.

Notification should be conducted as promptly as possible to prevent the family from learning of their loss through external sources. The media will actively seek to identify and report on the fallen first responder. All necessary measures must be taken to protect the next of kin from unwanted media exposure.

Notification Team Composition: To ensure a dignified and professional notification, a team should be assembled swiftly. The team should consist of at least two, preferably three individuals, **each with their own vehicle**. Recommended members include:

- The Fire Chief, if available; otherwise, the highest-ranking available officer (Deputy Chief).
- A designated Family Liaison Officer is selected by the Chief.
- A close firefighter colleague or a trusted civilian family friend.
- **Have an ambulance staged for emergencies**

If the family resides outside the department's jurisdiction, the local fire agency in that area should be contacted to conduct the notification promptly.

In the event of multiple casualties or separated families of one firefighter, separate notification teams must be assembled and deployed. Before arriving at the residence, verify all pertinent information, establish who will deliver the notification, and decide on the precise wording of the message.

It is important to acknowledge that grief can manifest as anger, and the family may direct their frustration toward the department. For this reason, the initial notification and its execution are of critical importance.

Procedure for Notification at the Residence:

- If the next of kin has known medical vulnerabilities, paramedics should be placed on standby. However, emergency vehicles should remain out of immediate view.
- Upon arrival, identify yourself and request permission to enter. Notifications should be made in a private setting.
- Consider having notification personnel of different genders.
- Confirm that you are speaking with the correct individual before proceeding.
- Encourage the family to sit down and ensure they are in a comfortable setting.
- Deliver the message clearly and directly. Begin with phrases such as:
 - "I have very bad news."
 - "I am very sorry to inform you..."

- Provide only verified facts, avoiding speculation. If a question cannot be answered immediately, commit to obtaining accurate information.
- Allow the family to process their emotions without attempting to diminish or rationalize their grief.
- Display empathy and do not conceal your own sorrow.

Phrases to Avoid:

- "I know how you feel."
- "It was God's will."
- "Life will go on."
- "He would have wanted to go this way."
- "Be brave."
- "Passed away."

Instead, refer to the fallen first responder by their first name to maintain a personal connection.

Supporting the Family Post-Notification:

- Offer assistance in notifying other immediate family members (parents, siblings, etc.).
- With the family's consent, help establish a support system, which may include:
 - Clergy
 - Relatives
 - Close friends
- Do not leave the family alone unless they expressly decline further support. Wait for additional family members or friends to arrive.
- Do not take any personal belongings of the deceased at the time of notification.
- If the family wishes to view the deceased, arrangements should be made promptly. This can be an important part of the grieving process, even in cases of severe injury or disfigurement.
- If the family opts to visit the fallen first responder, transportation should be arranged. The family should not drive themselves. Radio communication should be minimized, and an alternative channel or cell phone should be used for necessary updates.

Ongoing Support and Considerations:

- If the Family Liaison Officer is not present during the notification, their contact information should be provided before the team departs.
- Ensure a department representative remains available to the family unless they request otherwise.
- Inform the family that the Family Liaison Officer will reach out to assist with necessary arrangements.
- Offer assistance in retrieving any children who may be away at the time of notification.
- Advise the family about potential media inquiries and suggest that a trusted friend or relative screen incoming calls.
- Arrange transportation to hospital for family, if needed.

- Reassure the family that their preferences and wishes will be prioritized by the department.
- Inform them that an autopsy is legally required.
- Clarify that no immediate decisions need to be made regarding funeral services, estate matters, or other logistical concerns.
- Before leaving, attempt to schedule a Family Planning Meeting within the next 24 hours to discuss necessary arrangements.

Out of area notification

If family members of the affected individual are located in an area where in-person notification cannot be made in a timely manner, alternative means of notification should be utilized.

Use of Local Emergency Services

Local fire or police departments may be contacted to assist with notification.

These departments should be briefed on the incident and provided with necessary contact information for the originating department.

Coordination and Communication

Ensure that all pertinent details of the incident are shared securely and appropriately.

Confirm receipt and understanding of the information by the assisting department.

Follow up to verify that notification has been successfully delivered.

Public Information Group

The Public Information Group is established to coordinate and disseminate all information related to a Line of Duty Death. The Group Leader reports directly to the Planning Manager during the service preparation phase.

Rule Number One: No names of injured or deceased first responders shall be released prior to the notification of next of kin. It is imperative to prevent families from learning of their loss through the media.

Responsibilities:

Media Coordination and Communication

- Manage all media inquiries and interactions.
- Schedule and set up press conferences
- Conduct interviews and news conferences.
- Prepare and distribute written news releases.
- Organize all media coverage for memorial services, including potential press pool coverage arrangements.
- Notify and coordinate with local media outlets as soon as possible.
- Establish designated media viewing areas at services and burials to ensure respectful coverage.
- Work collaboratively with the media to honor the fallen individual appropriately.

Official Notifications

Notify key individuals and organizations, including:

- City Safety Officer (who will contact OSHA)
- Local Union Representatives
- Surrounding Agencies
- Emergency Services District (ESD)
- State and National First Responder Organizations
- The Office of the President
- Governor's Office
- State and Federal Senators and Representatives

Timely notification to government officials is crucial to facilitate their participation and attendance.

Information Management

- Establish dedicated phone lines for both recorded and live information.
- Compile a comprehensive biography and recent photographs of the fallen individual for use in press releases and ceremonies.
- Develop and distribute a press kit, including:

- Biography
- Photographs
- Service details
- Maps of event locations

Service and Memorial Coordination

- Organize printed programs for viewings and memorial services.
- Coordinate video recording of key events.
- Manage VIP arrangements, including airport pickup, transportation, and lodging.
- Work with the Family Liaison to determine if the family wishes to:
 - Establish a trust fund.
 - Request charity donations in lieu of flowers.

Commemorative Displays and Tributes

- Collect relevant photos and memorabilia for display.
- Arrange for a shadow box containing:
 - Badge
 - Hat hardware
 - Patches
 - Photograph
- Produce a tribute video, if appropriate, incorporating messages from friends, supervisors, and pre-existing footage.
- Request letters of condolence from top officials who are unable to attend the service, to be read during the ceremony.

Administrative Oversight

- Maintain detailed phone logs to prevent redundant communication.
- Provide printed PIO identification badges to personnel involved in event coordination.
- If additional Public Information Officer (PIO) support is required, liaise with the Police Department or other agencies for assistance.

Planning Group

Honoring the service and sacrifice of a fallen firefighter is a solemn duty, deeply significant to both their immediate family and the members of our Department. To ensure a dignified and well-executed tribute, it is essential to establish an effective planning team capable of managing all necessary activities. This effort will be structured in accordance with the Incident Command System (ICS) framework, which is traditionally used to coordinate major emergency incidents.

Organizational Structure

The Fire Chief, or Acting Chief, will designate a senior Command Staff Officer (Deputy or Assistant) to serve as the Planning Group Manager. This individual will be appointed as soon as possible and will assume overall responsibility for the coordination and execution of the memorial service and related activities.

The Planning Group Manager will oversee the following seven Divisions/Groups:

- **Logistics Group**
- **Viewing/Vigil Division**
- **Memorial Service Division**
- **Interment Division**
- **Reception Division**
- **Family Liaison Group**
- **Public Information Group**

Upon confirmation of the death or if a passing is imminent, the Planning Group Manager must promptly assign Division/Group Leaders to capable individuals. A staff meeting should be convened immediately to distribute work assignment notebooks and outline responsibilities. Given the potential for religious or cultural customs requiring burial or cremation within three days, it is imperative that the planning process commences without delay.

The organizational structure provided is intended as a guide and may be adjusted at the discretion of the Planning Group Manager to ensure efficiency and effectiveness.

Key Considerations

To uphold the highest standard of professionalism and respect, the following considerations should guide the planning process:

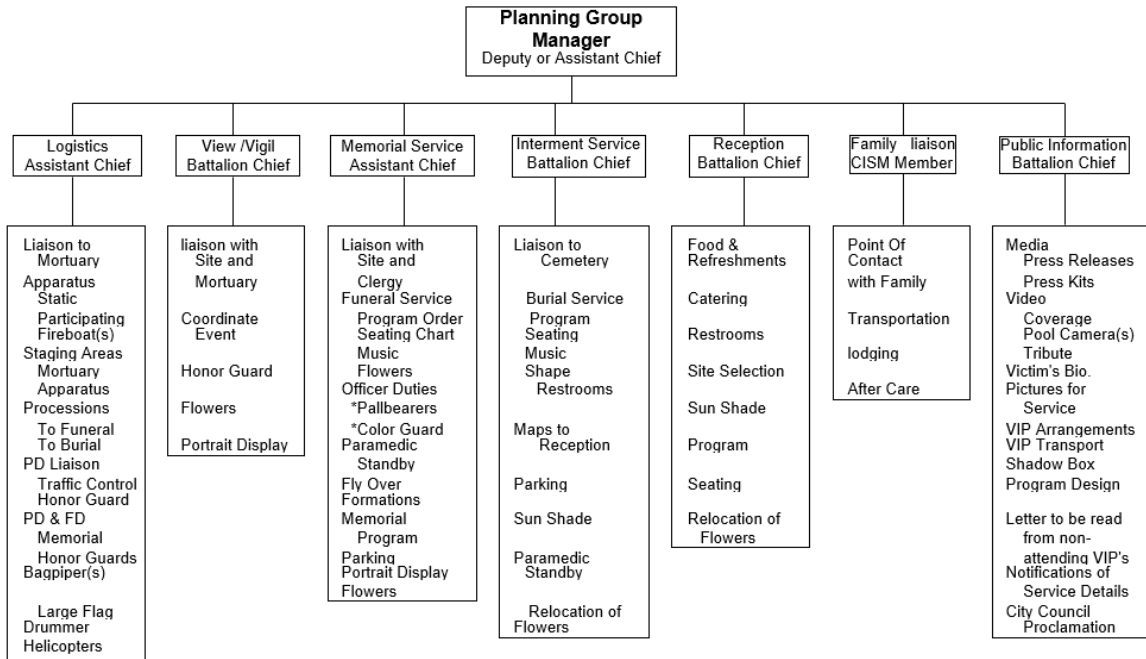
- The wishes of the surviving family must always take precedence.
- Clear and consistent communication within the Planning Group is essential for seamless coordination.
- Rehearsals of specific events should be conducted, when feasible, to minimize confusion and ensure smooth execution.
- The Planning Group should convene once or twice daily to review progress and address any challenges.

- Early activation of the Planning Group is crucial, as lost time cannot be recovered within the demanding three-to-five-day planning window.
- This is a complex event requiring highly skilled personnel; the most capable individuals should be selected to lead and staff the planning divisions.
- Division/Group Leaders should be empowered to assemble the best teams possible to fulfill their responsibilities.
- Anticipate large-scale participation, potentially numbering in the thousands, for a full honors funeral.
- Leverage available planning support from external agencies, including:
 - Firefighter unions (local, state, and international)
 - Law enforcement, emergency medical services, and other public safety agencies
 - Government and community organizations

A Planning Group Organizational Chart is provided, along with detailed job descriptions for each Division/Group. Individual Division/Group notebooks are also included for distribution among team members.

By adhering to this structured approach, we ensure that our fallen comrade receives the highest tribute, reflecting the honor, duty, and respect they deserve.

LINE OF DUTY DEATH PLANNING GROUP ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



Incident Investigation Team

In the event of a line-of-duty death or serious injury involving a firefighter, the Fire Department must take immediate and appropriate actions to ensure a thorough and accurate investigation. This process is essential to protect the interests of the fallen firefighter, their family, and the Department while complying with all applicable state and federal regulations.

To facilitate a prompt and effective investigation, a pre-designated Incident Investigation Team shall be assembled. This team will consist of the following personnel:

- Command Staff Officer (Deputy or Assistant Chief)
- Operations Battalion Chief
- Fire Marshal
- Law Enforcement Representative
- City Safety Official

The activation of the Incident Investigation Team shall be initiated by the Fire Chief or Acting Chief. Upon activation, the team must convene at the incident site as soon as possible.

Until the Incident Investigation Team assumes control, the Incident Commander is responsible for the initial collection of facts, preservation of evidence, and notification of the appropriate agencies.

Investigation Procedures

Immediate Actions

1. **Secure the Scene** – Limit access to essential personnel only and prevent unnecessary disturbances to the site.
2. **Impound Safety Equipment** – All safety equipment used by the affected firefighter shall be secured, including:
 - Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA)
 - Turnout Gear (Coat, Pants, Boots)
 - Helmet
 - Gloves

These items may require further examination and testing.

3. **Document the Scene** – Capture comprehensive video and photographic evidence of the incident site.

Secondary Actions

1. **Arrange for an Autopsy** – Ensure that an autopsy is conducted as required.

2. **Preserve Incident Records**
 - Obtain and secure all audio recordings related to the incident.
 - Request written transcripts of radio transmissions, including time-stamped logs.
 - Impound all incident-related documentation, including:
 - Incident Worksheets
 - Personnel Accountability Forms
3. **Notify Relevant Agencies** – Ensure that all required agency notifications are made, including but not limited to:
 - Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)
 - Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
 - U.S. Fire Administration (USFA)
 - National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)
 - Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) (if suspicious circumstances exist)
 - State Fire Marshal
 - Public Safety Officers' Benefits (PSOB) Program (one team member to serve as liaison)
 - City Safety Officer
4. **Obtain Written Statements** – Secure written statements from all personnel directly involved in the incident. Ideally, statements should be completed before the end of the shift. If this is impractical, they must be submitted within 24 hours. These statements are to remain confidential and sealed for review solely by the Incident Investigation Team.

Review and Analysis

- Analyze all chronological reports related to the incident.
- Review all written statements for consistency and accuracy.
- Organize interview teams to conduct recorded interviews with all personnel present at the scene.
- Reconstruct the incident based on statements and available evidence.
- Create detailed diagrams and schematics of the fire scene for investigative purposes.
- Review the autopsy report upon its completion.
- Compile and finalize the official investigation report.

Fire Investigation Protocol

If the fatality or serious injury results from a fire or explosion, the Fire Department's Arson Investigation Unit shall lead the fire investigation. This unit will determine the cause and origin of the incident in coordination with any additional investigative resources, such as the ATF or the County Sheriff's Department. Once the fire investigation is concluded, the Arson Investigation Captain will formally transfer control of the scene to the Death Investigation Team.

Family Liaison Officer (FLO)

Designation and Initial Duties

- The FLO is appointed by the Chief or Acting Chief immediately after a Line of Duty Death.
- The FLO should be selected from the Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Team.
- A designated list of trained individuals should always be available through the Alarm Office.
- The FLO must be available 24/7 until after the burial, and provided with an agency vehicle, communication equipment, and support.
- An assistant should be assigned to aid in responsibilities.
- If multiple deaths occur, each family requires a separate liaison.

Initial Notification

- The FLO should accompany the Chief or designee to notify the family.
- If unavailable, provide the family with the FLO's contact details immediately.

Family Planning Meeting (Within 12-24 Hours)

- Attendees:
 - Family Liaison Officer
 - Assistant Family Liaison Officer (preferably a family friend)
 - Family's religious representative or department Chaplain
- The family should be given all service options before making decisions.
- Important decisions include:
 - Type of service
 - Location
 - Agency involvement
 - Funeral honors and traditions

Traditional First Responder Funeral Options

- Flag-draped casket
- Casket on fire apparatus
- Agency pallbearers (8) and color guard
- Apparatus procession
- Honor Guard at viewing

- Bagpipers
- Motorcycle escort
- Last alarm ceremony
- 21-gun salute
- Ladder arch
- Bugler playing taps
- Eulogy by Chief, Union, or officials
- Location preference (city or alternate area)

Addressing Family Concerns

- Be prepared for grief-related emotional responses, including potential blame.
- If the family declines agency assistance, respect their wishes but inform them of a departmental memorial service.
- Consider religious customs that may require expedited services.

Family Liaison Officer Checklist

- Assist in notifying family members and friends.
- Arrange for child-care if needed.
- Contact the family's church or religious organization.
- Transport family to hospital (if applicable).
- Arrange for food and beverages at the home.
- Help manage visitors and provide a gatekeeper.
- Handle phone messages if requested.
- Determine the funeral home preference and schedule appointments.
- Assist in selecting burial clothing (Class "A" uniform available from Lighthouse Uniforms).
- Help gather items for visitation and funeral.
- Arrange travel and lodging for out-of-town guests.
- Assist in locating necessary documents:
 - Social Security card
 - Driver's license
 - Will
 - Life insurance

- File for immediate benefits. Last Team
- Escort family to funeral home, church, and services.
- Coordinate post-funeral benefits review with the Benefits Coordinator.

Family Planning Checklist

Mortuary Details:

- Name: _____
- Address: _____
- Phone: _____

Service Preferences:

- Full Honors Service: Yes / No
- Burial / Cremation / Other: _____
- Cemetery Plot Purchased: Yes / No
- Vigil/Viewing Details:
 - Location: _____
 - Date: _____
 - Time: _____
- Religious Preference: _____
- Open to Public: Yes / No
- Memorial Service:
 - Location: _____
 - Date: _____
 - Time: _____
 - Open / Closed Casket
 - Religious Burial Timeframe: Yes / No (Required by: _____)
- Graveside Service: Yes / No
- Agency Involvement: Yes / No
- Assistance for Out-of-Town Family:
 - Transportation: Yes / No

- Lodging: Yes / No

Preferred Pallbearers (8 required):

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

Family Contact Information:

Name Relationship Phone Number

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Additional Considerations:

- Preferred scriptures: _____
- Preferred music: _____
- Preferred speakers: _____
- Deliver burial clothing to funeral home.
- Obtain recent photos for memorial and public information officer.

This document serves as a structured guide for the Family Liaison Officer to ensure the family receives the highest level of care and respect during this difficult time.

Benefits Coordinator

(For Fire Department & Family Liaison Officer Use – Arkansas-Specific)

1. Immediate Actions (Within 24-48 Hours)

- Coordinate with the Family Liaison Officer.
- Verify Next of Kin (NOK) Information and establish primary contact.
- Provide Immediate Financial Assistance (department funds, firefighter relief organizations, or charities). NWA Metro Chiefs has funding available for members.
- Obtain Multiple Copies of the Death Certificate (needed for claims).
- Ensure Medical Examiner/Coroner's Report (**if requested**) for official cause of death documentation.

2. Federal Benefits Processing

Public Safety Officers' Benefits (PSOB) Program (Federal Death Benefit)

- National Fallen Firefighter Memorial
<https://www.firehero.org/>
- File PSOB Death Benefits Claim
(<https://bja.ojp.gov/program/psob>).
- Required Documentation:
 - Certified Death Certificate
 - Official Incident Report
 - Employer Verification of LODD
 - Marriage Certificate (if applicable)
 - Birth Certificates of Children (if applicable)Verify Status of PSOB Educational Benefits for spouse and children.

3. Arkansas State LODD Benefits

- File for Arkansas Workers' Compensation Death Benefits (Arkansas Division of Workers' Compensation).
- Apply for Arkansas State LODD Death Benefit (administered through the Arkansas Firefighter Relief Fund). <https://arclaimscommission.arkansas.gov/claim-submission/>
- Determine Eligibility for Arkansas Firefighter Pension Benefits (Local Fire Pension, Arkansas Local Police and Fire Retirement System [LOPFI] if applicable).
- Check for Additional Benefits through the Arkansas Firefighters Association.
- Contact Arkansas Last Team
Contact information at <https://www.firehero.org/>

4. Local & Department Benefits

- Process Fire Department Life Insurance Claims (check for city/county policies).
- Verify Eligibility for Local Firefighter Pension Fund Payments through LOPFI or municipal plans.
- Ensure Union Benefits are Processed (if IAFF or Local Union Member).
- Apply for Any Department-Specific LODD Death Benefits.

5. Additional Compensation & Support

- File for Social Security Survivor Benefits ([SSA Survivor Benefits](#)).
- Submit Any Private Life Insurance Claims (e.g., personal policies held by the firefighter).
- Check for Mortgage/Loan Protection Insurance (if applicable).
- Verify Any Additional Employer-Sponsored Benefits.
- Verify any Credit Card policies
- Assist with Wills and Probate

6. Educational & Family Assistance

- Apply for PSOB Educational Benefits (tuition assistance for spouse/children).
- Check for Arkansas-Specific Education Assistance for Firefighter Families (e.g., tuition waivers or scholarships).
- Apply for Scholarships from Firefighter Associations (e.g., NFFF, IAFF, Arkansas Firefighters Association).
- Ensure Family is Connected with Survivor Support Organizations (e.g., National Fallen Firefighters Foundation, Arkansas Fallen Firefighters Memorial Foundation).

7. Funeral & Memorial Assistance

- Apply for Federal & State Funeral Reimbursement Benefits.
- Coordinate with the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation for Honors.
<https://www.firehero.org/resources/handling-a-lodd/criteria/>
- Ensure Family is Offered Burial in a Firefighter Memorial Cemetery (if applicable).

- Confirm Department Honors (LODD Funeral, Last Alarm Ceremony, Honor Guard, Bell Toll Tribute, Final Radio Call).
- Arkansas Last Team can assist with headstones and other funeral needs

8. Long-Term Follow-Up & Support

- Verify Status of All Claims & Payments (Follow-up Monthly).
- Maintain Contact with Family for Survivor Assistance Programs.
- Assist Family with Ongoing Mental Health or Grief Counseling Services.
- Ensure Family is Invited to Future Memorial Events & Recognitions.

Arkansas Last Team can assist with filing for benefits.

<https://www.firehero.org/resources/family-resources/benefits/>

Washington and Benton County DEM can provide county attorneys to assist with paperwork.

Logistics Group

The Logistics Group is established to manage key operational responsibilities following a Line of Duty Death (LODD). This group ensures the seamless coordination of all logistical elements in support of memorial and funeral services. The Logistics Group Leader shall report directly to the Planning Group Manager and is responsible for appointing competent personnel to assist in executing the group's extensive duties.

Responsibilities of the Logistics Group Leader:

Transportation Coordination:

- Arrange for the transportation of the deceased from the coroner's office to the mortuary, utilizing a Fire Department ambulance if necessary.
- Designate and coordinate the use of all apparatus for ceremonial events, including:
 - Apparatus that is designated as the caisson.
 - Apparatus that is designated as the flower vehicle, if required.
 - City/County units participating in the processions.
 - Vehicles from outside agencies.
 - VIP transport, including provisions for:
 - The surviving family.
 - Elected officials.
 - Union representatives.
 - City management.
 - Clergy.
 - Antique fire apparatus, if applicable.
- Establish the order of apparatus in all processions.
- Plan and designate the route for the procession, ensuring:
 - The route passes the deceased's fire station and as many other stations as feasible.
 - The procession travels through downtown areas to allow public participation.

Procession and Service Coordination:

- Arrange the transfer from the mortuary to the service site.
- Coordinate the meeting point for visiting apparatus and the caisson before proceeding to the service site.
- Organize the procession from the service site to the burial location.
- Enforce strict adherence to the following protocols:
 - **No sirens** shall be activated during any procession.
 - **Emergency lights** should remain activated throughout the procession.

Apparatus and Display Management:

- Coordinate the static display of in-service apparatus along procession routes.
- Arrange ladder trucks to form a ladder bridge with a large flag display.

- Work with the Planning Manager to determine mutual aid requirements for station coverage.

Law Enforcement Liaison:

- Coordinate with law enforcement agencies for:
 - Motorcycle escorts.
 - Street closures along the procession route.
 - Rifle teams for a 21-gun salute, if requested.

Staging Area Organization:

- Designate and manage staging areas for procession participants:
 - **Mortuary Staging Area:**
 - Assign an officer to liaise with the mortuary.
 - Organize agency apparatus.
 - Secure a casket roller if a fire department apparatus is used as the caisson.
 - **Outside Agency Apparatus Staging Area:**
 - Assign an officer to manage the area, which may accommodate over 100 vehicles.
 - Ensure availability of:
 - Restroom facilities.
 - Refreshments and food services.

Ceremonial and Uniform Requirements:

- Secure the services of a bagpiper.
- Secure Flags as needed
- Arrange for one or two buglers, with amplification if necessary.
- Obtain a drummer, if requested.
- Procure an adequate supply of white gloves for command staff, pallbearers, and color guard members.
- Distribute black mourning bands for badges.
- Develop and distribute all necessary route and staging maps.
- Prepare the deceased's helmet and turnout gear for placement with the casket.
- Select and coordinate eight pallbearers, working with the Family Liaison Officer to respect family preferences.
- Oversee color guard arrangements.
- Issue a directive specifying the required uniform attire, including:
 - Hat
 - Tie
 - Black mourning band on the badge

Memorial Watch Coordination:

- Organize and oversee the standing of watches at the Police and Fire Memorial from dawn to dusk in one-hour shifts.
- Extend an invitation to local law enforcement for participation.
- Coordinate for both the Fire Chief and Police Chief to stand the initial watch.
- Prepare the memorial site with:
 - A podium featuring pertinent service information.
 - Velvet rope barriers for appropriate crowd control.

Additional Logistical Considerations:

- Manage incoming floral arrangements and their proper placement.
- Arrange for a helicopter flyover, if desired, in coordination with service group leaders.
- Provide transportation for injured first responders who wish to attend services.
- Coordinate water displays from fireboats, if applicable.

The Logistics Group plays a critical role in ensuring a dignified and honorable tribute to fallen firefighters. Attention to detail and precise coordination are paramount to the success of these solemn ceremonies.

Viewing/Vigil Division

The Viewing/Vigil Division will be established if the family requests such a service. The Viewing/Vigil Leader will report directly to the Planning Group Manager and will be responsible for overseeing all aspects of the viewing and vigil.

Required Information:

- **Service Date:** Typically scheduled one to two days prior to the memorial service.
- **Location:** _____
- **Time:** _____

Responsibilities of the Viewing/Vigil Leader:

- Serve as the primary liaison with the mortuary.
- Coordinate with clergy regarding religious services or traditions.
- Ensure coordination with the service facility to facilitate all arrangements.
- Work with the Logistics Team if the body is transported to a site other than the mortuary.
- Organize and confirm the order and content of the service.
- Arrange for Honor Guards to be stationed at or near the casket, ensuring proper rotation and adherence to protocol.

Honor Guard Duties:

- A total of five Honor Guards will be assigned: one at each end of the casket, with rotations occurring every 15 minutes.
- Coordination with the Family Liaison Officer to accommodate any family preferences regarding Honor Guard participants.

Honor Guard Assignments:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Additional Considerations:

- Immediate family members should be escorted by agency personnel to and from the viewing.
- If applicable, Catholic traditions may include a rosary service, which may or may not require Honor Guard participation.
- Honor Guards are expected to wear their uniform hats and gloves while inside the church or mortuary, including while posted alongside the casket.
- The event is typically scheduled one or two days before the official memorial service.

- The casket may be presented as either open or closed, based on family wishes.
- Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) team members should be available on-site for counseling, if necessary.
- Visual tributes, including photographs and mementos of the fallen first responder, should be present. The Public Information Officer (PIO) group is responsible for providing:
 - Special mementos
 - Photographs
 - Floral arrangements

This division is committed to ensuring a dignified and respectful vigil, honoring the fallen first responder with the highest level of professionalism and decorum.

Memorial Service Division

The Memorial Service Division is responsible for planning and coordinating all arrangements for the primary memorial service in the event of a Line of Duty Death (LODD). The Division Leader will report directly to the Planning Group Leader to ensure seamless execution.

To facilitate proper planning, the following essential information must be submitted to the Memorial Service Division by the Planning Group Manager and the Family Liaison Officer as soon as possible:

1. **Date:** _____
2. **Location:** _____
3. **Time:** _____
4. **Level of Agency Involvement:** _____
5. **Service Accessibility:** Open or closed to the public and external agencies
6. **Casket Preference:** Open or closed casket
7. **Preferred Music:** _____
8. **Preferred Speakers:** _____
9. **Bagpiper:** Yes / No
10. **Last Alarm Tradition:** Yes / No

Division Responsibilities

Facility & Logistics

- Ensure the chosen venue can accommodate the anticipated attendance, with plans for overflow if necessary.
- Coordinate logistics for arrival and departure at the service.
- If the service is indoors, determine seating capacity and obtain a floor plan layout.
- If the service is outdoors, ensure provisions for:
 - Public Address (PA) system
 - Tent and seating arrangements
 - Restrooms and water stations
 - Power supply and shade

Coordination & Planning

- Collaborate with religious leaders on the program's content.
- Design the order of service, ensuring it does not exceed one hour and forty minutes.
- Establish a seating plan for:
 - Family members
 - VIPs and dignitaries
 - City officials and political representatives
 - Union representatives (local, state, and national)
 - Command officers and visitors
 - Agency personnel and civilian attendees

- Visiting fire departments
- Recruit academies
- Retired chiefs

Music & Audio Arrangements

- Coordinate with the family on musical preferences.
- Arrange for appropriate musical performances, including:
 - Choir or soloist performances
 - Instrumental ensembles or orchestras
 - Recorded musical selections
 - Flow of music throughout the service
- Ensure an adequate PA system is in place for clear audio delivery.

Ceremony & Traditions

- Work with the Logistics Group on pallbearer assignment and flags.
- Conduct necessary rehearsals to ensure smooth proceedings.
- Arrange for Advanced Life Support (ALS) or Basic Life Support (BLS) ambulances to be on standby.
- Coordinate with the Family Liaison Officer to keep the family informed.
- Select and organize ushers for the service.
- Ensure space for the Honor Guard and Agency Chaplain.
- Coordinate the Last Alarm Ceremony.
- Organize parking logistics for attendees.
- Arrange for a portrait display and distribution of the memorial program.

Media & Commemorative Elements

- Coordinate with the Public Information Officers (PIO) on:
 - The printed memorial program
 - Video presentations, including:
 - Interviews with colleagues and supervisors
 - Any pre-existing video footage of the fallen firefighter
 - Departmental video tributes
- Ensure a shadow box is prepared with:
 - Badge
 - Patches
 - Hat hardware
 - Photograph (provided by PIOs)
 - Department flag

Program Content & Presentations

- Develop and finalize the program order, including:
 - **Invocation & Prayer**
 - **Opening Remarks**
 - **Special Musical Performance**
 - **Scripture Reading & Minister's Message**
 - **Remarks by Distinguished Speakers:**
 - Mayor
 - Council member from the district where the incident occurred
 - State and federal representatives (if applicable)
 - Family representative(s)
 - Union representative
 - Agency representative(s) and colleagues
 - **Eulogy by the Fire Chief**
 - **Special Music Performance**
 - **Presentations (e.g., flag, shadow box)**
 - **Closing Remarks & Prayer**
 - **Last Alarm Ceremony**
 - **Bagpipe Performance**
 - **Dismissal Instructions**

Suggested "Last Alarm" Ceremony (For Firefighters)

Chaplain or Department member reads or recites:

Throughout most of history, the life of a firefighter has been closely associated with the ringing of a bell. As he/she began his hours of duty, it was the bell that started it off. Through the day and night, each alarm was sounded by a bell, which called him to fight fire and to place his life in jeopardy for the good of his/her fellow man. And when the fire was out, and the alarm had come to an end, the bell rang three times to signal the end.

And now our Brother/Sister _____ has completed his/her task, his/her duties well done, and the bell rings three times, followed by a pause, three times, followed by a pause, and three time in memory of, and in tribute to his/her life and service.

Officer in charge calls firefighters to attention.

Color Guard called to present arms.

Bell is struck three times.

Color Guard called to order arms.

Firefighters seated.

Interment Division

The **Interment Division** is responsible for coordinating and managing all arrangements for the interment service in response to a **Line of Duty Death**.

The **Interment Officer** shall report directly to the **Planning Group Manager** and ensure that all aspects of the graveside service are conducted with the highest level of dignity and professionalism. The service typically includes a brief religious ceremony along with several first responder honors and traditions.

The arrival at the cemetery is an emotionally challenging moment for the family. To minimize distress, it is essential to prevent unnecessary delays before the service begins. If an extended motorcade or other delays are anticipated, it may be beneficial to arrange a designated family waiting area. Additionally, a **comprehensive parking plan** must be established in coordination with the cemetery to ensure smooth traffic flow and adequate vehicle accommodation.

Key Considerations for the Interment Division

- **Public Access:** Determine whether the service will be open or closed to the public.
- **Location & Timing:** Confirm the cemetery location and anticipated arrival time.
- **Guest Attendance:** Estimate the number of attendees to ensure proper logistical arrangements.

Responsibilities of the Interment Division

- **Service Program:** Develop the order of service and content.
- **Seating Arrangements:** Ensure seating is provided for the family and VIP attendees.
- **Facilities:** Arrange for restrooms if deemed necessary.
- **Logistics & Coordination:**
 - Distribute maps to the reception area.
 - Provide adequate shade if required.
 - Coordinate with cemetery officials.
 - Liaise with clergy.
 - Organize the flag presentation to the family (executed by the pallbearer team).
 - Present a commemorative case containing the badge, name tag, and department patch to the family.
 - Develop a detailed parking plan.
 - Provide sound and electrical systems as needed.
 - Arrange for a public address system.
 - Coordinate special honors, including:
 - **Bugler** for playing *Taps*.
 - **Bagpiper** for ceremonial music.
 - **21-Gun Salute** (if applicable).
 - **Flyover** of aircraft (if approved and feasible).
 - Oversee the relocation of floral arrangements.

Suggested Interment Program

1. **Assembly**
2. **Officer Command:** *"Attention, Salute."* (Upon placement of the casket over the grave, command given: *"Ready, Two."*)
3. **Opening Prayer**
4. **Scripture Reading**
5. **Bagpiper Performance**
6. **Committal Reading & Closing Prayer**
7. **Playing of *Taps***
8. **Flag Folding Ceremony**
9. **Flag Presentation by the Fire Chief**
10. **21-Gun Salute** *(if applicable)*
11. **Aircraft Flyover** *(if possible)*
12. **Final Dismissal Command**

Reception Division

The **Reception Leader** reports directly to the **Planning Group Manager** and is responsible for coordinating and overseeing the reception following the burial service. This gathering will likely take place at a designated venue separate from the cemetery.

Responsibilities:

1. **Venue Selection:**
 - Ensure the location can accommodate the expected number of attendees.
 - Confirm sufficient parking availability.
 - Verify the venue's suitability for hosting the event.
2. **Event Logistics:**
 - Estimate the number of anticipated attendees.
 - Determine the event's start and end times.
 - Plan the menu and refreshments.
 - Decide whether catering services will be required.
 - Provide maps to distribute at the interment service.
3. **Outdoor Event Considerations (if applicable):**
 - Arrange for tents, restrooms, tables, and chairs.
4. **Program and Presentations:**
 - Organize any necessary introductions or remarks.
 - Ensure the availability of a PA system and stage, if needed.
5. **Floral Arrangements:**
 - Coordinate the relocation of floral tributes as appropriate.

The Reception Division plays a critical role in ensuring a respectful and seamless conclusion to the burial service, providing a space for attendees to gather, reflect, and support one another.

Aftercare Policy

It is the responsibility of the agency to provide comprehensive support to the surviving family members following a line-of-duty death. The aftermath of such a tragic event involves numerous details, paperwork, and procedural steps, and our organization is committed to assisting the family throughout this difficult period. This support may extend over an extended duration, ensuring the family's needs are met.

The **Family Liaison Officer (FLO)** is designated to coordinate all necessary assistance. The FLO may engage individuals with specialized expertise to facilitate this process as needed. While aftercare may require a significant time commitment, the workload will naturally decrease as various matters are resolved.

The surviving family should always be regarded as an integral part of our agency. It is our duty to provide them with the same level of care and respect that we would hope for our own families in similar circumstances.

Aftercare Responsibilities

The following responsibilities are included but are not limited to:

- **Assisting the family in completing all necessary forms for benefits**, including:
 - Agency-related benefits
 - State benefits
 - Federal benefits
 - Insurance claims
 - Deferred compensation
- **Providing assistance with tax-related matters**
- **Reviewing financial obligations** to ensure legality, fairness, and accuracy prior to payment by survivors. This includes:
 - Final medical expenses
 - Pre-existing debts
 - Funeral expenses
 - Identifying costs covered by insurance or other means
- **Facilitating the transfer of titles and bank accounts**
- **Arranging grief counseling services**
- **Referring survivors to relevant support organizations**, such as:
 - Support groups
 - National Fallen Firefighters Foundation (NFFF)
 - Concerns of Police Survivors (COPS)
 - National EMS Memorial Foundation
 - Texas Line-of-Duty Death (LODD) Task Force
- **Ensuring ongoing inclusion of the family in agency functions** to reinforce their continued connection with our department.
- **Managing the return of the fallen firefighter's personal effects**

- The FLO is responsible for clearing the individual's locker and ensuring all belongings are returned to the family in a respectful manner. Items should be reviewed beforehand to remove any inappropriate materials.
- **Addressing any additional needs** that may arise for the surviving family.

Injured Firefighter Response & Support Checklist – Arkansas

(For Fire Department Command, Safety Officers, and Family Liaison Use)

1. Immediate Actions at the Incident Scene

- Assign a Fire Department Representative to accompany the firefighter to the hospital.
- Preserve PPE and Equipment for potential safety investigations.
- Photograph scene
- Brief and Debrief Personnel
- Notify the Critical Incident Support Team

2. Internal Notifications

- Notify the Incident Commander (IC) and Fire Chief immediately.
- Inform the Safety Officer to document all incident details.
- Designate a Family Liaison Officer (FLO) to communicate with the firefighter's family.
- Notify the firefighter's immediate supervisor and shift personnel.
- Ensure all communications remain confidential until authorized for public release.

3. Family Notification & Support

- Contact the Firefighter's Emergency Contact/Next of Kin (NOK).
- Provide transportation and support for the family to the hospital if necessary.
 - Multiple transportation arrangements may need to be made.
- Offer mental health and chaplaincy support to the firefighter and family.
- Keep the family informed about the firefighter's condition and treatment plan.
- Establish Family Area. A department representative should be posted with the family to control access to the family and assist with needs.
- Work with hospital staff to provide an area for department personnel.

4. Hospital & Medical Treatment Support

- Assign a Department Representative at the Hospital to assist with logistics.
 - Ensure Medical Personnel Receive Vital Health & Exposure History of the firefighter.
 - Authorize treatment decisions if the firefighter is unable to do so.
 - Maintain department presence at the hospital to support both firefighter and family.
-

5. Documentation & Reporting

- Complete an Initial Injury Report (time, location, and circumstances of the injury).
 - Document the Incident Scene (photos, equipment status, environmental conditions).
 - File a Workers' Compensation Injury Report through the Arkansas Division of Workers' Compensation (Website).
 - Ensure Compliance with OSHA & NFPA Reporting (if applicable).
 - Secure PPE and Equipment Used in the Incident for Investigation.
-

6. Benefits & Financial Assistance (Arkansas-Specific)

- File for Arkansas Workers' Compensation Benefits (Arkansas Division of Workers' Compensation).
 - Determine Eligibility for the Arkansas Firefighter Relief Fund (assistance for injured firefighters).
 - Verify Coverage Under Fire Department and City/County Insurance Plans.
 - Provide Information on Short-Term & Long-Term Disability Benefits (LOPFI or other pension systems).
 - Confirm Additional Financial Support through the Arkansas State Firefighters Association.
-

7. Long-Term Recovery & Reintegration

- Establish a Recovery Plan with Medical Providers (physical therapy, rehabilitation).
- Ensure Continued Mental Health Support for firefighter and family.
- Coordinate a Modified Duty Assignment (if applicable).
- Prepare for a Fitness-for-Duty Evaluation Before Returning to Full Service.
- Ensure the Firefighter Receives All Entitled Benefits & Ongoing Assistance.

Appendix A

Department Resource Information Form

Date: _____

Department Information

Department Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

Department Leadership

Fire Chief: _____ Contact #: _____

Assistant Chief: _____ Contact #: _____

Public Information Officer: _____ Contact #: _____

Chaplain: _____ Contact #: _____

Line of Duty Death (LODD) Protocol

LODD Protocol Coordinator(s): _____

Family Coordinator: _____ Contact #: _____

Family Coordinator: _____ Contact #: _____

Funeral Coordinator: _____ Contact #: _____

Funeral Coordinator: _____ Contact #: _____

Benefit Coordinator: _____ Contact #: _____

Hospital Coordinator: _____ Contact #: _____

Department Coordinator: _____ Contact #: _____

Department Coordinator: _____ Contact #: _____

Procession Coordinator: _____ Contact #: _____

Cemetery Coordinator: _____ Contact #: _____

Department Structure

Department Type: Paid Volunteer Combination Emergency Medical Services (EMS): Yes
 No Number of Employees: _____ Number of Volunteers: _____ Number of
Administrative Staff: _____ Auxiliary Program: Yes No Union Affiliation: Yes No

Local Number: _____

Union Address: _____

Union Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Union President: _____

Fraternal Organizations

Member of Other Fraternal Organizations: Yes No If yes, complete the following: Organization
Name: _____ Address:
_____ Phone:
_____ Fax: _____ Organization Name:
_____ Address:
_____ Phone:
_____ Fax: _____

City and County Dynamics

Employee & Operational Information

Employee Files Location: _____ Contact Name: _____

Phone: _____
Fax: _____ Medical Screenings Required: Yes No

Support Services & Resources

Department Psychologist: _____ Address: _____

Phone: _____
_____ Fax: _____ Uniform Supply Vendor: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____
_____ Fax: _____ CISD Team Contact: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____
_____ Fax: _____ American Red Cross Coordinator: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____
_____ Fax: _____ Bus Company (for Rehabilitation Support): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____
_____ Fax: _____

Policy: Use of Line of Duty Death (LODD) Funding

Purpose:

The Northwest Arkansas Metropolitan Chiefs Association provides financial assistance of up to \$10,000 in the event of a line-of-duty death (LODD) or a catastrophic injury sustained in the line of duty by a member of a department affiliated with the organization. These funds are intended to support the immediate needs of the affected family or department.

Approved Uses of Funds:

The allocated funds may be used to address urgent financial needs, which may include but are not limited to:

- Travel and lodging for immediate family members. Immediate family members shall be defined as parents, spouse, children, and siblings.
- Funeral service preparation.
- Food provisions for the affected family or department personnel.
- Other immediate necessities as determined by the circumstances.

Procedures for Fund Access and Management:

A designated member of the Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT) will contact the Secretary of the Northwest Arkansas Metropolitan Chiefs Association to request access to the organization's credit card.

1. The designated CIRT member should be the individual assigned to or assisting the planning group.
2. The designated CIRT member will be responsible for tracking expenditures and maintaining accurate financial records, including receipts and a detailed tally of funds spent.
3. All expenses must align with the approved uses outlined in this policy and be documented appropriately for accountability and transparency.