

Peoria Police Department Policy and Procedure Manual

Policy 5.11A Line of Duty Deaths/Serious Injury Assistance and Benefits



**“Our Community...
Our Commitment”**

I. POLICY

A. It is the policy of the Peoria Police Department to provide assistance, if wanted, to the immediate survivors of an officer who dies, or is seriously injured, in the line of duty, with emotional support that includes funeral and benefit arrangements. (22.2.6) (22.2.4)

B. The Chief of Police, at his discretion, may activate some or part of this policy for out-of-state funerals, off-duty deaths (not line-of-duty), retired officer's death, death of a civilian employee, or line-of-duty death of an officer from a different jurisdiction.

II. PURPOSE (22.2.4) (22.2.6)

The purpose of this policy is to offer impartial assistance to all members of the Peoria Police Department's police family. It must be understood that services provided to the police family are dependent upon a number of factors. These include such things as availability of Peoria Police Department resources and the Peoria Police Department's primary role of providing public safety to our community. The Chief of Police may approve deviations from this policy depending upon those factors.

III. DEFINITIONS – For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions shall apply: The definitions listed are not all inclusive. (22.2.4)

A. Line-of-Duty Death - A death of an active or reserve officer that dies accidentally or feloniously while performing work-related functions either on or off duty.

B. Survivors - The deceased or injured officer's spouse, children, parents, siblings, fiancé, or significant other.

C. Serious Injury - A medical condition obtained accidentally or feloniously while performing work-related functions on or off duty that is considered life-threatening, career-ending, or a permanent disability.

D. Peoria Police Department Support Officer - A command staff officer assigned by the Chief of Police to coordinate the Peoria Police Department's support to the survivors and supervise the Family Support Officer, Funeral Liaison Officer, Benefits Coordination Officer, and the Public Information Officer, in their duties.

E. Family Support Officer - A Peoria Police Department employee assigned by the Department Support Officer to stay with the survivors and give emotional support and act as an immediate liaison between the family and the Peoria Police Department. This employee should have a good knowledge of the family relationship in order to effectively serve as a facilitator between the family and the Peoria Police Department during the wake and funeral.

F. Funeral Liaison Officer - An employee of the Peoria Police Department, usually an officer, assigned by the Department Support Officer to coordinate the funeral

and wake arrangements including traffic, crowd, and route control.

G. Benefits Coordination Officer - A Peoria Police Department employee assigned by the Staff Services Bureau Lieutenant or designee to coordinate the obtaining of Federal, State, and City benefits for seriously injured employees or the employee's survivors in case of an employee's death.

H. Employee Association Liaison - An officer assigned by the employee's association that works voluntarily or under Union Release Time and coordinates non-governmental private donations for the benefit of seriously injured employees or the employee's survivors in case of an employee's death.

IV. PROCEDURE

A. Peoria Police Department Support Officer

1. Department Support Officer Designation: Within 24 hours of the incident, the Chief of Police will designate a lieutenant as a Department Support Officer. The Department Support Officer will then designate a Family Support Officer, a Funeral Liaison Officer if the employee died, and Benefits Coordination Officer to assist him/her. The Department Support Officer will also notify the Union President of the employee so that he/she may assist the Family Support Officer.

2. The Police Department Public Information Officer will also be assigned to work closely with the Department Support Officer for any media releases. The Department Support Officer must receive the approval of the Chief of Police prior to any release of information to the media.

B. Family Support Officer

1. Designation: The Department Support Officer will designate a Department employee to be the Family Support Officer. The Family Support Officer is assigned to stay with the survivors/family of the officer and give emotional support and act as an immediate liaison between the family and the Peoria Police Department. This employee should have a good knowledge of the family relationship in order to effectively serve as a facilitator between the family and the Peoria Police Department during the wake and funeral or hospitalization.

2. The Family Support Officer will report directly to the Department Support Officer, but will work closely with the Funeral Liaison Officer. The Family Support Officer will be provided with a cellular phone, if they do not already have one, to ensure an open and immediate line of communication with the Department Support Officer, the Peoria Police Department, and the family of the deceased/injured officer/employee.

3. Initially, the Family Support Officer will work closely with the Funeral Liaison Officer to meet the needs of the officer's family and begin planning the wake and the funeral. That cooperative effort is listed in section D. of this policy.

a. The Family Support Officer will offer assistance to the family in meeting their transportation or lodging needs for additional family that may be coming into town to attend the services.

b. The Family Support Officer will arrange for a patrol watch to be placed on the family's residence.

4. Personal Belongings: The Family Support Officer will also be responsible for obtaining all the officer's personal belongings at the Peoria Police Department and returning them to the family, and obtaining all the Peoria Police Department-issued equipment for return to the City.

5. Family Support Officer Responsibilities:

a. To remain sensitive to the needs of the survivors long after the officer's death or serious injury and learn to recognize post-traumatic stress symptoms.

b. Encourage members of the Peoria Police Department to keep in touch with the surviving family and instill that they are still part of the police family, especially around the holidays.

c. Remind and accompany the family members to all court proceedings relating to the officer's death or serious injury including parole and probation hearings.

d. Keep the family informed on all new developments relating to press releases, trial proceedings, and investigative findings.

C. Funeral Liaison Officer

1. Funeral Liaison Officer Designation: The Funeral Liaison Officer is an officer designated by the Department Support Officer to assist the family in coordinating the Funeral and wake/visitation arrangements. The Funeral Liaison Officer will report directly to the Department Support Officer, but will work closely with the Family Support Officer. The Funeral Liaison Officer will be provided with a cellular phone, if they do not already have one, to ensure an open and immediate line of communication with the Department Support Officer, the Peoria Police Department, and the family of the deceased officer.

2. The Funeral Liaison Officer will assist the family in funeral planning and family assistance relating to the funeral, or wake/visitation. The Funeral Liaison Officer

will coordinate the funeral and wake/viewing arrangements, including traffic, crowd, and route control. The Funeral Liaison Officer and the Family Support Officer will initially contact the family of a deceased officer and determine if the family desires a police service or the Peoria Police Department's assistance.

3. Explain to the family the law enforcement funeral procedure (to include a twenty-one gun salute, the officer's last radio call, presentation of the flag, playing of taps, etc.).

4. Let the family choose a funeral home. Once that decision is made, the Funeral Liaison Officer will set up a meeting with the funeral home personnel and the officer's family.

a. Ensure the family has signed the necessary release and permission to embalm forms.

b. Ensure that a clean uniform, in good order, is available for the deceased officer.

c. Determine the family's feelings about the media being at the family residence, in the funeral home, at the church service, or at the cemetery.

d. Ask the family for their selections on pallbearers.

5. Once the meeting with the officer's family and the funeral home is concluded, the Funeral Liaison Officer will:

a. Contact the pallbearers and generate a list of names for the funeral home.

b. Provide a burial flag for the casket, if the family so desires.

c. Secure a photograph of the deceased from personnel files for use by the funeral director (styling of hair, restorative work, etc.)

d. Establish an honor watch at the funeral home.

e. Arrange for an officer to watch the family's residence during the wake, viewing and funeral.

6. Once the meeting listed in section D.4. is concluded, the Family Support Officer and the Funeral Liaison Officer should ensure that they have documented the following information from that meeting:

a. Note the selected date, time, and location of the funeral service and the interment.

b. Note the name, address, and phone number of the clergy the family has selected.

c. Note the name of the funeral director who will be in charge of the services.

d. Note whether or not it will be an open or closed casket service (if open, at what time will the casket finally be closed).

e. Note the time that the officer will be ready for viewing.

7. Immediately after the meeting, the Family Support Officer shall provide all of the pertinent information to:

a. The Department Support Officer.

b. The deceased officer's Team/Unit/Section Supervisor and Bureau Lieutenant.

c. The Department Public Information Officer for appropriate media releases.

d. The Communications Supervisor on duty (for teletype to other agencies).

e. The Employee Association Liaison.

f. The Peoria Fire Department.

8. After the family's meeting with the funeral director, the Funeral Liaison Officer and Family Support Officer shall meet with the funeral director separately to discuss the specifics of a police service, if one was selected by the family. The specific details will be worked out with the funeral director and the presiding clergy member.

a. They shall provide the funeral director with the list of the pallbearers.

b. Make arrangements for twenty-four hour honor watch and viewing of the deceased.

c. Make arrangements to have a door left unlocked at the funeral home, if they normally close at a certain time, for access by the honor watch.

d. If the service is at the funeral home chapel, the Family Support Officer needs to obtain a diagram of the chapel and associated areas.

(1) Determine seating arrangements and overflow seating.

(2) Determine the maximum occupancy and work out arrangements for overflow crowd.

e. Determine if a public address system is present. If not, the Funeral Liaison Officer will need to secure a public address system.

f. Determine where the family will enter so that attending uniformed officers may form an honor line.

9. Contact the presiding clergy (chaplain/minister/rabbi/priest).

a. Explain the dynamics of a police service, and its various unique components.

b. Establish the order of the funeral and interment services.

10. Coordinate traffic-related activities involved with the funeral. These duties may be delegated to the Traffic Services Section supervisor, with the consent of the Shift I Patrol Lieutenant. The traffic-related responsibilities include:

a. Coordinating the parking at the viewing/wake.

b. Coordinating parking at the funeral services. Parking should be done as to assist in the order of the motorcade/procession, which is as follows:

(1) Escort motors (Peoria Traffic Services Section Motorcycle Officers).

(2) Hearse and deceased officer's family vehicles.

(3) Visiting agency motorcycle officers.

(4) Attending dignitaries.

(5) Marked Peoria Police Department Patrol vehicles.

(6) Marked Police vehicles from visiting agencies.

(7) Fire Department vehicles.

(8) All other civilian and unmarked vehicles.

c. Coordinating the route for the procession, including traffic control needed for the route.

d. Coordinating parking at the gravesite services.

e. Coordinating the assignment of patrol vehicles and other Peoria Police Department vehicles used during the service. This includes the cleaning of the vehicles and ensuring they are appropriate for the particular service.

11. Create a traffic plan for the procession route that includes all traffic officers' posted positions. Draw a diagram of the funeral procession order and provide a routing map to the Department Support Officer for release to the media, by the Public Information Officer, once the plan is finalized.

12. Order of events and protocol: While each funeral may be different, the following order of events should generally be followed:

a. Uniformed officers should be lined up at the church along either side of the hearse parking spot to the door of the church.

b. Pallbearers move the casket to the church, uniformed officers salute on command given by the honor guard officer in charge as the casket passes into the church.

c. Repeat the two steps above when the casket leaves the church.

13. Order of Gravesite Ceremonies is:

a. Uniformed officers are formed in ranks between the gravesite and the hearse.

b. Motorcycle officers are formed in ranks opposite of uniformed officers.

c. Uniformed officers salute on command of the honor guard officer in charge when the pallbearers carry the casket from the hearse to the gravesite.

d. The playing of the officer's last radio call, in accordance with family wishes and established radio etiquette.

e. Religious rites are conducted.

f. The flag is folded by the honor guard and presented to the surviving spouse or parent by the Chief of Police, or his designee. The folder salutes on presentation of the flag as does the Chief of Police when making the presentation.

g. Taps is played by bagpipes, if available. Uniformed officers salute during taps.

h. Twenty-one gun salute.

i. Uniformed officers are dismissed at the conclusion of the ceremony.

D. Benefits

1. Coordination: The Benefits Coordination Officer is responsible for the coordination and assistance, with the officer's survivors, in obtaining benefits in a timely

manner. The Benefits Coordination Officer facilitates the acquisition of benefits using resources available from the City's Human Resources Specialist and the Employee Association Liaison.

2. List of Benefits: The following is a list of benefits provided by the City of Peoria or available from other governmental entities and is not all inclusive. It is recommended that approximately twenty (20) certified copies of each document mentioned be obtained to facilitate the processing of the claims. Additional documents can be obtained at the Maricopa County Health Department.

a. Federal Benefits

b. Public Safety Officers Death Benefit - The United States government provides a one-time monetary benefit to the survivors of a law enforcement officer killed in the line of duty (or permanently and totally disabled) under the Public Safety Officers Benefits Program controlled by the Bureau of Justice. The family may file for this benefit independent of the police department; however, the department is mandated by the federal government to complete specific forms. Claim forms usually take 30 days or more to complete and after submission, the benefit may take 90 days or more to receive. The monetary amount varies with the consumer price index each year. The Bureau of Justice will then determine if the death qualifies for the benefit or not. The Benefits Coordination Officer may assist the family in filing for and obtaining these benefits.

c. Social Security - The survivors are eligible for Social Security benefits if the officer paid into the Social Security program. Claim forms can be picked up at the local Social Security Office. The following documents will be needed prior to filing a claim:

- (1) Certified Death Certificate.
- (2) Marriage Certificate.
- (3) Birth Certificate of the deceased.
- (4) Siblings' birth certificates.
- (5) Final W-2 form of deceased.
- (6) W-2 forms for past two years of deceased and spouse, if they are surviving.
- (7) Certificate of Military Discharge (DD-214 form), if they served.
- (8) Dates of other prior marriages and Social Security numbers of prior spouses.

d. United States Worker's Compensation -The U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Worker's Compensation

Programs may provide compensation to the survivors if the officer's death met the following criteria:

(1) The officer was engaged in the apprehension or attempted apprehension of any person who has committed a crime against the United States, or at the time was sought by a law enforcement authority of the U.S. for the commission of a crime against the United States or as a material witness in a criminal proceeding initiated by the United States.

(2) The officer was engaged in protecting or guarding a person held for the commission of a crime against the U.S. or as a material witness in connection of such crime.

(3) The officer was engaged in the lawful prevention of, or lawful attempt to prevent the commission of, a crime against the United States.

(4) Veterans Administration - A monetary benefit, U.S. flag, and a grave marker may be obtained from the Veterans Administration if the deceased officer was a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces. If the deceased officer was a current member of the Armed Forces, his survivors may be eligible for benefits under the Servicemen's or Veterans Group Life Insurance program. The local office of the Veterans Administration can be contacted for acquisition of this benefit. The Benefits Coordination Officer will assist the family in obtaining this benefit.

3. State Benefits

a. Worker's Compensation / State Compensation Fund - The officer's survivors are eligible for monetary payments from the State Worker's Compensation Fund. The survivors must file a worker's compensation claim with the Worker's Compensation Appeals Board/Industrial Commission. If the death is job related, a check to cover burial expenses (up to \$3,000 dollars) is provided, plus monthly compensation. The Benefits Coordination Officer will assist the family in obtaining this benefit. The following forms will be needed to process the claim:

- (1) Deceased's birth certificate.
- (2) Copy of children's birth certificate(s).
- (3) Certified copy of the Marriage License.
- (4) Certified Death Certificate.
- (5) Prior divorce decrees.

b. State of Arizona Death Benefit - Arizona State law (Arizona Revised Statutes (ARS) § 23-1046)

provides for monetary payments to the survivors of a law enforcement officer killed in the line of duty outside the scope of Worker’s Compensation and the Public Safety Retirement System. The Arizona Department of Public Safety shall be contacted to request this benefit. The Benefits Coordination Officer can assist the family in obtaining this benefit.

c. Public Safety Retirement System - Survivors are eligible to obtain the officer’s pension. The surviving spouse must have been married to the officer for at least two years. The payments will commence the first day of the month after the member’s date of death. Inquiries should also be made by the survivors to determine if there are any health insurance riders on the plan. The Arizona Public Safety Retirement System can be contacted to request this benefit. The Benefits Coordination Officer will assist in obtaining this benefit.

d. Educational Benefit - Arizona State law (ARS § 15-1808) provides that the Board of Regents, after verification from the Arizona Peace Officers Memorial Board, shall provide a Tuition Waiver Scholarship to the children of an officer killed in the line of duty if they qualify for admission and are under 30 years of age. The benefit can be sought by contacting the Arizona Peace Officers Memorial Board. The Benefits Coordination Officer will advise the survivors of this benefit.

4. City Benefits

a. Final Compensation Paycheck -The Benefits Coordination Officer will coordinate through the City's payroll the issuance of the remaining compensation check, payout of accrued compensation time, and payout of accrued sick time if applicable.

b. Life Insurance - The City of Peoria provides a life insurance policy through the current insurance vendor that covers all employees. The policy provides that the survivors get the employee's annual salary, rounded up to the nearest thousand dollars. The City also provides the employees the option of purchasing additional life insurance through the current insurance vendor.

c. ICMA Deferred Compensation - If the officer was contributing to the ICMA Deferred Compensation program, his survivors are eligible for monetary benefits, based on those contributions. The Benefits Coordination Officer will coordinate with the Human Resources Department to expedite these benefits.

d. Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act - The City of Peoria provides survivors continued health coverage for up to eighteen (18) months after the death of an employee under this act. A premium must be paid by the family to continue this benefit.

5. Public Donations of Money

a. The Peoria Police Department and the City of Peoria cannot control or account for monetary donations made by the public. Donations collected must be immediately turned over to either the survivors or their recognized managing party.

b. Donations can be encouraged by the release of a bank account number to the media by the Public Information Officer.

c. Certain recognized private organizations can be contacted by the Benefits Coordination Officer or the Employee Association Liaison to inquire into the benefits they may provide. Some of these organizations are recognized as:

(1) The 100 Club. The One Hundred Club is a group of local businessmen who have organized to assist the families of law enforcement officers either killed in the line of duty or who have been seriously injured. This organization is prepared to present a check to the family to cover immediate expenses. The 100 Club will need to be provided with the surviving children’s names and dates of birth. This will allow them to maintain contact with the family for possible educational funding for the children. They will also assist with financial planning and long-term assistance.

(2) The Fraternal Order of Police. The local Fraternal Order of Police Lodge may provide a flag, bagpipe player, and a small monetary donation. They must be contacted to secure any of the listed benefits.

(3) Concerns of Police Survivors. This national organization is a private group funded by grants, primarily from the federal government, and has close ties to the Bureau of Justice. Concerns of Police Survivors can provide invaluable assistance in all aspects of dealing with the death of an officer. Either the officer’s family or the Peoria Police Department may contact the Concerns of Police Survivors to initiate available benefits. It is strongly recommended that the family be encouraged to interact and participate with this organization. Assistance provided includes (but is not limited to):

(a) Notification, hospital, and funeral protocols

(b) Assistance and guidance in the obtaining of federal, state, and city benefits

(c) Long-term emotional support services for survivors such as peer support groups for the spouses and children

(d) Scholarships and peer support camps for surviving children.

6. Personal Insurance: The Benefits Coordination Officer will assist the officer's survivors in searching for personal insurance policies and applying for the benefits.

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