

# Peoria Police Department Policy and Procedure Manual

## Policy 5.11 Line Of Duty Deaths/Serious Injury Notification Protocol



**“Our Community...  
Our Commitment”**

### I. POLICY

A. It is the policy of the Peoria Police Department to provide prompt notification to survivors of an officer who dies, or is seriously injured, in the line of duty. (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. PROCEDURE

A. Change of Address/Name/Notification/Medical form – A new Change of Address /Name/ Notification/Medical form shall be completed and submitted by every employee within the Peoria Police Department, in concurrence with their Annual Appraisal date. It will be the responsibility of the Senior Executive Assistant to enter information from the form into the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system to allow immediate access by supervisors 24 hours a day.

#### B. Notification (22.2.6)

1. Notification Team: In the event of a line-of-duty death or serious injury, a command staff officer may request, through the Chief of Police, formation of a Line-of-Duty Death/Serious Injury Notification Team, once the scene is stable and the investigation is proceeding.

2. Release of Information: The command staff officer on scene will also remind Peoria Police Department employees that the release of the deceased/injured officer's name, call sign, or serial number over the radio or to the media is prohibited until the family has been notified.

3. Family: All attempts will be made to get the family to the hospital before the death of an officer/employee, even if notification by the Team has to be forgone.

4. Team Makeup: The team will be appointed by the Chief of Police or designee which may include one or more of the following:

a. The Chief of Police, or his/her designee, at the minimum a lieutenant.

b. The Peoria Police Department's Police Chaplain, or his/her designee.

c. A member of the Peoria Police Department's Critical Incident Stress Management Support Team (CISMS Team).

d. An employee who knows the family and is considered a family friend.

e. A member of the employee's labor association, if available and able to respond within 30 minutes of being contacted.

5. Next-of-Kin Notification: All attempts to notify the next-of-kin should be in person. Next-of-kin is defined as a spouse, child, parents, fiancé, and/or significant other. Notification by telephone will be a last resort and must be approved by the Chief of Police, prior to making the telephone call.

6. Next of kin notification is the responsibility of the Chief of Police or designee. Employees are not authorized to make any notifications to the injured employee's family or friends. The Peoria Police Department realizes that employee friendships are strong, even among spouses and siblings; however, notification made prior to the Notification Team may be misleading to the employee's condition or circumstances surrounding the incident.

7. Out-of-Area Kin: Notifications of survivors beyond driving distance will be requested from the law enforcement agency in that jurisdiction. Notification requests will be made by National Crime Information Center (NCIC)/Arizona Crime Information Center (ACIC) teletype to validate the request. The teletype will ensure personal death notification is made. The teletype will also request telephone contact be made with the Chief of Police or his/her designee handling the notification so that details of the incident can be relayed. Notification by telephone will be a last resort and must be approved by the Chief of Police.

8. The Team should respond to the survivors' location in at least two vehicles, so that one vehicle may stay at the residence, if need be, and the others can transport the survivors to the hospital.

#### C. Notification Protocol (22.2.6)

1. Once the Notification Team has been formed, the Team will respond to the survivors' location in two or more vehicles.

2. If there is information that one of the survivors to be notified has medical problems, medical personnel should be summoned to respond with the Team prior to making contact. The medical assistance will be staged in close proximity to the location, but will not necessarily be with the Team and the survivors, unless their assistance is requested or required.

3. Upon arrival at the survivor's location, the Team will keep in mind that once the family sees the Team, they will know something is probably wrong.

4. Notification should not be made at the door. Notification should be made inside and after everybody has been seated.

5. Notification should be made in a clear and slow voice. The family should be given a description of the occurrence and the officer's name should be used when providing the description. The officer's EXACT medical condition (I.E. DEAD, DIED, SERIOUS/CRITICAL CONDITION) at the time of the notification should be clearly explained. Do not give the family/survivors a false sense of hope such as stating he has gone away, passed away, or is being treated at the hospital. Reactions by the family members may include hysteria, anger, fear, fainting, physical violence, and/or shock.

6. Childcare: If childcare is needed, arrangements will be made with trusted neighbors, co-worker spouses, the employee's labor association, or Victim Assistance to handle this function.

#### D. Hospital Protocols

1. Travel to Hospital: Officers will drive the family members to the hospital. If a family member(s) absolutely refuses to be driven, all attempts will be made to have a member of the Notification Team, preferably an officer, ride with them. If they are being transported in a Peoria Police Department vehicle, Team members should not have the police radio on the channel that is being utilized by the officers investigating the death/serious injury.

2. Hospital Contact: Once at the hospital, one of the higher-ranking Team members will contact hospital personnel and request the following:

a. Media control.

b. A private room.

c. Ask that all medical bills and paperwork be addressed to Worker's Compensation and/or the City of Peoria Human Resources Department (HRD), and not to the officer's residence.

d. Timely reports of the officer's medical condition to family and the Team.

e. Visitation to/or observation of the officer as soon as possible.

3. A uniformed officer shall be assigned at the officer's hospital room door.

4. Updates: In coordination with the Crimes Against Persons (CAP) Unit Sergeant, a Team member will give updates to the family about the incident and status of the investigation.

5. When needed, a Team member will drive family members back to their residence.

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