


SHELBYVILLE FIRE & RESCUE STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES		
	SECTION: Membership SUBJECT: Line of Duty Death/ Notification	S.O.P: 102.15
		PAGE: 1 of 4
	Approved By:	Effective Date: December 1, 2012 Revision Date:

Purpose:

This policy describes the actions to be taken in the event of a line of duty death. The death of any firefighter while on duty, or while undergoing medical treatment for injuries or disease resulting from such duty, is considered a line of duty death for the purposes of this policy.

Scope:

This policy shall apply to all of the SFD members.

Procedure:

I. Procedures at Time of Death

1. In the event a series of incidents occurs on the scene, whereby a serious injury has led or may lead to the death of a firefighter, certain actions must be taken. The following items are the direct responsibility of the scene fire ground commander as soon as the immediate needs of the fire ground are accomplished.
2. Notify the Fire Chief, if other than the on-scene fire ground commander.
3. Notify the Coroner's Office, the Police Department and the KY State Fire Marshall and call for a Chaplain and personal Pastor's.
4. Secure the scene of the incident. Impound and secure any equipment involved in the fatality incident such as protective gear, SCBA and fire apparatus.
5. Do not transmit any information regarding the death over the two-way radios, as they can be monitored.
6. Establish a telephone link capability from the scene.
7. Make no media statements or releases. Direct Central Dispatch, the Public Information Officer and all personnel to withhold release of personal data relation to the victim or the death, pending notification of next of kin.
8. Advise personnel not to make comments that could be overheard by the public.
9. Begin to gather all available information concerning the incident and circumstances leading to the death.
10. Direct the Safety Officer to contact an organization to begin the Critical Incident Stress Debriefing process.
11. Notify the District's Legal Counsel.

II. Special Duty Committee


Chaplain/Notification Officer

1. The Chaplain/Notification Officer is responsible for notifying the deceased member's next of kin. When possible, the Chief should assume the role of Notification Officer.

Hospital Liaison

1. The Hospital Liaison is responsible for maintaining a line of communication with the hospital staff and the Chief or on-scene commander via telephone link.
2. The Hospital Liaison should go directly to the receiving hospital and should be responsible for the following until relieved:

SHELBYVILLE FIRE & RESCUE STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

	SECTION: Membership	S.O.P: 102.15
	SUBJECT: Line of Duty Death/ Notification	PAGE: 2 of 4
	Approved By:	Effective Date: December 1, 2012
		Revision Date:

- a. Update the Chief or on-scene commander of any significant information relating to the patient's condition.
- b. Assure that no press releases are made.
- c. Assure blood gases are drawn as soon as possible.
3. Collect all personal articles of the firefighter, should pronouncement of his/her death should occur.

Benefits Coordinator

1. The Benefits Coordinator shall assist the survivors in the preparation and submission of any and all reports, claims and other forms and shall insure the proper and punctual processing of applications for benefits.
2. The Benefits Coordinator should visit with the surviving family to discuss the benefits they receive within a few days following the funeral.

Department Safety Officer

1. The Department Safety Officer shall oversee the debriefing operations and ensure that all members have access to additional psychological assistance.

Department Chaplain

1. The Department Chaplain shall provide support for the deceased member's family and members of the Department and their families.


Public Information Officer

1. The Public Information Officer shall assist the Fire Chief in notifying all agencies involved and affected by the incident.
2. The PIO shall assist the Fire Chief in the preparation and promulgation of the statements to the news media, the fire service and the public.
3. The PIO shall assure that all members of the SFD are notified of the incident.
4. The PIO shall remain a key contact person for outside agencies, news media and other departments in relation to the death and subsequent ceremony

Family Liaison

1. The Family Liaison shall serve as a liaison in the ongoing welfare of the family and the department.
2. The principle concern of the liaison is the ongoing welfare of the family. Immediately after the family is notified, the Family Liaison should be placed at the disposal of the family to keep them informed of the Department's activities and to render whatever assistance necessary to assist the family through the crisis.
3. All information from the Department to the family is to be relayed by the Liaison or the Chief.
4. The Liaison shall have information concerning the death and the continuing investigation to answer family questions.

SHELBYVILLE FIRE & RESCUE STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES


	SECTION: Membership	S.O.P: 102.15
	SUBJECT: Line of Duty Death/ Notification	PAGE: 3 of 4
	Approved By:	Effective Date: December 1, 2012
		Revision Date:

5. The Liaison should make the family aware of what they can offer in the way of assistance in the family decides to have a line-of duty funeral.
6. The Liaison, if requested by the family, may assist in coordinating the funeral arrangements in include the following:
 - a. Interacting between the family and the Funeral Home Director.
 - b. Interacting among the family, Minister and church to arrange the Funeral service.
 - c. Arranging and directing the funeral procession.
 - d. Coordinating pallbearers and ushers.
7. The Liaison might call upon other members of the Department to assist him/her in fulfilling these responsibilities.
8. In all cases, the level of Fire Department participation with the funeral arrangements will be at the discretion of the surviving family.

III. Notification of Next Of Kin

1. Prompt notification of the next of kin is of the utmost importance in the case of a line of duty death. Notification shall be made by an official representative of the Fire Department in person whenever possible. The official notification must be made before details of the death are released to the news media.
2. The Chief/Chaplain is responsible for the notification of the next of kin. The Chief/Chaplain may make the notification himself or may designate a Notification Officer. Ideally, the Department Chaplain and another member of the Department will accompany the Chief or the Notification Officer.
3. The Department representative shall familiarize himself with the circumstances of the death before making the notification.
4. Once the notification has been made; the Notification Officer will advise the Public Information Officer who may then, with the Chief's permission, make an official announcement.
5. The Chief/Chaplain or the Notification Officer should be prepared to stay with the next of kin until a family member or friend arrives, or as long as requested.
6. Immediately following the notification, a member will be placed at the disposal of the family to serve as the Family Liaison. In some cases, it may be advantageous for the Notification Officer to assume the duties of the Family Liaison.
7. In all cases of a line of duty death, the District will request that an autopsy and a toxicological examination be preformed as soon as possible.

SHELBYVILLE FIRE & RESCUE STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

	SECTION: Membership	S.O.P: 102.15
	SUBJECT: Line of Duty Death/ Notification	PAGE: 4 of 4
	Approved By:	Effective Date: December 1, 2012
		Revision Date:

IV. Medical Testing

1. Steps must be taken to insure that cause of death is accurately reported. In all cases of line of duty death, an autopsy will be requested and will include a toxicological examination with a test for specific levels of Carbon Monoxide in the blood expressed in an exact percent. This is absolutely crucial in the event of a collapse of a member at or following an incident without a physical injury present.
2. The toxicological examination should also include a test for blood alcohol level expressed in an exact percent not merely test for the presence of alcohol in the blood.
3. If a member is admitted to the hospital with injuries sustained in the line of duty or following and reasonably connected with such duty, a request should be made upon admission for a blood test with a specific test for Carbon Monoxide expressed in an exact percent level. It is imperative that these tests be expressed in percent levels rather than trace or presence of Carbon Monoxide. This is crucial if there is any possibility of a coronary involvement, even if it is not obvious at the time of admission.

V. Reports

1. Upon returning to the fire station every member involved or having any information should fill out a complete report detailing all that he/she knows about the incident. These reports will be used by the Chief to make a complete report and to claim benefits.

VI. Funeral/Procession Uniform

1. Members attending the funeral in uniform shall wear a class A uniform and badge shroud.

VII. Period of Mourning

Following the release of information to the public, all flags at the fire stations will be lowered to half-mast and all badges will be shrouded. Flags will remain at half-mast until the day following the funeral, and badge shrouds will be worn for fourteen (14) days after the funeral.