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SUBJECT: Line of Duty Death **PAGE #** 1 of 9
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PURPOSE

This procedure defines the policies and responsibilities to be followed in the event of a line of duty death and can be escalated in the event of multiple deaths or multiple members being seriously injured. The death of any firefighter while on duty, or while undergoing medical treatment for any injury or disease resulting from such duty, is considered a line of duty death.

GENERAL

Ranks and names specified for particular duties in this policy are under ideal conditions and shall be altered according to availability. It must be remembered that duty death and serious injury can happen not only on the fireground, but also on highways, at the station, or at drill. Guidelines shall be adjusted as needed to fit the situation remembering that all situations require thorough investigating, good documentation, timely notifications, and isolation of both personal and department equipment. Serious injury to a member shall be addressed in the same proficient manner as a line of duty death in case of grave outcome.

HIGHEST RANKING OFFICER'S RESPONSIBILITIES: (On Scene)

In the event of a line of duty death or serious injury, the Officer shall ensure the following:

- Inform the dispatch office (by phone only) the name(s) and general incident details. The dispatch office should be reminded not to release information to non-Teutopolis Fire Department personnel. **THE DISPATCHER SHALL DO THE FOLLOWING:**
- Notify the Chief
Duties: Retrieve next of kin information and carry out notification plans.
- At the Incident Commanders discretion, call an extra alarm to relieve personnel on the scene.

Before leaving the scene, the incident commander shall:

- Isolate and tag any equipment or gear used by injured/deceased personnel.
- Secure scene pending investigation by police and fire departments.
- In the event of a death(s) or serious injury(s) as a result of a vehicle accident involving a Teutopolis Fire Department vehicle, the vehicle(s) involved shall be towed/driven to the Teutopolis Fire Department Station after being released by Police Department.
- Document location and names and addresses of witnesses for investigators.



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PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

The Chief will delegate the job of Public Information Officer who will be responsible for the following:

1. Respond to the scene:
 - Gain first hand knowledge.
 - Assist operations.
 - Remind all personnel to direct all press to him/her. The Chief shall instill a "gag" order on all personnel to avoid misinformation.
2. After the above task has been completed, he/she should then respond to the Teutopolis Fire Station to:
 - Prepare for press release.
 - Withhold names of deceased or injured personnel until notified by the Chief.

NOTIFICATION AND FAMILY LIAISON

The Chief (and any fire department members accompanying the Chief) will meet at the Teutopolis Fire Station to begin the next of kin notification. The following should be done:

- Retrieve the Emergency Notification sheet from employees file.
- Formulate plan on how to notify family based on employee's wishes.
- Notify family and assist family to hospital. Assist family with further notifications. Concur with family for release of information to the press. Notify PIO when approved.
- While at the hospital, he/she shall:
 - Assist family as needed
 - Order that the following be done:
 1. Impound all equipment, clothing, and personal effects.
 2. Toxicology tests.
 3. Exact carbon monoxide levels (if fire related).
- Discuss with family that the medical examiners office will probably do an autopsy.
- Advise family who will be the Family Liaison and the role as family liaison.
- Answer as many family questions as possible, being factual and truthful.



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FIRE DEPARTMENT FUNERALS

At the earliest convenience, the Chief will convene all department personnel to plan all activities. Individual duties are established to help coordinate responsibilities. The following duties will be assigned:

- Response & Readiness Officer
- Funeral & Procession Officer
- Wake & Uniform Officer
- Agency Notification Officer

Response & Readiness Officer

This officer shall be responsible for the following:

- Secure all of the deceased personal effects.
- Coordinate and activate the Crisis Intervention Team.
- Provide for proper fire department staffing and equipment for duration of crisis.
- Oversee equipment readiness for funeral
 - Ready engine for casket and flowers
 - Bunting available from Illinois Fire Chiefs
 - Build casket platform if needed
- Work with pallbearers in preparation for casket placement and removal.

Funeral & Procession Officer

This officer shall be responsible for the following:

- Confirm wake and funeral time and place.
- Meet with funeral director, minister, and Illinois Fire Chiefs Funeral representative to formulate plans and details.
- Coordinate the procession route with local police and fire departments.
- Assign two (2) ladder companies for the cemetery entrance.
- Formulate staging plans for visiting companies and apparatus at the church and/or funeral home.
- Assign a picture-taking unit. Provide good media access.



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Wake & Uniform Officer

This officer shall be responsible for the following:

- Assess the department's needs for hats, uniforms, white gloves.
- Make black elastic shrouds for badges.
- Secure and install station bunting.
- Coordinate Honor Guard details.
- Establish and conduct the fire department "walk through."

Agency Notification Officer

This officer shall be responsible to notify the following agencies:

- **Illinois Department Of Labor 312-793-1820 Within 8 Hours.**
- MABAS 54 Funeral Committee
- Office of the State Fire Marshal in order to have the flags lowered at half-staff throughout the State
- Public Safety Officers Benefits Program (888-744-6513)
- Districts Insurance carriers (Coordinate thru the Districts Trustee's)
- Illinois Attorney General Death Benefit Program
- National Fire Academy/US Fire Administration (301-447-6771)
- Transmit death and funeral information via MABAS and IFCA e-mail systems

INVESTIGATIONS

The Chief may utilize an independent investigation team or appoint an internal team. The investigation team's duties and responsibilities shall include:

1. The gathering and analysis of all physical evidence relating to the event and to preserve the chain of evidence.
2. Within 24 hours of the incident, interview all witnesses with direct or indirect knowledge of the circumstances and collect written statements from all involved Teutopolis Fire Department or mutual-aid personnel.
3. Collect all incident recordings, documentation of radio traffic, witness statements, photographs, videotapes, and any other related items. This includes any media footage. All information must be kept and maintained as it may be subpoenaed.



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4. Collect copies of autopsy report, medical treatment records, injury reports, and other information related to the incident.
5. Consultation with any persons or agencies having special knowledge of the factors involved, including experts and consultants from the private sector if needed.
6. Maintaining liaison with other agencies or teams involved in the incident's investigation.
7. Develop a concise written incident report including; circumstances surrounding the incident, the conclusions, and the recommendations. This report will include diagrams, photos, and incident observations.

The investigation team shall establish and maintain an ongoing liaison with the Fire Chief (and in certain circumstances the Districts Attorney). It is the Fire Departments policy to cooperate fully with all other governmental and private agencies having legal cause to be involved in the investigation of a line-of-duty death incident and to cooperate voluntarily with organizations working in areas of the Fire Service Occupation Safety and Health Education and Training.

The Illinois Department of Labor and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration will likely conduct an investigation of incidents resulting in serious injury or death of a Fire Department member. The investigation team will provide liaison with such agencies.

Other governmental agencies that may be involved in an investigation include:

- United States Fire Administration
- National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health
- Law Enforcement Agencies
- State Fire Marshal
- Illinois Industrial Commission
- Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms

These agencies participation shall be at their discretion. These agencies may or may not produce their own incident reports of the incident with recommendations or corrective measures. These reports will be included in the Fire Departments final report, when possible, but will not supersede or substitute the investigative team report.

The investigative team report will utilize the resources of individuals and agencies outside the Fire Department to assist in the investigation and/or provide technical consultation when necessary. These resources include:



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- National Fire Protection Association
- Private Consultants
- Testing Laboratories
- Insurance Agencies
- American Petroleum Institute

After the team has collected all incident information and has completed a draft report, before issuance of a final report all those involved in the incident will be included in a fact-finding critique. When the final report is finished, the Fire Chief will schedule a report presentation.

DEFINITIONS

Line Of Duty Death - The death must be the result of a traumatic injury suffered in the line of duty.

Job Related Traumatic Injury - A blow to the body by an outside force, i.e., crushing injuries suffered in a building collapse, apparatus accident or fall. Burns, smoke inhalation and such climatic injuries as heatstroke or frostbite are considered traumatic injuries.

Job Related Non-Traumatic Injury - A non-traumatic injury that is strongly believed or has been proven attributable to the job. Examples: stress, heart attacks, strokes, diseases and mental illness.

Active Member - An active employee of the fire service.

Inactive Member - A retired or pensioned member of the fire service.

Non-Job Related Death - Deaths, natural and traumatic, that are not job-related.

FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS

American Flag - Any active or honorable discharged member of the United States Armed Forces should have the American Flag draped or displayed on the casket. At the time of internment, the American Flag will be folded and presented to the surviving family **"ON BEHALF OF A GRATEFUL NATION."** Representatives from the Armed Forces, VFW, American Legion, etc., shall have first right of folding and presentation to the family. If unable to obtain members from these groups, the Fire Department should undertake this responsibility. A Firefighter who died in the Line of Duty should have the American Flag draped or displayed on the casket.



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Bag Pipers - Used in traditional fire service ceremony. "Pipers" accompany and play music during casket movement.

Bell Service - A portable bell that is tolled at the conclusion of the religious ceremony. One member reads a statement regarding the deceased last alarm. A second member tolls the bell at the conclusion.

Bugler - One (1) or two (2) personnel sound tapes at the internment.

Badge Shrouds - Black elastic or tape is used to cover a horizontal portion of the uniform badge: as a reflection of "in mourning."

Color Guards - A trained unit carrying the National and Local Flag. Color guards participate in all marching processions. (The IAFF has a trained unit available for funerals)

Crossed Ladders - The use of two (2) aerial trucks crossing extended ladders (for officers) apex ladders (for non-officers) at the entrance of the cemetery.

Eulogy - Fire service member(s) speaking in remembrance as part of the service.

Fire Engine Caisson - The use of a fire department pumper for carrying the casket.

Fire Service Flag - A flag offered by the Illinois Fire Chiefs Association that is used to adorn the casket during the service. The flag is folded and presented to the family at the internment.

Flower Unit - The use of a fire department processional vehicle for transporting flowers.

Hearse - Vehicle provided by the Funeral Director for carrying the casket.

Honor Guards - One (1) or two (2) uniformed fire service members standing guard at the casket during the wake.

Honor Detail - Non-detailed uniformed department members and visiting department members present to pay tribute.



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Pall Bearers –

Active - Uniformed members assigned to carry the casket.

Honorary - Uniformed members not assigned to carrying the casket, however are placed in an honorary position leading the casket.

Station Bunting - Mourning drapes that are placed on the outside of public buildings and fire stations.

Vehicle Bunting - Mourning drapes that are used to decorate fire vehicles participating in caisson and flower unit details.

Walk Through - A pre-determined time during the wake when uniformed members and dignitaries enter for a unified tribute.

Types Of Services

Level One: Death as a result of a line-of duty-death or job-related. This may include an inactive member whose death has stemmed from an injury sustained during active duty.

Level Two: Death of an active member, non-job related.

Level Three: Death of an inactive member, non-job related.



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SUGGESTED OPTIONS

LEVEL ONE

American Flag
Bagpipers
Bell Service
Bugler
Badge Shrouds
Color Guards
Crossed Ladders
Eulogy
Fire Engine Caisson
Fire Service Flag
Flower Unit
Honor Guards
Honor Detail
Active Pall Bearers
Station Bunting
Vehicle Bunting
Walk Through

LEVEL TWO

American Flag
Bell Service
Badge Shrouds
Eulogy
Hearse
Fire Service Flag
Flower Unit
Honor Guards
Honor Detail
Active Pall Bearers
Vehicle Bunting
Walk Through

LEVEL THREE

American Flag
Bell Service
Badge Shrouds
Hearse
Fire Service Flag
Honor Guards
Active Pall Bearers
Walk Through