



Tulsa Police Department

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Policy # 310B

Effective Date 04/17/2020

Policy Name Critical Injury/Death of a Police Officer

Approved Date 04/17/2020

Approved by *Wendell Franklin, Chief of Police*

Previous Date 08/21/2008

PURPOSE OF CHANGE:

To update policy format.

POLICY:

Liaison assistance shall be provided to the immediate family members of any Tulsa Police employee who dies in the line of duty. Assistance will be provided whether the death is the result of felonious, medical, or accidental circumstances while an employee is an active member of the Department. The Department will also provide the family with information regarding all survivor benefits. For sworn personnel, the Department will also take the necessary actions to ensure funeral arrangements properly reflect the family's wishes in the event of a death. In addition, the Department will provide similar assistance to any employee who suffers a severe and debilitating injury in the line of duty.

SUMMARY: Procedures to assist families of police employees who have been critically injured, or who have died in the line of duty.

APPLIES TO: All personnel

DEFINITIONS: None

PROCEDURES:

A. NOTIFICATION

1. It shall be the responsibility of the involved employee's division commander, or designee, to properly notify the next of kin.
2. The name of the involved employee shall not be released to the media before immediate family is notified.
3. A police chaplain, the police Psychologist, or Chief of Police, or designee, should accompany the officer or commander making the notification.
4. If there are young children in the home, the officer or commander making the notification will arrange for the child care needs of the family.
5. If the parents of sworn personnel reside within a reasonable distance, they will be afforded the courtesy of personal notification. If immediate survivors reside out of town, request personal notification from the law enforcement agency in that area.

B. DIVISION COMMANDER

1. The division commander, or designee, will ensure arrangements have been made with the hospital for appropriate waiting facilities for the family and fellow employees.

2. If the family of sworn personnel wishes to go to the hospital, they should be transported via police vehicle if possible. The division commander, or designee, will ensure the family is updated on the situation upon arrival. Ensure that the family is allowed to see their injured/fallen officer as soon as possible. Division commanders will also arrange for transportation back to the family's residence as well as any other immediate assistance that is required.
3. For sworn personnel, the division commander, or designee, should be present at all times during the family vigil at the hospital and arrange for any assistance the family may need. The division commander should also arrange for all medical bills of the injured officer to be sent to the Police Personnel/Budget section of the Tulsa Police Department.
4. For sworn personnel, the division commander will advise the Chief of Police and the deputy chiefs of the situation.
5. With the approval of the family, the division commander will appoint a liaison to assist the family throughout the wake and funeral.
6. For sworn personnel, meet with the liaison officer, the Honor Guard coordinator, and the chaplain to ensure all family needs are met and all aspects of the funeral arrangements are being taken care of. Arrange for EMSA and a wrecker to be present during the funeral and procession.
7. For sworn personnel, once the funeral arrangements are set, establish a complete funeral itinerary. Brief the Chief of Police of the itinerary and any other activities. Post the information at all divisions. Include address information for officers wishing to send cards or flowers.
8. Ensure that all of the employee's personal property is available for return to the family as soon as they are ready. If sworn, arrange for the officer's vehicle to be cleaned.
9. For sworn personnel, ensure that a uniformed officer is assigned to guard the family's home during the funeral.
10. For sworn personnel, ensure that the officer's name is added to the Training Division's Memorial Plaque.

C. OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE

1. For sworn personnel, place the liaison officer, the Honor Guard coordinator, and any other officers necessary on special assignment.
2. For sworn personnel, ensure that the TPD Badge wreath is ordered and authorize the wearing of mourning bands.
3. For sworn personnel, inform the Mayor of the situation and request the Mayor's office make arrangements with the Governor to order flags lowered to half-staff.
4. For sworn personnel, acknowledge visiting departments as well as departments that lent assistance with letters of appreciation.
5. Appoint a Benefits Coordinator. Ensure that the person selected has experience and knowledge of all benefits due the family.

D. LIAISON OFFICER – SWORN PERSONNEL

1. Arrange for the family to meet with the Honor Guard coordinator, the police chaplain and/or family pastor/priest to plan the funeral services. Ensure that the family's wishes come before the Department's. If the family desires a police funeral, ensure that they are advised of the protocol of such arrangements.

2. Provide as much assistance as possible. This may include overseeing any travel and lodging arrangements for out of town family members. Contact the FOP and FOPA presidents to request assistance with meals, childcare, and to arrange for someone to screen calls in the family's home.
3. Ensure that the surviving parents and close relatives are afforded recognition and proper seating arrangements during the funeral, procession, and graveside services.

E. HONOR GUARD COORDINATOR – SWORN PERSONNEL

1. If the family desires a police funeral, assist in coordinating the funeral and procession.
2. Coordinate with the funeral home director on the details and protocol for a police funeral.
3. Activate the Department's Honor Guard.
4. Inform other police agencies and Honor Guards of the funeral arrangements via teletype. Brief visiting Honor Guards regarding the funeral itinerary and protocol.
5. Coordinate the procession route and duties of the Motorcycle Unit before, during, and after the funeral.
6. Designate areas at the cemetery for family, friends, officers, Honor Guards, etc. during graveside services.

F. COMMUNICATIONS UNIT

1. Coordinate any press release with the Chief of Police, the division commander, and the Detective Division to ensure no information is released which could jeopardize the criminal prosecution.
2. Conduct all exchanges with the media throughout the planning stages of the funeral.

G. BENEFITS COORDINATOR

1. Meet with the family within 72 hours of the funeral to advise the family of the benefits they are eligible to receive.
2. Obtain, prepare, and submit all forms and supporting documents to the appropriate agencies for processing.
3. Provide any other related assistance requested by the family. Maintain contact with the family to verify all benefits are received.

H. CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS (IF APPLICABLE)

1. The Detective Division Commander will assign a contact officer to notify the family of court proceedings. Ensure all trial information (e.g., time, date, and location) is posted at all divisions.
2. The contact officer will ensure the family receives a detailed account of the incident. If details cannot be released due to legal or prosecutorial reasons, explain the reasons to the family. The family should also be provided with the name and a contact phone number for the Assistant District Attorney handling the court proceeding.
3. If the family wishes to attend the trial, the contact officer or the liaison officer may assist in coordinating transportation and may accompany the family during the trial. Court proceedings, protocol, and what to expect during the trial should also be explained.

REGULATIONS: None

REFERENCES:

312A, *Funerals and Formal Functions*
137, *Tulsa Police and Fire Chaplaincy Corps*
310A, *Critical Incident Response Team*