

PINE BLUFF POLICE DEPARTMENT POLICY & PROCEDURES MANUAL

	SUBJECT:	POLICY NUMBER 195
	LINE OF DUTY DEATHS	ISSUE DATE 02/19/2008
	CHAPTER: ADMINISTRATION & PERSONNEL	EFFECTIVE DATE 02/19/2008
	ISSUED By: Chief of Police John E. Howell	TOTAL PAGES 3

I. POLICY

The policy of this agency is to immediately respond to an employee's death by not only conducting a thorough investigation into the circumstances, but also by providing comprehensive support to next-of-kin.

II. IMPLEMENTATION

A. In the event of a felonious or an accidental line of duty death of an employee of this agency, all assigned personnel not involved in an emergency situation will prepare to respond as directed.

1. First officer on the scene will call for the nearest available back-up officer immediately upon determining that an employee's death has occurred. The duty of the back-up officer will be to make notification to next-of-kin as quickly as possible after being briefed on circumstances of death. The only circumstance when the back-up officer would not proceed to make notification would be that the officer's presence at the scene is tactically required. In that case, the back-up officer will provide assistance until the scene is secure, then proceed with notification.
2. First officer on scene will notify dispatcher by radio that an employee death has occurred, and whether the death is accidental or felonious. DO NOT USE NAMES ON RADIO.
3. Upon notification that an employee's death has occurred, the dispatcher will immediately notify the Chief of Police. If radio is used for means of communication, DO NOT USE NAMES ON RADIO.
4. First officer on the scene will be responsible for a complete and detailed written report. First officer on scene will not leave the scene until investigation of the scene is complete or relieved by the Chief of Police.

B. NOTIFICATION OF NEXT-OF-KIN

1. The back-up officer will contact the dispatcher to determine the most senior officer available to accompany him to notify next-of-kin. In addition to these two officers, the agency chaplain or a member of the clergy may be dispatched if available to respond quickly. If another person is not readily accessible, and there is an opportunity to get the family to the hospital prior to the demise of the employee, the back-up officer should not wait for the appropriate delegation to gather.
2. If the family wants to go to the hospital, they should be transported via police vehicle. Should there be serious resistance and the family insists on driving, an officer should ride with them.
3. Make arrangements for any young children.
4. Surviving parents will be notified in the same manner as spouses if they live within the county. If they live elsewhere, a request will be made to the appropriate agency to make notification.
5. If the tactical situation permits, the Chief of Police will accompany the back-up officer and will be the primary notification officer.

C. ASSISTING THE FAMILY AT THE HOSPITAL

1. A member of this agency will be present the entire time the family is at the hospital and will arrange whatever assistance the family needs. (The officer(s) who made the initial notification should be at the hospital).
2. Arrangements will be made for transportation of the family back to their residence.
3. Arrangements will be made for all medical bills relating to the services rendered to the deceased employee to be sent to this agency. The family should NOT receive any of these bills at their residence address.

D. FAMILY SUPPORT

1. A Department Officer will immediately be appointed to the critical assignment of liaison officer. This position will not be a decision making position, but in the role of “facilitator” between the family and this agency. The liaison officer will:
 - a. insure the needs of the family come before the wishes of the department;
 - b. meet with the family and tell them what his/her responsibilities will be during this time;
 - c. Meet with the family regarding funeral arrangements. The liaison officer should make the family aware of what the department can offer in the way of assistance if the family decides to have a “law enforcement funeral”;
 - d. Know all the information concerning the death and the continuing investigation to answer family questions;

- e. Provide as much assistance as possible; oversee arrangements for travel and lodging for out-of-town family members.
- f. Be constantly available to the family;
- g. See that the surviving parents are afforded recognition and will have proper placement arranged for them during the funeral and funeral procession;
- h. See that the family is briefed on the funeral procedure (i.e., 21 gun salute, presentation of flag, playing of taps, pallbearers, funeral procession, etc.);
- i. See that a “family support group” (officer’s wives and others) are assigned the responsibility of seeing that the home is prepared for the influx of visitors and that ample food is available. Baby sitting needs for all family members should be met. Have someone screen phone calls. Make sure someone is always at the residence.
- j. Coordinate pallbearers, ushers, and 21-gun salute manpower requirements with other law enforcement agencies if the family desires a “law enforcement funeral”
- k. Make available department patrol vehicles to the family if they desire transportation to and from the funeral home; and
- l. Provide information and assistance to obtain benefits to the surviving family.
 1. The same person appointed as liaison officer for family support will be appointed as a “benefits coordinator” after the funeral to gather information on all benefits/funeral payments available to the family. This officer will be completely responsible for filing appropriate paperwork and following through with the family to ensure that these benefits are being received.
 2. The benefits coordinator will visit the family a few days following the funeral and give them a list of the benefits due, who to contact at the various benefits offices, and when they can expect payment of the benefits. Benefits will differ with each individual, and depending on whether death was felonious or accidental, but all the following benefit sources should be expected.
 - workers compensation;
 - social security;
 - federal public safety officer death benefit, 42 USC 3796 (currently \$119,894.00);
 - state public safety officer death benefit ACA 21-5-705 (currently \$100,000.00 if a felonious act, plus \$25,000.00 if wearing a bullet proof vest, or \$25,000.00 for accidental death);
 - National Chief of Police’s Association (\$2,500.00);
 - personal life insurance;
 - educational benefits for dependent children;
 - Veterans Administration; and
 - Health benefits will continue for six months after death upon payment of premium.