



CITY OF MADISON POLICE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE



**Line of Duty, Life-Threatening Injury or Death of an Employee**

Eff. Date 01/15/2019

**Purpose**

To provide employees and their families appropriate emotional care for dealing with the stress of a seriously injured, ill or deceased family member. This will be done through proper preparation, notification and follow-up.

Although this SOP is intended to address line of duty death or injury of Police Officers, many provisions including notification and family assistance, may be applicable to any agency employee regardless of whether or not it is duty related.

**Procedure**

**PRE-INCIDENT PHASE**

1. Employee photos shall be kept up-to-date.
2. Employees shall complete, and keep up-to-date, all paperwork related to critical incidents and notifications.
  - a. In order to make prompt notification to an employee's family, in the case of a serious injury or death, an Employee Emergency Notification File will be kept in the office next to the Officer In Charge's Office. This alphabetical file will contain a notification sequence for each employee of the Madison Police Department, indicating who should be notified first, second, third etc., their addresses and phone numbers. Employees should include in this sequence someone who would be able to contact/locate dependents who are in school or additional people to contact. There is space provided for optional information.
  - b. Every employee should fill out a Critical Incident Partner form. The completed forms are kept in alphabetical order in the office next to the Officer In Charge's Office.
3. Honor Guard policies and practices should be put into place.
4. Employees should inform their loved ones of what is available to them and what to expect following a Line of Duty Death or Life-Threatening Injury. Line of Duty Death forms A & B can also be filled out. The completed forms are kept in alphabetical order in the office next to the Officer In Charge's Office.

**INCIDENT PHASE**

1. Officer in Charge shall retrieve the paperwork completed by the officer.
2. Notify the Chief of Police and Commanding Officers as soon as practical.
3. Notification shall be made to those designated by the involved officer, as soon as possible and based on the most recent information provided by the involved officer.
  - a. All notifications will be made in person, when possible. Multiple notifications may be necessary.
  - b. Notifications will be made by the Chief of Police or designee and those as requested by the officer, should time allow. Notification should never be delayed if it would allow loved ones to reach the hospital prior to demise.
    - i. At least two people will be present for the notification.
    - ii. Those making the notifications should ask to be allowed inside and gather those present.
    - iii. Use the employee's name when speaking to the family.
    - iv. Speak slowly, clearly and honestly about what has occurred. If the employee is deceased, say so. Do not provide false hope.
    - v. Consider bringing medical care to the notification, or having them stage nearby.
    - vi. If family desires to go to the hospital, transportation will be provided, or an officer will ride with the family should they so choose. It should be suggested that the family not drive themselves.
    - vii. Be prepared for any and all responses that the loved ones may have.

- viii. Reassure by expressing your sorrow and assuring them that the Madison Police Department we will do everything we can to provide support.
    - ix. If notifications need to be made outside of the area, a request for assistance shall be made of the agency local to the family.
4. Officer in Charge shall make the following notifications:
  - a. District or Unit chain of command.
  - b. EAP and Peer Support Coordinator.
  - c. PIO if necessary.
  - d. Designate or communicate where the Command Post will be located.
5. Chief of Police shall designate an Incident Commander for the duration of the incident. This person will be responsible for coordinating all department functions related to the incident. No decisions or actions should be taken without first notifying the Incident Commander.
6. Activate relevant processes from the OICI SOP.
7. No information regarding the officer or personal information shall be aired on the radio.
8. Officers that are able to contact loved ones should be reminded to do so. No information on the involved officer should be shared.
9. A hospital liaison shall be designated as soon as practical. This liaison will be responsible for coordinating with hospital staff.
  - a. Arrange an area in the hospital for family and an area for coworkers.
  - b. Arrange for the family to get updates as soon as they arrive.
  - c. Arrange for the family to visit the injured or deceased, prepare them for what they will see and accompany them.
  - d. Explain the involvement of the Medical Examiner if relevant.
  - e. Notify billing and registration that this is Workers Comp related and all billing should be done as such and to the Police Department.
  - f. Involve our Employee Assistance Program and or Peer Support.
  - g. Communicate and work with those who made the notifications.
  - h. Arrange for any transportation needs, child care or other needs from the loved ones.
  - i. Designate a media location.
10. EAP will be activated in the following ways:
  - a. Act as a coordinator for all service for the involved family and department personnel.
  - b. Respond to the CP and get briefed.
  - c. Determine who was most directly involved and provide immediate diffusing.
  - d. Provide an informational debriefing for all personnel from the effected shift prior to the end of their tour of duty.

## POST INCIDENT

1. Funeral and Wake
  - a. Plans and desires of the family and designees will come before the Department's.
  - b. Assign a family liaison and an honor guard liaison to assist with the tasks. Should be familiar with the employee, but not too emotionally invested to be effective. Responsibilities include:
    - i. Meet with family to explain their role
    - ii. Provide a contact number and be available.
    - iii. Make sure that family's wishes are heard and met.
    - iv. Assist with any arrangements needed.
    - v. Make family aware of what choices are available.
    - vi. Ensure that all family and those close have a place .
    - vii. Provide the details on the funeral and relay wishes for desired inclusions and exclusions.
2. Media
  - a. Incident Commander will designate a PIO or Commander to work with the media.
  - b. No information will be released without prior approval of the Incident Commander or Chief of Police.
  - c. Should the family grant an interview, the PIO or designee will be present and brief the family on questions, process etc.

3. Peer Support
  - a. Ensure that the family home is ready for visitors.
  - b. Handle phone calls as requested by the family.
  - c. Provide or arrange necessary transportation.
  - d. Facilitate the involvement of other support services: Concerns of Police Survivors, Victim/Witness, Parents of Murdered Children and other resources intended to provide support for the survivors.
  - e. Arrange for someone to provide regular residence checks and guard the home during the wake, funeral and other advertised absences from the home.
4. EAP
  - a. Schedule a debriefing for officers involved.
  - b. Offer a debriefing for involved family, to include spouses, significant others, children, parents and siblings.
  - c. Keep Incident Commander, district teams and management team informed.
  - d. Conduct follow-up meeting to keep all other employees supported.
5. Benefits
  - a. Incident Commander will assign an officer that will gather information on all of the benefits available to survivors.
  - b. Ensure that proper paperwork is completed, in a timely manner, for all benefits.
  - c. Meet with the family within a few days of the funeral to outline what is coming and when.
  - d. Follow up with the family approximately one month later and continue to do so until all benefits are received.
  - e. Inform the family on continuation of City Health Insurance.
  - f. The officer assigned to assist with benefits should work with HR representative to jointly make sure all benefits are covered.
6. Criminal Proceedings
  - a. Family will be notified prior to any press releases.
  - b. Family will be notified of all proceedings.
  - c. Arrangements will be made for attendance should the family desire.
7. Extended Support
  - a. Peer Support and EAP shall encourage and assist family and affected coworkers in obtaining professional help.
  - b. Create a plan for ongoing support for at least two years. Should include calls, check-ins, cards, remembrance of significant dates.
  - c. Invite family to all memorials and events related to their family member.
  - d. Provide information on other organizations that exist to offer survivor support.

Original SOP: 05/13/2015  
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