



CITY OF MADISON POLICE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE



Line of Duty Death of an Employee

Effective Date: 01/31/2025

## Purpose

The purpose of this SOP is to outline the Madison Police Department's response to a line of duty death.

The Madison Police Department (MPD) recognizes that a line of duty death will likely have far-reaching affects across the agency and the community and will require a timely and sensitive response to the needs of the involved officers, surviving family members, the organization, and the community.

The Madison Police Department recognizes that adhering to an incident command model, with clearly defined assignments/roles, will greatly assist the surviving family members and the organization in the aftermath of a line of duty death.

The Madison Police Department recognizes that proper "notification" is a critical component of the survivors' ability to adjust to the loss of a family member.

The Madison Police Department recognizes that ensuring survivor benefits are in order and quickly addressed will assist the surviving family in the aftermath of their loss.

The Chief of Police may institute any part of this policy for a non-commissioned employee of the Madison Police Department, or for any death of a Madison Police Department Public Safety Officer.

## Definitions

**Public Safety Officer:** An individual serving a public agency in an official capacity, with or without compensation, as a law enforcement officer.

**Line of Duty Death (LODD):** Any action, felonious or accidental, which claims the life of a Madison Police Department sworn employee, while on duty. This definition is for the purposes of this policy only. Also:

Pursuant to 34 U.S. Code SUBCHAPTER XI— PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS' DEATH BENEFITS, a line of duty death is presumed when a public safety officer dies from a heart attack, stroke, or vascular rupture while engaged in, on duty, or within 24 hours of participating in a non-routine stressful or strenuous physical law enforcement service, or a training exercise involving non-routine stressful or strenuous physical activity.

**Survivors:** Primary family members of the deceased employee, including spouse, children, grandchildren, parents, grandparents, siblings, fiancé, and/or significant others.

**LODD Involved Officer:** An officer who is directly involved in the line of duty death of another officer.

**Family Liaison Officer:** A member of the Madison Police Department who is assigned to the survivors of the officer killed in the line of duty, for the purposes of coordinating communication between the survivors and the involved agency to include funeral arrangements, benefits, and investigative updates. In most cases, this will be a member of the MPD Peer Support Team who has received specialized training in dealing with line of duty deaths and the role of a Family Liaison Officer.

**Employee Designated Representative (EDR):** A pre-identified person, of the deceased officer's choosing, who can act as a liaison between the survivors, the Family Liaison Officer(s), and the Madison Police Department.

**Law Enforcement Death Response Team (LEDR):** The Wisconsin Department of Justice Law Enforcement Death Response team is an available resource/team that is trained to assist with all details surrounding the death of a law enforcement officer, regardless of the circumstances. LEDR's response is willing to assist any agency in any manner requested and can include: Death Notification, Critical Incident Debriefings, Peer Counseling, Funeral Service Preparations, Public Safety Officer Benefits (PSOB), Family Support, Media Coordination, and Department logistics. LEDR can be reached 24/7 at: (866) 410-5337.

**Notification Team:** The personnel responsible for notifying the next of kin of a deceased employee. Ideally, this team consists of the Chief of Police or designee, the person(s) designated in the employee's emergency notification packet, and a representative from the county medical examiner's office, with emergency medical technicians (EMTs) standing by; however, the time necessary to fully assemble and deploy this team must be balanced against the prompt notification of survivors, with special consideration given to any possibility that a survivor might be able to reunite with an employee before their passing.

## Procedures

### Pre-Incident

1. All employee photographs shall be kept up-to-date.
2. Employees will meet with their supervisor annually to review and edit (if necessary) all paperwork related to critical incidents and emergency notifications.
  - a) In order to make prompt notification to an employee's family, in the case of a death, an Employee Emergency Notification packet is saved to the employee's personnel file in LERMS. This packet 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. Employees may also identify an Employee Designated Representative. See Employee Emergency Notification Information Packet (Form A).
  - b) All employees are encouraged to make sure they have up-to-date beneficiary designations in place.
  - c) Employee Emergency Notification packets shall only be viewed for official purposes related to a notification, or for administrative purposes by the supervisor responsible to ensure the form has been reviewed annually. Access history to Employee Emergency Notification packets will be audited to ensure that only appropriate access occurs.
3. Peer support officers who can act as Family Liaison Officers should attend training that teaches best practices in dealing with line of duty deaths.

### In the Event of a Line of Duty Death

- A. Duties of LODD Involved Officer(s)
  1. Immediately notify dispatch of incident and location. When practical, any radio communication should be done over an encrypted radio channel.
  2. Render first aid and request response by emergency medical services.
  3. Officer(s) shall inform a supervisor or the Officer-in-Charge of the incident as soon as possible.
  4. Protect and secure the scene until relieved.
  5. Identify witnesses for subsequent interviews. The LODD involved officer(s) shall not participate in the interviews of witnesses.
  6. Brief the first arriving supervisor of the nature of the incident.

7. Reporting requirements for LODD involved officer(s) will be completed by investigators assigned to the incident. LODD involved officers will not be required to prepare a written report.

#### B. Duties of the On Scene Supervisor

1. Assume responsibility for the security and preservation of the scene. The involved agency is responsible for the initial response unless relieved by an outside agency lead investigator.
2. Notify the Officer-in-Charge.
3. Ensure that a LODD non-involved supervisor, if not already at the scene, responds immediately to the scene of the incident (A LODD non-involved supervisor is defined as one who has not been involved specifically at the scene, or involved in any tangential fashion, e.g., operation planning, drafting of search warrants, surveillance officers, intelligence gathering, etc.).
4. If necessary, establish a scene command post and give location to the Dane County Public Safety Communications (911 Center).
5. As soon as practical, relieve the officers directly involved in the line of duty death of any further responsibilities at the scene.
6. Identify and separate witnesses until the arrival of the lead investigator and/or other outside investigators.
7. If an outside agency lead investigator is involved, provide all necessary information to the outside agency lead investigator, and then relinquish control of the investigation to the outside agency lead investigator.

#### C. Duties of the Officer-in-Charge (OIC)

1. The Officer-in-Charge shall retrieve all employee paperwork completed by the deceased officer, which is maintained in the employee's personnel tab in LERMS. The OIC will review the packet for the names of any on-duty officers who are requested to be part of the Notification Team. If possible, those officers will be taken out of service and immediately assigned to the Notification Team.
2. Notify the Officer Involved Critical Incident (OICI) team commander or designee, and the Forensic Services Sergeant.
3. Notify the Chief, the Assistant Chief of Operations, and the Assistant Chief of Investigative and Specialized Services.
4. Notify Commanders of the District where the incident occurred. If the incident occurred outside of the employee's assigned district, the District Commanders of the involved employees should also be notified.
5. In the event of an Officer Involved Death or Other Critical Incident, refer to that SOP.
6. Notify the Captain of the "back-up" District where the incident occurred. For example, West District is backed up by Midtown District. In most cases, this commander will eventually become the Hospital Supervisor.
7. Contact Dane County Public Safety Communications (911 Center) Supervisor to inform on-duty officers of the status of the incident (e.g., injuries to officers and community members, or other important information). This should be done via silent dispatch, utilizing the Mobile Data Computer (MDC) and/or email, and should contain the following information:
  - a. Name of the deceased officer(s);
  - b. Name of LODD involved employee(s) and their status;
  - c. Directive to on-duty officers to refrain from any information sharing outside of MPD, including social media posting;
  - d. Advise on-duty officers it is appropriate to communicate to their own families their current status, but they should refrain from sharing any other information until authorized by a commander. It is critically important that information is not inadvertently shared with survivors.

- e. Advise personnel that they may gather at an MPD facility (such as Midtown or the MPD Training Center) for support; but they shall not assemble at the hospital. Only officers who have been directed to go to the hospital as a result of being assigned a necessary and specific law enforcement task by a supervisor should go to the hospital, and they shall check-in with the Hospital Supervisor upon arrival.
8. Notify the Madison Professional Police Officers Association (MPPOA) or Association of Madison Police Supervisors (AMPS) President, or another member of the MPPOA/AMPS board if the President is not available.
9. Notify the Peer Support Team Coordinator and deploy any on-duty Peer Support Officers to initiate the Critical Incident Stress Management protocol.
10. After formal notification to the involved officer's family has been made and in coordination with the Incident Commander, notify the department, via phone chain, followed by an email (sent to PD Group), that an MPD employee/officer was killed in the line of duty. The OIC will identify the officer by name, rank, and the location of the event, the location for all employees to assemble at if they decide to come in to work for support purposes. This email notification shall direct all employees to refrain from making social media notifications about this incident.
11. All media releases shall be cleared through the Internal Communications Commander and/or the Incident Commander. The name of the deceased employee will not be released to the media by the Department before the immediate family is notified. If the media obtains the employee's name prematurely, the Chief of Police or designee will request the name to be withheld until proper notification can be made to the survivors.

#### D. Duties of the Notification Team

1. It is the responsibility of the Notification Team to properly notify the next of kin of an employee who has died in the line of duty. Consideration should be given to immediate family, extended family, significant others, and relevant military branches. The deceased employee's *Emergency Notification Packet* must first be consulted. Prompt notification must be balanced with the wishes of the employee, if noted in their packet, with special consideration given to any possibility that a survivor might be able to reunite with an officer before their death. Additionally, expedience is of the utmost concern in consideration of instant social media, instant messaging, and other means in which the survivor family could learn of the tragedy before proper notification can take place.
2. If there is knowledge of a medical problem with an immediate survivor, medical personnel should be immediately available at the time of notification.
3. Notification will be made in person and ideally never alone. At least two vehicles should be used so someone can stay with the family, if necessary.
4. Never make a death notification on the doorstep. Ask to be allowed into the residence and gather the survivors together. If the survivor is at work, the Notification Team should request that the survivor be brought to a private room. Members shall not inform the workplace supervisor of the purpose of the visit other than to indicate that it is a family emergency.
  - a. Inform survivors slowly and clearly of the information that you have.
  - b. If specifics of the incident are known, the Notification Team should relay as much information as possible to the family.
  - c. Be sure to use the deceased officer's name during the notification. Never give the family a false sense of hope. Use words such as "died" and "dead" rather than "gone away" or "passed away." Experience has shown that survivor family members want and need straightforward talk. State the facts as known. Be clear on what information is known and what is not yet known.
5. If the family requests to visit the hospital, they should be transported by police vehicle.
  - a. It is highly recommended that survivors not drive themselves to the hospital.
  - b. If the survivor insists on driving, someone should accompany them in the family car.

- c. If young children are at home, and the survivor's decision is for those children to remain at the home, the Notification Team should arrange for babysitting needs. This may involve a co-worker's family, transportation of children to a relative's home, or similar arrangements.
6. Do not be overly protective of the family. This includes sharing specific information as to how the employee died.
7. Any promises, such as, "We will promote them posthumously," or "We will retire their badge," shall not be made to the family by any person except the Chief, and even then, strong consideration should be made to withhold such promises and actions until the emotion of the incident is under control.
8. Prior to departing for the hospital, the Notification Team should notify the Hospital Supervisor (by telephone, if possible) that survivors are en route so that arrangements can be made for their arrival.
9. The deceased employee's parents should also be afforded the courtesy of a personal notification whenever possible and practical. Be aware of any medical problems of the parents that may exist. If immediate survivors live beyond the Dane County area:
  - a. The Notification Team will ensure that a teletype message is sent to the appropriate jurisdiction, requesting a personal notification.
  - b. The Notification Team may choose to call the other jurisdiction by telephone, in addition to the teletype (TTY) message.
  - c. Arrangements should be made through the notifying agency to facilitate a conference call with the Notification Team, so details of the incident can be relayed directly from the Notification Team to the survivor family.
10. During a line of duty death, the external monitoring of police frequencies may be extensive. Whenever possible, communications regarding notifications should be restricted to the telephone or to encrypted channels.
11. The Notification Team should complete written details specifying the identity, time, and place of the survivor notifications.
12. The Notification Team should remain at the hospital while the family is present until adequately relieved by the family liaison(s).

#### E. Duties of the Hospital Supervisor

1. The Hospital Supervisor is responsible for coordinating the law enforcement activities at the hospital where the injured or deceased officer has been transported. This on-scene role should be initially filled by the first available supervisor, who may be supplemented by a commander from the back-up district of injured or deceased officer. It is essential this role is filled without delay in order to prevent significant disruption at the hospital. These responsibilities include, but are not limited to the following:
  - A. Announcing to Dispatch over the radio that they have assumed the role of Hospital Supervisor
  - B. As soon as reasonably practical, identify who from the hospital will be MPD's primary point of contact for exchange of information
  - C. Contacting the head of security to ensure patient privacy and the normal functioning of the hospital
  - D. Whenever possible, wearing a traffic vest when in this role, which helps hospital staff know who is in charge from MPD for communication purposes
  - E. Coordinating the arrival of the Notification Team with hospital staff
  - F. Coordinating with the OICI Hospital Supervisor, if applicable
  - G. Limiting the number of MPD personnel at the hospital to only those with a specifically assigned, critical law enforcement task
  - H. Redirecting MPD personnel without an assigned task to the designated place of assembly, like the MPD Training Center. Officers shall not assemble at the hospital.
2. Do not be overly protective of the family. This includes sharing specific information as to how the employee died.

3. Any promises, such as, "We will promote them posthumously," or "We will retire their badge," shall not be made to the family by any person except the Chief, and even then, strong consideration should be made to withhold such promises and actions until the emotion of the incident is under control.

F. Duties of Assistant Chief of Investigative & Specialized Services

1. Will make the request for an outside agency lead investigator, or outside agency observer. If an outside agency lead investigator is unavailable, MPD will oversee the criminal investigation and assign a lead investigator.
2. Will evaluate the need for an administrative review and/ or the need for Professional Standards & Internal Affairs (PSIA) investigation.

G. Duties of the Investigative Commander

1. This position is typically assigned to an MPD Assistant Chief or Captain and is responsible for coordinating investigative resources related to the line of duty death. This person will typically be the Captain of Investigative Services.
2. Contact Assistant Chief of Investigative & Specialized Services and notify them of the line of duty death.
3. In the event of an outside agency criminal investigation, coordinate with the investigating agency to make certain they have access to all necessary MPD resources to conduct the investigation.
4. Make investigative assignments and coordinate investigative efforts.
5. Management of investigative personnel (assignments, monitoring hours worked, etc.).
6. Managing overtime and arranging relief for investigative staff.
7. Communicate investigative updates to the Assistant Chief of Investigative & Specialized Services and the Incident Commander.
8. Designate case as "Extraordinary" for Telestaff/payroll purposes (if appropriate).

H. Duties of the Incident Commander

1. This position is typically assigned to an MPD Assistant Chief or Captain and is responsible for coordinating MPD operational resources. This person should not be in charge of any investigation related to the line of duty death. This person will typically be the Operations Captain.
2. Establish and staff a Department Command Post (CP), if necessary, to coordinate information and response to the tragedy.
3. Ensure a Hospital Supervisor has been assigned.
4. Ensure an Honor Guard Commander has been designated and the duties fulfilled.
5. Ensure that at least one Family Liaison Officer has been designated and the duties fulfilled.
6. Ensure a Staffing Commander has been designated and the duties fulfilled.
7. Designate an Internal Communications Commander.
8. In conjunction with the Honor Guard Commander, ensure the issuance of a teletype message to formally announce the line of duty death. As soon as practical, an initial TTY may be distributed with the announcement and that arrangements are pending. Details of arrangements should be withheld until completely verified; once that happens, subsequent TTY and email release should be considered. Extreme care should be given to releasing a TTY with information that will need to be changed or withdrawn. A follow-up TTY shall include the following:
  - a) Name of deceased.
  - b) Date and time of death.
  - c) Circumstances surrounding the death.
  - d) Funeral arrangements (state if service will be private or a police funeral).
  - e) Expressions of sympathy in lieu of flowers.

- f) Contact person and phone number for visiting departments to call to indicate their desire to attend or to obtain further information.
  9. Direct the wearing of badge mourning bands and any other Agency memorials.
- I. Duties of the Peer Support Commander of the Family Liaison Officers
1. This person will assign and oversee the Family Liaison Officer and will monitor the wellbeing of any designated Employee Designated Representative (EDR) from MPD. Typically, this person will be a lieutenant assigned to the Peer Support program. The Peer Support Commander of the Family Liaison Officers will report directly to the Incident Commander until the completion of ceremonial events related to the line of duty death; the Peer Support Commander will then report to the Commander of Support Services.
  2. Designate at least one Family Liaison Officer with consideration not to designate someone so close to the survivor family that they would not be able to handle the responsibilities of this role.
  3. Coordinate the schedules of the Family Liaison Officers to provide as much daily availability to survivors as possible.
  4. Place the Family Liaison Officers on special assignment in order to fulfill their duties.
  5. Ensure that the Family Liaison Officers have department issued cell phones and that the phone numbers are shared with the Incident Commander and the Honor Guard Commander.
  6. Work with the Family Liaison Officer to coordinate Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) responses for the survivors.
  7. If an MPD Employee Designated Representative (EDR) is working with survivors, monitor the wellbeing of the EDR with recognition that this is an extremely emotionally taxing role.
  8. Place the Critical Incident Partner (CIP) on special assignment in order to fulfill their duties.
- J. Duties of the Family Liaison Officer
1. This person is a facilitator between the survivors and the MPD. It is important that this person not be someone so close to the survivor family that they would not be able to handle the responsibilities of this role. This person(s) will report directly to a Peer Support Supervisor.
  2. The Family Liaison Officer is not a decision-making position, but a “facilitator” between the survivors and the MPD. It is important that the person(s) assigned this role realize they are not to make decisions on behalf of the MPD. The Family Liaison Officer will have immediate access to the Department Incident Commander, the Honor Guard Coordinator, and the Benefits Coordinator so necessary decisions can be made immediately.
  3. In conjunction with the Honor Guard Commander or their designee, assist the survivors with funeral arrangements and making them aware of what the Department can offer if they decide to have a law enforcement funeral.
  4. Apprise the survivors of information concerning the death and the continuing investigation.
  5. Provide as much assistance as possible, including overseeing travel and lodging arrangements for out-of-town family members, arranging for food for the family, meeting childcare and transportation needs, etc. The Peer Support Commander should contact the MPPOA or AMPS President, or board member if the President is unavailable, to discuss and coordinate financial and other logistics associated with these needs.
  6. Work with the Benefits Coordinator to obtain needed information from the family for benefit processing, as well as keeping the family apprised of the progress with the death benefits.
  7. Work with the deceased officer's district command to ensure that the officer's personal property is returned to the family.

8. Work with the department coordinator regarding "Donations" to the family.
9. If no court proceedings surround the circumstances of the member's death, the Family Liaison Officer will relay all details of the incident to the family at the earliest opportunity. If criminal violations surround the death, the Family Liaison Officer will:
  - a. Inform the family of all new developments prior to press release.
  - b. Keep the family apprised of legal proceedings.
  - c. Introduce the family to the Dane County Crime Response Program and the Dane County Victim/Witness coordinator.
  - d. Arrange for investigators and prosecutor(s) to meet with the survivors, at the earliest opportunity before and following any trial, to answer all their questions.
10. The Family Liaison Officer acts as a long-term liaison with the survivors to ensure that, if desired, close contact is maintained between the MPD and the survivors and that their needs are met.

#### K. Role of the Employee Designated Representative (EDR)

1. This person is predetermined and of the deceased officer's choosing.
2. This person is identified when MPD commanders access your Emergency Death Information Packet (Form A), which is stored in the employee's personnel file in LERMS.
3. If an officer did not identify an Employee Designated Representative on the Emergency Notification Form, the department may appoint one if requested.
4. The Employee Designated Representative will coordinate with the Family Liaison Officer.

#### L. Duties of the Honor Guard Commander

1. This is the person who will oversee and coordinate the planning and implementation of all aspects of the funeral arrangements. The Honor Guard Commander will also be primarily responsible for external communications to the greater law enforcement community. This person will report directly to the Incident Commander.
2. Notify the Law Enforcement Death Response Team (LEDR). This notification can be made by contacting the Wisconsin State Patrol Regional Post, where all contact information for the LEDR Team is maintained. LEDR Team contact information is also located at [www.wichiefs.org](http://www.wichiefs.org).
3. Work with the Incident Commander and the Notification Team with regard to timely release of initial information via TTY and email. Details of arrangements should be withheld until completely verified; once that happens, subsequent TTY and email release should be considered.
4. Coordinate all movement of the deceased in a ceremonious fashion. This includes any procession from the hospital to the morgue.
5. As soon as possible, arrange for a 24-hour guard that is posted to stay with the fallen officer. While this is a function of the Honor Guard, other sworn employees of the agency can be assigned this role. This 24-hour-a-day posting should start at a minimum following the release of the deceased by the Medical Examiner.
6. As soon as feasible and practical, in conjunction with the Family Liaison Officers, meet with the survivors to determine their wishes regarding MPD participation in the preparation of the funeral or services. Any information in the employee packet shall be shared with the family at this time. The family shall be assured that the MPD is willing and able to coordinate all arrangements, but no decisions will be made without their input and approval (Should the family elect to not have a law enforcement funeral, the Chief must consider holding a Department memorial service in recognition of the need for co-workers to grieve and experience some closure to the line of duty death).
7. Work closely with the family-identified Funeral Director and Clergy to develop arrangements. Attention will be given to selecting venues that will be capable of accommodating the large law enforcement response, and in the absence of such venues, developing contingency plans, as needed.



8. In accordance with Honor Guard Policy, ceremonial aspects of the visitation and funeral arrangements will be planned by the Honor Guard Coordinator.
9. Determine what public safety, church, fraternal, and labor organizations will provide in terms of financial assistance for out-of-town family travel, food for funeral attendees following the burial, etc.
10. Evaluate the necessity of reaching out other Honor Guard resources.
11. For the funeral, if necessary:
  - a. Designate a *Logistics Lead* whose responsibilities include the following:
    - I. Arrange for adequate water/food at each venue.
    - II. Arrange for portable restrooms, if needed.
    - III. If deemed necessary, arrange for bus transportation from alternate staging/parking locations to venues.
    - IV. Responsible for copying and distribution of funeral instructions for visiting agencies.
    - V. Responsible for documenting all visiting agencies and dignitaries.
    - VI. If directed, coordinate having someone video record services and document agencies present.
  - b. Designate a *Traffic Coordinator* whose responsibilities include the following:
    - I. Coordinate/Manage traffic and parking at each venue including visitation, funeral, cemetery, and any fellowship function.
    - II. Collaborate with any involved jurisdictions for needed traffic control for visitation, funeral, and procession.
    - III. Under direction of the Honor Guard Commander, direct the assembly of the squad and vehicle procession.
    - IV. Pre-plan and designate the procession route in consultation with the Honor Guard Commander.

M. Duties of the Internal Communications Commander

1. This person will coordinate the internal communications related to the line of duty death including, but not limited to, support services updates, investigative updates, and ceremonial activities. This person will report to the Incident Commander, but will also be in regular contact with the Investigative Commander, and the Support Commander and will share and coordinate information from these branches to MPD personnel at regular intervals.
2. Coordinate timely department-wide notifications, releasing factual information with directives regarding confidentiality.
3. This person will coordinate with the Public Information Officer (PIO) regarding external communications.

N. Duties of the PIO

1. This person will be responsible for external communications regarding the incident.
2. This person must coordinate all external releases of information regarding the incident with the Internal Communications Commander.
3. The name of the decedent should be withheld until survivors are notified.
4. If the media learns the identity of the decedent prior to notifications, the PIO will request the name be withheld until proper notification can be made to the survivors.

O. Duties of the Staffing Commander

1. This person is responsible for ensuring the staffing of all critical department assignments through the conclusion of ceremonies related to the line of duty death.
2. If necessary, coordinate deployment of outside law enforcement agencies to cover functions of patrol services at the time of the funeral, if deemed necessary.

3. Coordinate extra patrol of family residence throughout all phases of the planning, visitation, and funeral.

P. Duties of the District

1. Ensure that involved personnel have had appropriate opportunities to contact family members, Union officials, and/or attorneys.
2. Coordinate with the Support Commander to ensure that EAP and trauma services have been offered.
3. Ensure that regular command updates are given to the Chief and Assistant Chief of Operations.
4. If applicable, ensure that the Significant Exposure to Blood Borne Pathogens SOP is followed.
5. Responsible for Community Care tasks.
6. Arrange for the cleaning out of the employee's workspace and/or locker, as well as the delivery of the employee's personal belongings to the family at an appropriate time. This should be coordinated through the Family Liaison Officer.

Q. Duties of the Support Commander

1. This position is typically assigned to an MPD Assistant Chief or Captain and will be primarily focused on providing support to commissioned and non-commissioned personnel. This support will come in many forms including, but not limited to, Peer Support, EAP, LEDR, and Finance (Benefits). This person will typically be the Peer Support Captain.
2. Ensure that the Wisconsin Law Enforcement Death Response (LEDR) Team has been contacted at (866)410-5337.
3. Designate a Peer Support Commander of the Family Liaison Officers.
4. Designate an Internally Focused Peer Support Supervisor and ensure that Peer Support is immediately activated.
5. Notify City of Madison Risk Management within 24 hours of the event.

R. Duties of the Internally Focused Peer Support Supervisor

1. This person is responsible for coordinating MPD's internal EAP, Peer Support, and CISM resources in response to a line of duty death. This assignment reports to the Support Commander.
2. Ensure that police witnesses and other employees, who may be emotionally affected by the death of another employee, will be afforded the opportunity to attend a Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) debriefing held by a trained mental health professional (EAP).
3. Ensure that services of the LEDR Team, as well as the Department's contracted Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provider is activated immediately.
4. Coordinate all EAP, Peer Support and CISM response.
  - i. EAP responsibilities:
    1. Coordinate a CISM response for the involved officers.
    2. Coordinate a CISM response for MPD command staff.
    3. Provide grief support services for all impacted MPD employees (civilian and commissioned)
  - ii. Peer Support Responsibilities:
    1. Assist EAP staff in identifying impacted MPD personnel and coordinating CISM response.
    2. Provide a supportive presence at the Districts.
    3. Conduct follow up check-ins as requested.
    4. Provide grief support to impacted MPD personnel if/when requested.

## S. Duties of the Benefits Coordinator

1. This role will typically be filled the MPD Human Resources Coordinator.
2. This person will work with benefits specialists from LEDR and Concerns of Police Survivors (COPS) to ensure every available survivor benefit is explored.
3. This person will coordinate with the Family Liaison Officer(s) to share benefits information with the appropriate survivors.
4. This person's responsibilities will continue well after the immediate event.
5. This person will report directly to the Department Support Commander.
6. This person will be responsible for the following:
  - a. Filing Workers' Compensation claims and related paperwork.
  - b. Contacting the appropriate agencies immediately to ensure that the beneficiary receives death and retirement benefits, the employee's remaining paychecks, and payment for remaining annual and compensatory time.
  - c. Gathering information on all benefit/funeral payments, to include the Federal Public Safety Officers Benefits Act that is available to the family.
  - d. Notifying police organizations, such as Wisconsin Professional Police Association (WPPA), and any other fraternal organizations of which the employee was a member. These organizations may also offer financial assistance with logistical needs of the funeral services.
  - e. Preparing a printout of the various benefits/funeral payments that are due to the family, listing named beneficiaries and contacts at various benefits offices and when they can expect to receive payment.
  - f. Meeting with the surviving family a few days after the funeral to discuss the benefits they will receive, what has been done, as well as what has yet to be completed. A copy of the prepared printout and any other related paperwork should be given to the family at this time.
  - g. If there are surviving children from a former marriage, the guardian of those children should also receive a printout of what benefits the child(ren) may be receiving.
  - h. Attention should be given to the revocation of health care benefits. Many providers allow a 30-day grace period before canceling or imposing monthly payments upon survivors.
  - i. Continue meeting with the family until benefit applications are well underway. Then, meet with the family in four to six months to ensure they are receiving benefits.

## T. Public Safety Officer Death Benefit (PSOB)

1. Public Safety Officer Death Benefit (PSOB) is a program that provides a death benefit to eligible survivors of a public safety officer whose death is the direct and proximate result of a traumatic injury sustained in the line of duty or certain work-related heart attacks or strokes. To receive a death benefit, the claimant must establish that the public safety officer died as the direct and proximate result of an injury sustained in the line of duty. Under the program, it is presumed that a public safety officer who dies from a heart attack, stroke, or vascular rupture, while engaged in, on duty after, or within 24 hours of participating in a non-routine stressful or strenuous physical law enforcement activity, or other emergency response activity, or a training exercise involving non-routine stressful or strenuous physical activity, has died in the line of duty for death benefit purposes. The PSOB program pays a one-time lump sum death benefit to eligible survivors of a public safety officer killed in the line of duty. The amount paid to the officer's survivors is the amount authorized to-be paid on the date that the officer died, not the amount authorized to-be paid on the date that the claim is approved.
2. PSOB death benefits are paid to eligible survivors in the following order:

- a) If the officer is survived by only a spouse and no children, 100% of the death benefit goes to the spouse.
- b) If the officer is survived by a spouse and children, 50% of the death benefit goes to the spouse and the remaining 50% is distributed equally among the officer's children.
- c) If the officer is survived by only children and not a spouse, the death benefit is equally distributed among the officer's children. If the officer is survived by neither a spouse nor children, the death benefit is paid to the individual(s) designated by the officer in the most recently executed designation of beneficiary on file at the time of the officer's death. If the officer does not have a designation of beneficiary on file, the benefit is paid to the individual(s) designated by the officer in the most recently executed life insurance policy on file at the time of the officer's death.
- d) If the officer is survived by neither a spouse nor eligible children and the officer does not have a life insurance policy, the death benefit is equally distributed between the officer's surviving parents.
- e) If the officer is survived by neither a spouse, nor eligible children, nor parents, and the officer did not have a designation of beneficiary or a life insurance policy on file at the time of their death, the benefit is paid to surviving adult, non-dependent, children of the officer.
- f) A death or disability benefit will not be paid:
  - i. If the fatal or catastrophic injury was caused by the intentional misconduct of the public safety officer or the officer's intention to bring about their death, disability, or injury;
  - ii. If the public safety officer was voluntarily intoxicated at the time of their fatal or catastrophic injury;
  - iii. If the public safety officer was performing their duties in a grossly negligent manner at the time of their fatal or catastrophic injury;
  - iv. If an eligible survivor's actions were a substantial contributing factor to the officer's fatal or catastrophic injury.

#### U. Continued Support for the Family

1. Members of the Department must remain sensitive to the needs of the survivors long after the member's death. The grief process has no timetable. More than half of the surviving spouses can be expected to develop a post-traumatic stress reaction to the tragedy.
2. Holidays may be especially difficult for the family, particularly if small children are involved. Increase contact with the survivors, as additional support is important at these times.
3. The Chief of Police or a designee should observe the member's death date with a short note to the family, flowers on the grave, and/or wreath placement at the Wisconsin Law Enforcement Officers Memorial.

Original SOP: 05/13/2015

(Reviewed Only: 03/04/2016, 12/20/2016, 12/26/2017, 02/04/2022)

(Revised: 01/15/2019, 01/28/2020, 01/31/2023, 1/23/2024, 09/20/2024, 01/31/2025)

(Name Change and Overhaul of SOP: 01/28/2020 – previously known as Line of Duty, Life-Threatening Injury or Death of an Employee SOP)