



TALLAHASSEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDERS MANUAL

 Proudly Policing Since 1841	SUBJECT Notification of Death or Serious Injury		 Nationally Accredited 1986
	CHIEF OF POLICE <i>Signature on File</i>		
NUMBER 37	ISSUE DATE 10/01/2001	REVISION DATE 04/12/2024	TOTAL PAGES 4

AUTHORITY/RELATED REFERENCES

General Order 67, Victim Advocacy
General Order 73, Chaplain Program
General Order 74, Line of Duty Death or Serious Injury

ACCREDITATION REFERENCES

CALEA Chapter: 55

KEY WORD INDEX

Assisting Agencies with Local Notifications
Department-Investigated Incidents

Procedure II
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POLICY

The notification of a death or serious illness/injury to the next of kin is very critical and shall be carried out in a prompt and considerate manner. Members shall utilize appropriate resources to assist in this endeavor.

DEFINITIONS

AVR: Digital Audio and Video Recording System.

Deceased Person: a person who is obviously dead or who has been legally pronounced dead.

Seriously Ill Person: a person who is in danger of dying due to an illness or medical condition.

Seriously Injured Person: a person who has received a serious injury that may

cause death.

PROCEDURES

I. DEPARTMENT-INVESTIGATED INCIDENTS

A. In the event the next of kin of a deceased or seriously injured/ill person lives in the City of Tallahassee, the following protocols shall be allowed:

1. Whenever possible, a member of the Department shall make the notification in person.
2. Members delivering the notification shall have as much information, as legally appropriate, to ensure the notification is completed in a timely, professional, and considerate manner.
3. The Victim Advocate or Chaplain shall be utilized when appropriate to assist with the notification. In their absence, or in addition to, a close friend or other relative may be sought to assist with the notification.
4. Members making a notification to the next of kin with a medical condition shall seek the appropriate level of assistance from emergency medical personnel.
5. Members shall make every reasonable effort to complete the notification prior to the end of their work shift.
6. The officer or detective shall note in the offense report the name of the person notified, their relationship to the deceased or seriously injured or ill person, and the notification time.
7. When notification is not possible by the assigned member, the follow-up detective, appropriate patrol district supervisor, or the on-duty Watch Commander shall be notified to re-assign the task to another member.
8. In rare circumstances, a death notification may need to be made over the telephone (or video-call such as Facetime). If a notification must be made over the telephone, the same protocols and considerations shall be followed with the member's AVR activated. A telephone notification shall be approved by a sworn supervisor.

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- B. In the event the next of kin of a deceased or seriously injured/ill person lives outside of the City of Tallahassee the following protocols shall be followed:
1. The notification shall be completed with the assistance of the law enforcement agency in the appropriate jurisdiction.
 - a. A Teletype message shall be sent to the agency confirming the official request to include information relevant to the notification and requesting a return confirmation message to our agency upon delivery of the notification to the next of kin.
 - b. The member shall make direct contact with a member from the agency and provide as much information as legally appropriate to ensure the notification is completed in a timely, professional, and considerate manner.
 2. In rare circumstances, a death notification may need to be made over the telephone (or video-call such as Facetime). If a notification must be made over the telephone, the same protocols and considerations shall be followed with the member's AVR activated. A telephone notification shall be approved by a sworn supervisor.
 3. The member shall document in the offense report the persons involved in completing the notification, the persons notified and their relationship to the next of kin, and the time of notification.

II. ASSISTING AGENCIES WITH LOCAL NOTIFICATIONS

- A. Notification requests received from other law enforcement agencies must be verified by an official Teletype message prior to a member contacting the next of kin.
- B. The request to make a notification to a next of kin shall be assigned to an officer and shall include as much information as possible to ensure that the notification is completed in a timely, professional, and considerate manner.
- C. The Victim Advocate or Chaplain shall be utilized, when appropriate, to assist with the notification. In their absence, or in addition to, a close friend or other relative may be sought to assist with the notification.
- D. Members making a notification to the next of kin with a medical condition shall seek the appropriate level of assistance from emergency medical personnel.

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- E. The member shall make every reasonable effort to complete the notification prior to the end of their work shift.
- F. When notification is not possible by the assigned member, the follow-up detective, appropriate patrol supervisor, or on-duty Watch Commander shall be notified to re-assign the task to another member.
- G. In rare circumstances, a death notification may need to be made over the telephone (or video-call such as Facetime). If a notification must be made over the telephone, the same protocols and considerations shall be followed with the member's AVR activated. A telephone notification shall be approved by a sworn supervisor.
- H. The member making contact shall document in the CAD report (or agency-assist report, if appropriate) the persons involved in completing the notification, the person(s) notified, and their relationship to the deceased.

History: issued 10/01/2001, revised 07/01/2009, 03/23/2010, 04/12/2024