LINE-OF-DUTY
FUNERAL GUIDE

The California Fire Foundation and California Professional Firefighters (CPF) understand the jarring experience of a line-of-duty death. A compilation of policy, procedures and suggestions follow to help you through this trying time.

The resources found in this guide come from a variety of sources, all cited within the following pages. It is meant to serve as an example based on our experience and the experience of those who have walked in your shoes. While we know this guide cannot diminish the grief of losing a member of our firefighter family, we hope that it provides you with peace of mind as you go through an often unfamiliar process.

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As per IAFF Guidelines:

A. After the notification of a death of a member, the Office of the Chief of the Department should immediately inform Union Office/Officials and the fire department chaplain.

B. The fire department should be informed that local union official(s) wish to accompany department officials that are dispatched to notify next of kin. After the family has been officially notified, the fire department and the local union should notify all on-duty members.

Please refer to IAFF's web site at http://www.iaff.org/HS/PDF/LODD-US.pdf to obtain proper notification forms.

In addition, notification should be made to California Professional Firefighters and the California Fire Foundation so that an alert to CPF leadership can be sent to all locals in California the next business day.

**FLAG PROTOCOL**

A. After notification of the line-of-duty death is completed, flags at all jurisdictions’ properties (government center, fire stations, schools, etc.) should be lowered to half-staff in honor of the fallen firefighter.

According to government code, the Governor of the State of California must authorize the lowering of the flags to half-staff. The California Fire Foundation can assist with this notification process.

B. Flags at jurisdictions’ properties should remain at half-staff from date of death through the day of committal (burial).

C. Flags at fire stations and the union hall should remain at half-staff for a period of 30 days. Funeral bunting, if used, should also remain on fire stations and the union hall for 30 days.

D. After the notification of the line-of-duty death is completed, badge shrouds should be placed across the face of each member’s badge. Badge shrouds should remain for 30 days.

If communication and notification assistance is required by a local, California Professional Firefighters and the California Fire Foundation can be contacted during business hours at: (916) 921-9111 or info@cpf.org
LINE-OF-DUTY DEATH NOTIFICATION PROCESS

As per IAFF Guidelines:

A. The local union president must immediately appoint an individual with the sole responsibility of planning the fallen firefighter’s funeral.

   Many locals choose to appoint a small committee to plan for the fallen firefighter’s funeral.

B. In order for the local union to be fully prepared, the following initial information must be gathered from the fallen firefighter’s family as soon as possible. A union/department member should be immediately assigned as a family contact to assist the family and serve as the liaison between the family and those planning the funeral. The family liaison should keep some of the following questions in mind. Please refer to page eight (8) for a form to document memorial wishes.

   • Do they want a funeral with full department honors?
   • Do they want a church funeral? If so, what church?
   • Who is their choice of priest, minister, rabbi or other religious representative?
   • Where is the funeral home?
   • Who is the funeral director?

C. If the family requests a departmental funeral, the funeral director should be notified. The funeral director makes arrangements with the church, cemetery, etc. The union/department should make arrangements for the funeral director to receive the deceased’s uniform in the event of a departmental funeral or if requested by the family.

D. A list of pallbearers must be obtained from the family. Honor guard members should be selected, usually chosen from house and company members, and scheduled to stand at the casket during the viewing at the funeral home.

E. Site selection must begin immediately for the memorial service (if planned) and for a reception following the funeral/memorial service. Vendors such as floral companies and transportation services should be solicited immediately for assistance.

F. The local union must determine the availability of the following:

   • white gloves
   • union pins
   • badge shrouds
   • bunting (fire stations/union hall)

G. The family liaison should assess the need for a printed memorial program and work with the family to gather biographical material and photographs.
H. If necessary, secure space from local hotel(s).

I. Establish a liaison with the police department.

- Request that the police department send an announcement to law enforcement of the line-of-duty death with as much detail as possible, including funeral arrangements, department and union addresses, and phone numbers of the local union representative responsible for funeral.

- Request that the police provide detail in a marked car at deceased’s home during the entire funeral period.

- Request that the police have a representative at the planning meetings who can assist with logistical coordination including traffic, crowd control, out-of-town firefighters, parking, etc.

California Professional Firefighters and the California Fire Foundation are available as a resource to assist with any of the above protocol. Badge shrouds, a CPF and IAFF flag, a bell and a 20’ X 38’ Garrison flag are available to any local union who requires their use. Hotel arrangements, memorial programs, funeral arrangements and other administrative support are also available to assist the local president and those whom he or she appoints for logistical support.
LINE-OF-DUTY DEATH FUNERAL

For line-of-duty departmental funerals, the following protocol should be arranged:

A. One appointed family liaison is responsible for assisting the family, including escorting them into church and showing them to their seats. The department should select a chief-in-charge for directing and coordinating fire department and firefighter involvement in funeral.

B. The honor guard should post colors prior to the church service. The honor guard should be posted outside the church on both sides of the entrance. Department personnel, union officials, firefighters and dignitaries should line up with honor guard facing the street. The family passes between ranks. In all instances, one family should enter one church ahead of any dignitaries. Ushers should keep the front right part of the church open for members and delegates. After one deceased is greeted, all attendees march into the church and are seated in the following order:

- Fire chief
- Union president
- International principal officer(s)
- State principal officer(s)
- Local union officials
- Deceased’s company
- Delegation of department’s chief officers
- Members of department
- Members of other fire departments

C. All remain standing until all firefighting delegations are in place.

D. At the conclusion of the service, ushers will direct the firefighting delegation to the street where they resume original places, facing the church, under direction of the chief-in-charge. Pallbearers then proceed out of church with the deceased followed by the family and other mourners. The chief-in-charge gives the command for salute as the deceased is brought from the church and placed in the hearse.

E. After services, the funeral director assembles procession. The chief-in-charge directs all firefighting personnel, proceeded by colors, to march ahead of procession to a designated pass-in-review position. If desired, a designated fire house can be chosen for pass-in-review. Fire house should have apparatus on apron, with all on-duty personnel at attention, bells tolling as procession passes. Afterwards, pass-in-review procession proceeds to cemetery.

Additional examples and detailed explanations for fire service funerals can be found in the Chaplains Manual for fire department funerals on the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation web site, located at: www.firehero.org
ADDITIONAL PREPARATION TIPS

California Professional Firefighters and the California Fire Foundation have devised a checklist for each firefighter to fill out to further prepare for a line-of-duty death.

The following information should be held in a known place with specific individual(s) entitled to access it in the event of a line-of-duty death.

• PERSONAL INFORMATION OF FIREFIGHTER
  Name, date of birth, Social Security Number, driver’s license number

• FIREFIGHTER’S PREFERRED FAMILY LIAISON
  Firefighter should identify a preferred family liaison to notify next of kin in the event of a line-of-duty death. List all contact numbers for liaison. Firefighter should make sure liaison has all of his/her family’s contact information as well.

• NEXT OF KIN INFORMATION
  Firefighter should list next of kin’s schedule and contact info so that he/she can be found quickly at all times.

• FAMILY INFORMATION
  Firefighter should list any other family members, their contact information and schedules in case they need to be contacted immediately.

• FINANCIAL INFORMATION
  Firefighter should list all banks, credit institutions and accounts he or she holds. Include account titles, numbers, location of keys, etc. and provide next of kin with location of this information.

• PROFESSIONAL CONTACTS
  Firefighter should list any attorneys, accountants, insurance company/agents, or financial planners and their contact information. Next of kin should be provided with the location of this information.

• WILL/TRUST
  Firefighter should create a will or trust and keep it up to date. List where the original copy is located, which date the will or trust was executed on, named executor of will/trust, and attorney/will preparer. Next of kin should be provided with the location of this information.
Below is a listing of important documents that should be kept in a safe place. Next of kin or other designee should be provided with the location of these documents.

- Marriage certificate
- Birth certificate/children’s birth certificates
- Adoption papers (if applicable)
- Divorce papers/child support documents (if applicable)
- Military discharge papers (if applicable)
- Veteran’s papers (if applicable)
- Social Security Card
- Income and tax records
- Firearms and registrations
- Vehicle title

Below is a listing of common assets that should be accounted for and kept in a safe place. Next of kin or other designee should be provided with the location of this information.

- Real estate holdings
- Insurance policies
- Investments: Stocks, bonds, money markets, mutual funds
- Deferred compensation: Retirement funds, 401(k)s
- Life insurance policies
## MEMORIAL WISHES

Hemet Firefighters Local 2342 has produced a form for their own firefighters to fill out stating their wishes. With Local 2342’s permission, we have included this form in this guide for all those who would like to supply their next of kin or other designee with this type of information.

Name and address of preferred funeral home:
___________________________________________________________________________________________

I have the following pre-arrangements:
___________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________

Name and address of church, synagogue or mosque:
___________________________________________________________________________________________

Clergy/contact person:
___________________________________________________________________________________________

Preferred site for memorial service:
___________________________________________________________________________________________

Procession to grave site to include (fire apparatus?):
___________________________________________________________________________________________

Name(s) of officiating clergy:
___________________________________________________________________________________________

Other speakers:  Name                                                   Department/Relationship
___________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________

Names of pallbearers:
_____________________________________________    ____________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________

Preferred flowers: ____________________________________________________________

After funeral, send flowers to:  □ rest home  □ hospitals  □ other: _______________________________

Donations (instead of flowers) to: _______________________________________________________________

Preferred musical selections: _______________________________________________________________
Favorite readings: 

_____________________________________________     ____________________________________________

_____________________________________________     ____________________________________________

Clothing: 

☐ Purchase _________________________ at time of need. ☐ Select _______________________ from my wardrobe.

Jewelry: wedding ring: ☐ leave on   or   ☐ return to family   other: _________________________

I prefer: 

☐ Burial @ ________________________________ Type of casket: ________________________________

Type of marker: ______________________________ Inscription/emblem: __________________________

☐ Cremation to be handled by: _____________________________________________________________

Ashes to be scattered: ________________________________

Other instructions: ________________________________

Special firefighter funeral requests: 

☐ Sounding of last alarm (bell or siren) ☐ Fire department Honor Guard ☐ Color Guard

☐ Procession with fire equipment ☐ Bagpipes ☐ Gun salute

☐ American flag draped on casket ☐ Fire department spokesman read eulogy

☐ Casket displayed on engine

Other instructions: ________________________________

Other fire departments to be notified: 

Department                          Contact Person

______________________________________________

______________________________________________

______________________________________________

Other special requests or instructions: 

______________________________________________

______________________________________________
IAFF WALL OF HONOR APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Please contact: JoAnn Wiley
Phone: 202-824-8639
Email: jwiley@iaff.org

IAFF FALLEN FIREFIGHTER MEMORIAL FOUNDATION WALL OF HONOR

In 1997, fire service leaders formulated new criteria to determine eligibility for inclusion on the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial. Line-of-duty deaths shall be determined by the following standards:

1. (a) Deaths of firefighters meeting the Department of Justice’s Public Safety Officers’ Benefits (PSOB) program guidelines, and those cases that appear to meet these guidelines whether or not PSOB staff has adjudicated the specific case prior to the annual National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service; and

   (b) Deaths of firefighters from injuries, heart attacks or illnesses documented to show a direct link to a specific emergency incident or department-mandated training activity.

2. While PSOB guidelines cover only public safety officers, the Foundation’s criteria also includes contract firefighters and firefighters employed by a private company, such as those in an industrial brigade, provided the deaths meet the standards listed above.

3. Some specific cases will be excluded from consideration, such as deaths attributable to suicide, alcohol or substance abuse, and other gross abuses.

CALIFORNIA FIREFIGHTERS MEMORIAL WALL APPLICATION CRITERIA

www.memorial.cpf.org
THE FIREFIGHTER'S PRAYER

This poem is often used at Line-of-Duty Death Memorials and has been included in this guide for your reference.

When I am called to duty, God
Wherever flames may rage
Give me strength to save a life
Whatever be its age.

Let me embrace a little child
Before it is too late,
Or save another person from
The horror of that fate.

Enable me to be alert
And to hear the weakest shout,
And quickly and efficiently
To put the fire out.

I want to fill my calling
To give the best in me
To guard my friend and neighbor
And protect their property.

And, if according to your will
I must answer my final call,
Bless with your protecting hand
My family one and all.

-ANONYMOUS