

FUNERAL

STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINE

DATE APPROVED: MAY 2008

I. SCOPE

This standard establishes guidelines and procedures that will ensure proper support and care for a firefighter's family after the death of a member of the fire department. These guidelines will also help ensure that proper honors are rendered.

II. OBJECTIVES

To promote the honor and respect for the fallen firefighter

To establish lines of authority and responsibilities during notification, funeral and burial proceedings

To establish criteria for each type of funeral: Class I, Class II, & Class III

To establish criteria as to whom these honors are rendered

III. CLASSIFICATIONS

Class I - A Class I death is to be considered for members of the department who are killed at the scene of an emergency incident or killed while responding to or returning from the scene of said incident. A Class I death will also include those that are injured at the scene and who later die as a result of these injuries.

Class II - A Class II death pertains to members of the department who dies, but not due to injuries sustained while performing emergency activities.

Class III - A Class III death is a death occurring when a member is "off duty" and not relating to any emergency or non emergency activities.

IV. NOTIFICATION

Line of Duty Death (Class I & II)

The Fire Chief and the Chaplain will be responsible for contacting the families of firefighters that have been killed in the line of duty. If the firefighter's next of kin are outside of the county, it is the Chief's responsibility to notify the fire or police department nearest the family, and to arrange that a uniformed officer contact the family in person.

Off Duty Death (Class III)

Department members that have knowledge of a fellow members death are encouraged to notify the Fire Chief.

The Fire Chief will then notify the department Chaplain and the membership after receiving and verifying prevalent information on the member's death and applicable funeral information.

The Chaplain, once notified, is then responsible for contacting the family and offering department assistance.

The Chaplain would then contact the department Funeral Coordinator as per the family's wishes.

The Fire Chief will announce the death and any funeral/memorial arrangements.

The announcement should follow a set format, and be from the Fire Chief or ranking officer, or other appointed member, regardless of who reads it.

The verbal announcement should be followed with typed copies to be distributed for posting at the station, with a follow up announcement once funeral plans are finalized.

Sample Announcement

It is with deep regret and sorrow to report the death of _____ (members name). _____ (name or names) died at _____ (time) (date may be necessitated, especially if death was not immediate) while _____ (actively working on, responding to, returning from) at _____ (location). Funeral arrangements are pending at this time, however, a formal announcement of the arrangements, and the department's participation will be made, within the wishes of the family (or families).

V. ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Funeral arrangements are the ultimate responsibility of the family, but the fire department will provide assistance if requested.

An officer of the department will designate those who are to prepare a fire apparatus for the funeral or memorial service.

An officer will contact a fire department to provide a fill in during the funeral or memorial services.

During this time of need, all department members are expected to pull together as a team and provide support to each other.

If a debriefing is needed, the Fire Chief or other officer, or appointed member will contact the Central Shenandoah EMS Council to make arraignments.

VI. GUIDELINES FOR THE FUNERAL/MEMORIAL SERVICE

Class I- Line of Duty Death

All available department personnel **are to** attend dressed in badge shirt.

All members will wear a black band over their badge.

Class II- On Duty Death

1. All available department personnel are **encouraged** to attend dressed in badge shirts.

2. All members will wear a black band over their badge.

Class III- Off Duty Death

1. All available department personnel are asked to attend funeral.

2. All members that wear badge shirts will wear a black band over their badge.