

DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER 16-03

OFFICE of the CHIEF OF POLICE
REPLACES: General Order 05-04

DATE: March 4, 2016

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATIONS

I. PURPOSE.

The emergency notification of family members of the death or serious injury/illness of a relative may result from an incident occurring within the department's jurisdiction or at the request of an outside law enforcement agency. In either event, the department shall respond in as prompt a manner as possible and initiate the required notification with compassion and consideration for the victim's family.

II. INFORMATION COLLECTION PROCESS.

The assigned officer will gather the facts surrounding the death, illness, or injury to make a sufficiently informed notification. Personal and/or confidential information should not be broadcast over the radio, but relayed to the assigned officer by ECDC personnel via phone, or vice-versa.

Should the notification request originate with an outside law enforcement agency, ECDC communications will contact the on-duty supervisor, who shall be responsible to obtain the required information. The supervisor will then relay the data to a subordinate officer to be handled, or he/she may elect to accompany their subordinate during the notification.

III. NOTIFICATION PROCEDURE.

- A. Whenever possible, the assigned officer will request a friend (if known), clergyman, or neighbor to assist with the notification.
- B. The assigned officer will make sure of positive identification prior to attempting any notification.
- C. Notification should never be made via telephone, except where investigative time constraints or some other pressing issue dictates otherwise. Should the target relative reside in another jurisdiction, the appropriate law enforcement agency shall be contacted and requested to make the notification.
- D. The assigned officer shall introduce themselves at the door and request to enter the home. They should avoid releasing information at the doorstep.
- E. The officer shall be as direct as possible, leaving no false hopes or confusion. Words such as "Died" or "Dead" are preferable to those that may be less precise.
- F. Officers making an emergency notification should be reassuring, understanding, and offer all reasonable assistance to the victim's family.

IV. DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS.

ECDC Communications shall initiate a computer entry for each emergency notification. This includes those originating within the City as well as those where the department is providing a courtesy service to an outside law enforcement agency.

Investigative reports shall be the primary source of documentation for sudden death and serious accidental injury incidents that occur within the City. Other deaths and serious injuries may be covered by Uniform Vehicle Accident Reports. However, in cases where notification requests originate outside the City, the officer assigned to the call may elect to write a Memorandum Report. Otherwise it will simply be recorded via ECDC computer entry.

BY ORDER OF:

KEVIN R. MURPHY
Chief of Police

KRM:mj

CALEA Reference: 55.2.6/81.2.11