

WYOMING



DEATH BENEFITS AVAILABLE TO THE SURVIVING FAMILIES OF LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS WHO HAVE DIED IN THE LINE OF DUTY

STATE DEATH BENEFITS

There is no one-time state death benefit available at this time but it is possible there are benefits through a retirement system.

9-3-613.

Payment on death; duty related.

(a) If a member of the retirement program dies as a result of any activity related to official duties as an employee prior to retirement under this article, a monthly death benefit equal to fifty percent (50%) the greater of sixty-two and one-half percent (62.5%) of the member's final actual salary at time of death or two and one-half percent (2.5%) of the member's salary multiplied by the years of the member's service credit, as determined under W.S. 9-3-417, shall be paid to the surviving spouse.

(b) In addition to the benefits provided under subsection (a) of this section, an additional amount equal to five percent (5%) six percent (6%) of the final actual member's salary shall be paid as a benefit for each unmarried child under the age of eighteen (18) years, provided the total death benefit paid to the surviving spouse and children in accordance with this section shall not exceed one hundred percent (100%) of the employee's 2 final actual salary.

(c) A member's salary for purposes of determining 5 death benefit payments under this section shall be equal to 6 the greater of: (i) The member's highest average salary at the time of death, as defined in W.S. 9-3-602(a)(xvi); or (ii) The member's final actual salary at the time of death as defined in W.S. 9-3-602(a)(vi).

<https://www.wyoleg.gov/2023/Introduced/SF0018.pdf>

<https://www.wyoleg.gov/Legislation/2023/SF0018>

EDUCATION BENEFITS

CONCERNS OF POLICE SURVIVORS – provides financial assistance of up to \$2,000 per semester to surviving children and surviving spouses of law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty, according to C.O.P.S. criteria, who wish to pursue a course of study beyond high school. Since there is a tuition-free education benefit available in your state, you must first apply for and be denied by the state or the institution to be eligible for the C.O.P.S. scholarship.

How to Apply: <https://www.concernsofpolicesurvivors.org/scholarship>

CONCERNS OF POLICE SURVIVORS (C.O.P.S.) // (573) 346-4911 // cops@nationalcops.org

CONCERNSOFPOLICESURVIVORS.ORG

This information is compiled by National C.O.P.S.

Revised 2025

The PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS' EDUCATION ASSISTANCE (PSOEA) Program provides financial assistance, for the purpose of seeking higher education, to the spouses and eligible children of local police, fire, and emergency public safety officers who have been killed or permanently disabled in the line of duty.

Educational assistance through the PSOEA Program is available after the Public Safety Officers' Benefit (PSOB) death or disability claim process has been completed and benefits have been awarded.

Visit <https://psob.bja.ojp.gov/> for more information and the application or call the PSOB Office toll-free at 1-888-744-6513 to discuss the requirements for receiving PSOEA benefits.

KIDS CHANCE OF WYOMING- To be eligible for a scholarship grant, applicants must have a parent who has been killed or seriously injured as a result of a work-related incident that meets the criteria of the Workers' Compensation Act and that has resulted in demonstrated financial need. Applicants must be under 25 years of age. For more information or to apply, visit <https://www.kidschancewy.org/>

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Death Benefits must be filed with the Division within one year from the date of death. The date of death, regardless of the date of injury, will be used to determine benefits. A spouse receives benefits based on a percentage of wages at the time of death compared to the Statewide Average Wage for 100 months. If there is no spouse, the child or each child will receive a portion of the spouse benefit for 100 months in addition to their monthly benefit in accordance with Wyoming Statute 27-14-403(c). If there are no dependents and the case is compensable it will be opened for payment of funeral and medical expenses only.

<https://dws.wyo.gov/dws-division/workers-compensation/>
<http://wyomingworkforce.org/workers/workerscomp/claims/#12>

PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS' BENEFITS (PSOB) PROGRAM

A unique effort of the U.S. Department of Justice; local, state, tribal, and federal public safety agencies; and national organizations, the Public Safety Officers' Benefits (PSOB) Program provides death and education benefits to survivors of fallen law enforcement officers, firefighters, and other first responders, and disability benefits to officers catastrophically injured in the line of duty.

The claim has two parts (A&B) that require the agency and family to fill out online. Visit <https://psob.bja.ojp.gov/> for additional filing information. If you need assistance filing this claim, contact the National C.O.P.S. office at (573) 346-4911 or cops@nationalcops.org

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STATE LIFE INSURANCE & RETIREMENT

Check with your agency to see if you are eligible for State Life Insurance or death benefits from a Retirement system.

If your officer participated in the Wyoming Retirement System the Spouse will receive a lifetime benefit of 62.5% of your salary at the time of death, as well as 6% for each child under age 18. If the officer dies in a non-duty related event, the spouse will receive a lifetime benefit of 50% of your salary and 6% for each child under age 18. Death benefits for both duty-related and non-duty related deaths may not exceed 100% of your salary at the time of death. If you are not married you may designate another beneficiary. If you are vested at the time of your death, a non-spousal beneficiary could elect to receive a benefit based on your years of service, highest average salary, and his or her age. If you are not vested, your non-spousal beneficiary would receive a lump sum payment of twice your contributions and interest. For a non-spousal beneficiary to elect a lifetime benefit rather than a lump sum, the beneficiary must be at retirement age to begin the benefit within one year of the date of your death. Otherwise, the non-spousal beneficiary would only be eligible for the lump sum death benefit. Lump sum payouts to non-spousal beneficiaries or estates taking a lump sum payout must be distributed within five years of the date of death.

Questions should be directed to the WRS Wyoming Retirement System

<https://retirement.wyo.gov/>

retirement.wyo.gov pension@wyo.gov

(307) 777-7691

HEALTH INSURANCE BENEFITS

Health benefits vary depending upon police department benefits. Contact the Benefits Coordinator at your agency.

FUNERAL BENEFITS

Workers' Compensation burial expenses of the deceased employee shall be paid in an amount not to exceed \$5,000, with an additional amount of \$5,000 to cover other related expenses, unless other arrangements exist between the employer and employee under agreement. See workman's comp section above or contact your claims analyst for more information.

DIGNITY MEMORIAL FUNERAL, CREMATION AND CEMETERY providers created the Public Servants Program for emergency service personnel. This program provides dignified and honorable tributes, at no cost, for career and volunteer law enforcement officers who fall in the line of duty. Visit their website for complete information at <https://www.dignitymemorial.com/> and look under Public Servants for details. You may also call 800-344-6489 and speak with a representative.

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WILBERT FUNERAL SERVICES, INC. provides complimentary burial vaults and related services for fallen law enforcement officers. For more information visit <https://www.wilbert.com/> or call (888) WILBERT.

FEMA COVID-19 Funeral Assistance If you are covering the cost of a COVID-19 Funeral, FEMA may be able to help. You may qualify for up to \$9,000 for expenses. For more information visit <https://www.fema.gov/disaster/coronavirus/economic/funeral-assistance#eligible>.

The COVID-19 incident period ended on May 11, 2023. FEMA will continue to provide funeral assistance until September 30, 2025, to those who have lost loved ones due to the pandemic.

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

PEER SUPPORT ORGANIZATION

CONCERNS OF POLICE SURVIVORS INC., (C.O.P.S.), is a national, non-profit organization that works with law enforcement agencies, police organizations, mental health professionals, and local peer-support organizations to provide assistance to surviving families of law enforcement officers who have died in the line of duty. C.O.P.S. provides Hands-On Programs, training for law enforcement, National Police Week registration/accommodations, scholarships, counseling and so much more to surviving families and co-workers.

Contact the C.O.P.S. National Office 573-346-4911, email cops@nationalcops.org or visit <https://www.concernsofpolicesurvivors.org/local-chapters> for information on a chapter in your area. Office hours are Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. CST.

SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFIT Spouses, children, or parents may be eligible for Social Security Benefits. To apply for benefits, call (800) 772-1213 to speak to a Social Security representative or visit your local Social Security Office. You cannot report a death or apply for survivors benefits online. Visit <https://www.ssa.gov/benefits/survivors/ifyou.html> for more information.

Wyoming Peace Officer Association- \$500 Death Benefit Must be a member in good standing. Visit <https://wyomingpeaceofficers.com/> for more information.

OTHER BENEFITS TO ASK YOUR AGENCY ABOUT:

City life insurance?
Private life insurance?
County & Local Jurisdiction Benefits?
Real estate tax relief?