

FUNERAL PLANNING

The agency should help the family with funeral planning. While the line-of-duty death of a law enforcement officer affects the agency, its personnel and the community, the funeral must honor the family's wishes – even if it does not follow tradition.



FUNERAL CUSTOMS FOR LINE-OF-DUTY

DEATHS INCLUDE:

- Flags at half-staff
- Casket watch
- Honor guard
- Flag-draped casket
- Flag presentation (Please consider providing more than one folded flag – e.g. one to spouse and one to parents)
- Mourning shroud on badges and department buildings
- 21-gun salute
- Last call
- Playing of “Taps”



SUPPORTING THE FAMILY

One liaison officer should be assigned to the spouse and a second liaison officer should be assigned to the parents, if applicable. This places less pressure on the spouse to keep the in-law family informed and leads to better relations. Being a liaison officer is an emotionally difficult assignment. Officers should be closely monitored for evidence of self care.

The liaison officer will:

- Make sure the needs of the family come before the wishes of the department.
- Meet with the family regarding funeral arrangements. Since most officers do not prearrange their own funerals, the family should make all the decisions.
- Oversee arrangements for travel and lodging for out-of-town family, and provide assistance getting them from the airport to the hotel and funeral services.
- Be available to the family throughout this traumatic time.
- Find out what the public safety fraternal/labor organization involvement will be and what financial assistance they are providing for out-of-town family travel, feeding the officers assigned to the funeral details, feeding funeral attendees following the burial, etc.

- See that the surviving parents, siblings, and all biological children and step-children – especially those with former spouses – are recognized and will have appropriate seating during the funeral and funeral procession.
- Brief the family on the funeral procedure.

The agency should consider transporting the family to and from the funeral home and all of the planned services.



Visit www.concernsofpolicesurvivors.org and download “Support Services to Surviving Families of Line-of-Duty Death” for additional information.